

the **Bridge**

February 2023



A community magazine for Bridport supported by the Anglican Church

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We're unique, but we're powerful together

Well, that's another Christmas and New Year, crept up and gone, just like that! February has arrived!

I don't know about you, but I'm finding they come round quicker these days – is it an age thing? I must admit to one of my Christmas weaknesses, that of loving children's animated films, which are always in abundance during the festive season. They are always lovely family films, which when you're busy can occupy the children – and, as I've confessed, me! Two of my favourites this year are an old film, *Ice Age*, and a new one: *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. I love them both, not only because they are healthy entertainment for the whole family, but most of all because they have deep significant messages. I think adults often complicate things that are really so very simple, whereas children get straight to the heart of it. Both these amazing films give a powerful message of inclusivity and acceptance, valuing uniqueness.

I remember being in a group at a training event, and we were asked to define 'normal'. Try it before you read on, and you see it's quite a challenge. Well everyone was trying to impress by coming out with deep, heavy, psychologically informed definitions. I was last, and to everyone's surprise, I announced: "I know exactly what 'normal' is." I paused for effect and then added, "I am! It's the rest of you I'm worried about!" Simple but profound. We tend to pass judgement on the world, everything and everyone in it, from the gauge of our personal perspective. I'm 'normal' and anyone not like me is wrong. Actually, no two of us are identical, not even twins. I prefer the word 'unique', as we are part of God's creation, and you'll be pleased to know that when He made me He threw away the mould. But what

is really important is how we interact with each other. Do we compete and 'force' our beliefs and ideas on others? Do we speak, because we have 'the right', but not listen to someone with a different perspective? I often say, "I don't have to be wrong for you to be right, and you don't have to be wrong for me to be right."

Over the festive season I went to a Churches Together Epiphany carol service at St Catherine's, the Roman



Coral Hatton

Catholic church. It was beautiful, with so many different churches represented and so many people singing carols together. The most amazing and humbling group, who brought tears to my eyes, was a group from Ukraine. They were in beautiful traditional outfits and sang a carol from their homeland, as well as an English carol, *Away in a Manger*. Despite all they'd been through, the worries they still had about home and about those affected by an unjust and brutal war, friends and family, they praised God. Wow! What an example to us,

who, in our plenty, often still grumble.

But as *Ice Age* tells us, "We may be the strangest herd I've ever seen, but we're a 'herd' [family]" – in the film that's Sid the sloth, Manny the mammoth and Diego the sabretoothed tiger. In *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* (spoiler alert) the boy finally realises that 'home', is about relationships, not geography.

You may have already broken your New Year's resolution, but I challenge us all, including myself, to add another for 2023. Let us value each and every person for their uniqueness, and learn to live in peace and harmony, no longer judging someone we probably haven't even met because we don't understand them, because they're different or have a different perspective on life. I was reminded by a friend that February is a time of love, with Valentine's Day coming in the middle of the month. Well, that's what it's really all about, isn't it? Love and respect!

John 13:34–35 (NRSV) reminds us: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Coral Hatton
Licensed lay minister

Let's value each and every person for their uniqueness, and learn to live in peace and harmony

A force of love and support

This month I was very happy to be invited to visit the Living Tree at their regular Friday drop-in session at the Quaker Meeting House.



Olivia Daly
Editor

This charity does wonderful work providing friendship and support to local people living with cancer, and I saw first-hand why it's such a powerful force in combating feelings of isolation and fear. I saw members taking part in *Tripudio* (no, I didn't know either), singing (yes, I joined in) and generally relaxing and catching up over a cup of tea. The Living Tree is a wonderful asset to the Bridport community and you can find out more about their work on page 7.

On a slightly more disappointing note, we received just one entry to our feature writing competition for young people, which we launched in the September issue and which closed on 12 December. We won't be awarding the first prize or publishing the entry; the entrant will receive the runner-up prize.

A poem: SNOWDROPS

***The frosts of winter still enshroud this scene,
But soon the little beaks of muted green
Now breaking through the fertile earth will bring,
The first of all the flowers that bloom in spring:
And when the dainty pendent bells unfold
We'll glimpse the tiny stamens drenched in gold.***

David Bushrod

Church services in the Parish of Bridport

		St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay
Week 1: 30 January – 5 February	<i>Monday</i>						10am Morning Prayer
	<i>Tuesday</i>				2.30pm Holy Communion		
	<i>Wednesday</i>	2.30pm Holy Communion					
	<i>Thursday</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
	<i>Friday</i>						
	<i>Saturday</i>						
	<i>Sunday</i>	8am BCP Holy Communion	4pm Contemplative Church (Hall)	10am Parish Holy Communion for Candlemas			
Week 2: 6 – 12 February	<i>Monday</i>						10am Morning Prayer
	<i>Tuesday</i>						
	<i>Wednesday</i>						
	<i>Thursday</i>		10am Eucharist			10am Morning Praise	
	<i>Friday</i>						
	<i>Saturday</i>						
	<i>Sunday</i>	8am BCP Holy Communion 11am Holy Communion	9.30am Eucharist	11am Morning Praise	9.30am Morning Praise		11am Morning Worship
Week 3: 13 – 19 February	<i>Monday</i>						10am Morning Prayer
	<i>Tuesday</i>						
	<i>Wednesday</i>						
	<i>Thursday</i>		10am Holy Communion			10am Morning Praise	
	<i>Friday</i>						
	<i>Saturday</i>						
	<i>Sunday</i>	8am BCP Holy Communion 11am Morning Worship	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion		11am Holy Communion
Week 4: 20 – 26 February	<i>Monday</i>						10am Morning Prayer
	<i>Tuesday</i>						
	<i>Wednesday</i>						
	<i>Thursday</i>		10am Holy Communion				
	<i>Friday</i>						
	<i>Saturday</i>						6pm Service of wholeness and healing
	<i>Sunday</i>	8am BCP Holy Communion 11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Matins	9.30am Morning Praise	11am Holy Communion	11am Morning Worship

Beach wheelchairs are coming to West Bay

A new scheme to provide beach wheelchairs at West Bay is set to launch this spring.

The project has been gathering momentum since Bridport Town Council laid special matting on West Beach last summer, improving access for people who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters. The town council will now be working with Dorset Council and Parkdean Resorts, which owns West Bay Holiday Park and which will be closely involved in facilitating free hire of the wheelchairs.

“The matting has already been well used by many people with disabilities or restricted mobility who have never been on the beach at West Bay before,” says Elaine Leader, who is spearheading the project. “The wheelchair scheme is going to make an incredible difference to so many people.”

The project’s Crowdfunder appeal has so far raised more than £3,000 towards the £10,000 target, and Bridport Round Table has made a generous donation to fund one of the beach wheelchairs.

As well as beach wheelchairs, there will also be one that can float in the sea and can be used with help from a qualified swimming coach so the user’s carer does not necessarily need to be in the water.

Additionally, West Dorset Mencap has offered significant funding for the manufacture of a special wheeled platform to allow those who need a specific wheelchair, and cannot transfer, to enjoy the beach and the sea.

Cllr Ian Bark, Mayor of Bridport, says: “We’re incredibly grateful to Elaine Leader and other local volunteers for the drive and ambition they’ve brought to this initiative, as well as Parkdean Resorts and Dorset Council for being the operational force behind this important and inclusive scheme, and to all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to the fundraising effort.”

The town council also expects to install two new ‘Changing Places’ facilities, one at West Bay Road car park and the other at West Bay Holiday Park. Each will have a toilet, an adult changing bed, shower and hoist and will offer a basic but crucial solution for people with complex disabilities so they can enjoy a whole day at the beach instead of having to go home when they need to change or use the toilet.
www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/beach-wheelchairs-for-west-bay-west-bay-dorset-1

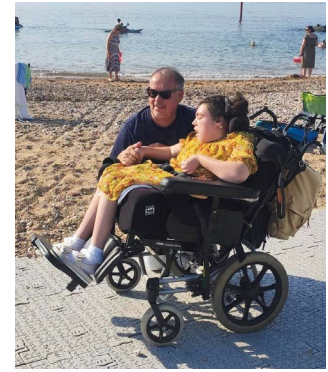
Stay warm and well this winter

Age UK North, South and West Dorset has secured funding from the National Grid to help older people stay warm and well this winter.



