



THIS ISSUE IS
NANTES
Solicitors & Notaries
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the **Bridge**

A community magazine for Bridport
supported by churches in the town

March 2025

THE PARISH OF BRIDPORT

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 Bookings at www.hallbookingonline.com/bradpole
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United Church (details below) Sue Herman

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All phone numbers are Bridport (01308) unless otherwise stated.

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Advertising rates appear at www.thebridgemagazine.org/advertising. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the editor. Otherwise send copy to parish editors (details in Parish Pages) at least three days before the deadline, or a week for handwritten/typed copy. We cannot guarantee to include unsolicited contributions.

Opinions expressed in The Bridge are not necessarily those of either the editorial team or the clergy. While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents, we cannot accept responsibility for information given or claims made by our contributors or advertisers.

There are flowers beside the path we tread

My family has been grieving this spring. We had to say goodbye to a dear, elderly family member as the snowdrops came through in a carpet of white, and gold aconites were spotted in banks beside the path. She loved flowers, and her favourites were lilies and roses – in particular canna lilies, which she grew in drifts in her garden.

I am not fond of lilies myself, the strong scent reminding me of loss and funeral bouquets; it is a Good Friday flower to me, not an Easter Sunday one. But I love Jesus' reference to lilies, along with wild birds, in Matthew's Gospel (Chapter 6). The story is told in such a way that when he says "See the lilies there!" I think he must have been walking along a path, spotted them and just got inspired. It is a story that brings me solace: if I really stop to consider the exquisite loveliness of nature, I can believe Jesus' reassurances to not worry and that God – who gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers and the welfare of birds – cares dearly for each and every one of us and is there with us every step of the way.



In March we are in Lent, and with Easter approaching we can mark

Pictured: The Faquq'a or Gilboa iris grows prolifically in Israel and Palestine

Mboesch/ CC BY-SA 4.0

the journey of the season by following the known rhythm of snowdrops, crocuses, daffodils, primroses and violets, giving way to later spring flowers like lilies, which are traditional in Easter Day displays. These flowers celebrate Christ showing us how to be

God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers... and he cares deeply for every one of us

fully part of the wonder of giving and receiving love, which I believe is at the very heart of God. This is a love that creates and sustains, and gathers up all things into it, so nothing is lost, for all time. It's a flowering, the opening up of a source of loving strength that my family are leaning into.



The Revd Lorna Johnson

On a more down-to-earth note, after a lot of Googling when I should have been getting on with other tasks, I discovered that there are 2,000 different plant species in the Palestine region! This is because it is a place where three ecoregions meet. Of these plants, 54 are found nowhere else on Earth but there.

I found no mention of dog roses, which are my favourite flowers, but Jesus would have spotted anemones, poppies, gladioli and camomile daisies. I also read about ancient olive groves carpeted today with beautiful, rare irises, and young graduates in the region are working to preserve and protect these rare indigenous species. Amid all the destruction and political turmoil, this is inspiring to know. Let us pray that peace holds and all the people of the region and the flowers and birds flourish again.

If you, too, want to care for flowers as young people do in the Holy Land and as our Eco Church team help us to do in Bridport, check out this article: www.sustainablefloristry.org/church-flowers.
The Revd Lorna Johnson
Associate Priest

Meet John in the March pod

For this month's magazine I caught up with the Revd John Rees.

John is one of the parish's two associate priests – along with Lorna, who has written this month's leader, above – and came to us last year with a wealth of experience in industry and in ministry. John and his wife, Anne, have settled in Bradpole, where they are proving valuable additions to the church and the wider community. Meet John on page 13.



Olivia Daly
Editor

Church Electoral Roll

If you live in the Parish of Bridport or worship at one of its Anglican churches, and would like to be added to the Church of England's new electoral roll for the parish, please see page 6 for details and to find out what you need to do.

CHURCH SERVICES

MARCH 2025						
Date	St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay
Sun 2 <i>Sunday before Lent</i>	8am BCP HC	4pm CC (hall)	10am Parish service of HC			
<i>Mon 3</i>						10am MPR
<i>Tues 4</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Wed 5</i> <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	2.30pm HC 7.30pm HC	10am Eucharist				
<i>Thurs 6</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 9 <i>1st Sun of Lent</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am MP	9.30am MP		11am HC
<i>Mon 10</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 13</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 16 <i>2nd Sun of Lent</i>	8am BCP HC 11am All-age HC *	9.30am Eucharist	11am HC	9.30am HC		11am MP
<i>Mon 17</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 20</i>		10am Eucharist			10am MP	
Sun 23 <i>3rd Sun of Lent</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	9.30am MP	11am HC	11am MP
<i>Mon 24</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 27</i>		10am Eucharist				
<i>Sat 29</i>						4pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
Sun 30 <i>4th Sun of Lent & Mothering Sunday</i>	8am BCP HC 11am MP	9.30am Eucharist		9.30am HC	10.30am MP	

HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise / MPR = Morning Prayer
* All-age Holy Communion is a new service for St Mary's Bridport. See page 16 for more information.

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Sharing achievements, challenges and opportunities at the parish awayday

The Parish of Bridport kicked off this year with a lively ‘awayday’ for the clergy, lay ministers and worship leaders, pastoral assistants and many more people who are involved in the daily life of the parish’s six churches. The Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Team Vicar, tells us more...

Many months ago, before Canon Deb stepped back and announced her upcoming retirement, she scheduled an awayday for the parish in mid-January.

At the beginning of December, Deb passed the responsibility for the day-to-day running of the parish to me, with the support of the Revd John Rees and the Revd Lorna Johnson. I thought about postponing the awayday, as perhaps now is not the season for long-term vision planning. But the awayday fell in the season of Epiphany, and as I started to pray about it, remembering the gifts from the wise men to Jesus, I realised how important it was for us as a parish to meet to worship and to pray together, and to celebrate the many various gifts that God has given us all to use in his service. This became the major theme of the awayday.

We also heard an inspirational talk from Anna Hardy (Giving Advisor, Diocese of Salisbury) on turning the financial management of our churches into something thoroughly missional. We told each other the story of our six churches. We shared our frustrations, our future hopes and also the many exciting opportunities

and initiatives that are already bubbling up in our communities.

Many people from across our churches contributed to the awayday: all who gave up their Saturday to be there and all those who met in advance of the day or wrote in with their reflections.

Everybody’s offering made a valuable contribution to the whole and we realised there is much to celebrate: the ongoing service of our faithful teams in their local churches; new forms of worship, particularly with children and young people; our eco initiatives; our community outreach and hospitality. There are also some challenges: to review our internal administration as a parish; and to improve on our communication, both internal and external. We are already on the case...

All of this was very valuable work, and we have had lots of positive feedback about the awayday. Although we are not using the results of the event right now to write a long-term vision plan, we can map where we are and what we have in this season – to notice God at work among us, to celebrate it and to use it as best we can to make Jesus known in Bridport.

The Revd Cally Burch



The Revd Cally Burch

Alpha makes Christianity relevant for today

A group of about 10 people in the parish have completed the 14-week Alpha Course, which explores the fundamentals of Christianity. The group started meeting last autumn at the home of the Revd Cally Burch.

The Alpha Course was developed by Nicky Gumbel, an English priest and author, and is a practical introduction to the Christian faith, explaining it in a way that is relevant to today’s world.

Helen Thomas was among the recent group. “Each session started with a delicious meal together, a great way of getting to know everyone,” she says. “We watched the Alpha videos and had some great discussions – it answered many questions for us all.

“We even went to Hilfield Friary with Cally and her husband, Rob, where we had a day learning about God’s spirit in us, called the Holy Spirit. We went to a thought-provoking communion service and listened to a visiting choir.

“The course made me realise afresh how much God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit have been involved daily in my life before and since I became a Christian, including a few amazing miracles, which I shared with the group.”

Anyone who would like to attend the next Alpha Course can contact Cally (details on page 2).



This year's Lent book is The Whole Easter Story

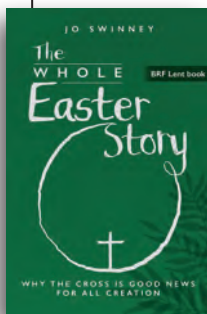
The Parish of Bridport's Lent book is **The Whole Easter Story: Why the Cross is Good News for All Creation** by Jo Swinney.

"We've chosen this book because we love its combination of engagement with the Bible and strong environmental focus," says the Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Team Vicar. "There will be groups running in this parish and in our neighbouring benefice, Beaminster, and after Easter our parish eco champions also hope to host an open meeting to discuss any practical follow-ups from the book."

Copies are available from Good Books in Bridport or from James or Michele Craddock on 458725. If affording the cost of the book is difficult, please contact the parish office (details on page 2).

For more information about groups and meetings, keep an eye on pew sheets and the parish website.

A Rocha is also hosting its own online national discussion, hosted by the book's author and Jo Herbert-James on Wednesdays 5 March–9 April, 8–9pm: www.tickettailor.com/events/aroCHAINinternational/1480132



Don't forget World Day of Prayer on Friday 7 March

Christians across the world will be celebrating this year's **World Day of Prayer (WDP) on Friday 7 March.**



The theme of the 2025 event is 'I made you wonderful', and Christians in the Cook Islands will lead people all over the world in prayer on this special day. This group of 15 islands in the South Pacific has a rich, colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature.

The WDP is an international, ecumenical event that allows us to hear the thoughts, hopes, concerns and prayers of women from across the world. Preparation for the day is vast, with the theme being chosen years in advance and one country – this year the Cook Islands – being given responsibility for writing the service.

The event is celebrated in more than 120 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world, through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa 38 hours later.

You can join in this joyous, worldwide wave of prayer at St Swithun's Church on Friday 7 March from 10.30 to 11.30am. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

www.worlddayofprayer.net/index.html

Would you like to be added to the church's new electoral roll?

If you live in Bridport, or worship at one of the Anglican churches, you can have your name listed on the new Church Electoral Roll.

Being on this electoral roll demonstrates your willingness to help shape the future of the church, not just locally, but nationally and even internationally. Your support for the Christian community is made known, and you will have the opportunity to be involved in helping to shape our parish, including contributing ideas for mission and service in our town, as well as maintaining our beautiful buildings, ever-aware of our environmental impact.

The electoral roll is revised annually with minor amendments. However, every sixth year a new roll is created from

scratch and all potential members need to re-apply to have their name added to it. This process takes place this year so everyone has a chance to apply.

