

THE BRIDGE JUNE-JULY 2026

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

Village website: sweffling@onesuffolk.net,

The Rev. Claire Kiddy, revclairekiddy@gmail.com, Tel: 07469
718695



There will be an Open-air Service in Sweffling Churchyard on Sunday, 14th June at 3.00 p.m., followed by afternoon tea at church.

We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful place and the service is designed to celebrate this and to give thanks to God for his goodness to us and for the nature all around us.

Everyone welcome

From the Rev. Claire:

We are fast approaching the longest day of the year, when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky. The summer solstice occurs on Sunday 21st June 2026 at 9.24am, the sun will have reached its highest point in the sky and officially this will be the first day of summer. I am very grateful for the longer days; there is more time to appreciate creation all around me, to watch the sun going down and the light evenings gives more opportunity to tend to the very large rectory garden.

The days will then shorten by roughly 3 minutes a day, at first we hardly notice the evenings drawing in. This is surprising really as we are creatures of habit and yet we adapt to living in varying shades of light and dark. When you think of it, we live very differently depending on the time of year, in the summer months we might head for the beach after a day's work or we might fire up the BBQ and eat supper in the garden. In the winter months the curtains are closed by 4pm, going out can feel like quite an effort, staying cosy indoors seems more attractive. Is it any wonder that some people find the contrast between light and dark too much to cope with and suffer seasonal stress disorder?

“Jesus is the Light of the World, through him all things were made.In him was life and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.” These familiar words from the Gospel of John are read at our Christmas services. In the darkness of winter, the metaphor of the light of Christ shining in the darkness is easier to relate to.

So how are you reminded of the Light of the World shining in the darkness when you are enjoying the long light days of June, I wonder.

John's Gospel reminds us that in the beginning was the Word and that through him all things were made. The book of Genesis takes us back to the beginning when God created

the heavens and earth, the earth was formless and empty, the darkness was over the surface and the Spirit of God was hovering over the water and God said let there be light and there was light.

As spring begins to turn to summer the growing season accelerates, grass quickly grows, plants flourish and bloom, birds are singing and sunny days lift the spirit and all seems good. Creation itself reminds us that we are all part of God's created order, made in his image we are to be the love and light of Christ in a world that desperately needs it.

Care for God's creation is part of the Christian life. We honour the Creator when we care for creation. We show love to our neighbours when we care about the places in which we live and we work for justice when we seek to tackle climate change and halt the loss of nature. Our churchyards are valuable green spaces in our communities and they give opportunity to put our faith into action and to be responsible stewards of God's good earth.

June 6th-14th is Churches Count on Nature, a week to pay particular attention to plants and insects of particular interest and to record what you have seen.

To celebrate and give thanks for the nature found in our churchyards, Sweffling are holding an outdoor Churchyard Service and tea on Sunday 14th June at 3pm.

It is great to know our churchyards will be part of our mission and ministry this summer: Badingham celebrates midsummer on Saturday 20th June with a fun afternoon which will highlight how the churchyard is being managed to benefit wildlife. There will be opportunity to see how the community gardens are flourishing, and you can marvel at the amazing bug house with five-star accommodation created by children.

Saturday 27th June at 3pm you can enjoy a strawberry tea in Bruisyard Churchyard, with lovely views of the Suffolk countryside.

Plans are underway for Messy mornings in August and once again we will be using our churchyards for various trails and bug hunting.

To show our commitment to caring for God's creation some churches have expressed interest in becoming Eco Churches and hope to begin applying for bronze awards.

Lots of opportunities to enjoy God's wonderful world this summer – remember to make the most of the long days while you can, as each day the light fades earlier by three minutes.

Revd Claire.

Obituary:

It is with sadness that we report the death of Joyce Hewitt in April this year. Joyce and Dennis lived in the Mill House and raised their family there, but after Dennis's death, Joyce slowly developed dementia and spent her last years in a care home. Joyce was a supporter of the church and always active in village activities. She is buried with Dennis in Sweffling Memorial Garden. We remember her with fondness and send condolences to her family.

Easter in St. Mary's.

