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April 2026

the
Bridge

A community magazine for Bridport supported by churches in the town

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Kathrine O'Brien, Virginia Bowley, Helen Thomas.
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Flax Forward into the future with local group celebrating heritage crop



Flax Forward is a community project that will aim to celebrate Bridport's flax-growing heritage while exploring the potential of locally grown, natural, sustainable materials.

A joint initiative between Wessex Community Assets, Bridport Museum, Bridport Arts Centre and Bridport School of Regenerative Fashion, the project will launch this May, thanks to a grant of £50,000 from the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

Flax Forward will explore two complementary paths: heritage research and community engagement. For the first, it will work with Bridport Museum for six months to gather knowledge from heritage collections, archives and community sources. The museum will recruit up to 15 volunteer researchers during April to take part.

Alongside this work, Flax Forward will also explore new community and business opportunities from growing and using natural materials, and will provide hands-on training in the cultivation and processing of flax. Volunteers will help to design and make a 'Bridport dress' using locally grown flax.

From May to July, Wessex Community Assets will work with Tamarisk Farm at West Bexington to grow a new crop of long-stalk flax. This product can be grown successfully without fertilisers or pesticides, supporting biodiversity and organic farming practices. It can also enable farmers to diversify crop rotations.

To apply to get involved in the research work, or to find out more about the project as a whole, visit wessexca.co.uk/flax-forward-project.

Bridport mourns former mayor Dave Bolwell

People across Bridport have been saddened to hear of the death of Dave Bolwell on 6 March following a short illness.

Dave was the mayor of Bridport for 2023–24 and served as a town councillor and on Dorset Council for several years, having moved here from Wiltshire with his wife, Bridget, in 2017.

Current mayor Cllr Anne Rickard says: "When David was elected to Bridport Town Council, he brought with him much former experience from his service on West Wiltshire District Council, which was a valuable asset to share with us too. David was a friend and colleague who will be much missed by us all. His lively sense of humour and great sense of fairness were also much appreciated."

West Dorset MP Edward Morello – a fellow Liberal Democrat – wrote on X: "I am incredibly sad about the passing of Dave. He was a brilliant and hard working councillor. He was also generous, funny, and kind. My heart goes out to his family. He will be sorely missed."

In 2023 Dave kindly took time out of his busy mayoral schedule to meet The Bridge's editor for an



interview. He expressed his delight in being the mayor of his adopted home town, and spoke of his lifelong determination to get involved in local life. He said: "You can stand and watch, or you can do!"

We send our condolences to Bridget and the rest of Dave's family on their loss.

CHURCH SERVICES

HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise / MPR = Morning Prayer

APRIL 2026 – see left for an explanation of the abbreviations						
Date	St Mary's Bridport	St Swithun's Allington	Holy Trinity Bothenhampton	Holy Trinity Bradpole	St Mary's Walditch	St John's West Bay
Wed 1	2.30pm HC					
Thurs 2 <i>Maundy Thursday</i>		7.30pm Eucharistic Vigil		7pm HC		
Fri 3 <i>Good Friday</i>	2pm Meditation	2pm Liturgy	12 noon Prayers	1–2pm Vigil		2pm Stations of the Cross
Sat 4 <i>Easter Eve</i>	8pm Easter Eve service					
Sun 5 <i>Easter Day</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist 4pm CC (hall)	11am HC with baptism	9.30am HC	11am HC	6am Sunrise service 11am HC
Mon 6						10am MPR
Tues 7				2.30pm HC		
Wed 8		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
Thurs 9		10am Eucharist 3.30pm Wild & Messy Church				
Sun 12 <i>2nd Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC 11am All-age HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am MP	9.30am MP	10.30am MPR	11am HC
Mon 13						10am MPR
Thur 16		10am Eucharist				
Sun 19 <i>3rd Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC 11am MP	9.30am MPR	11am HC	9.30am HC	11am MPR	11am MPR
Mon 20						10am MPR
Wed 22		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
Thurs 23		10am Eucharist				
Sat 25						4pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
Sun 26 <i>4th Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	9.30am MP	11am HC	11am MPR
Mon 27						10am MPR
Thurs 30		10am Eucharist				
MAY 2026						
Sun 3 <i>5th Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC	4pm CC (hall)		10am Parish service of HC		
Mon 4						10am MPR
Tues 5				2.30pm HC		
Wed 6	2.30pm HC	2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)		2.30pm Service at The Hyde		
Thurs 7		10am Eucharist				

* Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina take place on alternate Wednesdays. For more details email carolinewhitaker@hotmail.com

Reading will change your life

Andrew Tate – supposed king of the ‘Manosphere’ and a scary influence on the impressionable minds of teenage boys across the world – says he’s “too smart to read”.

“I need action,” he continues. “I need constant chaos in my life to feel content... [reading] is for people with slow brains.” Oh dear.

Louis Theroux’s Netflix documentary about the Manosphere left me feeling, well, just a bit sad. Tate doesn’t appear, but we meet a few of his apprentices, young musclebound men who swear a lot and blame feminism for all the world’s ills.

Whether this is just a grift (they all seem to have some dodgy money-making scheme going on, funded by their teenage followers) or they really believe the poisoned views they spout, these young men don’t seem to like themselves very much. I can see what they’re pushing against: plodding on with an ‘ordinary’ working life, day after day, is hard; meaningful relationships aren’t easy to maintain; young women reach emotional maturity sooner than boys, generally get more effective support from their friends, and seem more ‘sorted’. But surely railing against the world, hurting the people who love you and possibly ending up on the police wanted list isn’t the answer.

If these chaps realised that long-term ‘chaos’ brings misery, not contentment, they’d have a chance. Learning to sit with your feelings is a big step on the road to being a fully functioning adult. And what helps us understand those feelings? Reading. So please, Manosphere bros, start reading: read novels and opinion; poetry and history; memoir and science. Read news reports that challenge, rather than support, your world view. Even if it’s just 15 minutes a day, reading is a habit that will change your life. Understand other people a bit better and you’ll understand yourself, too.

Olivia Daly, Editor
The first of our features marking The National Year of Reading 2026 is on pages 12 and 13. If you enjoy The Bridge, and would like to make a donation towards our expenses, please visit thebridgemagazine.org/donate-to-our-work for a link to our Charities Aid Foundation page.



Olivia Daly
 Editor

The greatest story ever told

“In the beginning was the Word...” — John 1:1

How appropriate that this Easter issue of The Bridge has a feature about books in celebration of 2026 as the National Year of Reading. Easter is the climax of the Christian story – a story that is told in one of the greatest libraries the world has ever known: the Bible.

The Bible is not just one book but many. It contains poetry, love songs, history, parables, philosophy, letters, prayers, lament and vision. It tells a story vast enough to encompass the whole of human experience: the world’s creation and salvation and life’s meaning. The Psalms alone contain more emotional range than almost any collection of poetry ever assembled. Many of the Bible’s stories are readable in a single sitting; try Ruth or Esther, for example. Others of its books contain a lifetime’s worth of depth – look at Paul’s letter to the Romans. Job wrestles with suffering with a rawness that feels startlingly modern. The Gospels give us the life and teaching of Jesus – his stories, his compassion and his radical challenges.

Taken together, these writings have shaped our literature, our language and our imagination more deeply than perhaps any other collection in human history. Bridport, as a town of culture with a deep appreciation for the arts, is well placed to read the Bible afresh in that light.

At the heart of this great library is the story of Easter itself: Jesus’ death and resurrection, a tale of sacrifice and hope, and of darkness that does not have the final word. A really good book can open doors into other worlds, grow our empathy and help us see our own lives more clearly. The Bible certainly does that – so if you want to settle down and lose yourself in a good read this Easter, perhaps you might open the Bible and revisit the oldest, most enduring story of all – you may find it richer than you remembered.

From all of us who lead churches here in Bridport, we wish you and everyone dear to you a very happy and peaceful Easter.
 Every blessing,
The Revd Cally Burch
 Interim Team Rector



The Revd Cally Burch

Saturday @ St Swithun's
GRAND PIANO
Recital 10.30am till noon
by amateur pianists
 Please contact Charles
 07814388327 to play



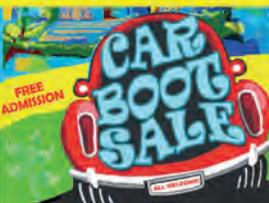
Tea+ coffee

11
APRIL

ST SWITHUN'S BAND CONCERT @ St Swithun's Church
Come and watch your local band
perform a variety of popular songs
Monday 11 May 7.30pm
 Refreshments available
 in the church hall afterwards
 FREE concert with donations going towards:
 church funds and the Band
All welcome



Car Boot Sale with Plant & Garden Sale
 St Swithun's Church Grounds
Saturday 9 May
10am - 1pm
 Clothes, Bric a Brac, Tombola
 Jazz Cafe, Drinks, Bacon Butties,
 Produce and (free) Charity Stalls
Seller's Pitch £12
 Book in advance 07887483228



Wanted: Treasurer, St Swithun's Church

St Swithun's Church, Allington, is looking for a treasurer.

