FAKENHAM PARISH CHURCH

A ROCHA UK SILVER AWARD WINNER 2024 ECO CHURCH ecochurch.arocha.org.uk



February 2026

# THE BEACON

Church and Community Magazine



* Rector's Reflection
* Shrove Tuesday Soup and Pancakes
* What's Lent all about? * The Norfolk glottal stop
* Solar Panels for the Parish Church
* Town Council review * Fun at Fakenham Library
* St Valentine

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# Parish Prayers

**1 Feb** Lancaster Avenue, Cranmer Court. *The healing of society's ills.*

**8 Feb** Nelson Road, Hamilton Court, Hayes Lane, Woodlands, Olive Fisher Court.
*People suffering from addiction, their families, support workers.*

**15 Feb** Alethorpe and Fulmodeston. *Guides, Brownies & Rainbows and uniformed groups.*

**22 Feb** Eckersley Drive, Wigg Road, Arthur Road, Norman Close.
*Local shops, trades businesses and industries.*



# From the Parish Registers

**Funerals**

8.12.25 Victor Creed
7.1.26 Marion Andrews

***Cover pic:***
**The Revd Tracy Jessop**

***"Fakenham Choral Society is asking if we have a couple of angels who can give them a hand at the next concert?"***



**Beacon Deadline**
**Editorial content to Audrey Sharp by 1st of every month**
**Advertising artworks to Dee Jackson by 1st of every month**
**Bundles available for deliverers on the last Thursday of every month**

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# Rector's Reflection – a New Year restoration



As February unfolds and the chill of winter persists, I find myself reflecting on how this time of year brings both challenges and opportunities. The days, though slowly lengthening, can still feel dark and cold, and it is often tempting to retreat indoors, away from the world and its busyness. Yet, in this quieter season, we are also offered a unique space to pause, take stock, and renew ourselves for the months ahead.

St. Valentine's Day will be with us soon. A day that, for many, is filled with hearts, flowers, and expressions of affection. It's easy to dismiss it as a commercial venture, but beneath the surface, it's a wonderful reminder of the power of love in all its forms. Valentine's can prompt us to appreciate the relationships that bring meaning to our lives.

In our faith tradition, love is at the very heart of what we believe. The Bible tells us that "love is patient, love is kind". These words take on special significance against the backdrop of February's grey skies and frosty mornings. To share a kind word, offer a helping hand, or simply smile at someone in the street is to reflect the love that God has for each one of us. In small ways, we can be a light for one another, even when the sun seems reluctant to shine.

At this time of year, you will already have seen the snowdrops appear, their delicate white blooms bravely pushing through the cold earth. These early flowers are a gentle sign that brighter days are on their way, and they never fail to lift our spirits, reminding us that even in the midst of winter, hope and renewal are quietly blossoming all around us.

I encourage you to find some moments of connection. Perhaps drop a note through a neighbour's letterbox, reach out to someone you haven't seen in a while, or volunteer your time for a local project. Or why not join in with a new style service on the 4th Sunday of each month too – Café Church. A chance to join with others to chat around a theme over a coffee and a pastry, sing, pray and take communion or a blessing. It's a great introduction if you're curious or new to church.

February is not just about endurance, but very much about hope. Lent begins this month, inviting us into a period of reflection and renewal. As we prepare for the promise of Spring, can we carry forward the warmth of love and faith, nurturing it in ourselves and in others? I wish you all a peaceful, joyful February. May your days be brightened by kindness, and your hearts lifted by the knowledge that you are part of a caring and compassionate community.

With every blessing,

*The Reverend Tracy Jessop.*





# Churches around Fakenham welcome *you* in February

**Parish Church Upper Market Place, Fakenham NR21 9DY**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sun 1 | 10am Parish Communion |
| Sun 8 | 8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) |
| | 10am All Age Worship |
| | 6.30pm Choral Evensong |
| Sun 15 | 10am Holy Communion |
| Wed 18 | 6pm Ash Wednesday Service with Imposition of ashes |
| Sun 22 | 10am Café Church Communion |

***Other Services*** 9.30am every Thursday Holy Communion, a short, quiet service.
9.45am every Monday (except Bank Holidays) Stepping Stones for pre-school children with a grown-up. (Including children's clothes Swap Shop)

