

THE BRIDGE December/January 2024/25

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

Village website: sweffling@onesuffolk.net,

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Christmas is almost upon us, and events in Sweffling are building up to the festive season. There is the Christmas Brunch and Market on November 30th, (it may have already happened by the time you read this), the Christmas Brass Concert is on December 6th, the Carol service by Candlelight is on December 15th and we have the Midnight Service of Holy Communion on Christmas Eve. Don't forget the First Thursday Supper on December 5th and the wreath making on the

7th. More details of each of these later in The Bridge – it would be good to see you at them.

From the Rev. Claire Kiddy:

As you will see in my letter in the Upper Alde Link I am looking forward to my first Advent and Christmas in the Upper Alde Benefice. As far as St Mary's Sweffling is concerned, we have the Midweek Holy Communion Service at 11am on the second Sunday of December, the 11th. Unlike the 1st & 3rd Sunday the Midweek Communion is not in traditional language, it is a simple, said, reflective service for the middle of the week. It seems appropriate that in St Mary's church the focus of our reflection on that day will be on Mary and her 'yes' to God. Sweffling Christmas Carol Service will be on December 15th at 5pm and then on Christmas Eve at 11.30pm Midnight Mass (BCP)

The bonus of the special seasonal services and events is getting to know people. So far in Sweffling I have enjoyed the Harvest Lunch, making twiddle muffs at the Rural Coffee Caravan and having Dean Joe Hawes from the Cathedral join us at St Mary's. I expect by the time you read this we will have had the Christmas Market and the countdown to Christmas will have begun.

My New Year's resolution is to find more ways of engaging with the community, my first question will be, what would you like your village church to do? How can I serve you? One thing I would like to do is Messy Church – but is it something families would like? I am sure as I engage with the community I will be finding out the answer.

There are various ways to stay connected:

The Weekly Link – please email me and then I can email you a copy each week

revclairekiddy@gmail.com

Social Media – Upper Alde Churches 'follow' on Instagram and 'like' on Facebook

Please note the service rota in the Bridge and the Upper Alde Link will be different from usual because of additional seasonal service.

Revd Claire

Visit of the Dean of the Cathedral to Sweffling

On Sunday, November 3rd, the Dean of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich came to St. Mary's, preached at our morning service and assisted with Holy Communion. The visit was arranged whilst we were in interregnum. However, we are especially grateful to him for honouring this visit because, the day before, he was in Exeter, taking part in the service of enthronement of Bishop Mike as the 72nd Bishop of Exeter, and he arrived back in bury St Edmunds very late on the Saturday evening. He preached a very meaningful sermon and stayed after the service for coffee and cake, and to chat with the congregation.

Afterwards we received the following message from him:

"It was a delight to be with you, and the warmth of welcome was really impressive."

Joe

MacMillan Coffee Morning – 28th September

A big thank you to everyone for a fabulous effort this year, the final total sent to MacMillan Cancer Support was £850.10. Match funding is in the process for an amount of £750.00 which gives us a final total of £1,600.10. Many thanks to you all. *Lynda Newson*

Harvest in Sweffling

On Sunday October 6th, we celebrated Harvest with a Festival Thanksgiving service of Holy Communion, at which a large congregation enjoyed singing the familiar harvest hymns and listening to Rev. Claire's Harvest message. The windows were decorated with flowers and berries but, as in previous years, instead of fresh produce we asked for donations of food suitable to take to the Social Supermarket in Saxmundham. The village was extremely generous with their gifts and, later in the following week, we were able to fill the car with boxes of dried and tinned goods, toiletries etc.. There were so many gifts that we almost doubled the supermarket stock. Needless to say, the lady in charge was very grateful for the donations and asked for her thanks to be passed to the village.

The Service was followed later by the Harvest Lunch, at which 40 people enjoyed a delicious home-cooked two course meal. The profit from the lunch and the raffle amounted to £430, which was sent to Tear Fund to help with relief in Gaza.

