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September 2024

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## Rector's Ramblings – September 2024 (Sabbatical & Rest)



By the time that you read this, I will have already begun my extended sabbatical which starts on 1<sup>st</sup> September and runs until the 26<sup>th</sup> November. Sabbaticals are an important part of ministerial life, providing an opportunity for clergy to recharge their batteries, deepen their faith, and return to their ministry with



Revd Mark being blessed by an Elephant in a Hindu temple in Madurai, India on a previous visit.

renewed energy and focus. In the Church of England extended sabbaticals are granted by the bishop to parish priests once every 10 years (although because of COVID and a backlog of clergy waiting, I've had to wait almost 12 years for my turn to come around!) To facilitate this, I will be stepping back from the day-to-day responsibilities of

parish and deanery life to focus on personal spiritual growth, study, and rest. During this time, I am planning to go back to my old Theological College in Oxford as well as travelling down to the archives of the Royal Asiatic Society (of which I am an elected Fellow) in London as I continue my research into Early Christianity in India. I will also be going to a monastery in Belgium for a retreat and then catching up with friends both here in the UK and in Germany. Finally, I will be spending some extended time in South India, visiting the churches and communities which the Apostle Thomas founded there, as well as meeting up with friends and former work colleagues from when I lived and worked in India. As you can imagine there has been much planning involved, but I am confident that the team of lay ministers and visiting clergy will ensure that the regular services in the Benefice will happen as usual. As a Benefice we are blessed with a wonderful Curate, The Revd Dr Karen Smith, who will be there for all your pastoral needs, including Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals. She is supported by The Revd Liz Paxton, an experienced and recently retired Parish Priest. *(Should you need to contact Revd Karen, she can be reached on 07751 932408 or 01440 594036, or by email at [drkarensmith@me.com](mailto:drkarensmith@me.com))* May I encourage you to use this time as an opportunity to deepen your own spiritual lives and to support one another. Please continue to pray for me as they embark on this journey of renewal, and also for the people I will meet and

worship alongside in India. I look forward to returning back refreshed and inspired at the end of November - just in time for all the Christmas events and activities. May God's peace and love be with you all. With love and blessings



Mark The Revd Mark Woodrow

**Please note that Revd Mark will be away from the Benefice on an Extended Sabbatical from Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 until Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**During this time if you need pastoral support, or would like to discuss a Baptism, Wedding, or Funeral you should contact our Curate:**

**The Revd Dr Karen Smith**

**Tel: 01440 594036 / 07751 932408**

**Email: [drkarensmith@me.com](mailto:drkarensmith@me.com)**

**Antonia Close, Haverhill, CB9 0BU**

If you have a question regarding one of the churches in the benefice, please contact the representative of the specific parish:

**Clare & Poslingford – Mr Don Ramsey & Mrs Jean Ramsey – 01440 268598**

**Cavendish – Dr Graham Jenkin & Mrs Heather Jenkin – 01787 280030**

**Hundon – Mr Richard Langridge & Mrs Margaret Langridge – 01440 786629**

**Stoke by Clare – Mr Roger McKenny – 01787 277654**

**Wixoe – Mr David Starr – 01440 785206**

**For general information about the churches please**

**visit: [www.stourvalley.org.uk](http://www.stourvalley.org.uk)**

## Monthly Rainfall 2023/2024

2024	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July					
Nick Burton- Stradishall	55	115	45	64	96	15	94					
Tina Lee- Stradishall	57	119	47	87	91	19	93					
Sam Slater- Stansfield	51	129	55	60	114	19	85					
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	59	121	59	68	99	23	88					
Jay Gridley-Hundon	71	128	57	74	104	21	93					
Victoria Pakenham - Fenstead End	53	132	59	62	106	21	90					
Elaine Plumpton Great Saxham	54	129	66	69	78	23	90					

2023	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nick Burton- Stradishall	42	5.5	95	51	66	19.5	94	56	70	170	88	75
Tina Lee- Stradishall	50	1	75	57	75	22	93	55	68	168	88	69
Sam Slater- Stansfield	36	4.5	111	69	49	22	94	55	73	181	108	80
Rod Taylor- Stansfield	54	6	105	63	46	19	94	62	66	180	95	90
Jay Gridley-Hundon	40	4	111	60	56	24	84	69	66	187	96	89
Victoria Pakenham - Fenstead End	45.5	5.5	93	54.5	36	19.5	92.2	60	73.8	186.8	88	79.4
Elaine Plumpton - Great Saxham	60	4	114	62	65	28	70	63	49	172	85	94



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## The Life and Times of a Gardener Christine Walkden

An entertaining and inspirational talk about the thrills and spills of a life as a gardener and broadcaster.

**Saturday 5 October 2.30 – 4pm**  
**Hundon Village Hall.**

Clare and Cavendish Horticultural Societies and Hundon Gardening Club have come together to organise a speaker, famous for her appearances on the TV, with a regular spot on Radio 4 Gardeners Question Time, as well as being a published author.



Tickets are on sale now – They cost £15.00 each and include cake/refreshments and are available from:



Also available from your local Horticultural Society and Hundon Village Shop



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Half page	£275	£150	£ 35
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	Price for the period		Price per issue
	12 months	6 months	individual advert
Eighth page	£ 165	£ 90	£ 20
Quarter page	£255	£ 140	£ 30
Half page	£ 420	£ 230	£ 45

Front page or full page adverts are only considered in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Editor. The rate is subject to negotiation.

Stradishall a 100 years ago




These are 2 photographs of Stradishall crossroads from the early 20th century. The little cottage on the left was occupied by my great aunt and uncle, **Lily and Sidney Cutts**. The view in both looks up the Avenue towards Stradishall village. Would love to know who the children were but doubt anyone would know now. Many thanks, **Martin Hurst**



**Wickhambrook Farmers' Market**












With your continued support we returned in the Spring and since then the second Sunday monthly.  
**Thank you Martin**



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Wickhambrook, Suffolk

## Stansfield Church BBQ

The Stansfield Church BBQ has been an annual event for perhaps 20 years and this year proved to be as exceptional as all the



previous gatherings. Quite perfect weather is a definite bonus, but the linchpin is first class planning and **Louise Cairns** can be relied upon to ensure that every aspect is carefully thought through and, of course, her wonderful catering skills are greatly admired by all. The Lady was keen to

point out that the event was a joint effort and how right she is. Dozens of pairs of hands made sure that the term “a team effort” definitely applied.

