

the **Bridge**

May 2026

THIS ISSUE IS

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A community magazine
for Bridport supported by
churches in the town



Photo by Thomas Faull

Inside this issue:

- We meet Bridport musician Matt Kingston
- Exciting times for music at the Sir John Colfox Academy
- Celebrating the life of the Revd Philip Ringer

THE PARISH OF BRIDPORT**Team Rector** vacant**Interim Team Rector**The Revd Cally Burch Day off Friday
cally@parishofbridport.org / 07746 561144**Associate Priests**The Revd Lorna Johnson Day off Saturday
lorna@parishofbridport.org / 341520 / 07501 408221
The Revd John Rees Day off Monday
john@parishofbridport.org / 07340 589375**Permission to officiate**The Revd Janis Moore Day off Wednesday
janis@parishofbridport.org / 425644
The Revd Ann Ayling
annayling7@gmail.com / 424896
The Revd Margaret Preuss-Higham
revmph@gmail.com / 07817 161687**Licensed lay ministers**

Graham Purse 423220 Peter Wright 456967

Lay pastoral assistantsDiana Wright, Caroline Cooke, Anne Rees, Jane Trower,
Kathrine O'Brien, Virginia Bowley, Helen Thomas.
*If you cannot get to church and would like home
communion or a visit, please contact Diana (456967).***Lay worship leaders**Martin Whiting, Anne Rees, James Craddock,
Kathrine O'Brien**Team Administrator** Dianne Sinclairadmin@parishofbridport.org / 424747
Postal address: The Administrator, c/o The Rectory,
84 South Street, Bridport DT6 3NW**Secretary to the PCC** Bridget Trump

pcc@parishofbridport.org / 459875

Safeguarding Wendy Thorogood

PSO@parishofbridport.org / 07469 249014 (office hrs)

ChurchwardensMichele Craddock 458725
John Adams 425766
cwteam@parishofbridport.org**HALL BOOKINGS****St Swithun's Church Hall** Anne Ansell

ssubbookings@parishofbridport.org

Bothenhampton Village Hall Heather Purse

heatherpurse@yahoo.co.uk 423220

Bradpole Forster Village Hall Sarah Kilcoyne

bookingsbradpolevillagehall@gmail.com

Bookings at www.hallbookingonline.com/bradpole**St Mary's Church House Hall** Mish Bartlett

stmaryschhbookings@gmail.com

Walditch Village Hall Jane Weyman

janeweyman@btinternet.com 424299

Christian Fellowship, King St Jackie Edwards

538028

United Church Sue Herman

bucoffice1@gmail.com

Bridport Food Bank Sonia Maynard

info@bridportfoodbank.org 07443 596096

OTHER CHURCHES IN BRIDPORT**Beacon Church, Priory Lane** 456031 office**The Christian Fellowship** 458227**St Mary & St Catherine (Roman Catholic)**

Father Colin Groombridge / Faith Leborgne (secretary)

bridport@predtr.org.uk 07544 595633

Bridport Quaker Meeting

clerka@bridportquakers.org

Room hire enquiries roomhire@bridportquakers.org

United Church (Methodist & United Reformed)

The Revd Jane Wilson 341159

jane.wilson@methodist.org.uk

Jane Clinton, secretary bucchurchsec@gmail.com

*All phone numbers are Bridport (01308) unless
otherwise stated.**The advertising and copy deadline for the
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Bridport says a fond farewell to the Revd Philip Ringer

During the evening of Saturday 21 March, the Revd Philip Ringer died peacefully in his sleep at home in Bridport, following a period of illness that included a couple of stays in hospital. He was 78.

Philip was loved by people in every walk of life across the town. The Revd Cally Burch, Interim Team Rector, says: "Right to the end of his life, Philip was out and about, attending prayers with the ministry team, leading a communion service at Harbour House, visiting the Cornish Bakery and Groves, spending time out in the community he loved and served so faithfully. He will be hugely missed.

"We in the parish are determined to honour Philip's memory by carrying on the events he started and which have become local traditions. I'm thinking particularly of the famous annual Blue Light carol service for the emergency services, which will surely be one of his most important legacies."

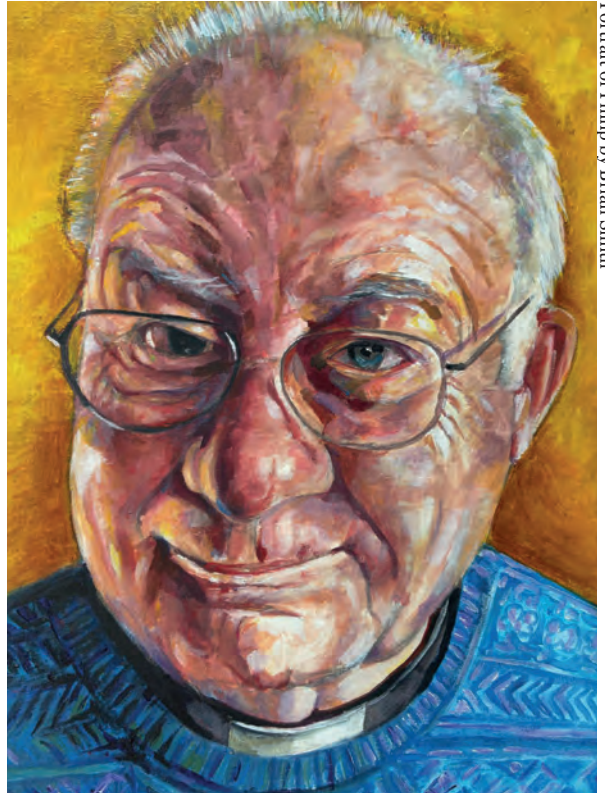
Philip joined the Metropolitan Police in 1966 as a special constable, becoming a regular officer the following year. He progressed through the ranks and retired as a chief inspector in 1995.

Heeding a call to ministry, Philip was ordained in 1991 while working in the police. He continued to serve Dorset Police as divisional chaplain until his death, having also taken on the role of chaplain at Bridport Community Hospital.

Before moving to Bridport in 2008, Philip was rector in the Wriggle Valley Benefice, having previously been vicar of Lynton and Lynmouth in north Devon.

His responsibilities in the Parish of Bridport centred on St John's, West Bay, where he regularly led services. He was also a committee member with West Bay Days, the voluntary group that runs events for the community and visitors, with profits going to local charities. A spokesperson for the organisation says: "Philip was a huge supporter of West Bay Days since the very beginning. He tirelessly brought our lovely community together through thick and thin. Our lives have been enriched by knowing him... [he was] kind, caring, wise, committed, non-judgemental and funny."

Philip is survived by his wife Christine, their son Paul, daughter-in-law Mel and grandchildren Molly and Alex.



Portrait of Philip by Brian Smith

A very special funeral

Philip's funeral took place on the afternoon of Saturday 11 April at St Mary's Bridport. His coffin had lain overnight in his beloved St John's, where there was a requiem communion service on the evening of the previous day.

There wasn't an empty place in the pews during the funeral service, or in the extra chairs that had been put out. Mourners from every aspect of Philip's full life were there to say farewell, and representatives from Dorset Police, the West Bay harbour team and HM Coastguard volunteers carried his coffin.

The St Mary's bellringers rang magnificently for the funeral, as tower captain Bob Hardwick explains: "Philip was our bellringer chaplain and a great supporter. Before he died, he asked that when the time came, we would ring half-muffled bells as he was brought into the church, and fully open, joyful bells as he left on his journey. We were proud to do so."

