

April 2021

the **Bridge**

THIS ISSUE IS

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If you cannot get to church and would like home communion or a visit, please contact one of the lay pastoral assistants.

Cupboard Love food bank

Carrie Gamble 07443 596096
cupboardlove.bridport@gmail.com

Hall bookings

We hope halls will be allowed to reopen soon.

For future bookings please contact:

St Swithun's church hall

Details online at www.bridport-team-ministry.org/hall-bookings
or contact Yvonne Welch 459587

Bothenhampton village hall

Pennie Jones (temporary) 458006

Bradpole Forsters village hall

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The start of a new phase in our lives

A side effect of living in lockdown is that the sense of moving through the seasons of the year is getting a little blurry.

Yes, we are perhaps more sensitive to the natural seasons, spending more time than ever outdoors. And that's a good thing. But for many of us, our days have become less differentiated; things can all merge into one. And for those who are part of a community of faith, there is a loss in terms of moving through the church year.

I remember an Easter morning many years ago when I was a theological student in Salisbury. I dragged myself out of bed in the wee small hours to walk down to the cathedral for the service at 5.30am on a morning when the clocks had gone forward, so it was really 4.30am.

It was a miserable morning, too, quite cold and drizzling with rain, and however much the verger tried, he could not get the brazier to light for the bonfire at the dawn liturgy. Eventually we were all herded into the cloisters and the fire was lit and the celebration began.

Because we had to change the way we marked the start of the Easter celebration – maybe because it was a little chaotic and unplanned – it felt new, more immediate, more connected to us and what was going on around us.

In the firelight I saw a woman I knew in the crowd and she looked quite radiant in the flickering light. I saw the real joy in her face and a sense of expectation. She turned to the person next to her and said in an excited voice, as if she'd just heard it and known it for the first time:

“He is risen!”

And the reply came back: “He is risen indeed, hallelujah!”

Well, you might say, what's so remarkable about that? It's what we do every Easter Sunday.

But not so, in these strange times.

Just recalling that episode feels like looking back to a former life. And what makes the memory so powerful is that sense of realising a truth for the very first time. That's what markers in our journey do. They point us on the way, they help us understand the way we have travelled, and they prepare us for the way ahead.

‘Things won't simply go back to what they were before. We have all been changed’

In the Bridport Team we returned to church on Easter Sunday, but we are all still in a time of transition, finding our feet, finding new patterns. Some still need to find the confidence to come out, some are feeling lost and out of kilter. And in those times, perhaps we need these anchors in time, these markers of life, even more than ever.

The Easter Sunday from my past remains vivid for me because then I caught the excitement and real joy of Easter. It was in the sense of exhilaration and sheer delight.

I hope that once again we might catch the deep joy of what it is we celebrate in our lives. Things won't simply go back to what they were before. We have all been changed. We have all experienced hardships, loss, unexpected blessings and moments of light.

Whether we go to church or whether we don't, we all need to hear the message of new life; new hope, new ways of living together.

The resurrection isn't a happy ending to a sad story. It is the beginning of a new story, a new phase in our lives, and I pray, a new phase in the life of this community.

The Revd Deb Smith



The Revd Deb Smith
Team Rector

Good Books to reopen in April

Along with most other shops in Bridport, Christian bookshop Good Books will reopen on Monday 12 April after the Covid lockdown. “We're so looking forward to welcoming our valued customers again,” says manager Janice Collins. “We hope lots of people will be able to come and browse.” The shop is at St Mary's Old School in Gundry Lane and will be open Monday to Friday, 10am to 1pm.

Vaccinated at Bridport Medical Centre – lucky me!

I had my first Covid jab at Bridport Medical Centre on ‘Super Saturday’ – 20 March – when the wonderful team there vaccinated 2,500 people.

One word sums up how I feel about this: lucky. The whole experience was easy, painless, and free. I was there for about 15 minutes and everyone I met was cheerful, helpful

and efficient. I've had no side effects, but even if I'd been groggy for a couple of days, I'd still feel the same way.

Almost exactly a year after Covid struck and the first lockdown was announced, we have a safe vaccine and more than half the adults in the UK have had their first shot. I don't always feel proud to be British – and I'll spare

you the reasons why – but I'm chuffed that our scientists and the NHS have led the world on the vaccine. It wasn't ‘rushed’: it was a priority.

It's easy to take access to universal healthcare for granted, but moments like this are a reminder to reflect on our privilege. The vaccine is the way out of the Covid tunnel – and the light at the end is in sight!



Olivia Daly
Editor



Bridport Museum's ropemakers (pictured) will be twisting their twines outside on 15, 22 & 29 April and 6 & 13 May, 11.30am to 1pm. Come along and watch the fascinating process – and maybe get a piece to keep!

Meanwhile, the museum's historic guided walks are back by popular demand this spring. Volunteer guides will lead socially distanced walks on most Tuesdays and Thursdays in April and May, weather permitting.

The walks follow two themes: 'Bridport now and then: homes and businesses cheek by jowl' (Tues), and 'Rope for royalty: the growth of Bridport's wealth' (Thurs). They leave from the museum at 10am, and last around 1.5 hours. Easy level walking, £5 per adult (under-16s free). There is no need to pre-book, but numbers are limited to six per walk (or two households) to comply with Covid restrictions.

The museum plans to reopen on 17 May.

www.bridportmuseum.co.uk

Volunteer wanted Parish Treasurer



Have you ever thought how you might use your skills to contribute to your local community? This could be the opportunity for you!

There are six Anglican churches in Bridport within the Bridport Team Ministry. Each has its own treasurer. We're seeking a volunteer to become our parish treasurer, looking after central parish finances and overall coordination.

The timing is exciting: we're reviewing the whole financial structure and this is a chance to be in at the beginning, to define the role and help establish a robust financial system for the future. You will work with the finance committee of the team.

You don't need to be a qualified accountant, but a facility with numbers, good computer literacy and excellent communication skills are essential.

To apply, or just to discuss this role in confidence, please contact Philip Sturrock, Chair of the Finance Working Group, by email (philip@philipsturrock.com) or by phone (07802 895785). Applications by 30 April please.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated to The Bridge following our December appeal. The easiest way to support us, and allow us to reclaim Gift Aid if you are a taxpayer, is to pay online at <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/14198>. All donations are very welcome!

