

October 2020

# *the* **Bridge**

A community magazine for Bridport  
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Opinions expressed in The Bridge are not necessarily those of either the clergy or the editorial team. 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.

Deadlines for the November issue: Advertising Thursday 1 October · Copy Monday 5 October

# This summer has had a different end

## At this time of the year we are usually getting back to normal after the more relaxed days of summer.

It's a throwback to the 'back to school' feeling we all remember from those dim and distant days perhaps, a fresh start, new ventures.

This year things have been different. Lockdown and the slow crawl out of it – or in and out of it for some – means that many of us are floundering when it comes to getting back to normal or even the new normal... whatever that is.

The last days of summer for me are usually spent at Greenbelt, a Christian arts festival. Camping out, dodging the rain more often than not, taking part in worship, hearing amazing speakers, great music, poetry, drama, being with friends and talking, debating, putting the world to rights... being the church.

I'm sure it's not everyone's cup of tea, but for me Greenbelt is what sets me up for that 'back to school' time. New ideas, hearing of others' experiences, being challenged and then returning to the place where I am called to serve – changed and ready to go... again.

Of course Greenbelt didn't happen this year. Well, there was an online version – like church – but the gathering-in-a-muddy-field bit was put off until next year (hopefully!).

I still camped in a rainy field with friends, we still put the world to rights, but it was different.

I guess the bonding experience of this time for everyone is that things have been different for us all. There are some good things in the difference, the chance to slow down for some, to pay attention, to see the kindness of strangers and the imagination to adapt in tough times. And there have been great sadnesses too – in restricted and lost lives, separation and pain, fear and uncertainty.

When we miss the things and the people we love, we tend

to see them more clearly. So I have been thinking about Greenbelt – and the loss of it – and you will have something similar that spells out how different this time has been – and what you want for the future.

The new-look, full-colour Bridge magazine you are holding in your hands and reading is a small sign of these different times we are coming through, and a new beginning too. It is built upon the hard work of many in the past, a community magazine that has kept going online during lockdown and is now emerging once again with this exciting re-launch. We hope you like it!

There is a poet who is a favourite at Greenbelt. He's called Harry Baker. I would have been squeezed into a marquee listening to him speaking these words – but instead I share them here. It's a verse from his poem 'When This Is Over':

*The world of everything we knew  
is somewhere we cannot return,  
the world of everything that's new  
is one we'll build from what we've learned,  
we'd never dream ashes could rise again  
until we saw them burn  
and the next time I stand in front of you  
will feel like it's been earned.*

The Revd Deb Smith



**The Revd Deb Smith**  
Team Rector  
Bridport Team Ministry

## Welcome back to The Bridge – with a new look

### Finally... we're back in print.

Delivering hard copies has been impossible since March, so we've been publishing a digital edition, which I hope you saw. Online publishing is all very well – and, let's face it, it's hard to imagine how most of us would have coped during lockdown without the internet – but there's nothing quite like the feel of paper in your hands. I'm thrilled that our print edition is back, and thanks are due to everyone at Creeds (our printers) and our team of volunteer distributors for helping to make it happen.

I took up the editor's reins in March, just as lockdown was starting. I've been in West Dorset since 2007 and now live in the countryside near Charmouth. My background is in producing in-house publications for specialist clients – writing, editing, design and production – and I also do publicity work for some local groups. This is my first 'public' magazine and I'm loving it.

We've been working hard behind the scenes to get ready for the magazine's relaunch. And here it is! The most obvious change is that it's now in full colour, and there's a new cohesive design including a few elements that we've been trying in the digital edition. I really hope you like it.

Another change is that we've expanded our team of contributing churches with the addition of Bridport United Church (with Uploders Chapel) and the Roman Catholic Parish. They each have a column in the Parish Pages, which start on page 9 and this month include an introduction to the new churches and their ministers.

This month's feature (page 6) is about Cupboard Love, the town's food bank, and I'd like to thank Carrie Gamble and the team there for sparing the time to talk to me when I visited, even though they were all rushed off their feet. Bridport is lucky to have such a valuable resource – and so many dedicated volunteers who are prepared to get stuck in and make it work.

I'd love to know what you think of the new-look Bridge. Please feel free to email me with feedback, questions or ideas: BridgeEditor@icloud.com (two 'e's in the middle).



**Olivia Daly**  
Editor

# Churches Together cancels this year's Christmas lunch

**After a lot of heart searching, Bridport Churches Together has announced with great regret that there will be no Christmas lunch this year.**

"The Christmas lunch is an enjoyable, happy and, above all, inclusive event," says organiser Jill Henderson. "In the present circumstances, it would seem to be impossible to achieve this while maintaining social distancing. We don't want to have to turn away any potential guests, which we would have to do by operating a 'first come, first served' policy for a reduced number.

"There is also the question of the health and safety of our volunteers, which could not be ensured in these circumstances. Alas, the logistics are insurmountable."

Philip Ringer, Chairman of Churches Together in Bridport and District, adds: "We'd like to thank all our past volunteers and local supporters, including Waitrose, for their help in previous years. We hope that we can all meet up again for a very merry Christmas lunch in 2021."



Storm Dennis at Hive Beach by Oran Balazs

## Bridport Camera Club has a great deal to offer

**The cover photo on this issue of The Bridge was taken by Rosie Mathisen, the co-chair of Bridport Camera Club. The club has given us a number of shots and we'll be using more of the members' work in future issues.**

The club was founded in 1994 at the Burton Bradstock Hotel by the proprietor at the time, David Barnikel. Since then it has gone from strength to strength and (under normal circumstances) meets every other Wednesday at Bridport Town Hall. Its members have a wide range of experience and all sorts of equipment – some even use their phone camera.