As always, the day starts with a service of Holy Communion in the garden led

by our Parish priest **the Revd. Eve Bell**. A most special setting for a chance to sing, pray and reflect. That was speedily followed by bulk

cooking for the over 100 guests, but an ample supply of beers and wine made sure that guests could relax before their lunch and spend over £500 on raffle tickets. With that added to ticket sales and bar profits the total profit was £2,100. A

much needed and appreciated contribution to the annual running costs of our church. The day was a perfect example of a small community coming together. New acquaintances made and friendships strengthened. That so many lingered on



into the afternoon was a sign that all valued the special pleasure of Suffolk village life.

**Hugh Douglas-Pennant**

## Wickhambrook WI July Meeting

This month's meeting was kept “in house” as two members of the Wickhambrook History Society gave a talk on the history of the Women's Institute in Wickhambrook and how it has progressed



over the years. **Dorothy Anderson** explained that interest had been piqued by a visit to the Records Office in Bury St Edmunds last year where many of our old records are held. Sadly the current offices are due to close and all records will be moved to **Ipswich**. There was concern that these records would not be as accessible to members interested in the history of the Institute.

With the help of **Gillian Cooper** who read out some historic information, Dorothy gave a brief synopsis of how the Women's Institute first came about. In Ontario, Canada, children had died from contaminated milk and there was an attempt to promote education for better health. There was already a Farmer's Institute and 35 women turned up keen to set up a Women's equivalent. The very first Women's Institute was founded in **Stoney Creek, Ontario by Erland and Janet Lee**. **Adelaide Hoodless** was the very first speaker at the inaugural meeting

in 1897. The first Institute to be founded in Great Britain was in 1915 after the outbreak of the First World War when the role of women became increasingly important to the war effort. It was set up in the small village of

**Lanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlillanantysiliogogoch** which is on the island of **Anglesey** in North Wales. The Marquis of Anglesey was keen to support the movement and gave the women a place to meet. By 1917 there were 40 Institutes established.

The guiding principle behind the movement is that the Women's Institute is for everyone: rich, poor, educated or otherwise. It was intended as a place for friendship, education and exchange of ideas. Wickhambrook was originally a village of small farms including one owned by **Justin Brook**. He was a very philanthropic farmer who employed women as well as men and built houses for his workforce. Wickhambrook WI was given land and money to purchase an old barrack room in which to hold its meetings. This hall is still in use today. Wickhambrook's first meeting was held in December 1926 and moved into their own hall in 1929. It is unusual for an Institute to have its own hall. The hall is in the charge of three Trustees who are all members of the Institute.

Each of these Trustees then gave us their personal insight into what the WI means to them. Firstly **Joyce Draycott** described how she moved to Wickhambrook in 1966 as a teacher at Ousden. She soon joined the committee and remembers how formal things were back then. Members addressed each other as Miss or Mrs and it was always Madame President. She was at pains to point out that wherever you go and meet a member of the WI they

become a friend. **Thelma Farrow**, the second Trustee told the story of how in 1995 she was celebrating her 50th birthday at a WI meeting when the meeting was interrupted by a debonair young man who presented her with a box of chocolates saying “because the Lady loves Milk Tray”! The meeting was interrupted again by the present of a



bottle of red wine and a third time by a bunch of red roses. All this had been organised by another member of the WI as a surprise.

**Deirdre Smith**, the third Trustee, read out a moving description of the WI written some years ago by her mother who was a previous stalwart of Wickhambrook WI.

After all the talk of the history of our WI Dorothy was keen to point out that the movement continues to evolve and move with the times. Wickhambrook WI has two reading groups and two walking groups who all meet regularly. We also have many events outside of the monthly meetings including trips to the theatre, pub lunches, providing monthly tea parties and a yearly Literary Lunch which involves guest speakers from the world of books. The evening was deemed a great success and enjoyed by all the members who attended. **Wendy Mansfield**



It appears that Louise is on holiday so we have selected some delicious recipes from 2021

## Sweet cinnamon eggy bread with fresh fruits & maple syrup

This is my favourite weekend brunch at the moment and my B & B guests adore it. Late seasonal fruit such as the last strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants, blueberries, blackberries have all been frozen and are perfect for this.

My boys live in Canada so we get our maple syrup there but you can buy from the supermarket or farm shop.

Per person you will need

1 egg

50ml milk

Large teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 tablespoons caster sugar



1 ½ bread slices cut diagonally across the centre

Mixture of fresh berries

Maple syrup

Beat the first 4 ingredients together and place in a shallow dish. Pop the bread slices in, turn a couple of times, cover and leave several hours, preferably



overnight, to soak.

Heat a little oil and butter in a large fry pan and gently fry the eggy bread until golden. Pile onto a warm plate, top with the berries and drizzle over maple syrup

## Stuffed marrow rings

With the emphasis on local and seasonal produce this gutsy early autumnal dish

makes great use of abundant courgettes or marrows. Don't use very old ones though as they will be tough. You could use any minced meat, lamb, pork or even leftover ham. For a vegetarian version substitute the meat with lentils, sautéed carrots, peppers, aubergines and celery

This dish is equally suitable for a family supper or a relaxed dinner party and can easily be prepared the day before and kept covered in the fridge overnight.

1 small marrow cut into rings, seeds removed and peeled (in stripes if feeling creative!)

50g butter

1 large onion & 1 garlic clove, diced

450g minced beef

1 tin tomatoes, or fresh & peeled from the garden

Beef stock cube, salt, pepper, sugar to taste & plenty of fresh thyme

Fresh breadcrumbs

Optional: Worcestershire sauce, tomato puree, anchovy sauce

Blanch the marrow in boiling water until just softening, drain

Heat butter, lightly fry onion & garlic until transparent

Add beef, fry few minutes until brown.