A green ministry in Bridport

A small group has been considering the possibility of the Bridport churches joining 'Eco Church'.

This initiative involves finding ways to integrate respect for nature and the environment into church life. There are five areas: worship, buildings, land, individual and community.

The group is looking for a few new members. "We'd like to get some people together to enable Eco Church to happen in Bridport by working with the PCC and local environmental groups," says group member Janet Webster. "This is a wonderful opportunity for us as the church in Bridport to reach out and share ideas about keeping creation beautiful."

If you are interested in becoming a member of this group please contact Janet on 01308 538101.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>



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Back to a pattern of public worship

The Bridport Team Ministry (BTM) has resumed a pattern of regular public worship in all of its six churches.

The first public BTM services since the 2021 lockdown were held on Easter Sunday, after which a gradual move began towards a full service rota. During April and May, Sunday Eucharist services are being held at St Mary's, St Swithun's and Bradpole, and there are mid-week services at all the churches.

"It's a great joy for us to be getting back together to worship," says the Revd Deb Smith, Team Rector. "It's particularly fitting that the process of reopening began at Easter, a time of resurrection and new life. We're looking forward to opening up further in the months to come, and there will be news about that soon.

"For those who can't come back to public worship yet, we'll continue our online services, either live or on demand, so everyone can feel included."

As was the case between the lockdowns, the plan for reopening relies on churches being Covid-safe, with 'track and trace' records, stewarding to ensure social distancing and thorough cleaning after each service. Anyone coming into church at any time must wear a mask.

The full rota of services is shown here.

Sunday

9.30am
11am

Eucharist at St Swithun's
Eucharist/Service of the Word
at St Mary's Bridport

11am

Eucharist/Service of the Word at Bradpole

Monday

10am

Morning Prayer at St John's West Bay

Tuesday

10am–noon
2.30pm

St Mary's Bridport open for private prayer
Service of the Word at St Mary's Bridport
(On the second Tuesday in the month
this is Eucharist/Communion instead)

Wednesday

10am
2.30pm

Morning Prayer at Bradpole
Eucharist at Bradpole (the first Wednesday
of the month only – this is in addition to
the morning service)

Thursday

10am

Eucharist at St Swithun's followed by
private prayer until midday

10am

Eucharist (first, third & fifth Thursdays)
or Morning Prayer (second & fourth
Thursdays) at Walditch

Friday

10am

Eucharist (first, third & fifth Fridays) or
Morning Prayer (second & fourth Fridays)
at Bothenhampton

Saturday

6pm

Evening Prayer at St John's West Bay
(fourth Saturday in the month only)



Left: The Revd Pete Stone and St Mary's parishioners Eileen Dearden and Rosemary Parker created this beautiful Easter scene, which has been on display in the church since the beginning of Holy Week.

Don't let St Mary's Church House Hall close for good

The team who run St Mary's Church House Hall in South Street have launched a crowdfunding campaign to help the facility survive the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The hall (pictured) was closed for 235 days last year and has not opened at all so far in 2021, leading to a 70% drop in income and a 40% drop in reserves. However, the trustees have still had to pay for utilities, insurance, repairs and upkeep.

The building, which dates from 1920 and was refurbished in 2000, is owned by the Magna Housing Association but is leased to St Mary's Church House Hall Trust, which is a registered charity. The hall is run by a management committee of volunteer representatives.

The hall's usual income comes entirely from hiring out space for activities such as slimming clubs, yoga, music, dancing and antiques fairs.

The trustees are aiming to raise £10,000 to cover these

losses as well as any further losses that will be incurred during the rest of this year. The hall will be allowed to reopen on 12 April when lockdown restrictions are eased, but strict guidelines will apply and user numbers will be limited.

Steve Bartlett, chair of the hall trustees, says: "We can't afford to lose this valuable asset in our community, a place where folk of all ages and interests have met for over 20 years. Please help us if you can."

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/saving-st-marys-church-house-hall



Advice for citizens from a kr

The Covid pandemic is a year old, and many among us have been struggling like never before with benefits, debt or simply putting food on the table. We meet the Citizens Advice team helping Bridport people cope...

In its 81-year history, Citizens Advice (CA) has never seen anything like 2020. Despite the necessary restrictions imposed on face-to-face advice at most of its offices for four months, CA gave direct advice to 1.1 million people across England and Wales last year – three-quarters of whom had never contacted the service before – and saw visits to its website rise 43% on 2019.

The experience of staff at Bridport's CA reflects this national trend. As the Covid-19 pandemic took hold and the first lockdown dragged on, employment began to look uncertain for many people and their income was suddenly in doubt. Hospitality was the hardest-hit industry across the UK, followed by retail, and in an area like ours where these are the biggest employers, widespread shutdowns had an inevitably disastrous effect on job security.

"There were furlough payments for many workers, of course, but we saw lots of cases of employers just letting people go," says Rovarn Wickremasinghe, manager of Bridport CA. "This led to a big rise in enquiries about employment rights and benefits. And although we've actually seen a drop in debt enquiries during Covid because creditors have relaxed their collection procedures, we're expecting these cases to rise as 2021 continues." Clearly, lots of people are struggling; for many of them, CA has literally been a life-saver.

Citizens Advice is a national charity with a membership of about 300 local Citizens Advice (LCA) offices, which are independent charities in their own right. LCAs are funded through a range



The Bridport CA team (clockwise from top): manager Rovarn Wickremasinghe, benefits specialist Andy Pennington, volunteer representative Kate Goldrick, administrator Carol Pearson and advice service manager Martin Wood

of channels including local authorities. Dorset is covered by four LCA offices working closely together: Central (offices in Dorchester, Sherborne, North Dorset and Weymouth & Portland); East Dorset (Wimborne); Purbeck (Wareham); and Bridport. Each office supports additional outreach services; Bridport, for instance, runs sessions in Beaminster and Lyme Regis, although these haven't taken place during the pandemic.