A message from Philip's family

With grateful hearts – thank you. Christine, Paul and all our family would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone across Bridport, West Bay and the wider church and community who has supported us so generously since Philip's death.

continued on page 7

CHURCH SERVICES

MAY 2026 – see below 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
Sun 3 <i>5th Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC	4pm CC (hall)		10am Parish service of HC		
<i>Mon 4</i>						10am MPR
<i>Tues 5</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Wed 6</i>	2.30pm HC	2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
<i>Thurs 7</i>		10am Eucharist				
Sun 10 <i>6th Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC 11am MP	9.30am Eucharist	11am HC	9.30am MP	11am MPR	11am HC
<i>Mon 11</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thur 14</i> <i>Ascension</i>	7pm HC	10am Eucharist 3.30pm Wild & Messy Church				
Sun 17 <i>7th Sun of Easter</i>	8am BCP HC 10am HC & APCM					
<i>Mon 18</i>						10am MPR
<i>Wed 20</i>		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
<i>Thurs 21</i>		10am Eucharist				
Sun 24 <i>Pentecost</i>	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist		9.30am MP	11am HC	11am MP
<i>Mon 25</i>						10am MPR
<i>Thurs 28</i>		10am Eucharist				
<i>Sat 30</i>						4pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
Sun 31 <i>Trinity Sunday</i>	8am BCP HC		4pm Patronal Choral Evensong	10am Patronal HC (parish service)		
JUNE 2026						
<i>Mon 1</i>						10am MPR
<i>Tues 2</i>				2.30pm HC		
<i>Wed 3</i>	2.30pm HC	2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
<i>Thurs 4</i>		10am Eucharist				
Sun 7 <i>Trinity 1</i>	8am BCP HC	4pm CC (hall)			10am Parish HC service	

HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise / MPR = Morning Prayer / APCM = Annual Parochial Church Meeting *Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina take place on alternate Wednesdays. For more information email carolinewhitaker@hotmail.com

Compline: There is a short service of Compline (night prayer) on Zoom each Tuesday and Thursday at 8pm. The liturgy is taken from the setting in the Book of Common Worship. To join, email nigelg8@gmail.com and ask for the Zoom link.



Musical joy lasts a lifetime

For this month's magazine I went to the Sir John Colfox Academy to interview the head of music, Ali Davies.

I haven't had children, and I abandoned my own plan to become a teacher just a short time into my teaching practice, so I haven't really been inside a school much during my adult life. However, being in the music department at Colfox really took me back.

My mother was a musician and a teacher; she was head of music at the Hertfordshire school I attended until I was 16. A classically trained pianist ("Royal Academy, darling!" she once told a teenage friend of mine, as I cringed), she loved musical theatre and directed several elaborate productions at the school including a show called Rock Nativity by legendary couple Tony Hatch and Jackie Trent.

Her aim in this job was always to make music accessible and fun for all her students. To involve everyone, whether or not they had a natural gift for the subject, and whether or not they were learning an instrument. She knew that music was, for most people, one of the greatest sources of pleasure – of joy – and if germinated properly in childhood, the seed of interest in music would grow into a love to last a lifetime. And this is exactly what Ali Davies is doing at Colfox.

My mum died in 2015. Since then, I've realised that whenever I think of her – which is often – music is the spark. I'll hear something and think, oh, she would love this! She had a great affection for Debussy, and one of my earliest memories is sitting with my toys under our baby grand piano while she played his Children's Corner suite.

I know she'd also have loved the music by Bridport composer Matt Kingston – otherwise known by his professional name, Matthew Coleridge. This month, Matt is conducting a performance of his latest work, *The Breath of Life* (along with a work by fellow local musician Chris Reynolds) by the West Dorset Singers and Broadoak Choir. Turn to page 13 to meet Matt, and page 10 to read about what's happening in the world of Colfox music.

Olivia Daly, Editor



Olivia Daly
Editor

So much of my soul is music

As this issue of The Bridge has a musical theme, I have taken the opportunity to write a personal reflection on the subject for my turn in this column...



Graham Purse

I have sung solos almost all my life. At infant school, the first verse of *Away in a Manger*; at my church choir audition, *There Is a Green Hill Far Away*; my first church solo, the echo from *The Birds' Carol* – "From out of the wood did a cuckoo fly: *Cuckoo!*". After my voice broke and began to settle as a baritone, I was asked to chant the Epistle (the first lesson) every Sunday – and so it goes on until nearly 70 years later. I still intone many parts of our church services. But what is music?

That's difficult to define, but the way I see it is that a human is made up of body (physical), mind (mental) and spirit (divine link or spiritual awareness). Put the three together and you come up with the very essence of a person, their soul. For me, so much of my soul is music. Tunes and words are always playing in my mind. It may be a theme tune from something I've heard on television or a hymn or chant we have recently sung.

So what sort of music do I like? I love the hymns, both old and new, as they can teach us so much about the love of God. I love the psalms, written over 1,000 years and started 3,500 years ago. These days we chant them (simple tunes) and they are very similar, without the poetic side, to modern rap. I guess my favourite non-church music came from the group Queen. What I don't like is when the music drowns out the words.

Music has been part of my whole life. I never consider myself to be very good but I have tried, and will continue to try, to be a better vocalist. Music is part of my soul, and through the hypnotic tunes and words I have felt closer to God, drawn to God. I hope I have drawn others to the love of God as well, as shown to us by Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Graham Purse
Licensed lay minister



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



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**WEST DORSET SINGERS WITH
 THE BROADOAK CHOIR PRESENT:**

Matthew Coleridge
The Breath of Life
& Chris Reynolds
Aldhelm's Bridge



United Church Bridport
7.00pm Saturday 16th May 2026
 Tickets £15 (under 18s free) from
 Bridport Music Centre or www.ticketsource.co.uk/wds

With support from
 Bridport Town Council



www.westdorsetsingers.org Reg charity No. 1125032.

Car Boot Sale
with Plant & Garden Sale
 in St Swithun's Church Grounds
Saturday 9 May
10am - 1pm FREE ADMISSION

Clothes, Bric a Brac,
 Tombola, Jazz Cafe,
 Drinks, Bacon Butties

Produce & (free) Charity Stalls

Seller's Pitch £12
 Book in advance
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Bridport

 Choral - Society
 Established circa 1900


**SPRING
 CHORUS**

Bringing our community together with music

**SAT 9 MAY
 7:30pm**

Bridport United Church - East Street - Bridport
 Tickets £15 (under 16's free) available from
 Bridport TIC (and online), Smith & Smith and on the door.

 **The Living Tree** Retiring collection for
 The Living Tree Cancer Support Group

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27 June – 5 July 2026

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 Not the Rolling Stones
 Nigel Planer *Young Once*
 Chris Chibnall
 John Kampfner *Braver New World*
 Pantaloons al fresco theatre
 Bijou Opera *Le Nozze di Figaro*

Tackling urban poverty in Kenya

Imagine waking every morning knowing that if you don't earn money today, your family will go hungry tonight.

With no formal work opportunities, low pay, high food prices and no social support, it's impossible to plan ahead. This is urban poverty; the precarious, stressful life that most people lead in the densely packed, sprawling 'informal settlement' of Dagoretti in Nairobi, Kenya.

Fridah Moraa is a mother and grandmother who became the sole provider for her family when her husband died last year. Protecting her children from hunger and malnutrition became a constant battle.

Fridah lives with her twin thirteen-year-old sons, Eliud and Abiud, plus her daughter and four-year-old grandson, Quillan, in a rented corrugated metal shelter with no running water and shared toilet facilities. She used to buy vegetables from a wholesaler (a two-hour round trip) six days a week to sell on her market stall. It was a relentless way to make an unreliable income.

