

Gayton News

Est. 1988



Cheeky Lamb!

Gayton
N • E • W • S

Spring
2026

Issue 170

Publication

Gayton News is brought to you by the Gayton Information & Communications Action Team. While we may edit submissions for clarity or length, the views expressed remain those of the contributors.

We print 250 copies of each issue, delivered throughout the village by our wonderful team of volunteers — thank you!

The Parish Council kindly funds the printing of **Gayton News**, with additional support from local advertisers. If you would like to advertise your business, please contact the Editor.

We welcome your stories and articles. Please send them to:
gaytonnews@gayton-northants.co.uk

The deadline for submissions for the Summer Issue is: **15th May 2026**

Advertising Rates

Fundraising events held in the village and organised by residents: FREE

All other advertising	By Villagers	By Others
Whole Page	£16	£32
1/2 Page	£8	£16
1/4 page	£4	£8

(Increased in Jan 2026 to cover costs)

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Welcome!

Isn't it nice to finally have a few warm, sunny days? Is spring really with us? It must be — the snowdrops have flowered in the churchyard and the daffodils are now out.

Apparently, it rained for 40 consecutive days in Northamptonshire at the beginning of 2026. Fortunately, I was on holiday in South East Asia at the time, where they were experiencing unseasonably hot weather and drought! Perhaps we should be considering paddy fields and rice production in the UK...

In this issue, Carl has written a very useful introduction to starting your own allotment, so maybe this is the year you begin your own version of *The Good Life*.

In June we have the hugely successful and enjoyable **Gayton Open Gardens** to look forward to. Have you considered opening your garden?

The report from the school shows that they have had their usual intensively active term — they seem to cover an amazing range of topics over the year.

As always, I warmly welcome articles from you all. In the meantime, you'll have to put up with my thoughts on beekeeping!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the *Gayton News*.

Regards,

Colin Simmonds, Editor, Gayton News

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18 Mar, Wed 10:00 – 11:30 Evergreens meet @Eykyn for drinks & chat
20 Mar, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
22 Mar, Sun 10:00 – 11:00 CW Family Communion at St Mary's Church
25 Mar, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
26 Mar, Thu 19:30 Parish Council meeting Village Hall
27 Mar, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
31 Mar, Tue 17:30 – 20:30 Pizzas by The Wood Oven @Eykyn Arms
31 Mar, 18:30 – 21:30 Jazz & Blues Night @ The Eykyn Arms
3 Apr, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
8 Apr, Wed 10:00 – 11:30 Evergreens meet @Eykyn for drinks & chat
8 Apr, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
10 Apr, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
12 Apr, Sun 10:00 – 13:00 Gayton Walkers Monthly Walk
17 Apr, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
22 Apr, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
24 Apr, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
25 th April 20:30 *Live Music* Whisky Flowers @The Eykyn
26 Apr, Sun 10:00 – 11:00 CW Family Communion at St Mary's Church
28 Apr, Tue 17:30 – 20:30 Pizzas by The Wood Oven @Eykyn Arms

28 Apr, Tue 18:30 – 21:30 Jazz & Blues Night @ The Eykyn Arms
1 May, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
6 May, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
8 May, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
10 May, Sun 10:00 – 13:00 Gayton Walkers Monthly Walk
13 May, Wed 10:00 – 11:30 Evergreens meet @Eykyn for drinks & chat
15 May, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
20 May, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
22 May, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
24 May, Sun 10:00 – 11:00 CW Family Communion at St Mary's Church
26 May, Tue 17:30 – 20:30 Pizzas by The Wood Oven @Eykyn Arms
18:30 – 21:30 Jazz & Blues Night @ The Eykyn Arms
29 May, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
3 Jun, Wed 20:00 – 22:00 Pub Quiz @ Eykyn Arms
5 Jun, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
7 Jun, Sun 13:00 – 17:00 Gayton Open Gardens & Allotments UK
10 Jun, Wed 10:00 – 11:30 Evergreens meet @Eykyn for drinks & chat
12 Jun, Fri 20:30 – 21:30 Bingo @ The Eykyn Arms
14 Jun, Sun 10:00 – 13:00 Gayton Walkers Monthly Walk

Evergreen Club

Why not join us on the second Wednesday in the month for a coffee and a chat?