Bridport CA closed its South Street office in March last year, then opened from the end of July until November for drop-in clients, although Covid

safety arrangements meant that most visitors to the building were seen by video conferencing, with the adviser in a separate room. Since the second lockdown in November, the offices have remained closed to face-to-face callers, but will re-open as soon as possible.

The majority of people seeking advice throughout the pandemic have done so by phone, either via the Dorset Advice Line (DAL) or by calling the Bridport office itself. "The DAL has been in place for about eight years, although Covid has certainly highlighted its importance," says Rovarn.

Knowledgeable, helpful team

Volunteers are stepping up

The backbone of the CA service is its volunteer advisers, who are trained in twice-yearly intakes (usually in February and September) to a level that allows them to give general advice. There are about 70 at Bridport, representing all areas of society and many areas of knowledge, including retired solicitors, accountants and other professionals.

The volunteers' training is organised through the national CA and is "fantastic", as Kate Goldrick, Bridport's volunteer representative, explains: "Citizens Advice has a very supportive, collegial ethos that ensures our volunteers have the tools they need to be effective. Everyone has six months' training before they 'fly solo', and there's always a supervisor on hand for back-up and help. During Covid we've had to introduce ways of working remotely, and video conferencing has played a big part in maintaining the link between volunteers and supervisors as well as allowing clients to reach us."

Volunteers also have access to 'Advisernet', a CA portal to a range of online tools to help them find information quickly when they're with a client.

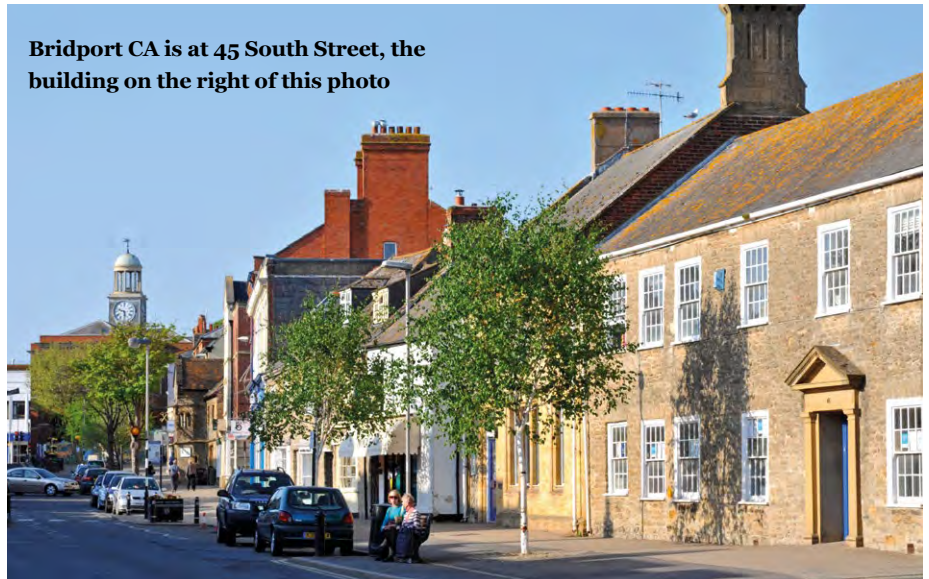
Help with benefits

In an 'ordinary' year, Bridport CA helps about 2,500 people with an average of three separate issues each. About 40% of these problems are benefits-related, with debt, housing and employment accounting for about 10% each, and it's clear that many clients have been struggling for a while, letting things get to a pretty bad state before seeking help.

Andy Pennington is Bridport's benefits specialist. "We see a lot of under-claiming, partly because the system is so complicated," he says. "Universal Credit [UC] was intended to simplify arrangements for people on low incomes by combining several other benefits, but many find the process overwhelming. The fact that a lot of UC decisions are automated creates real problems, particularly for anyone transferring from older, 'legacy' benefits."

The CA's government-funded 'Help to Claim' service was introduced in 2019 to guide people through the UC application process. "We just want to make sure

Bridport CA is at 45 South Street, the building on the right of this photo



people get what they're entitled to, and 'Help to Claim' is a big step forward. About half the UC claimants we see are classed as vulnerable, and many don't have internet access, a bank account or ID. About a third have significant utility arrears or other debt issues, too."

Dealing with debt

Advice service manager Martin Wood is Rovarn's deputy and is responsible for the advice CA delivers. He also coordinates the paid advisers who work at the office, usually on specific projects. For instance, the national CA has secured funding for 100 new debt advisers across the country, including one who joined the Bridport team in November.

"Generally speaking, the problem of debt has been growing," says Martin. "We help people organise their debts by priority and find a way to manage repayments. Ultimately some choose to apply for a debt relief order, which writes off up to £20,000 in debt for people who fulfil certain criteria and adhere to certain financial restrictions for a year afterwards. It's a fresh start – but sadly we see people getting one and then finding themselves back to square one after a few years."

Many people in debt, or suffering a drop in income, struggle to put food on the table, and the national CA has been working with food bank charity The Trussell Trust on a major food security project. At county level, a paid adviser

is coordinating food banks, community fridges and social supermarkets (which sell surplus food from various sources at heavily discounted prices) as well as investigating the problems that send people to food banks. There is also a new helpline run by the two agencies for people who need emergency supplies.

A force for change

The scale and busyness of the CA operation show how much it's needed. Many clients are struggling, desperate for help, while others just need straightforward advice about a problem that can be solved quickly. Many, many people have reason to thank this unique charity for its help in the last year alone. And as well as advising people on the front line, the CA feeds statistics and information up to national agencies – and ultimately to decision-makers in government – while the CA specialist benefits team has also highlighted cases for judicial reviews. In these ways it's a proactive as well as a reactive force for change on individual, local and national levels.

Citizens Advice is at 45 South Street, although face-to-face service is not currently available. The best way to contact an adviser is to ring the Dorset Advice Line (0800 144 8848) or, if you are an existing client, you can leave a message on 01308 456594 and someone will call you. For email advice use the contact form at www.bridportca.org.uk.

Bothenhampton & Walditch PC news

Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council (BWPC) has been busy over the last year, as its chairman, Jim Basker, writes...