The current roll expires in April and the new roll becomes effective at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), which is being held on Sunday 18 May in St Mary's Church, Bridport. As a member of the new electoral roll you will be able to vote at this meeting and elect churchwardens and Parochial Church Council (PCC) members for the new year. You will also get a flavour of the activities and events held in our churches and across the Churches Together network in our town.

To find out more, or to have your name added to the new electoral roll, please contact the parish office in St Mary's Bridport (details on page 2) or look on the homepage of the website and download a form: www.parishofbridport.org





Pictured: Waves of Emotion, the 'hero' elephant sculpture, with Weldmar nurses and on the pier at West Bay

A herd of elephants hits town in Weldmar's Stampede by the Sea

Many of us have a deep affection for Weldmar Hospicecare, thanks to the support they give to our friends, family and neighbours.

Knowing that last year they cared for 295 people in our area, Bridport Town Council is proud to host the Weldmar Community Nurses team at our Mountfield building. They care for patients with complex care needs in the last year of life; approximately 80% of all hospice patients are cared for in the community.

We're thrilled, too, to support Weldmar's Stampede by the Sea, a vibrant public art trail that's coming to Bridport, West Bay and Lyme Regis from 28 March to 25 May. This exciting event will feature more than 30 stunningly painted elephant sculptures, dotted around the area to create a free, family-friendly adventure. Each elephant is a unique creation by a talented local artist.

In addition, a mini herd of 28 smaller elephants will be displayed inside local businesses and public spaces. Many of these sculptures were designed by local schools as part of an educational programme that engages young people on themes like creativity, health and citizenship, but also grief and bereavement – often the 'elephant in the room'.

The trail is designed not only to raise awareness of Weldmar's vital services but also to spread joy and foster a sense of community. It promises to be a boost

for local businesses, with cafes and shops expected to see increased foot traffic from people exploring the trail – a welcome uplift for Bridport and West Bay.

Visitors will find five of these magnificent elephants at sites managed by the town council: one outside the Tourist Information Centre in Bucky Doo Square, two on the Welcome Hub in West Bay, another outside the West Bay Discovery Centre, and one outside The Salt House. The Salt House will also serve as a pop-up headquarters where you can get a trail map, ask questions and buy a range of merchandise, with every single penny going to Weldmar Hospicecare.

Above all, the trail's primary goals are to raise funds for the essential work of Weldmar Hospicecare, which provides compassionate end-of-life care to adults in the region, and to increase local awareness of their services. Some of the sculptures have been sponsored by members of the local community, and after the trail has finished, the elephants will be auctioned to generate even more support.

It's a fun, creative way to enjoy public art while supporting an incredible cause. You can discover more on the website, www.stampedebythesea.org, and by following Stampede by the Sea on Facebook or Instagram.

Caroline Pearce

Project Manager, Bridport Town Council

Welcoming Fr Colin to Bridport Catholic Parish

Father Colin Groombridge is settling well into his role as the parish priest of Bridport Roman Catholic Parish.

Colin – and his dog, Norman – moved into the presbytery in September following the retirement of his predecessor, Mgr Keith Mitchell. His previous job was in Torquay, where he oversaw two churches and was part of a chaplaincy team visiting nursing homes, a hospital and a school.

Born in Kenya, Colin moved to Sussex as a small child with his family and after completing school trained in nursing at Guy’s Hospital. He knew deep down, however, that a life in the church was waiting for him.

“There have always been two strands running through my life – the NHS and religion,” he says. “I was familiar with the Anglican church through my experiences growing up, but I knew I wanted to be a monk, so I needed to be Catholic – it just made sense to me. With the help of the Guy’s chaplain, Fr Michael Cooley, I became a Roman Catholic.”

Colin completed a neurology nursing course and ran a neuro ward at Guy’s for a time before entering

Prinknash Abbey, a Benedictine monastery in Gloucester.

“It’s an enclosed order and I found that I missed the pastoral contact,” says Colin. “I left the abbey and worked in a Sue Ryder hospice before deciding to take a Bachelor of Divinity degree at the University of Wales.”

Colin later took more nursing qualifications and worked as a clinical educator in London and Sussex before a bereavement affected his health and he himself had to spend time in hospital.

“I recovered but I knew I couldn’t return to lecturing. I worked in infection control at Torbay Hospital and started applying for priest jobs. Entering a seminary as a mature person meant giving up everything – including my nursing registration.” Curacy at St Mary’s in Poole followed, then the job in Torquay.

Colin is creative and loves crafts such as quilting, knitting and crochet. “I also love the liturgy so I like to lead a long mass! And I’m excited about working with Churches Together here in Bridport and doing what we can together.”



Pictured: Fr Colin Groombridge with his dog, Norman

Calling all pianists!

We have a **GRAND PIANO** and on **8th March** and **12th April ...**

10.30am till 12 noon, the church will be open to receive pianists in short slots of up to 15 minutes each



No matter whether you're a complete beginner or concert pianist, young or old, ALL are welcome!

Not a performer? Come and listen, and be the audience

PLEASE BOOK Tel: **Charles** **07814388327**

St Swithun’s Church Allington

St Swithun’s Church Hall, Allington

FUN QUIZ

Friday 11 April at 7pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

Teams of six (max)

£5 per head in cash on the door for church funds

Bring your own nibbles and drinks
During the break there will be standing bingo, a raffle and refreshments

ALL WELCOME • Extra parking at Amsafe

Book in advance: 07741 457505

Wild & Messy Church explores the theme of gifts

The Wild & Messy Church session in early January was all about gifts, as the Revd Lorna Johnson, Associate Priest, writes...

We thought about the Magi, the wise travellers who brought gifts to Jesus and were now on their way home.

We thought about how Jesus, a gift to us from God, can help us be a gift and a blessing to others.

To be a gift to others we practised a healthy(ish!) fridge cake for a bake sale for the charity Mercy Ships, which deploys hospital ships to some of the world's poorest countries to provide free medical care for people in need. We also made sailing ship decorations (pictured) on the Mercy Ships theme.

We learnt an exercise to look after the gift of our bodies and made plans for a small half-barrel pond in the churchyard (if we get permission) so we can be as a

gift to nature in return for the gift that nature is to us. We'd love to welcome toads to Wild & Messy Church!

We were thankful for our meal of beans on toast with cheese, plus fridge cake and satsumas. This was itself a gift from a generous anonymous donor from St Mary's.

If you'd like to come along and join our Parish of Bridport Wild & Messy Church, we'd love to see you. It's open to all ages (children need to come with a parent or carer) and is on the second Thursday of every month, 3.30 to 5.30pm at St Swithun's Church Hall.
The Revd Lorna Johnson



Fellowship, tea and more from Churches Together

CTiBD Chair Sue Herman gives us an update on the organisation's activities...

It's been a busy few months for Churches Together in Bridport & District (CTiBD) with some beautiful joint services and other events at various churches in the town.

First, I want to say how grateful I am to CTiBD for supporting the community lunch on Christmas Day. Many people don't realise that this event is organised under the CTiBD 'umbrella': it costs a lot of money to put on – around £700 – and if CTiBD didn't pay most of this, it just wouldn't happen. And of course thanks, too, to all our suppliers, who help as much as they can.

After a busy December with several joyful services that drew people from across the town's churches, we held the new year's first Sunday afternoon Tea & Chat in mid-January. Hosted by the Christian Fellowship, it was a lovely event with friendship, singing, a quiz and a delicious tea. Thank you to all at the Fellowship for such a happy afternoon and to all who came.

Please join us at a future Tea & Chat or other event (details below) – everyone is welcome to everything.

Tea & Chat: for anyone who enjoys food & company!
Sunday 23 March – Bridport United Church
Sunday 11 May – St Mary and St Catherine's RC Church
Sunday 14 September – St Swithun's or St Mary's (tba)

Pray Bridport: a monthly informal prayer session
Tuesday 11 March, 6.30pm at St Swithun's
Tuesday 8 April, 6.30pm at Beacon Church
Tuesday 13 May, 6.30pm at the Christian Fellowship

Vigil for Peace

At the Chapel in the Garden on the first Saturday in the month, outside BUC on the third Saturday and outside St Mary's on the fourth Saturday: all 12 to 12.15pm. It's a quiet gathering: you don't have to stay for the whole time, just pop in and out as you feel.

Easter Morning dawn service

Monday 21 April, 6am at East Pier, West Bay

What is CTiBD?

This local organisation comprises all the churches in the town that operate in accord with the principles of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and those that are members of the Evangelical Alliance.

CTiBD organises a range of services and other events. These have included open-air services at West Bay in the summer, the lighting of the Christmas tree, the Bridport Nativity, community carols after the West Bay sea swim on Boxing Day, and twice-yearly Taizé services. It has also provided a popular rest tent at the annual Melplash Show.

www.ctibd.org.uk

BRIDPORT ARTSCENTRE		WHAT'S ON
		MARCH
FILM DANCE MUSIC THEATRE SPOKENWORD COMEDY TAKE PART		
Sat 1st	THE THREE LITTLE PIGS BY STUFF AND NONSENSE THEATRE	11am 2:30pm
Thu 6th	CHUBE	7:30pm
Fri 7th	BLUE NOTE RECORDS BEYOND THE NOTES	7:30pm
Thur 13th	I'M NO ANGEL (1933)	11am
Thur 13th	WOMEN BEHIND THE WHEEL (2022)	7:30pm
Fri 14th	CONCERTS IN THE WEST ALASDAIR BEATSON	11:30am
Fri 14th	ELVIS MCGONAGALL GIN & CATATONIC	7:30pm
Sat 15th	MET OPERA FIDELIO	5pm
Fri 21st	I HAVE A BRUISE BY WOMANEWER	7:30pm
Mon 24th	CHRIS CHIBNALL IN CONVERSATION DEATH AT THE WHITE HART LAUNCH EVENT	7:30pm
Tue 25th	EXHIBITION ON SCREEN DAWN OF IMPRESSIONISM PARIS 1874	7:30pm
Wed 26th	POT LICKER	7:30pm
Thur 27th	BRIDPORT'S CULTURE CAFE	7pm
Sun 30th	BEN TUNNICLIFFE'S NOWHERE ENSEMBLE	8pm
WWW.BRIDPORT-ARTS.COM 01308 424 204		

Bridport Christian Fellowship invites you to come and hear

Abi Willetts



Saturday 15th March at 7pm
Sunday 16th March at 10.30am

Abi will be accompanied by a team from Rooted for this weekend and there will be an opportunity for ministry and prayer after each service.