Add tomatoes, stock cube, seasoning, thyme & bubble away for 20 mins until reduced.

Pile into marrow rings, sprinkle the tops with breadcrumbs and bake in oven 180°C for 35 mins

Serve with a hot cheese sauce and potatoes.

## Aubergine bake

Our aubergines are perfect now for this recipe which came from my Sicilian friend's mother, Rosa. The Sicilians eat this

**ABSOLUTELY DELICIOUS**

cold but it is equally good straight from the oven.

1 large aubergine sliced & brushed with oil

1 large onion diced

6 very ripe tomatoes, skinned

1 garlic clove crushed

Parmesan (but we used cheddar!)

Garden herbs such as thyme, parsley, basil, sage

Vegetable stock powder

Sugar, salt & pepper to taste

Griddle or barbecue the aubergine slices until cooked, set aside. Sauté the onions until soft, add the garlic for 1 minute, then the tomatoes, stock powder, herbs, sugar & seasoning. Bubble away until reduced slightly.

In a gratin dish layer some tomato mixture, then some aubergine slices, then some cheese and repeat as necessary finishing with a layer of cheese. Bake 180°C for 40 minutes.

**Louise**

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## Jeff Fellows –local wines



This month is the turn of local independent wine merchants to feature. I recommend browsing through their catalogues, as of necessity, they stock wines which are more varied and therefore more interesting. The staff are also very knowledgeable about the wines so do ask them to describe them for you. The firms are as follows with my selections,  
 Vino Gusto, 27, Hatter Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1NE Sibilana Viti Sensale, Grillo '22. A refreshing white from Sicily. Expect flowery citrus notes. 13% £10.  
 Ondarra Gran Reserva Rioja '16. A real treat. Has body and depth. A blend of

Tempranillo and Mazuelo grapes has the distinctive cassis, herby approach leading to notes of Cherries, plums and blackberry jam. Tannins are smooth and it has a long finish. 13.5% £15.50  
 Nethergate Wines, Gatehouse Farm, Depden, BSE. IP29 4BZ  
 Albariño Orbella. The go to white wine for fish dishes, from NW Spain, which is noted for variety of them. Lemon of course, with other citrus influences and an acidity to it. 12.5% £14.50  
 Barbera d'Asti from Piedmont. Red and black fruit including cherries and currants softened tannins. A hefty 14% £11.21.  
 I have previously recommended this firm's wine from Manzanos. The following can be added to the list.  
 Rioja Cosecha Finca. Plenty of fruit with a hint of Vanilla. 13.5% £9.94  
 Rioja. Crianza. Red fruit notes, hint of nutmeg with Vanilla. 14% £12.10

Baythorne Wines. Baythorne Hall, Baythorne End, Halstead. CO9 4AH  
 Chateau Haut-Mouleyre '22. A blend of Sauvignon-Semillon. The former provides the fruit and acidity, the latter softens it all. £11.99  
 Chateau Pontet- Nivelle. A classic Bordeaux blend of fruit and tannins. £10.99  
 Corney and Barrow. Belvoir House, High St., Newmarket. CB8 8DH.  
 A Pinot Grigio from the Veneto. Luna , Cecilia Beretta '23. A delicate, floral, almond and citrus tone to this. 12.0% £11.25  
 Polemico, Pais, Vina Laurent '22. The Pais grape of Chile. Red cherry notes with a hint of liquorice. 13% £13.95.  
 best,  
**Jeff**

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**WEDNESDAY**  
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**THURSDAY**  
 Coggeshall 7.30am-12.30pm  
 Long Melford 2.30pm-5pm  
**FRIDAY**  
 Clare Market Hill 8am-10am  
 Lavenham Market Place 11am-1pm  
 Depden 2-4pm



## Music at Stradishall Church

The Perpetual Choirs played a concert at **Stradishall Church** on 10th August as



part of a tea and cake fundraiser for church repairs. The musical collective is run by Stradishall resident and music producer **Giles Bryant**. Hundreds of people from around the world have contributed to this musical project which aims to bring healing and harmony to people, communities and the world through sacred songs.

A handful of band-members were on a break from their UK tour promoting their latest UNITY album, when Giles heard that a musical duo had cancelled a concert at the church, so he offered the band's services.

The concert was very well received by a packed church, and the music provided a

beautiful backdrop to a lovely afternoon.

Giles said 'Music is a wonderful way to unite people, uplift our spirits and bring healing. In ancient times, and even today, people maintain a perpetual choir for peace in our world. We are trying to bring this back to our land. It was wonderful to sing in this ancient church as part of our UK Tour.'

Giles would love to offer more free concerts, and sing-a-long community choir events in Stradishall church and surrounding churches. To contact him, or to see the band's music visit [www.theperpetualchoirs.com](http://www.theperpetualchoirs.com)



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**Without volunteers, we'd be a nation without a soul**

**St Mary's Church Hawkedon**



**St Mary's Church, Hawkedon** has two regular services each month. At 9am on the second Sunday there is a said BCP Holy Communion service and at 11am on the fourth Sunday a Morning Prayer with hymns. So for September:

Sunday, 8 September at 9am BCP Holy Communion service taken by the **Revd Clive Fairclough**

Sunday, 22 September at 11am Harvest Festival service with hymns followed by refreshments

***WANTED: SOMEONE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF PLAYING HANDBELLS!***

**Stradishall church** has a set of 10 handbells, origin unknown. With my limited musical knowledge, they don't seem to form an octave (plus). They also have letters engraved on them, which again, seem to bear no resemblance to "normal" musical notation. Could this be a code for the ringers? The leatherwork bears the name of the manufacturer, "**Shaw Son & Co Bradford**". We would dearly love for them to be available for use, but need some guidance first as to what we are offering. So – if there's anyone out there who can help, please contact **Carol** on **07708 899579**. (Just for the record, I can manage "Pop goes the Weasel" on them!!)