**Salvation Army Oak Street, Fakenham.**
Every Sunday morning at 10.30 am

**Methodist Church Chapel Lane, Sculthorpe. NR21 9QB**
Morning service of worship 11am each Sunday



**Fakenham Baptist Community Church**
Sundays 10:30-12:00 at Fakenham Community Centre. All are welcome.

**St Anthony RC Church Wells Road, Fakenham.**
Sunday Vigil Mass every Saturday at 6.00pm
Sunday Mass at 10.45am and Tues-Fri at 10.00am

**Orthodox Church of the Holy Transfiguration, Scarborough Road, Gt Walsingham**
Every Sunday morning 10.00am Hours 10.30am Liturgy.

**Holy Trinity, Hempton**
Sunday Mass at 9.30am. Wednesday Mass at 9.30am.

*We continue to pray for peace for all the people of Gaza, Israel and throughout the Middle East at this time.*
*We continue to pray for peace for the people of Ukraine and all areas of conflict.*
*"God of peace and justice, we pray for the laying down of weapons in every place of war. We pray for all those who fear tomorrow, that you would hold and protect them".*

# The story of a hymn - "When Morning Gilds the Skies"

It's been estimated, that without the work of skilled poetic translators, we would not have many of our favourite hymns today. This is exemplified by Edward Caswall (1814-1878) who in1858 translated the well-known hymn, "When morning gilds the skies." The original verse, written by an unspecified German writer, appeared in the German hymnbook in the 19th century.

The distinguished English poet and translator Robert Bridges (1844-1930) adapted Caswall's text. The version sung today is therefore the cumulation of four people's work, the fourth being the composer of the music, choirmaster and distinguished musician, Sir Joseph Barnby (1838-1896). He held various posts, including organist of St Andrew's, London, where services achieved a high degree of excellence. He included works written by women composers, a first for the Church of England. He was also conductor of the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, director of music at Eton College, and principal of the Guildhall School of Music.

There is a real interrelationship between text and music in this hymn.
The melody is skilfully written, with the rising notation of the first line, mirroring the sun rising in the morning. The melody ends on a high note with "May Jesus Christ be praised!" These five words form a brief refrain that encapsulates the intent of the entire hymn of praise.

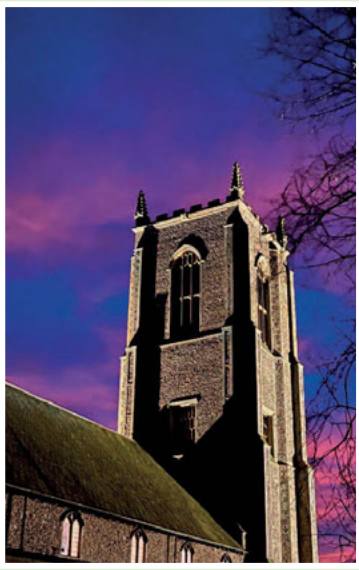
*When morning gilds the skies,*
*My heart awaking cries,*
*May Jesus Christ be praised.*
*Alike at work and prayer*
*To Jesus I repair;*
*May Jesus Christ be praised.*

*Be this, while life is mine,*
*My canticle divine;*
*May Jesus Christ be praised.*
*Be this the eternal song*
*Through all the ages on:*
*May Jesus Christ be praised.*



Sources: Hymnary.Org and Wikipedia

*Kay Hathway*



# Floodlighting Sponsorship - helping our light shine

You can keep our Church beautifully lit by sponsoring one of our floodlights for £15 a week, perhaps to celebrate a special occasion or to remember a loved one.

If you would like to sponsor our floodlighting, please use the form available from church or on our website or call us on 01328 862268 for more information.