Lilies, given in memory of family and friends, again decorated the church for Easter and the beauty and scent were amazing. The names of those to be remembered were written on decorated scrolls by John Tesh and were read out at the Easter Day Thanksgiving service.

There was a beautiful Easter garden prepared by the Tesh family and Rose and Annie Loveridge made lovely miniature Easter gardens.

The church was full and the congregation enjoyed singing familiar Easter hymns and listening to the benefice choir sing the introit "This Joyful Eastertide" and the hymn "Now the green blade rises". Thanks to Rev. Claire for leading the worship and to everyone who

took part in the service in any way. After the service refreshments and Easter eggs were enjoyed by all.

Taize service

The third of our regular Taize services was held on Sunday evening, April 12th. It was a quiet, reflective service, enjoyed by all those who were present. The next service will at the end of July, date to be announced.

Annual Parish Church Meeting

At the APCM held in church on April 22nd, Mrs Daniel and Professor Tesh were re-elected as Churchwardens. Professor Tesh was also re-elected as Treasurer. Members of the PCC are Mrs. Tesh (Secretary), Dr. Fitzgerald (Safeguarding Officer), Mr. Abbott, Mrs. Loveridge, Mr. Morford and Mrs. Weatherby. There are 21 people on the church electoral roll.

St. Mary's Church roof repairs

You may have noticed scaffolding on the church building at the junction of the tower with the main body of the church. This was needed to facilitate repair of the abutment of the church roof to the tower, which allowed the ingress of water inside the church. The repair has now been completed, at a total cost of £9436 of which £1573 was VAT. Previously, historic buildings, such as churches, had been able to recoup the VAT on building repairs but the present government, in its wisdom, has revoked this possibility, so all future repairs will have 20% added to the cost of the work. Now that the roof is watertight we have to wait for the internal plasterwork to dry out before embarking on internal repairs at additional cost. We also need to pay attention to the external woodwork (bargeboards etc) as these are in need of repair/replacement and painting.

Bygones Day

On Sunday, May 10th, Julian and Sandy Rowe organised a very successful Bygones Day on the Townland Meadow. The weather stayed fine, if a little chilly, but it did not affect the enthusiasm of the exhibitors. There was an amazing turn out of classic and vintage cars, tractors, engines and other memorabilia, all of which were admired by villagers and visitors alike. Soup, rolls, scones and cakes were served with tea, coffee and soft drinks available. It was a most enjoyable time and the exhibitors were overheard asking when the next one would be organised! The day raised the magnificent sum of £1739, which Julian and Sandy have generously donated to St. Mary's Church. The money will be used to help fund the church repairs. **Photographs of the event are in the centrefold of The Bridge**
A message from Julian and Sandy: *A lovely, if cold, day was had by all at the recent Bygones Rally on the Townland Meadow on 10th May. We would like to say thank you to all helpers and for contributions to the food. It couldn't happen without this help. The sum of £1739.00 was raised and donated to St Mary's Sweffling.*

Sweffling Supper Club

Another year has come to an end. We only do the supper clubs between October and April. It was started to get people together in the dark winter months. This year we had some great themes from Caribbean to Spanish.

Thanks to all who cooked for us and came along to offer their support. A special thank you to Michelle and the other community staff who ran the bar on those evenings.

This year we have raised a wonderful £520 which will be split between the St Elizabeth hospice and EACH.

Well done to all involved and we hope to see you again after the summer.

Kirstin and Ruth

Bygones Day Pictures



Tennis club news

June is the start of the new season for Sweffling Tennis Club. This year, in addition to conventional tennis, the court is also set up for Pickle Ball. All the equipment is kept on the court and is available for members to borrow. If there is sufficient interest, we can arrange Pickle Ball lessons as well as a Pickle Ball evening.