She is the pastoral advisor to the Ichthus London congregations and coordinates Ichthus's Overseas Missions work. She graduated from RadNet in 2001 and is passionate about church planting and seeing more of the Holy Spirit's activity in the church.

Bridport Christian Fellowship, Kings Square DT6 3QD
 01308 458227 • info@bridportchristianfellowship.org
 www.bridportchristianfellowship.org

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH 
BRADPOLE

The Friends of Holy Trinity Church present:



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PALESTRINA 500

SATURDAY 15TH MARCH AT 7PM

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Drinks by donation.

The Friends of Holy Trinity Church Bradpole is a charity (No. 279543) which supports the preservation and upkeep of the church and churchyard

William Shakespeare's **THIS MY THEATRE** 

The Tempest

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH BOTHENHAMPTON

2nd May, 7pm

Tickets: thisismytheatre.com
07732 253311 | £16 | Refreshments Available

In association with... 

Discover Carmina with the West Dorset Singers

The West Dorset Singers (WDS) are giving musical locals the chance to sing with them for an afternoon as they rehearse some of the best-loved choruses from Carmina Burana, Carl Orff's choral masterpiece.

On Saturday 29 March, WDS – which is West Dorset's biggest choir – is hosting a come-and-sing event at St Swithun's Church, Bridport.

"It's a great opportunity for people to experience singing extraordinary music as part of a big choir," says Matt Kingston, the WDS musical director. "We've been rehearsing Carmina for a few weeks and it will be exciting to share what we have learned with other singers."

Experienced singers, members of other choirs, and novices who want to give it a try are all welcome. WDS can provide music scores for those who don't have their own, along with training aids for anyone who needs help with practising their part.

The fee for taking part is £15 per person, and the rehearsal starts at 1.30pm.



Pictured: the West Dorset Singers in rehearsal, and (left) their musical director, Matt Kingston



The event will end with an informal performance at 4.30pm, to which everyone is welcome. Entry is free, with a voluntary retiring collection. WDS will present their full concert performance on Saturday 17 May, also at St Swithun's.

For more details, visit www.westdorsetsingers.org or contact secretary@westdorsetsingers.org.

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Could you help to save the Golden Cap Association from closure? Come forward now and get involved

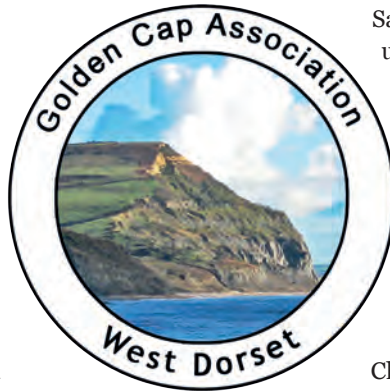
The length and breadth of this magazine’s Get Involved section is testament to the hard work of the many volunteers across Bridport and beyond who give their time and skills to provide interesting and entertaining opportunities for other people.

From singing to stagecraft, bellringing to embroidery, there really is something for everyone – and the Golden Cap Association (GCA) is no exception. Operating in support of the local work of the National Trust (NT), the group has found the perfect way to make NT membership even more enjoyable, with a range of fascinating events including talks, walks, coach outings, quizzes and lunches, as well as three newsletters each year.

The association was formed in 1978, and started with 575 members, growing to a high of 800 at the start of this century. Membership has since dropped to around 300. All GCA members are either members of or volunteers with the National Trust (this is a condition of membership).

Chris Walliker is the group’s president. “Our activities allow us to donate to the National Trust, and we have funded a variety of projects in the charity’s West Dorset area,” he says. “In recent years these have included equipment for a local ecology group, outdoor information boards, a major hedgelaying project and restoration of a wildflower meadow.”

Events planned for the coming months include a talk on 28 April about the Bankes family of Kingston Lacy by historian and National Trust guide Andy Williams.



Sadly, however, the group’s future is under threat. Mike Nicks has been its treasurer for 14 years and chairman as well for 9 years, and last year announced his wish to retire from these roles at the end of 2024. “During this long period, Mike has guided the association with total commitment, especially through the difficulties of the Covid years, and we’re all very grateful to him,” says Chris. “We haven’t found anyone else to take on these roles permanently, although

Mike has kindly agreed to serve as treasurer for another year, and long-standing committee member Margaret McClellan has accepted the role of acting chair for 2025.

“Despite our approaches to the membership to come forward to join the committee and allow some of our longest-serving officers to retire, we have unfortunately now reached the point when we’ll have to say ‘time’s up’ at the end of this year unless other people take on enough of the work.”

So if you’re a National Trust member or accredited volunteer – or are prepared to become one – and would like to help save this valuable organisation from closure, the first step is to visit the GCA website at www.goldencapnt.org.uk/wp, email the association at info@goldencapnt.org.uk or call Margaret McClellan on 01308 862197.



Golden Cap and surrounding National Trust land, taken from the southwest



Ben Salter / Flickr

From BT to Bradpole: John Rees's journey in life, faith and ministry



The Revd John Rees has been active in ministry in the Parish of Bridport for just over a year now, so we thought it was time we caught up with him to find out how things are going – and to learn a bit more about his life and career...

The Bridge: A hearty – but rather belated – welcome to Bridport, John! First, can you explain how you fit into the Parish of Bridport team?

The Revd John Rees: I'm one of two associate priests in the team: the other is Lorna Johnson. We're both 'non-stipendiary', meaning we're not paid by the church for our parish work; Lorna works for the Diocese of Salisbury in another capacity, and for the parish as a volunteer. I was a rector in Wiltshire and am now retired from paid ministry. I spend about 25 hours each week on parish work.

TB: So do you have specific responsibilities?

JR: I lead the schools ministry previously led by Pete Stone, so I'm involved at St Mary's Primary School, where I've recently become a local governor. I'm also beginning to support Bridport Primary school as well as supporting young people in other ways. I'm working with the St Mary's headteacher and the Diocese of Salisbury to develop a monthly worshipping community called Flourish, similar to the previous Star Club initiative that was paused when Pete moved on to his new job. I'm also leading a church council subgroup looking



at how we can help children and families – particularly those who aren't already connected with the church. My passion is finding ways for schools and the church to work together for the good of the community.

TB: And you're involved with services and day-to-day activities in the parish, too?

JR: Yes, I lead services across the parish, especially at Holy Trinity Bradpole, the nearest church to our house and a place where I feel very much at home. My background is evangelical, although I'll happily work across the various traditions in the Church of England.

TB: Tell us a bit about your life before Bridport. How long have you been a priest?

JR: I was ordained in 2006, having studied part time for three years in Salisbury. I took on some responsibilities at a local church alongside my secular 'day job', but within a few years I realised I couldn't carry that pace until my retirement. In 2010 I started

applying for rector jobs and soon started working full time in the church, taking on a priest-in-charge role in Rowde and Bromham near Devizes, Wiltshire. One of the things I'm proudest of from that time is my work on building up links between schools, church and community, with initiatives including dramatised bible readings and monthly worship in schools.

In June 2016 I moved to the Canalside Benefice on the edge of Trowbridge, also in Wiltshire. I was the rector, responsible for four churches – we had some retired clergy and associate priests in the team, too – and I was also chaplain to the Wiltshire and Bath Air Ambulance. Thinking at the time about how I'd been called to serve those parishes, I sensed huge potential in terms of re-engaging with the community, building up the lay teams and, of course, leading Christian distinctiveness work with the three CofE primary schools and their governors.

TB: What drew you to ordination?

JR: I've always been active in the church and I started to think about ordination back in the 1990s, when I was a churchwarden and led ministry with teenagers. My wife, Anne, and I have always had a shared sense of being called to ministry – in our previous benefice she set up a toddler group and a coffee group, and now here in Bradpole she's a lay worship leader and involved with running the toddler group.

TB: And what about your life before becoming a priest?

John Rees's journey in life, faith and ministry continued

JR: We lived in Highworth, near Swindon, and I worked in management for British Telecom for 25 years, initially leading the supply of cable to engineers and then developing new secure communications services for the Ministry of Defence, among other things enabling remote working for forces personnel.

There's definitely a connection between that job, managing change and leading a team of security specialists, working with the military and other agencies, and a priest's role in the church! Both involve dealing with diverse people with very different skills, communicating effectively, being entrusted with confidential information and working collaboratively. Change management in industry is great preparation for church life: learning to question gently whether the existing way of doing something really is the best way. I believe God

gives us all unique talents to use for ourselves and for the good of the community; I want to help people grow in confidence when it comes to using those skills, and discover who God has called them to be.

TB: How did you end up here in Bridport?

JR: In 2021 I sensed that it would soon be time to move to a more part-time ministry. At the time we owned a house in Highworth and the tenants had given notice; we knew we didn't want to move back there, so we decided to sell, and this triggered thoughts of retirement plans. We knew we wanted to stay in the Diocese of Salisbury, and also liked the idea of retiring near the sea. We're caravanners and we'd enjoyed visiting Highlands End, and although we also considered the Purbecks, we had a strong sense of wanting a lively community in a market town. We came to look

at Bridport: it really spoke to us, particularly the diversity of the CofE churches and the schools, and Anne saw Bradpole church on the parish website and suggested it would be a good fit for us. We found our house and that was that! At first I was still working full time in my previous benefice, and we'd come down here for days off and holidays, but I left that role in July 2023 and we made the big move.

TB: And do you have time for any hobbies...?

JR: My aim is to have an active ministry here but also to take time out so we can be away for a month or so sometimes. We love walking in the countryside and going away in our campervan. We regularly visit our sons and grandson in Wiltshire, where I'm still Air Ambulance Chaplain, and we're planning to visit wider family in New Zealand later this year.

Christian Aid's lifesaving work in Sudan: an update

This year's Christian Aid (CA) Sudan Christmas Campaign has raised an astonishing £810.98 – over £300 of which was raised by Peter Wright's Antarctic talk last month.

Never has this support been more necessary. The 20-month-old armed power struggle continues and has caused the world's biggest humanitarian crisis. Estimates suggest that up to 150,000 have been killed so far in the conflict, and more than 11 million people have been forced from their homes.

Over the last year almost a million refugees and returnees have also crossed the border from Sudan into South Sudan to escape horrific war

crimes, violence and rape. CA's local partners are trying to support this influx by providing cash, emergency supplies and access to water and sanitation to almost 100,000 people.

There has also been serious flooding as part of a recurring pattern when the Nile overflows after heavy rains caused by climate change. The 2024–5 floodwaters reached levels not seen in decades, causing widespread destruction. Like so many developing nations, Sudan has done little to affect climate change, yet takes the brunt of it.