Climate emergency

Following the lead of Dorset Council (DC), BWPC has declared a climate emergency. Our parish plan for 2022–27 will incorporate the actions we are going to take.

Planning

BWPC responded to the government's 'Planning for the Future' consultation document, which aims to make it much easier to secure planning permission for housing. It proposes a system whereby local authorities define 'growth' land where building is possible in principle. This simplifies the planning process and there is no local consultation before work starts. BWPC expressed concerns about local democracy.

DC's draft local plan 2023–2038 replaces the West Dorset local plan 2016 and covers where housing and commercial development should take place. BWPC contributed to the response of the Bridport area neighbourhood plan committee, as well as responding in its own right. The local plan addresses many issues related to the climate emergency, which we reinforced in our response.

We have a statutory duty to check planning applications submitted to DC's planning department and have invested in training so all councillors are aware of the problems that arise when developments are planned in built-up areas. We try to visit sites in pairs so we can cover all possible issues. We also talk to neighbours about their concerns.

Transport, traffic and footpaths

BWPC has appointed a voluntary footpaths officer, Philip Park, to keep our footpaths clear and to cut back hedges. Footpaths have been heavily used this year, and some steps, bridges and stiles have been mended. We have installed five more dog waste bins near the ends of footpaths.

Open spaces/environment

DC has presented its climate and ecological emergency strategy public consultation, to which BWPC responded in detail. We approved many of the initiatives, while arguing that DC could take a stronger lead in persuading suppliers to modify their processes, and in talking to residents.

Community

Heavy winter rainfall in the parish led to flooded properties in Walditch and Crock Lane, so drains had to be cleared and replaced, and roads swept. We liaised with DC highways and flooding officers over this, and obtained some sandbags from the Bridport Town Council lengthsmen. We have also appointed a flood officer, Chris Addis.

We have started to prepare a new parish plan based on responses to a questionnaire delivered to all households in the parish. This will outline the actions that BWPC should aim to deliver during the five years to 2027, including greater use of social media and publicity.

Our priority is recruiting new councillors, particularly younger people from across the parish.

Village-specific activity is covered in the parish pages (p11–)



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At a time when we're all trying to play our part in tackling climate change, there's one easy action we can take – and it will save us money, too!

The edible food we throw away contributes to climate change. We are wasting not only the food but also the resources that went into creating it, from fertilisers and water for growing it to the greenhouse gases created by production and transportation.

Here are some handy tips on how to reduce your food waste. For more, visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com.

Get your portions right. It's very easy to cook too much pasta and rice. Obviously appetites differ, but a quarter of a standard mug of uncooked rice or two generous handfuls of uncooked pasta per person are a good rule of thumb when estimating quantities required.

Store food correctly. Food lasts longer if stored in the right places. Bread keeps best in its original packaging in a cupboard or bread bin, not the fridge. Keep potatoes in a breathable bag/sack (not plastic) in a cool, dark place.

Get the best use out of your fridge/freezer. Setting your fridge down to 5°C will keep food fresher for longer. Freezing what you won't eat is like pressing the 'pause' button. All kinds of foods can be frozen, right up to the use-by date, including milk and bread.

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ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967
 Churchwarden – Lesley Hill 422417
 Director of music – Tim Linsley
 07830 308701
 Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 420632

Back to normal – or forward to a better future?

By the time you read this, many of us will have been to St Mary's to celebrate Easter. If you were among the congregation, did you find it difficult to recognise people hidden under their masks and lockdown hair? If you couldn't join us, did you celebrate at home, perhaps by joining one of the online services? Whatever Easter Sunday was like for you, it can hardly be described as 'normal'. As we rejoice in the slow relaxation of the pandemic restrictions, and begin to meet together again as a worshipping community, is this 'back to normal'?

During this long period of isolation, we have become changed people. We have found new ways of connecting with each other and new ways of worshipping, have rejoiced afresh in the wonders of the natural world with its changing seasons. However, at the same time there have been significant losses, including friends and relatives who have died, whether through Covid or not, and their loss is made harder because we haven't been able to say our farewells.

And what about the realisation that not being able to do certain things has actually given us a new sense of freedom? For each of us, this experience will be different. Now, as we are slowly being allowed to take these up again, do we really need or want to do so, just because we can?

Just as the disciples found a new way of being after the resurrection, so we at St Mary's, as we join with them in following our risen Lord Jesus, maybe also need to develop new ways of following, of building on everything we have learned over the past year.



Daniel Keehe/pixabay

So, at St Mary's, is it to be 'back to normal' or is it to be 'faith in the future' as we work out the way forward with the risen Christ?

Peter Wright

These are the April services at St Mary's. Everyone is welcome (please remember to wear a mask).

Sunday 11	11am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 13	2.30pm	Parish Communion
Sunday 18	11am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 20	2.30pm	Service of the Word
Sunday 25th	11am	Service of the Word
Tuesday 27th	2.30 pm	Service of the Word

Covid-19 has made a huge impact in so many ways and many of our regular donors have not been able to support the church as they once did. If you can make a donation, whatever you can give, you will be helping us to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport.



HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton

Village editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
 Churchwarden – Heather Purse 423220
 Children & youth worker –
 Jean Mitchell 422127
 Home communion –
 The Revd Kay Watters 427290
 Director of music – Sue Smith 456955

From the village editor

We welcome back readers who were unable to access the February and March issues of The Bridge on the internet. It is good that the magazine is back in printed form and being delivered to all households. The distributors have a chance to enjoy the lovely colourful spring gardens as they go on their rounds, getting some exercise at the same time.

Have you seen the daffodils alongside the paths at Holy Trinity? They have made a glorious display, but there are

some gaps that need filling in. If anyone has an abundance of blooms and would be happy to donate some bulbs when the foliage has died back, please let our churchwarden know.

Grass and weeds have been growing alongside attractive flowers in the Old Churchyard for several weeks now and it's in need of another tidy up. This peaceful corner of the village is much used by people visiting their loved ones' graves, and we're seeking volunteers for a working party on Thursday 15 April to help clear the grounds. See overleaf for details, and remember to bring your own gloves and tools. A weekday has been chosen as families and friends are now allowed to meet in gardens and may wish to do so at weekends.