There are regular competitions in various categories with a special section for inexperienced members. The photo above was a placed entry in a recent 'Low Light' category.

This year the club is offering a great deal on its usual membership rates because it's not holding face-to-face meetings. Instead, all its autumn meetings are taking place via Zoom, a video conferencing website. The full year's membership is £30, but there's a special price of just £10 for September to December.

Online meetings began on 7 September but there are plenty more to look forward to, including Lara Jane Thorpe sharing her experiences in food photography on 7 October and award-winning fine-art photographer Tim Booth on minimalism on 21 October.

Visit [www.bridportcameraclub.co.uk](http://www.bridportcameraclub.co.uk) for more details.



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## Ride + Stride 2020 goes ahead in the sunshine

**This year's Ride + Stride fundraiser took place on Saturday 12 September, albeit with a few Covid-related changes.**

During the annual event, people on foot, bikes and even horses aim to visit as many local historic churches as possible to secure their sponsors' pledges. This year many churches were closed and, while some had stewards in attendance to welcome the riders and striders, most participants recorded their visits themselves. Organisers from the Dorset Historic Churches Trust report unprecedented use of the event's JustGiving page, and will publish fundraising results soon.

# Services continue despite rule change

**The Church of England has confirmed that there will be no change to arrangements for services following the government's ban on gatherings of more than six people both indoors and outdoors.**

The Bishop of London, the Rt Revd & Rt Hon Sarah Mullally, who is the chair of the CofE's coronavirus recovery group, said on 9 September that she welcomed confirmation from the prime minister that places of worship would still be allowed to hold more than six people in total, despite the new restrictions, and she was reassured that public worship could continue. "We will continue to work with the government on specific areas relating to our churches and church-based activities," she added.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby, confirmed the decision just after the government's announcement, tweeting: "Worship is the work of God – not a social gathering – and gives the strength to love and serve."

The rule change, which applies across England and Scotland, took effect on 14 September and was announced amid a rise in new Covid-19 cases. A very similar rule applies in Wales.

Services in the Bridport Team Ministry have been taking place at St Swithun's Church, Allington, since late July, with Eucharist at 9.30am and Morning Prayer at 11am each Sunday. There is also Morning Prayer at 10am on Thursdays.

"I hope all will be encouraged by the archbishop's words and reminded of what it means to be the church, whether we are worshipping at home or gathering in our buildings," says the Revd Deb Smith, Team Rector. "It has been a real joy to be back in church, and though the health and safety guidelines make worship a little different, it is a privilege to gather to pray and share in holy communion.

"We of course continue to follow all the health and safety guidelines to ensure the protection and wellbeing of each other and to keep our buildings safe and open to all."

**The Archbishop of Canterbury assured churchgoers that public worship would not be affected by the new Covid-19 restrictions**



Other BTM churches are continuing to open for private prayer on a rota, as follows:

Mondays	10am–12noon	St Mary's, Bridport
Tuesdays	10am–12noon	St Mary's, Walditch
Wednesdays	10am–12noon	Holy Trinity, Bradpole
Thursdays	10am–2pm	St Swithun's, Allington
Fridays	10am–12noon	Holy Trinity, Bothenhampton

## Services resume at Bridport United Church, too

The first post-lockdown public service at Bridport United Church took place on 6 September. The Revd Peter Clark took the service, which attracted about 25 people, all masked and socially distanced.

"A lot of us were concerned that there wouldn't be much fellowship, and others wondered how communion would be managed safely," says church secretary Sue Hermon. "In fact there was a great sense of community – and afterwards we stood outside chatting to people we hadn't seen for months. Communion was safe, with the bread distributed around the church to outstretched hands by gloved, sanitised hands."

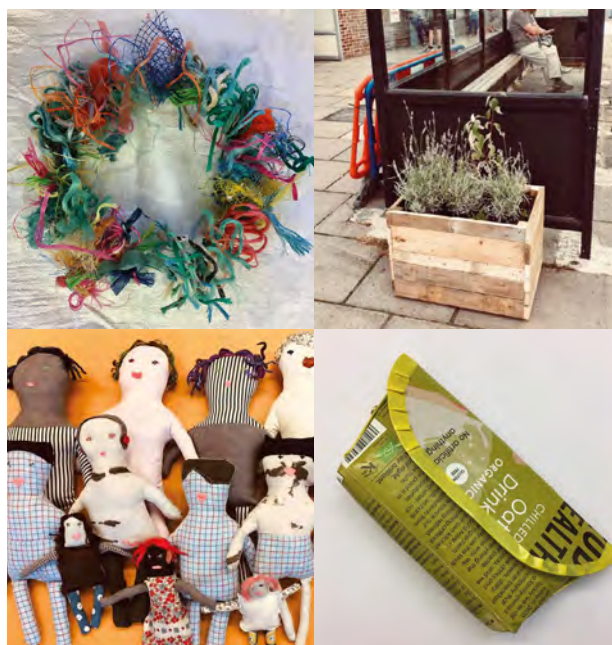
Sue adds that the service was "pared down and reflective". Singing is still not allowed, but the church's musical director, David Illingworth, played the organ and the congregation hummed as the words to the hymn were shown on a screen.

## It's back to the workshop for Bridport Community Shed

Bridport Community Shed – a group of people who come together to share practical skills – is aiming to resume more of its usual activities this month.