As in most CA projects, help is delivered via a long established partner: Smile Again Africa Development Organisation (SAADO).

Daniel Auyen works for SAADO at Wedwell refugee settlement in South Sudan and was himself raised in a refugee camp. "You're only a refugee by virtue of the situation you find yourself in," he says. "Refugees are wonderful, talented people, who given a chance can contribute to the change we are all yearning for."

Jill Henderson, CA's local organiser in Bridport, says: "While situations like that in Sudan can seem overwhelming, every prayer, every gift, every action brings hope to people in need. Thank you to everyone in Bridport who so generously responded to the pressing need in the Diocese of Salisbury's link diocese in Sudan."

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ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967

Director of music – Tim Linsley

07830 308701

Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 420632

Covid-19 made an impact in many ways, and many of our regular donors haven't been able to support the church as they once did. If you can make a donation, whatever you can give, you'll be helping to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport.



Church and children

Often people say that children are 'the future' – whether they are talking about future leaders in business, politics or the Church, or perhaps just responsible adults. It's generally accepted that children need to be nurtured, cared for and loved so they have good foundations for their adult life, but sometimes this way of thinking can lead to the mistaken belief that childhood is merely preparation for the future rather than being important in itself.

The Church has often taken this view, with children being tolerated – as long as they were 'seen and not heard' – rather than being welcomed; seeing children as the 'future Church' rather than an important part of the worshipping community that is Church NOW. Maybe this is why Jesus took the step of singling out children as examples of the Kingdom of God – a step quite unacceptable to the first-century disciples for

whom children were seen as unimportant, a nuisance and a distraction from the real business of learning from Jesus and passing on this good news.

What does this mean in practice? And what have we been doing about it at St Mary's?

The first step has been to welcome children of all ages to the church, and the second step is to provide a space that is appropriate to their needs. A place where babies and toddlers have space to be and to play and for older children to have Sunday School where age-appropriate learning and craft activities can take place.

The third step is for the congregation to value their learning as the children return to the main body of the church to show us what they have made and learned. And sometimes we all enjoy a joke that the children tell! In this way children are affirmed as an important part of our worshipping community. It has been so good to see the children grow in confidence as they share their learning with the adults. This is not the Church of TOMORROW – this is Church TODAY!

The fourth step is to use the children's gifts and talents to contribute to the worship of the Church as a whole – taking part in readings, for instance, and making the Easter Garden. With this in mind we are planning a further step... an all-age Holy Communion service.

At St Mary's at 11am on Sunday 16 March there will be a service for everyone. Preparations are under way with the children, the Sunday School leaders and the clergy to plan a Holy Communion service that will be more easily understood and involve families in taking part and becoming an integral part of the whole worshipping community.

Peter Wright



Bridport Town Council CENTRAL WARD

Ward clerk – Will Austin 456722
enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

We've had a bit of confusion recently over some proposed changes to parking on South Street on market days. Just to be clear, the proposal – suggested by Dorset Council and aimed at addressing traffic problems when traders are setting up and removing their stalls – will not now be going ahead. There will, however,

be some other changes to allow laybys to be used for parking when not in use by the market (mostly when the weather is bad) and we expect these to come into operation in March.

This was one of the issues discussed at the last ward meeting in January. Other topics were: the recently completed resurfacing of Bridport FC Car Park (*pictured*); proposed developments at Fisherman's Arms, Flood Lane, and Sidney Gale House; a management plan for Asker Meadows; a proposed cider and music festival on the meadows; and a request to lock the gates at night at Borough Gardens. This last item has subsequently been approved, and aims to prevent some serious vandalism and antisocial behaviour affecting residents of and visitors to the gardens. The changes are expected to come into effect over the next few weeks.

The ward meetings happen generally every couple of months and we'd love to see residents join councillors to discuss anything relating to Central Ward. Public attendance is much better at the other four ward meetings and your input can make a real difference so please do come along – the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 17 March at 3pm at Bridport WI Hall.



Resurfacing work at Bridport Football Club Car Park, which is now complete

A reminder, too, that we're very much looking forward to the arrival of Stampede by the Sea (www.stampedebythesea.org), a fundraising art trail organised by Weldmar Hospice with town council support. The trail, which includes the town centre, will comprise 30 striking and colourful elephant sculptures, designed and painted by talented artists.

Will Austin

HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton

Parish editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
Children & youth worker –
Jean Mitchell 422127
Director of music – vacancy

From the parish editor

March church services begin with parish worship at Holy Trinity Bothenhampton on Sunday 2 March at 10am, followed by tea and coffee.

The season of Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on 5 March and leads up to Easter. There will be study courses throughout the parish, details of which are available on the table at the back of Holy Trinity (and see page 6 for details of the Lent book). The fourth Sunday in Lent (30 March) is Mothering Sunday.

As well as the usual monthly coffee morning in Holy Trinity, which is on 1 March, the village hall committee will be hosting a coffee morning on Saturday 15 March, 10am–12 noon in the hall. This is a time for meeting friends and neighbours, and maybe people you haven't met before, over a hot drink and biscuits. All welcome.

The Luncheon Club is another social occasion, and

Luncheon Club

at Bothenhampton Village Hall
Thursday 13 March

From 12 noon; lunch served at 12.30pm

Come and enjoy a two-course hot lunch with others

- Fish pie or spinach and pepper frittata
 - Jam roly-poly and custard
- Price £7 per head



Please book so we have numbers for catering:
Heather Purse 423220

heatherpurse@yahoo.co.uk

the next one is on Thursday 13 March in the village hall from 12 noon. Heather Purse and her team work very hard to provide a delicious hot meal, so please let her know if you would like to go. Details are above.

Visitors to Holy Trinity often comment on how well the church is kept. This is due to the work of a few dedicated people who keep it clean and tidy and arrange flowers, and to whom we are most grateful. However, some extra help is needed for a spring clean taking place over two days. On Thursday 27 March →

HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton continued...

there will be high-up cleaning to remove cobwebs, etc., and on Friday 28 March there will be plenty of low-level, sitting-down jobs to do as well as other tasks for the more agile helpers. Both days will start at 10am. If you are able to come, any buckets, cloths and gloves you can bring will be useful.

If you prefer to work outdoors, the Old Churchyard spring working party will be on Saturday 5 April at 2pm.

Tickets are now available online or by phone for the production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. This play will be performed at Holy Trinity on Friday 2 May by This is my Theatre, the travelling company that

delighted us last November with their excellent production of *A Christmas Carol*. Any profits will go to the Churches Conservation Trust, which looks after the Old Church. See the advert on page 10 for details.

March is the beginning of spring and we are looking towards warmer weather and lighter evenings.

Remember the clocks go forward one hour on 30 March.

Barbara Ffooks

FILM NIGHT in Bothenhampton Village Hall

Saturday 29 March – title to be announced

Doors open 7pm, film starts at 7.30pm

Admission £5 • Refreshments available

Please book by emailing lcnc2413@outlook.com

ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor – James Craddock 458725

walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

If you have any pastoral or personal issues, please contact the Revd Ann Ayling on 424896

Walditch Art Group fosters creative friendship

We meet in Walditch Village Hall on Wednesdays, 2–4pm, from September to May. During the summer months we meet outdoors at different locations.

The group was founded in 1993 in Eype, meeting in the village hall there. It was a small gathering of people who wanted to paint and draw together, sharing their expertise and company. By 2012 the group had outgrown the hall and decided to move to Walditch.

We remain a small, informal, friendly group of amateurs, ranging from beginners to experienced artists. There is no set topic or media, and members do their own thing, exchanging ideas. We always have a cup of tea halfway through the afternoon.

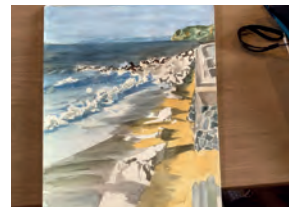
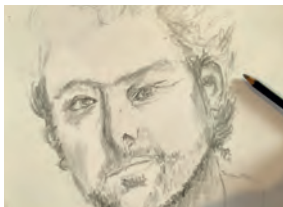
Some of our members live in the village, while others come from Bridport, West Bay and further away, including Lyme Regis.

During the summer we paint at various locations in and around Bridport and these have included lakes, gardens, landscapes and buildings. Whenever possible we finish with a cup of tea and a chat. A programme is drawn up based on locations put forward by members.

New members are always welcome. You can either just turn up or contact Diane (56845 or 07773 080729) or Robin (456421) if you have any questions.

Robin Stapleton

Walditch Art Group members at a meeting and (below) some of their artworks



Walditch Garden Group

Our friendly group meets on the last Thursday of every month except December. Everyone is welcome, from near and far, so if you are interested in trying us out, do come along at 10am on Thursday 27 March for our next meeting. We gather in Walditch Village Hall for garden chat, discussion, advice and tea/coffee.

Jane Mowatt (07810 110461)

March garden tips: Prune bush and shrub roses. Prune shrubs with colourful winter stems. Mulch bare soil in borders. Protect fruit blossom against frosts. Sow sweet peas and place in cold frame. Sow hardy annuals where they are to flower. Plant early potatoes and asparagus. Sow vegetables outside. Harden off young vegetable plants before putting them outside. Divide herbaceous perennials.

Pruning: Group 3 clematis (late-summer flowering), hybrid tea rose, floribunda and English roses (their annual prune or revival prune), hardy fuchsia, *Hydrangea paniculata*, lavender, *Leycesteria formosa* (Himalayan honeysuckle). Prune winter-flowering shrubs (including winter heathers) when the flowers have faded.

Shrubs and other plants for March: *Chaenomeles*, the Japanese flowering quince, flowers March to May, in shades of bright orange-red, white or pink. The shrub *Salix caprea* (pussy willow) takes easily from cuttings, and flowers during March and April. Loved by bees for its pollen, it produces male and female catkins on separate plants. Primroses are a native primula species and, along with the cowslip, the parent of the garden *Polyanthus*. Pale yellow *Primula vulgaris* thrives in soil that's rich in organic matter, with shade for part of the day. *Pulmonaria* (lungworts) are shade-loving,



**Pictured: Primroses in Walditch churchyard (top);
Anemone blanda**

bee-friendly perennials, flowering in shades of blue, violet, pink, purple, red and white during March and April. *Anemone blanda*'s cheerful, daisy-like flowers in shades of blue and purple are perfect for naturalising in a mixed border around the base of deciduous shrubs, or adding spring colour to the edge of a woodland garden. For maximum impact, plant woodland anemones in bold drifts.