The annual BBQ is on the 25th May. This is where members have the chance to meet others and arrange possible club nights, activities and possibly a summer BBQ. There is an active What's App group for both court booking and to contact members for games. New members are extremely welcome. We have a variety of categories including Juniors for all school age children, at only £5/pa. Anyone interested should contact Sue Rusack on 07904 088794

Sweffling Parish Council Report

The Annual Village meeting and the Parish Council (PC) AGM were held in Sweffling Hut on May 12th 2026, following the County Council elections on May 7th. Due to boundary changes, Sweffling is no longer in the Framlingham Ward but is part of Saxmundham and surrounding villages. Therefore, Sweffling had to say goodbye to Councillor Stephen Burroughes who has served our community for many years. Thanks were recorded for all his dedicated service and assistance to Sweffling during his time in office. Our new County Councillor is Julia Ewart and we look forward to working with her.

At the Annual Village meeting, reports were received from the District Councillor, Parish Council, St. Mary's Church, the Townland Trust, Sweffling Hut committee, the Alde Community Council and the Tree Warden.

At the PC AGM John Tesh was re-elected as Chairman and Amanda Daniel as Vice-Chairman. The responsibilities of the other councillors are detailed in the minutes of the meeting, which have been posted on the village notice board. Other PC business is also included in the minutes. The 2025 annual audit, which entails an extraordinary amount of effort was very well received. Thanks were recorded to the Parish Clerk, Peter Grogan, for all his hard work throughout the year.

The next meeting of the PC will be held in Sweffling Hut on July 14th at 7.30 p.m. All members of the village are invited to attend.

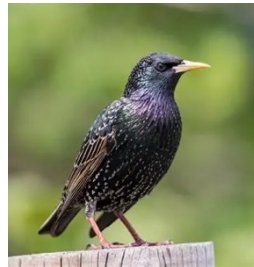
Bridge Nature Notes June - July 2026

One of the birds which we have seen declining in numbers in Sweffling is the Starling.

Only a few years ago these birds used to nest under the pantiles of our roof, where visitors could watch them. One year, the nest site was taken over by Squirrels, and the Starlings never came back. There are still a few in the Village in summer, and a few small parties in the winter, but they are much scarcer than previously, and nationally they have shown a worrying decline. It was good, therefore, to see them here in town, nesting under the roof

Of the cottage opposite. They have been busy feeding for three weeks, but at the time of writing, the young have just fledged and left the nest.

They were not here when we arrived in the winter, but by spring a few were around, with one singing its loud song of rattles and whistles, from a neighbour's chimney pot. Starlings are very handsome at this time of year, the breeding season. They have glossy, black plumage, which in sunlight is shot with areas of green, or purple. The beak is yellow, with blue at the base in the male. The new young are a plain pale greyish-brown. Late in the summer they will all moult into the non-breeding plumage, which is black, but covered in pale buff



spots. Most birds moult all their feathers once in each year, as they become worn and abraded, and cannot be repaired. Moulting again, however, to acquire a new set of breeding feathers is expensive, requiring much food and energy, and Starlings, along with some other birds (such as House Sparrows), have evolved means to avoid this. During the winter and very early spring, the pale spots, which are the tips of all those feathers, (and which are much softer than the dark parts), wear away, to reveal plain glossy black

underneath.

Cuckoos again returned to Sweffling in April. I hope that you have been hearing this very special, evocative bird. There was one calling further up the river, in Bruisyard, by the middle of the month. I am always pleased to hear them, and that they are still with us. Regarding their winter migrations to Africa, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has for several years marked several individuals with transmitters, which enable them to be tracked. You can follow these journeys on the Cuckoo migration link on the BTO website. The Swifts have been back from Africa since the first week in May (we first saw them over Framlingham on May 3rd), one of the latest migrants to arrive. Watch out for them, and listen for their 'screaming' flights over the village, and the Sweffling and Rendham pubs. The builders here installed a couple of Swift nest boxes high up on our house, under the eaves. Swifts will definitely use nestboxes, and I know of several nestboxes nearby which are being used, but it takes several years to find and adopt them. We will just have to be patient.



Geoffrey Abbott



Bell Ringing News

It has been a joy to hear the bells rung regularly for services. The new recruits are now able to participate in service ringing but there is always room for new learners. Please contact Jonathan or Suzanne Stevens if you would like more information.