The group completed an outdoor project at the Allington Hill wellbeing area in August, returned to Bridport Market with a Saturday stall in Bucky Doo Square, and held a socially distanced picnic in early September. Now it has also announced plans to resume its twice-weekly sessions at the Mountfield workshop near Bedford Place, subject to current Covid restrictions.

The workshop sessions are on Wednesdays (crafting and upcycling) and Thursdays (woodworking) from 10am to 12.30pm. The group welcomes new members: for more details visit [www.bridportcommunityshed.org.uk](http://www.bridportcommunityshed.org.uk) or its pages on Facebook and Instagram.





# Cupboard

Bridport's food bank has b...  
 people in the town during...  
 visited on a busy Wednesday...  
 helping those who often h...

**F**or a perfect example of how Bridport responded to the Covid-19 crisis, you need look no further than Cupboard Love, the town's food bank.

Before the start of lockdown, the food bank was operating from three cupboards in St Mary's Church, as it had done for years. People in need would come every Wednesday morning not only to pick up food and toiletries, but also to enjoy coffee and cake and chat to the volunteers. There was a café-style arrangement with a relaxed, friendly atmosphere, and even visiting experts from Citizens Advice, Housing and the mental health field on hand to answer questions. Then, at one o'clock, everything would be tidied away until the following week.

But in mid-March everything changed. Life as we know it suddenly stopped – and the combination of a vast increase in demand and the closure of the church to the public saw Cupboard Love

grow... and grow... and grow.

As the effects of lockdown kicked in, many people who couldn't work from home and weren't furloughed inevitably found themselves struggling to put food on the table. The food bank responded to this demand – and the logistical difficulties posed by the restrictions – by switching to a delivery arrangement. People could phone up and ask for an emergency three-day food parcel, which would be delivered to their home.

“Demand doubled in the first weeks of lockdown,” says Carrie Gamble (pictured top left), who has been the food bank's manager since 2017. “We also lost many of our volunteers, mainly the older team members who were advised to shield so just weren't leaving the house. Luckily the level of donations shot up, too, and new volunteers came forward from the Bridport Coronavirus Community Support group – I just don't know how we'd have managed without them.”

To comply with the new regulations,

St Mary's was totally closed to the public from the start of lockdown (and it's still only open for two hours a week). It was clear that it was going to look very different inside for a while, as donations started to pour in and the food bank spread out over much of the church, volunteers using the pews and floor space to pack parcels and store food with no need to clear up at the end of the day.

“The community proved how incredibly generous it is,” says Carrie. “This was true before Covid, but early in lockdown donations moved up a gear. Local businesses of all sizes have been giving food, and there's been quite a lot from the public, too. People have been going to the shops less, so we've had fewer items coming via the donation boxes in supermarkets, but we've definitely received more gifts of money from individuals.”

National chains Morrisons, Waitrose and Lidl have been making local donations of food, and Carrie lists



All photos by Eddy Pearce

## It all adds up...

In 2019 Cupboard Love provided 1,485 food parcels, which helped to feed 2,130 adults and 778 children in Bridport and the surrounding villages (these figures are for the whole year).

During the Covid-19 lockdown the number of people requesting and needing help increased dramatically. The numbers from the beginning of lockdown in mid-March to the end of July 2020 (four and a half months) are: 661 food parcels, feeding 876 adults and 454 children.

# Food Love: feeding the people

been a lifeline for many  
lockdown. Olivia Daly  
day to meet the team  
have nowhere else to turn

Washingpool Farm, Leakers Bakery and Burton Bradstock Post Office among the smaller businesses that have been sending supplies regularly. The Pilsdon Community, too, has been growing extra vegetables and delivering them to the food bank on Wednesday mornings. Meanwhile, Carrie and her team have used the cash gifts – nearly £100 a week at the height of lockdown – to buy additional fruit and vegetables. They work from a guide to make up the food parcels, with bags for single people, bags for couples and bags for families – plus

their pets, of course – and catering for various dietary needs.

“I haven’t turned any donations away,” says Carrie. “Although demand for the food bank went down slightly after the first peak as some people’s additional benefits started to come through and others went back to work, I know the level of donations will drop at some point, and we have to prepare for an increase in demand later in the year when seasonal work dries up – this happens every year, even without Covid.”

As the restrictions were eased in early July, more volunteers started to come back, albeit in limited numbers to ensure social distancing. People using the food bank were able to come to the church again, too – but only as far as the door, to collect their three-day package of essentials – while the team continued to deliver to people who were shielding. →



# Cupboard Love: feeding the people

continued

Carrie's team of regular volunteers includes Debra Bates (pictured right), who has been working at Cupboard Love for two and a half years. Debra explains that when she retired early from her job in social work, the food bank was the main thing that she wanted to get involved with. "I particularly like it here because there's always a warm, genuine welcome for everybody," she says. "It's a very special place and everyone enjoys being here."

"This pandemic is the most significant thing that's happened in most of our lifetimes, and there's been lots of uncertainty, lots of anxiety. But people trust us – particularly Carrie – and it's been wonderful knowing we have helped to make things better for them."

So what of the future? The economic effects of Covid-19 are likely to be long-lasting, so Cupboard Love is going to be a vital part of many people's support network. Perhaps the most significant challenge it faces is lack of space: once the church is open to the public, and the food bank can no longer take up the whole building, the three cupboards that used to house all the supplies just won't be enough. Organisers are having to look for an alternative base.