# Wickhambrook Local History Society News – 2024



**It appears that Dorothy is on holiday so we need to wait until next month.**

## Gatehouse Charity: NHS Mindfulness Course

**FREE ONLINE MINDFULNESS COURSE FOR OVER 65s**  
Led by a Clinical Psychologist



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**Course Dates:**  
Various start dates in May/June 2024  
Places are free but limited to 15 per course, therefore early booking is recommended to guarantee your spot.  
Bookings can be made via our website: [www.the-mindful-life.com](http://www.the-mindful-life.com) by clicking on the 'apply now' button or email [raachel@mindfullife.uk](mailto:raachel@mindfullife.uk) with any queries

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SCAN ME WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA

### Wickhambrook WI folksong meeting

Once a year the WI committee take a back seat, and the members take over! We never quite know what to expect but this year the members did not disappoint. An evening of folk music and country dancing had been organised for our entertainment. **Folk Band “The Idle Kelpies”** played a variety of Scottish and Irish folk tunes for half an hour. **Len**, on the bodhrán or Irish drum, **Penni**, on guitar and **Jean** who plays the flute, and the whistle soon had us tapping our feet along to the lively tunes. We

were then invited to take part in some folk dancing under the guidance of **Ella Hollins**, one of our members. After one or two false starts we managed to get the hang of a large circle dance and whooped and hollered around the WI hall. We then mastered a dance in sets of eight where we had to remember whether we were a man or a lady. This did manage to lead to some confusion, but we all enjoyed ourselves. After thirty minutes of gay abandon, we needed a rest and were treated to a

further set of tunes from “**The Idle Kelpies**” ending with a singalong to “**The Skye Boat Song**”. The members had provided delicious homemade cakes for refreshments, and these were served with tea and coffee. Everyone agreed it had been a lively and entertaining evening.

**Wendy Mansfield**



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Stansfield  
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## Dogs Saving Lives

Friday 6th September  
Stansfield Village Hall  
7.30pm



Guest speakers Richard Rigby and David Soanes will talk about the incredible work of the 'Medical Detection Dogs' charity which trains dogs to detect the odour of human disease and support people with life-threatening health conditions'

Licensed Bar

Tickets £5 on the door

(Priority booking for Stansfield residents until 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept by contacting friends@stansfieldvillage.org.uk or 01284 789 192)

Suitable for children 10yrs +

Stansfield Village Hall . Hall Lane . Lower Street . Stansfield . CO10 8LW  
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## Stradishall *Vehicle* *Activated Sign!!*



It is here at last!

## 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  
Website: www.memoriesaregolden.co.uk

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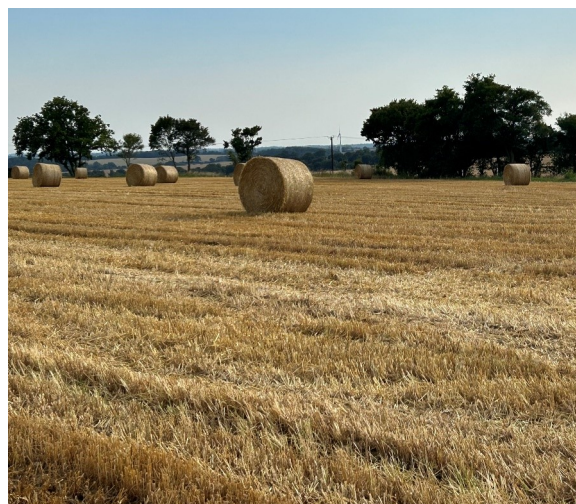
## Smallholding by Portia Brown

Harvest is a go; we have finished the barley and oats. We are now busy combining the wheat. The weather has been on our side, with perfect combining weather so far in August. The Barley and Oats have yielded well. The barley straw has all been baled and is safely in the barn ready for winter bedding for the cattle and sheep. The cattle muck from the barns over winter will be spread on the fields once we have harvested, as a natural fertiliser and soil conditioner.

Our sheep skins rugs arrived back to the farm after being organically tanned. These are a byproduct of our rare breed slow grown grass reared lamb boxes. We salt them ourselves and then send them away to be tanned naturally using a chemical free process. These beautifully curly long-haired fleeces are from our curly flock and are from two of the UK's rarest breeds. These stunning rugs are dense, long and lustrous with an even texture as the curly locks

hang individually completely bespoke. The cattle and sheep are looking very well with the abundance of grass and clover this year. We will be starting to wean the lambs over the next few weeks from their mothers as the ewes are starting to push them away. The ewes will stay on some poorer pasture so their milk dries up and the lambs will be moved to fresh pasture.

**Portia**



## Stradishall Church regaining its former state of grace!



### Refurbishment of Stradishall church Completion of the first big step.

We started in March this year the church is now waterproof and looks beautiful because a lot of work has been done:

- South aisle now waterproof
- Chancel roof broken tiles replaced
- Porch made safe
- All walls repainted
- Bell tower inside walls are pristine
- Main carpet is amazing
- All pews are shabby no more
- Windows cleaned and one repaired
- Manor pew rediscovered
- Vestry is smart and clean
- Heaters, chairs, tables, brooms and buckets hidden out of view
- All covers and curtains have been refreshed and changed
- All doors repaired and look good
- This state was celebrated in August by a village event and a Benefice communion service



### Votive candles for your prayers and memories



You are welcome to light a candle to say a prayer, or in memory of a loved one.  
Simply flick the switch on the reverse.  
Your candle will be left to shine all night, and will be extinguished when the church is opened tomorrow.

### What a window cleaner!

## Summer Fun in Stansfield

*“Stansfield is a lovely place to live”* ...that was the prevailing comment made to parish councillors at the Summer Fun Day in Stansfield in August... and *“Please do this event again next year*

Over 80 people attended the event, held in the Village Hall and grounds. Thanks to generous sponsors, most activities, prizes and the BBQ and even some ice creams were free to residents and children and at no cost to the parish funds.