# February Walks with Fakenham Ramblers

**Saturday walks start at 10.30am. Wednesday walks begin at 10am.**
Bring a packed lunch on Saturday walks which are generally over 6 miles.
Otherwise, sturdy boots and waterproofs are all that's required.
Please arrive ten minutes or so before the walk start time.
**Please contact the walk leader for up-to-date walk information.**

| Date & Time | Venue | Grid Reference Postcode Distance | Walk Leader(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sat 7th Feb, 10.30am** | **Great Snoring & Little Walsingham**<br>Park/meet at Gt Snoring Social Club<br>£1 donation | OS 251/946347 **NR21 0HL** 9.5miles | **Bridget**<br>07866 034378 |
| **Weds 11th Feb, 10am** | **Bintree**<br>Park/meet at Church car park<br>£1 donation per person | OS 238/016234 **NR20 5NJ** 5.5miles | **Jane & Dave**<br>07790 642185 |
| **Sat 21st Feb, 10.30am** | **West Runton & Sheringham**<br>Park/meet at West Runton Beach cp | OS 251/026437 **NR25 7PG** 9miles | **Bridget**<br>07866 034378 |



# FAKENHAM AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ARCHIVE



With the impending changes in local government that could involve the dissolution of county and district councils this month's archive photograph, donated by the Fakenham Heritage Group, provides an example of someone involved in another change to councils from Fakenham's past.

Pictured is Mrs Margaret Thorsen. After her education in Fakenham at Mrs Tuthill's school and then the Grammar school, in the 70s she was elected to become the first ever woman on the new North Norfolk District Council, a Conservative representing the Fakenham and Hempton ward.

This fitted well with her belief that women should play a much more active part in political life.

If you would like to see many more photographs of Fakenham and the surrounding villages as well slideshows, displays and many Fakenham residents' scrapbooks, just come to one of our meetings in church from 2.00 to 4.00 on the last Tuesday of every month. You can also see them online at fakenhamcommunityarchive.weebly.com

*Howard Young*

# Town Council Viewpoint - Looking back on 2025

Putting the 2025 diary away gave me the idea of reviewing some of the past year's events. Here are a few reflections...

**January** - the highlight of that month was the consecration of ground at Creake Road cemetery with the Bishop of Lynn and our own Rector, Tracy Jessop. The rain poured down and wind howled but the land was blessed and during the year new paths and roadways were constructed for the extension to be brought into use. Managing cemeteries is an important task for the council and our team has been trained to deliver this service efficiently and with sensitivity.

**February** - the first of the meetings run by North Norfolk District Council on Local Government Reform and Devolution. We still do not know how Devolution will affect us.

**March** - the launch of the Fakenham Film Festival, thanks to the efforts of Active Fakenham. It was a great success.

**April** - the appointment of Cadet Sgt. Tyler Barker as the Mayor's Cadet. Tyler has accompanied me to events throughout the year, including laying a wreath on Armistice Day. He has recently been promoted to Colour Sargeant.

**May** - VE80 when the town commemorated the anniversary of the end of war in the Far East. As ever, residents of Fakenham attended to show their respects.

**June** - Future Norfolk launch event at the Royal Norfolk Show with an update on Devolution. Nothing much new to tell.

**July** - The first inkling that Fakenham was to get a new Post Office!

**August** - a quiet month.

**September** - An afternoon at RAF Lakenheath for the Civic Leaders event, networking with our counterparts in other local towns

**October** - The new and very smart Post Office opened on 24th with queues forming immediately and ever since.

**November** - Remembrance Day and Armistice Day events with large crowds in attendance on both days. Thanks to the Fakenham Town Band for the music and all uniformed personnel for their support at the event and to Rev. Tracy Jessop for a lovely service afterwards.

**December** - the ever-popular Christmas Tree Festival, organised for the last 25 years by the parish church, drew lots of people to the town to visit the church to see the trees and to support charities of all sizes.

*Angela Glynn,*
*Chairman of Fakenham Town Council*






# Shining a light:
# Fakenham Parish Church leads the way on solar power

The parish church is making waves as one of the early adopters of solar energy, championing sustainability and innovation at the heart of its community. Once operational, the newly installed solar panels are projected to generate a remarkable 17,500 kWh of clean, renewable energy each year, slashing carbon emissions by an impressive 3,608kg annually. To ensure not a drop of this green power is wasted, surplus energy will be stored efficiently using a cutting-edge Fox ESS 20.7 kWh battery storage system.

All plans for the project were carefully consulted on with the relevant authorities, culminating in planning approval at the end of 2025. This pioneering initiative not only aligns with our commitment to environmental stewardship but also underpins the practical needs of the church by helping to offset the higher costs of full electric heating. With this bold move, we hope to inspire the wider community and pave the way towards achieving Gold Eco Church status, advancing from our current Silver.