Bridport Town Council BOTHENHAMPTON & WALDITCH WARD

Ward clerk – Jo Hughes 07398 171955
bandw.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

Our February meeting at Walditch Village Hall was well attended with residents raising several issues. These included a request for the trees at the John Gundry

play area to be removed as they are overhanging and overshadowing the allotments; a request for the bench at the entrance to Jellyfields nature reserve to be moved to the other side of the entrance so it is away from the dog waste bin; and a request for the Platinum Jubilee tree, which was planted on Valley View in 2022, to receive some TLC in the form of mulch and a high-nitrogen fertiliser as well as the removal of one metre of grass around the base of the tree to aid its growth.

There was also a request for the grass cutting contractors to refrain from mowing the grass for the next few weeks under the horse chestnut tree on Walditch Green, where there is a stunning array of snowdrops (*pictured overleaf*). →

BTC Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward continued...

These issues were passed to the town council's grounds maintenance team for actioning where possible.

The 20mph subject also came up, with residents stressing the need for the reduced speed because of the number of pedestrians, joggers, horse riders, etc. using the roads. Unfortunately, the process for achieving 20mph is not swift; once we have met the criterion of demonstrating significant community support, traffic surveys will need to be carried out because another important criterion is that existing mean speeds must be at or below 24mph to provide a realistic opportunity for compliance. If the speed surveys meet the criteria, we will then make a formal 20mph application, which will be assessed to determine whether the matter can proceed to a formal public consultation.

Finally, you may have noticed some new locked noticeboards appearing in the ward. Although these are locked, if you want to display any community info, please let me know and I will do my best to help.

The next meeting will be at 11am on Tuesday 29 April at Bothenhampton Village Hall. In the meantime, if you



Pictured: there has been a stunning display of snowdrops on Walditch Green in recent weeks

want to raise any items of interest or concern, please email me at bandw.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk.
Jo Hughes

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

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Bell enquiries –
htbrabells@parishofbridport.org
For pastoral or personal issues, please contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
(Wednesday is her day off)

The Friends of Holy Trinity Church
Bradpole invite you to a

Soup & Pud Lunch

Thursday 6 March, 12–2pm
Bradpole Church

£10 on the door



Quiz evening

Do come to the quiz evening organised by The Friends of Holy Trinity on Friday 4 April at 7pm in the church. The cost will be £12 per person, which will include a fish and chip supper (there are menu options). Drinks will be by donation and there will be a raffle. Places fill up rapidly, so please book with the secretary, Wendy Carnell (thefriendshbt@gmail.com / 01308 420716) as soon as possible. Invite your friends, family, neighbours and come as a team of four or join a team on the night. Any queries please contact the secretary.



Village lunch club

The club will be lunching on Tuesday 11 March in Long's Fish & Chip Restaurant. Please contact Thelma Pulman (458533) for more info. All welcome to join.

Other groups

The Mothers' Union will meet at 2.30pm on Tuesday 18 March. The Crafty Group will meet on Thursdays 6 and 20 March. Please contact Daphne King (427552) for more information.

Tots@Ten

Pre-school children are welcome to join others, with parents and carers, normally every Wednesday during

term time at 10am in the church where there are toys to play with and lots of space. Refreshments are served. There is no charge.

Parnham Voices concert

We will be hosting a concert by Parnham Voices in the church on Saturday 15 March at 7pm. Please see the advert on page 10 for details.

Bradpole Forster Village Hall

The trustees have arranged for John Preston, a volunteer from the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, to give a talk at 2.30pm on Monday 17 March. He will explain how to use the defibrillator (pictured) – which is installed on the wall outside the village hall – and demonstrate the up-to-date method of resuscitation.



The trustees would like to encourage as many people as possible to come to this free session so they will know how easy it is to use the equipment and potentially save lives.

Last month's tabletop sale in the hall was a great success and a good start to the trustees' plan to do this every couple of months or so. The idea was to promote the hall's availability for hire, showing possibilities for parties and small events. With a combination of

entrance money, the sale of teas and coffees, and a raffle, the event turned a profit, which will help with the purchase of a new oven as part of updating the kitchen. Look out for the next date to book a table!



The main hall (pictured above) is available for hire by local community groups and private hire and is fully accessible with facilities for disabled people. Hall bookings can now be made online at www.hallbookingonline.com/bradpole.

There is also some information on the Bradpole website: www.bradpole.org.uk/the-forster-memorial-institute-bradpole-village-hall.

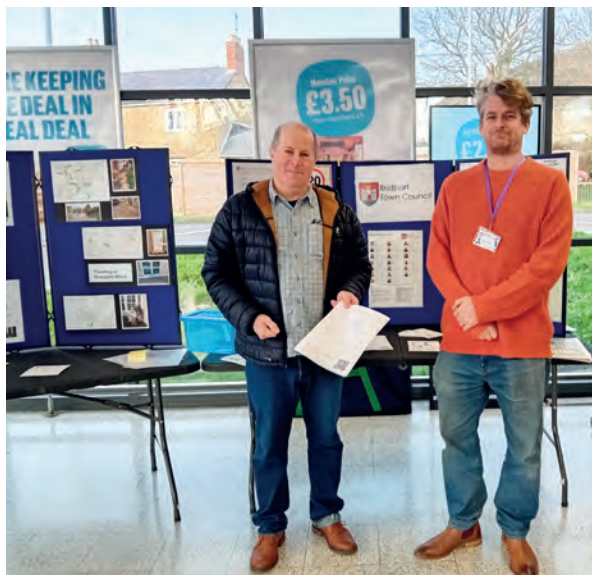
Bradpole Buzz Group

The group would love some support with the following:

- Practical help with planting
- Offers of wild plants and seeds from your garden
- Suggestions and general support



We will be meeting on Saturdays 1 and 22 and Wednesday 12 March. For more information phone Rose Van den Akker on 01308 425756 or email bradpolebuzz@gmail.com.



Pictured: Councillors Nigel Amor (left) and Rob Casey at January's community engagement event in the foyer at Bridport Co-op

**Bridport Town Council
BRADPOLE WARD**

Ward clerk – Sandy Goldsmith
07944 523084
bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

As reported last month, your ward councillors started off 2025 with a community engagement event at the Bridport Co-op (pictured). They felt it went very well.

Many people made constructive points about the 20mph survey, with the majority supporting the suggested areas for the lower speed limit but a few in total opposition. The councillors will consider the outcome of the survey and comments by members of the public, not only at the event but also by those who have completed the online survey or who spoke at the January ward meeting at Bradpole Village Hall. →

BTC Bradpole Ward continued...

At the Co-op event, councillors also discussed other issues with concerned residents including parking and antisocial behaviour.

Reporting issues & incidents to Dorset Council

At the ward meeting, councillors reminded people about the importance of reporting incidents such as blocked drains, poor road/pavement surfaces, and overgrown verges and trees to Dorset Council, either online or by phone.

The more people that report an issue, the more likely it is that the relevant department will deal with it. A general rule is that if one person reports an issue, on the first occasion (unless it is causing an immediate danger) it will be noted but no action will be taken. On a second report, the issue will again be noted and may well trigger action if this is deemed to be warranted, while on receipt of a third report, failure to act puts the authority in a potentially culpable position

and will generally trigger some form of action.

So, when a number of people report an issue to the relevant authority, this should result in that authority taking action.

When reporting an issue or incident, it is important to stick to the facts and include as much relevant detail as possible (location, time of day, etc.) with photos if possible. The contact details for Dorset Council are: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk / 01305 221000 / customerservices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Forthcoming events

The next community engagement event is on Saturday 8 March from 10am in the foyer of Bridport Co-op.

Your ward councillors are always ready to listen to any concerns you have about Bradpole Ward. The next public meeting will be held in May (date and location to be confirmed).

You can contact me on 07944 523084 or by email at bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk.
Sandy Goldsmith

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

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Marking Candlemas at our parish service

St Swithun's Church hosted the parish service of Holy Communion on Candlemas Sunday, 2 February. Our pioneer team vicar, the Revd Cally Burch, led the service, while the Revd John Rees gave the sermon.

The hymns were Praise to the Holiest in the Height; Faithful Vigil Ended; Lead Us Heavenly Father, Lead Us; and O Happy Band of Pilgrims.

The words of the Collect were quite moving, reflecting on the presentation of Jesus in the Temple: "Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever."

The Bible readings were from Hebrews 2 and from Luke 2, in which Jesus is presented in the Temple.

The St Mary's Sunday School team led the inter-

cessions beautifully, helped by Michelle, one of the children.

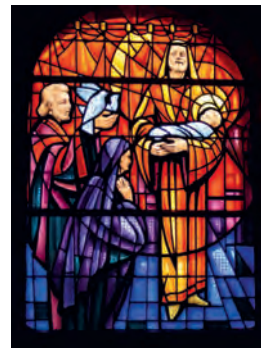
We had journeyed through Epiphany, when the Wise Men brought their gifts to Christ, and John's sermon was on the theme of gifts. He gave the moving example of a piece of driftwood with the inscription "The road to a friend's house is never long", given to him and his wife, Anne, by a friend of many years who has sadly since died. John talked about how the gift reminded him that people are more precious than possessions.

Reflecting on the Gospel reading, which told of how Mary and Joseph brought their precious gift, Jesus, to the Temple to be blessed, John said Jesus was God's great gift to us all. He added that Simeon and Anna were guided by the Holy Spirit to recognise the infant Jesus as God's promised saviour – and that Simeon said Jesus would be "a light to lighten the Gentiles", bringing a new relationship with God to all people.

Finally, John explained how God gives us all spiritual gifts and talents to use both for our own benefit and in the service of others – he encouraged us to identify and use our own gifts and to support each other in doing this, too – for the benefit of the parish and the town.

After the service, our dedicated team of helpers served refreshments in the church hall.

James Craddock



Bridport Town Council WEST & ALLINGTON WARD

Ward clerk – Amy Stephenson
bridportwest.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

At our January engagement session we were lucky enough to have Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Pete Smith joining us, as well as members of the public. Pete spoke about various ward-related issues including problem parking. He reminded us that parking issues are not a police matter but are down to Parking Enforcement at Dorset Council so need to be reported to them. Criminal damage to cars, however, should be reported to the police. This has caused some concern in the Hospital Lane area recently.

Pete also talked about the ongoing drug problems, not only in the ward but everywhere. There have been several drug 'busts' over the last few months and more are likely to follow. The police take reports of drugs seriously but do need information from the public so they can proceed to an investigation, warrants, etc. Any information is gratefully received, whether it's a licence plate number, the time of day when things are happening, or other details, and this can help build up a picture. You can report by phone or online to 101, or online at www.dorset.police.uk/ro/report.