But Carrie's not worried about Bridport's generosity drying up. "As the need has grown over the years, so has awareness of food poverty," she says. "We've worked to achieve this locally – such as through the fundraising events we held last November during the 'We Shall Overcome' anti-austerity weekend – and it's happened nationally, too, with more exposure in the media. I believe there's both the demand and supply to ensure Cupboard Love's existence for a while yet: I wish the demand wasn't there, but at least we can fulfil it."



## Capturing Bridport life in lockdown

The beautiful photos in our feature on the food bank were taken by Eddy Pearce and are part of the Bridport Lockdown Project. Created in April to document the experiences of Bridport people during the pandemic, the project asks people to submit photos and explain the stories behind them. "We wanted to give people a positive story-telling outlet at a time when we were particularly focused on how we engage and interact with our community," says Eddy. Ultimately, all the photos and their stories will be added to the Covid-19 archive at the Dorset History Centre. Discover more at [www.bridportlockdown.org](http://www.bridportlockdown.org) plus Facebook and Instagram (search 'Bridport Lockdown').



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## ST MARY'S Bridport

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### An ordinand in lockdown

For those of you who don't know me, I'm Maggie and I'm an ordinand in the Bridport Team Ministry. A what? I hear many of you ask. An ordinand – which is just a fancy way of describing someone who is training to be a vicar.

Like so many other people, I have found lockdown to be challenging at times, and living on my own I have found it particularly isolating, especially in those early days and weeks. However, as I reflect back on those times, I can see that I have developed new relationships and have had new experiences that I wouldn't have done otherwise. Like many I have discovered the joys (or headache) of Zoom, and have been hosting a service of night prayer three times a week for several months now. I have met lots of new people through this, and I value, as they do, the quiet reflective time we have together at the end of the day. I look forward to the time when I can meet these people in person.

I have also prepared and recorded an online sermon as part of my training. In the 'old days' I would have delivered it in church one Sunday morning, no doubt to have been forgotten by the time people got home for their lunch, but now my sermon is 'out there' somewhere floating on the internet, waiting to be stumbled upon by some poor unsuspecting person who might Google 'harvest hands' or some such like.

Studying on my own has been hard. Part of my training usually involves residential weekends every few weeks

with other would-be vicars, which obviously hasn't been able to happen. I have missed their friendship, wisdom and humour, so I was thankful to be able to go to college for a few days recently for our annual summer school. Reconnecting with my friends was amazing and I came away feeling refreshed, rejuvenated and ready to start my next year of training.

So, as we tentatively begin to emerge into this new world, I look forward to reconnecting with those of you I know, and I look forward to meeting those of you I haven't yet met.

*Maggie Crosbie*



**Maggie Crosbie at Sarum College, which overlooks Salisbury Cathedral**

### Please support our church

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 previously did. If you can help us with a donation, whatever you can give, you will be helping us to maintain our beautiful church and its ministry in the heart of Bridport. Thank you!

Giving online is easy and quick. If you're familiar with QR codes, you can scan the code shown here. For information about how to donate in other ways, please email the treasurer of St Mary's, Julie Gardner: [julie.gardner88@outlook.com](mailto:julie.gardner88@outlook.com)



## HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

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### Saving our village hall

Bradpole Village Hall (the Forster Memorial Institute, pictured) has been at the centre of village activities since it was built, with the help of public subscription, and opened in 1890. It is held in trust for the benefit of local residents.

The current team of trustees has diminished in numbers and can no longer manage the hall. In the meantime, the administration of the hall has been carried out by the chair and clerk of the parish council (which rents an office in the

building) to ensure that it is insured, for example. The fabric of the building has been inspected by two people from the former management committee for maintenance purposes.

After details of this predicament were publicised in the area, along with requests for help, several people have said they would be prepared to become trustees of the hall so that a new board of trustees can be established. Others have said they would help to ensure the continued availability of the hall to the community. →



## HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

If you would like to add your name, either as a trustee or as a volunteer helper, and have not already done so, please email [bradpole@dorset-aptc.gov.uk](mailto:bradpole@dorset-aptc.gov.uk) or phone 01308 422140.

A new trustee board will have to be elected at a public meeting, which in itself presents a problem because of the Covid-19 restrictions.

Up-to-date information about the situation can be found on the parish council website: [bradpole.org.uk/category/community/](http://bradpole.org.uk/category/community/).

### Dear friends,

October is upon us and we enter the autumn season with the light fading and the colours of creation and countryside changing.

This year we will be unable to celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving in the traditional way in our churches, singing those well-known harvest hymns, offering our produce,



decorating the church and sharing a harvest lunch or supper. However, we must – and surely will – give thanks to God for all he has provided in the months of lockdown, as well as thanks to our farmers, our shops and shopkeepers and those who have delivered groceries, fruit and vegetables to our homes.

Although the long, light summer evenings will be replaced with shorter days and darker evenings, there is one

**‘The Light of the World’  
by William Holman Hunt**

light that cannot be extinguished: the light of Christ.

The well-known painting ‘The Light of the World’ by William Holman Hunt shows Christ at the door. He wears a priestly robe and a crown depicting royalty, and yet it is a crown of thorns reminding us of his suffering and sacrifice. He carries in his hand a lantern, a symbol of his teachings which have gone into all the world, and a lamp to our feet showing us how to live and bringing us joy and comfort.

There is no latch or knob to the door; it can be opened only from within. Will we open our hearts to God’s love and light?

The words from Genesis remind us that God said, “Let there be light” – and there was light.

