the Bridge

November 2026

A community magazine for Bridport
supported by churches in the town



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Inside the magazine:

- *How to prepare for flooding this winter*
- *December's Bridge magazine will be the last*
- *Lose – or find – yourself in a book this month*
- *We meet Canon Becky Roberts, new Team Rector*

THE PARISH OF BRIDPORT

Team Rector
The Revd Canon Becky Roberts
rector@parishofbridport.org / 07768 647772

Pioneer Priest & Team Vicar
The Revd Cally Burch Day off Friday
cally@parishofbridport.org / 07746 561144

Associate Priest
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 Margaret Preuss-Higham
revmph@gmail.com / 07817 161687

Licensed lay ministers
Graham Purse 423220 Peter Wright 456967

Lay pastoral assistants
Diana 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

Team Administrator Dianne Sinclair
admin@parishofbridport.org / 424747
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Secretary to the PCC *pcc@parishofbridport.org*

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

Churchwardens
cwteam@parishofbridport.org

HALL BOOKINGS

St Swithun's Church Hall Anne Ansell
ssvbookings@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
Please visit *hallbookingonline.com/bridportuc*
or email *lettingsbuc@gmail.com*

Bridport Food Bank
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@prcdtr.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 & copy deadline for the Dec 2026 / Jan 2027 issue is 5pm on Mon 9 November

The Bridge Editor & production: Olivia Daly 07710 805029 *editor@thebridgemagazine.org*
Advertising: Chris Senior (Mrs) 427451 *advertising@thebridgemagazine.org*

Advertising rates appear at *www.thebridgemagazine.org/advertising*. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the editor. Otherwise send copy to parish editors (details in Parish Pages) at least three days before the deadline, or a week for handwritten/typed copy. We cannot guarantee to include unsolicited contributions.

Opinions expressed in The Bridge are not necessarily those of either the editorial team or the clergy. While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents, we cannot accept responsibility for information given or claims made by our contributors or advertisers.

The Bridge magazine will cease publication at the end of this year

The Revd Canon Becky Roberts, Team Rector Bridport Parish, and Chair of Bridport Parochial Church Council (PCC), writes...

I write to share the sad news that the December/January bumper issue of The Bridge magazine will be the last issue.

Olivia Daly has done a marvellous job as editor over the past six years. With her editorial experience in internal communications at the John Lewis Partnership, and subsequent freelance work, she has used her skills and hard work to expand The Bridge's content and quality. It has been an impressive commitment and output. And the reach of the magazine has been tremendous, with 6,000 copies available in the Bridport and West Bay area.

She has been part of a wide team of people, including the Bridge committee: Ian Bark as chair, Chris Senior as advertising coordinator, and Valerie Gierth as treasurer. And of course writers and contributors from the wider town and church communities, and the many delivery volunteers who make sure the magazine reaches its readers.

So why, you may be asking, is The Bridge coming to an end?

Olivia recently handed in her resignation and is leaving the editorial position. (It must be noted that she had also taken on the position of organiser of distribution at St Mary's Bridport and in fact was also delivering to many of the houses for which there were no volunteers to deliver!) In order to be fair to the advertisers who communicate through the magazine, a decision needed to be made promptly.



The Revd Canon Becky Roberts

The Bridport PCC therefore had to decide whether there was the capacity, both financially and in our practical and human resources, to take the magazine forward after Olivia's departure.

The points affecting the decision to stop the magazine as it is included the fact that Olivia had done such a good job that a comparable editor would be impossible to find within a limited timescale. It was felt that it was better to celebrate the good that had been achieved than to try and keep it going.

As with many business and charities at this difficult financial time, it was also felt that as a charity the PCC could not afford to keep contributing the amount it needed to invest and did not have the resources to support the search for more advertising. Some advertisers had pulled out over the past year.

However, the PCC also recognised the amount of good The Bridge does to reflect and celebrate the various aspects of its communal life. It really has been a team effort to share both the good news of Bridport and the Good News of faith.

And so we celebrate the achievements and know this phase ends.



BTC vacancy: *Bridport Town Council (BTC) is looking for a project manager to help deliver priorities in its Five-Year Plan. The successful candidate will focus on developing and delivering culture and arts initiatives and demonstrating their value to the local economy, with scope to take on other BTC projects. Fixed 12-month contract, 3 days per week based at Mountfield. The deadline for applications is 9am on Tuesday 17 November. For more information visit www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/about/job-vacancies.*

NOVEMBER 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 1 *All Saints*	8am BCP HC 3pm All Souls	4pm CC (hall)	**10am Parish service of HC**	3pm All Souls		
Mon 2						10am MPR
Tues 3				2.30pm HC		
Wed 4	2.30pm HC					
Thur 5		10am Eucharist				
Sun 8 *Remembrance*	8am BCP HC 10.50am Remembrance	9.30am Eucharist	10.50am Remembrance and HC	9.30am Remembrance and MP	4pm Remembrance	10.50am Remembrance and HC
Mon 9						10am MPR
Wed 11		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
Thurs 12		10am Eucharist				
Sun 15	8am BCP HC 11am MP	9.30am Eucharist		9.30am HC	11am HC	
Mon 16						10am MPR
Thurs 19		10am Eucharist				
Sun 22 *Christ the King*	8am BCP HC 11am HC	9.30am Eucharist	11am Matins	9.30am MP		11am MP
Mon 23						10am MPR
Wed 25		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				
Thurs 26		10am Eucharist				
Sun 29 *Advent*	8am BCP HC 11am MP	9.30am Eucharist	4pm Taizé service organised by CTiBD (see opposite page)	9.30am HC		3pm CTiBD carol service followed by Christmas tree lighting
Mon 30						10am MPR

DECEMBER 2026						
Tues 1				2.30pm HC		
Wed 2	2.30pm HC					
Thurs 3		10am Eucharist				
Sun 6 *Advent 2*	8am BCP HC **10am Parish service of HC**					
Mon 7						10am MPR
Wed 9		2pm Centering Prayer* (hall)				

*HC = Holy Communion / BCP = Book of Common Prayer / CC = Contemplative Church / MP = Morning Praise MPR = Morning Prayer *Centering Prayer takes place on the second and fourth Wednesdays. For details email carolinepuntismoore@gmail.com NB: services are subject to occasional change. Latest info at www.parishofbridport.org*

Coffee morning: At St Swithun's, Allington, there is a community coffee morning in the hall on the first Thursday of each month from 9.30 to 11.15am. Free coffee, cakes and snacks plus a raffle in aid of a local charity. All welcome!

Churches Together in Bridport & District: what's on

This month members of the churches in Bridport will meet for their monthly prayer session, 'Pray Bridport', in the Beacon Church at 6pm on Tuesday 10 November.

Our bi-monthly Tea and Chat will be held at Bridport United Church at 2.30pm on Sunday 22 November. All are welcome to this tea and there is usually some entertainment too. These tea events are particularly aimed at those who feel a little lonely on a Sunday and would like some friendly companionship. If you need a lift, please let us or your church know and we will try and arrange one for you.

Our service on the first Sunday of Advent (29 November) will be a Taizé service at Holy Trinity Bothenhampton at 4pm. We will be pleased to see you at this popular event.

We are now starting to plan for our Christmas Day lunch, which has been running for many years and is particularly popular among those who find themselves alone at Christmas. The lunch will be at Bridport United Church, arriving at 12 noon for lunch at 12.30pm. If you'd like to come or you can offer a lift to the church, please ring Sue Herman on 01308 422598.

If you'd like to volunteer your help with this event, please ring Peter Wilson on 01308 423557 or 07778 159826. This could involve preparing vegetables on Christmas Eve, or helping with serving and clearing up after the lunch itself. We'd also be pleased to hear from you if you are a trained chef or cook. Thank you to all who have enjoyed helping in the past to make this a very happy and successful event.

Heather Purse, Secretary, CTiBD

Parish fundraising continues for St John's West Bay

The Parish of Bridport needs to raise around £58,000 for three renovation projects at St John's Church in West Bay.

