

# PARISH PUMP

No 386 [parish.pump@gmail.com](mailto:parish.pump@gmail.com)

July 2025

TOP CAMBRIDGE CHOIR RETURNS TO DENSTON on July 5th



Everyone in **Denston Church** last September for the Flower Festival's Evensong will remember the choir and the glorious singing. It was decided on the spot that they should be invited back to give us a summer concert. The choir was the **Cambridge Renaissance Voices**, led by acclaimed choir director **Rupert Preston Bell**. On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July they will return to Denston with a programme taken from the **Song of Songs**, King Solomon's poetic meditation on love and desire. Join us to bask in the most sensual language in the Bible, set to the sublime music of four

**St Nicholas' Church, Denston**  
6.30pm on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## *Cambridge Renaissance Voices*

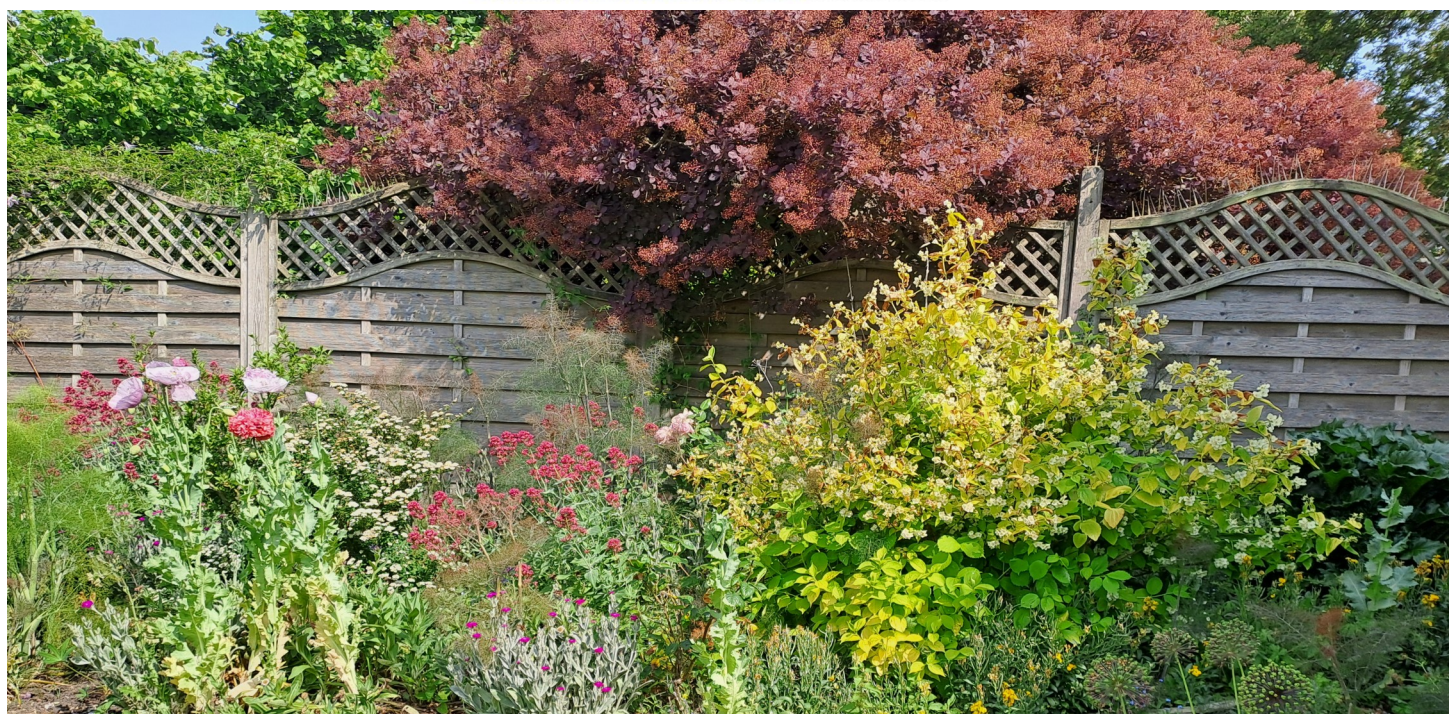
*'Arise, My Love'*

*Music of the Spanish Renaissance*  
*From the Song of Songs and for the Virgin Mary*



Tickets £20, to include a glass of wine and canapés  
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leading Spanish composers and sung by one of the country's finest choirs in one of Suffolk's most historic and beautiful churches. It promises to be a very special evening indeed. As always, the event will feature Denston's famous hospitality! Wine and canapés will be served after the hour-long concert. And, weather permitting, concertgoers will have the opportunity to explore **Rosemary Macaire's** beautiful garden across the road from the church, designed for her by leading garden designer **Xa Tollemache**. **Tickets cost £20 from Camilla Hamilton, 01440 820761** All proceeds are for the fabric of St Nicholas' Church, Denston.



We sincerely thank St Nicholas Church Denston for kindly sponsoring the colour pages this month which we think makes the Parish Pump special

## Our first centenarian for a long time Mrs Doreen Chapman

Mum celebrated her first triple digit birthday on 30th May, here she is with her own tiara & a card from the King & Queen!



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## St Nicholas Hospice Care Volunteering

**Support your local Hospice by volunteering at an event.**

Could you spare a few hours to help St Nicholas Hospice Care? Volunteering at one of our events is a simple, flexible way to give back and make a real difference to those in our community who rely on the Hospice's care. Whether it's helping for an hour

or a whole day, whatever time you can give is warmly welcomed.

**Key events coming up include:**  
[The Sunset Walk](#)  
[Hidden Gardens of Bury](#)  
[St Nicholas Hospice Care 10K Run](#)

To volunteer, email [Supportercare@stnh.org.uk](mailto:Supportercare@stnh.org.uk). We'd love to hear from you.



## SORRY!

Last month a number of errors and omissions occurred in the magazine. The reason for this was that my checking process was flawed and errors and omissions slipped through. I truly apologise to those people who were directly affected. My only method to make up for the omissions is to put the missing articles in the July issue and this has been done. Kind regards Peter

**Rector's Ramblings – July 2025 (Anything but Ordinary)**



Dear Friends,  
As July 2025 dawns, the sun hangs high in the sky, and our gardens, parks, and even the roadside verges are bursting with life. It's a truly glorious time of year, and for us in the Church, it marks a significant period within our liturgical calendar: Ordinary Time.

For some, "Ordinary Time" might sound, well, a little... ordinary. It's not Advent with its hopeful anticipation, nor Christmas with its joyous celebration. It's not the solemn reflection of Lent, nor the triumphant glory of Easter. Yet, within its very "ordinariness" lies a profound beauty and a vital spiritual truth. This is the longest season of the Church year, stretching from Pentecost until Advent, and it is precisely in this extended period that we are called to growth. Think of our gardens. They don't suddenly bloom overnight in a magnificent explosion. They require consistent care, day after day, through the seemingly mundane tasks of

watering, weeding, and nurturing. It's in these ordinary moments that the roots deepen, the stems strengthen, and the buds slowly, steadily, begin to form. And then, almost imperceptibly, the vibrant colours and fragrances emerge. Spiritually, Ordinary Time is much the same. It's a season for deepening our roots in faith, for strengthening our relationship with God through daily prayer, reflection, and acts of loving kindness. It's not about grand, dramatic pronouncements, but about the quiet, consistent work of discipleship. It's about integrating our faith into the fabric of our everyday lives – in our interactions with family and friends, in our work, in our leisure.

This July, as the Summer days stretch out before us, let us embrace this opportunity for growth. Perhaps it's a chance to spend a few extra minutes each day in quiet prayer, simply listening for God's voice amidst the summer hum. Or maybe it's an invitation to pick up that spiritual book you've been meaning to read, allowing its wisdom to nourish your soul. For others, it might be about consciously

seeking out opportunities to serve others in our community, offering a helping hand or a listening ear. The readings we hear during Ordinary Time often focus on the teachings of Jesus, his parables, and his ministry. These are not just stories from a distant past; they are living words that invite us to reflect on how we are living our lives now. Are we truly seeking to follow Christ's example in all that we do? Are we allowing his love to transform us, day by day, into more compassionate, more joyful, more faithful individuals?