But thanks to Christian Aid's local partner, Beacon of Hope, Fridah's life has changed. They are training aspiring urban farmers like Fridah to cultivate their own vegetables in small unused city spaces, using tools and ingenious techniques like vertical, space-saving gardening to make the most of every inch of ground.

She now has a small urban 'farm' hidden at the end of



Fridah with grandson Quillan

David Macharia/Christian Aid

a concrete alley. It's a surprise when she opens the gate to reveal the lush crops that can manage to thrive here. She beams with pride as she says: "When what I have planted grows, that is what makes me happy. When I get money that I have earned, that's what makes me happy." Fridah is now feeding her family with her own nutritious produce and selling it on her nearby market stall to generate income.

Christian Aid Week 2026 is 10–16 May. These Bridport events will support the campaign:

Thursday 7 May, 10am–12 noon: Coffee morning with music at Holy Trinity Bradpole. Cakes, bakes and preserves, bring-and-buy, etc.

Saturday 9 May, 10am–1pm: Table at St Swithun's car boot sale. See advert on opposite page for more info.

Sunday 10 May, 3–4.30pm: 'Scandal & Corruption in Bridport!' talk by Bruce Upton at St Mary's Church House Hall.

Wednesday 13 May: Street collection outside Boots, Bridport United Church and The Electric Palace.

Saturday 16 May, 10.30am–12.30pm: delicious homemade cakes and coffee at St Mary's, South Street.

Friday 22 May, 7–9pm: Fun quiz at St Mary's Church House Hall. Bring your own drinks & nibbles. Tea and cake served in the interval.

A fond farewell to the Revd Philip Ringer *continued*

In recent weeks we have been overwhelmed by the kindness shown to us through letters, cards, messages, prayers, shared memories, and simple conversations stopped for in the street. Many of you have told us stories that made us smile, some that made us laugh out loud, and others that helped us understand afresh just how quietly and faithfully Philip touched so many lives.

Philip loved this town and its people. He believed deeply in meeting people where they were, in churches, at the harbour, at community events, in hospital corridors, and through his work as chaplain with Dorset Police. Long before his ordination, his life in policing shaped his belief in service, presence and care for those carrying heavy responsibility, and he was deeply grateful for the friendships and mutual respect

he found among emergency service colleagues here in West Dorset.

In recent years, many of you will have shared in his nightly 'Tonight in Bridport' Facebook posts. That small, faithful act expressed something central to who he was: a steady commitment to hold this place, and its people, before God, especially in uncertain times.

We are especially thankful to the churches of Bridport and West Bay, to colleagues past and present, and to all who gathered with us at St Mary's or joined from afar. Your support has carried us, and continues to do so.

Philip believed in showing up, in kindness, generosity, and in hope. Thank you for showing us all of those things in abundance.

Christine, Paul and family

News in brief

Swap plants and grow new things

Bridport Food Matters is holding a plant swap on Millennium Green on Saturday 16 May from 10.30am to 3.30pm. Bring along a vegetable, herb or flowering plant to swap, or take away something of your choice for a small donation.

Charity seeks dog-walking volunteers

The Cinnamon Trust is looking for voluntary dog walkers in Bridport. The charity helps elderly and terminally ill pet owners to look after their animals when they can no longer do so. Volunteers become part of a small team assigned to an owner and their dog, walking on a rota basis to suit availability. www.cinnamon.org.uk / appeals@cinnamon.org.uk / 01736 758701 (office hours)

100 at 100: do you know any centenarians?

Dorchester photographer Kevin Wilson is halfway through his project to photograph 100 centenarians across the south of England – and he's looking for more. He says: "All the people I have photographed so far have been delighted – as have their families. There is no cost whatsoever... and I will provide the family with all the photos I take." You can contact Kevin on 07595 347814 / kevin@kevinwilson.co.uk.

Announcement: a temporary change in diocesan leadership

The Diocese of Salisbury has announced that the Rt Revd Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne, is to be acting Bishop of Salisbury for a temporary period.

This follows the news that the Rt Revd Stephen Lake has voluntarily and temporarily stepped back as diocesan bishop while a financial audit of two funds is underway. He has also resigned from his role as Church Commissioner.

A spokesperson from the national Church of England, which is leading the process, confirmed that the financial audit is being undertaken following allegations of potential financial irregularities in relation to two separate funds, both of which relate to the office of the Bishop of Salisbury. These funds are separate from parish share and other funds controlled by the Diocesan Board of Finance.

Churches Together in Bridport & District: what's on



All the churches in Bridport had a very busy time leading up to Easter.

Churches Together in Bridport & District had a wonderful dawn service at West Bay's East Pier on Easter Sunday. The service was well attended, despite the cold wind, and it was poignant that it had been devised by the Revd Philip Ringer, our former chair. His wise counsel will be missed.

The display of the Stations of the Cross paintings in St John's West Bay was thought-provoking for those who visited.

We have two events this month. Tea & Chat is on Sunday 3 May at 2.30pm in Walditch Village Hall (next to the church). This is aimed at anyone who would like some social time with others on a Sunday afternoon. Tea is free of charge. Pray Bridport, a chance for Christians of all denominations to pray together, is at St Mary's, South Street, on Tuesday 12 May at 6pm. All are welcome to both these gatherings.

Heather Purse, Secretary, CTiBD

Bridport Food Bank

Bridport Food Bank, a registered charity, is seeking a volunteer to take on the role of treasurer.



You need not have a financial background, but you should have practical budget management experience.

You will work with a group of trustees and volunteers who are committed to the main purpose of the charity: the prevention and/or relief of poverty in Bridport and the surrounding area of Dorset. The treasurer is normally a trustee of the charity.

For further information, visit our website www.bridportfoodbank.org and email info@bridportfoodbank.org to arrange a visit to meet the team and see Bridport Food Bank at work.



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EST 2025

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Council collaboration with local groups leads to improvements across town



There's plenty happening across Bridport as local groups and council teams work together.

A new community growing space has been created next to St Cecilia's Allotments near St Catherine's Primary School. Working in partnership with Bridport Town Council's grounds team, members of Edible Bridport have established a series of raised beds to grow fresh produce for everyone to enjoy.

The beds will soon be filled using soil from a nearby wildlife pond currently under construction, and topped with nutrient-rich compost before being planted with vegetables. The aim is simple but powerful: to create free, accessible food for the community. This project builds on Edible Bridport's ongoing work across the town, where small growing spaces and planters are gradually appearing in public areas. You can find out more online at bridportfoodmatters.net. The group is always keen to welcome new volunteers and identify further sites: contact ediblebridport@gmail.com.

Another initiative helping to connect people with food growing is the seed library at Bridport Library. Open during library hours, the project encourages residents to grow their own produce and save seeds for future use. By distributing locally adapted seeds, the library supports both sustainability and biodiversity. Many seeds have been generously donated by local growers, including the hard-working volunteers from Bridport Community Allotment (next to the community orchard), which is one of our allotment sites and a much-loved green space in the town. Contact bridportseedlibrary@gmail.com.

Meanwhile, after months of navigating potholes, residents will have noticed a welcome improvement to several key roads. Resurfacing works have been completed on East Street, West Street and St Swithin's Road. Teams from Dorset Council Highways have laid a smoother, quieter surface, greatly improving the route through town. Residents are reminded that they can report any new potholes elsewhere via the council's website dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/report-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement or platforms such as FixMyStreet.