The role involves working with the St Swithun's Church sub-committee and with the overall parish treasurer, as St Swithun's is one of the six churches in the Anglican Parish of Bridport.

The job would suit someone with a bit of spare time, familiarity with numbers and some computer skills. It is not necessary to be a practising Anglican, but some understanding of church life could be helpful.

The role includes many interesting tasks – not only record keeping but also planning skills, as the church is in the middle of a major restoration project. But don't be put off by the challenge! The present treasurer is still around and will provide as much support as you like, including a phased handover and lots of familiarisation. Or you may prefer to jump straight in! Either way is possible.

For a no-commitment chat about this, please ring Philip Sturrock on 07802 895785.

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**THE GREAT DORSET
BEACH CLEAN**

WEST BAY

Thursday 2nd April 10:30am
**Meet outside West Bay
Discovery Centre**

Hosted by WBDC & Clean Jurassic Coast

Do your bit to keep our shoreline spotless

Residents and visitors are invited to roll up their sleeves and make a real difference this Easter as the Great Dorset Beach Clean returns from 1–12 April.

Last year's event saw a huge community effort, with 297 volunteers taking part across the county, 17 beaches cleaned and 330kg of rubbish removed.

The West Bay beach clean is on Thursday 2 April (see above for details) but if you miss that one, you could head to Lyme Regis on Sunday 12 April and meet other volunteers at 3pm outside the RNLI shop by the Cobb.

All equipment will be provided, although participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves and wear suitable clothing for coastal conditions.

Emma Jackson from Litter Free Dorset says: "Beach cleans are a simple but powerful way for communities to come together to reduce marine litter and protect our beautiful coastline."

Litter Free Dorset is a hosted partnership at Dorset Council that works to create better local environments for everyone living and working in Dorset's towns, beaches and open spaces.

litterfreedorset.co.uk/great-dorset-beach-clean

Churches Together in Bridport & District: events

April starts with Holy Week, a special time for Christians as they consider the events that lead to Jesus Christ's crucifixion.

In 2016 Churches Together in Bridport & District commissioned 14 paintings depicting the traditional Stations of the Cross in modern settings. Painted by local artists from Bridport Art Society, many of the works show local landmarks.

Pictured here is Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus, painted by Joan Wilkinson. See the St John's column on page 23 for more information about the paintings.

This year these paintings are being displayed in St John's Church, West Bay, from Monday 30 March until Saturday 4 April (Easter Eve). The church will be open at 11am each day; closing times will depend on volunteers' availability and will be displayed at the church. On Good Friday at 2pm there will be a service of reflection focusing on the Stations of the Cross. On Easter Day we will begin our celebration of the Risen Christ together on East Pier at West Bay at 6am. The Cornish Bakery will open early on that day to sell refreshments after the service.

We have Tea & Chat at Holy Trinity Bradpole on Sunday 12 April at 2.30pm, and our monthly prayer session is at St Swithun's on Tuesday 14 April at 6pm.

Our Lent lunches around different churches were a great success. Grateful thanks to all who provided the soup and bread.

Heather Purse, Secretary, CTiBD



HEADLIGHT RESTORATION SAVE £££'S ON NEW UNITS!

This can be an MOT failure and make night driving very difficult

**Please call Peter on 07825 395208
or email: headlightman76@gmail.com**



News in brief

A wheely generous donation

Bridport's Inner Wheel group has raised an impressive £1,200 for Fortuneswell Cancer Trust, which works to improve facilities at the Fortuneswell Unit at Dorset County Hospital where more than 12,000 patients every year receive treatment for cancer. The money will also help to ensure that the cancer care department at Bridport Hospital remains open.

Learn practical skills in a beautiful setting

Coppet Hill camping and glamping site near Bridport (DT6 6RL) is the location for an interactive navigation skills workshop on Saturday 11 April from 10am to 2pm. Participants will learn how to use a map and compass with confidence, walk on bearings, measure distance through pacing, and understand the landscape. Places are £40 (to include maps, equipment for the day, and lunch) at www.ticketsource.co.uk/coppet-hill.

Fundraising jazz from the Rotary Club

Bridport Rotary Club presents an evening of music from the Dorset Youth Jazz Orchestra at Bridport United Church in East Street on Saturday 18 April at 7 for 7.30pm. Tickets are £12.50 (£5 for young people 18 and under) from Bridport Tourist Information Centre, online at bridportandwestbay.co.uk/tickets, from Rotary Club members or on the door. Profits will go to the portable ventilator appeal at Dorset County Hospital and other good causes.

Looking at life around the hill

There's still time to catch Life in the Shadows of Allington Hill, an exhibition celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Allington Hillbillies volunteer group and the 40th anniversary of the local fundraising campaign that allowed the Woodland Trust to buy Allington Hill. The exhibition brings together memories and photos of life around the hill; people can bring their contributions along and the final collection will be donated to the Bridport History Centre. Allsop Gallery, Bridport Arts Centre until 4 April, open Wednesday to Saturday 10am–4pm. Free entry. *Turn to page 11 for our feature about the Allington Hillbillies.*

Genealogists offer help with family history searches

If you're researching your family tree and have reached a dead end – or if you just need a hand getting started – the Dorset History Centre's family history surgery can help.

The surgery is being held on Fridays 10 and 17 April, when one-hour sessions with a trained genealogist volunteer are available to book at 1, 2 and 3pm.

There's a charge of £5, which goes to Dorset Archives Trust. The surgery is held at Dorset History Centre, Dorchester DT1 1RP.

This initiative is part of Dorset Council's commitment to preserving and promoting our local heritage while encouraging community engagement with history.

To book, phone 01305 250550 or email archives@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.



We would love to welcome you at any of these 2026 Easter Services

Maunder Thursday 2nd April
Messianic Sedar Service
 An opportunity to take the Passover items & relate them to Jesus' sacrifice
 7pm at Bridport Christian Fellowship
 Kings Square DT6 3QE
 (back of East Street Car park)
 Suitable for adults 18+. Please book by
 26th March via Harry 01308 421225

Good Friday Service 3rd April
 10.30am at Bucky Doo Square
 All ages welcome
 Followed by refreshments

Easter Sunday Service 5th April
 10.30am at Bridport Christian Fellowship
 All ages welcome
 Followed by refreshments

CHRIST Risen
 HAPPY EASTER
www.bridportchristianfellowship.org

St Swithun's Church Hall, Allington

FUN QUIZ

Friday 17 April at 7pm

Doors open at 6.30pm

Teams of six (max)

**£5 per head in cash on the door
for Messy Church and general funds**

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

ALL WELCOME • Extra parking at Amsafe

Book in advance: 07859 803734



High Sheriff's Award for 'Mr Fix It', town surveyor Daryl Chambers

At a recent gathering in Bridport Town Hall, the High Sheriff of Dorset paid tribute to a man whose dedication to the town has become the stuff of local legend: Daryl Chambers, affectionately known as 'Mr Fix It'.

Though officially the town surveyor for Bridport Town Council, Daryl's contribution stretches far beyond any job description. The High Sheriff described him as someone who anticipates needs before they arise, quietly preparing, planning and putting things in place long before most people even notice a task is needed. His willingness to give his time, energy and expertise – often far beyond working hours – has made him indispensable to the life of the town.

Daryl's practical skill is matched by his character: a blend of Yorkshire determination, humour and straight talking honesty. He understands people, listens well and brings out the best in those he works with. Many local organisations, businesses, schools and community groups have benefited from his guidance and support.

Even as he passes retirement age, Daryl continues to serve, taking on extra responsibilities during times of transition and ensuring that others are trained and supported for the future. His commitment has helped Bridport and its surrounding area thrive.

Although the Town Council cannot award its own staff the title of Townsperson, the High Sheriff's Award offered a fitting way to recognise what the community has long known: Daryl is one of Bridport's true heroes. He often insists he is "just doing his job", but the gratitude expressed in the Town Hall made clear that his work is far more than that.