This "ordinary" season is far from mundane. It is a sacred time for spiritual development, a period where, like the natural world around us, we are called to flourish. So, as you enjoy the (hopefully) warmth of July, the longer evenings, and the beauty of creation, take a moment to consider how you might cultivate your own spiritual garden. May this July be a truly blessed and fruitful season of growth for each and every one of us. With every blessing,  
**Mark The Revd Mark Woodrow (Rector)**



**DO YOU LIVE NEAR STRADISHALL CHURCH OR WALK YOUR DOG NEARBY??**

We are still looking for people who are able/willing to join our **key holder rota**. We endeavour to keep this peaceful historic building open all year round, during daylight hours. Our rota is very flexible, and well-behaved dogs are always welcome in the church – so if you live nearby, or if you regularly pass the church as a dog walker, and feel you could help, please email [parish.pump@gmail.com](mailto:parish.pump@gmail.com) or ring 07708899579. Thank you.



**Parish Pump  
COPY DEADLINE**  
All contributors & advertisers to submit copy no later than the 21st of the month -  
**PREFERABLY**  
**BY THE 18th PLEASE!**  
Please note the change

**Monthly rainfall inches 2024/2025**

2025	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nick Burton- Stradishall	55	31.5	11	22	20.5							
Tina Lee- Stradishall	45	32	9	25	19							
Sam Slater- Stansfield	46	30	5	23	21							
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	64	35	13	25	26							
Jay Gridley-Hundon	59	26	11	21	26							
Victoria Pakenham -Fenstead End	73	33	8	21	30							
Elaine Plumpton - Great Saxham	63	42	6	23	17							

2024	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nick Burton- Stradishall	55	115	45	64	96	15	94	14	99	58	47	42.5
Tina Lee- Stradishall	57	119	47	87	91	19	93	16	98	68	31	38
Sam Slater- Stansfield	51	129	55	60	114	19	85	15	76	55	33	63
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	59	121	59	68	99	23	88	16	80	73	42	51
Jay Gridley-Hundon	71	128	57	74	104	21	93	16	108	71	39	39
Victoria Pakenham -Fenstead End	53	132	59	62	106	21	90	16.5	88	38	39	79
Elaine Plumpton Great Saxham	54	129	66	69	78	23	90	16	99.6	52	43	53

# SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE IN REDE



Plans are well in hand for the first ever fully staged play at the **Green Arena at Pykards Hall**. The set has arrived, some of which was made locally by **Parish Engineering in Cockfield**, and the costumes - some 120 of them - have been transported from **London** in heavy laundry bags. With a cast and crew of over 30 it promises to be a very special event. **See separate ad on page 7 for how to get your tickets.** These photos from the recent London production show: firstly the whole cast; then Queen Elizabeth arriving for a theatre performance and finally Will and Viola sharing an intimate moment .



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## June Farming by Portia Brown

With lambing coming to an end and all our sheep sheared for this year we are looking forward to harvest. We have begun cutting and wrapping the haylage for winter feed for the cattle and sheep. Hay crop will be next. The crops are looking well, our heavy clay land has benefited us as it has held the moisture with the minimal rain we have had. We have grown barley, wheat, oats and linseed which will be harvested in this order too. Warren has been busy servicing the combine over the last week making

sure it's all tickety-boo for the upcoming season.

We have some exciting news: we have had our first pigs arrive this week, and they are going to be outdoor raised in woodland.

We have picked the **Berkshire pig breed**, a rare, black-haired pig breed with white points (feet, snouts, and tail tips) and is considered a heritage breed. They are known for their excellent meat quality, with Berkshire pork often praised for its rich, juicy, and flavourful characteristics often

compared to **Wagyu** beef. The breed is also known for being hardy and adaptable, making them suitable for outdoor systems. They are a medium sized pig with a very docile and placid temperament making them relatively easy to manage; they are often known as a **lady's pig**. The Berkshire breed originated in England and is one of the oldest recorded pig breeds in the UK. Our cattle are happily grazing the water meadows along the river Stour.



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Half page	£275	£150	£ 35
BACK PAGE			
	Price for the period		Price per issue
	12 months	6 months	individual advert
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Quarter page	£255	£ 140	£ 30
Half page	£ 420	£ 230	£ 45



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**LUNCH MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH WITH A GUEST SPEAKER.**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT OUR CLUB SECRETARY  
TELEPHONE: 07824 309738**

## SAVE THE DATE

**WICKHAMBROOK SUMMER FETE AND FLOWER  
SHOW  
SATURDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025  
FROM 1PM – 5PM**

**CAR SHOW, DOG SHOW, INFLATABLES, VARIOUS  
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## WICKHAMBROOK SUMMER FETE COMMITTEE

After a very successful Summer Fete last year, with a substantial amount of money raised, the Wickhambrook Summer Fete Committee **are in a position to offer funding** to the village organisations who may require funding for any new projects, new equipment etc.

For more information or apply for funding please contact **Maggie Elers** on  
email: [maggielers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maggielers@hotmail.co.uk) Telephone: 01440 820559

## Country Cooking with Louise Mackrill



*It's picnic time of year. I love picnics but sometimes we want a change from sandwiches, something portable & tasty, all wrapped up ready for transporting. A pie of course! Tasty filling wrapped up in buttery pastry, simply gorgeous.*

*Here is my favourite picnic pie which is from the National Trust. It looks like a lot of work but is really very simple.*

*And for the sweet picnic pack up these gooey chocolate brownies and devour with tubs of fresh summer fruit.*

### Classic Picnic Pie

500g plain flour



¼ tsp salt  
125g lard, chilled & diced  
125g unsalted butter. Chilled and diced  
3 eggs beaten, plus 1 to glaze the pie

#### Filling

30g unsalted butter  
250g onions finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
200g fresh white or wholemeal breadcrumbs  
2 tbs chopped fresh sage  
1 egg beaten  
1 kg pork sausage meat  
2 tbs chopped fresh thyme  
2 skinless chicken breast fillets (350g) sliced  
2 tart eating apples cored but not

peeled  
225g onion chutney or relish  
Salt & pepper

Make up the shortcrust pastry in a processor OR combine by hand. Knead to bring it together, cut off one third for the lid then shape both portions into thick discs, wrap & chill well.

To make the sage and onion base melt onions in the butter & cook until soft, add garlic for 1 minute, remove from heat, add breadcrumbs, half the chopped sage, a beaten egg & seasoning. In another bowl combine sausage meat with remaining sage & 1 tsp of thyme, divide into 2 portions. Preheat oven to 170°C fan. To assemble pie: roll the larger disc out to a circle large enough to line the base & sides of a greased 23cm spring clip tin. Let the excess hang over the sides. Spread the breadcrumb mixture over the base, cover with one portion of sausage meat, cover with slices of apple and then the sliced chicken on top of that, spread the chutney over & finish with the second



portion of sausage meat. Roll the remaining pastry to slightly larger than the top of the tin. Brush the edges of the pastry case with beaten egg, put the lid disc on top,

press the edges together, trim off overhanging pastry, crimp the edges with a fork or fingers & glaze. Make a steam hole in 1 top, place on a heated baking tray and bake for 15 mins. Reduce oven temp to 140°C fan & bake for another 1 ½ hrs until pastry is golden brown. Leave to cool for 15 mins then run a round bladed knife around the inside edge to loosen but take care as it will be fragile, so then leave until completely cold before unmoulding. Wrap & chill overnight, before slicing. Take along a tub of fresh salad or even just some cherry tomatoes on the vine.