The Scriptures say, “God commanded light to shine in the dark. Now God is shining in our hearts to let you know that his glory is seen in Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6)

There is a wonderful children’s poem, Robert Louis Stevenson’s ‘The Lamplighter’, which I recited as a child:

*My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;  
It’s time to take the window to see Leerie going by;  
For every night at teatime and before you take your seat,  
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.*

*Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,  
And my papa’s a banker and as rich as he can be;  
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I’m to do,  
Oh Leerie, I’ll go round at night and light the lamps with you!*

*For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,  
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more;  
And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,  
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him tonight!*

May you be comforted and protected by the peace and light of our Lord.

*The Revd Janis Moore*

## HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton

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Director of music – Sue Smith 456955

### From the village editor

It is good that The Bridge can once again be printed in paper copies and be available to all households to read. The past five issues have been published online only so not everyone has been able to see them, but it was necessary to avoid asking the distributors to go from house to house during the coronavirus lockdown. We now say a big thankyou to our loyal band of volunteers in Bothenhampton for resuming their important role of delivering copies to all homes. The magazine will continue to be available on the internet, too.

Holy Trinity continues to be open, for private prayer only, each Friday from 10am to 12 noon. There have been two



Michael Day

Sunday team services every week in St Swithun’s since 26 July, and the clergy are looking at ways of opening other BTM churches for services now that restrictions are easing. We really look forward to the time when we can worship in Holy Trinity once more, but it may not be just yet.

The services at St Swithun’s started as being said only. No singing was allowed, so there were no hymns or a sung setting of the communion service, but there was organ music at appropriate times. However, by the end of

## HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton continued...

August the regulations permitted a limited amount of singing in church, which meant the congregation could hum a hymn while reading the words on a screen, and a small group could sing. Happily four or five members of Holy Trinity choir and a member of St Mary's Bridport have been contributing to the services by singing a quiet anthem each week on the balcony next to the organ in St Swithun's where there is plenty of room to be safely distanced. Hopefully this is just the beginning of music returning to our worship – it certainly feels like another step towards normality.

*Barbara Ffooks*



## Volunteers are needed to help tidy the Old Churchyard on Saturday 10 October from 2pm

Please bring your own garden tools, container and garden gloves. The areas needing work are:

- Removal of ivy on walls
- Digging out persistent weeds on graves
- Cutting down vegetation around church
- Reducing size of compost heap

## Fall back...

Autumn is now with us and British Summer Time is coming to an end. Please remember to turn back your clocks one hour on Sunday 25 October.

## ST MARY'S Walditch

Village editor and 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)

## So long, summer

Summer tumbling into autumn is a time of looking back as well as to the future. At a summer like no other with oppressively hot nights and a stream of holidaymakers seeking escape from the trials of the past few months. The hastening chillier days and darker evenings are a moment to stand and stare. The chestnut tree on the green is gradually losing leaves that provided much-needed shade in blistering heat. The owls are calling fervently in the black of night and when dawn breaks, the birds' chatter has a new urgency. Change is coming.

Walditch has been transformed by this past year. It may look the same but there's a difference in the air. It's not just the hint of a new season, more the acknowledgement of what we are living through.

Trawling through pictures of Walditch past, with lanes blocked by heavy snow and troops billeted in the Hyde, there is a sense of endurance about this place. The church, village hall and green are the landmarks of an English country scene. Yet what emerged as a local farming community is now home to neighbours from near and far. And our community has been a stalwart of the pandemic.

Autumn here means pumpkin soup left on the doorstep from a villager's batch cooking (and sometimes a pumpkin, too), home-baked cakes sold to help fund the church while it is closed, endless waves, how-are-yous, do-you-need-anys and offers of cups of socially distanced tea. Oh yes, and laughter. At hair let loose, masks steaming up glasses and the latest tips for losing lockdown pounds. I'm ready to welcome autumn in Walditch. I couldn't imagine being anywhere else.

*Mimi Moore*



## Connecting with the wild world

In some respects, lockdown has been blissful! My computer developed a gremlin: I couldn't send or receive emails or use Google or Facebook and, as the weeks went by, I became less inclined to 'fix it'. Apologies to all those people who had to phone or call round with an important message, and to those friends whose latest exploits I still don't know. Am I a dinosaur?

In a 'thought for the day' talk in September, Canon Emeritus Angela Tilby said that she was now more aware that she, too, was a member of the animal world. Certainly we have been privileged to encounter a wide variety of wildlife and birdlife over the past months, and it is joyful – and awe-ful – to remember that we are one with God's wonderful creation.

And as autumn deepens, from September into October, we see leaf-fall, the stripping away of fruit flowers and vegetables in our gardens and animals going into hibernation. Our own joints may become more creaky as the air chills and darkness threatens – and we too tend to hibernate.

We know that over the next few months, there will be more challenges to face, but be sure that God will not fail to bring rebirth and renewal when the time is right. And I may cease to be a dinosaur... unfortunately!

*The Revd Ann Ayling*



Michael Day

## ST JOHN'S West Bay

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

### From the village editor

It is nice to report that there have been no funerals in the past month at St John's, but it is still sad that the church is unable to open. It's such a focal point in West Bay and you are constantly going past it and realising just how much you miss being able to go inside to worship. Online services are great, but I really miss singing my favourite hymns. I'm sure I'm not the only one.

With the funfair packing up – always the signal that the summer season is over – I wonder whether this year we will see more visitors in the autumn. Obviously with the children going back to school it will not seem quite so busy, but there may well be a lot of people who have been reluctant to visit during the busy time and might now feel more confident. Indeed, seeing the Bay on the webcam at weekends, one wouldn't think there was a pandemic, and Bank Holiday Monday was no exception. Apparently business has been really brisk in the kiosks, which are a firm favourite with visitors. Of course this year there was none of the annual events that people look forward to – Pirates Day, the RNLI raft race, West Bay Day and Bonfire by the Beach – and we can only hope that they will return next year.