Garry Hayball

Pictured above: Daryl and his award with wife Jilly and son Matthew. Below left: a little bit of Bridport in a Tunisian market

A passion for the market

Daryl says the most rewarding part of his career has been running Bridport's twice-weekly market over the past 20 years. The market offers a wide variety of stalls selling local produce, street food, antiques, vintage items, clothing, crafts, plants and handmade goods. Many traders have been part of the market for years, and it is particularly well known for its antiques and bric-a-brac stalls. Its popularity attracts visitors from far and wide, who also enjoy Bridport's independent shops and cafes.

Over time it has become the most successful market in the southwest, a success recognised by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), where Daryl served as a director for 12 years. As a NABMA Ambassador, he has spent the last 15 years carrying out health checks on struggling markets across the country. His achievements have been recognised with several awards, including Market Team of the Year at the National Awards in 2022 and the NABMA Lifetime Achievement Award for services to markets in 2021. Wherever he travels, Daryl takes a market bag with him and sends colleagues photos of it from different locations. Here he is (*left*) enjoying a busman's holiday in a Tunisian market.

Caroline Pearce, Project Manager, BTC



Broadchurch writer Chris Chibnall curates this year's From Page to Screen festival

Bridport Arts Centre (BAC) has announced a dazzling line-up of movies for the 2026 From Page to Screen film festival.

This year's festival is curated by Chris Chibnall – screenwriter of Broadchurch and Doctor Who as well as Netflix hit Agatha Christie's Seven Dials – and takes place at various Bridport venues from Wednesday 22 to Sunday 26 April.

Among the highlights are four gala screenings, which Chris will be introducing. The opening night gala (22 April, 6.30pm at BAC) marks the 60th anniversary of the filming of John Schlesinger's 1967 adaptation of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, which was shot at locations across Dorset. On the closing night (26 April, 8pm at BAC) there's a centenary screening of the 1926 Buster Keaton comedy *The General*, with a live piano accompaniment.

Friday 24 April sees a very special gala of the James Bond classic *Casino Royale* (2006) at the Electric Palace at 7.30pm, followed by a Q&A with the film's writers, Neal Purvis and Robert Wade, and its composer, David Arnold. And there's a gala screening of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), also on the biggest screen in town (25 April, 7.30pm at the Electric Palace).

Screenings during the festival include recent releases *H Is for Hawk* (26 April, 2.15pm at BAC), *The Little Sister* (25 April, 10.45am at BAC) and *Die My Love* (24 April, 2.15pm at BAC), plus classics *His Girl Friday* (24 April, 10.45am at BAC), *Touch of Evil* (22 April, 10.45am at BAC) and the hilarious *Airplane* (25 April, 5pm at BAC).

There's a free screening (for children in Years 3 to 7) of family favourite *The Fantastic Mr Fox* at Bridport Youth & Community Centre on Wednesday 22 April at 5pm. This is in association with Bridport Youth Club (non-members can sign up for free day membership). Free apple juice, popcorn and ice cream will be served before the film.

Meet the Makers

New for this year's festival is Meet the Makers, presented in partnership with Imaginary Friends. In these lunchtime sessions, some of the UK's leading film and TV professionals share insights into their crafts and answer the question: what do you do all day?

These practitioners include Bridport's own Eddy



Pearce, a location manager who worked on *Ammonite*, *Persuasion* and *Paddington* in Peru; the producer of *The Crown*, *Suzanne Mackie*; and James Strong, director of *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*.

Meet the Makers is aimed at anyone who wants to work in the screen industries or simply wants to find out more about what goes on behind the camera.



Chris Chibnall

Inspiring the next generation

Chris Chibnall is hoping that his involvement in the festival will encourage young people in Dorset who are thinking of a career in film or television. "We shot *Broadchurch* right here," he says, "so I really want young people to feel like they are the next generation of filmmakers. I didn't grow up knowing anybody in the television industry, the film industry, the book industry. It was a completely other place for me."

Chris adapted Agatha Christie's mystery *Seven Dials* into a Netflix series, which aired earlier this year. "To curate this festival in the year after I've done my first adaptation just felt really exciting," he adds.

Organisers have made *From Page to Screen 2026* as accessible as possible for young people. Anyone aged 25 and under can buy tickets for most films for just £3, and gala tickets are just £5. The Meet the Makers sessions are free for young people.

The Allington Hillbillies have nature in mind

Rising above the rooftops of North Allington, with sweeping views of the surrounding countryside, Allington Hill is a place where people come to enjoy fresh air and nature.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated group of local volunteers, led by Cathy Harvey and Steve Todd, work hard to keep the hill thriving. This group is the Allington Hillbillies.

The Hillbillies are a community volunteer group devoted to looking after the hill, including Cooper's Wood and Cooper's Field. Working closely with The Woodland Trust and Bridport Town Council, they help to maintain the landscape and to protect and encourage wildlife, while ensuring the land remains accessible for all.

The group includes local residents of all ages and from all walks of life: an enthusiastic bunch who gather on Wednesdays throughout the year, plus Sundays during the winter. Passersby might come across them in their distinctive orange tops, clearing paths, maintaining benches, managing the wildflower meadow that covers the hillside with colour and life in spring and summer – and emptying the poo bins! This spring they have been continuing with the long-term project of restoring the hedge along



the top of the field for the benefit of wildlife.

Nature is at the heart of everything the Hillbillies do. By encouraging native plants and carefully managing habitats, the group supports a wide range of wildlife from birds and butterflies to small mammals and pollinating insects. Their work helps to maintain the ecological balance of the hill while making it a richer place to explore. They also recognise the important role that nature plays in mental health and wellbeing.

The Hillbillies organise outdoor events throughout the year, helping residents connect more deeply with the natural environment around them. These activities include moth and bat evenings, local history walks and the extremely popular Nature Club, run by Cathy Harvey for children and their carers during the school holidays, encouraging them to experience nature up close.

The hill, and Cooper's Circle in particular, has also become a hub for storytelling, outdoor learning, art activities and small events.

This year, on 2 May, the Hillbillies are putting on a country fair with traditional craft stalls, have-a-go activities, local experts sharing wildlife knowledge in the speakers' tent, live music and good food from local providers. There will also be horse-logging demonstrations and guided wildlife walks around the hill. This event is the first of its kind in Bridport and entry is free for all.

The group is also running an art and local history event in Bridport Arts Centre's Allsop Gallery over the Easter holidays, with art workshops for all abilities and ages.

What began as a small group of local enthusiasts has grown into a valued part of the Bridport community. The Allington Hillbillies continue to protect one of Bridport's iconic landscapes, ensuring that the hill remains alive with wildlife and community spirit for years to come.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact details are online at allingtonhillbillies.org.uk.

Pictured: volunteers from the Allington Hillbillies take a break from working on the hill (top); it's a perfect spot for family fun (left)



Mark the book! A round-up of tips

An early-age foray into literature has the potential to last a lifetime. Yet reading appears to be on the decline, and a campaign launched recently to reverse – or least stall – the trend is timely.

The National Year of Reading 2026 is a UK-wide initiative led by the National Literacy Trust and the Department for Education and aims to encourage people of all ages to pick up a book. How many activities are so low-cost, informative and inspiring? And that's just for starters. Creativity and imagination desperately need nurturing if we are to develop and sustain a rich inner world.

Alongside coverage of the National Year of Reading, there has been much in the press recently about the benefits of curling up with a good book. Reading isn't a complete antidote to loneliness but there's a lot to be said for the comfort of engaging with a set of characters. As our guest contributors explain, books bring us insights into different communities, other viewpoints, and all the while the mind is active, whirring, taking in and processing.

As its website (goallin.org.uk) explains, the National Year of Reading campaign is promoting “reading that fits how we live, not the other way around... reconnecting reading with the things that already inspire us – from playlists and football matches to films, food and family time.”

We asked some booklovers to recommend writing that means a lot to them. The answers make fascinating reading...

One of the most beautiful and best-written novels I've read in a long time is *This Is Happiness* by Niall Williams.

It's set in Faha, a small Irish town that in the 1950s belatedly gets electricity, and what happens when one of the men who is to install it arrives, upending all sorts of relationships. It is the most gorgeous portrait of small-town

life, with a huge cast of characters drawn in quick sketches. At times hilarious, at times poignant, it is a book to savour, with every sentence a gem. And if you love it, there's a sequel called *Time of the Child*, which Williams wrote because so many readers had asked him for more about Faha.

Tracy Chevalier, novelist
tracychevalier.com

Once upon a long time ago, before social mobility was a thing, my father read a book that changed his life.

Published in 1940, *Fame* is the Spur by Howard Spring charts the story of a man who rose from the humblest of beginnings in Manchester to achieve political success. Dad left school at the age of 14, as you did in those days. At the local Labour Exchange he was offered a choice: take a factory apprenticeship, or serve articles and train to be an accountant. Option two was set in motion.