As I write this, we are looking forward to a service in Holy Trinity on Easter Sunday, the first service in our church since New Year's Day. As coronavirus restrictions continue to ease, and more vaccinations are given, we hope services will take on a regular pattern so we can worship together.

Barbara Ffooks

Public services Friday 10am: 16 April Morning Prayer; 23 April Eucharist; 30 April Service of the Word. Followed by private prayer until noon. →

HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton continued...

Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council (BWPC) *Activities in Bothenhampton*

The planning committee rejected plans for the development at Homestead Farm in Main Street. An appeal is now with the planning inspector in Bristol awaiting a hearing in May.

We have asked the highways department at Dorset Council (DC) to reconsider the placing of the 30, 40 and 50mph limits on Burton Road. 'Slow' signs have been offered but negotiations continue. Meanwhile, we have asked for a 20mph limit on Crock Lane. DC has put in enhanced 'slow' signs and has cut hedges back to improve sightlines.

The Highways Agency has told us that roadworks on Sea Road South in the next two years will upgrade the Pasture Way crossing, in principle to include light controls.

A community bus has operated along Sea Road South and into South Lawns on Wednesdays and Saturdays since October. We are unhappy about this as the low-entry buses cannot safely negotiate Crock Lane or Chestnut Road.

The John Holt play area has been partly occupied by builders, but we have had the dry-stone wall repaired and the trees pruned. The telephone box library in Main Street has been repaired and repainted.

The DC-owned Bothenhampton Nature Reserve is being transferred to Bridport Town Council with a contribution from BWPC. We also make biennial contributions to the maintenance of the churchyard at Holy Trinity.

Jim Basker, BWPC Chair

Garden Working Party

**The Old Church Yard
Thursday 15 April at 2pm**

Please help us tidy up these lovely grounds. Bring your own gardening gloves and tools to clear ivy and weeds, trim any areas that aren't being cut, and reduce compost and overgrown areas.

Your work area will be allotted on arrival depending on your ability and tools and also to maintain social distancing.



HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

Village editor – Douglas Baldwin 424232

douglas.baldwin@seaside20.plus.com

Churchwarden – John Adams 425766

Tower captain – Peter Carnell 420716

If you have any pastoral or personal issues,
please contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
(Wednesday is her day off)

Bradpole village hall

The hall will be open on Thursday 6 May for the local election (for the Police and Crime Commissioner) and will be subject to Covid restrictions. There are currently no scheduled by-elections for Bridport Town Council, Dorset Council or parish councillors; the next full elections will be in 2024.

No date has yet been fixed for a general reopening of the hall because of the ongoing restrictions. However, in line with the gradual easing of those restrictions, we have put together a number of plans, policies, risk assessments, hirer agreements and guidance documents, which will be in place when the hall is available. Contacts for organisations that would like to use the hall in future are invited to get in touch with Jane Bryant, the booking secretary, to discuss fees and arrangements – 01308 427493 / oxeyedaisy101@gmail.com.

Village defibrillator

The village fête committee, the parish council and the trustees of the village hall have come to an arrangement whereby a defibrillator will be installed on an outside wall of

the village hall. The fête committee and the parish council will share the purchase costs, and the parish council will pay for future maintenance costs as owners. The installation will kindly be carried out free of charge by R N Stephenson Electrical Contractors Ltd and the village hall will provide the electricity supply.

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a portable life-saving device that can give a casualty's heart an electric shock after it has stopped beating normally during a cardiac arrest. It works by checking the casualty's heart rhythm, through pads placed on their chest, and giving them a shock if necessary. By using one before an ambulance arrives, you can significantly increase someone's chance of survival. Defibrillators can be used on anyone over one year old!

Anyone can use a defibrillator – you don't need to be trained. To access the equipment, you call 999 and are then given a code to open the box using the keypad. There are clear instructions on how to attach the defibrillator pads. The equipment is portable so could be used in other village locations if necessary.

Bradpole Parish Council

There are no candidates for election to the parish council on 6 May. However, there are two vacancies and people could be co-opted. If you are interested, please contact the parish clerk, Sandy Goldsmith, on bradpole@dorset-aptc.gov.uk. There is information about the council online at www.bradpole.org.uk/

Douglas Baldwin

Public services: Sunday 11am Eucharist/Service of the Word; Wednesday 10am Morning Prayer, 2.30pm Eucharist (first Wednesday of the month).

ST MARY'S Walditch

Village editor – James Craddock 458725

Churchwarden – Chris Wellman-Herold
281096 / chris.w-h@hotmail.co.uk

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

If you have any pastoral or personal issues,
please contact the Revd Ann Ayling 424896
(Wednesday is her day off)

An appeal

During February 2021 there was a partial ceiling collapse in the chancel of St Mary's Church, Walditch. Sadly, the repairs are not covered by insurance, so sparse parish funds will have to be used instead. If you would like to make a donation towards these urgent and ongoing repairs, please contact James Craddock, the Walditch parish editor (phone number above or email craddockjames@hotmail.co.uk).

Getting ready to fly the nest

Whenever I drive along Sea Road South, I glance up to see the rooks' nests, high in the leafless trees on the way to the Crown roundabout.

A few weeks ago there was a single large nest, left over from last year, in one tree; at the last count there were eight, in two trees, some undergoing DIY, others already occupied.

I was reminded that a few years ago there was a rookery in the woods above Walditch, and that each evening I would witness the 'fly past' over my garden of 30 to 40 birds returning to their roosts.

And didn't they chatter – probably recounting to their families and friends the adventures of the day! Then... an absolute hush. I wondered, do they all go to sleep at once?

For the past year we haven't been able to 'fly the nest' for



Davie Bicker/pixabay

adventures, but I'm sure there are many stories ready to be told of sorrows, of joy, of emptiness, of realisation, of the care and concern and love shown by friends and strangers.

Light the spire

The church will be lit from 25 April until 8 May to mark the first anniversary of the passing of Derek Gange of Walditch.

From his loving wife, Sheila Gange



And as the days lengthen and Covid restrictions ease, hopefully we will again be able to meet together in person, to chatter and share our experiences. And there will be such a lot to say!