The largest project is the £30,000 renewal of the church's heating, following the upgrade of the electrical wiring and lighting in 2024. Other work comprises the repair of the roof and general weatherproofing to the building, and the restoration of the clock, which until recently had allowed harbour workers, residents and visitors to check the time for more than 80 years.

www.parishofbridport.org/donate

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' John 1:5

Light shines in the darkness in November: the lamplit evenings, the fireworks and blazing bonfires, and the candles we light for those we love and miss in this season of remembrance.

To remember is to hold on to what matters to us. Some memories are better forgotten, but at its best, remembering is a sign that we love. Even when grief holds us in the past and numbs us to the present, it is love that sits behind it.



The Revd Cally Burch

On Remembrance Sunday we honour those who gave their lives in war. Jesus said that no one has greater love than to lay down their life for their friends (John 15:13). It is in that light that Christians remember such sacrifice, because it points us towards Jesus' own death for us all on the cross. On that day, Good Friday, we humans put Love to death and then found that Love overcomes death.

We are at a hinge in the year. While remembrance is about looking back, the new Church year starts on Advent Sunday, 29 November, when we start to light candles again and look forward.

We look back with gratitude. Many thanks to the producers of The Bridge and particularly to the editor, Olivia Daly, for the wonderful magazine they have given us over the past few years. As it ceases in its current form, we wish them well in all that comes next for them.

As we look forward ourselves, there is much to be grateful for. In the Anglican parish, we are very excited to welcome Canon Becky as our new team rector. Thank you to everyone who turned out to give her such a warm welcome at her induction service, and we look forward to celebrating our first Christmas with her. In Advent we light candle after candle, so the light will soon grow!

Everyone is welcome to all our services of Remembrance, All Souls and Advent Sunday – you'll find details on the opposite page.

The Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Priest & Team Vicar

This year's Parish Green Day explored living well in Creation

The Parish Green Day at the end of September had a gentle focus, starting with a prayer walk led by the Revd Cally Burch, Pioneer Priest & Team Vicar.

Joined by Jonathan and Janice Bourbon – Mayor and Mayoress of Bridport – the group took a stroll in the autumn sunshine through some green areas in Bridport. "We took time to share knowledge of the wildlife in the area as well as to think and pray," says Janet Webster, Eco Church coordinator in the parish.

After a break for coffee and cake at St Swithun's, they looked at what they had achieved so far with Eco Church and plans for future eco projects. These include the Swift Project and an art installation made from discarded toothbrushes and plastic coat hangers.

"We continue to look at how we can further grow roots of a new way of living well in Creation," adds Janet. "We are looking forward to more collaborative working with other local green groups next year. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this day, which left us with much to ponder: what is our relationship with nature? And how might we want to change this in response to the climate emergency?"
ecochurch@parishofbridport.org



Pictured above: the Parish Green Day group at St Swithun's Church after their prayer walk around some of the town's green areas



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Visit: www.dancingwithtaichi.co.uk



Water risk: don't wait until you're flooded to find out what to do

Bridport is no stranger to flooding, and while some residents know they live in areas at risk, flash flooding can also happen unexpectedly in other parts of the town.

Sudden downpours, overflowing ditches, run-off from roads and water appearing in gardens or driveways can all create problems with little warning. And the results can be devastating. That's why it's so important for households and businesses to be prepared before flooding happens. At this time of year, we ask in particular that you keep an eye out for blocked drains in the highway near your property and report blockages to Dorset Council on their 'report a problem' page.

Bridport Town Council's new flooding resources page *(www.bridport-tc.gov.uk/flooding-resources)* brings together useful information to help residents understand the risks and know what to do before, during and after a flood. It tells you how to sign up for flood alerts and warnings from the government, where to find long-term flood-risk maps, and advice on how to build an emergency kit for the home and car. It also explains how you can take practical steps to prepare in advance, especially if you have experienced flooding before or are concerned about local conditions.

If flooding does occur, the page sets out who to contact depending on the source of the problem. In an emergency where there is a risk to life, residents should always call 999. For other flooding issues, the guidance explains whether to contact the Environment Agency, Dorset Council or Wessex Water.

Bridport Town Council has volunteer flood wardens who can help residents during a flood, and sandbags are available through our depot, but please call the office on 01308 456722 first. After a flood, reporting the incident via the Flood Online Reporting Tool is vital so Dorset Council's Flood Risk Management Team can build a clear picture of local issues and plan future improvements. They can only help if they know about problem areas; after Storm Chandra only two properties reported flooding, but we know many more were affected.





Pictured: flood wardens cleaning up (above); council staff picking up sandbags from the depot (below left)



The flooding resources page also includes information on food safety after flooding, home insurance support through Flood Re, and help that may be available for businesses affected by flood damage. It also has a link to the excellent Flood Mary website run by Mary Long-Dhonau OBE, who was herself flooded and has extensive experience of supporting communities affected by flooding and working with local authorities, government agencies and residents. Her site includes a link to a superb free ebook about property flood resilience in homes and businesses.

For anyone living in Bridport, the message is simple: don't wait until flooding is at your door. Visit our flooding resources page now to find practical advice.

Caroline Pearce, Projects Manager, BTC

Bridport Food Bank launches ‘Reverse Advent Calendar’ campaign to support local families

As the winter months approach, Bridport Food Bank faces one of the busiest times of the year.

To support local families experiencing food insecurity during this difficult period, the charity is launching a Reverse Advent Calendar campaign.

Instead of the usual Advent calendar, where you open a door to receive a treat, the campaign is encouraging people to donate one item every day for 24 days in December.

The food bank particularly needs donations of tinned food (soup, beans, meat, vegetables and fruit), pantry staples (pasta, rice, tea, coffee and long-life milk), toiletries (soap, toothpaste, shower gel and sanitary products) and treats such as biscuits, chocolate and festive goodies.

“We are hoping that many people across the town will join in,” says a spokesperson. “Free printed calendars



will be available to pick up from mid-November at St Mary’s Church in South Street and a number of town-centre businesses. These will give you all the information you need about where and when to drop off your donations. Thank you for your support!”



A generous donation for The Living Tree from Ropemakers landlords



John and Geraldine Baker – landlords of The Ropemakers pub in West Street – have donated £2,085 to Bridport charity The Living Tree.

The couple have been donating to the charity for more than 10 years, and have raised over £10,000. The funds are the profits from the pub’s weekly meat draw and annual dog show.

Geraldine presented the latest cheque to The Living Tree’s chairman, Mark Cowling, last month *(pictured)*.

The Living Tree supports people affected by cancer, whether they are patients or family members, carers or friends. “Everything the charity provides is free of charge,” says Mark. “It’s made possible only through the positive support of people like John and Geraldine.”

We meet the new Parish of Bridport Rector, the Revd Canon Becky Roberts



Canon Becky Roberts arrived in Bridport a few weeks ago to begin her new role as Team Rector. We caught up with her to find out more about her life and career and hear how she's settling in...

The Bridge: Welcome to Bridport! Where have you moved here from and what was your last job?

Canon Becky Roberts: Thank you for your welcome. So many people have been so welcoming both at my licensing service and as I have walked around the town and visited the six communities in the parish.

I have moved from Harnham, on the outskirts of Salisbury, Wiltshire, where I was incumbent of the parish and Rural Dean. The parish was very varied with large amounts of new housing alongside traditional village communities, and a livestock market. In my role as Rural Dean, I worked with seven parishes to coordinate clergy and ministry across the deanery, planned and chaired deanery meetings, reporting significant issues, and assisting during clergy vacancies.

TB: Where did you train for ministry?

BR: I trained for ministry at Queens College, Birmingham. It was a long while ago now! I have been ordained for 21 years so I am sure things have changed greatly. However, I was particularly interested in social justice and enjoyed the courses that were offered termed 'liberation theology', which links the good news of



Jesus Christ firmly with active approaches to societal change to help marginalized people.

The college enabled the training of Anglican, Methodist, United Reform and Baptist ministers at that time, so I gained a great deal from other traditions as well as my own.

TB: When did you decide to enter the church?

