

THE BRIDGE June/July 2025

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

Village website: sweffling@onesuffolk.net,

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As we move into summer we can look forward to longer warmer days, wild flowers blooming in the fields and hedgerows and gardens bursting into bloom. Spring has been exceptionally dry in our area, and we badly need rain for the crops to flourish, but **NOT** on August 16th which is the date of the Sweffling Fete. Book the date, tell your friends, and if you can help it would be most appreciated. There is more

information later in The Bridge, with contact details if you would like to be involved.

REVD. CLAIRE WRITES:

I am delighted to tell you that on June 1st in Rendham Church at 3.30 p.m. I will be licensed as Rector of the Upper Alde Benefice. This is a significant event not only for me, but also for each parish church as I will be the first female rector in more than 800 years of its' history. At the moment I am licensed as Priest in Charge, this is because a Bishop's Suspension Order was placed on the benefice, when Revd Jonathan Olanczuk retired. So, for 8 years there has been uncertainty over the viability of continuing as just a 6-parish benefice, this is relatively small for a benefice. I am pleased that the suspension has been lifted and that Badingham, Bruisyard, Cransford, Dennington, Rendham and Sweffling can continue to be the Upper Alde Benefice. This is largely due to dedicated parishioners who have worked hard for many years to preserve and maintain the church buildings and have given generously to enable the mission and ministry of the church to continue.

At my licensing service I receive the 'cure of souls'. This sounds a rather old-fashioned term, but it encompasses the unique aspect of the Church of England. The vicar/rector is there for everyone in the parish, for people of all faiths and none, and they are to care deeply for people's spiritual needs and wellbeing. This comes from Jesus' command that we are to love everybody, to love our neighbour as ourselves. The church building is a symbol of God's love, it stands in each parish as constant reminder of the past, present and future, and the gradual changing seasons of life. I know our beautiful buildings are loved and valued by many people who don't wish to come to services but appreciate the peace and tranquillity. The history and the prayer-soaked walls give an awareness of our smallness in the whole created order and a sense of something 'other' or 'more' than ourselves.

It is so important that churches are open every day so that everyone can enjoy their village church. This does rely on volunteers to open and lock and I am very grateful to all those who help with this. We do need more volunteers to unlock Sweffling church, at the

moment it is only open Wednesday and Sunday. I am thankful to those who volunteer to clean their village church, tidy churchyards, arrange flowers and clean the brasses. I am enjoying getting to know all six parishes in the benefice and particularly enjoy meeting people at community events and finding out what people love about their village. As you will see there are lots of summer events coming up in the benefice so I am making sure I get them in my diary. Enjoy the long daylight hours of early summer and hopefully the sun will shine on all our village events. *Revd Claire*

EASTER THANKSGIVING SERVICE AND MEMORIAL LILY FESTIVAL.

Over the Easter weekend, St. Mary's Church was redolent with the scent of more than 70 white lilies, given each given in memory of a loved one. Jill Abbott beautifully wrote the names of those to be remembered on scrolls placed in the window sills. An Easter garden was built and planted at the front of the church and children brought miniature gardens, which were so imaginative and well done. (see photos in centrefold) The Easter Day service of Morning Prayer, led by John Tesh, was well attended and we welcomed a number of visitors. After the service we enjoyed Easter eggs and refreshments.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING (ACM) AND CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLE

At the ACM Wednesday May 7th John Tesh and Amanda Daniel were elected as churchwardens. We are very grateful to Amanda for agreeing to step into Geoffrey Abbott's shoes. Geoffrey has been churchwarden for 15 years and we would like to thank him publicly for all his hard work and dedication to St. Mary's Church during that time. Geoffrey will remain a member of the Parochial Church Council (PCC), together with Anne Fitzgerald, Catharine Loveridge, James Morford, and Sheila Tesh. Teresa Coleman, Pam Fagan and Diana Smith have stepped down from the PCC and again we would like to thank them for their years of service to the church in Sweffling. We know that they will be there to offer help and advice, as they always have done. The names of those on the church electoral roll are posted in the church porch.

SAFEGUARDING.

Safeguarding training is being undertaken by all those at St. Mary's who have any role of responsibility. The aim of the training is not only to ensure that the roles are performed in a proper manner but to be able to recognise in others situations where people may be in need of help and support. John Tesh and Anne Fitzgerald, as church elders who can lead services, have already successfully completed the leadership training and have received their certificates. Other members of the PCC will complete their training during 2025.