There were complaints from visitors who were fined for parking in the wrong places because of a lack of available spaces. This is a particular problem on a Sunday morning now that the car boot sale is back. It's very popular and



Elliott Brown

takes up a whole section of the car park. I know there was talk of moving to another location, but for the time being it will stay in West Bay.

The Discovery Centre is open Tuesday to Thursday and Sunday from 11am to 1pm and 2 to 4pm, and continues to be popular with visitors. Obviously some of the centre's interactive displays have been temporarily taken out of use but there is still plenty to see and learn about West Bay and the surrounding area. Visitors are reminded to observe social distancing, wear a face mask and follow the one-way system.

The weather at the end of summer seemed to be very changeable, particularly with the arrival of Storm Ellen. The seas were quite magnificent but also quite dangerous and yet again people got into trouble. Fortunately the life guards were on patrol during the daytime until early September. West Bay Road was flooded because we had so much rain in such a short period of time.

Sue Pollock

## ST SWITHUN'S Allington

Village editor – June Goodburn 423061  
Churchwardens – Mandi Sturrock 420304  
Jo George 426457  
Children and youth worker – 423061

### From the village editor

The Sunday team services at St Swithun's Church have been a joy. There has been a very well attended communion service at 9.30am every Sunday, with Morning Prayer at 11am, and with the help of a large screen everyone has been able to join in. There is also Morning Prayer on Thursdays at 10am.

So many members of our congregation have said how wonderful it has been to still be able to attend church in these difficult times. So please, come along – your church service is still here.

For many years, October has been the month when we have held the Harvest Thanksgiving service, and despite all the current problems we still have the harvest to be thankful for. However would we cope without our farmers?

Many years ago one of our churchwardens was a farmer. Every Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday, the church was beautifully decorated. On each side of the main doorway was a large sheaf of corn, the four small pillars at the back were

**Bradpole  
churchwarden  
John Adams  
welcomes the Revd  
Ann Ayling and  
parishioners to a  
Sunday service  
at St Swithun's**



entwined with wild hops, and the window sills were laden with fruit and vegetables.

Lots of produce was given, all of which was later distributed to those people in the parish who were ill. The service was always well attended, with everyone enjoying the harvest hymns, such as this eternally popular one:

*We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land,  
but it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand;  
he sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,  
the breezes and the sunshine and soft refreshing rain.  
All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above,  
then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all his love.*  
June Goodburn

## Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Peter Clark 425978  
Church secretary – Sue Hermon  
01297 489658 / bridportsec@gmail.com

### incorporating UPLODERS CHAPEL

Correspondent – Carol Hall 423163  
carol@gribb.plus.com

#### Introducing Bridport United Church

I remember the principal of my theological college telling me about visiting a village where the non-conformists bought their meat at one butcher while the parish folk did so at another across the road, such was the animosity between the two groups. One can of course understand that the conflicts that resulted from the Reformation did run deep, and in the scheme of things at least differentiating between a butcher that was 'ours' from 'theirs' was a big improvement from burning each other at the stake!

Nevertheless, I thank God that these days we are much more likely to focus on the things we hold in common than those we disagree on. We have indeed come a long way.

The Bridport United Church is a 'local ecumenical partnership' or LEP (originally the 'P' stood for 'project' but over time 'partnership' seemed a better term). It was initially an amalgam of two denominations.

The easy one to describe is the former Methodist Church in South Street (now the Bridport Arts Centre), which joined with the folk of the Congregational Church in East Street in the current 1860-built building. The Congregational Church is more complicated because as a denomination it then joined with the Presbyterian Church of England in 1972 to form the national denomination of the United Reformed Church (URC). If this weren't enough, this was followed in 1981 first by the Churches of Christ in the UK, then in 2000 the Congregational Church in Scotland also joined the URC.

The Bridport United Church, then, is technically a union of two church congregations and five denominations.

The United Reformed Church, of which I am a Minister of Word and Sacrament, is a conciliar (council-based) church with a tradition of bottom-up governance and a primacy of seeking the 'mind of Christ' in the congregational church meeting. This naturally leads to a variety in approaches to running things.

Methodism is a much stronger and centrally led 'brand,' founded of course by John and Charles Wesley – who, I understand, never really wished to form a breakaway denomination. Not only did they die still Anglican priests, but also are now recognised as Anglican worthies. As so often when church folk disagree, the result is division and schism rather than acceptance of diversity. I'd like to say that



**The Revd Peter Clark**

such behaviour is all over but, sadly, now and again certain issues arise that lead to a similar outcome.

However, as I indicated earlier, we now live in generally more friendly ecumenical times – perhaps evidenced by the fact that the first person I ever heard pray for the United Church and its new minister was an Anglican reader when I was sitting incognito at St Mary's a week before I started in post.

Our worship style is a bit freer than the prescribed range of liturgy in Anglican or Catholic churches, with services led by Methodist local preachers and URC lay preachers as well as URC and Methodist ministers from across the Methodist circuit, which stretches eastward to Bere Regis and south to Portland. We offer a variety of styles but remain fairly traditional and recognisable to most regular churchgoers, though with a focus less on the sacraments (with communion only monthly) and more on the Word, which we tend to argue is 'sacramental' too! We also now host the former Xalt team that used to be based in St Mary's. Now re-branded as Soul Space, it has always had a variety of church backgrounds in the team and adds an alternative, more contemporary worship service to our portfolio.