### Gooey chocolate brownies

Brownies are simply perfect for a picnic, sweet & gooey, especially if taken along with a tub of strawberries or raspberries. This recipe is gluten free, super-gooey and these are possibly the best brownies you will ever taste! Cuts into 15 squares  
200g dark chocolate broken into chunks  
100g milk chocolate broken into chunks  
250g salted butter  
400g light soft brown sugar

4 large eggs  
140g gluten free plain flour  
50g cocoa powder

Heat the oven to 160°C fan. Line a 20 x 30cm baking tin with baking parchment. Melt the chocolate, butter, sugar in a pan, remove from heat, stir the eggs, one by one, into the chocolate, sieve over the flour & cocoa, stir in. Pour into the tin & bake 30 mins or maybe a bit more for a firmer texture. Cool completely before slicing into squares, store in an airtight container or pack & freeze.

PS Sometimes I use all dark chocolate and for sheer obscene gooiness I add a tablespoon of golden syrup to the mixture!  
**Louise Mackrill**

## LIVE THEATRE AT THE GREEN ARENA

PYKARDS HALL, REDE

Saturday 19th July at 7.30pm

Sunday 20th July at 3pm

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THE PLAY

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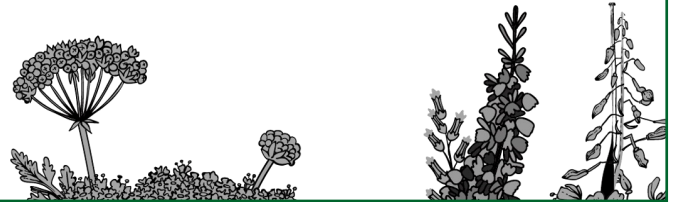
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## What about the future of the Parish Pump?

As you know I had a bit of an accident recently which amongst other things focused my mind on what if the outcome had been different.

This is not directly a plea for a new editor but an attempt to give our readers {you!} a taste of what it's like;

1. Basically all you have to do is take all the articles that you receive and combine them with the adverts and make an good publishable newspaper
2. It is both enjoyable and satisfying. It is like a fascinating crossword puzzle with an attractive end result.
3. All the contributors become your friends which is wonderful.
4. As you know PP appears to be popular and lots of readers tell you that, so you get a new lot of friends from them.
5. Finally the magazine has been running for nearly 20 years so it is almost a West Suffolk tradition—So we can't let it die can we?

If anyone wishes to share the process with me you will be very welcome. So please give me a ring on 07711689171 or email

<[parish.pump@gmail.com](mailto:parish.pump@gmail.com)>

Kind regards Peter

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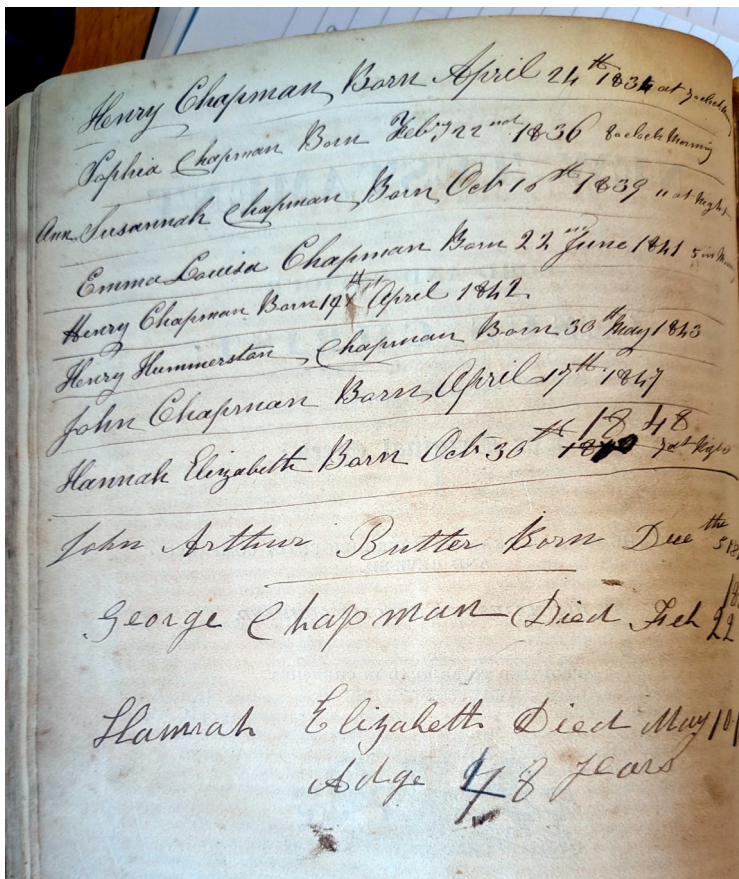
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## Can you help? Robert Helliwell and I have supplied Dorothy with some information



I have been contacted by someone in Salisbury who found a family bible in the charity shop where she works. She has done some research to try to find any family members who might like to have the bible but with no success. I am hoping that someone local might be able to help.

**George Chapman** was born in Stradishall in 1810 and married **Susan Marrow**. They had four daughters and four sons and an adopted son, **Jonathan Butter** who died at sea aged 30. George was a shoemaker and lived at Attleton Green and he died in 1884. The four daughters all married. Three of them moved away but **Emma** married **Samuel Bowyer** who was a gardener at Denston Hall.

If you know of any surviving members of the family, please contact me.

**Dorothy Anderson, History Recorder**  
07508 367475 [dorothy@btopenworld.com](mailto:dorothy@btopenworld.com)

## Wickhambrook Flower Show

12<sup>th</sup> July Memorial Social Centre Hall open  
from 14.00



If you would like to enter you can find our  
schedule in Wickhambrook shop or by scanning  
QR code.



Entry date 9<sup>th</sup> of July in  
WI Hall between  
6.30pm and 8.30pm

For more details contact Polly on  
pollypituch@aol.com or 07588811069

## Services at Hawkedon St Mary in July



Dates for services at Hawkedon St Mary's in July:  
Sunday, 13 July at 9am. BCP Holy Communion  
**and very importantly Sunday, 27 July at 11am.** - The  
Bishop will be leading our service of Holy Communion.  
All would be very welcome and refreshments will be  
served afterwards.

Many thanks and best wishes, Heather

[htapr@dircon.co.uk](mailto:htapr@dircon.co.uk)

01284 789 250/07774 275656

**Heather Phillips.** 01284 789 250 or 07774 275656

[htapr@dircon.co.uk](mailto:htapr@dircon.co.uk)

**MINDFULNESS COURSES** see last month's edition  
of Parish Pump

Our **Mind Cog Programme** is designed for older adults  
with Mild Cognitive Diagnosis to improve memory and  
overall brain health. MCI is recognised as a risk factor  
for dementia and from a psychological point of view is a  
'window of opportunity' to improve cognitive  
functioning. Despite this, access to support and  
information for MCI patients and their families is very  
limited. Our Mind Cog Programme has been developed  
by Clinical Psychologists to address this and is based on  
a combination of current research evidence and best  
practice guidelines.

We also have the **Mindfulness for Older Adults who  
Care**, a programme tailored to the needs of carers to  
support mental health, relaxation, wellbeing and foster  
community. This programme is for people who care for  
a friend or family member or have done previously. We  
know that current or previous caregiving can deplete the  
people who provide it, and this course has been designed  
to support older adults, wherever they are in the  
caregiving journey.

All courses are 6 weeks long, are accessed online and  
are completely free of charge Our **Mind Cog**

**Programme** is designed for older adults with Mild  
Cognitive Diagnosis to improve memory and overall  
brain health. MCI is recognised as a risk factor for  
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## Memories are Golden

Open

Monday - Thursday 09.30 - 2pm

The Old Parkway School, Unity Offices, Park Road,  
Haverhill, CB9 7YD

Memories are Golden specialises in offering day care services to  
individuals living with dementia and suffering from heart  
conditions, diabetes, and other long-term physical challenges.

We also support people in their journey towards combating  
loneliness and isolation from families, friends, and their  
community.

Our Community Hub provides a safe space to socialise and build  
friendships, as well as providing meaningful activities,  
entertainment, and social events, to improve well-being. We also  
provide a 2 course nutritious meal every day.