As well as providing free information and advice on subjects including welfare benefits to help local older people maximise their income, the organisation is arranging for its DBS-checked ‘Handy People’ to carry out energy efficiency assessments. They will use thermal imaging technology to identify areas in the home that could be reducing energy efficiency, and make improvements such as draft proofing.

For more information or to refer yourself or someone else into the scheme, phone 01305 269444 or email enquiries@ageuknswd.org.uk.



Above: Rachel Hallett (left) and Neil & Lily Barnes are among those who have used the wheelchair-friendly matting to access West Bay’s West Beach. Right: an example of a beach wheelchair that can be used on sand



Could you be a Living Tree trustee?

The Living Tree cancer support charity is looking for more trustees, including someone with potential to take on the role of chairperson in the long term.

For more information email thelivingtreedorset@gmail.com or phone 07341 916976. See our feature on p7, too.

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Get ready to 'Ring for the King' this May

Throughout the country plans are being made to 'Ring for the King' at the Coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6 May.

For hundreds of years church bells have rung out, not only to call communities to worship, but also to celebrate special occasions, in remembrance of others and to signify special events. They are part of the soundscape of the UK. In June last year we celebrated Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee with the sound of bells, and the same bells later rang out with a muffled sound throughout the nation as a mark of respect at her passing in September.

Following the announcement that King Charles's Coronation will take place on 6 May, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has initiated an appeal to recruit more ringers so they can be trained in time to Ring for the King.

You can start to learn at any age. If you're interested in finding out more, take a look at the Learning to Ring video here: www.ringfortheKing.org/learning-to-ring

If you think you'd like to give it a go, please get in touch, either by contacting one of your local Bridport towers, or by using the link provided on the Association of Ringing Teachers website after the video. Local contact details can be found in the 'Get Involved' listings under 'Bellringing in the Parish of Bridport' (page 20).



Bridport's mental health charity, The Burroughs Harmony Centre, is looking for a new trustee after one of the founding trustees, Alison Williams, retired at the end of her second three-year term of office. Harmony offers peer support, information, signposting and lots of enjoyable activities to local people living with a mental health problem.

For more information, including a job description, email tegwyn.j@harmonydropin.org.uk. There's more information about the charity at www.harmonydropin.org.uk.

World Day of Prayer 2023

**Friday 3 March at 10.30am
at Bridport United Church, East Street**

The service this year has been prepared by the women of Taiwan with the message 'I have heard about your faith'. They ask us to join them as they give thanks for their beautiful island and encourage one another in our faith as the apostle St Paul did in his letters.

The day of prayer is celebrated in over 170 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world.

Everyone is welcome and refreshments will be provided. For more details contact Kathy Hince on 01308 485626 or hincekathy@gmail.com.

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Support, advice & friendship for people living with cancer

A cancer diagnosis is devastating news for anyone. It's a grenade thrown into your world, causing panic and shattering normality, destroying plans and raising endless questions. Often it makes you feel totally alone, even if you're surrounded by loving family and friends; often the thing that helps most is being around people who are going through the same thing.

That's why groups like the Living Tree are so valuable. Meeting weekly here in Bridport, the Living Tree is a self-help and support group for people affected by cancer and their carers and loved ones. It's a space where people can get advice, take part in a range of activities or simply enjoy a cuppa and a chat.

The Living Tree was founded in 2012 by Jo O'Farrell and the current chair, Jo Millar, who says: "I'd been having treatment for cancer and a mutual friend introduced me to Jo, thinking we'd hit it off. We did! She'd been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma three years earlier, and we both thought it would be good to have a group like this, so we set about trying to get it off the ground. We got a £5,000 Macmillan grant and began with just six or so people; we wanted to start small, as everyone was having



The Living Tree
Living well with and beyond cancer

treatment, and we let it grow naturally."

Sadly, Jo O'Farrell died in 2018. "She did so much for the Living Tree behind the scenes – it was her way of coping," says Jo Millar. "After such a loss – and that of Fiona Burkeman, who also died in 2018 and who had also been central to the growth of the group – I realised I'd have to delegate more and get organised. The group has grown, thanks to people's willingness to get involved and amazing support from the town, too. We now have 20 to 30 people who come along regularly to various weekly activities, plus many more who keep in touch via our newsletter and social media."

The Living Tree holds a drop-in session every Friday afternoon (2–4pm) at the Quaker Meeting House in South Street. There are sometimes activities such as singing, art and craft, yoga or Tripudio (a gentle form of exercise targeted at the lymphatic system), sometimes a speaker or demonstration,

and always tea and healthy snacks. Some people come for the whole two hours, some pop in for a shorter time – everyone is welcome.

Although some health-related advice is available – particularly suggestions for complementary therapies that may boost wellbeing – and members share their experiences, the Living Tree isn't about 'cancer talk'. "We just talk about normal things here," says Tony Meakin. "When you've been diagnosed with cancer, many people in your life don't know what to say to you, which makes you feel isolated. Here, though, we're all in the same boat, whether you're having treatment, are caring for someone who is, or you've lost a loved one to the disease."

"There's no doom and gloom here," adds John Johnston. "Usually we don't even know what type of cancer other members have. It's a wonderful group. When I was first diagnosed, I thought it didn't sound like my type of thing, but I was wrong! Then years later, when I was recovering, I wanted to give something back, so I kept coming and got involved. I didn't think I needed therapy, I just wanted to help others going through what I'd experienced. I realise now that the Living Tree was my therapy."

"It's particularly hard to get men to 'join in' and come to groups like this, but once you step through the door you realise how helpful it is. And you can →



Pictured: many local organisations raise money for the Living Tree. Bridport Freemasons, for example, recently made a donation of £1,500 from their fundraising activities

Support for people living with cancer continued

do as much or as little as you like. For me, it was one good thing to come out of my cancer; I've met some great people I wouldn't have met otherwise."

Roz Copson is well known in Bridport for her campaign work for mental health services, but she got involved with the Living Tree a few years ago when Jo Millar – her GP at the time – asked if she would help with fundraising. Roz has since organised initiatives including a marathon walk in 2017 in aid of the cancer unit at Dorset County Hospital, and a half marathon the following year. She found herself benefiting from the group's support more recently, however, when a benign brain tumour that she'd been living with started to grow.

"Suddenly I was on the receiving end, which was a real eye-opener," says Roz. "In December I spent three days at Southampton Hospital having treatment,

and I have a follow-up visit this month; I'm hoping my treatment is finished. I'm so grateful for the medical expertise at Southampton, and for the friendship and support of the Living Tree folk. There are so many stories here, and people have different ways of coping, but really everyone just wants to help each other."

As well as its Friday drop-in, the Living Tree runs table tennis sessions at Bridport Leisure Centre and Salwayash Village Hall, a 'Splash Club' group at Highlands End swimming pool, and local amblers' walks. It also has an allotment in Pymore Road, where green-fingered members meet on Wednesdays (10am to noon) to tend the plot – no experience required! At the end of the morning they enjoy herbal teas, snacks and smoothies, often made from their own produce.

For a while the Living Tree also held a Thursday evening group at The Bull

Hotel. It was popular and provided an opportunity for working people to benefit from the camaraderie and support that the organisation offers. Partners were encouraged to come along.

The charity runs a stall whenever it has an opportunity – such as at the Melplash Show and the Charter Fair – to raise awareness of its work and to raise funds by selling its books (the Book of Words, Living Treats, and Jo O'Farrell's poetry books) and homemade greetings cards.