BR: Now that's an interesting phrase! I learnt to love God as a child in prayer, as the first female 'boat boy' in St Mary's, West Moors. I was the first female allowed in the sanctuary area of the church! (A boat boy is someone who places the incense onto the coals so that smoke rises, symbolising our prayers rising into God's holy presence.) My call to become a priest developed as a teenager, although women were not allowed to be priests in the Anglican church at that time so I trained to be a teacher and taught in East London and overseas before returning to London and pursuing the calling. On the day I heard that I had been accepted, I took my friends out night clubbing in Leicester Square! I'm too old for clubs these days but I do like to dance!

TB: What attracted you to the Bridport job?

BR: Now, someone visiting St Mary's asked me this last week, and I replied that as I had been leaving for a two-week retreat, I had said to my husband that if the role in Bridport came up I thought I would be a good match and would apply – not knowing when the role might come up at all. I looked at my phone on the last day of my retreat and saw that the role was advertised! I knew the town from visiting several times, and had enjoyed the creativity, markets and coastal walks. I was also impressed by the Church congregation's desire to serve the community and share faith. Sometimes we have to take the opportunities that are sent our way. I was delighted to accept the post when offered after the interview processes were complete.

TB: What are your first impressions of Bridport?

BR: First impressions are that Bridport is a real mix – in many ways a historic town with tradition and then added in is creativity and quirkiness. There is real poverty and appears to be a lack of work for younger people.

I think Bridport loves a festival – we came to view the house when the hat festival was taking place and were very impressed by the interesting array and the number of people joining in. ➔

We meet the Revd Canon Becky Roberts continued

TB: What does your husband, Neil, do, and what are his plans here?

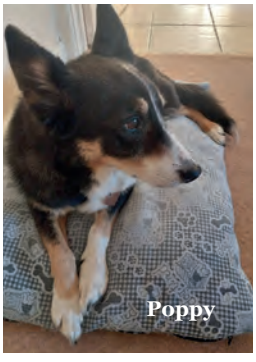
BR: Neil is a lawyer. I cannot speak for his plans here, apart from the fact that he is very content with a good coffee combined with a good coastal or country dog-walk. Our dog, Thelo, usually leads him astray! He is good at sniffing out coffee, cake and real ale. Neil also loves a good barber, and I have set him the challenge of 'Around the world in 80 shaves'!

TB: What do you like to do when you're not working?

BR: I relax by baking! A long while ago, in lockdown, our household worked its way through recipes for many cakes. For me, it's a case of 'Around the world in 80 bakes'. I enjoy a good swim, coastal and countryside walks and anything creative. I am a creative at heart, reupholstering, making curtains, painting and life drawing, and I have a pottery wheel that I really would like to have more time to use.

The Cinnamon Trust helps people and their pets to stay together

Have you heard of the Cinnamon Trust? *writes Jill Henderson*. I hadn't, until a work colleague told me all about it. It's a charity that helps older and terminally ill people to care for their pets when they can no longer manage.


Poppy

Once I'd retired and had some time on my hands, I contacted the charity to volunteer as a walker for them. I wanted canine company but was not able to commit to a full-time pet at that stage.

They accepted me as a volunteer, and I joined a team of two other walkers for Poppy *(pictured)*, a lovely young tri-coloured collie. We each walked her on two days a week. Ann, her retired farmer owner, having trained her well, had since become unable to walk far. Poppy would rush to greet me enthusiastically at the door and was a joy to take for local walks, where she tirelessly ran after my ball thrower. When we got back, Ann and I often enjoyed a nice chat over a cup of tea.

Sadly, Ann had a sudden fatal stroke 15 months later, and Poppy was left without an owner. Realising that she was one of the nicest, most obedient and loving dogs I had ever met, I became her permanent fosterer for the Cinnamon Trust. She was my constant loving companion for the next 10 years, and I received every support from the trust, which met her medical expenses and provided sympathetic, qualified veterinary nurses on hand for advice, something I particularly valued as she got older. Poppy became a well-known pooch about town and was a regular much-loved attendee at Holy Trinity Bradpole's Sunday services.

Sadly, I lost dear Poppy recently, and miss her so much. I offered to be a Cinnamon Trust walker again, but was surprised to be told there were none needed in Bridport. They asked me to spread the word, however, so here goes!

The Cinnamon Trust operates through its registered national network of animal-loving volunteers. These volunteers 'hold hands' with the pet owners: they can walk a dog for a housebound owner, take a pet to the vet, foster a pet whose owner needs hospital care, fetch a cat's food, change litter trays, clean out a birdcage – simply provide help however it's needed. The goal is to ensure the owner has all the help they need to stay together with their pet, and to know their beloved furry or feathered friend is in safe hands, then and in the future.

So if you think you might need the trust's help, or would just like to know more, you can contact them on 01736 758708 or *hello@cinnamon.org.uk*, or visit their website at *www.cinnamon.org.uk*.

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Bridport United Church Christmas Tree Festival

Wednesday, 9th December until Sunday, 20th December

Opening Service and switch on of lights
Tuesday, 8th December at 5 pm

Opening Times:
Wednesday, 9th (Bridport Christmas Cheer)
10 am - 1 pm + 3 pm - 7 pm

Monday - Friday 10 am - 1 pm
+ 2 pm - 5 pm on Fridays
Saturdays 10 am - 3 pm
Sundays 2 pm - 4 pm

Free entry, donations welcome

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MONDAY 7th DECEMBER

7.30 pm

CHRISTMAS MUSIC, CAROLS & MINCE PIES

DONATIONS ALL WELCOME

Don't forget you can find info about a huge range of local organisations on our website at www.thebridgemagazine.org/get-involved. The website will remain in place while we wind up the administration of the magazine.

Bridport Food Bank

Local people need our help

Every week, we provide essential food and support to more than **100 local people.**

Can you help?
Scan to donate

Or visit bridportfoodbank.org

St Swithun's Church Hall, Allington

AUTUMN FUN QUIZ

Friday 20 November at 7pm
Doors open at 6.30pm

Teams of six (max)
£5 per head in cash on the door
Prizes for winning team!

Coffee and cake will be provided during the interval, plus standing bingo and a raffle. Bring your own nibbles, glasses and drinks.

ALL WELCOME

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A reminder of climate change warning to come at Dorset COP conference this month



DDC - Ministry of Defence

Richard Nugee

Britain's former top military adviser on climate change and national security will deliver a stark warning about the threats facing the country when he addresses Dorset's leading climate and environmental organisations this month.

Retired Lt Gen Richard Nugee is the keynote speaker at the fourth Dorset COP (Conference of the Parties) at Coastland College's Kingston Maurward Campus, near Dorchester, on 14 November. He will reveal the latest developments in the government's response to the national security implications of climate change, including updates from the new ministerial Task Force for Climate, Nature and Security.

General Nugee will also update delegates on developments since last November's National Emergency briefing at Westminster, where he was among climate experts warning politicians and leaders about the security threats posed by climate change.

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Life is a Cabaret for Bridport audiences





Pictured: Cabaret cast members rehearse in the Bull Hotel's Hayloft

Following the success of their last production, Juliet and Her Romeo, which ran for two sold-out nights in May, the players of the Bridport Stage Company are now knee deep in stockings and suspenders rehearsing Cabaret.

This unique and inclusive stage company returns to its spiritual home – The Bull – for the production, and will be transforming the Hayloft into the Kit Kat Club.

Cabaret is based on a play by John Van Druten that in turn was based on Goodbye to Berlin, a novel by Christopher Isherwood. It is set in pre-World War 2 Berlin, a city of excess and glamour hiding dark undercurrents as political change encroaches on the lives of the Kit Kat Club performers.

Sally Bowles is the part that actress Immy Barnes was born to play and she takes centre stage with her musicality and presence. The company has welcomed back members from previous productions and they are all directed by Valerie Goodwin, a force of nature and a champion of drama's power to transform lives while entertaining.

This will be a highly accessible, rousing production with a real edge: a production for now.

The Bridport Stage Company delights and entertains while raising money for The Samaritans. The group's previous production raised over £2,000 and the total from all previous shows is £10,000. It's a completely inclusive company where everyone can be themselves and find friendship.

Cabaret is going to be the hottest ticket in town, so reserve your tickets early!

Article by David Brazier (who is playing Ernst)

There are three performances of Cabaret: Sunday 22, Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 November at 7pm. Tickets are £10: email Valerie Goodwin at tasterella@hotmail.co.uk to add your name(s) to the door list for your chosen day, and then pay on the door.