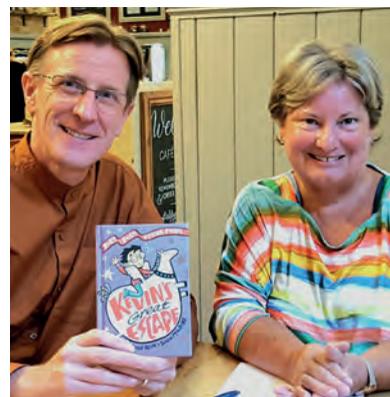
Dad had political ambitions and did get as far as selection for what was then the Manchester Gorton constituency. Unfortunately Mother had other ideas – and being the



Jon Drott



Introduction by Annette Shaw



Pictured: Annette Shaw's father as a boy (far left in front row); Annette with author Philip Reeve

for the National Year of Reading

wife of an MP wasn't one of them. Although to be fair, as we began a slow migration south, she upgraded the daily newspaper delivery, peaking with *The Times* on our arrival in Surrey.

Our departure from the land of Lancashire hotpot was driven by several factors. The farm, owned by Dad's grandparents, was barely five miles from the city centre. No future there. The decline of the cotton industry was lurking. Meanwhile, the encouragement to keep reading and studying came from the accountancy practice where Dad worked. He ploughed through Dickens, shared George Eliot with Mum – and, slowly, circles completed as if the words mirrored life events.

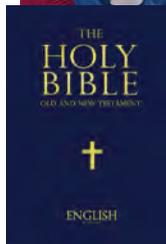
The world has a different set of problems and distractions now, but the need for self-improvement, resilience and anchor points is stronger than ever. Page turning is part of the solution. From bedtime reading to my teenage Saturday job in Marple Library, books were part of everyday life. Even now, if I look at the pile of 'just finished' or 'pending', it's a round-the-world trip. Inspiration for supper; solving a murder. A psychological thriller set in Cornwall. The heartwarming stories penned by Jenny Kane.

Mood-lifting strategies come in many guises and for anyone who hasn't picked up a book in a while, or wants to introduce children to what could be a lifetime hobby, I'd start by reaching for a Philip Reeve – such as the adventures of Kevin, a roly-poly Dartmoor pony. With illustrations by Sarah McIntyre, you don't have to be seven to laugh out loud. I still giggle at the memory of a character questioning what a store, *The Po Of ice*, sold. Probably

stamps. The wind had blown off part of the sign: *The Post Office*.
Annette Shaw, freelance writer

My choice is the Bible.

At King Charles's coronation in May 2023, he was presented with a Bible with the words: "This is the most valuable thing that this



The Revd John Rees, Associate Priest in the Parish of Bridport

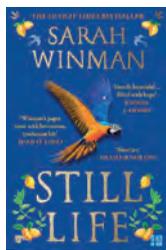
I loved Still Life by Sarah Winman.

Her writing is flawless! Rich and full and delicate at the same time. *Still Life* is a big hearted novel with characters you won't want to leave behind. It is the only book I have immediately started again once I reached the end. Charming, uplifting, a little quirky and utterly wonderful.

Sarah Meadham, proprietor of The Book Shop, South Street, Bridport
dorsetbooks.com

world affords" and "Here is wisdom".

This has been my experience too – reading my Bible has given me both comfort and challenge. I enjoy sharing a storyteller version with children and responding to their questions.

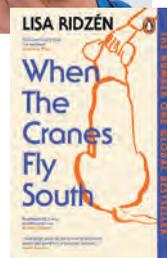


When The Cranes Fly South by Lisa Ridzén is my choice.

I loved this book for the sensitive

way it depicts one man's experience of ageing, his need for autonomy and his relationships with his son and his beloved dog. It made me cry, but it has lingered in my memory for the tenderness with which it depicts the difficult father/son relationship, the role of carers in the family and the atmosphere of rural Sweden that the author evokes.

Rachel Coney, Bothenhampton resident and enthusiastic member of two book groups



My recommendation is Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver.

This is a retelling of David Copperfield set in modern-day Appalachia, where poverty and addiction steal so many chances. Kingsolver's prose immerses the reader in *Demon's* world and has you rooting for him to succeed – or just survive – against the odds. I am in awe of the skill and work it takes to produce a novel like this.

Olivia Daly
Editor, The Bridge Magazine



We will be marking the National Year of Reading in further issues throughout 2026

More Eco Church success in the Parish of Bridport

Members of the Parish of Bridport have been celebrating as St Mary’s Church in Walditch has gained its bronze Eco Church award.

“Well done to all those who have been involved with this – it is a wonderful achievement,” says Janet Webster, leader of the parish’s Eco Church group.

There are six Anglican churches in Bridport and between them they have received one silver and four bronze awards. As part of the award, each church’s volunteer team has chosen to manage part of their churchyard for wildlife and to plant pollinators that attract bees and butterflies.

“We had some wonderful displays of wildflowers last summer and look forward to enjoying them again this year,” adds Janet. “Do stop by, take a seat and listen to the birds and bees and maybe the silence... being in nature is so uplifting for all of us.”

A date for your diary

This year’s Parish Green Day will be at St Swithun’s Church on Saturday 26 September from 10am to 2.30pm. The theme will be ‘Sharing with and learning from our neighbours – building communities in Bridport’. Everyone is welcome, so do come and join us. ecochurch@parishofbridport.org

Pictured: gorgeous wildflowers in bloom last summer, planted by the Eco Church teams at Holy Trinity Bothenhampton (top) and St Mary’s Bridport



Do you play a violin?

You would be most welcome to join West Dorset Community Orchestra for rehearsal on Wednesdays 6.30–7.45pm during term time in the Christian Fellowship hall, East Street Car Park, Bridport DT6 3QE 01308 456297 www.westdorsetmusic.org.uk





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Bridport Clothes Bank

An idea born amid war, now helping the whole community

Back in April 2022, during the early weeks of the war in Ukraine, an enterprising Bridport group started to collect clothing to send out to people in need in the newly occupied country.

As the war progressed, some of the refugees accepted into the UK came to West Dorset, so emphasis was shifted to helping them settle here. In May 2022, Bridport Clothes Bank (BCB) came into being, run by a steering group and coordinated by Jan Thorne. Its aim was to offer free clothing not just to the refugees but to anyone in the local community, helping people's financial situation and their mental wellbeing.

At first BCB used a unit in Beaminster, thanks to the generosity of Palmers Brewery. Then the group rented premises in St Michael's Trading Estate in Bridport, kitted out courtesy of the town's Round Table. The operation grew, and in 2025 BCB moved into a 500 sq ft unit at the Bridport Youth and Community Centre, where the manager and trustees were hugely supportive in helping them turn what was a dark and dirty former car workshop into a



bright, airy space where volunteers can sort, pack and store clothing.

The move to bigger premises could not have come at a better time as the amount of clothing being donated and given out has increased dramatically. As well as clothes, BCB also accepts bedding and towels (providing they are clean and of good quality) and some smaller household items such as pots, pans and cutlery.

BCB has an active fundraising team, raising money selling clothing at stalls in Bucky Doo Square and fetes to pay the rent and keep the organisation running, and to buy new underwear to give out alongside the donated clothing.

Dozens of extremely motivated volunteers help everything run

smoothly; there are sorters, packers and drivers working hard behind the scenes and others manning the distribution points. These are:

- at St Swithun's Church Hall on Thursdays 9.30–10.30am;
- at Bridport Youth & Community Centre (BYCC), Gundry Lane on the first Saturday each month 12–12.45pm; and
- at Prout Bridge Community Centre, Beaminster on the second and fourth Mondays each month, 10am–noon.

At the distribution sessions, BCB volunteers ask people what they are looking for, and some touching stories have emerged showing how much appreciated the BCB service has been. It is very fulfilling to see the gratitude on the faces of people who are finding even charity shop prices a test of their budget.

If you know someone in that category, please tell them about BCB. This organisation is a wonderful example of a community operation doing exactly what it should be doing – working together to support each other.

BCB accepts donations at all of its distribution points as well as during opening hours at Bridport Leisure Centre and the Mountfield council offices.

*Email: BridportCB@outlook.com
Tel: 07596 077385 (please text or leave a message)
Facebook: [Bridport ClothesBank](https://www.facebook.com/BridportClothesBank)*

Pictured: the clothes bank session at Bridport Youth & Community Centre (left); coordinator Jan Thorne (top)



ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967

Director of music – Tim Linsley

07830 308701

Tower captain – Bob Hardwick

07977 989263

Rhythms of life

We are in the season of Lent and if you have visited St Mary's in recent weeks you may have thought that it looks a little more sombre than usual. During Lent we try to simplify things, so there are no flowers and our altar frontal is plain with sashes of purple.