While we are on the subject of West Street, the pollarded trees near the Post Office often prompt questions, particularly as some are cut while others remain untouched. This is part of a careful rotation to support roosting pied wagtail populations. When the



Clare Balchin



Pictured, from top: The Bridport Town Council grounds team have been building raised beds at a new community growing space near St Cecilia's Allotments; the new seed library at Bridport Library is a valuable resource for residents growing food

birds gather in large groups on the unpollarded trees, it's a memorable sight.

Further enhancing local biodiversity, 13 new nest boxes have been installed at the meadows by Asker Meadows Local Nature Reserve Group and Tim from our grounds team. Built by the 1st Charmouth Scout Troop, each box is numbered to help monitor use, supporting ongoing conservation efforts.

Together, these initiatives reflect a town that's working collaboratively to grow food, care for wildlife, and improve everyday life for its residents.

Caroline Pearce, Project Manager, BTC

Exciting times for music at the Sir

After Ali Davies's interview last year for the position of head of music at the Sir John Colfox Academy in Bridport, the head teacher took her into the main lobby to show her one of the school's greatest treasures. And when Ali saw the Steinway concert grand piano tucked away under the stairs, behind a row of display boards, she knew she really wanted the job.

Of course, she was successful, and has been in post since the beginning of this academic year. A career musician and experienced instrumental teacher, Ali is relatively new to mainstream education, and completed her two-year Early Career Teacher induction last July while working at Holyrood Academy in Chard. Then she saw the vacancy at Colfox.

"Head-of-department jobs don't come up very often, and I knew I had to apply," she says. "Being in Bridport is a gift, culturally speaking, and there are so many opportunities for making connections in the community. And the Colfox students are fantastic – there's lots of talent and curiosity here."



Cecilia Davies

Fast forward a couple of terms, and that Steinway has seen some action. Maintained but little used for years, the piano was in good shape to be played, inspiring Ali to launch the Music at Colfox programme of public and in-house performances. Informal monthly concerts by students started in October, giving young people a chance to experience performing and grow in confidence. Five or six students (who may or may not be having instrumental lessons) take part, and the concerts are in the music department after school so parents can come along.

Ali plans to organise one professional, public, ticketed concert each term. In March, pianist Duncan Honeybourne kicked off the series with a recital of music by JS Bach, Brahms and Schumann, plus 20th-century composers Reginald Redman and Francis Pott. "The concert brought in people from the community," says Ali. "We sold 75 tickets, which was a great result as I'd like the department to be largely self-sufficient. Duncan also led an afternoon masterclass for 10 students at a standard of Grade 4 or 5 upwards. He was so encouraging and absolutely brilliant at talking to them."

Towards the end of last term, students from Years 7 to 13 put on their spring concert, with a huge range of music from Bach, Vivaldi and Debussy to Queen, Jessie J and Madness, and many in between. The students sang, played piano, drums, guitar and hand bells, and came together in bands and a 15-piece orchestra. There was standing room only in the packed hall, and the audience of family, friends and supporters was spellbound.

Ali is determined to nurture a love of all kinds of music in her students. She took 16 of them to hear the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra playing a programme of film music, and took a group of GCSE students to meet film composer David Arnold during



Words by Olivia Daly

Pictured: professional pianist Duncan Honeybourne with Colfox student Beatrix – and the school's fabulous Steinway piano – after Duncan's recital in March

John Colfox Academy in Bridport

the Bridport Film Festival's Meet the Makers series in April. She has arranged a 20% Colfox discount at Bridport Music Shop, and adds house points to each student's 'music merit card' every time they practise at school.

Her approach also includes teaching students to read musical notation. "We start in Year 7, writing in note names and getting students to work them out," she says. "The 'dots' are code, and the students learn coding in computing, so why not music? Pushing them to try, to persevere, develops a lifelong skill, particularly in a world where so much is instant – but it has to be a practical experience, not just note bashing. We're not trying to make hundreds of professional musicians, we just want them to love music, and to be able to make a bit for themselves. Having the basics can open doors to further study for some, and means they can be part of a musical community wherever they end up."

Alongside class teaching, instrumental lessons are the other lynchpin of music education, and Colfox has a growing team of peripatetic (visiting) teachers covering a range of instruments. Ali would like to encourage more students to take up brass and woodwind instruments, and is holding taster sessions. "We need these instruments to make an orchestra! Our orchestra started as a band, but I've renamed it – we have strings, drums, saxophones and one clarinet, but we'd love to have more."

With an eye to the future, the department is working to set up an after-school music club, where all local primary-age children (including those who are home



Pictured: the school orchestra (top), Year 9 band, and solo guitarist Thomas performing at the spring concert

educated) will be able to come for instrumental coaching. "We'd like to get four or five teachers along to each session," says Ali. "It'll be a useful stepping stone between primary and senior school, and the kids will find out what they can expect here at Colfox. I'd also love to start visiting local primary schools to talk about our music offer."

With regular reports in the media about the neglect of music education – despite the importance of music itself to nearly everyone in our society – it's reassuring and exciting to learn that our local secondary school is doing



such great things to promote the subject. "The head is super-supportive of what we're trying to do," says Ali, "and I have fabulous colleagues both on the staff and in our peripatetic team. But of course it's the students who are most important; I just want them to love music as much as I do."

www.colfox.org/music

Dorset Art Weeks is now an annual event

Dorset Art Weeks (DAW) is a two-week event celebrating contemporary visual arts and crafts, inviting the public to explore artists' studios, workshops, group shows and curated exhibitions across the county. This year's event runs from Saturday 23 May to Sunday 7 June.

Since its inception in 1992, DAW has run as a biennial event. However, after careful consideration, organisers Dorset Visual Arts (DVA) have announced that it will now take place every year.

Paul Newman, DVA's creative director, says: "DAW will be an important part of a developing programme of opportunities, support and networking for Dorset creatives. Along with our DVAtions programme, we're pleased to provide an increasingly diverse and ambitious range of initiatives for artists and makers across the county."

Bridport artists taking part in DAW 2026 include Angie Porter, whose vivid, Matisse-like paintings (*example pictured right*) celebrate colour and pattern in



Angie Porter

landscapes and still life. She will be painting live in her South Street studio.

Franny Owens is one of several artists opening their studios in St Michael's Trading Estate. Her resonant, tactile ceramics are thrown in stoneware and porcelain.

From her studio on St Andrews Road, Susan Clarke works in collage and printmaking. She uses colours, lines, shapes and marks from the landscape, reassembled as collaged panels, and also makes three-dimensional collage on paper houses and bottles.

Amanda Wallwork, Kit Benwell, Jon Adam and Richard Wilson work at the Old Timberyard Studios

in West Bay, producing paintings, installations, ceramics and sculpture.

There are many other artists opening their doors around Bridport and further afield. For full details, and everyone's opening days and hours, visit dorsetartweeks.co.uk/venues or pick up a brochure at the Tourist Information Centre, Bridport Arts Centre, The Book Shop or Groves.

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Matt Kingston's unusual route to the top of the musical tree



Musician Matt Kingston – also known by his professional name, Matthew Coleridge – was involved with Bridport choirs long before he became a leading light in the world of contemporary choral composition.

His new album, *The Breath of Life*, was released a few weeks ago and two local choirs will be performing its major work in a concert this month under Matt's direction.

We caught up with Matt at his home on the Denhay Estate near Bridport...

The Bridge: Matt, congratulations on your new album! You're becoming a familiar name in musical circles and your Requiem appears in Classic FM's Hall of Fame again this year. How did you get started in composition?