"Thanks to our hard-working committee members and volunteers – plus the wonderful people of Bridport – our group is thriving," says Jo Millar. "The community is so supportive of what we do, and many local groups have raised money for us. I hope we'll be able to continue helping people affected by cancer long into the future."

www.thelivingtree.org.uk

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‘My glass is always half full’: Ian Bark’s positive outlook and pride for Bridport

In the pod this month is Bridport Mayor Cllr Ian Bark, who reflects on his time so far in the role and his hopes for the year ahead...

The Bridge: You’re now in your third term as Mayor of Bridport. What events stand out as highlights of your tenure?

Ian Bark: Becoming Mayor of Bridport in May 2020 during the first Covid lockdown was a baptism of fire. It was simply not possible to carry out the role in the same way as my predecessors and I had to consider how I could support the people of the town and promote it more widely. The internet was to become a powerful ally and allowed me to reach and interact with even more people than previous mayors. I was even elected and sworn in via Zoom.

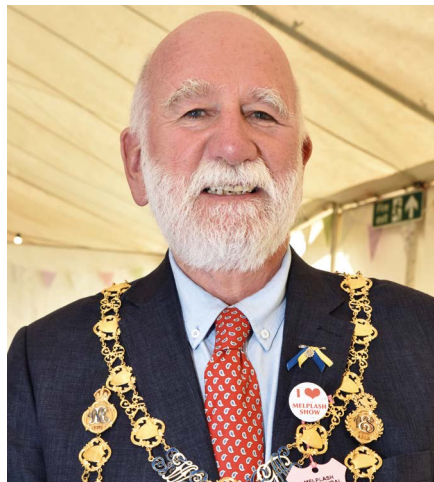
Writing the weekly Mayor’s Blog – in which I report on events I’ve attended, support local businesses and groups, and try to discuss local issues in an even-handed manner – is, I hope, something future mayors will continue. I have been amazed by how many people read it and send me feedback and information. I was even contacted by a lady in Australia following a piece about Agnes Suttill, Bridport’s first woman town councillor.

As Mayor, I represent the town and its council at civic and ceremonial events and functions and community activities. It’s a responsibility I take extremely seriously and it has allowed me to visit some amazing places and meet some fascinating people.

For instance, I sat beside and chatted to Chris Patten in the Electric Palace during last year’s Bridport Literary Festival. He was very easy to talk to.

I also found myself, in full mayoral regalia, standing in Bucky Doo Square delivering the Form of Proclamation for Proclaiming the New Sovereign of the United Kingdom. This hadn’t been done for more than 70 years!

When I became Mayor I set Bridport the challenge of achieving Plastic Free



Town status, and 18 months later I stood in Bucky Doo Square to declare that we had achieved it. The ‘Plastic Free’ team worked really hard, and continue to do so, encouraging businesses, schools and community groups to remove at least three items of single-use plastic from their operation. The reality is that everyone who took part did much more than the minimum and I’m so proud of what they achieved.

And I visited the Hollis Mead dairy farm to find out first-hand about how they manage their herd and the positive impact it’s having on the environment. Joining in with the milking at 6.30am, followed by a walk through the wild flower meadows buzzing with insect life, and listening to skylarks overhead, was a magical experience.

TB: What do you think the way Bridport dealt with the Covid pandemic says about the town?

IB: The pandemic had a major impact on all our lives and the first lockdown was particularly frightening. It was also a time that brought out the best in people; neighbours looked out for each other, and the high street businesses that were allowed to remain open went that extra mile and adapted their operations to serve us better. Technology and the internet again played a significant

role, and some local businesses quickly established an online presence so customers could make orders remotely for collection or delivery – something that has continued.

When the vaccine became available, our health centre rose to the challenge. With the support of Bridport Town Council and an army of volunteers, they achieved some of the highest vaccination rates in the UK.

TB: As we enter a new year, what are the biggest issues facing people in Bridport?

IB: Bridport isn’t immune from the issues facing people across the country and indeed across the globe. The war in Ukraine, the cost of living and energy, climate change – these will all continue to impact on the people of Bridport during 2023, and as far as climate change is concerned, for decades to come.

The cost of living and energy will undoubtedly be at the forefront of many minds this year. Bridport is regularly portrayed as one of the best places to live in the country, and it is. But the town also has one of the highest levels of social deprivation and poverty in Dorset and has one area that falls in the top 20% nationally for deprivation. As a trustee of the Cupboard Love food bank, I am very aware that numbers using it are increasing, and we are looking to open a new evening session for those in work but struggling to make ends meet.

As a town councillor, I find it extremely frustrating when the support we give to people wishing to improve their homes by installing double glazing and solar PV panels is rejected by a planning system that is no longer fit for purpose.

TB: What are your hopes for 2023 – both personally and for the town?

IB: My glass is always half full and I believe I have a positive outlook on life. Despite all the negativity we hear, see and read about every day, I am a firm →



Ian's positive outlook & pride for Bridport continued

believer that people are fundamentally good and that, in time, good will always come out on top.

With that in mind, I hope that on the global stage in 2023 we see an end to the war in Ukraine and also see politicians putting climate change and the environment first and foremost when making policy decisions.

Here in Dorset, and in Bridport in particular, the decisions we make when choosing what to buy will have a profound impact on the survival of our high street shops. Think ethical, think local and shop local are key to achieving a sustainable future.

TB: You've lived all over the country and moved here on retirement 10 years ago. What drew you to Bridport?

IB: I was born in 1953 and grew up on a farm in Nottinghamshire, was a student in Norwich, and spent my working life in Wadebridge, Bodmin, Milton Keynes and Newport Pagnell. For several years before we retired, my wife and I had been visiting our youngest daughter, who lived in Blandford Forum and now Dorchester, and came to appreciate what a lovely area West Dorset and Bridport in particular is.

When I retired in 2013, we decided to move to a new area and start afresh. And so we ended up in Bridport with a clean sheet of paper and an open mind, keen to explore. The rest is history, as they say.

TB: You're a keen gardener and we know you enjoy tending your allotment. Apart from a crop of fruit and vegetables, what does gardening add to your life?

IB: Throughout my life I have enjoyed gardening and growing my own vegetables. The things you grow yourself always taste better, nothing beats fresh from the plot, and eating seasonally means you look forward to and really appreciate different crops as they become available.

I am most happy when I'm in my small garden, on my allotment or walking through the countryside. I can become totally absorbed by the simplest of tasks, transfixed by the sound of a bird or the wind rustling through the trees. You can take the boy out of the farm but you can't take the farm out of the boy. I guess I am still a country boy at heart.

Ian's blog is online at www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/news/mayors-blog

Time to reflect on our care for wildlife

The Swedish have a word for those quiet days between Christmas and New Year – ‘mellandagarna’, the ‘middle days’. The frenetic build-up to Christmas is over, perhaps work is at a standstill, it's time to reflect.

It was during those days that I became aware of Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical, ‘Laudato si: On care for our common home’, in which he urges us to pause and reflect on the effects of our misuse of resources. Last year was the warmest on record and we got used to scenes of flood, drought and fires around the globe, so now really is a good time to consider what we can do to help locally.

My reflections include my years working at the sharp end of wildlife and habitat management, when I observed both intense habitat loss and changes in the behaviour of plants and animals in response to the rapidly changing climate. Some have managed to adapt and others definitely have not.

To see some ‘winners’, walk around Radipole lake in these winter days and you might glimpse the majestic marsh harrier. Until the 1980s, this bird of prey was a strict summer visitor, unable to

survive the British winter, but now it is resident all year. The little blackcap warbler has followed the same pattern and I wasn't too surprised when a pair became regular visitors to my bird feeders, while in early January I was greeted by bumblebees drinking the nectar from an early flowering honeysuckle, which would normally have flowered in February.