In every aspect of our lives we benefit from the rhythms of life that sustain us: day and night, seasons and celebrations. We all acknowledge the need for periods of rest, but in practice it takes a lot of work and preparation to rest well! Times of celebration need anticipation, planning and preparation beforehand.

In our church life, Christmas is preceded by the season of Advent, while Lent is the six-week period that leads us to our celebration of Easter. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, when in St Mary's we gathered on a very wet February evening for a service at which we were called to 'the observance of a holy Lent'. We began our season of preparation.

If you read the Sunday magazines, you'll be well aware that body coaches and mental health practitioners have recently been extolling the virtue of taking a break in any fitness regime. Psychology suggests that truly sustainable, long-term results come from consistent effort mixed with rest, not constant intensity – and the church does likewise! In both Advent and Lent there is a Sunday of 'easement' when there is relief from the austerity of the season. The fourth Sunday of Lent is sometimes known as Refreshment Sunday but more usually as Mothering Sunday, and at St Mary's there was much joy as we distributed flowers in celebration of this special day.

Mothering Sunday is celebrated in many countries on



Pictured: The simplicity of the church during Lent prepares us for the celebration of Easter (inset)

the fourth Sunday of Lent. In the 16th century, people would make a journey to their 'mother' church once a year on this Sunday, and wealthy landowners would use this day to allow their servants to visit family. Mothering Sunday is sometimes known as Simnel Sunday because of the tradition of baking Simnel cakes to celebrate the 'family reunion' during the austerity of Lent.

Now we move towards the end of Lent; the days are lengthening and we celebrate new light and new life! After our period of solemn preparation, we come to the joy of all that is Easter: God's grace and love for us made known in the risen Christ. Please do join us for our Easter services or pop into the church for your own moment of celebration.

Lesley Hill

Bridport Town Council CENTRAL WARD

Contact 01308 456722
enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

Looking forward to the Charter Fair

The Charter Fair will soon be upon us, and we are hoping for 'fair' weather! Arthur Woodgate, Chair of the Charter Fair Committee, writes:

Bridport Community Charter Fair is scheduled for Saturday 16 May. This free family event runs from 9.30am to 3pm in Bucky Doo Square and at Mountfield, this year extending to Downes Street to

accommodate the increasing number of community organisations that want to take part.

The 2025 fair proved popular both with the public and with those taking part. Bridport Mayor Anne Rickard said: “It was one of the most successful we’ve had – absolutely fantastic!” Other comments by participants included: “It’s a very special event, an opportunity to meet not only the public but also other groups in our community,” and “The fair seems to be going from strength to strength – it reinforces what a range of community resources we have. Very inspiring.”

There will be an eclectic mix of entertainment at both Bucky Doo and Mountfield, with refreshments, a bar and a children’s area with face painting, Messy Art and a truly bonkers magic show, as well as a presentation of awards for outstanding service to our community.

The fair is a partnership between the Charter Fair Committee and Bridport Town Council, and celebrates both the granting of the town’s market charter more than 700 years ago in recognition of its rope-making industry, and Bridport’s Citizens’ Charter, which in 2018 declared Bridport’s status as the UK’s first Rights Respecting Town.

This year’s event is sponsored by Foundry Lea, from where a spokesperson says: “Events like the Charter Fair play a vital role in strengthening local connections



Garry Hawball

Pictured: Maypole dancers at last year’s Charter Fair in front of an image of Rex Trevett, Bridport’s ‘Mr Music’ and former Charter Fair Chair

and creating opportunities for people of all ages to come together.”

More information from Claire.Peters-Way@bridport-tc.gov.uk or a.c.woodgate@btinternet.com.

Amy Stephenson

Thanks to Bridport Camera Club for the photo

HOLY TRINITY
Bothenhampton

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

From the parish editor

April begins with Holy Week and Easter. Good Friday is on 3 April and there will be prayers at 12 noon in Holy Trinity. On Sunday 5 April, Easter Day, a service of Holy Communion will be held at 11am, incorporating a baptism, and we welcome the family on this occasion. As Lent will be over, the church will be decorated with flowers and the Easter Garden displayed.

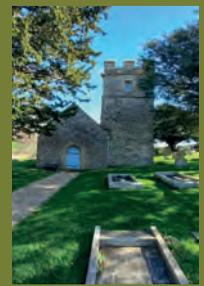
The Easter weekend also includes the next coffee morning in Holy Trinity on Saturday 4 April, 10am to 12 noon. A selection of delicious homemade cakes for Easter will be on sale, and books and a raffle there too.

Volunteers for the spring working party in the Old Churchyard are asked to come on Saturday 18 April at 2pm. The main task will be improving some of the

Garden working party
Saturday 18 April at 2pm
The Old Churchyard

Please help tidy up these lovely grounds. Bring your own gardening gloves and tools to edge memorial stones, weed and strim uncut and overgrown areas, and cut dead wood.

Work areas will be allocated on arrival according to ability and tools brought.



graves, which have sunk owing to the very wet winter. Soil needs to be moved from the old compost area, so wheelbarrows, spades and forks would be very useful. Improving the gravel path to the church building has reduced the weeds and another load of gravel is being put down, so garden rakes will be needed to level the path. There are also a number of the usual lighter jobs to do, so if you are able to help in any way you will be most welcome.



The village hall committee is inviting everyone to a cheese and wine evening on Saturday 11 April from 7.30pm. As well as being a social gathering, the evening will be fundraising for maintenance of the hall. The first priority is tackling the dampness in the back wall, which needs rendering because the Bothenhampton brick has become porous. Tickets are £10 from Pennie or Heather (*see right for contact info*).

The seat marking the year 2000, which was under the Turkey oak tree next to the church until it fell into disrepair, has now been restored. Grateful thanks go to the Bridport Community Shed for their time in renovating the legs and sides of the bench. Payment was met with some of the donations made at the Burns Night event, so thank you to everyone who contributed on that occasion.

Later this year we hope to have a garden open day with a cream tea in the village hall. Everyone loves to see what delights lie behind houses, so if you have a garden that others would enjoy, please ring Margaret on 01308 422414. The proposed date is the afternoon of Saturday 27 June.

The spring flowers have been glorious this season, particularly the daffodils. The blooms beside the church path have given much pleasure to people walking through. It is also good to see the high pavement on

Bothenhampton Village Hall Committee
 invite you to a
Cheese & Wine Party

Saturday 11 April at 7pm

Tickets £10 to include a glass of wine with cheese, from Heather (423220) or Pennie (458006). In aid of funds for the maintenance of the village hall



Hollow Way being used regularly once more. Dorset Council have done an excellent job, working in extremely difficult weather conditions, which we very much appreciate.

Barbara Ffooks

FILM NIGHT in Bothenhampton Village Hall
 Saturday 25 April

Doors open 7pm, film starts at 7.30pm

Admission £5 • Refreshments available

For film details and to be added to the mailing list, please email Nick Child: lenc2413@outlook.com

ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor –

James Craddock 458725
walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com

Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421
 If you have any pastoral or personal issues, please contact the
Revd Ann Ayling on 424896



Michael Day

Bridport Town Council
BOTHENHAMPTON &
WALDITCH WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

Our February ward meeting at Walditch Village Hall addressed several resident concerns including the

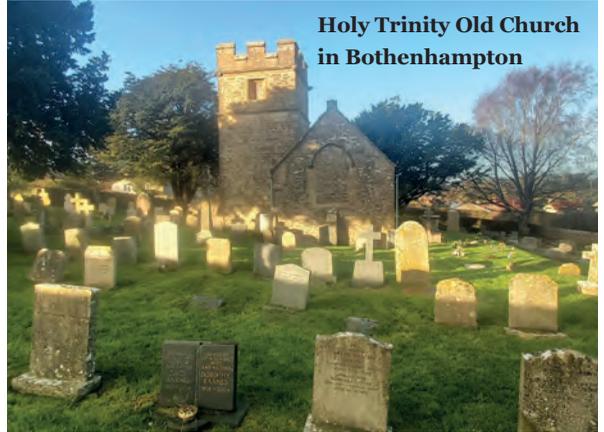
new A35 speed reductions, an update on the A35 Sea Road South pedestrian crossings, the ward's 20mph application, issues with the Dorset Council online reporting portal, and drainage problems on Walditch Road near the village green. The meeting notes, including updates, are available on our ward page on the town council website: www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/wards/bothenhampton-walditch-ward and on the ward noticeboards in both villages. Our next ward meeting will take place at Bothenhampton Village Hall in April (date and time to be confirmed).