Stanton Garage Doors Ltd
T: 01305 789883
Showroom now open
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All life is here: how to lose – or find

To round off our coverage of the National Year of Reading, Annette Shaw suggests ways to welcome more books into your life...



Annette Shaw





Andrew Parsons / Creative Commons

Pictured clockwise from above: Secondhand books are available for next to nothing – or even free – in loads of surprising places such as this display at Modbury Farm Shop; Annette Shaw (left) with the late author Marcia Willett; Queen Camilla is patron of the National Literary Trust, the co-organiser of the National Year of Reading 2026

This is quite a moment: I'm about to mention the Queen and Dolly Parton in the same paragraph.

Over the last 20 years there has been a considerable decline in reading for pleasure. A 2024 survey by The Reading Agency showed that 35 per cent of adults are 'lapsed readers', while the statistics for children are a sad reflection of how life has changed with the rise of social media, screens and phones. But there are two unlikely heroines.

Queen Camilla is the patron of the National Literacy Trust and a central figure in the UK-wide National Year of Reading 2026, a campaign led by that charity and the Department for Education. She also led an initiative to gift a special edition of Katherine Rundell's Impossible Creatures to every Year 6 and P6 child this Christmas. And across the pond, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library gave away more than 330 million free books to children worldwide during the music star's lifetime.

In the last of our series about encouraging everyone to pick up a book, we explore some of the less obvious ways to make page turning popular once more, and why we risk losing something so precious. It doesn't take much to incorporate more books into everyday life. Prepare for the literary equivalent of hiding broccoli under Yorkshire puddings...

National Trust Properties: many have secondhand bookshops, including Thomas Hardy's Cottage and Max Gate near Dorchester. Houses such as Killerton in Devon actively encourage visitors to browse and enjoy that special feeling and homely smell found only in a library. So, unless screens become sensory, let's hope books continue to have a robust shelf life.

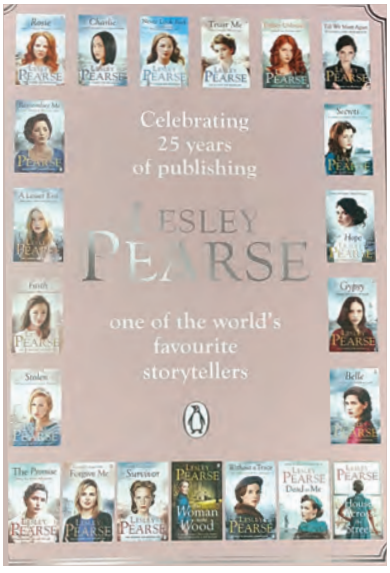
Modbury Farm: just out of Burton Bradstock, the shop has a bookcase stocked with pre-loved donations. Pick up six eggs, a cabbage and an autobiography.

Literary Festivals are held in abundance. Check out Bridport (happening this month) or plan ahead for the Yeovil and Dorchester events next year. Author presentations are a great way to learn about the story behind the story. Writers are generally fascinating people with expansive, inquiring minds.

Be a **surprise book gifter** for friends or anyone in your orbit who needs a boost (and perhaps lives too far away for a coffee) via *www.worldofbooks.com*.

Bibliotherapy is a recognised form of self-help. Lesley Pearse and the late Marcia Willett are go-to novelists for many who find solace and comfort in their words. On the cover of Marcia's Reflections, the caption is "Escape to the sea and find yourself again". Empathy. Family sagas. Tragedy. Romance.

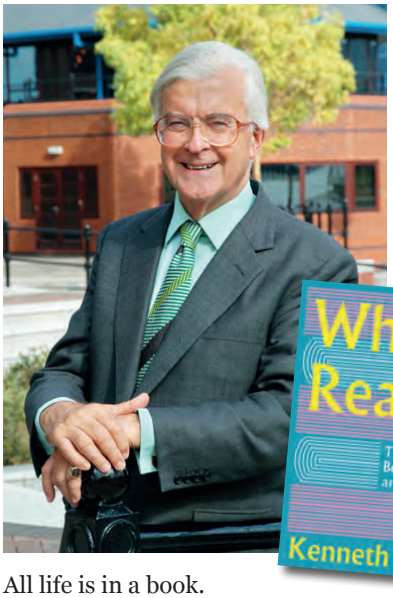
– yourself in a good book this month





Annette Shaw

Pictured above: Novelist Lesley Pearse and some of the books she has written during 25 years in the business. Left: Kenneth Baker, author of Why Read? The Battle Between Book and Screen



All life is in a book.

Go retro at the weekend and rediscover the pleasure of a **quality newspaper**, breakfast and the crossword.

If further evidence is needed, a new release from Unicorn Publishing Group is one to explore. Kenneth Baker has been in the House of Commons and the Lords for 58 years. In Why Read? The Battle Between Book and Screen, he recalls why reading was so important to him.

A really engrossing, richly illustrated book, it covers the rise and fall of the newspaper industry, exceptional authors and much more.

In 1837 the poet Robert Southey wrote to Charlotte Brontë saying, "Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life and it ought not to be." Happily, Charlotte ignored his advice! More recent suggestions include a comment from the late TV and radio personality Dr Michael Mosley: "... reading poetry aloud builds vocabulary, memory... because it engages the ear as well as the eye, which are stimulated in different parts of the brain."

Here's to your next chapter, from all at The Bridge.

Play The Random Game

Insomnia is no one's friend. Fighting the duvet at 3am, longing for sleep and dreading the thought of the incoming dawn. Rather than reach for the mobile and add not only blue light to the mix but also the risk of being led by algorithms into possibly not-so-enchanted woods, play The Random Game. Simply pick up a book, let the pages open at random and read wherever your eyes come to rest.

A personal favourite is The Swallow, The Owl & The Sandpiper. Compiled by Claire Maitland and illustrated by Rodger McPhail, it's packed with words of courage, wisdom and spirit. This gem is available from The Sandpiper Trust and Amazon UK.

Deep within me there are resources
to meet every crisis
I shall encounter.
I live every day
As best I can... *(Anon)*

Another example is Brian Patten, one of the Liverpool Poets alongside Roger McGough. He wrote The Book of Upside Down Thinking in Morocco and this collection, drawn from Middle Eastern folk stories, is a real tonic. It may even change your perspective on problems.

A Presumptuous Assumption

I checked into a fantastic beach
hotel.
"We'll make you feel at home," the
manager said.
I protested at his assumptions,
Cancelled the booking and fled.
I lived at the back of a car-park
And wanted some glamour instead.

In 'The Book That Changed My Life', first broadcast on 14 October and now on BBC iPlayer, Queen Camilla shares her faith in the power of books and reading.

ST MARY'S Bridport

Parish editor – Peter Wright 456967
Director of music – Tim Linsley 07830 308701
Tower captain – Bob Hardwick 07977 989263

A special space and place

The design pages on the internet strongly recommend creating multi-functional spaces in our homes and suggest ways to achieve this. One advert I saw recently begins: "Transform your living space into a joyful and meaningful haven... explore the art of envisioning a space that aligns with your activities and passions."

St Mary's has been busy in recent weeks and on a number of occasions we have needed to make creative use of the open, multi-functional space provided by a building with a footprint of 643 square metres. The cruciform plan of the church means the space that we generally use for events comprises the nave and the north and south aisles – and that is space enough!

Historical documents suggest that 14th- and 15th-century worshippers took a similar approach. In his 1989 history of St Mary's, John B Whitehouse writes that the church was very active and growing from 1350 to 1450. He adds, however, that despite all the activity the church interior would have given an impression of emptiness: no neat rows of pews in the nave, and probably not even a pulpit, as sermons were rare.

In contrast, an open, multi-functional space was very far from the thinking of those worshipping here in the early Victorian period. At this time the church was filled with high pews of different shapes and sizes and there were large galleries around almost all the wall space. In 1851, the Revd Melville Lauriston Lee worked hard to improve the church interior, removing the galleries but retaining the pews. It was not until 1996 that a fire in the roof led to restoration work including new lighting, a new stone floor, and modern movable seating. We now have the opportunity to recreate that feeling of space that was recognised almost 500 years ago.