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Mr. John McKee of Bruisyard on 18th April 2025. John was a leading light in the social life of Bruisyard and he played a large role in the establishment of Bruisyard Village Hall, a great amenity for the village. He and Teresa organised soup and pud lunches, and various suppers throughout the year. He was a great supporter of village events in Sweffling as well as Rendham and Cransford. John and Teresa were great fans of country music, in particular Scottish and Irish music. They travelled throughout the county to concerts and arranged music evenings in Bruisyard Village Hall.

His funeral was held in Bruisyard Church on Wednesday, 21st May. In typical John style, his coffin was taken to church on the sidecar of a motor bike.

We sent our prayers and condolences to Teresa and family. John will be sadly missed.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) was held on Tuesday May 11th in Sweffling Hut. A written annual report had been received from Stephen Burroughes, County Councillor. Vince Langdon Morris, District Councillor, attended and gave his report, including a brief outline of the proposed reorganisation of governance in Suffolk and Norfolk. This is under discussion at the present time and no decisions have yet been taken. Reports were received from village organisations including the Parish Council, St. Mary's Church, the Townland Trust, the Village Hall, the Alde Community Council and the Tennis Club.

The APM was followed by a meeting of the Parish Council. Items on the agenda included election of the officers of the Parish Council, reports on village matters including Jubilee field, local infra structure, and an update on the progress of the annual audit.

In view of the uncertainty of the local government re-organisation, a decision was taken to suspend temporarily the filling of casual vacancies.

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday, July 8th 2025, in Sweffling Hut. All members of the village are invited to attend.

SWEFFLING WHITE HORSE BOWLS CLUB

We are very fortunate in Sweffling to have a bowls green. Most of our members come from either Sweffling or Rendham but, as other local villages do not have such a facility, we are your local club for all the surrounding area.

We are a small friendly club, the green is situated next to the Village Hut in Sweffling and we will always welcome new members. As we have teams in the three competitions, we have opportunities for players of all abilities and those with no experience of bowls.

For more information you can contact our Club Secretary, John Stanley by email at arthurjohnstanley@gmail.com or by phone on 01728664073 or his mobile 07484793594.

SWEFFLING TENNIS CLUB

The Sweffling Tennis Club is thriving with several active groups of players. With Wimbledon just around the corner, the enthusiasm for tennis is at its height, we welcome new members; families and individuals. We have special rates for one-off weekend/week membership for occasional visitors. Please contact SueRyderR@rusack.myzen.co.uk for further information.

Laura Parsons-Mann is unable to run the children's tennis coaching this summer, having submitted the grant application, the committee failed to discuss or approve it. Laura circulated this information to the parents but received no feedback, so very sadly it will not go ahead this summer. Laura is happy to start the process again for 2026 if there is sufficient interest.

ALDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

This year's Flower Show was a great success, with 125 exhibits and 13 childrens' entries. The Hut was a picture of colour, which was different from the weather outside. The cups were won again this year by Richard Shattock, Sheila Tesh and Glynis Holman.

The children's entries included decorated Easter cards, a garden on a plate, and an assortment of animals carved out of fruit and vegetables. The Junior cups were won by Teddy and Esme Parsons Mann. Many thanks to everyone for supporting us, either by exhibiting, or helping in any way, allowing us to continue with this community event. To finish on sad news, Mr John McKee, a member of our committee, and always supported the Flower Show, has recently passed away. (His tulips won a prize as he was in hospital!)

NEW WAR MEMORIAL AT THE HUT



In addition to the memorial plaque on the wall of the Hut, there is now a new memorial on the side of path, opposite the plaque. This memorial has been expertly crafted and installed by Kim Hayes and provides a fitting place to lay a poppy wreath. The text reads "In memory of the fallen men of Sweffling". The cross and surrounds are made from black-stained wood and the base is infilled with white stone chippings. The cross bears a brass plaque, with the inscription "Lest we forget". The names of the fallen can be found on the war memorial in St. Mary's church, Sweffling.