But others face great challenges. From cuckoos and turtle doves to hedgehogs and wildcats, the loss of wild

places and unpredictable climate is having devastating effects on a range of creatures. Even wildlife-rich areas are becoming increasingly isolated, making it difficult or impossible for plants and animals to thrive. Can you imagine a snail being able to cross the A35?

So, after reflecting on the challenges, can we do anything to improve things? Well, Bridport is renowned for its community spirit and there are already voluntary groups planting trees and looking after protected areas like Allington and Coneygar hills. Action to link these green spaces to other areas like churchyards and the river meadows would all help wildlife and improve flood resilience. Individually, we can try to reduce energy use and leave the car at home, and in the garden or window box plant nectar-rich flowers, leaving ‘wild’ patches for insects and slow worms and making sure hedgehogs can get through the garden fence.

Changing our view of the natural world will also help – we are just as much part of it as the snail crossing the road!

Alan Bowley

www.ramblewithalan.wixsite.com



ST MARY'S Bridport

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

From the parish editor

Consider this number: 2,040. No, it's not the number of unopened emails in your inbox, or the year in which there will be flooding from a rise in sea level and a dramatic increase in drought and poverty across the world unless carbon emissions are reduced (United Nations report). It is, in fact, the number of people who came to St Mary's in December. That is those we know about – because we counted them.

So I thought as we move on into 2023 it would be good to pose a few questions of these 2,040 people.

- Why did they come?
- Who were they?
- When did they come?
- What did they come for?
- What impact did this visit have?

Why? Some chose to come, some were sent, some were invited, some came out of curiosity, some out of habit, some because of a need.

Who? Babies, children, teenagers, elderly and everyone in between.

When? From opening to closing – that is 10am or earlier to 3pm or later (or on 24 December around midnight).

What for? Services, funerals, talks, concerts, study groups, food bank or to find a quiet place to sit for a while.

What impact? We often don't know, but the visitors book records some of those who were not counted speaking of:

- "Enjoying the rest"
- "Splendid light, very peaceful"
- "Looking for my ancestors in the churchyard"

Among those events where numbers were recorded, we welcomed congregations from the six churches in the Bridport Parish on the four Sundays in Advent to walk, be creative, drink and eat together, sing, worship and be taught.

Other services focused on different groups in our community. The Blue Light Service, for instance, allowed people to offer thanks for the emergency services. The Mencap carol service embraced the message of Christmas in a way accessible to all, while the primary school's carol



service and the crib service both engaged children with the Christmas story.

There were also four funerals, when we welcomed and supported grieving families and friends as they said their goodbyes to their loved ones.

Among those events where numbers were not counted, we had the Christmas market, when the chairs and pews were cleared from the chancel to allow space for stalls and for serving delicious homemade curry or soup at lunchtime. We also held the Christmas Cheer evening of festive readings and song.

Three fascinating speakers – Prof Philip Howse OBE, Sir Ghillian Prance and the former Bishop of the Amazon – came to talk about the work of the Church in Brazil and the impact of climate change. An Advent group reflected on climate change using the book *Sleepers Wake*, and the Cantamus concert filled the church with the amazing power and range of the human voice. Finally, babies and toddlers from Tots Time visited the crib.

It was a really busy month for the clergy, the 'deputy wardens' who prepared the church to welcome so many, and all those from the congregation at St Mary's who stepped up to offer their time, energy and skill. As the inheritors of an 800-year-old town-centre church, we welcome this responsibility and are thankful for all the support and encouragement we have received from across the Bridport Parish in seeking to meet the needs of our community and proclaim afresh the good news of the gospel.

Peter Wright

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

Parish editor – Barbara Ffooks 423122
 Children & youth worker –
 Jean Mitchell 422127
 Home communion –
 The Revd Kay Watters 427290
 Director of music – vacancy

From the parish editor

Although Christmas and New Year now seem far behind us, it is worth noting how lovely Bothenhampton looked, full of colourful lights over the festive season. There was a magnificent tree in the church, too, lit up in time for the Festival of Light service on Advent Sunday. The tree was fully decorated for the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols a week before Christmas, and the whole church looked beautiful. The candles and decorations were left in place for the Epiphany service on 8 January, when we remembered the visitation of the Three Kings. The →

'Winter Warmers' coffee morning

Bothenhampton Village Hall
Saturday 18 February

10am–12 noon

In aid of village hall funds



HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton continued...

communion service on Christmas Eve was held at 8pm and was well attended.

A memory tree was placed in the Old Church for anyone wishing to attach a label bearing the name of a loved one to be remembered.

Now we are coming into February, with the evenings getting lighter and spring flowers beginning to appear. Our monthly coffee morning in Holy Trinity is on Saturday 4 February, 10am till 12 noon. Whether you are new to the area or just wanting to get out for a while, this is a good way of meeting people in a warm, friendly atmosphere, with home baking, a book stall, cards and a raffle.

There will be another luncheon served in the village hall on Thursday 9 February. These occasions have been popular throughout the winter months, and they are an opportunity for people to enjoy a delicious hot meal in the company of others. If you would like to come along, please contact Heather Purse so she knows how many to cater for. There

Luncheon Club

Bothenhampton Village Hall

Thursday 9 February

From 12 noon; lunch served at 12.30pm

Come and enjoy a two-course cooked hot lunch with others

• Baked gammon or ratatouille

and halloumi bake

• Plum crumble

Cost £4.50

Please book so we have numbers for catering:

Heather Purse 423220 /

heatherpurse@yahoo.co.uk



will be a vegetarian option, too (see above for the menu).

A 'Winter Warmers' coffee morning will be held in the village hall on Saturday 18 February, 10am to 12 noon – another chance to meet up with friends over a cuppa.

It is good that the film club has started up again, and the next showing will be on Saturday 25 February in the village hall at 7.30pm (doors open at 7pm). The film title will be announced as soon as possible. Please let Nick Child know by email if you intend to go: lcnc2413@outlook.com.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on 22 February. Details of Lent study groups will be available in all churches. *Barbara Ffooks*

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

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

Village fete

The Bradpole village fete committee – Dawn Adwick, Claire Botten, Paul Butt and Jody Leaf – are arranging for the event to take place on Saturday 3 June 2023 (make a note in your diary!) and held their first public meeting last month in the village hall.

The last fete, back in 2019, was a huge success, and the money raised (together with funding from Bradpole Parish Council) enabled the purchase of a defibrillator, which was installed at the village hall by kind permission of the hall trustees. This year the committee will be focusing on raising funds for the Bridport Young Performers (BYP), a theatre group for young people aged 25 and under.

Throughout the year the BYP offers opportunities in musical theatre, acting, dance and singing, including

workshops, community events and their Christmas musical, which last year was Oliver! at the Electric Palace.

If you were unable to attend the public meeting but would like to be involved, please contact Jody Leaf: 01308 485201 / 07971 870873 / jodyleaf@hotmail.co.uk.

Bradpole Parish Council

At the December 2022 meeting, the chair, Councillor Baker, said that any resident interested in becoming a councillor on Bradpole Parish Council could

be co-opted so they would be ready to stand in the 2024 elections to represent Bradpole Ward on Bridport Town Council following the implementation of the community governance review.

The deputy clerk, Jo Hughes, confirmed that the bench at the Railway Crossing gardens closest to the crossing gates would become the 'Happy to Chat' bench. A sign was being produced to display on the bench.

The Parish Plan action plan for 2022 has been reviewed and updated and is online at www.bradpole.org.uk/parish-plan/parish-action-plan.

Under the planning section of the agenda, it was noted that Dorset Council had approved the application by the new owners of the former village store and post office at 1 Middle Street for change of use from shop (A1) to office (B8) with stock for internet sales and no changes to the building. Dorset Council had imposed a condition limiting the hours of



HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

opening in accordance with Neighbour Plan Policy D4.