Central to our motivation is the Church of England's "Fifth Mark of Mission": to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. By embracing advanced technology and sustainable solutions, we are putting faith into action - leading by example and sparking positive change for both people and planet. Our vision is to show that caring for the environment is not just an abstract ideal but a practical, everyday reality rooted in our faith.

In addition, any excess green energy generated will be sent back to the grid. This means that if you have a green energy tariff from your supplier, there's every chance the electricity lighting up your home might have come straight from our church roof - a small but meaningful connection between our mission and the wider community.

Our total fundraising goal is £40,000 and thanks to your support, we have already raised £13,000. This includes £1,800 from the Prize Draw during the Tree Festival, several generous donations totalling £6,000, and a grant of £5,200 from The Benefact Trust. We still need to raise £27,000 to fully cover the costs, so every contribution brings us closer to our goal and helps to keep our development fund topped up for future projects. We receive no external funding, everything we are able to do is funded by our church family.

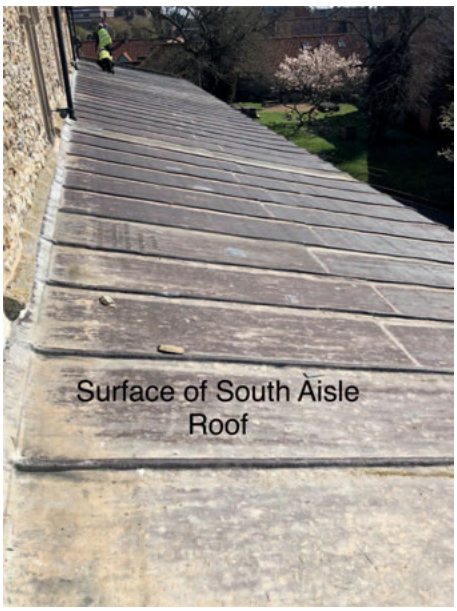


If you would like to donate, please visit our website www.fakenhamparishchurch.org.uk and click on the 'donate' button.

The solar installation is expected to be fully operational before the end of February.

*The Reverend Tracy Jessop*



# Lent: Making Room for What Matters

Lent arrives quietly each year, marked by ash and scripture, prayer and promise. It is not a loud season, or a comfortable one, but it is a gift: a stretch of time set aside to prepare our hearts for Easter by honestly reflecting on how we live.

Modern life rarely encourages reflection. We live amid abundance; of food, entertainment, information, noise, opinions, and possessions. Many of these things are good in themselves, yet their sheer excess can leave us distracted, tired, and spiritually unfocused. Lent invites us to pause and ask gentle but important questions: What fills my days? What shapes my desires? What might be crowding out space for God?

Traditionally, Lent has been associated with "giving something up." There is wisdom in this practice, not as an exercise in self-denial for its own sake, but as a way of noticing our attachments. When we step back from something familiar whether it is constant scrolling, habitual spending, rich food, or the need to stay endlessly busy, we become more aware of how easily excess can take hold. Fasting, in its many forms, helps us recognise our dependence on God rather than on consumption or comfort.




Yet Lent is not only about subtraction. It is also a season of intention, a time to take something up that leads us toward growth and grace. This might be setting aside a few minutes each day for prayer or scripture, reconnecting with silence, or practising gratitude. It might mean acts of generosity, volunteering time, or reaching out to someone who is lonely. Small, faithful commitments can reshape us more deeply than grand resolutions.

Taking something ***up*** during Lent is not about self-improvement alone. It is about becoming more attentive; to God, to one another, and to the needs of the world around us. As we loosen our grip on excess, we create room for compassion, patience, and hope to take root. In a culture that prizes speed and accumulation, choosing slowness and care can be a quiet act of faith.

Lent reminds us that preparation is itself holy work. We do not rush to Easter joy without walking the road that leads there. By reflecting honestly on our habits and choosing practices that draw us closer to God, we allow this season to shape us gently but truly.

May this Lent be a time when we make space - letting go of what weighs us down, and taking up what helps us love more deeply, live more simply, and walk more faithfully with Christ.

*The Reverend Tracy Jessop*



# 25th Christmas Tree Festival

Many thanks to all who supported this wonderful event in any way – sponsors, charities and volunteers.

The combined charities' total was **£17,032**
and the church raised, before expenses, heating etc, **£18,552**.