£55 per day

We are accredited with Suffolk County Council  
who can commission service users to attend the  
hub if they meet criteria

We offer a taster day FOC - If you would like to book a  
visit please call Kelly on 07538920731  
Email: [enquiries@memoriesaregolden.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@memoriesaregolden.co.uk)  
Website: [www.memoriesaregolden.co.uk](http://www.memoriesaregolden.co.uk)

## The garden Club: Auriculas, A History of this Popular Little Plant. Speaker Luci Skinner.

Our very experienced speaker, **Luci Skinner**, showed her love and in-depth knowledge of this amazing little plant. Primula Auricular, known as “Little

several leaves, single stem (scape) supporting several flowers ( the trush)). Some flowers and leaves have a white powder, secreted by hairs, called farin

seventeenth century and breeding it became very competitive. The Victorians displayed collections of auriculas on special bookcases and “theatres”, turning them frequently so the stem remained upright. Interest faded during WW1. However recently, during Covid, there was a big demand, as they are small and can be grown in window boxes and also suited to grow in small terracotta pots and rock gardens. They need protecting from extremes of hot and cold and do well in east facing positions. In August they can be divided into separate plants, with each having a carrot shaped root and rosette of leaves.



Bear’s Ears”, Auricular Ursi, has **500 species** mostly from the Northern Hemisphere found among mountains and riverbanks. We know the Cowslip, documented in Anglo Saxon times and Oxlip, which came from Denmark, also Primroses and Polyanthus. Auriculars are also Primulas. They have a carrot -like root , a rosette of

(Latin for flour). There are 5,600 species, all bred from three plants originating from mountainous areas. Their original, true colour is yellow, but over 400 years growers have developed many hybrids, including a variety of colours. In the sixteenth century, it was used as a cure for vertigo, because it grew in mountainous areas! Flemish Weavers brought it to this country in the

**Our next event was the Ashfield Green Farm Walk** on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June. By kind invitation of the Draycott family, the one-mile walk left at 6pm from the farmyard led by their son Roger, who showed us the crops, woodland and conservation work, followed by Wine and Cheese in their cart lodge. Members were invited to bring friends and family. Those not wanting to walk were invited to arrive about 7pm for chat and refreshments. An excellent and informative evening!

**Ruth**

**Hi everyone, every month I nearly always need a few photos to fill final white spaces. So if you have any you would like to share please send them to [parish.pump@gmail.com](mailto:parish.pump@gmail.com) Thanks Peter.**

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Helen and Ellie

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- Thursday - Coggeshall Market Hill 7-12pm**
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- **Lavenham 11-1pm**
- **Depden 2-4pm**

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## WILLIAM PROCTOR

### A SCANDALOUS MINISTER

Further to Professor Helen Stringer's article in last month's Parish Pump about the life of Rachel Spreght I thought it might be appropriate to say a bit more about her husband, William Proctor, who became rector of Stradishall in 1631. A previous article did appear in the Pump many years ago but there is no harm in retelling it.

During the 1640's, at the time of the Civil Wars, various attempts were made to reform the clergy, and accusations were made against various ministers. These mainly fell into 3 categories.

- those with Royalist sympathies, or who spoke against Parliament.
- specifically religious failings.
- those whose morals fell short of the expected standard.

In due course the Suffolk Committee for Scandalous Ministers was set up by Parliament and parishioners could report their incumbent to the Committee, who would hear the charges, and, if proved, would order his ejection from his living. Amongst others, William Proctor was in 1644 brought before the Committee and charged with at least 35 different offences. He was in due course ejected from the living of Stradishall, then worth about £100 per annum, and together with his wife and three children, was evicted from his home. His alleged offences included: administering the sacrament at the altar rail when he should not have done so;

failing to baptise or christen children when asked, which on at least one occasion resulted in the child dying unbaptised; excommunicating a poor man who had to work away in Newmarket for two years and was unable to come to Church. There were many offences involving drink. Apparently, he gave a soldier so much to drink he became drunk. Proctor was described as being so drunk himself that he could barely sit on a horse! One person described him as an alehouse haunter!

He was accused of swearing, of allowing cards to be played in his house night after night and of telling bawdy tales. Cutting his hedge on the Sabbath and getting his servant to cut it on fast days also got him reported to the Committee as well as allowing his maidservant to bake upon a fast day.

The reports of the Committee gives the names of the parishioners who reported Proctor, there are at least 20 different names, but interestingly around one third came from a couple called Joshua and Susan Paske, (wonder what William Proctor had done to upset them!) Also a few reports came from William Bowyer who was Lord of the Manor. William Proctor is also connected with the Stradishall Church Pewter. This consists of two Charles I flacons, two bossed dishes and one plate. Proctor's name is engraved on these together with the name of the donor, Richard Wigges, Gent. Quite why Richard Wigges donated them to Stradishall is not clear, the only

probable link is that his wife, Sarah Spreght was the sister of William Proctor's wife, Rachel Spreght. The pewter has been extensively researched by the Pewter Society and is currently lodged for safekeeping in the Cathedral Treasury.

**Robert Helliwell**

### Photos from Wickhambrook WI VE Day Event

**These are photos that I omitted from last month's issue SORRY!!!**



Louise Mackrill writes:  
My mum, Sara Dennis  
of Stansfield,  
celebrated her 93rd  
birthday on 7th June.  
**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
MUM !!**



Very happy to see the  
Humming Bird Hawk  
Moth return to my  
garden yesterday after  
a two year absence.  
David Ace



# Wickhambrook WI June Meeting - Reflexology

For our June meeting we welcomed **Kerri Plummer** who came to talk to us about Reflexology. Kerri has been a



reflexologist for 7 years after finding a way to work from home with three

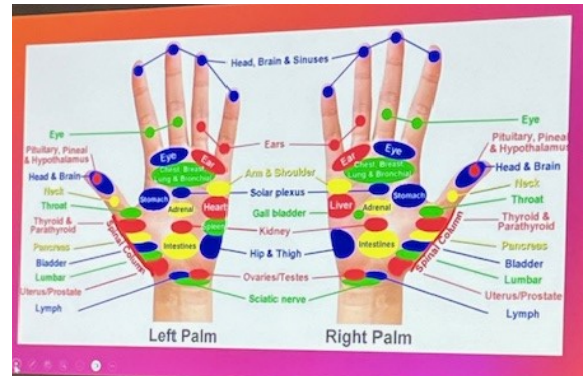
children. She now works from a “cabin” in the back garden of her home in Kedington. Kerri describes this as a very private and safe space where clients can relax and unwind. She has studied both women’s and men’s health, facial reflexology, foot and hand reading, together with living with cancer and other life limiting conditions. Reflexology is never promoted as a cure but as a support to emotional well-being. Stress is a major cause of problems in the body and reflexology will help to relax you. It is a holistic, complementary and completely natural therapy. Points on the feet, face and hands correspond with areas on the body.

The oldest documentation for reflexology appears in tombs in Ancient

Egypt dating back to 2500 - 2330 BC. Two early pioneers of reflexology in the west were **William**



**Fitzgerald and Eunice Ingram** who were responsible for promoting reflexology therapy in the 1900’s and the 1930’s. Kerri was passionate about the benefits of reflexology and its ability to **Relax, Restore, Revive and Relieve!** At the end of her talk we were all encouraged to examine our hands and practice a simple massage technique for reducing stress. This was followed by some questions as members were keen to follow up on some of the information Kerri had shared with us. We all felt it had been an enlightening evening **Wendy Mansfield**



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## Wickhambrook History Society

16 members of Wickhambrook Local History Society spent a very interesting morning at Cherry Hinton Hall Park and the nearby chalk pits with Michelle Bullivant, a landscape archaeologist, looking for evidence of the water mill which once stood in the grounds of the Hall. Beautiful weather, lunch in the Robin Hood pub, a most enjoyable outing.