Matt Kingston: I didn't come through the traditional route for professional musicians of a degree course, training at a conservatoire, or through the cathedral system. My parents weren't musical, although my grandparents on my mum's side were, and my professional name comes from my grandfather, Eric Coleridge, who was a composer, violinist, organist and music teacher. My parents encouraged me and my siblings to play music – we all played instruments, it was part of normal life. I took up the trumpet and the piano when I was about seven, and started singing in a church choir near home in Cheltenham.

I wrote a few pieces when I



Mike Cooper

was young, then in my 20s I got into popular music and worked as an arranger. In my early 30s I moved to West Dorset, and met my wife, Ellen, when she was selling Denhay cheese at the farmers' market in Bridport. She sang in the Broadoak Choir, so I joined too; they sang (and still sing) a lot of music composed by Chris Reynolds, their musical director at the time, and this encouraged me to give it another go.

TB: So how did your Requiem come into being?

MK: Our first child, Sebastian, was born in 2014 and I suddenly felt strongly that I wanted to start composing more seriously. The Requiem started to come together very quickly, and I set myself a deadline by booking St Mary's Church in Bridport for the first performance in October 2015. That concert was a huge success, and people started asking for a recording of the work – there wasn't one, so I started crowdfunding to get a professional choir to record it.

I've also raised money by leading

'come and sing' workshops where we rehearse the Requiem for a day and finish with a performance. I think I must have conducted it over 40 times now, and it's always a privilege to do so.

TB: So you raised enough money for the professional recording?

MK: Yes – I recorded it in 2016 with a group called RSVP Voices with just an organ for accompaniment, and then again in 2023, sung by the Choir of Royal Holloway with the Southern Sinfonia chamber orchestra. Classic FM made it their album of the week, which certainly helped its success.

TB: So how does your new album, *The Breath of Life*, differ? Have you felt your composition style evolving?

MK: The Requiem is explicitly Christian and uses a traditional, fixed series of Latin texts. *Breath of Life* is more varied – some of the texts are Christian, but others are more general, touching on 'the divine'. I started by setting a psalm and a hymn, then stumbled across other texts that expressed a different spirituality and which I found very powerful.

I've set words by the 18th-century English poet Christopher Smart; Nikos Kazantzakis and Rabindranath Tagore; Kahlil Gibran, Albert Einstein and John Muir. Moving away from the traditional Anglican doctrine means the music speaks to more people, which can make it more



An unusual route to the top of the tree continued

meaningful. And people with no experience of choral music can relate to it.

The order of movements is largely determined by pacing – after a big energetic peak, the next movement is still, soft and gentle, drawing listeners into stillness so they can think about the beauty of the words.

As well as the main cantata on *The Breath of Life*, the album also includes *Songs of Light*, three pieces using words by Rumi, Tagore and Muir. Another local choir, Cantamus, sang these at their spring concerts recently.

TB: And now 'your' choir is performing *The Breath of Life* right here in Bridport...

MK: Yes! I've been the musical director of the West Dorset Singers since 2011 (they were called the New Elizabethan Singers until three years ago) and they agreed to sing *The Breath of Life* before it was even finished. For the concert we're joined by the Broadoak Choir and we've paired my work with Aldhelm's *Bridge* by Chris

Matthew Coleridge
The Breath of Life



Reynolds; they make a good contrast and complement each other well. The programme has a blend of Christian and spiritual messages, with an appreciation of the natural world, too.

TB: Who are your musical influences?

MK: Sometimes I have to ignore outside influence, to try and be myself when I'm composing. I often find myself straying towards the 'colour palette' that American composers such as Eric Whitacre and Morten Lauridsen use, and I have to steer myself away and

make my own path. I love Benjamin Britten's music and the way he structures it; his use of rhythm in his vocal and choral music is extraordinary. I've learnt mostly by osmosis, by absorbing musical ideas from British composers of the 20th century, a lot of early and medieval music, right through to bands such as Pink Floyd, Queen and Radiohead, but always turning the music into something that sounds like my voice.

TB: You and Ellen now have two children. Are they musical?

MK: Sebastian is 12 now and he'll be singing alto in *The Breath of Life* at our concert this month. His sister Bea, who's 10, plays the violin and writes music. They both appreciate all kinds of music – they get it!

The concert by the West Dorset Singers and the Broadoak Choir is at 7pm on Saturday 16 May at Bridport United Church. See the advert on page 6 for ticket information.
www.matthewcoleridge.com

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Bridport Stage Company

A diverse, inclusive group preparing for their next production

It is 10 years since the indomitable Valerie Goodwin started the Bridport Stage Company.

This year, the dynamic director, playwright and force of nature returns to her Shakespearean roots with a new production, *Juliet & Her Romeo*, which the group will perform at the end of May at Bridport Town Hall, with all proceeds going to Samaritans.

I caught up with Valerie for coffee and cake a few weeks ago – a particularly propitious time as her play *The Magdalen Whitewash* was being performed in Gravesend to great acclaim. It was lovely to talk about all things theatre and Valerie's love of Shakespeare. She has always loved 'The Bard' and reinforced this with an MA at Exeter University; in conversation, his words trip naturally off her

tongue, and she occasionally bursts into song.

The Bridport Stage Company's remarkable group of actors is diverse and inclusive, from seasoned performers to newbies, from school pupils to some who have seen a few more winters. What unites them is a shared love of performing and a profound respect for Valerie, who holds the production and each of the actors in her heart.

This loose group assembles itself in a curious synchronicity, and idiosyncrasies and character are allowed full rein. At the centre of the process is a deliberate 'handmade and found' approach to costuming and staging – which, of course, means more money for

Samaritans. As Valerie says, "I like to create much from little."

Valerie herself gives much to the community of Bridport, working in Oxfam and also the Community Shed. She is great company and has that lovely and unusual quality of not judging others. Everyone is welcome and feels valued. Having seen two previous productions, I can attest to the feel-good energy generated and the sheer fun.

This production, an hour in length, is a great introduction to Shakespeare. It is an abridged, gender-blind production with modern songs; the beauty of the verse is paramount. Having attended many rehearsals and written and directed many school plays, I can say the production promises to be something special with some truly outstanding performances. And unlike in the West End, you may find yourself afterwards rubbing shoulders with one of the stars in *The Ropemakers* or while sipping a beverage in Coffee 1.

The capacity at the Town Hall is around 100 people, so I expect this play to be the hottest ticket in town in May. Best get in early.

David Brazier

Juliet & Her Romeo is on Thursday 28 and Friday 29 May at 7pm at Bridport Town Hall.

Tickets are £10 from Bridport Tourist Information Centre by phone (01308 424901) online at www.bridportandwestbay.co.uk/tickets or in person at the TIC in Bucky Doo Square 10am–3pm.

Pictured: the company in rehearsal for *Juliet & Her Romeo* (left); director Valerie Goodwin (top)



ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967

Director of music – Tim Linsley

07830 308701

Tower captain – Bob Hardwick

07977 989263

Welcoming our high flyers back to Bridport

The St Mary's churchyard community gardening group are looking forward to warmer days – and hopefully in May hearing the high-pitched screaming of our swifts returning.

As you probably know, Bridport is a Swift Town and last year many people got involved in events such as the Swift Pint Surveys, which aimed to collect more accurate data about Bridport's swift population (participants gathered in the Tiger Inn to learn about the survey process, hence the name!). As a species, swifts are on the Red List of birds of highest concern and they need our help.

So this year in St Mary's churchyard we are creating a small swift garden with insect-rich planting, a shallow water area and an information board for visitors and locals. We are also planning to erect swift boxes (similar to those at St Swithun's Church, pictured) to encourage nesting, and we hope this will help to increase numbers.

If you'd like to support this project or can donate plants or funding for swift boxes, please contact me on 07568 461024.