Over the last few weeks, the space in St Mary's has been used for regular services and twice-weekly food bank sessions, but we have also had fashion shows, weddings, funerals, concerts, coffee and cake events, the celebration of St Mary's School Harvest, and the institution and induction service for our new team rector, the Revd Canon Becky Roberts. Each event called for a different configuration of seating to create the space needed for the focus of the activities.







Clockwise from top: A concert by St Swithun's Band in St Marys; the church's wagon roof; the Revd Canon Becky Roberts, Team Rector, cuts the cake after her institution and induction service last month

An important part of the service for Becky was the commitments she made in a number of different spots around the church – at the font, at the lectern, at the altar and at the church door.

St Mary's is a sacred place but also a place of coming together for the people of Bridport in times of celebration, remembrance and shared worship. If you haven't visited the church recently, please do take the opportunity to do so. Whatever the arrangement of the seating, the wonderful multi-functional space below the beautiful wagon roof and mellow stone pillars is a place to be enjoyed by all.

Lesley Hill

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.

Bridport Town Council
CENTRAL WARD

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



Pictured: Bridport Town Council's Grounds Team

The Grounds Team's vital role in remembrance

Each November, Bridport comes together to remember and honour those who have given their lives in service of their country. The annual Remembrance Sunday parade is a significant civic occasion, bringing together veterans, serving members of the armed forces, community organisations, cadets, scouts, councillors and residents for a moving act of remembrance in the heart of the town. Organised by Bridport Town Council in partnership with local organisations and the armed forces community, the parade is a well-established part of the town's civic calendar.

While the public sees the marching bands, uniforms, wreaths and formal ceremony, considerable work takes place behind the scenes to make the event possible. Central to that effort is Bridport Town Council's Grounds Team and other staff.

For the Grounds Team, Remembrance Sunday starts much earlier than it does for most people. Preparation begins two weeks before the parade, when advance road closure notices are placed around the town to inform residents and visitors of the arrangements.

On the morning of the parade, the team is already at work, tidying the area around the war memorial, helping with the removal of parked vehicles, and putting road closures in place. Throughout the day, they help direct and divert traffic, manage practical arrangements and support the safe movement of crowds.

Their work also includes setting up and operating the carefully timed sounding of the maroons, which signal important moments during the event. Grounds Team members are stationed at various points along the parade route, while one walks with the procession to help ensure that everything remains in order.

The team are used to working behind the scenes. Their everyday role is caring for Bridport's parks, open spaces, verges and public areas, helping to keep the town looking its best for residents and visitors. On Remembrance Sunday, however, their work takes on a different significance.

While the Grounds Team supports events organised by Bridport Town Council, its role also extends to many events organised by the town's amazing community groups and local organisations. These are an important part of Bridport's character, and the team provides essential practical support to help them take place safely and successfully.

Remembrance is about people coming together as a community, and the Grounds Team is very much part of that community. These are familiar faces who work throughout the year to care for the town, and on this special Sunday they are helping to look after more than streets and public spaces – they are helping to support a tradition that matters deeply to Bridport.

So, as Bridport pauses this November to remember, spare a thought too for the people working quietly in the background. Before the parade begins, the Grounds Team will already have done their part – ensuring that Bridport is ready to remember.

Amy Stephenson

HOLY TRINITY
Bothenhampton

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

From the parish editor

Sunday 1 November is All Saints' Day, and the parish service for November will be held at Holy Trinity Bothenhampton at 10am. All are welcome. Remembrance Sunday is on 8 November and our Remembrance service at Holy Trinity will start at 10.50am so the two minutes' silence can be observed at 11am. At the end of the month, 29 November is Advent Sunday. Please see the table on page 4 for more information about our services. ➔

HOLY TRINITY Bothenhampton continued...

Our harvest thanksgiving was held on Sunday 11 October. The church was beautifully decorated, making it a perfect setting for singing several well-known harvest hymns, and giving thanks to God for his creation. A ploughman's lunch was enjoyed by 20 people, and we thank everyone who provided food, served it, and set up tables, making it a very pleasant occasion. The profit from the lunch was £190, which is being donated to the Churches Together Christmas Lunch Appeal

The Old Churchyard *(pictured right)* is looking well cared for following the hard work of 15 volunteers, ranging from 11 to 80 years old, at the beginning of October. People come regularly to the tidy-ups and their help is very much appreciated, both by Holy Trinity Church, which has the responsibility of the churchyard's upkeep, and by the families who visit the graves of loved ones. Grateful thanks to you all.

Brighten up a November day by coming to the coffee morning in Holy Trinity on Saturday 7 November, 10am till 12 noon. The church is warm and welcoming and is a great venue for catching up with friends or meeting new people. There are delicious homemade cakes for sale, a bookstall and a raffle. The money raised regularly tops £300 each month and goes towards paying the expenses of the church. We are very grateful to all our supporters. The following coffee morning will be on Saturday 5 December.

Barbara Ffooks



Graham Purse



Pictured above: The Old Churchyard is looking tidy and well cared for following October's work session by 15 volunteers

FILM NIGHT in Bothenhampton Village Hall

Saturday 28 November

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*



Pictured right: Holy Trinity Church was decorated beautfully for the harvest service, which was followed by a tasty ploughman's lunch (far right)



Mary Kay Cresswell

Thelma's hymn notes

O Valiant Hearts

I have chosen a hymn associated with Remembrance Sunday – O Valiant Hearts – because it was always played on that day in our local Dorset village church. The hymn was sung at a slow pace and in strict time.

The lyrics were written by Sir John Stanhope Arkwright (1872–1954) to honour the dead of World War 1 (1914–18). Not a cleric or a professional musician, Sir John was the Conservative Member of Parliament for Leominister in Herefordshire. He was a descendant of Sir Richard Arkwright, the cotton-spinning industrialist.
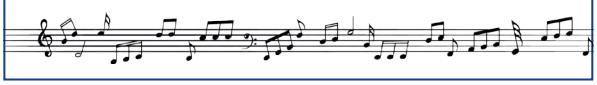
The most popular tune for this hymn is by the Revd Dr Charles Harris (1865–1936), vicar of Colwell in Herefordshire and a prebendary of Hereford Cathedral.

The hymn was sung during the burial of the unknown soldier at Westminster Abbey in 1920. It is a long-standing tribute to the fallen of The Great War and all casualties in succeeding military conflicts involving the UK and its allies. It became a central hymn to British remembrance during the interwar period of late 1918 to August 1939.

The hymn should be considered in light of the effect of WW1 on British society. The British Expeditionary Force, Royal Navy and Royal Flying Corps suffered 886,000 fatalities and 1.6 million woundings; many wounded victims were permanently disabled and even more were deeply affected by what they had experienced. A further 70,000 civilians died as a result of the war. In addition, the war was brought home to UK residents in their homes and places of work by the bombing raids, initially by Zeppelin airships and then by long-range Gotha German bombers on London, other large cities and coastal ports.

The hymn has seven verses. The first honours fallen soldiers, recalling their courage and sacrifice. The second describes their willingness to give all for humanity. The third speaks of their peaceful rest and hope in God's final call. The fourth connects their sacrifice to Christ's suffering. The fifth reflects on the enduring symbol of the Cross. The sixth affirms that those who follow Christ in sacrifice will rise victorious. The seventh is a prayer entrusting the fallen to Christ, the Shepherd of the dead.

Thelma Pulman, organist at St Mary's Walditch



ST MARY'S Walditch

Parish editor – James Craddock 458725
walditchbridgejsc@outlook.com
Verger – Pat Stapleton 456421

A jolly harvest gathering

On 9 October, St Mary's hosted an early-evening event at Walditch Village Hall to celebrate Harvestide.

There was a variety of delicious finger food plus apple crumble and soft drinks, and some people brought their own drinks.

The event was well attended by Walditch residents and the proceeds will go towards St Mary's Church.

Grateful thanks to those who provided food and helped to set up, serve and clear away on the day, making this an enjoyable festive occasion.

James Craddock



Bridport Town Council BOTHENHAMPTON & WALDITCH WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

Road safety, community resilience and infrastructure improvements were among the issues discussed at our latest ward meeting in October.