EASTER MEMORIAL LILY FESTIVAL (see page 2)



BRIDGE NATURE NOTES June - July 2025

The first Painted Lady butterfly I saw this year was at the beginning of May, along the verge in Sweffling village street. The Painted Lady is an attractive butterfly, with wings of an orange ground colour, and clear black and white markings towards the tips. This one, however, was a sorry sight. As well as the wings being battered and damaged, their colour was faded (through loss of their coloured scales) so that they were pale grey rather than orange. These butterflies do not survive the winter here. They arrive from the spring onwards as migrants, on a journey starting, astonishingly, in North Africa, and passing through Spain, Portugal and France. The journey takes them at least two generations, breeding on the way. I have seen them in the summer, in the high passes of the Pyrenees, on the Spanish French border. In some years they are scarce, but in others much more abundant. The caterpillars feed on thistles, but the adults can be seen wherever there are flowers, especially in gardens. It seems quite a privilege to have this beautiful creature fly all this way to visit your garden flowers. Incidentally, another colourful garden butterfly, the Red Admiral, is also a migrant from France.

Another butterfly, the Small Heath, which I do not know well, seems to be much more common this year. A small, light brown butterfly, it never settles with its wings open, so what shows when it lands is only the underside. This is a pale grey-brown, but with orange on the fore-wing, like a very small Meadow Brown. The caterpillar feeds on grasses, mostly on sandy soils. Not a spectacular creature, but good to learn about something new.



From time to time I mention new insects which have turned up in the village. One that I



have been asked about but have not seen, and which is getting sensational news reports from time to time, due to its habit of preying on Honeybees from their hives, is the Asian Hornet. Our native Hornet is becoming increasingly familiar,



with its large, handsome brown, yellow and gold body. The new species is slightly smaller, much darker (almost black), with a yellow or orange band near the tip of its abdomen, and yellow feet. Easy to distinguish.

A couple of plants to look out for. The first is called Crosswort, a plant I mentioned in a



talk as preferring chalky soils. This means that here it is found on the clay soils, (which are slightly chalky), and I have found it recently on a couple of field margins. Not very striking, it has short spikes of tiny yellow flowers. The leaves are arranged up the stem in groups of four, giving it its name, and showing its relationship to the Goosegrass family. The

second is not usually found wild, but is grown



occasionally as a fodder crop. It is a clover, with an extraordinary red colour, called the Crimson Clover. A field of it beside Holden's Lane, at the time of writing, is truly spectacular

This has been an extraordinary spring, sunny and dry, with everything appearing early, and blossom, especially Hawthorn, the best I have ever seen. On the other hand, many flowers are over early, and places like the Churchyard have become extremely dry (at least for now!). It will be interesting to see how different it looks like for flowers this summer.

Geoffrey Abbott

HUT EVENTS:

Chat and Craft with coffee and cake

Monday June 2nd and July 7th 10.00 a.m.-12.00 noon

Bring your own craft, join in with a group project or just come for a chat. All welcome. Led by Liz Eaton (01728 663613). Donations welcome to cover costs.

Saturday June 7th 7.00 p.m. BLUES NIGHT with the Blyth River Blues Band

Tickets £12 to include a Hot Dog.

Contact Mike Smithson: mikesmithson@gmail.com or text 07753825938

(See notice on back page of The Bridge)

Rural Coffee Caravan

Wednesday June 25th, July 23rd and August 27th 10.00 a.m.-12.00 noon

Note: Only in the Hut if weather is inclement, otherwise on the Jubilee Field Free and accessible to everyone. Coffee, tea and snacks. Chat, advice and information leaflets. Also, the organisers aim to bring a guest advisor each month.

Thursday July 3rd 6.00 p.m. - 9.30 p.m. Men@Work

More details to follow later

Date for your diary: Sunday September 7th 2.00 - 5.30 p.m.

Sweffling History Afternoon: Exhibition and Teas.

An exhibition of historical photos, maps and documents from various sources and family collections, including the Millennium books written and illustrated by families living in the village a quarter of a century ago.

SWEFFLING FETE - SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 16th August 1pm - 4pm

On Townland Meadow

All the usual traditional attractions

Fun Dog Show, BBQ, Beer Tent, Homemade teas, Pimms and Ice cream; Games, Tractor rides, Cake Stall, Bric a brac, Clothes & Books; Grand Draw - tickets will be in the next 'Bridge'

Fun for all the family - all profits to Sweffling Organisations.

If you haven't already said you would help, but would like to, please let Steve or Jill know asap. We are still in need of help for jobs large and small.:

Steve 07836 379940 or Jill 01728 663402 or [<jillianaabbott@gmail.com>](mailto:jillianaabbott@gmail.com)

Final Fete Planning Meeting

Wednesday 9th July 7.00 p.m. at Sweffling Hut.

All invited. The success of the fete depends upon everyone's participation. The village needs your support. Thank you!!!

THE LITTERPICK was a great success with a large number of volunteers. Many thanks to Audrey and Steve for their hard work in organising this.