Curry and Quiz night in the Hut

The Curry and Quiz night was attended by 30 people, including a family of 4 from Bruisyard and a couple from Great Glemham, the others being from Sweffling, all of whom had a very enjoyable evening. The three curry dishes, plus onion bhajis, a first for this year, were excellent. A big thank you to the cooks! The quiz questions were entertaining, even if a little obscure at times. There were some excellent raffle prizes, so another big thank you to everyone who donated and to everyone else who helped out generally!

It was a good community effort and we made over £220 net profit, for Hut Funds, making it a very worthwhile event. *Mike Smithson.*

Sweffling Fete AGM, 6th November 2024

This was both the AGM and a 'Wash-Up' meeting. Steve Ashurst, as Chairman of the Fete committee reported that the fete this year had been a great success, both socially and financially. More people from the village had been involved and more visitors came from near and further afield. The Dog Show had been very popular and all the stalls, games, food and drink etc. had been well supported. As a result, the profit amounted to £4317.82, an improvement of £766 over 2023. The total will be allocated according to the Fete constitution, i.e. half to Sweffling Church and the other half to be divided amongst village organisations that requested a share. This year seven organisations made representation at

the meeting, and the committee has allocated money to them in approximately equal amounts. The poster presentations, explaining how the money from the 2023 Fete had been used by the recipients, were very well received.

The date for the 2025 fete planning meeting to be decided, probably late spring next year, If you would like to receive a copy of the full minutes of the meeting, please e-mail Steve: ashurst.stephen@talk21.com

Remembrance Sunday Service.

On Sunday November 11th, Rendham and Sweffling marked Remembrance Sunday with a joint service in St. Michael's Rendham, led by John Tesh. The service commenced with the radio broadcast from the Cenotaph in London, the time signal followed by the two minutes silence and the last post and then continued in church with hymns, Bible readings, prayers and poems appropriate to Remembrance Day. The names of the men from both villages who died in the First and Second World Wars were read by Lesley Bennion and James Morford. Wreaths were laid by Dennis Moore and Jonathan Stevens. Bible readings and poems were read by Charles Seely, Suzanne Stevens, Jo Rogers and Anne Fitzgerald. Following the service in Rendham, the Sweffling wreath was taken to St. Mary's Church, where prayers were said and the wreath was laid on the War Memorial by Kim Hayes.

Stir-Up Sunday

(So-called because the prayer set for the Sunday before Advent begins "Stir up, O Lord, the hearts of Thy faithful people" in preparation for Advent and the coming of the Christ Child.)

On November 17th, Sweffling celebrated Stir-Up Sunday a week early by having a family service of Morning Prayer during which Dr. Anne Fitzgerald made a Christmas Pudding. She was assisted in this by eight enthusiastic children, who added and mixed the ingredients. All the congregation then stirred the pudding and made their Christmas wish. The pudding had 12 ingredients and, whilst making it, Anne described 12 ingredients that would make a good recipe for life. Whilst it was cooking, we had prayers, including special prayers for Safeguarding Sunday, and sang a hymn. After the service, the pudding was shared amongst everyone. it was really delicious!

Parish Council News.

The draft minutes of the meeting of the PC held on November 12th have been posted in the Village notice board at the end of Holden's Lane. Please consult these for detailed information of the proceedings.

Immediate village matters have been summarised below:

Local Infrastructure projects: There was a discussion regarding the proposed infrastructure projects, namely Sizewell, Sealink and Nautilus. Cllr. Tesh had attended a Sizewell C Forum meeting and reported back to the PC. It appears that currently none of the major projects are communicating with each other.

Spring Flowering bulbs. Sweffling has been successful in obtaining from East Suffolk Council a supply of free native spring-flowering bulbs, to be planted around the village. Cllr. Ashurst has more details and will be looking for volunteers for a working party to plant these.

Defibrillator: Amanda Daniel reported that the Parish Council have obtained a defibrillator, free of charge, from the British Heart Foundation. The package includes a ten-year supply of batteries and pads. The defibrillator is due to be delivered in the next three weeks and will be installed at the Village Hut, in a position where it can be clearly seen

from the road. When it is in place and fully connected, there will be a free group training session (approx. 30 mins) for anyone in the village who is willing to join a team of volunteers to learn how to use this equipment.