The council will look to hold two separate community events in 2023: an event to mark the King's Coronation, possibly on Sunday 7 May, which will require community involvement; and a parish council community event, possibly in July, requiring councillor involvement.

The recent play area inspection report highlighted the lack of adequate access for disabled people to Pageants Field Play Area. The council will obtain information about the costs and requirements, and report back.

Full details of this meeting and other information are online at www.bradpole.org.uk.

Bellringing

The 40th anniversary of the Dorset County Association of Ringers falls in 2023, so there will be lots of celebratory events around the county during the coming year. One of these, a course called 'Treading Into Triples', will be held on Saturday 29 April at Holy Trinity. Quite a few quarter peals will be rung, too, including one in Holy Trinity tower.

'Ring for the King' is the latest recruitment drive for ringers to train in time to ring for the Coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6 May (see page 6 for more details). If you'd like to become a ringer and undertake some intensive training for this very special event, please contact Janet Robinson, the tower captain. Practice nights are the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7.30pm.

The Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers (SDGR) plans to use the bells of Holy Trinity for regular training events. These will take place on most Thursdays throughout the



Friends of Holy Trinity


**present a 'Desert Island Discs' evening
with a guest castaway**

Friday 24 February at 7pm

Bradpole Church

*£10 per person to include
cheese and biscuits
Drinks by donation*

*To book please contact Wendy
Carnell: 01308 420716 /
wendycarnell@btinternet.com*



year but will be on tied bells so will not be heard outside the bell tower!

The Friends of Holy Trinity

This charity raises funds to be used solely for the maintenance of the church building and fabric, through activities such as coffee mornings and social evenings. A monthly '100 club' is run, with half the income used for prizes and half retained. The next event is 'Desert Island Discs', in the style of the popular radio programme (see above).

The society is open to anyone who is interested in the church, and the annual membership fee is very modest. To join, please contact the secretary, Wendy Carnell: wendycarnell@btinternet.com.

ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor – James Craddock 458725

walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

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

Rare fungi in Walditch churchyard

On Boxing Day 2020 we found what we thought was the rare pink waxcap mushroom in a small part of the Walditch churchyard conservation area. Happily, our identification was confirmed by the Dorset Wildlife Trust, who had consulted a national fungus expert. The find was subsequently notified to the Dorset Environmental Centre.

There was no sighting in 2021 but the mushrooms reappeared sporadically during November and December last year, over a slightly wider area than before.

The pink waxcap is sometimes regarded as the 'orchid' of mushrooms and is also known by the apt name Pink Ballerina. Its habitat is unimproved grassland and churchyards. In the UK, though far from common, it is most likely to be found in Wales and bordering counties in the West Midlands. Confirmed sightings in Dorset seem to be rare.

In at least 11 European countries it is on the 'red list' of



**Above: the rare pink waxcap mushroom appeared in
Walditch churchyard in November and December**

endangered species, and by comparison the UK is a relative stronghold, but the pink waxcap is nevertheless regarded as needing conservation action.

Pink waxcap mushrooms are likely to be found between August and December, generally appearing as solitary specimens or in small scattered groups. The cap colour can vary from dark to pale pink, which fades over time. At first it is narrowly conical, and later flattens out with a split edge. Its height is up to 7cm and width 5cm. Most of the fungus is below ground, as a mass of mycelium, and it resents disturbance.

While the pink waxcap is not poisonous, it is said to be unpleasant to eat and anyhow should be left to produce spores. However, it appears to be a delicacy for some unidentified animal, making it impossible on this occasion to get a good photograph.

Robin Stapleton



ST MARY'S Walditch continued...

Calligraphy at Walditch Village Hall

We're delighted to bring you the first in a series of articles about the various groups that meet in our village hall. This month it's The Three Cs, a band of people who enjoy the art of calligraphy. Eileen Dearden tells us more...

Calligraphy is the art of beautiful writing. Those of us of a certain age probably spent a lot of time in primary school practising handwriting and were even given marks for it. In different cultures, learning the different letter forms has long been considered a very important skill. These days, however, most people are likely to use a computer keyboard or phone to communicate in writing, and very seldom do we receive a handwritten letter in the post.

I asked members of our group why they do calligraphy, and these were some of the responses:

- to preserve the tradition of handwriting;
- the challenge of perfecting a traditional script;
- enjoying the physical movement of writing;
- improving mindfulness and concentration;
- it's totally absorbing;
- learning from one another;
- the social aspect of meeting for a common purpose (The Three Cs stands for calligraphy, coffee and chat);
- the possibility of endless learning through the many historical hands, their variations and modern versions;
- the satisfaction of creating something visually pleasing or of representing a favourite text or quote;
- and the practical application of the craft in making items for others.

If you're interested in having a go, you don't need a lot of equipment to start with – just pencils, a ruler and paper. As with many hobbies, there's plenty you can add as you develop skills and discover the variety of different pens, papers and colour media available.

It used to be possible to learn calligraphy in adult education classes, but sadly these no longer exist. To help

further calligraphy education, however, the Calligraphy and Lettering Arts Society (CLAS) was founded in 1994. Around the country there are regional groups affiliated to CLAS where hobby calligraphers can meet and improve their skills, attend workshops with professional tutors and hold exhibitions. The CLAS website (www.clas.co.uk) has details of these, and some groups also have their own websites.

Our local art shop in Bridport stocks some calligraphy items. There is also an online company called Scribblers (www.scribblers.co.uk) that sells a wide range of products.

The Three Cs is simply a practice group working on individual projects, but sometimes we choose a theme or particular script or design element to focus on together. Those who are more experienced are always willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

We are always happy for anyone who's interested to come along to any of our sessions, which happen on a Monday afternoon, fortnightly, from 2 to 4.30pm. If you'd like to do this, please contact me in the first instance (01308 425383).
Eileen Dearden

Walditch Garden Group

Seasonal topics and garden discussion throughout the year make this a popular slot on the calendar. Everyone is welcome to come along so do join us for our next meeting (with tea/coffee and biscuits) on Thursday 23 February at 10am in Walditch Village Hall.

Garden tips for February:

Provide fresh water for birds and feed them regularly. To help prevent the spread of bird flu, good hygiene is key, so clean bird feeders and feeding stations weekly and change drinking and bathing water regularly.

Check plant supports before they are hidden by new growth; repot or top-dress shrubs in containers; prune winter-flowering shrubs (inc. winter heathers) when flowers have faded; divide and replant snowdrops; apply organic-based fertilisers towards the end of the month; prepare seedbed for outdoor-sown veg seeds; continue planting bare-root trees, shrubs and bushes, including fruit; and firm newly planted trees and shrubs that may have been lifted by frost.

Jane Mowatt

Pictured: just a couple of examples of the beautiful calligraphy work produced by members of The Three Cs



ST JOHN'S West Bay

Parish editor – Sue Pollock

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Chapel warden –

Rosemary Russell 423013

News from St John's

Morning Prayer is held every Monday at 10am and this will continue throughout the coming year. It is a quiet gathering and a good opportunity to offer the business of the week ahead to God for his guidance. Just turn up and you'll be made very welcome – and sometimes we go for coffee afterwards at one of the local cafes.

It was good to celebrate Christmas Day at St John's although the numbers were down on previous years. Unfortunately the organist for the day was on duty at the hospital, so it was great that her daughter, Essie, together with Peter – one of the congregation who has a beautiful voice – could lead us in song. Many thanks to them both.

Boxing Day saw Peter helping again with the singing, ably assisted this time by Nina Garcia, outside on the Green for the community carols. The winter sunshine was much appreciated and well over 50 people gathered for half an hour of carol singing. The retiring collection raised £71 for church funds.

On New Year's Day the first Parish service of the year brought a good crowd to St John's. It's always nice to have a full church and we were also lucky enough to have an organist to play for us.