Cathy Harvey from the volunteer group The Allington Hillbillies told us they are looking at launching a project for 1 May 2026 to commemorate the 40-year anniversary of the purchase of Allington Hill by the Woodland Trust. This will be a Bridport-wide project and will also involve the town council to help the group celebrate this exciting event in a way that will be publicly engaging.

Our application for 20mph speed restrictions on six roads in our ward has now been submitted following traffic speed data surveys by Dorset Council. At the time of writing, we are waiting for the outcome, which may well have to go to a public consultation. The application is not a quick process so it may be several months before we see any new 20mph limits.

Our next ward engagement session will be in April. The date, time and venue are still to be confirmed but will be advertised on our noticeboards and social media, etc. We welcome all members of the public as this is your chance to air any concerns you have on ward-related issues in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Amy Stephenson



Neil Turner

ST JOHN'S West Bay

Parish editor – Sue Pollock
07903 558568
Chapel warden –
Rosemary Russell 423013

News from St John's

Services have been continuing but the church still remains closed outside service times because the work to repair the internal damage has not yet started. There's no word yet on a new heating system, although options are being considered. We are holding regular Sunday services as well as Morning Prayer on Mondays at 10am and the monthly Service of Wholeness and Healing on the fourth Saturday of the month at 6pm.

West Bay WI

The regular Knit & Natter session will be on Wednesday

5 March from 10am to 12 noon, then at the meeting on Wednesday 12 March (2.30–4.30pm) Keith Hayman will talk about the work of medical detection dogs. On top of all the other detection work they do, these clever dogs have been trained to detect Covid.

West Bay WI started in February 1925, and an exhibition to celebrate its centenary is now on display at the Discovery Centre. The group has also organised a celebration cream tea with cakes and a magician and entertainer. They will also be joined by Elizabeth Gale, a very well-known local figure and author, whose grandmother was a founder member.

If you are interested in joining the WI, please contact Alison Ridge on 01308 897293 or Maggie Hooper on 07720 056310.

Round and about the Bay

The feast of Candlemas, celebrated at the parish service at St Swithun's on 2 February, commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the Temple and was originally the day to remove any Christmas decorations. →

ST JOHN’S West Bay continued...

I think most people now prefer to take them down by the much earlier date of 6 January, which is Epiphany or Twelfth Night. West Bay stuck to the traditional timings, however, finally dismantling its new-style Christmas tree on 3 February; hopefully everything that had been used on the tree can now be stored or used throughout the year and then be put up again. It certainly proved indestructible during the storms, and West Bay has again been battered by extreme weather, with Storm Herminia forcing the flood barriers to be put in place once more. It was quite a sight to see an amazing amount of sea foam on the East Pier and beach, looking like a snow storm. This year sees the 20th anniversary of the formal opening of the £18 million coastal defence and harbour improvements scheme.

The Discovery Centre opened for the February half term with its exhibition ‘Myth and Reality: Smuggling in the 18th Century’ on display. Apparently West Bay had its fair share of smuggling, involving whisky, rum, brandy and tobacco coming ashore here. Visitors to the centre were encouraged to take part in a competition called ‘Search for the Smuggler’. These competitions are enjoyed by adults and children alike. The centre goes back to six-day opening from 18 March.

‘Stampede by the Sea’ (www.stampedebythesea.org) arrives in West Bay on 28 March for the start of an eight-week trail through Lyme Regis, Bridport and West Bay. The trail comprises 30 elephant sculptures, beautifully designed and painted by local artists. There will also be baby versions of the elephants in local schools, learning centres, shops and businesses. The event is raising money for the Weldmar Hospice. Elephants were chosen as they never forget, and Weldmar Hospicecare never forgets its duty of care in



the community. I have been struggling to find photos for The Bridge this month, but while out walking in the Bay I noticed that the water trough outside the Cornish Bakery is full of spring flowers, so I thought this would be just right. I hope you agree!

**Bridport Town Council
WEST BAY WARD**

Ward clerk – Will Austin 456722
enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

The ward clerk writes...

What a fantastic turnout at the last ward meeting at the Salt House in January – 42 people came along to discuss the ongoing issue of antisocial driving with PC Kirsti Frecknall and PCSO Pete Smith, and also to hear from local businessman Tom Hallifax about his vision for a ‘pavilion’ over the stone seating area. The feedback to Tom was mixed, with a 50/50 split of people in favour and against, and he is going to review the comments before deciding what to do next with his idea.

Both discussions were quite animated and I must say that some of the behaviour was some way short of being respectful – particularly to invited guests. It’s wonderful to see so many people getting actively involved in the West Bay community, but please, please, think about the effect of your words on others

who give their time to support the area. Rant over!

Since that meeting we’ve been asked to help with a project to set up a 12-month pilot weekend ‘shuttle bus’ service between Bridport and West Bay. We’re in the process of seeking funding and, if successful, we will seek to introduce a half-hourly service on Saturday and Sunday from about June this year, with a maximum fare of £1. Fingers crossed! We’re grateful to Josef Davies-Coates of United Diversity Bridport for developing the proposal.



The next ward meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 12 March at 6.30pm at the Salt House. Come along and talk about all things West Bay.

The iconic Christmas tree came down at Candlemas in February, and while it wasn’t a town council initiative, it’s surely worth thanking everyone involved – such a wonderful idea!

A reminder that West Bay Car Boot Sale is scheduled to start on Sunday 13 April this year, continuing weekly until October. Last year’s stall fees have provided a grants fund of over £7,000 that will be distributed to local groups in March.

Will Austin

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Jane Wilson
01308 341159

Church secretary – Sue Herman
422598 / bridportsec@gmail.com

Looking forward to Easter... but first, pancakes!

Are you looking forward to something? It might be something nice, even exciting, like a holiday, visit or celebration. However, it might also be something you're anxious about: a medical appointment, an exam or a job interview. How do we prepare for those things – planning, making lists, clearing our diaries? This is how it is with Christians as we prepare for Lent and Easter.

At the beginning of this month we mark Shrovetide before the period of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (5 March) and ends on Easter Saturday (19 April). Most of us will be eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday (4 March) – but do you know why? Traditionally Shrove Tuesday is a time to use up all those fatty, richer foods which will not be eaten during the period of fasting in Lent. In France it is known as Mardi Gras, which translates as Fat Tuesday, while Spain has Carnaval and Switzerland has Fasnacht – all festivals and feasts held around the date of Shrove Tuesday before Lent brings a time of reflection, contemplation and, in some cases, fasting.

On Ash Wednesday, believers gather for a service that includes making a mark (sometimes the sign of the cross) on people's foreheads in ash made from burning the palm crosses used in the previous year's Palm Sunday services.

The mark is a symbol of grief and a reminder of our own mortality.



Lent is traditionally a time when people decide to give up something that they love – perhaps chocolate, sweets or even using social media. Others might decide to dedicate themselves to doing something for the good of others, such as making a donation or volunteering with a charity. For Christians it is also a period of reflection and preparation for our contemplation and celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So, as we think about Lent let's consider how we can prepare ourselves for Easter... and don't eat too many pancakes!

Jane Clinton

Member of Bridport United Church



March services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 2	10.30am	The Revd Gwyneth Owen (HC)
	4pm	Soul Space
Wed 5	12 noon	Ashing service
Sunday 9	10.30am	The Revd Jane Wilson
Sunday 16	10.30am	The Revd Peter Clark
	4pm	Healing service (HC)
Sunday 23	10.30am	Peter Jenner
Sunday 30	10.30am	The Revd Jane Wilson
		(family service for Mothering Sunday)

Regular events

Mondays	9.30–11am	Little Lambs toddlers group (term time only)
Wednesdays	9.30–10am	Prayer meeting in church
	10am–noon	Coffee morning in the hall
	12.30pm	Lunch Club (fourth only)
		Two-course, home-cooked meal in the hall. Please book by phoning 422598. All welcome
Thursdays	2.30–4pm	Thursday Club (third only)
		Tea, chat, games & crafts in the hall. All welcome
	3.30–5.30	Messy Church (fourth only)
Saturdays	10am–noon	Coffee morning in the hall
	9–11.30am	Big Breakfast in the hall (second only)

For more details of our services and other events, please visit our website www.buc.cool or our Facebook page.



Have you spotted our smart new noticeboard outside the church?

St MARY & St CATHERINE Roman Catholic Church

Parish priest – Fr Colin Groombridge
colin.groombridge@prcdtr.org.uk
 Presbytery 424754
 Secretary – Faith Leborgne 422594
bridport@prcdtr.org.uk

A shepherd smelling of sheep

I had the privilege of spending most of my adult life working in education, teaching children from 4 to 18 as well as spending some time in adult education. Over the years I have interviewed many candidates for a wide variety of jobs in the field of education, including caretakers, cleaners, dinner ladies, teaching assistants, teachers and headteachers.

Part of the interview for most roles involved a tour of the school and a visit to the classrooms. I was particularly interested in the way candidates interacted with the children they met, and nowhere was this more interesting than in the Reception class!

Some candidates, conscious of their new suits or smart dresses, stood back some distance from the young children experimenting in sand, paint or water. Others quickly found themselves on their hands and knees, only too happy to risk a bit of Early Years mess. They understood that to teach was to meet each child at their level, eye to eye. More often than not, these were the candidates who got the job, and fortunately,

almost without exception, they turned out to be valuable, caring members of staff who lived up to my first impression.

As we read the Gospels, we become more and more aware that Jesus lived among the people, being with them eye to eye and face to face. He mixed with ordinary men and women, “sinners and tax collectors”. As Christians we believe in a God who is with us, understands where we are and recognises our difficulties. As Pope Francis says, Jesus was a Shepherd who smelt of His sheep.

May we all serve each other with humility and never be afraid to get grubby knees in our service of one another.

Deacon Mark Brown

Sunday Mass is at 10am at the Roman Catholic church in Victoria Grove and is streamed online at www.bridportcatholics.org.uk and the Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page. For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, see the weekly newsletter on this website or look for updates on Facebook.



BEACON CHURCH Priory Lane, Bridport

Church office 456031
office@beaconchurchbridport.co.uk
www.beaconchurchbridport.co.uk

Huge thanks to Simon

This month we want to say a massive thank you to Simon Batorksi for all his work and dedication in the Bridport Community Kitchen as he steps down this month from his role running this valuable resource. Simon had the vision to begin the Community Kitchen and serve all those in need.