Six parish councillors were present to give residents a chance to bring up any ideas and issues in a less formal way than at parish council meetings, of which the next one is on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Several issues were raised including that of the unusual amount of growth and dog fouling on local footpaths. Some

residents said they were concerned a couple of months ago, but pleased that the parish council had reported the issues to Suffolk County Council and thanked two parish councillors, along with some residents, for tackling some of the clearance work voluntarily.

In the meantime ideas are sought on what an event could include next year if enough volunteers come forward to help to run it. The event was jointly run by the Parish Council, the Village Hall Committee and Good Neighbour Scheme volunteers.

*“It is wonderful that we have so many volunteers in Stansfield ..thanks to all*

*those who helped to make this event truly fun for all. Especial thanks to Derek Adams and Dolly Whilems, who, as well as providing superbly mixed Pimms and good ales, projected the Stansfield PC archive footage of the Stansfield Silver Jubilee celebrations and images of Stansfield life from 1902-present day, for all to see. We are still seeking someone to catalogue and archive this footage”*, said Rex Barnes PC Chairman.

Any comments and ideas please send to [stansfieldpc@outlook.com](mailto:stansfieldpc@outlook.com) or phone 07827 128511.

## Fun with Good Neighbours in Stansfield

Many cakes were baked and enjoyed... egg and spoon races were keenly competed, creative competitions were held, with unusual flower arrangements, stories about Stansfield ...and even flag designs for the village: all this and more was organised by hard working village Good Neighbour volunteers at the Summer Fun event in August at the Village Hall. In the creative classes, Best in Show was an unusual and attractive flower arrangement in a clock by 10-year-old **Harrison Ager**. He was presented with a challenge shield rosette by

Chairman of the PC, **Rex Barnes**.

**Pic here of Harrison Ager with his Best in Show exhibit**

Reserve Best in Show was **Oscar Haynes (14)** with his story about Stansfield.

**Pic of Oscar receiving his prize for Reserve Best in Show from PC Chairman Rex Barnes**

Other prize winners included: Design for a flag for Stansfield joint winners **Grace (14) and Joyce (6) Manuwaha**; other flower and produce: **Harrison and Olivia Ager, Rosie Pallett, Hayden and Paul Haynes, Debbie Pugh and the Douglas Pennants**. Volunteer first aider



for the day, **Sammie Watson**, won the class for best decorated hat. Popular classes attracted numerous entries, and all received a rosette for taking part. Wellie Wanging and Egg and Spoon race contestants received Olympic style medals coloured gold, silver and bronze. These races were for children of various age groups and even adults... who were among the most keen competitors!

“Thank goodness the villagers raised the money to buy the playing field all those years ago, so we can enjoy events like this, especially the children”, commented one resident.

**Pics of Races here: 1 Joyce Manuwaha (6) romping home to 1<sup>st</sup> place in one of the egg and spoon races 2 A demonstration of the concentration needed in Wanging Wellies!**

But that is not all **Stansfield Good Neighbours** have been organising this summer. About eight lifts to medical appointments; the restoration of some village benches; and tidying in the Old Chapel Graveyard are underway at the time of writing this and will be reported more fully in future editions. **Help Line 07827 128511**



## Cowlinge Church Concert Series, Concert 2

### COWLINGE CHURCH HOLDS ITS FIRST CONCERT

The weekend of 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> July saw the church in **Cowlinge** host its first concert and its first flower festival: one adding to the other. **Christopher Moore**, the highly regarded organist, who serendipitously for us lives locally, gave listeners huge pleasure through the range of music he played. Christopher interspersed his playing with a lively account of the history of the organ in Europe and the UK: an altogether lovely concert, gifted to the church. For the concert and **Christopher's** generosity we are greatly appreciative. And the church looked very special and welcoming, decorated as it was with imaginative and beautiful flower arrangements created from village garden flowers and the wildflowers of Cowlinge hedgerows. To all contributors, both arrangers and providers of flowers and greenery, we give our warmest thanks.

It is fair to say that the Pimms served in paper cups before the concert was also well received!

#### **HOLD THE DATE**

The second hour-long concert in our church series will take place on the evening of **Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> October**. Details below.

Cowlinge Church Companions [cowlinge.church.companions@outlook.com](mailto:cowlinge.church.companions@outlook.com)



### **Brahms Horn Trio Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 7.00pm for 7.30pm**

We are delighted to announce that the next concert to be held in Cowlinge church is to be **Brahms Horn Trio**, by three talented players well known to Suffolk concert goers.

**Robert Spivey** first played the French Horn at the age of 11 when the school had run out of trumpets. Later, after his professional life as a consultant, Robert returned to his French Horn and today, as a well-known player, performs in orchestras and chamber groups in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

**Stephen Calder**, violinist and leader of the Sudbury Symphony Orchestra, grew up in a musical family. During his military career, Stephen took his music with him, playing with the army, at times in international diplomatic circles, and went on to study at the Birmingham Conservatoire on his return to civilian life.

**Christopher Moore**, the organist who delighted us in the first concert at the church in July, returns as a pianist to complete the trio of players for our second concert. Known throughout cathedral organ circles in the UK, Europe and South Africa, Christopher's contribution to organ music continues in this corner of Suffolk, which is his home, and beyond.

**7.00-7.30pm** Drinks with the **Cowlinge Church Companions**

**7.30pm** Brahms Horn Trio

Tickets are free; there will instead be a retiring collection towards the restoration of St Margaret's Church. Please let us know if you will be joining us, by emailing: [cowlinge.church.companions@outlook.com](mailto:cowlinge.church.companions@outlook.com)



## Wickhambrook Parish Council News



Hello, I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

The summer has been busy, with both Estates and a Parish Council meeting in July, and an extraordinary meeting for planning in August. **Parish Council Meetings** are open to the public so why not come along? We hope that you will find it interesting, and we would like to increase our community engagement. This helps to ensure that the decisions that are reached have the support of local residents. You never know, you may wish to get more involved – there are lots of ways to contribute, from attending meetings and asking questions, to joining in with volunteer events, becoming a lay member on our Estates Committee, or becoming a Councillor! We currently have one remaining vacancy for a parish councillor and are also looking for volunteers to a Community Speedwatch Group (we need six volunteers for this to be viable).