This is amazing in these difficult times, but only part of the story. We welcomed thousands of people, developed contacts and made a lot of new friends.

**THANK YOU!**

From the CTF team: *Anne, Alison, Lily, Jane, Elaine and Roger*








On February 14th we celebrate one aspect of love, romantic love, by exchanging valentine gifts and cards. It's also a time of expectation. Receiving either a signed or unsigned card, may lead to unintended situations. Novelists have written about such situations, for example, Thomas Hardy's 'Far from the Madding Crowd.'

With the advent of mobile phones, and meeting partners online, has the tradition become outdated? From the card industry, florists and supermarkets, it would appear not. So where does this tradition originate?

Saint Valentine was a 3rd-century Roman saint, commemorated in Western Christianity on February 14. He was either a priest or a bishop in the time of the Roman Empire, who defied the Roman authorities by secretly marrying persecuted Christians, and was martyred on February 14. One source said he had literally 'died for love'. His death is recorded as being c.270 AD and he was made a saint by Pope Gelasius in 496 AD. Apparently, he left messages for the couples he married signed 'from your Valentine'. So, although it was an innocent message, it both cost him his life, and started a tradition.

Love of all kinds has been taken up by poets of every age and there are thousands of examples. On the world stage, love for each other as human beings, is in short supply. So, although many choose to ignore this day, it has provided an opportunity for the celebration of love. St Valentine clearly acted both in ministry and out of love.

*Kay Hathway*



**THESE I CAN PROMISE**

I cannot promise you a life of sunshine;
I cannot promise riches, wealth, or gold;
I cannot promise you an easy pathway
That leads away from change or growing old.
But I can promise all my heart's devotion;
A smile to chase away your tears of sorrow;
A love that's ever true and ever growing;
A hand to hold in yours through each tomorrow.

*Mark Twain 1835 - 1910*

# Bee Squared …

… is a climate and bio-diversity initiative and our chance to give something back to nature after all it gives us. Bees and other pollinating insects have declined dramatically over the last 50 years, but small actions can make a big difference. By sowing just one square metre of your garden — or even a single pot — with wildflowers, you can help provide vital food and habitat for pollinators.

In February and March residents are invited to take part by claiming a free packet of wildflower seeds, enough for a square metre, and joining the growing Bee Squared movement. Together, we can help our gardens buzz with life again.

Free seeds can be collected while stocks last from Fakenham Town Council, Fakenham Parish Church & Fakenham Library from 14th February until 31st March 2026.

*Lesley Meanley, Town Clerk.*

# Christ Church, Fulmodeston

We have an interesting – you could call it C/catholic – range of significant days to mark this month. The 14th is of course St Valentine's Day:

St. Valentine is the Patron Saint of affianced or engaged couples, beekeepers, epilepsy, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travellers, and young people: he has a lot on his plate. He is represented in pictures with birds and roses and February 14th is traditionally the date of his martyrdom in Rome in the mid-to-late third century. On this day considerable quantities of chocolate are likely to be given, received and consumed.

Hot on its heels comes Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of Lent, when many people pledge to deny themselves treats such as … chocolate.

Both seem to mark an end to what for many is a period of winter lethargy: the birds and bees begin to go about their business and we give some serious thought to what Lent, with its promise of resurrection and revival, means to us in 2026.

## February Services

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sunday Feb 1st | 4.00 pm | Evening Prayer |
| Sunday Feb 8th | 11.00 am | Holy Communion (BCP) |
| Sunday Feb 15th | 10.00 am | Parish Communion service at Fakenham |
| Wednesday 18th | 4.00 pm | Ash Wednesday service with Imposition of Ashes. |
| Sunday Feb 22nd | 4.00 pm | Evening Prayer |

*Carolyn Thomas-Coxhead*



# Old Fakenhamian

In 1973 I left Fakenham for Exeter University to begin a degree in French and Spanish.

I had loved languages when I was at Fakenham Grammar School where I was fortunate enough to learn Latin, French and Spanish and even Russian during the sixth form taught by the lovely late Donald Jones who was also my Latin teacher. You are no doubt now asking yourself where all this reminiscence is leading. Well, I promised a couple of months back to write about the glottal stop and the Norfolk accent. It is the sound which is made when the middle or last T of a word is rather lost and is represented in writing by an inverted comma. So, butter becomes bu'er. Imagine my pleasure when I realised that I had been using the glottal stop for years before I was taught that it was more correct to pronounce the T properly, as the glottal stop is an intrinsic part of our Norfolk accent.