Residents raised concerns about the condition of Hollow Way following its reopening earlier this year. They said that overgrown vegetation is now narrowing sections of the pavement and encroaching onto the carriageway and pedestrian areas, making access more ➔

BTC Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward continued...

difficult for walkers, cyclists and pushchair users. Concerns were also raised about loose stones and deteriorating mortar. Dorset Council's highways officer will visit to inspect the site.

Traffic and road safety continue to be important issues for residents, particularly in Crock Lane, which was described as a 'rat run' for speeding drivers diverting from the A35. Encouragingly, the proposed 20mph speed limit for Bothenhampton and Walditch has now received authorisation to progress to the Traffic Regulation Order stage. Details of signage, road markings and installation dates are still to be finalised, but the works are expected to happen in spring 2027.

Although progress on the proposed Sea Road South pedestrian crossing has been slower than hoped, the project remains a priority. National Highways has indicated that the scheme is unlikely to advance this financial year owing to organisational changes and relocation to the Eype depot. However, the project remains firmly on the town council's agenda, and councillors will continue to push for the scheme.

Community resilience and emergency planning were also discussed. Residents asked about emergency shelters, local resilience arrangements and communications during major incidents. The town council's Community Emergency Response Plan, available on its website, outlines how the council would work alongside Dorset Council, emergency services and partner agencies during an emergency. Residents would be kept informed through the council website, social media channels, noticeboards and email. A desktop emergency exercise is planned to test local arrangements and identify opportunities for improvement.

Pictured: Teasels at Jellyfields Nature Reserve



Positive updates rounded off the meeting. Residents were pleased to hear that the Jubilee tree on Valley View is thriving following storm damage 12 months ago. Positive feedback was also received on the resurfacing of Bonscombe Lane in Walditch and the successful rubber-aggregate road repair along Main Street in Bothenhampton.

We hope to hold our next ward meeting in January, and details will be available on the town council website, our Facebook page and ward noticeboards. In the meantime, please do contact me if you wish to raise any concerns.

Jo Hughes

HOLY TRINITY Bradpole

Parish editor –
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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)

Remembering Poppy

I first met Poppy *(pictured)* at St Mary's Church where she sat obediently in the pew. She came to Bradpole Church 10 years ago when Jill Henderson became her carer. She was a faithful member of our church family; she not only came to church services, she also attended coffee mornings and music practices.

What did we learn and receive from Poppy? She showed us gentleness and obedience. As she walked among us and gazed at us with trusting eyes, we felt her unique presence. Whether you are a pet owner or an animal lover, caring for our pets is a special task. I know from those who live alone or have no family that pets are a lifeline.



Poppy

We will all miss lovely Poppy, but we give thanks to Jill for her care and for giving her a long and happy life. Poppy was put to sleep in August.

The Revd Janis Moore

See page 10 for information about the Cinnamon Trust, the charity that first introduced Jill to Poppy.

Ride + Stride

Thanks to those who took part in Ride + Stride in September and raised £538 through their sponsors. The money has been sent to the Dorset Historic

Churches Trust. The trust will apply for a tax refund under the Gift Aid scheme, which it will retain; £269 will be returned to Holy Trinity in due course.

The trust helps to maintain the fabric of Dorset churches and Holy Trinity has received its grants in the past.

Tots@Ten

Pre-school children are welcome to join others, with parents and carers, normally every Wednesday at 10am in the church during term time. The seats are pushed to the side so there is a lot of space and toys to play with. Refreshments are served for the children and adults. There is no charge.

Village lunch club

Lunch at the Haddon House Hotel *(pictured right)* will be on Tuesday 10 November at 12.30pm. If you haven't already booked, please give Jean Hutchings a ring on 427697. There is plenty of parking space at the hotel.

The club is open to anyone from the village and their friends so do contact Jean if you would like to have a reasonably priced lunch and a good chat!

Other groups

The Mothers' Union will meet at 2.30pm on Tuesday 17 November and the Knitting Group will meet on Thursdays 5 and 19 November. Please contact Daphne King (427552) for more information about these groups and their activities.

Bradpole Forster Village Hall

The AGM of the trustee board will be held at 7pm on Monday 2 November. The meeting is open to anyone







Elliott Brown

who is interested in supporting the village hall for the local community.

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 information and photos of the facilities.

Bradpole Buzz Group



The team will be meeting from 2 to 4pm on Wednesday 11 and Saturday 21 November. Do join them to help with planting, offers of wild plants and seeds from your garden, or just suggestions and general support.

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

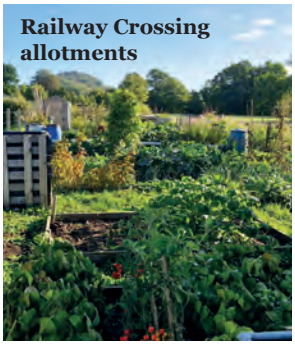
Commonwealth grave: You may have seen this sign in the car park at Holy Trinity Bradpole and wondered who is buried in the churchyard. It relates to Corporal A D White of the Royal Air Force, who is buried near the west door of the church.

Bridport Town Council
BRADPOLE WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...
Good news for Bradpole village, Jessopp Avenue and adjacent roads: Dorset Council (DC) has told us that our application for a 20mph speed limit was presented at their Delegated Powers meeting where Cllr Jeans (Cabinet Lead) authorised the progression of the 20mph Traffic Regulation Orders.

The next stage will involve finalising signage and road-marking designs and working with contractors to set installation dates. However, it isn't possible to give an accurate timeline at the moment. New road markings can be compromised by cold, wet, or frosty weather, so DC generally tries to avoid installing permanent road markings during such periods. Once I have any updates, I will let you know.


Railway Crossing allotments

Late summer saw the installation of a water supply at the Railway Crossing allotments in Caley Way. Allotment holders and their crops will benefit during any further dry spells. Thanks to Daryl and Claire at the town council who arranged and oversaw the work.


Autumn morning sunshine at Happy Island

Bradpole Parish Council archive
A new document giving a brief history of Bradpole Parish Council is now available. The council represented Bradpole residents from 1894 until 1 April 2024; a decision by Dorset Council in April 2023 led to the abolition of the civil Parish of Bradpole and the dissolution of the parish council.

The archive runs to more than 40 pages, with stories of people, local industries, important buildings and notable events. The Archive Steering Committee members produced the document, and I'd like to thank them for the many voluntary hours they have put in.

Bradpole Ward engagement event
Our next meeting is on Monday 7 December at 7pm in the village hall. Do come along and discuss any local issues that are concerning you.

You can keep up to date with ward news on our Facebook page, Bradpole Ward Matters, or 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

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A train at Bridport Station in April 1975

A busy time at St Swithun's
On 27 September, Bruce Upton gave a very interesting talk about the arrival in 1857 – and the sad departure in 1975 – of the railway in Bridport. Bruce asked the audience if anyone in the room ever went on the train, and a few people (including me) raised their arms.

I remember being put on the train with my sisters in Bridport and travelling to Westbury, where I was greeted by my grandmother.

There was standing room only at Bruce's talk, and everyone enjoyed learning about the history of our local branch line. The event was a fundraiser for the next stage of the church's restoration project: the repairs and decoration of the internal walls.

On 5 November St Swithun's will be celebrating the 11th anniversary of the community coffee morning. In November 2015, the mission group – very much encouraged by the Revd Pete Stone – decided we wanted to provide a space where people could come to meet old friends and make new ones. We have always tried not to charge for refreshments, but we will have to start charging a small amount to cover the real coffee.

In 2024 we decided to change the times of the coffee morning so we could provide a hot option as well as cake and drinks. The food glut group uses the hall on Thursday mornings, so we often use their donated food to make soup (or even chutney!) and their rolls for the bacon butties.

The hall is constantly in use, with many organisations hiring it for their events including the Parkinson's group, bridge and whist, the U3A's music appreciation group, embroiderers and many more.

The U3A provides opportunities for members to learn or practise all kinds of skills. It's also a place to build friendships or to meet people, helping to combat the loneliness and isolation that older people can feel. It's never to late to learn something new.