FUTURE OF THE SWEFFLING WHITE HORSE

On 1st April 2025, more than 100 people attended a meeting in Sweffling Hut to discuss the future of the White Horse. At the end of the evening it was decided that a way forward would be to explore the possibility of a "Buy-Out" by regular customers, and a committee of 7 volunteers was formed under a chairman, to take this idea forward. Discussions are on-going, but no news has filtered through yet.

REMINDER: MOBILE SHOP: Dales's Mobile Shop visits the village each Thursday between 1.30 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. It is parked in the layby at the front of the church. He has a wide range of household items and fruit and vegetables and comes highly recommended by those village residents who have shopped with him. Please support the shop, so that Sweffling does not lose this very useful facility.

CHURCH SERVICES – SWEFFLING AND RENDHAM; JUNE-JULY 2025

Date	Venue	Time	Service
June 1 st	Sweffling Rendham	9.30 a.m. 3.30 p.m.	Holy Communion Licencing service for Rev. Claire
June 8 th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
June 15 th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
June 22 nd	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
June 29 th	Rendham	10.00 a.m.	Benefice Holy Communion
June 29 th	Sweffling	6.30 p.m.	TAIZE SERVICE All invited
July 6 th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
July 13 th	Rendham	11.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
July 20 th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
July 27 th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
August 3 rd	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

There is a midweek service of Holy Communion on each Wednesday at 11.00 a.m. which rotates around the benefice as follows: 1st Wednesday – Rendham, 2nd Wednesday Sweffling, 3rd Wednesday, Cransford, 4th Wednesday, Bruisyard.

ARCHDEACON'S VISITATION: This is a slightly archaic term to describe the service at which the newly elected churchwardens make formal declarations that they will undertake the duties and responsibilities of churchwardenship and the Archdeacon offers prayers and encouragement. For Sweffling, this will be held on **Thursday June 19th in Framlingham Church at 7.30 p.m.** All are welcome to the service to support the churchwardens.

A “**TAIZE**” service will be held, in St Mary’s Church, Sweffling, on Sunday June 29th at 6.30 p.m. Taize Worship is a simple, meditative form of evening worship, and involves readings and periods of silence, interspersed with simple repetitive chants. If you have already experienced a Taize service and would like to help with the singing, please contact Amanda (663341), Sheila (663518) or Caroline (664112).

SUNDAY SCHOOL Families are warmly invited to bring their children to our fun and creative Sunday School, run with the Sweffling Church Services. Kids can enjoy Bible stories and hands-on crafts in a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere, followed by drinks and biscuits. It's a great opportunity to learn, play, and make new friends. Contact Anne (664077) for more details. See above for dates of Sweffling services/

COMMUNITY BUS – Picks up from your address

The Community Bus Service is available for all residents of East Suffolk District Council area. Transport is provided Monday to Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and the booking office is open 8.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can also book through the web site. Non-profit organisations can also hire their vehicles.

Contact 01728 830516 or 01728 635938 to ask for the bus to call, opening hours from 8.45 a.m. www.cats-paws.co.uk. The drivers are all volunteers and are very friendly and helpful with shopping etc.. The vehicles are all wheelchair accessible and are for people who can't easily use public transport, have no access to a car or live in a rural location.

UPCOMING EVENTS



JUNE 7TH 7.00 P.M.
THE BLYTH RIVER BLUES BAND
 Suffolk’s finest rocking blues band playing the music of John Lee Hooker, B.B. King, Canned Heat, Dr. Feelgood, Howling Wolf, the Doors, ZZ Top, Fleetwood Mac and much more.

Sweffling Hut Tickets £12
 Contact Mike Smithson to book
mikesmithson@gmail.com or text 07753 825938

Proceeds to Hut funds.

ST. MARY’S CHURCH, SUNDAY JUNE 29TH 6.30 P.M.

TAIZE SERVICE
JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL SERVICE
OF MUSIC, MEDITATION AND
PRAYER. ALL WELCOME



Sweffling Church and Village Fete
August 16th. Townland meadow 1.00.p.m.
Tell your friends and book the date
Final planning meeting July 9th 7.00 p.m.
Sweffling Hut

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Sunday September 7th 2.00 - 5.30 p.m.
Sweffling History Afternoon: Exhibition and Teas.
More details in the next edition of The Bridge

Harvest Festival Thanksgiving and Lunch. Sunday October 5th.
Donations of gifts for the local foodbank, please.

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