As a child just about everyone I knew spoke with a Norfolk accent (except of course Miss Catlin and Miss Codling who were the teachers at Sculthorpe Primary School). I like to think I am bilingual and I can drop back into my childhood accent at a drop of a hat. My son too is 'bilingual' as he spent many happy hours in my father's company as he grew up. So, when he went to Little Snoring Primary School he could understand very well when a fellow student asked him ' heya go' a pu'er Pe'er? (have you got a computer, Peter?)

It is a sad truth that those who do not know better consider those who speak with a rural accent are somehow not so bright as those who speak with an urban accent or a Welsh or Scottish accent. I have to admit that when we were visited at school by a former pupil who was studying at Cambridge University, I was astonished that he still spoke with a very strong Norfolk accent. Good for him I now say!

Remember the Singing Postman with his wonderful songs in the Norfolk dialect, notably Molly Wimbley who smoked like a 'chimbley' who constantly asked her boyfriend: 'heya go' a light, boy?'.

*Gilly Foortse*

## Fun, Games and toasty toes at Fakenham Library!

*Regular events at Fakenham Library*
*for further information about these events, or to book where necessary, please pop into the library during staffed time, or call 01328 862715*

### Mondays

Free Legal Advice NCLS - booking essential - 2nd Monday in month 10am
Family History help - booking essential - 1st Monday in month 10.30am
Audio Book Club - drop in - 3rd Monday in month 10.30am
Computer help - booking essential - Weekly, from 10.30am
Just a Cuppa - drop in - Weekly 11.30am - 12.30pm
Games group for Adults - drop in - Weekly, 1pm
After school crafts - drop in - Weekly, term time 3.30pm

### Tuesdays

Craft and Chat - drop in - 4th Tuesday in month, 10.30am
Reading group - drop in - Check dates with staff, 10.30am
Creative Writing - booking essential - 3rd Tuesday in month, 10am
Watercolour painting - drop in (but spaces limited) - 2nd Tuesday in month, 1pm
Lego Club - drop in - Weekly, 3.30pm (2pm school holidays)

### Thursdays

Bounce and Rhyme / Stay, Play and Chat - drop in - Weekly, 2pm

### Saturdays

Family Fun session, games, Lego etc - drop in - Weekly 10am



## Event: Toasty Toes

**Fakenham Library, Thursday 26th February 10,30am – 12.30pm**
Advice and information for older people about keeping warm and well this winter
Plus, collect a brand new pair of slippers to help reduce trips and falls



# Community Noticeboard

## Fakenham Film Society

**Witness for the prosecution (1957)**
**Thurs 12 Feb**

**The Ballad of Wallis Island (2025)**
**Thurs 12 Mar**

**My Beautiful Laundrette (1985)**
**Thurs 9 Apr**

***All screened at 7.30pm***
***at Central Cinema, Fakenham***

## ROSEMARY ROOMS
## Dementia Support Group

**The Gallow, Fakenham Racecourse**
Every Monday 10.30 – 12.30 (except Christmas Day)

We offer a chance to socialise for people with memory problems and those who are helping them. There are refreshments, games, jigsaws and conversations.

Contact Judith 01328 864061
or Pam 01328 829735 if you have queries.




## The 2nd Battalion, The Royal Norfolk Regiment at Kohima, 1944



A talk by Hazel Mindham
**Swanton Novers Village Hall, NR24 2RB**
**Saturday 21 February at 2pm**
£5 per person, hot drinks + raffle - no need to book.

Remembering Swanton Novers' own Lance Corporal Norman Phillipo.
Social history with some photos of my battlefield tour in 2025.

Proceeds to The Kohima Museum, Imphal Barracks, York, YO10 4HD, www.kohimamuseum.co.uk
Charity No: GB-CHC-1177539

**Queries: Hazel Mindham, 01263 862020**
**hazelmindhamresearch@gmail.com**

## Can you deliver The Beacon?

Here are some examples where we need your help-
You don't have to live there!
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Thank you!

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