The Revd Ann Ayling

Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council (BWPC) Activities in Walditch

After many years' pressure, we expect a 30mph speed limit to be extended to Upper Walditch this spring.

In the last year we have funded a new play area in Lower Walditch, ably supported by the Lower Walditch Play Area and Community Orchard (they have a Facebook page).

The Friends of the John Gundry Play Area have worked hard there to clean equipment and clear away undergrowth. We have helped by replacing rotten posts and swings. Also, a large number of dead or diseased trees have been felled.

BWPC has supported the Rural Gigabyte initiative, which will bring full fibre broadband to Upper Walditch. We have also used Community Infrastructure Levy funding to subsidise glazing in Walditch village hall.

The Jellyfields Nature Reserve, owned by Dorset Council, is in the process of being transferred to Bridport Town Council with a contribution from BWPC.

The telephone box library in Old Walditch has been repaired and painted.

BWPC makes biennial contributions to the maintenance of St Mary's churchyard, Walditch.

Jim Basker, BWPC Chair

Public services on Thursday 10am: Eucharist (first, third and fifth) or Morning Prayer (second and fourth).

ST JOHN'S West Bay

Village editor – Sue Pollock 07903 558568

Chapel warden – Rosemary Russell 423013

Round and about the Bay

For the past year, like so many organisations, the West Bay Women's Institute has been unable to meet, although members do keep in touch. They are eagerly awaiting a return to their regular meetings.

Those of you who have been out and about in the Bay will have noticed that the permanent pathway from the Discovery Centre to the toilets is now completed. Not only

does it look better but it will also give access for disabled people. The centre held a volunteers' meeting via Zoom recently to update everyone on the forthcoming plans (dependent on an easing of lockdown). From 12 April, weather permitting, there will be a stall outside the centre selling some of the items from the shop, along with leaflets, books and plants. Initially this will be once or twice a week. From 17 May the plan is to open the centre, hopefully on six days a week, with similar restrictions to last year.

You may have noticed a boat named 'Crackerjack of Hamble' (pictured overleaf) opposite Pier Terrace. She was built in 1957 and designed by Alan Buchanan, a prolific naval architect, who by the time of his death in 2015 at the age of 95 had designed over 2,400 yachts. There is a poster by the side of the boat giving full details about her. The reason she is here and undergoing renovation is that



ST JOHN'S West Bay continued...

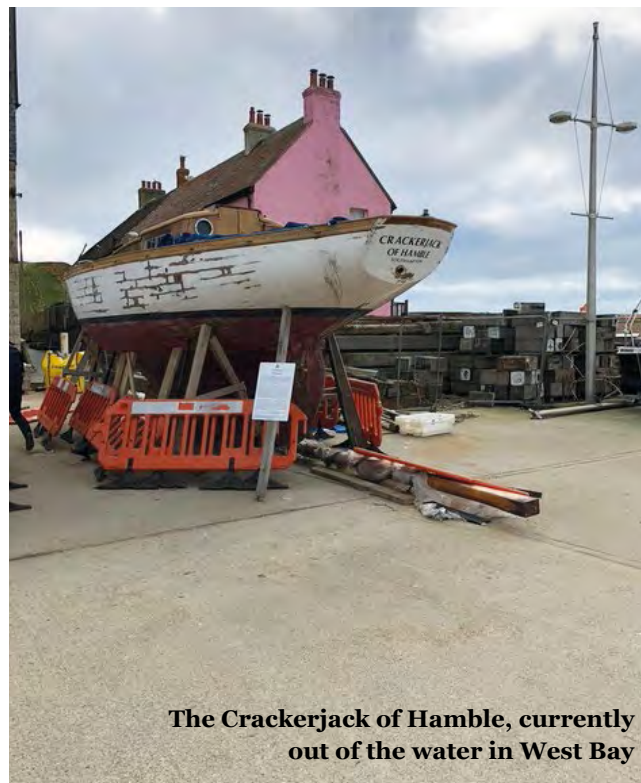
Henry Newbery & Co now has its headquarters in Bridport once again. They are the oldest continuously trading interior design house in the world, having created interiors in Buckingham Palace, as well as the Royal Yacht Britannia and the Titanic among other vessels. They are now building a private fleet of historical yachts, boats and ships that need renovation. If you are interested in helping with this project, contact yachts@henrynewbery.com.

The static caravans at Parkdean have now been returned to their original location having been moved for the flood defence work. There is a lot of work taking place to put things back to how they were, including planting some shrubs against the new wall, relaying turf and laying tarmac on driveways in time for visitors to return.

In fact, all around the Bay, work is going on to prepare for the return of visitors when this is allowed. Recently, however, police had to fine some of the bikers who had come to West Bay from Purbeck on a Sunday despite the Covid restrictions forbidding this.

Those of you who walk down to the Bay along the footpath will have noticed that the area behind Bridec has been cleared of trees and brambles, although a lot of rubbish is now stacked up there. West Bay Community Forum's chairman is on the case so hopefully the rubbish will be removed shortly.

Sue Pollock



The Crackerjack of Hamble, currently out of the water in West Bay

Public services at St John's: Monday 10am Morning Prayer; Saturday 6pm Evening Prayer (fourth Saturday in the month only).

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

Village editor – Anna Sullock
aejsullock@gmail.com

Churchwarden – Jo George 426457
Distribution – Kevin Payne 07976 534517



June takes a step back – with our huge thanks!

June Goodburn, a lifelong guide leader, is handing over distribution of the St Swithun's Bridge magazines to scout master Kevin Payne after 40 years. "I know it will be in safe hands with a scout!" says June. "Kevin will have a great distribution team to help him get out over a thousand copies in Allington. They are a good loyal bunch of people from the community and the church."

June has been involved with The Bridge from the start, some 40 years ago, along with Barbara Ffooks from Bothenhampton, and has worked on the editorial team and as a parish editor as well as in distribution.

The magazine began life as 'The Net' but was renamed. The vision was for it to be a 'bridge' from the church to the community, and between the six churches in the Bridport

Pictured: June Goodburn with fellow churchwarden Richard Maddock in the 1990s, and (below) with her dog, Pippa



ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

team, and June feels this holds true today. "This magazine should be for everyone," she says.