If you would like to find out more, please do call me or one of our councillors, or come along to one of our meetings. If you would like to be considered as a councillor, please take a look at the [website](#), and complete and return a co-

option application and eligibility form to Hilary. We look forward to hearing from you!

Key decisions and actions from the July parish council meeting include:

Approval of the [proposed changes to the draft Neighbourhood Plan](#) following consultation

A review of [the specification for the grounds contract](#) for 2025 - 26 – we're looking at whether some wildlife areas may be introduced into low traffic areas – please complete our survey and let us know your thoughts.

An update on the proposal for the [transfer of a small parcel of land at Bury Road](#)

[Reviewing charges for clubs](#) using Six Acres (a small increase for the next financial year)

A [request for financial support](#) from the Local History Society

The Estates Committee also approved funding for consumables to clean down and treat benches and play equipment. Work to nine memorials in the cemetery has now been completed, and the committee is looking into replacement posts at Coltsfoot Green.

You can find draft minutes of our recent meetings here:

[Estates Committee – July 11th Parish Council meeting](#) – July 25<sup>th</sup>

Extraordinary Meeting – August 15th If

there is anything you would like the parish council to consider at a future meeting, [please do get in touch with me](#).

Many of you may have now heard of the withdrawal of Stephenson's 10:46 No 14 Service. This was discussed at both the July and August meetings, and we have raised this with **Cllr Bobby Bennett**, our County Councillor, and also provided a statement to Suffolk News when they reported on it. It is disappointing that there was no consultation on this with either the parish council or residents of the parish. We will continue to advocate for this service to be re-instated through Suffolk County Council and wider parish networks. You may also be able to help raise the profile of this issue by writing to your local [MP, Nick Timothy](#) [nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk). 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,

**Hilary Workman**

Clerk for Wickhambrook Parish Council

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# CAR AID REPORT - July 2024 CLASP Committee Meeting 2024



32-32-42-24-41-48-31-26-21-25-35-32 Year 2023 total = 389 total, 32.4 average  
 47-62-29-37-38-34-46 Year 2024 to date = 293 total, 41.9 average Bookings as at 3rd. August month to date – 9  
 The number of trips made in the 2023 year, at 389, was 42% more than made in 2022.  
 The current monthly average of 41.9 trips is 29% higher than the 2023 level (32.4 trips).

After the **very busy** January (47 trips), followed by the **explosion** in February (62 trips), March **imploded** (29 trips). April with 37 trips experienced a 50% increase over April last year, whereas May (38 trips), was marginally down in May last year. June trips (34) were lower than May, and lower than June 2023. Demand in July at 46 trips was considerably higher than in the previous four months, and almost 50% higher than July last year. As will be seen from the Statistics Summary above, the demand for our service continues to grow. However, the difficulty in finding volunteers has continued. We have drivers taking extended holidays or having other commitments. Nevertheless, we have always managed to provide the service required, despite demands sometimes changing at short notice due to hospital rearrangements. **It is important to note that in Q2 2024 we used 30 drivers during the 3 months, virtually our whole available complement.**

Can I please urge all our volunteer drivers to try to identify and encourage any potential new persons to join our drivers' pool. I REPEAT. Although having a pool of over thirty volunteers, some of whom have limited availability, driver resource continues to be a problem given the very significant increase in client demand this year. Clearly, we still need to attract more drivers to provide the level of service to which we aspire, and our community requires, particularly now that demand is increasing. **John Webb**  
**August 2024**

## CAR AID - STATISTICS

2024	Journeys	Clients	Where to	Drivers	Mileage £	Cancels
January	47	26	14	21	531.75	4
February	62	36	21	22	805.45	4
March	29	21	9	16	383.85	6
<b>First Quarter Total</b>	<b>138</b>				<b>1,721.05</b>	<b>14</b>
April	37	28	9	23	536.40	7
May	38	29	12	16	543.95	2
June	34	27	12	23	521.60	5
<b>Second Quarter Total</b>	<b>109</b>				<b>1,601.95</b>	<b>14</b>
July	46	30	12	23	600.60	8
<b>Third Quarter Total to Date</b>	<b>46</b>				<b>600.60</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Year 2024 to date Total</b>	<b>293</b>				<b>3,923.60</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Year 2024 Month to date Average</b>	<b>41.9</b>		<b>Months</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>560.51</b>	

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**PLEASE NOTE**

**We send an electronic version of our magazine to about 400 people. If anyone in the villages does not receive the Pump or if you know anyone who would like to have it, please message us with their email address. I will ensure you will be put on the list. Kind regards, Peter**

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

<b>PARISH COUNCILS - WHO'S WHO in YOUR VILLAGE?</b>			
<b>Parish Council</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Vice Chair</b>	<b>Clerks</b>
<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:poslingfordddd@outlook.com">poslingfordddd@outlook.com</a> 07814 246 204	Marc Allison <a href="mailto:marc@theallisons.co.uk">marc@theallisons.co.uk</a>	Chris Turner 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:stradishallparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk">stradishallparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk</a> 07970717116	Robert Deeks 07940548407	Joanne Kirk <a href="mailto:stradishallparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk">stradishallparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk</a> 077946851198
<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>

### 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 [bobbybennet@suffolk.couk](mailto:bobbybennet@suffolk.couk)

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

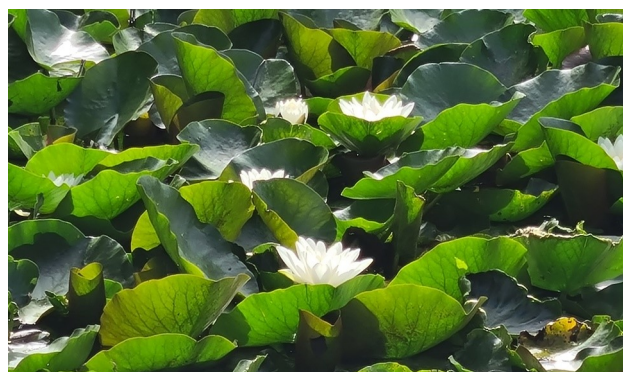
Richardson [karen.richardson@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:karen.richardson@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

### MacMillan's Coffee Morning

The Coffee Morning is on Saturday September 28th.