During a recent site visit in Bothenhampton, I went

to the historic Holy Trinity Old Church. Tucked away under the gently rolling hills at the end of a lane off Old Church Road, this picturesque medieval parish church is easy to miss, having been replaced in 1889 by Edward Prior's new Holy Trinity Church at the junction of Crock Lane and Hollow Way.

The Old Church features a 13th-century chancel and a 15th-century tower and sits in a beautiful walled churchyard still used today for parishioners' burials and the interment of ashes. Inside there is an elegant early Georgian reredos with oak altar rails. The church continued to be used as a mortuary chapel until 1971, when it was declared redundant.

Now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust, a national charity saving historic churches at risk, the church has no electricity, water or toilets but is open daily. Access is via a level gravel path to the west door. Its picturesque and peaceful setting and historic character make it a worthwhile place to visit, providing a window to the past and a quiet place for reflection.



**Holy Trinity Old Church
in Bothenhampton**

Keep up to date with all the latest ward news on our Facebook page: Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward Partnership. To get in touch about any concerns in the ward, please email me at the address in the box on the opposite page.

Jo Hughes

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

Parish editor –

Douglas Baldwin 424232

douglas.baldwin@seaside20.plus.com

Bell enquiries – Wendy Carnell 420716

htbrabells@parishofbridport.org

**For pastoral or personal issues, please
contact the Revd Janis Moore 425644
(Wednesday is her day off)**

Village Lunch Club

Jean Hutchings has kindly stepped into the role of lunch club organiser. She has arranged a more permanent home for the club at the Haddon House Hotel (*pictured*) in West Bay and has negotiated a good deal for a two-course lunch. There is plenty of parking space at the hotel. The next lunch will be on Tuesday 14 April at 12.30pm. If you haven't already booked, please give Jean a ring on 427697.



Elliott Brown

Holy Trinity Bradpole

Spring quiz

with fish and chip supper

Friday 17 April at 7pm

Tickets £15 to include supper

Drinks by donation • Raffle

Bring a team of four or join a team on the night
Numbers are limited so please book in advance
thefriendshbt@gmail.com / 01308 420716



Other groups

The Mothers' Union will meet at 2.30pm on Tuesday 21 April. The Knitting Group will meet on Thursdays 2 and 16 April. Contact Daphne King (427552) for info.

Tots@Ten

Pre-school children are welcome to join others, with parents and carers, normally every Wednesday during term time at 10am in the church. There are toys to play with and lots of space. Refreshments are served. There is no charge. After the Easter break, the new term will run from 15 April to 20 May. →

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

Tea & Chat

On Sunday 12 April from 2.30 to 4pm, Holy Trinity will host this event, which is organised by Churches Together in Bridport and District. Everyone is invited.



Bradpole Forster Village Hall

The main hall (pictured) is available for hire by local community groups and for private events and is fully accessible

with facilities for disabled people. Hall bookings can be made online at www.hallbookingonline.com/bradpole, where you'll also find more information and photos of the facilities.

Bradpole Buzz Group

The team of Rose, John, Carol, Maggie, Rosie, Kate and Harriet will be meeting on Saturdays 4 and 25 and Wednesday 15 April.



They'd welcome anyone who'd like to join them to offer practical help with planting as well as donations of wild plants and seeds from your garden, suggestions and general support.

For more information, phone Rose Van den Akker on 425756 or email bradpolebuzz@gmail.com.

**Bridport Town Council
BRADPOLE WARD**

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

The ward clerk writes...

Our ward's community engagement meeting on 16 February was well attended. Many residents had come along to discuss with councillors their concerns about the inadequate wooden fence that acts as a barrier between St Andrews Road and the grass embankment leading down to the properties in Fishweir Fields. As I mentioned last month, a vehicle had swerved off the road and gone through the fence and down the bank, ending up embedded in a resident's property. This incident was very distressing at the time and now residents have great concerns that there might be another similar event and people might be injured.

After a discussion, councillors agreed that they would send a letter to Dorset Council (DC) in support of the residents, urging DC to consider installing a more robust barrier and asking for a visit by highways officers. DC has now responded to the letter, confirming that the road safety management team is investigating whether a more substantial vehicle restraint system would be technically feasible.

Also discussed at the meeting were the Mangerton Lane abattoir, 20mph speed limits, and the Court Close wildlife site, which is still under DC ownership.

A Section 106 agreement was referred to during the



Pictured: Spring has sprung in Bradpole, with cheerful daffodils around the Caley Way postbox and pink blossom in the churchyard at Holy Trinity

meeting, in connection with a planning application. One person asked if we could explain what it was, and I thought I'd take this chance to do so:

A Section 106 agreement is a legally binding obligation between a local planning authority and a developer, designed to mitigate the impact of new developments. Monetary contributions from these agreements are often put towards community facilities, highways and green spaces.

The next ward meeting is on Monday 20 April at 7.30pm in Bradpole Village Hall.

To get in touch about anything in the ward, please email me at bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Sandy Goldsmith

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

Parish editor – please contact the magazine's editor (details on p2)

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07976 534517

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07969 826430

grahamwilliams386@gmail.com

So much going on in our beautiful churchyard

It's no coincidence that we are all beginning to concentrate on the world outside, now that the weather has turned to spring. Many visitors have commented on the glorious display of daffodils at St Swithun's this year. In 2012 a working party planted 1,000 bulbs to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee, and the flowers are now a wonderful sight each year. We have also invested significantly in bringing the churchyard up to a much better condition, and we are grateful to members of our regular community for putting much time and effort into this.

We have been rewarded with many comments from local visitors. One person walking their dog said to me: "I'm a Jehovah's Witness and I try to encourage my dog to take her walks somewhere near the Kingdom Hall but she loves this place and keeps bringing me back here!" Many other regulars – with and without dogs – find solace in the calm and the beauty of the churchyard. It has many different areas to explore: there's the east-facing part with its ancient headstones, surrounding the wonderful tulip tree; there's the secluded courtyard between the church and the hall; and there's the area to the west that the young people from Wild & Messy Church are transforming.

Those young members of our community have built a large wooden planter in the south-west corner and it will be used to grow a variety of vegetables and herbs for local use. In February some of the group set about starting the filling process, and so far they have covered a bed of cut branches with a mix of topsoil and compost. They are also planning to grow wild flowers from 'plugs', and have taken advice from the Allington Hillbillies. The plants will go in areas suggested by our churchyard plan and we hope they will flower through a long season to provide breakfast to the bees in our bee hotel! Volunteers are welcome, so if you'd like to lend a hand, please contact Kevin on 07976 534517.

In the north-west corner there is some hard-standing with a shed and some rather unsightly refuse bins. We



Pictured, from top: Two young members of Wild & Messy Church with the planter that the group has been building; swift boxes, kindly donated by a parishioner, wait for their first visitors

are hoping to build a bin store to tidy up this area.

In terms of our environmental footprint, we achieved an Eco Church bronze award for our work so far and we're now working towards a silver award. None of this comes without hard work and cash, and we are always grateful to those who contribute.

And, as it is Lent, we are also thinking about the hard work that goes into personal reflection. This is the time of year when we are all encouraged to think about our personal footprint on this earth. What could we do better? How could we be kinder and more mindful of others? It's a sort of personal 'spring clean' in time to celebrate Easter with a clear conscience. Come and celebrate with a walk around the church!

Mandi Sturrock

Bridport Town Council WEST & ALLINGTON WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

Our last meeting was held in February, when we updated residents on various issues. Of great concern was the state of the roads, and we reminded residents of the importance of reporting any defects officially. We handed out information on how to do this via the Dorset Council online reporting system and the Fix my Street website. If you would like a copy of this information, please contact me.

There were also some queries about dogs being walked through play areas, and this has caused some frustration among responsible dog owners at the Peter Foote play area. It is the policy of Bridport Town Council (and Dorset Council) that dogs are not allowed in play areas. The Peter Foote play area has been earmarked for potential regeneration at some point, but nothing has been formally agreed yet and dogs are still not permitted in this area.

The next ward meeting will take place on Tuesday 21 April at 6.30pm in St Swithin's Church Hall. As always, all ward residents are welcome to attend.

Don't forget the Allington Hillbillies' anniversary celebrations and Country Fair next month (1 and 2 May). See page 11 for more about this group.