Jane Trower

There's more information about Bridport's Swift Town initiative at www.commonground.org.uk/swift-towns

Bridport Town Council CENTRAL WARD

Contact 01308 456722

enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk

A busy month ahead for Bridport

Don't forget, it's Bridport Charter Fair on Saturday 16 May from 9.30am to 3pm in Bucky Doo Square, Downes Street and Mountfield. There will be stalls, entertainment, activities and refreshments – fun for all the family!



Pictured: the swift garden at St Mary's will include more insect-rich planting; there are plans to install swift boxes like these at St Swithun's; a common swift (*Apus apus*)

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



May also sees the Mayor Making ceremony, a formal annual event at which the town council officially confirms its election of a new mayor from among its councillors. It's a traditional and ceremonial occasion, usually held at the Town Hall; it marks the start of the mayor's year in office and is also a chance for councillors, officers, community groups and invited guests to gather, reflect on the past year and look ahead. The new mayor usually also outlines their vision for the town and reveals which charity they have chosen to support.

The ceremony includes the swearing-in of the new deputy mayor and the leader of the council as well as the mayor.



Pictured: Last year’s Mayor Making ceremony, with current mayor Cllr Anne Rickard in the centre

Mayors over the last decade have included Cllrs Dave Bolwell, Ian Bark, Barry Irvine and Sandra Brown. The current mayor, until the Mayor Making ceremony, is Cllr Anne Rickard, whose charitable focus for her year in office has been ASCape. This charity provides supportive socialisation for autistic and/or socially

anxious children and young people. They also promote peer support for parents and carers by creating a safe non-judgmental environment, encouraging the sharing of ideas, resources and support.

The mayor serves as the town’s representative at civic, social and ceremonial engagements, as well as delivering awards at local events, often wearing the chains of office. They also act as a non-party-political voice engaging with the community.

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

What better way is there to start the merry month of May than by meeting your friends at a lively coffee morning on Saturday 2 May in Holy Trinity Church, 10am until 12 noon. These popular events are held on the first Saturday of every month and are a great way of meeting people. There are always lovely homemade cakes and pastries for sale, plus books and a raffle. The proceeds go towards the upkeep of our village church, which costs quite a considerable amount each month, so many thanks to everyone who contributes.

The pattern of services in the Parish of Bridport is changing from May. The first Sunday in the month will still be a parish service at one of the six churches. Here at Holy Trinity there will be a communion service every month, and Morning Praise and Matins will alternate, but there will no longer be a service every week in Bothenhampton. However, it was decided last year that when there was a fifth Sunday in the month there would be a choral Evensong at Holy Trinity, and that remains the case.

Trinity Sunday this year falls on 31 May, which is a fifth Sunday, so at Holy Trinity we shall be celebrating our patronal day with choral Evensong at 4pm, and everyone is welcome. Evensong is a favourite service for



Pictured: Pat Brody’s painting ‘Turkey Oak and Me’

many people and is broadcast weekly on BBC Radio 3.

The trees are now well into the spring season and full of new growth, giving people a lot of pleasure, and none more so than the majestic Turkey oak, standing next to the church. This tree has inspired a Bothenhampton resident living close by to use her creative talents, →

as shown in the painting on the previous page and in the poem on the right.

Barbara Ffooks

FILM NIGHT in Bothenhampton Village Hall

Saturday 30 May

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: lcnc2413@outlook.com

ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor –

James Craddock 458725

walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com

Verger – **Pat Stapleton 456421**

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

A meaningful Easter Day service

Many Walditch villagers came along to the Easter Sunday Holy Communion service, which was led by the Revd Ann Ayling.

Ann gave a moving sermon, mentioning her former home in Tooting, south London. Despite the urban location, her garden there was full of birds, flowers, shrubs and trees, including a cherry tree and an old walnut tree. Even though it still produced walnuts, which the squirrels much enjoyed, this tree was rotten and was eventually cut down.

From the portion of walnut wood that was still sound, a friend carved a small round bowl, which Ann went on to treasure for many years. This, she said, was an example of resurrection using wood.

She also referred to the resurrection poem 'Food for Risen Bodies' by Michael Symmons Roberts, who has been described as a religious poet in a secular age. The poem is based on John 21:1-14.

Ann said the poem portrayed a beautiful reunion between Jesus and his disciples after his resurrection. The disciples were bewildered, disorientated and lost in a hostile world, and were returning from what had been a fruitless fishing expedition. Jesus appeared, having prepared a barbecue on the beach with fresh, delicious fish. The narrative is one of hope, redemption and the power of Jesus to transform lives; Jesus was there to bring life, joy and resurrection.

James Craddock

The Churchyard Turkey Oak and Me

By Pat Brody, a Bothenhampton resident for 51 years

I am me
I am blessed, sheltered, fed and watered

I am tree
I shelter, shade, thrive and grow

I dwell here
But horror streams into my mind from the riven world
I scream into the void

I stand fast
I don my summer veil of green and nurture the fungi at my roots
I reach out through the wood wide web

I sink into the folds of your fissured bark

I arch over and nourish you

We stand tall together
Reach out to foster man and tree

Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*)
Height 17.5m, trunk circumference 2.95m

Thelma's hymn notes

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

This hymn was sung at the beginning of every Easter Sunday service when I was a child in our village choir. It is probably the most popular of all Easter hymns.

Composed in Latin during the 14th century in Bohemia as an Easter hymn, it was translated into English in 1708 by John Baptist Walsh. Charles Wesley added a fourth verse in in 1740.

It is sung to the tune Llanfair, composed by the bilingual Welshman Robert Williams from Anglesey.

Thelma Pulman

Organist at St Mary's Walditch



This was the Revd Ann Ayling's last Easter service, as she is retiring in June. We will have coverage of her retirement in a later issue.

Bridport Town Council BOTHENHAMPTON & WALDITCH WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

The most recent Bothenhampton & Walditch ward meeting was due to take place in April, after this issue of *The Bridge* went to press. Updates from the meeting are available on the Bridport Town Council website, the ward's Facebook page, and noticeboards at the Crown Roundabout, Pasture Way, Bothenhampton Village Hall, Jellyfields, Valley View and Walditch Main Street.

One update that was available before the meeting concerns the 20mph application for Bothenhampton & Walditch. Dorset Council has confirmed that the application, which is included in the Bridport scheme covering multiple ward areas, has been approved by the 20mph panel and alongside several other schemes will now proceed to Stage 2: Formal Public Consultation. The proposal will be advertised in the local press and online, followed by a 21-day period for residents to comment, support or object. Dorset Council will then review all responses, consider formal objections and re-advertise the Traffic Regulation Order if changes are made. It will then either decide not to proceed with the proposal or move to Stage 3: Making the Order if there are no objections or if the proposal continues as advertised. Stage 3 would involve installing the required signage and road markings and advertising the 'made public' notice. Progress from Stage 2 to Stage 3 would probably take at least 12 months.

Dorset Council is currently coordinating 16 other speed limit schemes that are scheduled for installation over the coming months. Delivering these schemes



Pictured: the Platinum Jubilee tree on Valley View was damaged in a storm last September but is now recovering (right) after expert help and pruning

will require considerable work and organisation across several teams. Given the scale of work involved, Dorset Council has said that the schemes approved for public consultation will probably need to be progressed in manageable phases although as promptly as possible. We will provide further updates as available on the formal public consultation phase for Bothenhampton & Walditch as part of the Bridport scheme.