A new fibre broadband system is currently being installed in the village. Further information will be posted as it becomes available.

Use of Land at the top of Holden's Lane. See letter from Tim Broughton later in the Bridge.

Bowls Club news

By the time you get to read this note our season will be over and the green will be resting. Throughout Autumn and Winter club members work on the green preparing it for next year. The 2025 season will start as usual with an Open Weekend when all are welcome to come and give bowls a try. Some of those who came along for their very first experience last April have played a full season with us. We are a small but friendly club who will always welcome new members.

We also hosted two very successful events this Summer when we welcomed as many as 10 youngsters from Sweffling and surrounding villages giving lawn green bowling a try. Thanks to the ACC for supporting those events. We hope to run more such experiences next year.

In 2025 we will once again have teams in Division 1 of the Woodbridge and District Bowls League and in Division 2 of the Saxmundham League. We will also have a team in the Fynn Trophy. So there are opportunities for players of all abilities to get involved. Please watch for notices in The Bridge and in social media groups for news and the date for our Open Weekend. *John Stanley*

NATURE NOTES December 24/January 25

Since their arrival as a new species in this country (in 2004, from Asia via Europe), Harlequin Ladybirds have spread, and have now been in Sweffling for several years.

Considered a pest, as they eat other species of ladybird, Harlequins had, ironically, been introduced into Europe and America for pest control. You may find them in the garden any time from spring to autumn. They are our largest ladybird, but confusing to identify as they come in so many different varieties. The commonest forms are red or orange, with up to 21 black spots, or black with a variable number of red spots, but there are over 100 varieties! You



can see several forms in the picture. I have written before about their habit of roosting for the winter in the Church. Sure enough, by November there was a similar sized group (several hundred) gathered in exactly the same place as last year.

Ladybirds may live for two years, but I still think it is remarkable that so many find exactly the same place every winter. Go and see them - the Church is open all day on Sundays and Wednesdays. They are in the Southwest corner, between the porch and the tower, in the top right-hand corner of the window tracery. Each year, the Holly bush outside our back door is stripped of its berries well before Christmas eve, as is also the Pyracantha. Last year the main culprits were winter visiting thrushes, Redwings, with the red beneath their wings and prominent stripes above the eyes. I have not seen them in the garden yet this winter, although along with the other winter thrush, the



Fieldfare, they are already here. Instead, the berries are being eaten, even when they are not yet ripe, by Woodpigeons. Woodpigeons cheat. Instead of letting the seeds pass through



their guts, which is the reason berries have evolved to provide food for birds, they grind them up in their gizzards and digest them. In the picture one is doing the same with Ivy berries. Cheats!



This autumn several people have commented to me about how noticeable was the Robin's song at this time. Certainly, there is a lot less other birdsong to compete with, but the song the Robin sings in autumn and winter is different from its spring offering. It is less powerful, described in the books as thinner and more melancholic. It will sing this from time to time all winter, so listen out for it and see if you agree. The reason for this song, as in the spring, is to defend a territory against other Robins. The difference is that this winter territory is to defend a food supply for a single bird, not a breeding area for a pair. At the end of the breeding season any young Robins, which by now have their adult feathers, with the red breast, will get driven out. The same applies to one of the adult pair, more usually, but not always, the female. The evicted birds will wander about, and any which fail to find a vacant territory of their own will undergo a short migration, perhaps as far as France. This means that some of the Robins we hear singing in winter will be females, very unusual for British birds where normally only the males can sing.

Geoffrey Abbott



What's on at the Hut over the Christmas period?

Wednesday Warm-Up Soup lunches continue twice a month at the Hut.

Dates: December 4th, January 15th & 29th from 12 - 3.30pm

A 2 course lunch for £5 all inclusive, followed by crafts, board games and jigsaws.

All welcome to come and Warm-Up at the Hut, chat, work or play.



A special Christmassy lunch will be held on Wednesday 18th December

Cost @ £8 t.b.c. Bookings will be taken at the previous soup lunches.