10am to 12 noon. in Stansfield Village Hall. Teas, Coffees, Cakes and Raffle. Do come along and support a good cause. All donations of cakes and raffle prizes would be very much appreciated. All enquiries to Ann Corlett on 01284 789419.

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## Ride and Stride Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September

### DON YOUR LYCRA, TAKE A LEISURELY STROLL – OR ANYTHING IN BETWEEN, IN SUPPORT OF OUR HISTORIC CHURCHES

This event originated in Suffolk in 1982, as a sponsored cycle ride, or a walk, for individuals, groups, or families, and now takes place annually in virtually every county. Participants are sponsored for each place of worship visited between 9am and 5pm on the day. You choose your own route! Perhaps you could aim to visit all of the churches in the Parish Pump



area.....Half of the money raised goes the **Historic Churches Trust**, which gives grants for the repair and restoration of churches and chapels of all denominations, and the rest is given to the church of your choice. For full details, sponsor forms, and a list of buildings which will be open,



visit [www.shct.org.uk/ride-and-stride](http://www.shct.org.uk/ride-and-stride) At most places, there will be volunteers who can sign your forms and provide some refreshment. (NB There will be a Portaloos at Stradishall, even though it's not noted on the list.) We'd love to see your photos and hear your experiences. **If you send them to the Parish Pump by 21<sup>st</sup> September**, they will appear in the October edition.

There is also a "Pedal and Drive" Rally for Vintage and Classic cars on the same day. For details, see the relevant section on the web site above .

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## Who is who in our local church benefices?

BENEFACTICE	CHURCH (Parish)	RECTOR	CONTACT	ELDERS AND OFFICIALS
 <b>BANSFIELD</b>	<b>COWLINGE</b>	<b>The Revd Eve Bell</b>	<b>07815441304</b>	<b>Dr Paul Bevan</b>
	<b>DENSTON</b>			
	<b>LIDGATE</b>			
	<b>OUSDEN</b>			
	<b>STANSFIELD</b>			
	<b>STRADISHALL</b>			
	<b>(Assington Green)</b>			
<b>WICKHAMBROOK</b>				
<b>STOUR VALLEY</b>	<b>CLARE</b>	<b>The Revd Mark Woodrow</b>	<b>01787277515</b>	<b>The Revd Dr Karen Smith</b>
	<b>POSLINGFORD</b>			
<b>SUFFOLK HEIGHTS</b>	<b>HAWKEDON</b>	<b>The Revd Clive Fairclough</b>	<b>01284 615828</b>	<b>Mrs Heather Phillips Mr David Taylor</b>
<b>SUFFOLK HEIGHTS</b>	<b>(Thurston End)</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>	<b>As Hawkedon</b>



**Martin  
Kinna**

## Time for Games and Home Grown Events

September already! And the temperatures are beginning to show a slow slide into autumn when we shall look at the state of our log piles and begin to wonder what plants to grow next year. If only we could anticipate the weather changes. At our new home we know we have to do something about the fencing as a fine row of carrots got demolished by Peter Rabbit. I had not grown carrots before but then I had never felt like Mr McGregor either.

Outstanding since the last issue has been the extraordinary feast of the Olympics. Cheering our countries on is easy but the dedication, commitment and sheer grit of all the athletes is really inspirational. The camaraderie between rival nations, the heartfelt exchange of congratulations to the other team if you have been beaten yourself and the vice versa commiserations. It is not "jolly hockey sticks" it is basic happiness hard won, sportsmanship of the highest order, joy at winning and commiserations for the other fellow and an understanding of

how your rivals feel. There were unexpected moments of fun such as the BMX racing when tiny bicycles shot out of nowhere and performed with the energy of fireflies for a few moments. There were moments too to really savour when our own mop haired teenager heard he had just won a gold medal for shinning up a wall and he just could not take this news in. Fabulous stuff!

Lots of diving, lots of tearing along the dotted line, lots of team events and I for one was drawn in to it all. Something great to watch while you do the ironing! Paris looked beautiful and the Opening Ceremony showed it off brilliantly to us, the armchair viewers. Congratulations should flow in abundance to organisers, competitors and coaches and also to the remarkable teams of expert commentators and those juggling the schedules on television who made sure we got to see all the highlights and ceremonies as they occurred. Paris did itself proud and we enjoyed the

experience which took us to new levels of happy pride in ourselves and our countries. A wonderful summer treat amongst so many.

And here in this region of lovely Suffolk there have been Olympian efforts to celebrate the summer and raise money. To all the sandwich makers, the putting up tenters, the brewing of tea-ers. who all make our summer world go round; they too should be given our thanks. They are the Olympians of local life, and we would not be without you, everyone.

Harvest seemed earlier this year, hay was got in and fields gave up their grain and my favourite vista of a field still with its stubble has turned the colour of a lightly baked sponge! In the country small things can make the heart glow. I hope you will find such moments in the coming weeks before we really have to get out the secateurs and have an even closer inspection of the log pile.

**Martin Kinna**



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Mary's page

Mary Cleaver

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Mary Cleaver  
Partner - Duty Solicitor and Higher Courts Advocate  
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Years Qualified: 25

**Southport Attack through the lens of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

Women's Aid has spearheaded a letter to the Home Secretary to propose that the murder of the 3 little girls in Southport should be placed within a broader 'epidemic' of violence against women and girls. Almost simultaneously the National Police Chiefs Council's (NPCC's) declared VAWG a national emergency. The report states:

"Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) has reached epidemic levels in England and Wales, in terms of its scale, complexity and impact on victims. We have seen a 37% increase in recorded VAWG related crimes from 2018/19 to 2022/23 and we estimate that at least 1 in every 12 women will be a victim of VAWG every year (2 million victims) and 1 in 20 adults in England and Wales will be a perpetrator of VAWG every year (2.3 million perpetrators). These are cautious estimates as we know much crime goes unreported and in policing, we often only see the tip of the iceberg".