With spring well under way, it's encouraging to see new growth on the Platinum Jubilee *Malus 'Evereste'* tree on Valley View after storm damage last September. Although the tree lost its top half when the trunk snapped, with expert help and drastic pruning in January – the aim being to rebuild the tree, almost from scratch with selected new shoots – we all hope the tree will fully recover and flourish.

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

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)



Mothering Sunday

The service on 15 March was led by the Revd Cally Burch, who invited everyone to come forward and attach a flower to the wiring of a small cross (pictured) as a tribute to their mothers. Small posies, made by members of the Mothers' Union, were distributed to the congregation. →

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole continued...

Stained glass window

The window at the back of the church, which was severely damaged by a storm several years ago and was temporarily repaired, has been completely redesigned and remade incorporating the remains of the old window. Dan Humphries, a renowned stained glass glazier, and members of his team reinstalled the window at the end of March.

The window is dedicated to the memory of the late Joyce Pitcher, who lived in Bradpole all her life and whose legacy financed the work. The colours are vibrant and it is well worth a visit!

Eco Church

Holy Trinity has received an Eco Church Silver Award from A Rocha UK. Qualification for the award involved an assessment of five key areas of church life: worship and teaching; buildings and energy; land and nature; community and global engagement; and lifestyle.

Having progressed from the Bronze standard, the church and congregation have shown their commitment to “tread lightly” where we go and “leave no trace”, aligning with the stated aims of the Eco Church scheme.

Details of the award system, which encourages churches to take “practical action on caring for God’s earth”, are online at www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk.



Christian Aid coffee morning

Come and join us for a nice social morning while helping the mothers of Nairobi, Kenya, whose intense urban poverty is robbing them of the ability to protect their children from hunger. With your help they can farm vegetables in a small city plot, growing food and nurturing hope.

There will be a bring-and-buy stall, home preserves, book stall, cakes and bakes, and a raffle. Do come along on Thursday 7 May from 10am to 12 noon – and early visitors will hear our own parish duo of Sue Smith on piano and Dan Shackell on sax playing their jazzy music.



Fashion Show

The Friends of Holy Trinity are staging a fashion show in the church at 7pm on Friday 15 May. Proceeds of the show will be used to maintain the church building. See the advert above for more information.

Fashion Show

Friday 15 May at 7pm

(doors open 6.30pm)

Holy Trinity Bradpole

Theresa Weller opens the door to a wardrobe full of the styles and flair of the elegant Edwardian era, the ‘flappers’ of the Roaring 20s, and the Hollywood glamour of the 30s. Authentic costumes modelled live and accompanied by music of the times.



Drinks and nibbles after the show (by donation) and a raffle.

Tickets £15

from 01308 420716

or thefriendshb@gmail.com

*Numbers limited –
booking essential*

**Proceeds to The Friends
of Holy Trinity**

The Friends of Holy Trinity

A date for your diary – the Friends’ AGM will be on Thursday 18 June at 6pm in the church. After the usual appointment of office bearers and committee, there will be refreshments and a time for socialising. The meeting will be open to all.

Village lunch club

The next lunch at the Haddon House Hotel will be on Tuesday 12 May at 12.30pm. If you haven’t already booked, please give Jean Hutchings a ring on 427697. There is plenty of parking space in the hotel grounds.

Other groups

The Mothers’ Union will meet at 2.30pm on Tuesday 19 May. The Knitting Group will meet on Thursdays 7 and 21 May. 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. This term’s last session will be on 20 May and the summer term will run from 3 June to 22 July.

Bradpole Forster Village Hall

The main hall 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 Wednesdays 6 and 27 and Saturday 16 May.

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...

Well, the sun has been shining, the spring flowers are still blooming and the pleasant temperatures have been making us all feel a little brighter.

Your ward councillors have been dealing with various issues in the ward as well as sitting on their committees on Bridport Town Council.

At the time of going to press, we are still awaiting the outcome of the investigation by Dorset Council (DC) into the request for a more substantial vehicle barrier along St Andrews Road.



Pictured: spring flowers in Railway Crossing Gardens

I have, however, received an update from DC on the 20mph speed applications for Bradpole Village and Jessopp Avenue. The applications have been assessed and can progress to Stage 2: Public Consultation. During this stage, DC will advertise the proposal in the local press and on their website. There is a 21-day period during which people can object, support or comment. We are one step forward but still have a way to go and there's plenty of time for you to express your views.

Last month I explained the meaning of a Section 106 agreement, and another abbreviation you may hear at meetings is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) agreement. CIL is a planning charge used by local authorities to fund infrastructure such as schools and transport improvements that are deemed necessary to support new development. It is a monetary contribution based on the size of the new building work.

Bridport's Mass Litter Pick will be held on Sunday 17 May, and start locations will be advertised on noticeboards and social media.

Our next ward meeting will be in June – date and location to be confirmed.

You can keep up to date with all the latest ward news on our Facebook page, Bradpole Ward Matters. Please email me at bradpole.ward@bridport-tc.gov.uk if you want to get in touch about anything in the ward.

Sandy Goldsmith

ST SWITHUN'S Allington

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

Distribution – Kevin Payne

07976 534517

payne.kevin6@gmail.com

Verger – Graham Williams

07969 826430

grahamwilliams386@gmail.com

Easter traditions at St Swithun's

The Altar of Repose: Easter holds a special place in the church calendar at St Swithun's, representing a time of hope, reflection and renewal. Continuing a much-loved tradition, Jo George and her helpers decorated the church beautifully for the season. They adorned the Altar of Repose with candles and with vases large and small, brimming with daffodils, bluebells and greenery. The Blessed Sacrament in the centre created a focal point for the congregation.

During the Maundy Thursday service, members of the congregation took part in a vigil at the Altar of →



ST SWITHUN'S Allington continued...

Rest, marking this solemn and meaningful occasion.

The Easter Garden: On Holy Saturday morning, the Altar of Repose was transformed into the Garden of Gethsemane, with a depiction of Jesus standing by the empty tomb. Jo George thoughtfully put this display together, too, continuing a tradition she has upheld for many years. The Easter Garden at St Swithun's is a sight to behold, offering a tranquil and inspiring space for reflection.

Visitors are encouraged to come and admire the beautiful arrangements, and we hope the photos on this page capture the essence of the beauty that filled our church this Easter.

Rose Harvey

A musical treat

In early March we were treated to a fabulous concert of piano and cello music from two accomplished local



Pictured: this year's Altar of Repose (left) and Easter Garden on display at St Swithun's

musicians, James Olsen on cello and Nicholas Brown on piano (*pictured below with the audience*). Their programme included works by Beethoven, Brahms and Scriabin, as well as less familiar pieces from Ernest Bloch's suite *From Jewish Life*. It was rounded off with joyous, well-known music by Elgar and Saint-Saens.

Mandi Sturrock



Bridport Town Council
WEST & ALLINGTON WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

May comes and with it comes the Allington Hillbillies and their amazing Country Fair on Saturday 2 May from 10am to 6pm. This free, family-friendly event is being held on the Hospital Lane side of Allington Hill. Highlights include a variety of country craft stalls, speakers tent, live music, refreshments including a bar, horse logging demonstration and guided walks. Please note there is no onsite parking.

Before the fair there will be a community evening event of music, food and entertainment on Friday 1 May on the hill. Dogs are allowed to both events on short leads and must be kept under control.

To fund both these events, the Hillbillies have been putting on a variety of workshops, exhibitions, talks and raffles. The volunteers have worked hard to ensuring the success of the celebrations, so please do come along and show your support.