First Thursday Suppers

Suppers are arranged by Kirstin Stanley and Ruth Richardson usually, but not always, on the first Thursday of months from October through to March or April. These suppers are mainly, but not exclusively, for the community in Sweffling and are held with kind permission of Marie and Mark at the Sweffling White Horse. This year so far the group have supported The Stroke Association and St. Elizabeth Hospice. The theme for each future supper is decided by the participants on the previous occasion. Last month's theme was Spanish dishes and on December 5th we expect to enjoy the cuisine of West Africa, in particular that of Burkina Faso.

The first supper in 2025 will be on the **second** Thursday January 9th. The theme for January will be set at December's supper. Places are limited and are often oversubscribed so if you would like to get involved contact Kirstin by email at kirstin.stanley1@gmail.com

Keep Fit Class in Sweffling Hut.

Did you know there is a weekly Keep Fit class on Thursdays at 10.00 a.m. in the Hut? During December the class will be on 5th and 12th, then break for Christmas and the New

Year. For more information or to book, please contact Clare on 01728 621247 or 077697676161.

Coffee, Cake, Chat and Craft in the Hut

Monday, December 2nd, 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon. Come along and enjoy a cup of coffee, some delicious home-made cake and friendly chat. Craft is optional but bring some along if you wish. No charge, just a donation towards the coffee. Provisionally the following get-together will be on January 6th, weather permitting.

Reminders: Sweffling White Horse – Sweffling Feelgood Book club 2nd Monday of each month, Knit and Natter 4th Monday of each month, both 7.00 – 9.00 p.m.

Fly Tipping, including classified toxic asbestos has occurred in Sweffling. The matter has been reported to the police. Fly tipping is a criminal offence and carries fixed penalty fines of £400, rising to £50,000 and/or imprisonment. If you see fly tipping taking place, make a note of the vehicle registration number and report it to the police. All waste should be disposed of responsibly.

Agricultural land on the corner of Holdens Lane and Chapel Lane.

Hello! My name is Tim and I live in Badingham. It seems that there has been a lot of speculation about this 5 acres of land since I purchased it in February this year and I thought you might appreciate hearing things straight from the horse's mouth so to speak. I have been quietly getting to know the land and I think it is truly lovely.

My wish and intention is to support the natural regeneration of the land. I want to create a balance of open grassland with wild flowers, together with indigenous and naturalised English trees and shrubs to add to what is already here. Tree and hedge planting has now begun of Hornbeam, English Oak, Field Maple, Hazel and Hawthorn. This also includes a couple of native Black Poplars which have been in serious decline in England for many years and is the most endangered of all our native trees. I also intend to include some heritage orchard trees - Apple, Pear, Plum and Greengage as well as Walnut.

I have joined the Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) and will be joining with STWN in setting up one of their small-scale Tree Nurseries on the land, growing a wide range of indigenous and naturalised species using local seeds collected from strong parent trees - a unique way of preserving Suffolk's living heritage for future generations of people and the wider wildlife that trees support. These tree saplings will then be made available free of charge to people and projects locally and across the county.

As part of specified General Permitted Development on agricultural land I have situated on the land a green metal storage container, a natural composting toilet and a water container, all temporary structures. There will also from time to time be some limited low impact temporary recreational camping under the 60-day rule, (previously the 28-day rule), which will sometimes include some shared help with looking after the land as a common endeavour. I have really appreciated help from friends this year as I unexpectedly suffered a heart attack in April. Fortunately, I am making a good recovery and the NHS staff have been amazing.

I have greatly enjoyed meeting lots of people from the village during this year and learning something of the history of this beautiful field and parish. If you see me on the land, I am there quite often, please come and chat to me. *Best wishes, Tim Broughton*

Rendham Mummers: "Rendham women say enough."