Dorothy Anderson



## Le Puits en France, Monnet

(as many of you may know 'Monnet' is the name of the hamlet in Bourgogne where the Thompsons rebuilt a splendid ruin over 26 years)

### Jeff's wines



Hi Peter,  
Carrying on with the theme of different types of wine next on the list would be soft Reds, or to be more precise,

fruit filled easy drinking wines, which can be drunk at al fresco lunches outside, or as an aperitif at relaxed social functions. Similarly, they go well with the sort of simple food we eat most days in Summer, BBQ's being the most obvious example. As they are young wines they have the fruit, and acidity, to enhance the ( quite often) over/under cooked sausages, and burgers, regularly served on these occasions. Interestingly they are very acceptable when drunk chilled or have ice cubes added.

What to look for. Expect vivid colours, the nose should be bursting with fruit, red berry flavours predominant and little else. Alcohol is lower being in the 11 to 12% category. Elsewhere they would be classed as Vino de Tavola and are just an unserious everyday accompaniment to simple meals.

Anyone who has drunk Beaujolais Nouveau will recognise all of the above, although the latter region now are producing more serious vintage wines. When buying Valpolicella don't confuse it with the Ripasso version. This is a different wine and is made by adding the residue left after producing Amarone to the young wine. This increases the alcohol content to 14% and the fruit notes are enhanced.

However, there is an intermediate wine if you want a little more to enjoy from these particular wines which is

Valpolicella Superiore. This is the base wine vinified for a year which adds flavour and depth.

Tesco have a Rocco Alata V'cella which has all the red fruit notes. 12.5% £9.

Waitrose have a Bardolino, a similar wine, Recchia B'fino for £10.50

Majestic have two, Cantina del Garda Bardolino, apparently

this one has a vibrancy about it. 12% £9

Valpolicella Superiore DOC 20/21 13% £10. This one comes from Verona so all you Opera lovers will want to try this.

For a real treat venture to Corney and Barrow in Newmarket for their offering.

This is Valpolicella Classico Superiore Terre de Cariano Cecilia Beretta 2019.

This one has spicy notes along with the fruit. 13% £16.50.

**Jeff Fellows**



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Wickhambrook, Suffolk

## Wickhambrook and District Garden Club

This is a new class in the **Flower, Vegetable and Craft Show**, to be held in **Wickhambrook Memorial Hall** on **Saturday July 12<sup>th</sup>**, as part of **Wickhambrook Fete** when the results will be announced and a special cup awarded.

Residents of Wickhambrook, Stradishall and Denston may enter. The gardens will be judged by members of local garden clubs in this area.

To enter your garden, please email Polly at [pollypituch@aol.com](mailto:pollypituch@aol.com) or text 07588811069 **before 9th July**

### Cottage Garden Cup



### Billie Pike's research

Hi Peter,

I am doing some research on how graveyards are important greenspaces for pollinators and how pollinator biodiversity differs in response to different graveyard management techniques. There is currently very little research in this area despite historic churches being abundant in the UK.

I have already collected my spring samples and once the summer samples have been collected and identified I'm hoping to be able to provide each churchyard with a species list of bees on their site. It's quite exciting research that I'm hoping will have a lot of future practical uses. **Billie**  
Billie Pike <[23383800@live.harper.ac.uk](mailto:23383800@live.harper.ac.uk)>



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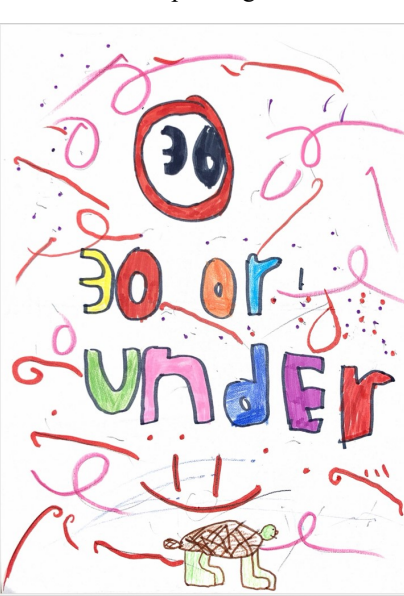
## Stansfield Annual Parish meeting

### A 20MPH speed limit in Stansfield?

*How do you feel about this?*

Stansfield's Annual Parish Meeting in May unanimously voted to ask the village parish council to press for the lowering of the speed limit in the village to 20mph.

Residents voiced concerns about the dangers to pedestrians and wildlife from speeding and intimidating driving through the village.



The speed of courier and delivery vans and even a school bus were discussed, as well as vehicles racing along Thurston Lane in dead of night. It was reported that around 50 signatures had been collected to add to the petition being organised by our MP Nick Timothy asking Parliament to give greater powers to local councils to tackle speeding in villages. Posters designed at the Village Coffee Morning at the end of April were to be laminated and erected in the village in an attempt to encourage all drivers to slow down.

If you would like to add your comments on this issue please email the parish clerk, Anne

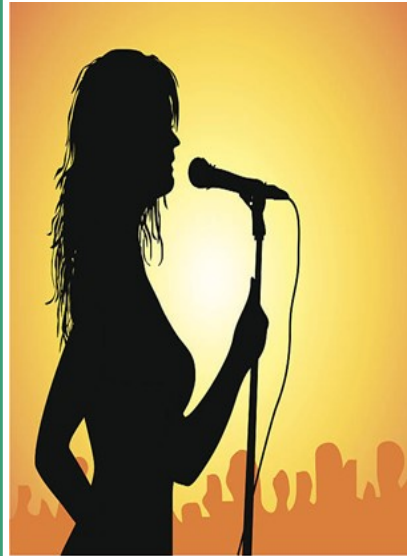
Lines at [stansfieldpc@outlook.com](mailto:stansfieldpc@outlook.com) A number of footpath issues were raised at the meeting. SCC were to be requested to expedite repairs to the damaged bridge along Thurston Lane known locally as Pooh Sticks Bridge. Mess left after tree felling on Footpath 2 near the main bridge in Stansfield and noise into the evenings are to be raised with the landowner and SCC. Loose dogs in Assington Green and around other

## Jazz in St Margaret's Church Stradishall

Jane welcomes you to St Margaret's Church Stradishall CB8 8YX

Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup>

Join us at 4.30 pm for *JAZZ AND SWING*



Tickets £20 (which include nibbles and a glass of fizz) are available at the door or by phone 01440 821278 from 28<sup>th</sup> July

parts of Stansfield have been causing alarm and could cause an accident, it was stated. The matter has been reported to the Police. Cllr Martin Slater offered to investigate the origin of noise from late night shooting near houses in the village. Pat Barnes