The intention to do more however is compromised by a creaking criminal justice system comprising court delays caused by a backlog that pre-existed the pandemic and the impossible predicament of prison overcrowding. A case I was recently involved with can be used to demonstrate this: an

accused person was interviewed by the police for fraud offences in March of 2021; the matter was listed for two trials, both of which were ineffective for a lack of court time and eventually the case was concluded and a 10-month sentence of imprisonment was imposed in May of this year. I was surprised to receive a call from this individual this week telling me that he had already been released. By my maths, that would be 2 months earlier than intended. No doubt his prison bed is needed and with fraud being a non-violent offence, he meets the Government's criteria for early release to ease prison overcrowding, possible when 40% (not the usual 50%) of the sentence has been completed.

The early release strategy is causing consternation. Responding to the announcement, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, says, "We should never have been in this situation. I remain concerned about the message early release sends and the impact it could have on victims.

"The safety of victims must be paramount. I welcome efforts made to mitigate the risks and attempts to exclude those domestic abuse perpetrators convicted of more serious offences. However, we know from HM Inspectorate of Probation that one-third of those managed by probation were known domestic abusers, even when this was not their index offence. Coupled with findings that two-thirds of probation areas are not meeting standards of

protecting the public, I renew my calls on the government to consider how this broader understanding of risk can be managed".

I, like many, hope that the current measures remain temporary, and pray for investment in the identified problem areas.

Mary Lee



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## A WARM WELCOME TO ALL at a Stradishall Village Event

As noted in last month's Parish Pump, on Saturday August 10<sup>th</sup>, Stradishall church was the venue for villagers old and new to meet and enjoy tea and cake. (See the fantastic cake below) It was a lovely afternoon: the church was looking superb, the home-made cakes were delicious, and there was a constant buzz of friendly conversations.

Special thanks must go to local resident **Giles Bryant, founder of the World Healing Project**. When he heard that the original planned recital wasn't going to take place, he so generously stepped in and offered the services of his musical ensemble, Perpetual Choirs. They named their programme "Music for Peace" – an apt choice for today's world. A big thank you to them, and to everyone who contributed and attended.

**Carol Thompson**



A delicious hummingbird cake full of exotic fruit. Needless to say it disappeared quickly.

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Friday 13th September – Sunday 15th September

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**Friday 13th September 6pm – 7.30pm**

A **Drinks Reception** in St Nicholas' Church, Denston, to mark the opening of *Music Through The Ages*, a unique floral interpretation of six centuries of church music, as well as a fascinating **Exhibition** tracing the history of the building.

**Entry:** Please let [misshbradfield@gmail.com](mailto:misshbradfield@gmail.com) know in advance if you can come. £10 per person (on the door). Wine & Cheese.

**Saturday 14th September 10am – 5pm, Sunday 15th September 10am – 3pm**

The spectacular *Music Through The Ages Flower Festival* is open over both Saturday and Sunday.

**Entry:** Discretionary donation. Tea, coffee & cake at the church (£4 per person).

**Sunday 15th September 4pm**

A beautiful **Choral Evensong** in St Nicholas' with members of Cambridge Renaissance Voices.

The service will be led by Bishop Martin, Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, and the Reverend Eve Bell. All welcome.

**Sunday 8th September 9am – Sunday 15th September 4pm**

A **Silent Auction**. An on-line auction of high-quality lots: holiday houses, sporting and national events, golf, art, and others.

Bidding opens at 9.00am on Sunday 8th September and closes at 4.00pm on Sunday 15th September. Registration from Sunday 1st September.

We would be delighted if you would like to participate in some or all of these events. All proceeds raised by *the*Denston 550 are in aid of St Nicholas' Church, Denston, to help a tiny rural community cherish a magnificent Grade 1-listed Suffolk church for future generations.

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# 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

I am struggling with feelings of what I can only call disappointment with my children. I am a divorced mother of four. Two boys and two girls. The oldest is 24 and the youngest is 18.

I got divorced two years ago after my husband I and simply ran out of steam. There was no love in the marriage, and we decided to part. It's all on friendly terms.

Ever since, everything has gone wrong with the kids. One dropped out of uni, one has taken up with a decidedly unsuitable partner, one has a terrible eating problem and has put on tons of weight, and my youngest has flunked A levels and has no clue what to do next.

I know I am a bad mother for using the disappointment word but I am at the end of my tether and feel pretty despondent about it all.

Please help.  
L

Dear L,

You packed a lot into this email but even so I found myself asking so many questions.

You spoke of your recent divorce but very lightly. And yet you date all the problems with the children from around that time.

Firstly, I need to make the point that all your children are individuals and are not in any way a banded pack. They have their separate strengths and challenges. I do hear however that to you it feels like it's all going wrong.

There is no quick way through this. I think it's important to ask yourself what impact your divorce might have had on your children? As you're on good terms with your husband try sitting down with him and talking this through. Then I suggest talking to each of your kids, giving each of them time and attention and hearing what's going on from their separate points of view. I would advise not coming at this from the point of view of lumping all their problems together. This frames it all from your point of view. It's more trying to hear what's going on for each them. Separately.

Finally, I turn to you. Even though you are at pains to tell me you are ok I find myself wondering if you really are? On the one hand disappointment with children is hard and as you feel it across the board with them it tells me you are not alright. Perhaps, after your divorce, you feel your happiness now depends on the children? Perhaps you feel more alone than usual helping them face their challenges? Perhaps the sum of the problems feels overwhelming? I don't know, only you will know, but I think it's worthy of reflection. The way forward lies in you accepting they are individuals. But also, being kind to yourself and paying due attention to your feelings. Helping grown children with their real-world issues is tough. A few sessions with a counsellor could really help.  
Good luck L

Carol



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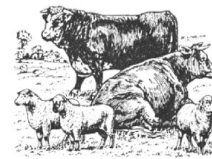
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