Rendham Knoll, Saturday December 21st, 7.30 p.m. Refreshments from 6.30 p.m.
Proceeds to St Elizabeth Hospice Charity, Ipswich

CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES: December/January 2024/25

December 1st	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
December 8th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
December 15th	Sweffling	5.00 p.m.	Carols by Candlelight followed by mincepies and coffee/tea
December 22nd	Rendham	10.00 a.m.	Carol Service
December 24th	Sweffling	11.30 p.m.	Midnight Holy Communion
December 29th	Cransford	10.00 a.m.	Benefice Holy Communion
January 5th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
	Badingham	11.00 a.m.	Celebrating the Epiphany
January 12th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
January 19th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Epiphany Carol Service
January 26th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
February 2nd	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion



CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

If you are a fan of **Carol Services** you can find the following on **Sundays** in the Benefice:
Sweffling - December 15th 5.00 p.m.

Rendham - December 22nd 10.00 a.m.

Cransford - December 22nd 3.00 p.m. Joint with Christian Fellowship at St. Peters.

Dennington - December 22nd 5.00 p.m.

There are also **Crib Services** with Carols on **Christmas Eve** for children and adults:
4.00 p.m. Badingham 5.00 p.m. Bruisyard



Sweffling: Christmas Eve starting at 11.30 p.m. Benefice Midnight Holy Communion

Please note: there is now a **midweek service of Holy Communion** on Wednesday at 11.00 a.m., which rotates between Rendham (1st Wednesday each month), Sweffling (2nd), Cransford (3rd) and Bruisyard (4th).

CHRISTMAS BRUNCH AND MARKET, SWEFFLING HUT

SATURDAY November 30th 10.00 A.M. – 12 NOON



Bacon and egg rolls, Freshly brewed coffee/tea
Christmas-themed stalls: Cakes, Presents, Preserves, Pickles, etc.
Raffle – donations of prizes welcome

Mystery parcels: Anne and Eleanore Fitzgerald will be running this stall and are asking for donations of gift items suitable for adults and/or children. Please contact Anne on 664077.

Proceeds in aid of St. Mary's Church

THERE WILL NOT BE A COFFEE CARAVAN ON THE 4TH WEDNESDAY OF DECEMBER. IT SHOULD RESUME IN JANUARY 2025.

“CHRISTMAS BRASS” CONCERT in SWEFFLING CHURCH

FRIDAY DECEMBER 6th, 7.30 P.M.

Leiston Royal British Legion Brass Band will play our annual concert of popular and Christmas music, with Sing-along Christmas Carols.

The perfect start to Christmas in Sweffling!

Tickets: Adults £8.00, Children £4.00 to include interval

Refreshments. Book with Diana (663578) or Sheila (663518) or pay at door. *Proceeds in aid of St Mary's Church*



CHRISTMAS WREATH-MAKING WORKSHOP WITH A GLASS OF FIZZ.

At Sweffling Village Hut; Saturday 7th December 2 - 5.30pm.



All materials needed will be provided to make a natural green Christmas wreath, wired onto a dried woven base. Seasonal decorative items can then be glued on. £25 inclusive. 12 places available - run by Jill Abbott. **For details or to book** <swefflinghut@gmail.com> or 663402 by 3rd December.



All profits to Sweffling St.Mary's Church.



PHOENIX SINGERS

Saturday 14th December 2024

7.00 p.m. Framlingham College

J.S. Bach CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

In English

Tickets £15 (under 18s free), includes refreshments after the concert. From: phoenixsingers@outlook.com; Hall Farm

Butchers, Market Hill, Framlingham and Choir members. Reg. Charity no. 1076549

Don't forget the Carols by Candlelight, St. Mary's, Sweffling, Sunday December 15th, followed by mincepies and coffee/tea. All welcome Christmas readings and Traditional Carols

Also, Epiphany Carol Service, January 19th 9.30 a.m.



Please e-mail any news items, events or short literary items for consideration for inclusion in the December/January edition to john.tesh@talk21.com before January 12th 2025.

The editors welcome contributions for The Bridge but reserve the right to edit. Accuracy of the content is the responsibility of the submitter. We are limited to 8 pages and so may not be able to publish everything we receive. Dated items of village interest will be given priority. Please include your name and contact details in case we need to get in touch. **The Bridge is sponsored by St. Mary's Church and is delivered free to all houses in the village.**