West Bay WI

Some members of the West Bay WI don't receive a copy of The Bridge, as they live outside the delivery area, so I dropped off a few spare copies when they had their first Knit & Natter of the year on 4 January. This month will see the usual Knit & Natter gathering on 1 February at 10.30am, then the following week on 8 February at 2.30pm there will be a talk by a speaker from Julia's House.

The WI is always keen to see new members. If you are interested in joining the group, please phone Alison Ridge on 01308 897293.

Round and about the Bay

How many of you watched the World Cup, broadcast from Doha in Qatar? I have only been there once, back in 1974.

Visa rules in Dubai, where I was living, meant that to get your resident's visa you had to leave the country and then come back in – so obviously you flew to the closest country. Needless to say, as in most of the Middle East, so much there has changed since then, but what piqued my interest was that one of the main areas where World Cup visitors were staying was named West Bay! It is described as glittering and shiny, with beautiful ocean views and some of the city's best shops, parks, hotels, restaurants and cultural attractions. Well we certainly have spectacular views and probably better and more spectacular seas!

The Discovery Centre will reopen for the half term holiday, 11–19 February, and then for the weekend of 25–26 February. The centre has organised a talk by Steve Belasco at the Salt House on Thursday 23 February at 2.30pm. Steve is a marine photographer and has spent the last 12 years documenting the Jurassic Coast from wave level. In this illustrated talk, called 'A Cruise Along the Jurassic Coast', Steve takes us in his boat along the entire 95-mile length of England's only natural World Heritage Site, with dozens of photographs that he has captured from the water level. Tickets are £5 and are available from Bridport TIC or by emailing info@westbaydiscoverycentre.org.uk.



Above: Photographer Steve Belasco will be speaking at the Salt House this month

You may have noticed a few things going on in West Bay recently. The bus stop is being replaced and has been temporarily moved to the lay-by on the other side of the bridge, which means there currently is no shelter. Work is going on at the entrance of Parkdean to install a takeaway pizza bar. Work also appears to have started on the Marsh Barn Road to build new houses on the vacant lot. Barriers have been erected next to the kiosks at the Mound as repair is required to the harbour wall. I also noted that the Bridport Arms will be reopening at the beginning of February under new ownership.

Sue Pollock

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

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From the parish editor

Now that the build up to Christmas and the entry into the new year is past, for many it feels like the energy has changed. For me, February is about looking for snowdrops. Often found in fairylike drifts on banks, by streams and in

seemingly secret places, they bring a delicacy of magical design, and to date haven't been affected by climate change.

The Revd Henrik Grape is the senior advisor on Care for Creation, Sustainability and Climate Justice for the World Council of Churches. He talks about "understanding the need for creation to rest"; winter can provide a fallow, hibernation-like time for reflection on our choices and how they affect the environment. Continuing the conversation is inescapable.

One familiar evergreen symbol of circular, eternal life and hope is the wreath, and a group of us enjoyed making wreaths at St Mary's and at St Swithun's. The history of wreath making dates back at least to the Persian Empire, ancient Egypt and Greece. The way they are popularly →

ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

used today as a decorative door element may differ from the potent symbolism of the past.

During the Persian Empire, a wreath – known as a ‘diadem’ – was a sign of power or authority and worn as a headdress. In Greco-Roman society a hand-crafted ring-shaped object was called a ‘corona’, made from fresh leaves, branches, twigs, fruits and flowers, and hung on a door as a symbol of victory. Women of this time wore headdress wreaths as fashion items and for weddings.

Winners of sporting events in Ancient Greece wore wreaths of laurel, a tradition echoed in present-day Olympic Games where the medals are engraved with laurel sprigs. The use of a monarch’s crown – such as at the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III this year – may have its origins in the wreath.

The Bible also mentions wreaths in Proverbs 1:9, likening our parents to a garland or pendant. In various versions, the text is: “For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about their neck.” (King James) “They shall be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.” (New International Version) “For they are a graceful wreath for your head, and necklace for your neck.” (New American Standard) “What you learn from them will crown you with grace and be a chain of honour around your neck.” (New Living Translation) “For they will be a garland of favour on your head and pendants around your neck.” (Christian Standard)

Adorning ourselves has been an ancient activity of pleasure, and jewellery can be a status symbol. King Solomon depicts parents and their teaching or instruction as something to be respected and not despised. Instead they could be seen as treasure; wise learning from a parent, like fine jewelry, is often gained at great cost.

There is another Biblical reference to wreaths in the Old Testament, Isaiah 28:5–6: “In that day the Lord Almighty will be a glorious crown, a beautiful wreath remnant of his people. He will be a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.” (NIV)

Although wreaths are today associated with Christmas, they were not a major motif in Judaism. Jews did, however,



Top: a wreath-making workshop at St Mary’s, led by Jane Trower (second left). On the right is Jo George from St Swithun’s. Other pics: a small domestic wreath courtesy of Ann Benbow of St Catherine’s; a wreath in progress

make wreaths for Shavout and other festive occasions before Christ’s birth. For Christians the circular shape can represent God, with no beginning and no end. There are intimations of the crown of thorns, so from Jesus’ birth there is a nod in the wreath to Easter and Christ on the cross.

Anna Sullock

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

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incorporating
UPLODERS CHAPEL

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“This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him. Listen to what he says!” (Matthew 17:5)

Later this month we begin the season of Lent, when we remember Jesus’ time in the wilderness before he began

his Gospel ministry. Many Christians use Lent as a time for fasting and prayer, to (re)focus our lives on God and reflect on what being a follower of Jesus means – and taking time out to listen to God is a good way to help us do that.

A friend who was ordained as a Methodist minister now lives in a Benedictine community near Worcester, where members make vows of stability, obedience (which comes from the Latin word ‘obed’ meaning ‘to listen’) and transformation of life. They make a commitment to listen to God and to each other, in the expectation that God’s transforming Holy Spirit will be at work in them, individually and as a community. In every situation they experience, they’re encouraged to ask: What is God seeking to draw out of me, to help me/us grow in this situation?

As part of our Lenten journey we might ask ourselves: How do we commit to our community? How do we listen to God, and to each other? What does God want to draw out of me, to help me grow, and to help our church, our community, grow?

BRIDPORT UNITED CHURCH continued...

Listening to God is important, and for that we need to find time and space to be still. Jesus spent many hours in stillness and prayer during his time on earth.



Mother Teresa of Calcutta was once asked: “When you pray, what do you say to God?” She said: “I don’t say anything, I listen.”

Then she was asked: “All right, what does God say to you?” She said: “God doesn’t say anything. God listens.”

Many people find the practice of mindfulness helpful – being ‘mindful’ of the present moment, pausing in our busyness to be still, noticing how we’re feeling, listening with open hearts and learning to rest in God’s presence. Father Ben O’Rourke suggests that when we learn to be silent and quieten our minds, we learn to hear “the music of God’s festivity in our hearts”.

You’re invited to join us on Sunday 19 February at 4pm at BUC for worship in the style of Taizé, which encourages us to listen to what God may be saying to us through music, meditation on scripture, and silence.

I pray that in the coming weeks as you make your Lenten journey you’ll find space each day to pause and be still, letting the music of heaven touch your heart, so you “overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”. (Romans 15:13)

The Revd Jane Wilson

February services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 5	10.30am	Revd Jane Wilson (HC)
	4pm	Soul Space with tea and cake
Sunday 12	10.30am	Chris Warren
Sunday 19	10.30am	Revd Peter Clark
	4pm	Taizé service
Wed 22	7pm	Ash Wednesday service (HC)
Thurs 23	3.30pm	Messy Church
Sunday 26	10.30am	Chris Smith

Regular events

Stepping stones pre-school every morning. Coffee morning every Wednesday from 10am to 12 noon – all welcome. Followed by Warm Spaces soup and toastie from 12 noon. We also have Saturday coffee mornings on 4, 18 and 25 February, 10am to 12 noon. Vinyl Saturday is on 11 February. There’s no Big Breakfast in February.