We are really pleased to be joining The Bridge at its relaunch and being a part of its exciting project to be a more community-orientated magazine, establishing the churches as an important (I'd argue vital) part of the community in Bridport and District. We are of course already in Covenant Partnership with both St Mary's and St John's churches, so this seems a logical step and we are delighted to have been accepted into the family of The Bridge.

Every blessing,

*The Revd Peter Clark*

#### Sunday services at BUC (East Street) – all at 10.30am

4 October (holy communion)	Peter Clark
11 October	Peter Jenner / C Smith
18 October	Peter Clark
25th October	John Walker
1 November (holy communion)	Peter Clark

The Soul Space contemporary worship team have been producing a video service on YouTube and Facebook ('Soul Space Bridport') for every first and third Sunday since Easter, and this will continue. As we can now get together again we will meet to show the video at 4pm on Sundays 4 and 18 October at Bridport United Church. Please wear face masks in the church and maintain social distancing – but please do come, especially if you'd like to see what we are doing and don't have access to the videos at home.

#### From Uploders Chapel

Well here we are again, still unable to get back to life as we knew it. I have been pondering for a while on what I can write about when there is nothing to report and no events happening yet at Uploders Chapel. Then it dawned on me:



**Bridport United Church**

## Bridport UNITED CHURCH continued...

life is still going on, with wonderful examples of kindness and consideration in our community and further afield.

It is possible to join services online via various technical ways, which is lovely, but we don't have to be in church on Sunday to behave like good Christian folk. So a BIG thank you to everyone who is doing what they can to help us get through this strange time.

I know that some people are concerned that they aren't doing enough, but if we all do what we can, then everything needed will get done. This might just mean picking up the phone and speaking to someone to brighten their day.

The chapel is very fortunate to be supported in ways other than its services, for example with art exhibitions and other events. The first one Rich and I went to was put on by Barry Wilson (who now lives in Hereford) and Ken Waterfield. Ken and his lovely wife Enid also supported the chapel at various events. Sadly both died earlier this year and are definitely missed.

Before lockdown I had been thinking what we could call each month – Jolly January, Fabulous February, Marvellous March and possibly Awe-inspiring April. Then the Covid situation brought those ideas to a halt. Fleeting thoughts like Appalling April and Miserable May came to mind but as I didn't want to be a doom-and-gloom merchant I found myself committing those ideas to the rubbish bin. We are so fortunate living in this area. Obviously the situation is a

**'Our Rev', an entry in the 2019 Uploders Scarecrow Festival, outside the chapel in the village**



struggle for a lot of folk so it's up to those of us who aren't having unpleasant experiences of one kind or another to keep smiling and remain grateful for what we have. Let's do our best to have an Outstanding October! Enjoy our lovely countryside, keep safe and keep smiling.

*Carol Hall*

### Services at Uploders Chapel

As soon as any service dates can be arranged we will let you know, if only by putting a poster up at the chapel. There is a possibility of services on Sundays 25 October and 8 November but this is yet to be confirmed. Any services at the chapel will start at 10.30am.

## St MARY & St CATHERINE Roman Catholic Church

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

### Introducing Bridport's Roman Catholic Church

We are excited to be sharing in this relaunch of The Bridge and thank those concerned for inviting us to do so. It might be an idea to introduce ourselves and the team in the Catholic Parish, which covers the villages of West Dorset. Within the parish we have two other churches beside the one in Victoria Grove, Bridport. Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs & St Ignatius in Chideock sits along a quiet country



lane (North Road). It is steeped in the history of Catholicism and the martyrs of the Reformation from Chideock Castle. St John's, Beaminster, meanwhile, is a comparatively modern building, opened in 1967.

The foundation stone of the first Catholic church in Bridport was laid in 1845 and the church was dedicated to St Mary & St Catherine in 1846. The

building served the community until replaced in 1978 by the current church, which was extended in 2016. In normal times we have a Sunday Mass congregation of around 150 of all ages (the service includes a children's liturgy). From that mass, holy communion is taken to the sick and housebound members of our community.

During lockdown many parishioners were involved in keeping in touch with those who were on their own, as well as helping with shopping and other needs. We are continuing to stream Sunday Mass on our Facebook page (search 'Bridport Catholic Parish') and plan to continue doing so. At a time when only about half our regular Mass-goers are in church, those who are unable to come along find this very welcome.

In Bridport, we also have St Catherine's School in Pymore Road. Sarah Terrey became our new head teacher a week or so before lockdown, and she and the staff are thrilled to

**The Church of St Mary & St Catherine, Bridport**



**Mgr Keith Mitchell**

## The Catholic chapel of Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs and St Ignatius in Chideock

be back in school with all the children again. They have all sorts of exciting plans and everyone is in good spirits. Their website is [www.stcatherinesbridport.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.stcatherinesbridport.dorset.sch.uk).

Our parish priest is Monsignor Keith Mitchell, who moved here from Plymouth in 2019 so was just finding his feet when lockdown began. Despite that, he feels very much at home in the parish and is enjoying the bustling town and the beautiful surrounding countryside. He lives in the presbytery adjoining the church. Father Cor Hooijmaijers is a Marist priest who worked in the Solomon Islands for many years and has retired to live in East Street. Father Cor is very involved in the life of the parish and town and we are blessed to have him with us. The Revd Mark Brown is a permanent deacon who has lived with his wife in the town for many years. He was ordained deacon in 2018 and ministers widely across the parish.