## PARISH COUNCILS - WHO'S WHO in YOUR VILLAGE?

Parish Council	Chair	Vice Chair	Clerks
<b>Denston</b>	Jeff Fellows <a href="mailto:jefffellows.crown@gmail.com">jefffellows.crown@gmail.com</a> 01440 820 310	N/A	Jeff Fellows
<b>Hawkedon/ Thurston End</b>	Rotating	Rotating	David Jarrold <a href="mailto:dmj1800@icloud.com">dmj1800@icloud.com</a>
<b>Poslingford</b>	Martin England <a href="mailto:martin.england@poslingford-pc.gov.uk">martin.england@poslingford-pc.gov.uk</a> 01787 278413	Marc Allison <a href="mailto:marc.allison@poslingford-pc.gov.uk">marc.allison@poslingford-pc.gov.uk</a> 07958337282	Chris Turner <a href="mailto:clerk@poslingford-pc.gov.uk">clerk@poslingford-pc.gov.uk</a> 07814246204
<b>Stansfield/ Assington Green</b>	Rex Barnes <a href="mailto:rexstansfieldsoc@gmail.com">rexstansfieldsoc@gmail.com</a> 07778 058425 <a href="http://www.stansfield.onesuffolk.net">www.stansfield.onesuffolk.net</a>	Andrew Pallett <a href="mailto:andrew.pallett.spc@btinternet.com">andrew.pallett.spc@btinternet.com</a> 01284 789434	Annie Lines <a href="mailto:stansfieldpc@outlook.com">stansfieldpc@outlook.com</a>
<b>Stradishall</b>	Ian Hutchinson <a href="mailto:clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk">clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk</a> 07970717116	Ed Hollingsworth <a href="https://stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk/">https://stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk/</a>	Joanne Kirk <a href="mailto:clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk">clerk@stradishallparishcouncil.gov.uk</a> 07880686069
<b>Clare</b>	Rob Eyre <a href="mailto:rob.eyre@clare-suffolk.co.uk">rob.eyre@clare-suffolk.co.uk</a> 01787 277 559	Paul Bishop <a href="mailto:paul.bishop@clare-suffolk.co.uk">paul.bishop@clare-suffolk.co.uk</a>	Davina Neale <a href="mailto:clerk@clare-suffolk.co.uk">clerk@clare-suffolk.co.uk</a>
<b>Cowlinge</b>	Linda Aston <a href="mailto:lindaaston555@gmail.com">lindaaston555@gmail.com</a>	Jane Nesham	John Barnett 01440 783 903
<b>Wickhambrook</b>	Mike Lavelle <a href="mailto:mike.lavelle@wickhambrook.org.uk">mike.lavelle@wickhambrook.org.uk</a>	Paul Couzens 07713 740 984 <a href="mailto:paul.couzens@wickhambrook.org.uk">paul.couzens@wickhambrook.org.uk</a>	Hilary Workman 07508 039 810 <a href="mailto:parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk">parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk</a>



**CAR AID REPORT - June  
2025 ,CLASP  
No meeting this month**



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**What does the Co-ordinator do?**

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**Summer fun at Stansfield**

**Sunday July 20<sup>th</sup> 12noon to 3pm Stansfield Village Hall**

Fancy having a go at Welly Wanging or entering an Egg and Spoon race? Like growing produce, arranging flowers, baking cakes? Drawing or painting or writing a story or poem? Then Stansfield Summer Fun Day on July 20<sup>th</sup> will be the place to be!

For those who just like to come and watch or socialise, there will be a raffle, cakes, a BBQ, and tea or something stronger to drink at the bar in the Village Hall from 12noon till 3pm. The egg and spoon races for children and adults were keenly contested last year, and the event organisers hope to add an obstacle race to the fun this year.

Local people are working with the Village Hall Committee, Good Neighbours Volunteers, and the Parish Council to organise the event, and parish councillors will be on hand to discuss any ideas and concerns residents have about the village.

For those who want to prepare in advance, the table classes will include:

- Design a logo for the Summer Fun event 2026
- Flowers in an unusual Garden Object
- Best decorated Cup Cakes (up to 6): a) adults b) children
- Basket of home-grown produce
- Flowers in a teacup
- Best decorated plate of food and/or flowers (Under 15s)
- Story or poem about a wildlife character(s), e.g.: a hedgehog family.

Classes may be further split into age groups if entries warrant. Entries will be accepted between 12 noon and 2pm . Judging at 2.30pm. Entries can be accepted in advance of the event by arrangement.

Telephone 07827 128511.

Stansfield Parish Council, Good Neighbour Volunteers  
&  
Village Hall Committee  
invite you to

Save the date for  
**Summer Fun  
in Stansfield**  
**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July**

Change of time  
**12 - 3pm**

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BBQ - Licensed Bar - Soft Drinks  
Tea - Coffee - Cakes - Raffle

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## Wickhambrook Council minutes

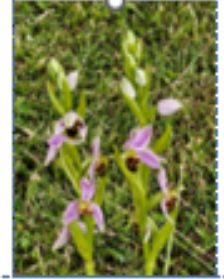


Hello, I hope you are all keeping safe and well. I've enjoyed some lovely weekends working in the garden and it's hard to believe that we are already heading into summer. We have seen some

lovely wildflowers in the cemetery which have established as following the pollarding of some trees and removal of the cypress's leading to the Chapel of Rest over the winter. We've also found some Bee Orchids in the newly established wildlife area on Six Acres.

A replacement bench has been installed at the bottom of Six Acres overlooking the fields, and is a very tranquil spot to rest for a few minutes on a walk around the parish.

Thank you to all who came to the Annual Parish Meeting on 24th April, when the **Alf Hicks Biscuit Barrel** was presented. Nominations were opened to residents of the parish in November, and this year, the **Warm Winter Wednesdays** volunteer team was chosen by the Parish Council for the award. They reach so many people, have forged strong connections with **Wickhambrook Primary Academy** and have been able to support other local charities with their fundraising. We also heard at the meeting of the many successes of clubs and societies in Wickhambrook.



Left to right: Miss Kerr, Dylan Blake, Sally Welsh, Edward Parfitt, Amanda Lavelle, Ethan Webb, Rosie Kerr

We have had some recent upgrades to the children's play areas scheduled in May and June with thanks to matched funding from West Suffolk. At the play area on the recreation ground, a replacement cargo net, new grass tiles and rubber mulch have

been installed, and at Bury Road new feet have been installed to the existing swing sets. Thanks go out to **Cllrs Kevin Grimes and Mel Karunaratne** for their inspections of the play equipment.

Grants were recently approved for: Local History Society (VJ80 Event £492.60. May saw the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, which took place on 29<sup>th</sup> May. Sadly, one of our long standing councillors, **Paul Couzens** has recently resigned. Our thanks go out to him for his many years of service to the parish and council, including as Chair of both the parish council and Estates Committee. We wish you well and many happy times with your family for the future! Sadly, in May we also learned of the loss of **Robert Everitt**, a former Wickhambrook Parish, St Edmundsbury and West Suffolk Councillor.



Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and many friends, and our thanks for all his support over the years.

We have three meetings in July – An Extra-ordinary meeting before the Estates Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> July to consider some planning matters, and our scheduled parish council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Check out the agenda and reports which will be published on 27<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> July respectively. <https://wickhambrook.org/parish-council-agenda/>. If there is anything you would like the parish council to consider, [please do get in touch with me](#).

Do feel free to forward this message on to neighbours, friends and family in the parish and ask them to get in touch with me at [parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@wickhambrook.org.uk) if they would like to be included in our e-newsletter mailing list!

Wishing you all the best, keep safe and well

**Hilary Workman** Clerk for Wickhambrook Parish Council

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## The Bansfield Benefice



### The Bansfield Benefice



The Bansfield Benefice is the collective name for the Parishes of Cowlinge, Denston, Lidgate, Ousden, Stansfeld, Stradishall and Wickhambrook in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Suffolk, United Kingdom.

### Services for July 2025 **DRAFT**

<https://www.bansfieldbenefice.org.uk/services/>

Date	Time	Church	Details
06 Jul	10:00 am	Ousden (Third Sunday after Trinity   HC)	Celebrant: <b>Revd Eve Bell</b> Organist: [KJ] Liturgoal colour: ● Proper 9
13 Jul	10:00 am	Cowlinge 🛎 (Fourth Sunday after Trinity   HC)	Celebrant: <b>Revd Barbara Sherlock</b> Organist: [KJ] Liturgoal colour: ● Proper 10
20 Jul	10:00 am	Lidgate (Fifth Sunday after Trinity   HC)	Celebrant: <b>Revd Eve Bell</b> Organist: [CM] Liturgoal colour: ● Proper 11
27 Jul	10:00 am	Denston (Sixth Sunday after Trinity   HC)	Celebrant: <b>Revd Eve Bell</b> Organist: [DO] Liturgoal colour: ● Proper 12

Year C

HC = Holy Communion; CW = Common Worship Order One; BCP = Book of Common Prayer;  
SOP = Songs of Praise; MP = Morning Prayer; CWOT = Common Worship Order Two  
(Organists initials)  
Elder: PS = Paul Swan