Mondays	2–3pm	Art history (first & second)
	2.30pm	Golden Cap Centre of the National Trust (last only)
Tuesdays	7.30pm	Bridport Choral Society
	2pm	Bridport Blind Club (first & third)
	2pm	Bridport u3a (fourth Tuesday)
	4.30pm	Rainbows (not at half term)
	5.30pm	Brownies (not at half term)
	7.30pm	New Elizabethan Singers
Wednesdays	7.30pm	Bridport Big Band (in church)
	12.30pm	Lunch Club (fourth only). All welcome for two-course home-cooked meal. Please book if possible: 422598
	6pm	Fitsteps
	7.30pm	Kickboxing

Thursdays	2pm	Thursday Club (third only). All welcome for tea, games, crafts and chat in inner hall
	2.15pm	Bridport History Society (second Thursday only)
Fridays	5pm	Slimming World
	6–7.30pm	Kickboxing

From Uploders Chapel

Well, as I write this the sun is shining in between some spells of rain. The days are getting a little bit lighter, although there’s some way to go yet. In early January we enjoyed a lovely service taken by Tony Boyden, which came after some other enjoyable services including the joint one with Loders Church.

I decided not to make a New Year’s resolution this year, but the closest I am coming to one is to avoid anything negative. I fully appreciate that, sadly, negative things are going on in the world, but there are some positive things that seem to get very little recognition. Two programmes we enjoy on TV are DIY SOS and The Repair Shop. The hard work, time and effort given to help people is truly inspiring.

Also very uplifting are the wonderful events locally. I enjoyed the lovely folk carol concert at BUC in December and the wonderful concert by Rough Assembly at the Town Hall on Twelfth Night in aid of Bridport’s Millennium Green. Lovely songs to sing along to, and some poetry, all with a theme of Love & Hope.

We are also pleased to let you know that we now have a date for your calendars – on Saturday 25 February at 7.30pm at Uploders Chapel we will have a really lovely evening of music from the Lost Memory Ramblers. Of course there will also be refreshments – it’s definitely an evening not to be missed!



The Lost Memory Ramblers have been going for as long as they can’t remember, playing a varied selection of music and songs, mostly in the Americana and string band traditions, including original 1920s and 30s tunes, country-blues, jug, hokum, 60s and later classics (their memory gets hazy after about 1978) and some self-penned songs – all brought lovingly to their devoted listeners with commitment, expertise, energy and humour (watch out for that).

They play a variety of acoustic instruments including guitar, steel and slide guitar, mandolin, mandola, harmonica and kazoo, and produce a range of vocal styles and musical textures and moods. It’ll be just like a sunny day in Memphis... or a rough night in Chicago... or just a nice evening in Uploders! Come along and enjoy.

So, we may not have had as Jolly a January as we had hoped but we shall definitely be making up for it with a Fabulous February! Make sure you try to be as positive as possible, and we look forward to seeing you this month. Your support of the chapel is much appreciated.

Carol Hall

February services at Uploders Chapel:

Sunday 5	10.30am	Tim Wells
Sunday 19	10.30am	Revd Jane Wilson

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

It's getting lighter!

Just a few weeks ago we celebrated Epiphany and the end of the Christmas season, and now Lent is already snapping at our heels in this month of February. The word 'Lent' has Germanic roots referring to the 'lengthening' of days, and the English word is a shortened form of the Old English 'lencten' meaning the same.

The natural world is experiencing this lengthening of days just now, too, as the dark days of December and early January give way to lighter days and warmer hearts. How we need that after some of the darkness about us this winter! The cost of living crisis is crippling many people and the swathe of strikes is disrupting many lives. Our NHS is in crisis, with insufficient capacity, shortage of staff and an inability to deliver the service they wish. In Europe, the cruel war in Ukraine rages on with no obvious end in sight.



Yes, there is a lot of darkness about. Yet we continue to see shards of light piercing the darkness, with so many acts of random kindness, quiet heroism and selfless service. Our community continues to respond generously to the needy through the work of the local food banks and charities. Experience shows us that in our DNA is a basic and deep spirit of goodness, of light in the

dark. That is hardly surprising as we are made in the image of God and we all have the spark of the divine in us, a spark we need to continue to fan into flame.

We can build a better world. Maybe this Lent we might ask ourselves: What can I do to build better? Even if we only do one extra act of kindness, it will make a difference and allow an extra shard of light to shine through. It will not be wasted.
Monsignor Keith Mitchell

Regular Sunday Mass is at 10am and is streamed online at www.bridportcatholics.org.uk and the Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page. For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, see our weekly newsletter on our website.

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Like all churches, we at Beacon Church have gone through significant transformation during the pandemic.

Having sought God's direction, we focus on communicating with God through prayer; being family to all who come through the doors; and reaching out to the community of Bridport.

During the week we meet on Wednesday and Friday lunchtimes to be a place of peace and to be family for the hungry and lonely through the community kitchen.

On Thursday evenings we open the door at 5pm and provide a place for anyone who wishes to

come and sit and rest from the busyness of life as we pray for the community of Bridport. Each week different people pop in; some stay for 10 minutes and others rest for a full hour. Some pray, some listen – all are welcome and we never know who will turn up – and it is always exciting to see who is drawn in.

Our Sunday mornings are very relaxed and Spirit-led. We follow a pattern of prayer and worship, teaching and fellowship.

Our heart is that all will feel welcome, and that through this all will meet the Lord and be transformed for the life that He intends for them. We'd love you to come along and join us.

James Houston



Get involved: local clubs, groups and societies

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

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

West Dorset Flower Club meets at the WI Hall, North Street, at 2.30pm on the second Monday of each month with demos and speakers. On Monday 13 February the speaker is Ian Bark and the club will also hold its AGM. Phone 456339.
Bridport & District Allotment Society (BADAS) is open to all. Membership is £5/year and gives discount at several gardening suppliers. Contact 250260 / email bridportallotmentsociety@gmail.com. More details online at www.bridportallotmentsociety.co.uk

Get involved: local clubs, groups and societies

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

Bridport & District Model Railway Club meets each Tuesday at Askerswell village hall 7–9pm. Members can run their stock on the club 'test track' or operate a club layout. Chairman Geoff Trenholme 281379.

Bridport & District Gardening Club will meet on Thursday 16 February at 7.30pm at the WI Hall, North St, when landscape and wildlife photographer Colin Varndell will talk about garden birds. Non-members £2. More information at www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk

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

Bridport Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings at 7.30pm at the United Church Hall. Contact Margaret Foster margefoster1956@gmail.com

Bridport Scottish Dancers meet each Wednesday evening at 7.15pm (7.30pm start) in Church House, South St, except first Wed each month which is at Salwayash village hall. First visit free, then £2 per session. Please bring the right money & your own refreshments. Contact Caroline 538141 / Malcolm 07790 323343 / www.bridportscottishdancers.org.uk

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

Bridport Community Shed, between Mountfield and Bedford Place, opens Mon, Wed & Thurs 10am–12 noon. On the first Tues of the month there is also an evening stitching session (please book in advance). Contact 07593 880428.

The New Elizabethan Singers meet for choral rehearsals in the United Church Hall on Tuesdays at 7.30pm from September to May. For more information please contact the secretary, Sarah Stamford sastamford@outlook.com / 425312 / www.thenewelizabethansingers.org.uk

Bridport Health Walks are free and take place every Wednesday, meeting outside Bridport United Church at 9.45am, and the first Thursday each month meeting at The Cowshed, Bridport Medical Centre, at 10.30am. The guided walks take 30–40 minutes on level ground. Refreshments available after the walk. No need to book, just turn up.

Golden Cap Association (West Dorset), in support of the National Trust, organises illustrated talks on the last Monday of the month (except summer) in the United Church Hall, East Street, at 2.30pm. Contact Mike Nicks 459855.