Karen and John offer great hospitality at the Eykyn Arms .

No need to book, no subscription to pay, just come along and enjoy the company!

The dates of future Coffee and Chat Mornings for 2026 are:

Wednesday 8th April
Wednesday 13th May
Wednesday 10th June
Wednesday 8th July
Wednesday 12th August
Wednesday 9th September

All at the Eykyn Arms starting at 10.00 am.

Further information from:
Carol Coppock 01604 859645
carol.coppock14@gmail.com
Manja Ronne 01604 859253
ManjaRonne@btinternet.com



Traditional Crafts

Hilary recently spotted this traditional craft in use in the village: Thatching.

Thatching is the centuries-old skill of building a roof using layers of dry vegetation. In this case, the material appears to be water reed, the most durable thatching material, which can last for 50–70 years.

Bundles of reed are laid in courses, starting from the eaves at the bottom of the roof and working upwards. Each layer is fixed into place with setting pins and secured with hazel sways, which hold the reed firmly against the roof timbers.

Once the bundles are in place, the thatcher uses a tool called a *Leggett* to dress the surface. By striking the reed, the thatcher compresses it so the roof becomes tight and weatherproof.

The final stage is the ridge at of the roof. This is often finished with a decorative block-cut pattern, which not only seals the peak but also gives each thatched roof its distinctive character.

It's a reminder that even today, traditional crafts like this are still quietly at work in our villages.

St Mary's Church Gayton NN7 3EY
GAYTON OPEN GARDENS
AND ALLOTMENTS
SUNDAY 7TH JUNE 2026 1-5PM



Tickets and map from the church
(Family Tickets Available)

Gardens Open

Plant Sales

Teddy Bear Trail

Homemade Teas in the church

Car Parking

From the Rector

We know all about the rhythms of the seasons as we move from winter into spring, but following the rhythms of the liturgy, the church has moved on from the birth stories of Jesus in Christmas and Epiphany towards the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus in Lent and Easter.

Sitting in the turning point between Epiphany and Lent is Candlemas (one of my favourite services of the year). The presentation of Christ in the Temple, to give Candlemas its full title occurs in the northern hemisphere on 2nd February. It is a turning point in the year, falling as it does halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. Timed to supersede the pagan festival of Imbolc, it is when the first signs of spring are just becoming evident, when days are getting perceptibly longer, and the darkest nights of winter are falling away.

Candlemas Bells (Snowdrops) pop up all over our churchyards and garden borders. They are such beautiful, delicate flowers and lift the spirits as the first sign of spring. I recently heard the legend of the snowdrop: According to legend, when Adam and Eve were ejected from the Garden of Eden, as they trudged out into the snow, holding hands and shivering with cold and despair, an angel took pity on them. Breathing gently on the falling snowflakes, the angel transformed them into snowdrops, whispering to Eve that these fragile flowers, the first to bloom in the cold depths of winter, would be a reminder of brighter days to come, and a reassurance that it would not be winter forever. How reassuring is that!



As we read the papers and watch the news, I hear so often such statements as *'it's frightening, isn't it?'*; *'I don't know what is happening to our world'*. The simple beauty of the snowdrop, flowering in what we regard as the depth of winter cold and darkness, gives us a glimpse of hope and a celebration of light before the dark purple of Lent takes up the rhythm of the seasons.

So, let us give thanks to God for all the beauty of His creation and do our part to nurture and sustain it.

Look out for what is happening in our churches over the Lent and Easter period, and come and join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'M. Clifton'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a long, thin horizontal line.

How to start an Allotment?

Why?

Starting your own vegetable plot is extremely rewarding and despite there being much to learn, anyone with a reasonable standard of fitness can do it. It's good for us in so many ways, lots of fresh air and vitamin D, like-minded people to chat to, a bit of a workout and of course lovely fresh, chemical free vegetables, and Gayton allotment is a lovely environment to spend time in, quiet and relaxing – especially if you switch off your phone! So, if you haven't got space in your garden or don't have a garden at all, but still fancy having a go at vegetable growing, Gayton Gardeners and Allotment Society would be glad to welcome you.

How?

Some of the following limited maintenance crops that outcompete weeds or offer multiple harvests from a single planting are an excellent choice to start with.

Soil Clearing Staples.

These crops are ideal for a new plot because they help suppress weeds and improve soil structure.