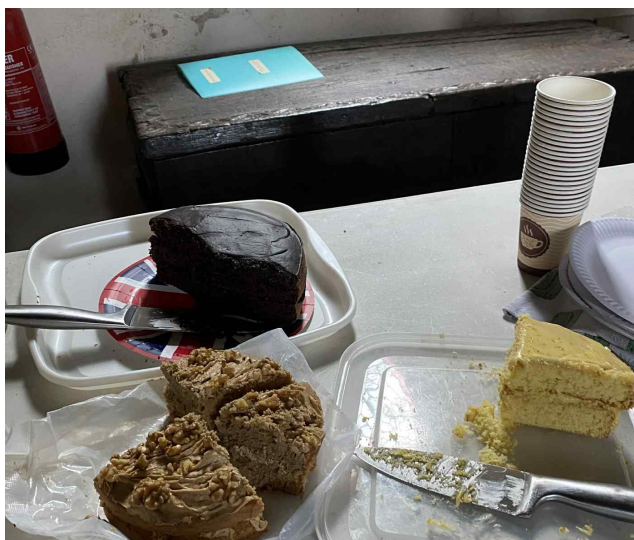


Please check the Benefice website each week for any changes

## Cuppa, Cake & Community Spirit Poslingford

A beautiful sunny day provided the perfect backdrop for a relaxed afternoon of tea, cake, and conversation in Poslingford Church, a cool and welcoming retreat from the heat. Guests were treated to an irresistible array of homemade cakes, so plentiful that many took extras home to share with their families. The warm, inviting atmosphere brought together familiar faces and new ones alike, with even a couple of friendly dogs joining in the fun! The afternoon also offered an opportunity for kindness, as generous donations helped restock the Community Pantry – a small but vital gesture that makes a big difference.

With good company, delicious treats, and a shared sense of purpose, it was a day that perfectly captured the spirit of community.



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## Opening the Doors: How Transparency Rules Are Reshaping Family Courts

From January 27, 2025, a quiet but significant shift occurred in the family justice system of England and Wales. For the first time, all family courts now allow accredited journalists and legal bloggers to report on cases—albeit under strict anonymity rules—marking a bold step toward greater transparency in a traditionally private domain.

This change builds on a transparency pilot launched in early 2023, initially trialled in three courts before being expanded nationwide. Under the revised Family Procedure Rules, judges must now start with a presumption in favour of issuing a “transparency order,” allowing media to report on proceedings while protecting the identities of children and families involved. The intent is clear: open the doors to scrutiny without sacrificing the safety or dignity of those who turn to the courts for help.

The President of the Family Division, **Sir Andrew McFarlane**, has been a key driver behind these reforms. In his 2021 report, he described the family court as operating in a “secrecy” that breeds mistrust and misunderstanding. His view is that greater openness—when balanced carefully with the need for confidentiality—can boost public confidence and hold the system accountable.

Indeed, reporting during the pilot phase has already shed light on difficult issues often hidden from public view. Coverage included cases involving deprivation of liberty orders, coercive control, and the complex decisions judges must make in care proceedings. These insights have not only informed the public but also sparked professional debate about best practice and judicial consistency.

Still, the move has not been universally welcomed. Some legal professionals and family advocates have raised concerns that even anonymised reporting

could place additional emotional strain on parents and children. There’s also apprehension that increased media interest might encourage more adversarial tactics in what are already deeply sensitive proceedings. Balancing openness with empathy remains a delicate task.

The transparency shift forms part of a wider reform agenda reshaping family law. Alongside the reporting changes, courts are increasingly encouraging out-of-court dispute resolution. Under new rules, separating couples must now actively consider mediation, arbitration, or other non-court dispute resolution (NCDR) pathways before issuing

proceedings. Judges may even impose cost penalties if parties unreasonably refuse to try alternative routes. Innovative pilot schemes like the “Pathfinder” model in North Wales and Dorset, and Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs), are also gaining traction. These aim to create more problem-solving, holistic approaches—placing children’s wellbeing and long-term family stability above rigid procedural wins.

Together, these reforms signal a justice system evolving to meet 21st-century needs: more transparent, more collaborative, and—ideally—more compassionate. But the real test lies ahead. Will greater openness lead to genuine accountability, or will it erode the very privacy that vulnerable families rely on? As the courts adapt, so too must the legal profession and the public in shaping a system that is both just and humane.

Mary Cleaver

### Denston Village Hall 100 Club Quiz night

STEFAN, TREASURER Denston Village Hall  
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This is the June 2025 draw for the 100 club

The Denston Village Hall 100 club winners for May 2025 are:-

1	Mick Corsby	£20
2	Selina Hopkins	£10
3	Stefan Bransby-Zachary	£5

Thanks Stefan

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	<b>OUSDEN</b>			
	<b>STANSFIELD</b>			
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	<b>POSLINGFORD</b>			
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<b>SUFFOLK HEIGHTS</b>	<b>(Thurston End)</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>

## Puzzle Time

### Puzzle 3

A 'Cabbage' Butterfly  
Victoria's Fruit  
A Grace Brothers' Captain  
Gone With the Wind Protagonist

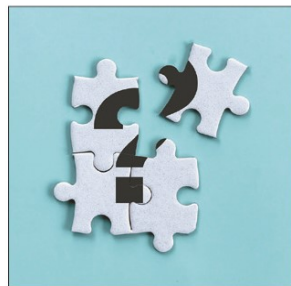
Who was the unfortunate Doctor?

A *Delphic's Quest* prize pen will be awarded to a randomly drawn correct entry each month. To enter, please submit your answer to [delphicsquest@gmail.com](mailto:delphicsquest@gmail.com) (feedback also welcome.) The closing date for submissions is 16th July.

Answer to Puzzle 2: Leek

[The clues were the Patron Saints and their Saints' Days; and the Leek is associated with St David.]

Congratulations to Patricia Whelan of Stansfield who is the winner of last month's puzzle.



**Yours to win!**



An image from a former life in County Durham

### West Suffolk District Councillors

West Suffolk District Councillor for **Denston, Stansfield, Hawkedon, Brockley, Wickhambrook, Stradishall, Clare, Hundon, Cavendish, Stoke by Clare, Kedington and others** Bobby Bennett  
[bobby.bennet@suffolk.co.uk](mailto:bobby.bennet@suffolk.co.uk)

West Suffolk District Councillor for **Whepstead Wickhambrook Denston, Stansfield, Brockley, and Hawkedon**

Sarah Pugh [sarah.pugh@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.pugh@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

West Suffolk District Council for **Clare, Kedington & Hundon ward**

Cllr Nick Clarke -

[nick.clarke@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:nick.clarke@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Cllr Marion Rushbrook

[marion.rushbrook@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:marion.rushbrook@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Cllr Karen Richardson

[karen.richardson@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:karen.richardson@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

### St Mary's Church Lidgate



We will be holding our cheese and wine party at Street Farm, next to the village pond, by kind permission of Barbara & Nick Arundale on August 9th @ 6.30 pm to 10 pm  
Cost Adults £12, children 5 to 12 £5 Raffle Tickets available from Janet  
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**Stansfield Village Hall News – July 2025 Cinema in Stansfield**  
 On Friday July 25<sup>th</sup> we are showing 'BlackKkKlansman', starring **John David Washington and Adam Driver**. This is the film that came first in our audience poll in April.

The **Spike Lee** comedy centres on the incredible true story of **Ron Stallworth**, Colorado Springs's first African-American police officer, who successfully infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in the 1970s. With the help of his partner **Flip Zimmerman**, Stallworth was able to deceive the Klan's 'grand wizard', David Duke, and rise through the ranks of the KKK to become the head of a local chapter in Colorado. "BlackKkKlansman dances smoothly between being funny, poignant, heartbreaking, scary, and beautiful. BlackKkKlansman is the movie America needs, all people need - for it is a movie for all people." **Gabriella Geisinger**, *Daily Express*. Big thanks to everyone who took part in our audience poll back in April! All the films up for voting were suggested by our regular 'Cinema in Stansfield' crowd, so we're really excited to say that the three winners were *truly* picked by the community.