The parish office is in the church and is normally open Tuesday to Friday from 8.30am to 12.30pm.

So that's us and a little of who we are! We look forward to being part of this community magazine.



## Get involved: local clubs, groups & societies

**We are no longer carrying adverts from local groups. Instead, information about these organisations will appear in a listings format, with a focus on one in each issue (see the next page). Unless otherwise stated, all phone numbers are Bridport (01308).**

*Please note: most groups have not been active since the start of lockdown but we are giving their usual arrangements in the hope that things will get going again soon.*

**Colmers WI** meets at the WI Hall in North Street. They hope to resume monthly meetings in October, but this depends on the hall being Covid safe. 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 and will restart in 2021. Contact [ian.ibbotson@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.ibbotson@btinternet.com) 01308 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](mailto: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 on Tuesday afternoons 1.45–4.45pm at the village hall. Contact Kathy 485626.

**Bridport Choral Society** rehearses on Monday evenings at the United Church Hall and hopes to resume activities in

January. Contact Chris Walliker: [cwalliker@btinternet.com](mailto:cwalliker@btinternet.com).

**Bridport & District Gardening Club** meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the WI Hall, North Street. 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](mailto: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](mailto:montycrook@rocketmail.com).

**Disabled Carers & Friends** meets every Thursday from 9am to 12 noon at Vernon's Court Community Room, South Street. Call in for a chat or advice. Email [pete.bowditch@hotmail.com](mailto:pete.bowditch@hotmail.com) or phone 423620, 421213 or 427819.

**Bridport Bridge Club** meets Wednesday and Thursday evenings (duplicate bridge, good standard) and the first two Friday afternoons in the month (relaxed bridge) at St Swithun's Hall. Contact Roy Tarsnane 425298.

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

### Citizens Advice

The local bureau is closed but is maintaining an online and part-time phone service. For advice on any subject you can ring 03444 111 444 (Adviceline) free of charge. The system directs your call to the nearest CA, which will answer if available. The local number is also back in operation now: 01308 456594.

You can also email [advice@bridport-cab.org.uk](mailto:advice@bridport-cab.org.uk). The CA website [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) has a comprehensive range of information, and you may also find the government website useful: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

# Dementia Friendly Bridport



**Dementia Friendly Bridport (DFB) aims to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing for local people living with dementia. It was founded by a group of volunteers who all have experience of the challenges of living with the condition.**

“We asked local people about living with dementia in Bridport and what might help to make life easier and more enjoyable,” says DFB volunteer Carole Emmerson. “In response we put in place a number of initiatives and events. Then this year Covid arrived and all our regular activities were cancelled, but we know how difficult lockdown has been for people living with dementia, so we’re keen that everything gets going again as soon as possible.”

First and foremost, DFB works to raise awareness and understanding of dementia through regular ‘Dementia Friends’ information sessions as well

as stalls at events throughout the year, including one in Bucky Doo Square during Dementia Awareness Week. A number of volunteers are also involved in other organisations where they feed back any issues raised.

Usual DFB activities include an exercise class (in collaboration with the Leisure Centre) for people with dementia and their carers. “There’s a fun, supportive environment – plus tea and chat afterwards – and it has led to some supportive friendships,” says Carole. There have also been a couple of successful tea dances and the group hopes to hold more.

Many businesses in Bridport and West Bay have signed up to DFB’s ‘Use Our Loo’ scheme, agreeing that anyone in need may use their loos without question or having to make a purchase. The businesses display a sticker in their window and are listed on the DFB website and in the tourist information centre.

The group’s website has news, a carers’ support page and a ‘what’s on’ of local dementia-friendly activities, plus a coronavirus update page added in response to the pandemic. There are also noticeboards in Bucky Doo (opposite the Arts Centre) and the medical centre.

“If you’re affected by dementia, we’d love to hear your feedback or ideas,” says Carole. “We want to do more, but we desperately need more volunteers. If you share our passion to make Bridport more dementia friendly and are interested in helping – particularly with facilitating groups, publicity, or becoming a Dementia Champion and running Dementia Friends sessions – please get in touch.”

Contact Deb on 07890 649561 / [dementiafriendlybridport@gmail.com](mailto:dementiafriendlybridport@gmail.com)

[www.dementiafriendlybridport.co.uk](http://www.dementiafriendlybridport.co.uk)

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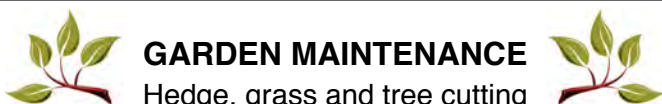
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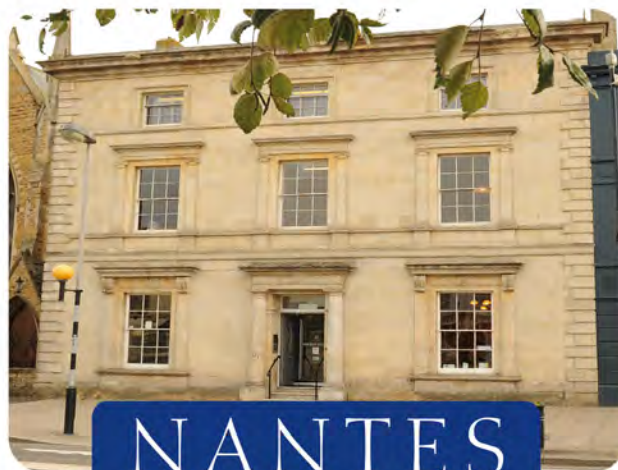
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