Bridport Stage Company (formerly Bridport Shakespeare Company) theatre group meets at the British Legion on Mondays, 7–9pm. All ages welcome; no experience needed. Contact Valerie: tasterella@hotmail.co.uk

Bridport History Society meets on the second Thursday each month at the United Church Hall, 2 for 2.30pm. Visitors welcome £3pp. Membership £10 / £15 couple. Contact Jane Ferentzi-Sheppard jferentzi@aol.com / 425710.

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

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

Colmer WI meets on the second Thursday each month at 7.30pm in the WI Hall, North Street. Visitors welcome to come for a no-obligation evening. Contact Gill Smith 301201.

Bridport Bridge Club meets Wednesday evenings (duplicate bridge, good standard) and Friday afternoons (relaxed bridge, not 3rd Friday in the month) at St Swithun's Hall, plus Thursday evenings online. Beginners' lessons started in November. See www.bridgewebs.com/bridport for updates or phone Roy Tarsnane 425298.

The Arts Society (West Dorset) meets at Bridport Town Hall, 2 for 2.30pm, on the third Thursday each month Sept–June. On 16 February Michelle Brown will present 'The Holkham Bible Picture Book: an Early 14th Century London Artist's View'. Membership £50 a year; visitors welcome £7.50 per event. www.taswestdorset.org.uk

Harmony Drop-in provides a safe, social space and peer support to aid the recovery journey of adults in the Bridport area who are living with mental health difficulties. Our group (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10am–1pm) offers activities and support, fostering wellbeing and increased self-esteem. Contact 07597 379290.

Bridport Community Front Room offers face-to-face support for people reaching a mental health crisis point or needing wellbeing support. Assembly Rooms, Gundry Lane. Thurs–Sun, 3.15–10.45pm. Appointments 07385 290804.

Dementia Friendly Bridport has spaces in its gentle exercise group for people with dementia and their carers. It's run by a qualified instructor and volunteers. Tuesdays 1.45–3.15pm at Bridport Leisure Centre. Contact Debra: 07890 649561 / dementiafriendlybridport@gmail.com

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

Free play singing, improvisation and earth/peace movement chants. Spontaneous compositions of sound; few words. Tuesdays 2pm at Bridport Youth & Community Centre, Gundry Lane, for about an hour. All welcome, £1 per person. Phone Pen 07713 008290.

Bridport & District u3a is for people in their 'third age'. No minimum age, but you must be no longer in full-time employment. Monthly meetings in Bridport United Church Hall with a guest speaker plus socialising over refreshments. Also more than 50 u3a groups meet regularly, covering a huge range of interests. Contact Vincent Sheppard 485763 / chair@bridportu3a.org.uk / www.bridportu3a.org.uk

The **u3a Singers Group** meets on alternate Thursdays for 10.30am start at the WI Hall in North Street. Contact Heather 425219 / www.bridportu3a.org.uk

Bridport & W D I Bowls Club invites you to a 'fun game' at St Andrew's Trading Est, DT6 3EX every Sunday 10am to 12 noon. First session free. Details 425278.

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

Get involved: local clubs, groups and societies

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

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

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

Bridport ASCape for young people 7–11 & 11–18, parents and carers affected by autism spectrum conditions (ASC) or social anxiety. Contact Karen Wright wrightmail2@aol.com or visit www.bridportasd.wordpress.com

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

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

Bellringers in the Parish of Bridport: We always welcome new ringers and are happy to train you on our bells – perhaps to 'Ring for the King' (p6). At St Mary's Bridport we meet at 7.30pm on Thursdays. Contact Bob Hardwick 420632. At Holy Trinity Bradpole we practise at 7.30pm on Tuesdays. We have a ground-floor ringing chamber and training simulator. Janet Robinson jrb-jrb@outlook.com

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

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

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

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

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

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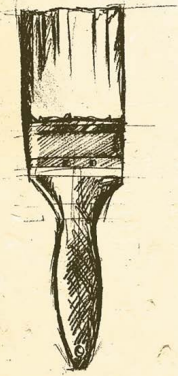
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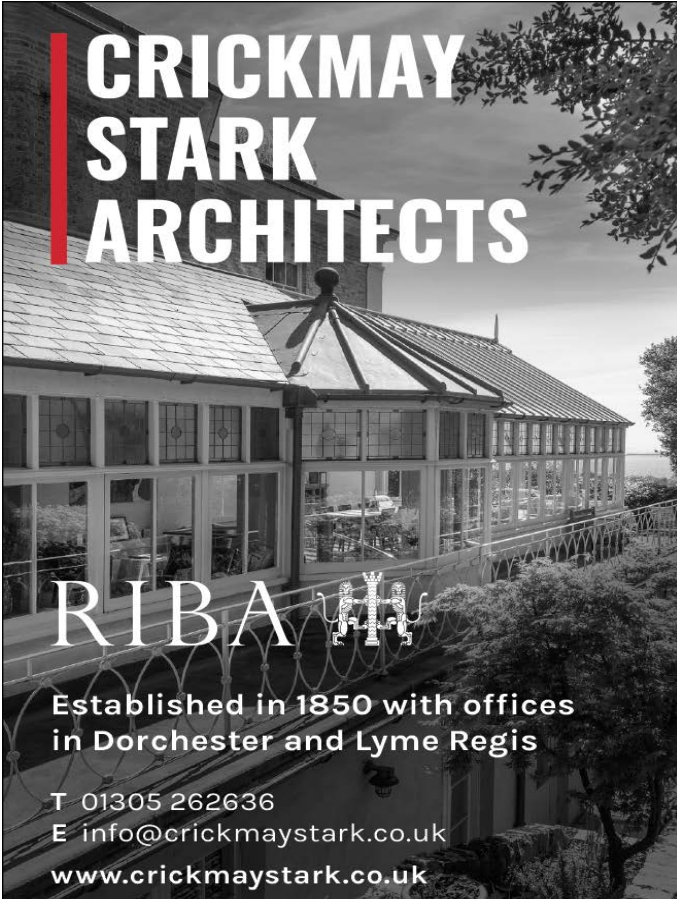
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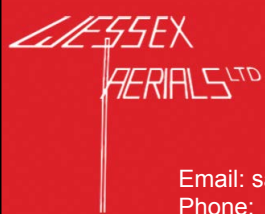


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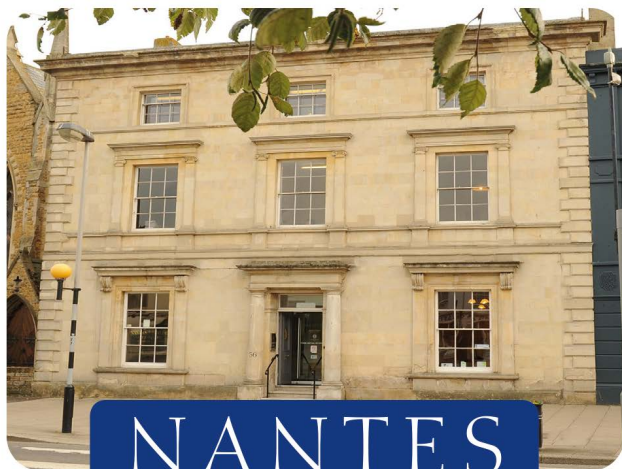
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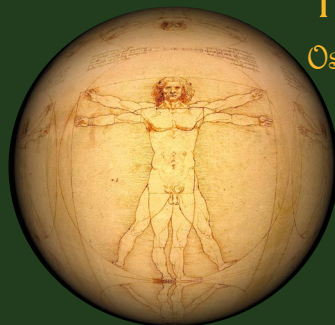
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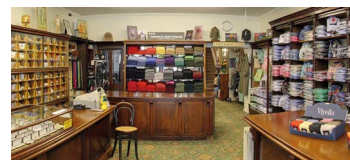
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