June has enjoyed working with all the different editors including Valerie Payne, who she says was "excellent". She says the Revd Philip Ringer has also been incredibly supportive to her and the magazine over the years.

A highlight of June's involvement with St Swithun's was the building of the church hall in the early 1990s. June was a churchwarden at the time and she and her fellow warden Richard Maddock were instrumental in getting the hall built.

The Revd Lorna Johnson, a curate training in this parish, says: "In the Church of England there are now people from

the congregation and clergy who focus on pioneer ministry. June Goodburn is an original pioneer lay leader and a great example of what vision and determination can achieve. The church hall project started a great collaboration between the church and the community in Allington and continues to be enjoyed by many community groups and parishioners. Many coffees after church, harvest suppers, christening parties and youth club meet-ups and fundraisers have happened there. June broke new ground for the church, and for women in the church."

Public services at St Swithun's: Sunday 9.30am Eucharist; Thursday 10am Eucharist followed by private prayer until noon.

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Peter Clark 425978

Church secretary – Sue Herman

422598 / bridportsec@gmail.com

incorporating

UPLODERS CHAPEL

Correspondent – Carol Hall

423163 / carol@gribb.plus.com

"He isn't here! He is risen from the dead!"

(Luke 24:6a)

I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that we have managed to deal with the pandemic by being innovative, not least technologically, as we humans are a very adaptive species.

Of course some developments already existed but were rarely used. I'd hardly encountered a live-streamed funeral before, for example, but there have been many in the last year. Video conferencing software such as Zoom was around, too, even if I had never even heard of it. I had watched videos on YouTube but it had never occurred to me to record one, nor indeed to try out iMovie on my computer.

Historically humans have made the most of technological developments and Christians are good examples of this. In the early years after the resurrection, people simply shared the stories by word of mouth. The apostles travelled far and wide to tell the good news in places of worship and over meals. But as they travelled they wanted to keep in touch with their new embryonic churches, so they used the technology of the time: writing letters. Some people had

access to the technology, while others (who were illiterate) didn't, so had to have the letters read to them. Today, some people are online and can access the technology, while others miss out or have to find an alternative.

Then, presumably, as the early apostles got older and were less able to travel, somebody sat down with them and said, "For goodness sake let's get those stories written down!" The result, of course, was the Gospels – and the Christians had invented the book (codices, actually, but an early form of book) to replace the older technology of scrolls.

Over the ages Christians have embraced other technology such as the printing press, allowing the Bible – as those writings became – to be widely disseminated and read by the masses as literacy became more widespread. We live in a great tradition of using the technology of the day to keep in touch and share our faith; of course an excellent example has been the ability to continue The Bridge online when lockdown has prevented distribution of a printed copy.

New technologies don't necessarily come easily and I confess that long Zoom meetings sometimes wear me out even more than a meeting in person, even if they do save the drive home! They do have their place, though, and have allowed us to do so much during this difficult period. Also, there have been some absolute gems, moments that refreshed me enormously. One happened the other week during the URC Synod (10am to 4pm... ouch!) when a child from Salisbury URC read out this poem she had written:

'God's Garden' by Alice Robson (7)

This is God's garden, he wants us to care.
He also has asked, 'Could we manage to share?'
God's words plant a seed in our mind
And he really wants us to try and be kind.

Jesus was sent to help us all out.
We can help all God's creatures if we speak out.
The slow, graceful sloth and the striped bumblebee
Their home is this planet, just like you and me.

The world is so beautiful – don't you agree?
His creation is amazing, as far as the eye can see.
But some mean people and uncaring countries
Have ruined the forests by chopping down trees.

The fish in the ocean have their place too.
But to keep their home healthy, it's over to you.
The cheetah goes whizzzz and the cow goes moo,
But to keep them alive, it's over to you.



Armin Schreijäg / pixabay



BRIDPORT UNITED CHURCH continued...

The elegant grey dolphins and majestic blue whales
Are being replaced by our waste, our plastic betrayals.
As I look out my window, every day,
Mini-sun daffodils shine as I pray

Nature is wonderful – even small bugs!
From crimson-topped ladybirds to slithering slugs.
So recycle your waste! Compost old food!
Make yours an eco-church and get everyone in the mood!

We are God’s stewards, we’re supposed to share.
He made us to protect the Earth, he made us to care.
The Earth belongs to God, and everything in it.
Our environment is fragile, so please look after it!

The Revd Peter Clark

The following Sunday services have been scheduled for the next few weeks, but please check the United Church website (www.buc.cool) for the latest information before setting out.

18 April	Revd Peter Clark (Communion and family service)
25 April	Jennie McGinlay
2 May	Revd John Yarrien (Communion)

From Uploders Chapel

Spring is definitely in the air. The sun is shining brightly, which is a great encouragement to get outside even if it is colder than I’d like. While the snowdrops are nearly

over, the daffodils, primroses and other spring flowers are coming into full bloom.

As I write, we have a service planned for Easter Sunday, heralding the start of a gradual return to some sort of normality. We have bravely planned services for mid-April and early May, too! The Covid vaccination programme is now well under way, and as long as people continue to follow the rules – and keep abreast of the changes as the restrictions are relaxed – we should be able to enjoy spending ‘normal’ time together again soon. As we pass the first anniversary of the pandemic, though, we’ll also remember and pray for those who have lost loved ones.

So for now I’m going to leave you with three lovely quotes we have on our calendar.

“Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow. It only saps today of its joy.”

Leo Buscaglia

“The most wasted of days is one without laughter.”

E E Cummings

“You do not find the happy life. You make it.”

Camilla Eyring Kimball

Well there’s something to think about! So do what you can to make yourself happy, don’t be robbed of the day’s joy, don’t waste any days by not laughing – and, where possible, help others to do the same.