A verse at the heart of Simon’s vision is: “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD

has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.” (Isaiah 61:1)

Simon led the Community Kitchen through lockdowns, ensuring people still had a meal during this very challenging, isolating time. He has overseen thousands of meals and helped hundreds of people who have walked through the door. He has been an inspiration to those in the community and to all of us in Beacon Church. Thank you, Simon, for everything you’ve done for so many with love and kindness and without judgement.

Thank you, too, to everyone in the community who has helped to support the work of the Community Kitchen. It really does make a difference to so many people. As we look for someone to help run the Community Kitchen, we pray for the right person to come forward and take on this important work.

If you would like to know more about the Community Kitchen or how you could help support it please visit www.bridportcommunitykitchen.org.uk.

The Community Kitchen is open from 11am to 2pm on Wednesday and Friday.

You are always welcome at Beacon Church. Wherever you are in your journey in faith, and whatever you believe, we'd love to meet you. Our service is at 10.30am each Sunday in the Beacon Evangelical Hall, Priory Lane DT6 3RW.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP King's Lane (in East St car park)

Office 424437 • David Collins 458227
info@bridportchristianfellowship.org
www.bridportchristianfellowship.org

We are a member church of the UK Evangelical Alliance and an Ichthus Link Church.

We meet for worship every Sunday at 10.30am and at various times during the week.

We seek to bless the community of Bridport with the Good News of Jesus, and everyone is assured of a warm welcome at our Sunday services or when joining in any of our activities.

Our usual pattern of activities is as follows (it varies during church festivals such as Christmas – see online for details: www.bridportchristianfellowship.org).

Mondays: Meals Outreach Project for those who find themselves in difficult times.

Tuesdays: House groups meet at 2–3pm, 2.30–4pm and 7.30–9.30pm.

Wednesdays: House groups meet at 10.30am–12 noon and another at 7–9pm. Precious Ones Baby & Toddlers Group, for under-4s and their parents or carers, meets in the church at 9.30–11.30am.

Bridport QUAKER MEETING The Meeting House 97 South Street

Correspondent – Jeni Edwards
538105 / jeni.edwards69@gmail.com



**Bridport
Community Kitchen**

HOT MEALS & REFRESHMENTS

SHOWERS & CLOTHES WASHING & DRYING FACILITIES

**HEALTH CARE & ACCOMMODATION
ADVICE & ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE**

OPEN 11 a.m - 2.00 p.m

WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS & FRIDAYS

AT BEACON CHURCH, PRIORY LANE. DT6 3RW

Email: bridportcommunitykitchen@gmail.com

Fridays: Come along and join in our Art Group, 10am–12 noon. You don't have to be brilliant at art!

Saturdays: Pray Chat coffee bar with free tea, coffee and cake, 10am–12.30pm.

Sundays: 10.30am–12 noon is our weekly service. On the first Sunday in the month, we share a meal or BBQ after the service.



**BRIDPORT
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**

Caring for our world: what does love require of us?

“We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will... Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life...”*

Walking on the beach in West Bay, the horizon makes the world seem infinite but at my feet I pick up →



QUAKER MEETING continued...

cans and packaging that might otherwise have joined the rafts of pollution floating out towards that distance.

Most mornings there is a Zoom meeting with Quakers who gather from all parts of the UK and across the world. On Tuesday at 7am there were Friends from Singapore, South Africa, and many European countries: and depending on the time there can be Friends from the American continent and beyond. And once upon a time I worked for Christian Aid in London, dealing with the poverty and need of the 'Third World' out there.

As time goes on, it feels as though our world is getting smaller and our effect on it is getting bigger. The challenge is: how we cope with that contrast? Our

challenge is to find out and follow what love requires of us.

Meeting is held at the Meeting House on South Street at 10.30am for an hour on Sunday mornings and 10.30am for half an hour on Wednesday mornings. All are welcome.

The Quaker website at www.bridportquakers.org contains all the details you need to book a room for an event or to find out more about us.

Jeni Edwards

*This is from Advices and Queries no. 42 from Quaker Faith and Practice 1995.



Get involved: local clubs, groups & societies

Please contact the editor (details on page 2) if you'd like your group to appear here. Entries are free but are limited to a few lines and are for non-profit community groups and clubs and their events (not ticketed events such as concerts). Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).



Bridport & District Allotment Society (BADAS) is open to all. Membership is £5/year and gives discount at several gardening suppliers. Contact 250260 / email BADASHUB@outlook.com. More details online at www.bridportallotmentsociety.co.uk

Friday Dance Group for women meets every Friday 11.30am–12.30pm at St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. Come and enjoy dancing as you like to a range of music. First session free. Details from Sue 425037.

Bridport Bridge Club meets at St Swithun's Hall on Tuesday afternoons (beginners/rusty players; not fourth Tuesday), Wednesday evenings and Friday afternoons (relaxed; not third Friday), plus online on Thursday evenings. Beginners' lessons started in mid-October. See www.bridgewebs.com/bridport or phone Martin Angold 01308 861120.

Bridport & District Model Railway Club meets each Tuesday at Askerswell village hall 7–9pm. Members can run their stock on the club 'test track' or operate a club layout. Chairman Geoff Purse 423220.

Burton Bradstock Duplicate Bridge Group meets at the village hall on Tuesdays 1.45–4.45pm. Contact Kathy 485626.

West Dorset Flower Club meets at the WI Hall, North St, at 2.30pm on the second Monday each month with demonstrations and speakers. On 10 March Lucille Street will give a demonstration called 'All things bright and beautiful'. Phone 456339.

Bridport Stage Company theatre group is now rehearsing its production of Alice Through the Looking Glass at The Bull Hotel on Monday evenings at 7pm. To get involved, email Valerie: tasterella@hotmail.co.uk. No experience is needed, and all ages are welcome.

West Dorset Singers (formerly the New Elizabethan Singers) meet for choral rehearsals in the United Church Hall on Tuesdays at 7.30pm from September to May. For more info contact the membership secretary, Jill Edwards: membership@westdorsetsingers.org

Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at 7.30pm at the United Church Hall. Contact Fiona Kenward fekenward@gmail.com

Citizens Advice is here to help

Need advice on benefits, debt, employment or other issues? Pick up the phone and talk to us on Freephone 0800 144 8848. You can also email us via the contact form at www.bridportca.org.uk or drop in to 45 South Street, Bridport (Mon, Tues & Thurs 10am–3pm, Wed & Fri 10am–1pm).



Bridport Blind Club is a social club for the visually impaired. It meets twice a month for tea, entertainment & chat. Part of Dorset Blind Association, which provides personal and technical help. Ian Ibbotson 898484.

Free play singing, circle toning, layering and creating spontaneous tunes, with improvised sound and world rhythms. Tuesdays 1.30pm at Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane. For more info phone Pen 07713 008290.

West Dorset Music Community Orchestra meets on Wednesdays in term time 6.30–7.45pm at the Christian Fellowship Hall in East Street car park. Contact 456297 / www.westdorsetmusic.org.uk

Bridport & District Gardening Club will meet at the WI Hall, North St on Thurs 20 March, 7 for 7.30pm, for its AGM. www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk

ASCAPE offers social opportunities and support for autistic young people and those with social anxiety aged 4–25 and their families. Contact info@ascapegroup.org or visit www.ascapegroup.org

Voices of Hope Singing Group is open to all ages and abilities. Easy, uplifting, joyful songs from around the world, some rounds and some in parts. Borough Gardens (off South Street) or The Chapel in the Garden if it's raining, Fridays at 11am. Suggested donation £5. janesilvercorren@gmail.com / 07887 675161 for more details or to join the mailing list.

The Cowshed Wellbeing Gardens group meets on Tuesdays 2–4pm. Gardening, talking, art & workshops for people with health vulnerabilities or wishing to enhance wellbeing. Access is to the left of Bridport Medical Centre. For details please text 07769 720773.

Bridport Scottish Dancers meet on Wednesdays mid-Sept to May at 7.15pm in St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. All welcome, no partner required. £3 per session incl. refreshments. Basic tuition in first hour. Please wear soft shoes. Caroline 538141 / Tony 01297 560335 / www.bridportscottishdancers.org.uk

Bridport Health Walks are free gentle walks around town. A 30-minute walk every Wednesday and a walk of about 60 minutes on the first and third Thursday each month. Meet in front of the United Church on East St at 9.45am and return for hot refreshments. No need to book, just turn up. For more details contact 01305 252222 / sarah.davies@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Bridport Tree Planting Group plants & gives away 1,000 trees a year in public and private spaces around Bridport. Three free saplings available per household. Help needed to water and weed young trees. Contact joe@thehacketts.uk for details and to receive newsletter. www.westdorsetfriendsoftheearth.org.uk/index.php/more-trees-please

Bridport Folk Dance Club meets every Monday 7.15–9.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. All welcome, including beginners. Phone 458165 or 459001.

Friends at Greenfields is a social get-together for those on their own, or simply needing a bit of company. Every Thursday 10am–3pm at Greenfields, Bridport Community Hospital. Contact Lyn Goward 488272.

Bridport History Society meets on the second Thursday of each month (except July and August) at the United Church Hall, 2.15 for 2.30pm. Visitors welcome £5pp. Membership is £12 individual / £18 couple. For more info visit www.bridporthistorysociety.org.uk

Bridport Inner Wheel meets monthly at Haddon House, West Bay, to enjoy friendship and listen to speakers as well as helping the community. Contact Sue Pollock 07903 558568 / rognsuewbay@btinternet.com

Bridport Branch Royal Naval Association meets on the third Thursday each month at 7 for 7.30pm in the Bridport & District Social Club, North St. Ex-matelots & all other ex-military welcome. Refreshments available. Contact Peter May glassertonm1141@outlook.com

Bridport Community Carnival Committee enables both carnival processions to happen on the third weekend of August each year. Would you like to get involved with planning this sociable event for 2025? Contact joycedunford@yahoo.co.uk or visit www.bridportcarnival.co.uk

Bridport Community Shed, between Mountfield and Bedford Place, opens Mon, Wed & Thurs 10am to noon. On the first Tuesday of the month there is also an evening stitching session (please book in advance). Contact 07593 880428.

The Harmony Centre provides friendly, informal support for local adults of all ages (18+) who want to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Call in during centre opening hours (Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am–1pm) to find out how we can help you. Now at Unit 1, The Tower Building, St Michael's Estate (entrance via courtyard off Foundry Lane DT6 3RR). Phone 01308 801154.