The Hillbillies, although unsuccessful with one of their funding bids to support this event, have been able to raise several thousand pounds towards the celebrations through initiatives including raffles,

talks, quizzes and workshops. One was a talk on 'Life in the Shadows of Allington Hill', which looked at the social history of Allington. Memories and photos collected for this event will be put together into a document that will be donated to Bridport History Centre. The talk was aimed at inspiring people to go through old photo albums and record their memories.

The Allington Hillbillies also interviewed local

residents to gather their recollections and memories.

A 1975 copy of the Western Gazette was passed to us after being unearthed from under a floor. One of the articles in it was about the Flaxhayes development (pictured above).

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page, 'Bridport West & Allington Ward Matters', or our page on the town council website, www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/wards/bridport-west-allington-ward.

There are also noticeboards dotted around the ward where we display relevant information as well as meeting dates and past minutes.

Amy Stephenson



Pictured: A 1975 copy of the Western Gazette found under a local floor includes news about the Flaxhayes development

ST JOHN'S West Bay

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

News from St John's

Regular Sunday services are held at 11am at St John's (see services, page 4) as well as Morning Prayer every Monday at 10am and a monthly Service of Wholeness and Healing on the fourth Saturday of every month, which currently starts at the winter time of 4pm.

Details of our Easter services are on page 4, as well as online at www.parihofbridport.org. The very popular sunrise ceremony on Easter Day is held on East Pier at 6am, so make sure you set your alarm – seeing the sunrise is always very special on this day.

St John's is hosting the town's Stations of the Cross paintings during Holy Week and there is a Stations of the Cross service on Good Friday at 2pm. See opposite for information about the paintings and when you can come and see them.

West Bay WI

The regular Knit & Natter session is on Wednesday 1 April, 10am–12 noon. At the meeting on Wednesday 8 April, 2.30–4.30pm, Sue from the wonderful Snooks

Hatters & Outfitters will bring a selection of hats to try on, as well as sharing insights into the industry.

If you are interested in joining this small, friendly group, please contact Alison Ridge on 01308 897293 or Maggie Hooper on 07720 056310. New members are always welcome.

Round and about the Bay

March saw West Bay coming out of hibernation and starting to gear up for the holiday season. The holiday park reopened and boats started returning to the harbour. I saw of a couple of fishing boats going out of the harbour – something I hadn't seen this year because of the sand bar.

Another popular feature of the summer months, the car boot sale, returns to the West Bay car park on 12 April and runs until the end of October. It's always a good place to pick up lovely plants large and small, as well as a wide variety of other items.

On 17 March the Discovery Centre returned to six-day opening (Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 4pm). Before this, the manager got the volunteers together at The Salt House for a refresher talk on the centre, its payment methods and the new items in the shop. There was news of the new exhibition, Changing Landscapes, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Jurassic Coast's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Volunteers were also able to try out some virtual reality headsets that had been kindly loaned.

Over the Easter period the centre has some children's activities, which always prove popular. And after a number of talks over the winter, the last one is on 30 April: Sam Scriven on Unseen & Underground. We now head into the summer season when there are regular Thursday walks – check the website or pop in for details.

The Discovery Centre is always looking for volunteers, so if you'd like to join a great group of people and learn loads about West Bay and the surrounding area, email manager@discoverycentre.org.uk.

The Stations of the Cross paintings

On Good Friday 2016, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury, led an ecumenical walk of witness from St Swithun's Church to the Boathouse in West Bay, passing 14 Stations of the Cross paintings on the way.

I was lucky enough to take part in this walk and it was a very memorable experience. The paintings were all interpretations of the traditional Stations of the Cross, reimagined in a Bridport context using modern settings and local landmarks.

In 2018, BBC Songs of Praise included four of these paintings in their programme on Palm Sunday,



Pictured: Two of the 14 Bridport Stations of the Cross, Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross (top), painted by Eileen Dearden, and Jesus' Body Is Removed from the Cross, painted by Elaine Butcher

when they were being displayed at St Peter's Eype. I contacted one of the artists, Eileen Dearden, who told me that when they came to film, it was bitterly cold with the 'Beast of the East' storm rapidly approaching. As her painting was a view by Palmers she had to stand there in the freezing cold – not a pleasant experience!

The Stations of the Cross paintings will be on display at St John's from Monday 30 March to Saturday 4 April, open 11am to 1pm.

Sue Pollock

Bridport Town Council WEST BAY WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

West Bay harbour suffered a lot of storm damage in January and February, and Dorset Council (DC) mounted a large clean-up operation. An 80-tonne crane was brought in to dredge a huge build-up – around 10,000 tonnes – of shingle and other debris in the outer harbour. This amount of sediment had not been seen here for more than 20 years.

The DC Harbours Team used a ‘crane and grab’ method to remove the debris (the crane removes one tonne of material in each ‘scoop’) while continuing the routine work of using the sluice gates to flush accumulated sediment from the harbour system.

DC’s cabinet member for Place Services, Cllr Jon Andrews, said: “These dredging works are a direct response to the extraordinary build-up of material caused by repeated south-easterly storms – the kinds of levels we’ve not seen for two decades. It’s essential that we do this work to open the harbour entrance and return it to how it was before the storms.”

DC has also been working with the Environment Agency, which had been carrying out an annual replenishment of the sea defences at the beach. The partnership meant that material recovered from the dredging operation in the harbour could be reused as part of this programme, contributing directly to the strengthening of coastal defences.

In other news, a copy of the Western Gazette from

Pictured: A 1975 copy of the Western Gazette found under a local floor includes news of a council discussion about “boosting the funfair element” at West Bay

1975 was found hidden under floorboards in a property before being passed to us. The photo here shows an article about a proposed addition to the West Bay funfair.

The next ward meeting will take place in June (details to follow). This will be advertised on our Facebook page and on the ward’s four noticeboards: in West Bay Road car park, outside the Cornish Bakery, outside The Salt House, and in West Cliff Road. Meanwhile, you can email us with any queries or concerns at enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Amy Stephenson

‘Fun bag’ for West Bay?

Warning of the over-development of West Bay, and the consequential spoiling of the very features which made it such an attraction, was given at West Dorset District Council’s Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting on Monday.

Dorchester’s Mr. Harold Durrant wondered whether it was wise to go on boosting the funfair element at West Bay or whether the time had not come to call a halt.

The Chief Engineer (Mr. P. C. R. Pearce) also told the committee, ‘I am concerned about the conglomeration of activities at West Bay.’

The discussion arose over an application from the proprietor of the funfair at West Bay to site what he described as ‘a fun bag’ at Fishermen’s Green or next to the trampolines outside Harbour House.

Inflatable

A picture of a ‘fun bag’ revealed it to be an assortment of inflatable shapes in different sizes and colours, occupying a space 30ft square.

Asked Mr. Durrant, ‘Are you trying to make West Bay into a second Southend or a nice little watering place where people go simply for pleasure?’

Replied the Chairman (Mr. Harold Smith), ‘We lost the nice little watering place years ago.’

Mr. Smith said they now had to cater for the people who flooded to West Bay, particularly the young ones.

He said he had had a word with the Chief Planning Officer (Mr. Philip Guest), and Mr. Guest had nothing against the idea, but felt that the two sites suggested were not suitable.

It was agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Mary West (Bradpole) should investigate the matter with the applicant and report back to the committee.

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Jane Wilson
01308 341159

Church secretary – Jane Clinton
bucchurchsec@gmail.com

Church bookings – Sue Herman
422598 / bucoffice1@gmail.com

Pause. Breathe. Make Space for God

This was the theme of our journey through Lent this year: an invitation to reflect each week on the attitudes and mindsets that we might need to let go of if they

were holding us back from being open to the transforming presence of God in everyday life. Things like:

- letting go of things that draw us away from God;
- letting go of structure and embracing the freedom of the Spirit;
- letting go of the familiar and embracing new possibilities;
- letting go of worries about scarcity and embracing God’s abundant generosity;
- letting go of obsession with appearances and embracing what’s in the heart;
- letting go of certainty and embracing mystery;
- letting go of despair and embracing ‘respair’; and
- letting go of fear and embracing joy.

These are all things the disciples had to let go of repeatedly in their journey with Jesus. This year we will be marking our own passage through Holy Week with a series of special services that allow us to reflect quietly on our relationship with Jesus as we remember his journey towards the Cross and the Resurrection.

Each day of Holy Week – Monday 30 March to Friday 3 April – at 8am and 12 noon (8am only on Good Friday) you're invited to come and pause for 15 minutes of quiet reflection as we listen to a Bible reading and meditation from the Iona community focusing on the days leading up to Jesus' death. Each session stands alone so you can come to as many or as few as you wish.