Pictured: a recent coffee morning at St Swithun's (top); an artwork by the children of Wild & Messy Church celebrating the season of creation and harvest

We wish St Swithun's Band a very happy 75th birthday. They practise in the hall every Monday and give two very entertaining concerts each year, in spring and just before Christmas.

Finally, the St Swithun's family wish the Revd Becky, Team Rector, a very warm welcome to Bridport.

Caroline Cooke

Bridport Town Council
WEST & ALLINGTON WARD

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

The ropemakers of our area

If you walk through North and West Allington today, it is hard to imagine just how busy these streets once were. Behind many of the houses were long gardens, workshops and ropewalks where people made rope, twine and nets.

Bridport became well known for making rope and nets, and North and West Allington played an important part in this trade. For many local families, ropemaking was part of everyday life. Men, women and children all had jobs connected with the work.

In North Allington, there were several small works and ropewalks. At number 5, Robert Hounsell & Sons made line, twine, fishing nets, shoe thread and other goods. The work went on behind the house, where there was a warehouse and a long ropewalk. Further along North Allington, John Rendall had weaving shops and spinning walks behind the houses.

It is easy to picture the scene. Long lengths of fibre would be stretched out along the ropewalk, while workers twisted and joined them to make stronger lengths of rope. The work could be hard and tiring, but it provided work for many people in the town.

West Allington was also an important place for ropemaking. Rendall & Coombs became one of the best-known firms in the area. Their works grew over the years, with ropewalks, workshops and other buildings. At first, much of the work was done by hand, but machines were gradually brought in.

There were other works nearby too. The Magdalen Works made rope, twine and fishing nets, as well as canvas and other goods. Some of the old ropewalk ➔

BTC West & Allington Ward continued...

buildings have survived, giving us a small glimpse of what the area would once have looked like.

Ropemaking continued in West Allington for a very long time; in fact, Rendall & Coombs made the last rope in Bridport in 1969. After that, the industry that had provided work for generations finally came to an end.

Today, there are few obvious signs of this busy past. Houses and gardens have replaced many of the old workshops and ropewalks. But the shape of the streets and some of the old buildings still give us clues.

So, next time you walk through North or West Allington, it is worth looking a little closer. Behind the quiet houses, you can imagine the long ropewalks, the workers and the strands of hemp and flax being twisted



into rope. The ropemakers may have gone, but their story is still part of Allington.

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 the services table on page 4 for more information. We also have Morning Prayer every Monday at 10am.

The highlight of the year for St John's is the lighting of the Christmas tree. This is on 29 November, with a service at 3pm – when West Bay Days will present money raised at various events during 2026 – followed by the lighting of the tree on The Green. There will be refreshments and Christmas carols. This festive event was previously led by the late Revd Philip Ringer, and who can forget him leading The 12 Days of Christmas, having assigned the numbers to various groups to sing? He is indeed a hard act to follow.

West Bay WI

This month's Chatterbox session is on Wednesday 4 November, 10am–12 noon. At the meeting on Wednesday 11 November, 2.30–4.30pm, Joannie Dyson will lead a Christmas craft session. No doubt members will also be keen to hear how Maggie Hooper got on recently when she was part of a group walking the Camino trail in Spain to raise funds for the Weldmar Hospice. I know I will as it is something I would love to have done.

If you are interested in joining this small, friendly



An exhibit from Earth My Earth, a visiting project highlighting textile waste and the environmental impact of fast fashion

group, please contact Alison Ridge on 01308 897293 or Maggie on 07720 056310. New members are always welcome.

Round and about the Bay

How many of you saw the structure built on the West Pier *(pictured above)*? Or visited the Salt House to see the exhibition of precious old clothes, or went to the clothes swap event? These were part of Kynourio Soma's Earth My Earth, a community-led artistic environmental project that originated in southern Greece. The group adapts it for each place it goes; for Dorset it focused on textile waste and the environmental impact of fast fashion.

I'm not too keen on the dark mornings and I've noticed the number of people selling at the car boot sale decreasing as the weather changes. Normally, walking on both piers I see quite a few fishermen (one

man even brings his dog) but on one morning recently there was no sign of anyone – or so I thought, until I came across a tent on the end of the West Pier. There were two fishing lines set up next to it, but no sign of any fishermen. It was kind of spooky, particularly as there was quite a heavy mist and it was very dark!

The current exhibition at the Discovery Centre is proving very successful and has been admired by locals and visitors alike. Have you spotted Dr Roberts *(pictured right)*? Also on display are some of Dr Roberts' bottles, lent by a local bottle collector who organisers hope may give a talk at some point about his fantastic collection. Despite the hot weather, visitor numbers were maintained at around 21,000. In November the centre is open on Saturdays and Sundays.
Sue Pollock



A model of Dr Roberts in the Discovery Centre

Forthcoming events

Lighting of the Christmas tree	Sun 29 November

Bridport Town Council
WEST BAY WARD

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

The ward clerk writes...

The summer crowds may have thinned and the days grown shorter, but there's no sign of things slowing down in West Bay. From road improvements and flood preparation to beach safety, policing and the future of the WB1 bus, there is plenty happening behind the scenes as West Bay heads into winter.

At the latest West Bay Ward meeting in September, residents brought forward a wide range of local issues, with road safety and parking among the talking points.

Several highway improvements are progressing, with Dorset Council agreeing to move forward with new double yellow lines, hatch markings and other parking restrictions in areas including Quayside, the Esplanade and Station Road. Works on this should have already started, if they are not already finished. Residents also raised concerns about faded road markings, parking near the Cornish Bakery and the lack of crossing markings between the church and bakery, all of which have been referred to Dorset Council.

The proposed 20mph scheme has also moved another step forward following public consultation. The scheme was subsequently submitted by Dorset Council for approval at the end of September and was successful. A delivery programme will now be developed for this and a number of other 20mph schemes across the county, with implementation currently anticipated for spring 2027.

Keeping West Bay safe was another recurring theme. Police continue to patrol the area, making efforts to tackle antisocial driving, while residents had concerns about boating, drones and hazards on the beach. Discussions also continue on seasonal dog restrictions and the possibility of clearer signage for next year.

With wetter weather now upon us, residents are being encouraged to report blocked drains and gullies to Dorset Council via their online reporting portal or the Fix My Street website. Local information is also being gathered to inform a wider review of flood resilience.



There was welcome news for local transport too, with funding secured to keep the WB1 weekend shuttle bus *(pictured)* running for three more years, although the winter timetable may be reduced. Other points included progress towards repairing the St John's Church clock, resurfacing plans for the Quayside car park, and concerns about litter and rusty nails on the beach.

So, while West Bay may be quieter this November, there is certainly plenty going on — and plenty for residents to keep an eye on as we look towards 2027.

Come along to our next ward meeting on Wednesday 11 November at 6.30pm in the Salt House to find out about all the latest going on in your ward.
Amy Stephenson

Bridport UNITED CHURCH

Minister – The Revd Jane Wilson
01308 341159
Church secretary – Jane Clinton
bucchurchsec@gmail.com
Church bookings – visit
hallbookingonline.com/bridportuc
or email *lettingsbuc@gmail.com*

Richard Benjamin is going the distance for Dorset's historic churches

"I must have had a weak moment," laughs Richard Benjamin when asked why he volunteered to help Dorset Historic Churches Trust (DHCT). Fourteen years later he is very much involved and admits that despite the occasional hard work, he finds it hugely rewarding.

Now in his 80s, Richard is the DHCT's deanery area representative for West Dorset, helping churches across the area with one of the trust's most important jobs: raising money and securing grants to keep Dorset's churches in good repair.

He has a particular connection with the trust's annual Ride + Stride fundraising event – held on the second Saturday in September – having taken part for many years. "In my younger days I would happily tackle visiting at least 39 churches on Ride + Stride day," he says. "I'm not as fit as I used to be, though, so I've cut the numbers down a bit – this year I visited 17 churches." His enthusiasm remains, however, and Ride + Stride continues to be one of the highlights of his year. As a member of Bridport United Church, he also emphasises how fantastic it is to have the support of the congregation of his church behind him.