I'd like to remind everyone about some of the new dog rules that came into effect on 18 March and which are pertinent to this area. Tougher penalties and new police powers are in force to protect farm animals and support rural communities. It will now be an offence if a dog attacks livestock; chases, stalks or frightens livestock; or causes stress, injury, death, miscarriage or loss of produce. A dog does not need to touch an animal

for an offence to occur. The law covers a wide range of livestock including sheep, cattle, goats, pigs, horses, poultry, alpacas and llamas.

These protections apply on farmland and on public footpaths or roads (public rights of way) where livestock are present. As a dog owner, you need to ensure you keep dogs under close control near livestock and use a lead in fields with animals. Remember: it's your dog, your responsibility.

Our next ward meeting is in June. The date will be advertised on our Facebook page, noticeboards and the town council website.

Amy Stephenson

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.

I have two lasting memories of the late Revd Philip Ringer. The first is of him standing outside on Sunday mornings before conducting the service, engaging with everyone; a lovely smiling face. And every year, after the West Bay Christmas tree was lit, it was the tradition to sing The Twelve Days of Christmas. Philip would divide up the crowd accordingly, and it became very competitive, every section trying to outdo the others. We will all miss him.

West Bay WI

The regular Knit & Natter session is on Wednesday 6 May, 10am–12 noon. At the meeting on Wednesday 12 May, 2.30–4.30pm, Story Traders will be sharing their stories with us.



Kiosks at West Bay



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

The kiosks in West Bay (pictured left) are a focal point for everyone: tourists, locals and of course the bikers. It's amazing just how popular they are. They first appeared in the 1950s selling teas, coffees, ice cream, drinks and sweets before expanding to include fish and chips. One can only imagine how pleased the seagulls were with this addition! I also spotted this lovely postbox topper (pictured below) on display over Easter.



The annual World Pilot Gig Championship take place at the beginning of May on the Isles of Scilly, and Bridport Gig Club will be sending a number of teams together with two of their gigs. It must be a logistical nightmare as the only means of getting there is on the →

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*



Eastertide and gardening: working in parallel

May is a time when the Eastertide message can be compared to the preparation of our beautiful gardens.

There is a profound, almost audible, sigh of relief that sweeps across the landscape in April. Winter, with its long, grey silence, finally relinquishes its grip, and the earth breaks into a spontaneous chorus of green.

It is no coincidence that the Christian season of Eastertide – 50 days of celebrating new life, extending from Easter Sunday to Pentecost – falls precisely at the time when nature itself seems to be rising from the dead. For the spiritual gardener, Eastertide is the ultimate season of hope, a time when the promises of faith are manifested in the soil.

The resurrection in the soil

In Holy Week, we walk through the dark, quiet tomb of Lent. But as the Sunday sun rises, we see the true ‘resurrection garden’. The gardener knows that a seed must appear to die, buried in the dark, cold earth, before it can burst forth into new, vibrant life.

When we see daffodils pushing through the last of the frost, or the first green shoots emerging from barren branches, we are witnessing the same power that rolled away the stone. It is a reminder that the dark, cold nights of life are not the final chapter.

The work of Eastertide: tending and turning

Just as Easter is a 50-day season of joy rather than a single day, gardening at this time is about active, joyful tending. It is the time for a spring clean: re-potting, weeding and turning over the soil, preparing the heart for new growth.

It is a time to sow seeds – hardy annuals like marigolds or sweet peas, which fill the garden with colour. It is the spiritual equivalent of planting new intentions: hope, patience, and kindness.

A season of ‘greening grace’

Eastertide is often described as a time of greening grace. It is a gentle, gradual unfolding, reminding

us that renewal rarely happens all at once.

Patience: We learn that, just as we cannot force a seed to sprout, we cannot force our own spiritual growth. We plant, we water, and we trust.

Joyful stewardship: The garden is not just a place of labour but a place of rest and wonder. It is a place to bask in the glory of the resurrection, appreciating the buzzing of bees and the scent of newly mown grass.

Lessons from the master gardener

In the garden, we learn that death is merely a preparation for a fuller life. The old, dead growth must be pruned away so that new life can thrive.

This Eastertide, as the world turns green, may we all find a bit of that ‘resurrection dirt’ under our fingernails. Whether you are tending a vast landscape or a single windowsill pot, take a moment to pause. Witness the transformation, smell the air, and join the chorus of the earth as it sings its quiet, joyful Alleluia.

Amen

Richard Plummer

May services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 3	10.30am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
		The Revd Peter Clark
	4pm	Soul Space
Sunday 10	10.30am	Morning Worship
		The Revd Jane Wilson
Sunday 17	10.30am	Morning Worship
		The Revd John Yarrien
Sunday 24	10.30am	Pentecost Sunday
		Morning Worship
		The Revd J Wilson
Sunday 31	10.30am	Morning Worship
		C Smith

Regular events

Mondays	9.30–11am	Little Lambs toddlers group (term time only)
Wednesdays	9.30–10am	Prayer meeting in church →

Bridport UNITED CHURCH continued...

Wednesdays	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)

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.



**St MARY & St CATHERINE
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colin.groombridge@predtr.org.uk
Secretary – Faith Leborgne
bridport@predtr.org.uk
Phone 07544 595633

Cutting bread with a butter knife

Recently we were given a pickle fork, the perfect gadget for removing pickled onions or other such things from a jar without making the process feel like some sort of arcade game! I was taken back to my granny’s kitchen drawer, which held a rich array of different utensils. She had the correct knife, fork and spoon for every occasion.

Sunday tea was the opportunity for many utensils to be on the table at the same time. Jam spoons, butter knives, dessert forks, cheese and apple knives were just a small sample of the many and varied pieces of cutlery that she owned and would regularly use.

Granny knew the pleasure in making everyone feel special and well catered for. She also knew that having the right cutlery could make life so much easier. Each object had a different function – but when working together they achieved the perfect meal!

In 1 Corinthians 12 we hear that the body is made up of many parts, each with their own specific functions. We need all these parts. They all have a function, just like the utensils in Granny’s drawer. As church and society we would do well to remember that we to have our own specific gifts and talents; no part is self sufficient or useless. In a time when the world seems keen for us all to be the same and often rejects diversity, may we always accept and love every human being for who they are, with their own specific gifts. And remember – you will always struggle to cut bread with a butter knife!

Deacon Mark Brown



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

For updates about Sunday and weekday Mass, see the weekly newsletter on 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.

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.



BRIDPORT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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

The Community Kitchen at the Beacon Church is open Wednesday and Friday every week from 10.30am to 2pm. Please feel free to drop in for a chat and a meal.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Community Kitchen, please email us as above. Or you can help financially: a monthly donation is particularly useful as it helps us to budget, but we hugely appreciate any donations, no matter how small. Our bank details are as follows:
 Sort code: 08-92-99 / account number: 65773479
 Reference: Kitchen

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.



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

The Religious Society of Friends

Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do not be persuaded into buying

what you do not need or cannot afford. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?"

Of the challenges found in the Advices and Queries, number 41 is perhaps the one that speaks to our day and age more than any other in the widest possible sense. As everyday life seems to get more complicated, and the



QUAKER Meeting continued...

interrelatedness of all we do becomes more worldwide, trying to judge the results of our actions becomes harder. The Quaker way of quiet worship gives us the time to look at our own lives and our community helps to put that life into context. What we can't do alone. We can do together.

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: www.thebridgemagazine.org/get-involved

In each issue we will feature one or two organisations in more detail, so please contact the editor (email editor@thebridgemagazine.org) if you would like to appear.

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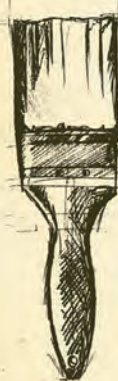
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