Potatoes: Often called "soil cleaners" because their dense foliage smothers weeds and the act of digging them up helps break up compacted soil.

Courgettes & Squashes: These are incredibly prolific. Just one or two plants can provide a massive harvest, and their large leaves act as a

living mulch to keep weeds down. Fast maturing and easy to grow.

Perfect for beginners who want quick results to help them stay motivated.

Radishes: These are the "instant gratification" veg, often ready to eat just 25 days after sowing.

Salad Leaves: Using "cut-and-come-again" varieties allows you to harvest individual leaves repeatedly rather than waiting for a whole head to grow. What is less well known is that if you pick individual leaves off some varieties of lettuce and they will continue to grow more, and end up looking like a miniature kale plant.

Beetroot: Exceptionally reliable and rarely bothered by pests. Bonus: the young leaves are delicious in salads.

Low Maintenance crops:

Onions & Garlic: Plant "sets" (small bulbs) in autumn or spring. They require little attention once established, though they do not provide shade, so they will need occasional weeding.

Runner Beans & French Beans: These grow vertically, making them great for saving space. They are vigorous climbers and produce a continuous crop if picked regularly and they taste so much better fresh.

Chard & Perpetual Spinach: These are much hardier than standard spinach. They can provide fresh greens almost year-round and will keep growing back after you pick them.

Perennials

By planting perennials, work is kept to a minimum with Year after year of tasty produce.

Here are a few examples:

9 PERENNIAL VEGETABLES — PLANT ONCE, HARVEST FOR YEARS

One planting. Decades of food.

20-30 YEARS
Asparagus

15+ YEARS
Rhubarb

INDEFINITE
Jerusalem Artichoke

SELF-PROPAGATING
Walking Onions

Mar-Nov
Sorrel

6 FT – celery flavor
Lovage

Zone 4+
Sea Kale

2,000 years cultivated
Good King Henry

Perennial broccoli
Turkish Rocket

ANNUAL: replant every year

PERENNIAL: plant once, harvest decades

If you are wondering what 'walking onions' are, they come from Egypt and the bulbs grow on the stems which bend over and self-propagate. They taste like ordinary onions, and you can eat all parts of the plant. Worth a try?

>>> Continued >>>

My favourites are Rhubarb and Strawberries, although strawberries need renewing every few years.

Rhubarb: Extremely tough and will survive even if the plot was neglected before you started. Timpani early is a very prolific variety. Good in pies, crumbles and jams, strawberry and rhubarb Jam is especially delicious, and you don't see in the supermarket.

Strawberries: Easy to grow in the ground or in



pots, and they will naturally spread to fill gaps. However, they do need to be kept weed free and covered to deter birds. There are a wide variety to choose from meaning with careful tending you can be eating fresh, chemical free strawberries all summer long.

Top Tips for Your First Season

If you take on an allotment, here are a few tips to get you started.

Kiss (keep it simple stupid). Start by clearing one small section and planting it at once to stay motivated.

Use Ground Cover: If you have areas that you aren't using, cover them with ground cover and the weeds will die back under it.

Sow little and often: Avoid a "glut" (too much at once) by sowing tiny amounts of seeds every 2-3 weeks.

Check for "Inherited" Plants: Before you dig everything up, look for existing rhubarb, fruit bushes, or herbs that might already be established.

Visit regularly: Don't let the weeds get out of control, it can be very de-motivating. The hoe is your best friend!

So, if you want a hobby that's good for your health (both mental and physical) and provides some lovely fresh vegetables, why not contact our Secretary:

Hilary 07778 574139,

hilaryglanville6@gmail.com

We have 2 small vacant plots which are perfect for a beginner.

Happy Gardening, Carl Hamilton

As some of you may already know, I'm a beekeeper. I keep honeybee colonies in hives to produce "Gayton Honey" – as well as enjoying the endless fascination of the hobby.



Honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) live very seasonal lives, with different challenges and behaviours throughout the year. Over the next few issues of the Gayton News I thought I'd give a brief overview of the beekeeping year.

Why Spring Matters Most

Spring determines the success of the entire year. Strong, healthy colonies established in spring can gather surplus honey and resist pests and disease. Poor spring management, however, can lead to swarming, weak colonies, or missed nectar flows.