Richard's role as Deanery Area Representative is about much more than taking part himself. He works with parish organisers across West Dorset, encouraging churches to get involved in Ride + Stride and helping them make the most of the fundraising opportunity. He also helps the churches through the process of applying to the DHCT for grant aid when vital repair and conservation work is needed.



Pictured: Richard Benjamin

It is a role that puts in him in close contact with many people working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep local churches open and cared for. Churches receive meagre financial support from the government; instead, the burden of responsibility for their maintenance and conservation falls to communities.

DHCT's work is vital because the county's churches are not only places of worship but an important part of Dorset's architectural, cultural and community heritage. The trust helps churches of all Christian denominations with the cost of preserving and repairing their buildings to ensure they can continue to serve the communities around them. It has supported hundreds of churches since it was founded in 1960 and today works with more than 400 churches across Dorset. Its network of deanery area representatives provide a vital link between individual churches and the trust.

Ride + Stride is central to that work. The event encourages people to walk, cycle or travel however they choose between Dorset's churches while raising sponsorship. The money raised provides income for DHCT, while participating churches can receive a share of half the sponsorship raised on their behalf.

For Richard, it is about the people he meets, the churches he visits and that satisfaction of knowing his time and effort are helping to protect some of Dorset's most treasured buildings for future generations.

So, despite that original "weak moment" there seems little sign of him giving up just yet – although perhaps these days he'll leave a few of those 30+ churches to the younger generation!

Charlotte Springett

November services at Bridport United Church:

Sunday 1	**10.30am**	**Morning Worship with Holy Communion Revd Jane Wilson**
	4pm	**Soul Space**
Sunday 8	**10.30am**	**Remembrance Sunday service, Revd Judy Turner Smith**
	4pm	**In Loving Memory Revd Jane Wilson**
Sunday 15	**10.30am**	**Morning Worship, Revd Ruth Lownsbrough**
Sunday 22	**10.30am**	**Morning Worship Roger Phillips**
Sunday 29	**10.30am**	**Morning Worship Revd Jane Wilson**

Regular events at Bridport United Church

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)
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 or to make a booking, please visit *hallbookingonline.com/bridportuc* or email us at *buclettings@gmail.com*.

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colin.groombridge@prcdtr.org.uk
Secretary – Faith Leborgne
bridport@prcdtr.org.uk
Phone 07544 595633

Sharing our story

I have just returned from walking the Camino – the last 120km of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela – in aid of Weldmar Hospice in Dorchester.

We arrived as a group of individuals who although having spent a little time together on practice walks were in many ways strangers.

We began walking and very quickly heard each other's stories: tales of love for those we have lost, who we want to remember and celebrate. There were many tears along the way but also much laughter amid beautiful stories of those we miss.

We completed our journey having found new friends – who know perhaps more about us than we intended to share. That is the power of the Camino, of walking alongside each other over many miles.

Thank you for the team at Weldmar Hospice who made our journey possible, and thank you for my fellow pilgrims who walked alongside me and allowed me to walk alongside them.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, November is the month when we remember those who have gone before us: the Holy Souls. May we all find someone to share our stories with and experience healing for our loss.
Deacon Mark Brown

Activities at our Bridport church

During the autumn and winter months, a group of us meet each Tuesday evening from 6 to 7pm at the Catholic Church in Victoria Grove to pray in silence for peace before the blessed sacrament. Anyone who would like to join us for either part or all this time is welcome.



Pictured: a waymarker along the Camino

If you are interested in finding out a little more about the Catholic Faith, do contact Father Colin via the parish office.

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.

Bridport QUAKER MEETING The Meeting House 97 South Street

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

Dealing with the modern world?

The introduction to the little Quaker booklet called Advices and Queries says that they are intended not as rules but as help – although some seem to be more demanding than others.

Number 39 says "Consider which of the ways to happiness offered by society are truly fulfilling and which are potentially corrupting and destructive. Be ➔

QUAKER Meeting continued...

discriminating when choosing means of entertainment and information. Resist the desire to acquire possessions or income through unethical investment, speculation or games of chance."

It seems that every organisation and charity now offers prizes for playing or presents for taking part – just giving is no longer seen as enough and we have to have something in return for any good deed. The Advice asks us to think carefully before getting involved and even if it seems like party-pooping, the temptation should be resisted. Ouch!

Jeni Edwards



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

BEACON CHURCH
Priory Lane, Bridport

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

Just Be!

At Beacon Church we are opening the building for the youth of Bridport to come and Just Be.

From Monday 2 November, Beacon Church will be open from 3.45 to 5.30pm for young people aged 12–18 to 'come and be'. There will be a free drink and snack – and of course wifi! There will be an opportunity to buy more drinks and snacks on top of the free ones.

This has come about because we heard the voice of some of the young people in the town. We have worked with Youth Voice Matters to develop the space and have met with three students at Colfox. Our heart is to have a space where everyone is welcome to come and Just Be themselves after school. Do come down and see what's happening!

We meet on Sundays from 10am for prayer, worship and coffee (the service is at 10.30am).

We also meet for prayer on Thursdays from 5 to 6pm. Wherever you are at with your own faith, you are always welcome to come and join us. We pray you can find a home from home with us at Beacon.







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.

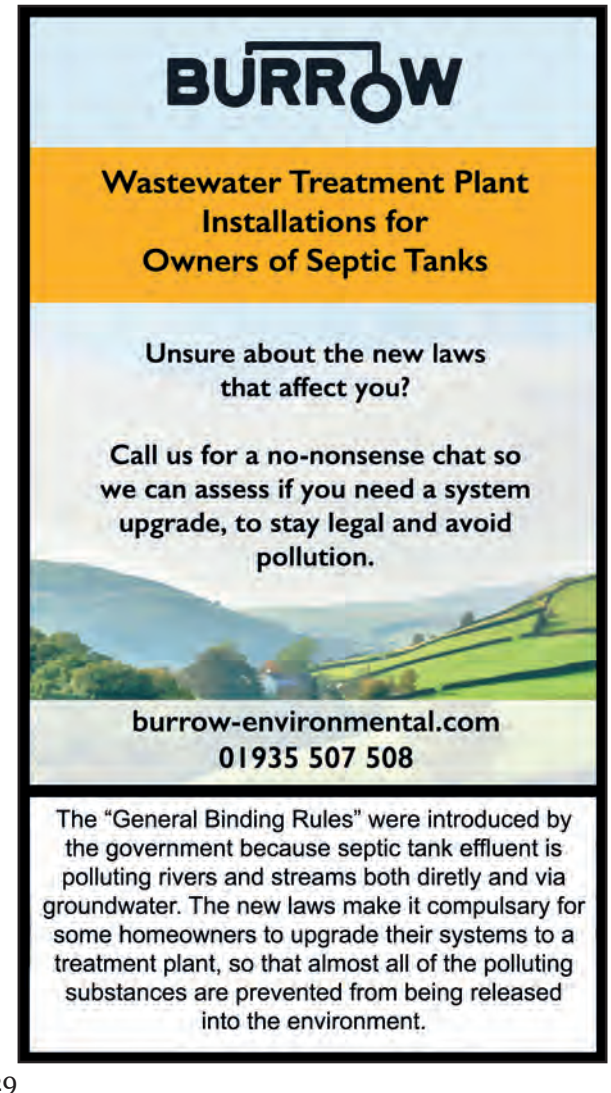
Tuesdays: House groups meet at 2–3pm, 2.30–4pm and 7.30–9.30pm.

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.

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









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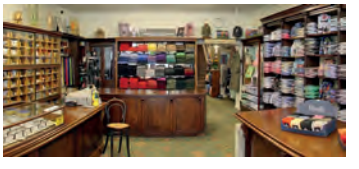
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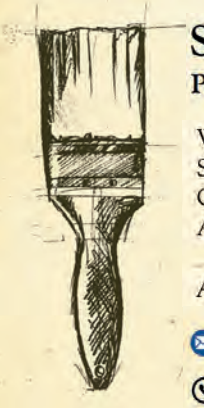
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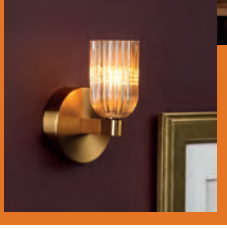
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