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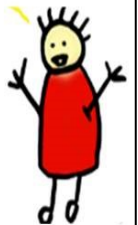
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**Martin**

**POST CARD FROM TUSCANY**

I am sitting in a courtyard of an old family farm overlooking the gently rolling hills of Tuscany. Sienna is just a few miles east of here but out of sight thanks to a bluff on the hill that shields it.

It is June, it is Italy, and the sun is bright from early morning and shines down on us from a cloudless sky. This all sounds like the beginning of an airport novel but it is actually happening. I am grabbing a short break away from Suffolk and hoping it is raining there so that the pots of flowers and shrubs don't perish from Spring drought. Through business contacts years ago a German colleague and I became friends. We met in unusual places round the world at an annual conference. I went to his wedding in Bavaria, we holidayed by the Red Sea and soon the two sons this couple produced came into our care and we took them to the Tower of London, and as many grisly sights as we could find to appeal to two bloodthirsty boys visiting London for the first time.

Time passed, our friendship prospered, and it occurred to them that as so many of their birthdays and anniversaries added up to numbers with a zero at the end they would celebrate with their friends every five years.

After quite a search they came across this old family farm complex where I am sitting in the sun this morning. We have been coming here now for twenty years joining the friends of our two friends for a wonderful catch up. Most are German and now have children of their own. It is a lovely group of us Oldies and young professionals almost all of whom speak magnificent unaccented English into which they move effortlessly when we are near. It is a very special group.

The farm comprises a series of old buildings with peeling stucco painted that ochre colour that is known to artists the world over as Burt Sienna. There are many trees and many birds. The chorus at dawn begins just after four o'clock and is really loud in a way we do not get in Suffolk. I cannot identify the different songs but as Italy is the land of song it is always a delight.

Yesterday fifteen of us spent the

morning making different pastas. I got to make a local version called Picci. If you remember rolling plasticine along your desktop till it made worms, then the process was rather like that and the rather uneven result looked a trifle forbidding when we ate them that evening but the ragu sauce with heaps of garlic made it very tasty. Others, perhaps more fortunate, got to make ravioli stuffed with ricotta and spinach and, again, loads of garlic. The garlic grown locally has very large cloves and is much prized. It is chopped fine and never pressed through a squeezer as this has a bad effect on the flavour. Once chopped it is never thrown into hot oil but brought up to cooking temperature slowly in a huge pan. The whole experience of making our own dinner was enormous fun and a great way of getting to know each other.

I sit here marvelling in this opportunity to relax in the beauty of rural Tuscany and give thanks for the long convivial evenings amongst the nicest group of fun and interesting people. I will not forget all the happiness, the laughter and the experience of learning so much. It has been a time out of time with so many moments to treasure.

xxxxxxx xxxxxxx. xxxxxxx.  
xxxxxxx

Later.....

As the time came to move on, we made our fond farewells, and the end came of a week of experiences like these plus a visit to Sienna and its fabulous Duomo (Cathedral) and its associated museum crammed full of art and statuary of the early Renaissance. We were sad to leave but even more was in store as we took a taxi to Florence some sixty miles to the north.

I had lived here in the late Sixties, so it is a city I used to know well and hold dear but we had not visited for about ten years. We arrived at our hotel in the baking heat and were soon on our mission to see some favourite places. Our hotel was near the Central Market, a huge complex of food stalls selling vegetables, huge cuts of meat for the famous Bif Stek Fiorentino, pastries and sweets and a whole upper floor of food outlets. It is close to the famous Medici Tombs designed by Michelangelo. It was a no brainier to begin our visit here and get the immediate feel of the city. The sun was merciless, but it was the crowds of tourists that gave the bigger shock. Everywhere there were guides

ushering walking tourists in groups of twenty or so; groups from all over the world -



Chinese, Japanese, Americans, Scandinavians were all being shepherded round from church to Piazza, to photograph each other beside huge equestrian statues. We wondered how prepared they were for the experience. Had they any idea of the significance of what they were seeing? I feared it would all turn into a nightmare blur for them as they spent their two days in this city before being bussed on to Venice, Rome or Naples.

What would their memories be once they got home and looked at the photographs on their mobile phones? We knew we could do nothing about the heat, or the crowds so set our agenda accordingly. We took in the Bargello, Santa Croce, and Orsanmichele. Each had been considerably restored since our last visit and their treasures are now in better condition and better lit than we remember. The biggest surprise though was the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, the repository of so much that had been created over the centuries for the Cathedral. This has had a total makeover, is now three times the size and has a most interesting architectural layout. Now the choir lofts by Donatello and Della Robbia and associated sculpture can really be seen to advantage and our visit there was thrilling.

Florence is not cheap and in common with many cities these days has a tourist tax but one felt the tourist dollar was being well and wisely spent. In short, our four days there were wonderful, and we felt we got the best out of them.

We came home by train. Florence to Milan and then on to Geneva where we spent the night. Next morning a train to Paris then across the city to Gare du Nord and Eurostar home to Kings Cross. The Eurostar experience is great but the wait for the train, the belligerent customs and security process were unnecessarily aggressive and unpleasant but all in all we felt that we had really travelled and not just been in an aluminium sausage as one does when flying.

All in all, a wonderful break and we were pleased to see on getting home that the British rain had not disappointed and the plants were in fairly reasonable order. One last thing - I bought a nice black T Shirt which was the uniform in a favourite trattoria, the Garibaldi. It has this legend on the back, "Save the Earth. It is the only Planet with Wine"

**Martin Kinna**

# Problem page

with Carol Reay-Glover



CAROL is a trained counsellor living locally who can offer advice on personal problems, such as relationships, divorce, child issues, employment, depression - or general worries. Email her in complete confidence at [carolreay1@icloud.com](mailto:carolreay1@icloud.com)

Dear Carol,

My friend of literally forever and I are just about to fall out so I thought I would email to ask for some help. Basically, it's all over flowers. Her son was getting married, and the budget was tight. I offered to help with flowers. I love doing things like that so was happy to. They said yes to the offer but as time went by, I noticed no one was doing anything about flowers at all. So, I asked and was told I was doing that. I'd offered to help. Cutting a long story short I did all the flowers – in the church and in the reception area. It was days' worth of work and because I knew they were strapped for cash I did it all on a shoestring. That's what friends are for, I guess. My problem not only has no one said thank you, but after the wedding everything had to be cleared away and even though I asked for help, I had none. None! No-one has said a word. I am gutted and speechless myself. And too angry to contact my friend in any way.

H

Dear H,

What a horrible situation to find yourself in.

It sounds as though you have been super generous and at the same time not noticed. That's a difficult combination to take. I am guessing you feel hurt, let down, angry as you say and a touch baffled. I wonder if your friend of such a long time has a habit of not saying thank you. Or is it unusual behaviour? If it's unusual, can you think what might be going on for her?

Start by recognising and acknowledging all your own feelings. I have tried to list a few but be clear what you feel. Then you have choices. You are already avoiding your friend. If you do nothing, I am guessing your friendship will end or dwindle away. Or you could choose to speak to your friend and explain how you feel. If you stick to telling her how you feel that would be best, but I am guessing because you feel so hurt and angry, and we don't know what she is thinking or feeling. It would be good to go into this asking her what is going on for her. You might end up having a row. You have known her a long time so maybe this would be OK, and air would be cleared.

It must be so hard to be in your situation, and you need to hold on to how generous you have been and how your intentions were always good.

Long term friendships are things of value – you say you have been friends forever. I therefore am inclined to hope you do speak to her and that friendship can be preserved, but of course, not at all costs.

I do hope you manage to navigate a way through this H. Good luck.

Carol

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We are interested in advertising in your upcoming issue and would also welcome the opportunity for an editorial feature if possible. We are happy to provide artwork as needed. Please let me know if this is something you'd be open to or if you need more information.

Best regards, **Louise**

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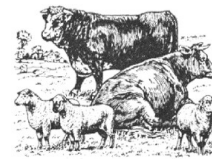
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