For this reason, beekeepers often say: *"The beekeeping year is won or lost in the spring."*

Early Spring (March – April): Colony Build-Up

As temperatures rise and the first blossoms appear, the colony starts to come back to life. The queen begins laying eggs again, while the 5–10,000 worker bees that have survived the long winter take on the job of foraging and rearing the next generation of bees.

Early pollen from willow, hazel, crocus, snowdrop, and dandelion are particularly important at this time, providing the protein needed to feed the developing brood.

This is a period for cautious first inspections when the weather allows (over 14°C with little wind). The main goals are to:

- confirm the colony is queenright
- assess brood pattern and colony strength
- check food reserves and feed if necessary
- clean floors and replace old comb frames

Colonies grow rapidly during this period to around 30,000 bees, so hive space must be managed carefully to avoid congestion.

Mid-Late Spring (April – June): Swarm Season

This is the most management-intensive period of the year. As colonies expand to 40–60,000 bees, they may prepare to swarm — their natural method of reproduction. Signs include new queen cells, increased numbers of drones (male bees), and crowded hives.

I carry out regular weekly inspections to monitor for swarm preparation and use swarm control methods to maintain control.

At the same time, I add "supers" (additional boxes) to provide storage space for spring honey from nectar flows such as oilseed rape, fruit blossom, hawthorn, and horse chestnut.

If you have any concerns about bees— or other small, buzzy things — in the village, feel free to contact me for advice. In particular, if you see a swarm settled somewhere, please let me know, as they may be eyeing up a cavity in your house — and no-one wants that!

Colin Simmonds. Tel: 858933

Sunday 15th March 4-7PM

Mothers Day Cocktails & Disco

Fancy a Pina Colada, Lemonchello Spritz, Aperol Spritz or maybe, Sex on the Beach?

Monday 16th Mar 7pm

Open Mic



“Mack & Wood” host a night for all artists to show their talent.

Wednesday 25th Mar 8pm

Quiz Nights

Quizmaster Rodger tests your general knowledge every alternate week, Teams of up to 6. Or turn up and join in £1 per head, Winners take all!

Tuesday 31st Mar 7pm

Jazz & Blues Night

Now in their third year of regular monthly sessions, Cliff Brown and the House Band plus Guests start early and finish by about 10pm, it's perfect for coming straight from work, having a bite to eat, some drinks and catching some outstanding mid-week live music. Burgers from the Pub and Wood Fired Pizzas by The Wood Oven (outside) 5:30-8:30pm

Saturday 25th Apr 8:30pm

The Whisky Flowers



An utterly brilliant Blues, Rock, Roots, Americana style band, playing a mix of original compositions with excellent covers such as Mountain and Rory Gallagher. See them locally before they become hugely famous!

Every Friday 8:30 – 9:30pm

Bingo Night @ The Eykyn Arms

Cash & Meat Prizes
Last Game is the Snowball

Tuesday 28th Apr

Jazz & Blues Night

Wood Fired Pizzas by The Wood Oven
(outside) 5:30-8:30pm

Tuesday 26th May

Jazz & Blues Night

Wood Fired Pizzas by The Wood Oven
(outside) 5:30-8:30pm

Term Report

At the beginning of the year, the children walked down to St Mary's Church for our annual **Christingle** service.

Earlier in the day, the children made their own Christingles, learning about the meaning behind each part. Our Year 5 & 6 pupils then led the service so confidently alongside Rev. Marion, making it a truly special occasion.



Christingle is an important tradition, helping children to reflect on Jesus as the light of the world, the love of God that surrounds us, and our call to care for others and our community

Thank you to everyone who joined us, it was wonderful to see such a great turnout and to share this special service together. >>> Continued >>>

Our children in Class 1 have been learning about Traditional Fairytales and to celebrate the end of their topic, they were all invited to a special fairytale ball!

The children enjoyed planting magic beans, decorating mirrors, wands and crowns as well as having time to dance!



Some epic costumes all round!

>>> Continued >>>

Our children in Class 2 have been having a fantastic time at Forest school.

To celebrate National Bird Watching week, the children made some fantastic bird feeders.

They have been learning about Morse code and practiced sending messages to each other, fire lighting, whittling, crafting and even created a zip line!



The children didn't let any of the rain dampen their fun as they constructed shelters and dens to protect themselves (and their hot chocolate!).