On Maundy Thursday (2 April) at 7pm you're invited to come and share in a candlelit Holy Communion as we sit around a table together, with foot washing for those who wish it, to remember Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples before he was betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.

On Good Friday (3 April) at 2pm there's a reflective Service of the Senses, an interactive opportunity to be part of the crowd and experience the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the events leading up to the Crucifixion. Join in with the shouts of the onlookers, see the Cross, touch the crown of thorns, feel the nails, smell and taste the wine vinegar.

On Easter Sunday (5 April) at 10.30am there's family worship and Holy Communion in the round, as we celebrate the joy and wonder of the Resurrection of Jesus that lies at the heart of our Christian faith.

And at 4pm on Easter Sunday, Soul Space does Easter in our usual informal cafe style with tea, coffee, cakes, songs, prayer, chat and a chance to reflect and explore the meaning of Easter. Everyone is welcome.

On Sunday 12 April at 10.30am we have Explore Together: what difference does the Resurrection of Jesus make? There will be a chat zone, a listening zone, a quiet zone and a busy zone – take your pick!

The Revd Jane Wilson

EASTER at Bridport United Church

You are warmly invited to.....

Messy Church

Thursday 26 March 3.30 - 5.30pm

Palm Sunday 29 March at 10.30am

Family Service

Easter Reflections 30 March - 3 April

Mon noon; Tues - Thursday 8am & noon; Fri 8am

Maundy Thursday 2 April at 7pm

Service of Communion and Footwashing

Good Friday 3 April

Service of the Senses at 2pm

Easter Sunday 5 April at 10.30am

Family Celebration with Communion

Soul Space does Easter!

Easter Sunday 5 April at 4pm

Explore Together

Sunday 12 April at 10.30am

For more details see www.buc.cool or Facebook

Regular events at BUC

Mondays	9.30–11am	Little Lambs toddlers group (term time only)
Wednesdays	9.30–10am	Prayer meeting in church
	10am–noon	Coffee morning in the hall
	12.30pm	Lunch Club (4th only) Please book on 422598
Thursdays	2.30–4pm	Friendship Club (3rd only)
	3.30–5.30pm	Messy Church (4th only)
Saturdays	10am–noon	Coffee morning in the hall
	9–11.30am	Big Breakfast in the hall (1st only)

April services at Bridport United Church:

For Holy Week, Easter and Sunday 12 April, see the panel above and details in the text.

Sunday 19 10.30am Morning Worship with church members

Sunday 26 10.30am Morning Worship with The Revd Jane Wilson

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

We have a number of rooms available for hire. For more information and to make a booking, please contact Sue Herman: bucoffice1@gmail.com.

Tapestry: The Resurrection of Christ, Vatican Museum



St MARY & St CATHERINE Roman Catholic Church

Parish priest – Fr Colin Groombridge
colin.groombridge@predtr.org.uk
 Secretary – Faith Leborgne
bridport@predtr.org.uk
 Phone 07544 595633



Sharing in the suffering of Christ

A few years ago I was given the opportunity to spend Easter in Ciudad Juárez, a city in Mexico. I stayed with Fr Kevin Mullins, a Columban priest, and attended each of the Easter services in his amazing parish.

Fr Kevin worked with parishioners who had been the victims of incredible acts of violence. Indeed, only two years before my visit, Juárez had been the most violent community in the world. Fr Kevin had at one time lost young parishioners at the rate of two per week as a result of violent crimes from drug cartels. He himself had twice been held at gunpoint and threatened with death. And yet he had stayed to serve his community and tell them the Good News of Christ.

Perhaps my most memorable experience was on Good Friday morning, when thousands of locals headed out onto the streets, and up into the hills to reenact the crucifixion of Christ. This was a very different experience to the sanitised version of the Stations of the Cross we might experience here in England. Young men carried full-scale crosses through the streets and

arrived exhausted at the point of crucifixion. They were then hauled up by ropes onto the crosses where they hung before finally being brought down. The women who followed knew only too well the horror of losing a child, as many of them had lost their own children to the violence of the drug lords.

It wasn't just the realistic actions of that Good Friday that was new to me. These people knew what it meant to share in Christ's suffering. As we celebrate Easter this year, we thank God for the gift of His son and we pray for all those who share in his suffering.

Deacon Mark Brown

Sunday Mass is at 10am at the Roman Catholic church in Victoria Grove and is streamed online at www.bridportcatholics.org.uk and the Bridport Catholic Parish Facebook page.

For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, as well as special services during Holy Week and Easter, see the weekly newsletter on the website or look for updates on Facebook.

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

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

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

We meet every Sunday at 10.30am for worship and Bible teaching, and at other times during the week.



BRIDPORT
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP

We seek to bless the community of Bridport with the Good News of Jesus; you would be most welcome to join us on Sundays or at any of our other meetings during the week.

Our normal weekly meetings are as follows but can change during festivals such as Christmas and Easter – please see our website for more information.

Mondays: Meals outreach project for those who find themselves in difficult times. Weekly discipleship group meets at 5.30pm.

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

Wednesdays: House groups meet at 10.30am–12 noon and at 7–8pm.

Saturdays: From 10.30am to 12 noon we have our 'Pray: Chat' coffee bar with free refreshments.

Sundays: 10.30am–12 noon is our weekly service. Once a month we have a meal after the service.

BEACON CHURCH Priory Lane, Bridport

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

Beacon Church welcomes you to join us this Easter as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

On Thursday 2 April we will be having a time of prayer leading into a time of worship. On Good Friday we will be showing the film *The Case for Christ*. It's free to come along and popcorn will be supplied. The film follows the true story of Lee Strobel as he goes out to disprove Christianity – come and watch this award-winning journalist's journey to faith.

On Easter Sunday we will have a family service of worship, games and celebration of 'He has risen'.

At other times we meet on Sundays from 10am for prayer, worship and coffee.

Wherever you are at with your own faith, you are always welcome to come and join us.

HE HAS
RISEN

THIS EASTER
AT BEACON

THURSDAY 2ND APRIL 5-7PM
PRAYER AND PRAISE

FRIDAY 3RD APRIL 7.30PM
FILM NIGHT- CASE FOR CHRIST

SUNDAY 5TH APRIL 10.30PM
EASTER FAMILY SERVICE


Beacon
CHURCH BRIDPORT

Bridport QUAKER MEETING The Meeting House 97 South Street

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

The Religious Society of Friends

We are known as Quakers, but that was a nickname given because of our way of worship. The formal name is the 'Religious Society of Friends of the Truth', often shortened to 'Friends'. Our way of worship is, like any deep relationship, both complicated and simple, and is summarised in our *Advices and Queries*, a series of 42 short questions and comments that I use as a basis for these articles.

Number 6 reads: "Do you work gladly with other religious groups in the pursuit of common goals?"

While remaining faithful to Quaker insights, try to enter imaginatively into the life and witness of other communities of faith, creating together the bonds of friendship."

Thus the idea of friendship is woven into all we do. It is a way of life. In the spirit of friendship and working

together, we are members of Churches Together, the ecumenical organisation that works to connect and unite Christian churches.



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

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

Jeni Edwards



Looking for our Get Involved listings for local non-profit groups? We're no longer including them in the printed magazine, although you can find the list on our website. In each issue we will feature one or two organisations in more detail, so please contact the editor (editor@thebridgemagazine.org) if you would like to appear. Next month we will have a feature about the Bridport Stage Company.

thebridgemagazine.org/get-involved

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into the environment.

Stephen Field

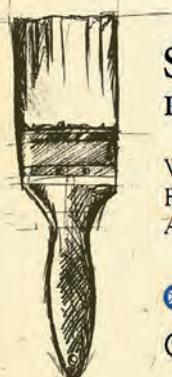
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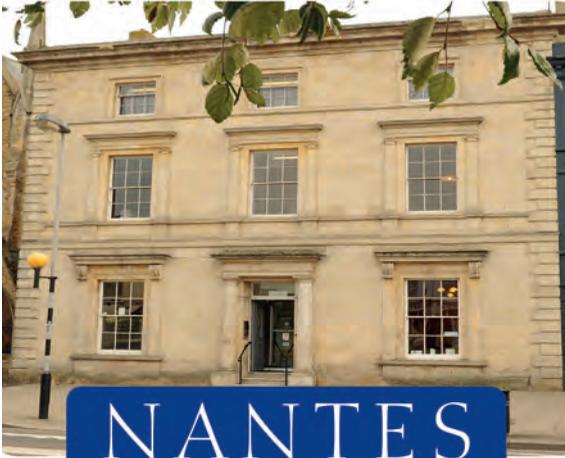
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