Carol Hall



Services at Uploders

18 April	Revd Ruth Lownsbrough
2 May	Revd Peter Clark

St MARY & St CATHERINE Roman Catholic Church

Parish priest – Monsignor Keith Mitchell
Presbytery 424754
keith.mitchell@prcdtr.org.uk
Secretary – Faith Leborgne 422594
bridport@prcdtr.org.uk

The importance of touch

Over this last year, many of us have missed being able to reach out to one another, to shake hands, to hug, to embrace. In church we have missed sharing the sign of peace with one another in our services. As a priest, I have particularly missed the ability to lay hands on those in



need of prayer and comfort and I know that they have missed it too. This has been especially true when ministering to the very sick and then having to anoint them with a cotton bud instead of a touch of the hand. How we long to be

able to hug those family members we haven’t seen in person for so long, and those friends we’ve been separated from.

The sense of touch is so important in our lives. We can empathise with the apostle Thomas, who seems to have kept a low profile around the time of Jesus’ crucifixion and in the days after the resurrection at Easter. The others had already seen the risen Jesus but Thomas was not there at the time. He wanted to see and touch Jesus before he would believe. He wanted to touch the wounds that the nails and spear had made. You can read about this, and how it ended in a profound profession of Thomas’s faith in Jesus as his Lord and God, in St John’s gospel, chapter 20.24–28.

This sense of touch is why Catholics so value the sacraments, for they are the touch of the Lord in our lives. Eternal realities are given through tangible signs: water, bread, wine, oil and laying on of hands are all signs of the real presence of God as He is in the Risen Lord. That is our Easter faith and one of the signs that he is always with us. All of us at Bridport Catholic Parish hope you had a wonderful Easter.

Mgr Keith Mitchell

Services at St Mary and St Catherine

Sunday Mass is at 10am when government regulations allow. This Mass is streamed through Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page and on the parish website: www.bridportcatholics.org.uk

For updates about Sunday Masses and daily weekday Mass in the parish, please see our weekly newsletter on the website.

Get involved: local clubs, groups and societies

Most groups have not been active during the coronavirus restrictions but we are giving their usual arrangements in the hope that they can resume soon. Please get in touch if you'd like your group to appear in these listings. Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).

Colmers WI meets at the WI Hall in North Street. Contacts are President Gill Smith 301201 and Sarah Nicks 459855.

West Dorset Flower Club (Bridport) meets at the WI Hall in North Street with regular visiting speakers and demonstrations. For details phone 456339.

Bridport Blind Club is a social club for the visually impaired. Contact ian.ibbotson@btinternet.com / 898484 or contact Leah Cross for personal or technical help 07789 997620.

Bridport Stroke Club meets weekly Sept–Christmas and Feb–July at the Community Room, Vernon's Court. Contact the secretary, David Lawrence: dandhlawrence@gmail.com.

Bridport Hearing Club meets on the first Monday afternoon of each month at Good Books, Gundry Lane. Cost £1.50pp to cover refreshments. For details phone 862608.

Probus, for retired/semi-retired professional men, meets at the Eype's Mouth Hotel on the third Wednesday each month at noon for lunch. Contact Graham Pitts 01297 561569.

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

Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at the United Church Hall and hopes to resume activities soon. Margaret Foster (Secretary) margefoster1956@gmail.com.

Bridport & District Gardening Club normally meets at the WI Hall but is currently holding lecture evenings over Zoom.

The next are on 15 April and 20 May at 7.30pm. Details at www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk. Contact Peter Gough 459469.

The Arts Society (West Dorset) has regular Thursday talks at 2.30pm at Bridport Town Hall. Contact Sandy Lovelock 01305 848390 / sandylovelock@btinternet.com.

Dorset Wildlife Trust (West Dorset Group) meets at the United Church Hall on the first Friday in each month. Contact Monty Crook 423442 montycrook@rocketmail.com.

Disabled Carers & Friends meet Thurs 9am–noon at Vernon's Court Community Room, South St. Call in for a chat or advice.

Contact pete.bowditch@hotmail.com/423620/421213/427819.

Bridport Bridge Club meets Wed & Thurs evenings (duplicate bridge, good standard) & the first two Fri afternoons in the month (relaxed bridge) at St Swithun's Hall. Roy Tarsnane 425298.

British Sugarcraft Guild meets at Groves' Ivy House cafe on the second Tuesday each month. Contact Jan 281085.

Bridport ASD and Social Anxiety Group for carers and young people 7–11 and 11–18. www.bridportasd.wordpress.com plus Facebook. Email indigo.may.counselling@gmail.com.

Bridport Child Contact Centre facilitates contact in a safe environment for non-resident parents following family breakdown. Volunteers always welcome. Phone 07792 075972.



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 leave a message on 01308 456594 – we will call you back.



Bothenhampton & Walditch
Parish Council since 1886

NOTICE OF VACANCY FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR

Bothenhampton & Walditch Parish Council is seeking applications from interested local people who care about their community. Be at the heart of decision making in your community – apply now to be a parish councillor.

Email: clerk@bothenhamptonwalditchparishcouncil.com
www.bothenhamptonwalditchparishcouncil.com

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is looking for a **SECRETARY**

The job entails taking minutes at five meetings a year; liaising with members and other outside bodies; and editing three yearly newsletters.

All expenses paid, plus annual honorarium

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or ring Maggie (01308 427214) or

Margaret (01308 422414)

for an informal chat

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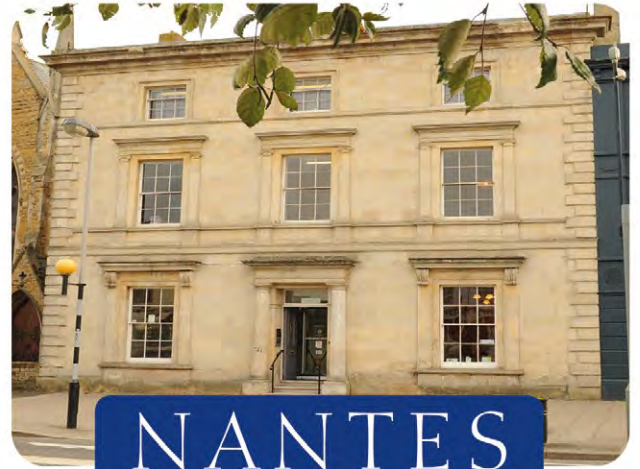
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