Bridport Community Front Room offers face-to-face and phone support with mental health practitioners and peer specialists for people reaching a mental health crisis point or needing wellbeing support. Thursday to Sunday 2.15–9.45pm. Based at The Harmony Centre, new address as in previous entry. Phone: 07385 290804.

Bridport Youth Dance offers classes in tap, contemporary, street, urban and musical theatre. To enrol or for more details contact Nikki Northover 07765 971357 / bridportyouthdance01@gmail.com / www.bridportyouthdance.org.uk



Bridport St Mary's Parkrun is a weekly, free, timed run or walk organised by volunteers. Saturdays 9am at St Mary's Field. Great fun for all ages and abilities. Register online first then bring your barcode on your phone or printed out. Find us on Facebook or visit www.parkrun.org.uk/stmarys

MMMM! Monday Movie, Meal & Mingling from United Diversity Bridport (UDB) & Sustainable Bridport. Mondays 6–10pm in the White Room, Chapel in the Garden, East St (entry via Rax Lane). Inspiring documentaries and short films by local filmmakers. Admission £3 to cover room hire (UDB members free). Food and drink available. www.ud.coop/mmmm

Bridport & District u3a is for people no longer in full-time employment. Monthly meetings 2pm on the fourth Tuesday each month (except December) in the United Church Hall, East St. The talk lasts about an hour, followed by Q&A and refreshments. On 25 March, Justine Salkeld from The Dogs Trust will come to talk about the charity's work in rehabilitating and rehoming dogs. Members free, visitors £3. More than 60 u3a groups meet regularly, covering a huge range of interests. Contact Alastair Forbes 424166 / chair@bridportu3a.org.uk / website www.bridportu3a.org.uk

The **u3a Singers Group** meets on the first and third Thursdays each month at the WI Hall in North Street, 10am for a 10.30am start. All welcome (no audition). Contact Heather 425219 / www.bridportu3a.org.uk.

The Rotary Club of Bridport meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6 for 6.30pm at the Bridport & District Golf Club, Burton Road DT6 4QT. We also hold fundraising and social activities on other dates and elsewhere. We help good causes locally, nationally and internationally and support the local community. Contact Mike Green 07909 990693 / mikegreen@greenmail.net

Bridport Stroke Club meets weekly Sept–Christmas and Feb–July at the Community Room, Vernon's Court. Contact Chris Farmer: agricols@icloud.com

Bridport Community Fridge redistributes surplus food free or for a donation. Usually Tues and Sat 10–11.30am at The Chapel in the Garden, East St. Also at St Swithun's Church with **Bridport Food Surplus Stall** on Thursdays 9.30–11.30am. See their Facebook page or email events@bridportunitarians.co.uk

Life+line Bereavement Support is a Parish of Bridport initiative for people of all faiths or none, meeting in a supportive, confidential environment to listen to and encourage one another in our experience of grief. Fourth Monday of every month 2.30–4pm at Greenfields, Bridport Community Hospital. Contact Diana Wright 456967.

Stepping Out Bridport is an exercise and wellbeing programme, led by trained rehabilitation instructors, for people living with or beyond cancer. Monday and Thursday mornings at the Pavilion, Bridport Leisure Centre. All ages welcome. Contact j.perfect@bridportleisure.com. More information at www.steppingoutbridport.co.uk

Bridport St John Ambulance unit meets at TS Keppel, West Allington, on Mondays. Cadets (aged 10–18) 6–7.30pm, adults 7.30–9pm. Volunteers are always welcome to join the unit. For details contact the unit manager: caroline.rendell@sja.org.uk

Girlguiding West Dorset has Rainbow, Brownie, Guide & Ranger groups meeting in Bridport area. Open to girls aged 4+ and adults, we offer an inclusive space for fun and friendship and a wide range of activities within a progressive programme structure offering opportunities and awards. www.girlguiding.org.uk/girlguidingwestdorset@gmail.com

Bellringers in the Parish of Bridport: We always welcome new ringers and are happy to train you on our bells. At St Mary's Bridport we meet at 7.30pm on Thursdays. For more info contact Bob Hardwick 420632. At Holy Trinity Bradpole we practise at 7.30pm on Tuesdays. We have a ground-floor ringing chamber and training simulator. Contact htrabells@parishofbridport.org

Golden Cap Association (West Dorset) in support of the National Trust, organises illustrated talks in the United Church Hall, East Street, at 2.30pm. On Monday 31 March the association will hold its AGM with a guest speaker. Non-members £5. Contact Sarah Nicks 459855. www.goldencapnt.org.uk

The **National Coastwatch Institution** works with other emergency services to keep people safe along our coastline. Volunteer watchkeepers always needed for lookouts at Burton Bradstock and Charmouth. Contact Station Manager Judy Clarke: judy.clarke@nci.org.uk

Bridport & Lyme Regis Royal Air Forces Assn meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6pm in various locations. Whether currently serving in the RAF, a veteran, a family member, or if you just want to do your bit to help, you are always welcome to join us. Bill Davies: 281200 / buccbill@hotmail.com

Bridport Royal British Legion meets on the third Saturday each month at 10am for a coffee morning. Come along to our hall in Victoria Grove for a chat and to find out about membership and activities. The RBL Hall is available for private and organisational hire. Contact Linda 425664 (hall bookings) or Mike Thompson 07974 534945 / mickey_thompson56@hotmail.com (membership).

The Bank of Dreams and Nightmares creative writing charity runs free workshops for children and young adults in local schools and elsewhere. Come and join our Marvellous Mentors supporting children to find their voice. No experience necessary. *www.thebankofdreamsandnightmares.org/volunteering*

Disabled Carers & Friends meet on Thursdays 9am–noon at Vernon's Court Community Room, South Street. Contact *pete.bowditch@hotmail.com / 423620 / 421213 / 427819*.

The New Arts Group will next meet at Bridport Town Hall on Thursday 20 March when Chris Bradley presents *The Queen of Sheba: Empress or Enigma?* This is a rebooking from November owing to bad weather. £10 per person to cover costs (no membership fee). Tea/coffee from 1.30pm (£1), talk starts at 2pm. For more details contact *jenifer.morley@btinternet.com*

Bridport & District Good Neighbour Scheme provides help for people in the community needing transport to medical appointments who cannot use public transport, do not qualify for the hospital car scheme, have no friends or family to help and cannot afford taxi fares. Donation to cover cost of the journey if possible. Contact 07778 211140.

Somerset & Dorset Family History Society (West Dorset Group) meets at Loders Village Hall. Members £1, visitors £3. Email Jane: *jferentzi@aol.com*

Bridport Dog Training Society has been active for 60+ years and meets on Monday evenings at St Mary's Church House Hall, South St. Contact club secretary Sue Palfrey 07787 289425. A trained dog is a happy dog!

West Bay Harriers are a Bridport-based off-road running group. One-hour trail on country footpaths, etc., every Monday 7pm from in front of The Woodman, South Street. With headtorches in winter. No charge. Contact Pete Brown 07762 257212.

Bridport Art Society is a friendly, non-profit group of artists at all levels of experience which aims to encourage interest in and practice of the visual arts. It holds an annual summer exhibition to celebrate its members' creativity. Find us at *www.bridportart.com* and on Facebook and Instagram.

Bridport & District RNLI holds five or six events (including Seatown BBQ) each year to raise money. Volunteers always needed. Contact Sadie 07811 470127 or Annie 07790 713156.

Bridport Camera Club meets most Wednesdays from September to May, 7–10pm at Bridport Town Hall. Friendly hub whose members follow all kinds of photographic interests on smartphone, digital camera or film. Non-members £5. Come along to a meeting or visit *www.bridportcameraclub.co.uk*.

Age UK's Forget-Me-Not dementia support group offers support and information to people living with dementia and their caregivers. Entertainment, speakers and refreshments. Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane, on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 1.30–3pm. £2.50pp. Phone 01305 269444.

Colmer WI meets on the second Thursday each month at 7.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. Visitors welcome to come for a no-obligation evening. Contact Sarah Fletcher *sarah.fletcher33@hotmail.co.uk*

Bridport Community Orchard & Allotment group is open to all for sociable monthly working parties in the two orchards in Bridport. The allotment group meets weekly on Thursdays at 2pm to grow and harvest fruit and vegetables together. For dates and details visit *www.bridportcommunityorchard.org.uk*

Bridport Lions Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm at Haddon House Hotel, West Bay. A social evening often also takes place on the fourth Tuesday, plus fundraising events throughout the year in aid of individuals and groups in our community. Contact Sheila Greenaway 07930 636804 / *bridportlionsclub@outlook.com*. Website *www.bridportlionsclub.org*

The Living Tree Cancer Support Group is for anyone affected by cancer: patients, their families, carers and friends. We can help through counselling, complementary therapies, creative activities and simple friendship, all free of charge. Drop-in session every Friday 2.15–4pm at the Friends Meeting House, South St, to relax, talk and meet people. Everyone welcome. 07341 916976 *mail@thelivingtree.org.uk / www.thelivingtree.org.uk*

Bridport Embroiderers meet in St Swithun's Hall on the third Friday, 10am–3.30pm. Programme includes visiting tutors and caters for beginners and those more experienced in machine and hand embroidery. Many other techniques covered. Monthly fee plus materials. Contact Bridget 07952 517764 / *bmtrump@icloud.com*

Salway Ash Acoustic Sessions are on the first Tuesday every month at 8pm at the Anchor Inn. Sing, play, join in, listen, enjoy. Contact Harry Britton 421225.

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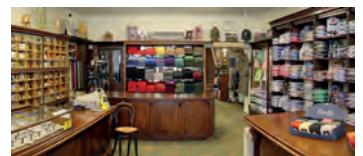


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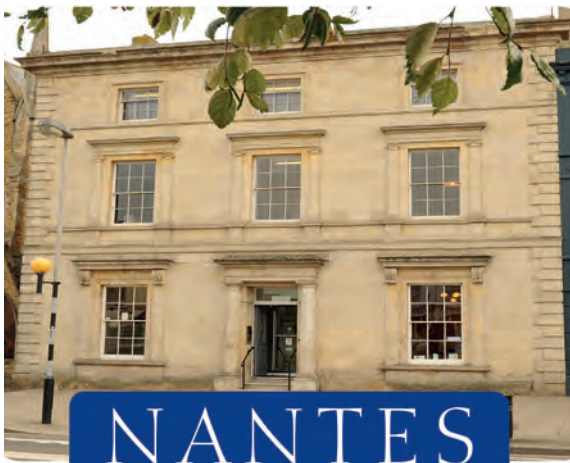
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