>>> Continued >>>

Our year 3 & 4 children have been learning about Ancient Egyptians and recently came together with their fellow year groups across the Federation at our school in Yardley Gobion for an action packed day of fun and learning.

They all participated in lots of activities including jewellery making and designing cartouches before imprinting their names in hieroglyphics.



The costumes were fantastic!

>>> Continued >>>

Our Years 5 & 6 have been learning about Ancient Greeks, and to celebrate the end of the topic they enjoyed an exciting Ancient Greek Day!

The children took part in traditional Greek dancing, tasted delicious Greek cuisine, built their own Greek temples, created traditional pottery, and even held their very own Olympic Games.



The children all had a fantastic day of learning and fun!

>>> Continued >>>

Times Table Rockstar's Day!

What an amazing day celebrating our Times Table Rockstars! All of the children looked fantastic, whether they came dressed in brilliant Rockstar outfits or simply brought their best Rockstar attitude to school.



Learning times tables is such a fundamental skill, and today showed just how powerful it can be when learning is fun. We are so proud of everyone's enthusiasm, confidence, and effort!

Recently, our wonderful children have been busy creating some beautiful "**Gayton Love Bug**" rocks

Our Marvels headed out into the village to hide them for others to find!

If you're out and about around the village, why not take a stroll and see if you can spot one?

We are all about spreading a little joy amongst the grey days



So be sure to keep your eyes peeled, let's share the love, one little bug at a time

Bev Tyler-Bedford either via email bursar@gayton-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk or call 01604 858749.

GAYTON AND TIFFIELD COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

**MINIBUS TIMETABLE AND FARES - From 1st APRIL 2024
TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS ONLY**

FARES: BUS PASSES - FREE. ALL OTHER FARES £2 SINGLE.

**BUS TO TOWCESTER IS A SCHEDULED SERVICE
BUS TO NORTHAMPTON IS A REQUEST SERVICE ONLY**



Please note that timetable may be subject to minor delays depending on unforeseen circumstances

TO TOWCESTER - SCHEDULED SERVICE

Stage	Gayton - Start	9:30	Dep	Gayton - Hillcrest Rd, Five Ways, High St, Back Lane
1	Tiffield	9:40		High Street - North and South
	Eastcote	9:50		High Street - Eastcote Arms
	Pattishall	9:55		Pattishall - Church St, Fosters Booth Rd, Leys Rd, Pool Close
	Astcote	10:00		Astcote School, High Street
	Towcester - Arrive	10:05	Arr	Towcester - Tesco, Aldi, B&M - Market Square - Waitrose

TO NORTHAMPTON - BY REQUEST

2	Towcester - Depart	10:10	Dep	Towcester - Waitrose
	Northampton	10:25		Tesco Mereway
	Northampton	10:35		Morrisons
	Northampton - Arrive	10:40	Arr	Northampton - Drapery

RETURN FROM TOWCESTER - SCHEDULED SERVICE

3	Towcester - Depart	11:15	Dep	Towcester - Waitrose - Market Square
	Towcester	11:20		Towcester - Tesco/Aldi/B & M
	Tiffield	11:25		Tiffield, High Street South and North
	Gayton	11:30		Gayton (Hillcrest Rd, Five Ways, High St, Back Lane)
	Eastcote	11:35		High Street, Eastcote Arms
	Astcote	11:40		Astcote - School, High Street
	Pattishall	11:45	Arr	Pattishall - Church St, Fosters Booth Rd, Leys Rd, Pool Close

RETURN FROM NORTHAMPTON - BY REQUEST - COLLECTION TIMES TO BE CONFIRMED BY PASSENGERS

4	Northampton - Depart	Approx 12:05	Dep	Northampton - Drapery
	Northampton	12:10		Northampton - Morrisons
	Northampton	12:15		Northampton - Tesco Mereway
	Gayton	12:25		Gayton (Hillcrest Rd, Five Ways, High St, Back Lane)
	Tiffield	12:30		Tiffield - High Street North and South
	Eastcote	12:40		High Street, Eastcote Arms
	Astcote	12:45		Astcote - School, High Street
	Pattishall - Arrive	12:50	Arr	Pattishall - Church St, Fosters Booth Rd, Leys Rd, Pool Close



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