The more experienced ringers have been taking part in Striking Competitions. Congratulations on their excellent results:

North East District of the Suffolk Guild Striking Competition at Wisset, Saturday May 9th, Call Change Competition`;

1st Aldeburgh 37 faults; 2nd Rendham and Sweffling 38 faults; 3rd Beccles 42 faults
4th Reydon and Southwold 54 faults; 5th Chediston 60 faults

Rendham and Sweffling were awarded the trophy for the Most Improved Band, mainly because the Masseys have returned to the fold. The trophy can be seen by the ringing chamber in Sweffling church.

Guild 8 Bell striking competition at Gislingham Saturday May16th:

North East District came third out of six bands. Towers represented in the NE Band were Rendham/Sweffling, Reydon, Halesworth, Chediston and Aldeburgh.

Marks for top three bands in percentages: NE District 88%, the Norman Tower (Bury St Edmunds) 90% and the winning band, North West on 91.7%.

SWEFFLING HUT EVENTS:

Saturday June 7th at 7.00 p.m.

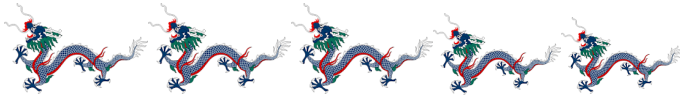
THEY'RE BACK! THE ONE AND ONLY BLYTH VALLEY BLUES BAND.

If last year's performance is anything to go by, they will have The Hut really rocking.

- Tickets: £12.50 per person (limited to 50).
- Includes: hot dog supper.
- A licensed bar will be available: Keg beer; Wines; Soft drinks.

Booking essential. Tickets are limited. Booking is via Mike Smithson

Email: swefflinghut@outlook.com Text: 07753 825938



Thursday 2nd July Sweffling Hut, 7.30 p.m.

TALK on CHINESE ASTROLOGY.

Johanna Murray will talk about this ancient art, with its roots going back to Daoism 5,000 years ago. This traditional system is based on the lunisolar calendar, using a 12-year cycle, where each year is represented by an animal sign. This practice is still relevant in China today where many people believe that the animal sign of their birth year, can determine personality traits and destiny.

£8.00 per person. Please contact Caroline Weatherby (01728 664112 for further information.

CHURCH SERVICES: June – July 2026

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|--|
| June 7th | Sweffling | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| June 9th | Dennington | 7.00 p.m. | Archdeacon's visitation, Swearing in of Churchwardens |
| June 14th | Rendham | 9.30 a.m. | Morning Prayer |
| June 14 th | Sweffling | 3.00 p.m. | Open-air Churchyard service |
| June 21st | Sweffling | 9.30 a.m. | Morning Prayer |
| June 28th | Rendham | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| July 5th | Sweffling | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| July 12th | Rendham | 9.30 a.m. | Morning Prayer |
| July 19th | Sweffling | 9.30 a.m. | Morning Prayer |
| July 26th | Rendham | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| August 2nd | Sweffling | 9.30 a.m. | Holy Communion |

Taize Service at end of July – date to be announced

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 Fitzgerald (664077) for more details.

RENDHAM FETE. 12:30 - 4:00PM SATURDAY 4TH JULY 2026
Grove Farm Meadow

Attractions include: Woodbridge Brass Band; Birds of Prey Flying Display; Samboomba Samba Band; Drive-by from the Suffolk Vehicle Enthusiasts Club; East Anglian Kite Flyers with their huge kites; Stand showcasing Parham Airfield Museum; Dog Show; The Red Barrows; Grand Prize Draw. BBQ; Refreshments, Stalls etc. **FREE ENTRY; PLENTY OF PARKING**

OTHER EVENTS:

Aldeburgh Music Club concert in Orford Church, Saturday May 30th at 7.30 p.m.

FOLK SONGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

Ticket £15, under 18 £7.50 from Aldeburgh Music Club or pay on the door

Liz Eaton has **TEXTILE ART EXHIBITION** at the Blacksmith Gallery, 24 Bridge Street, Framlingham IP13 9AH from 23rd June till the 5th July, 10am - 4pm. If you are not familiar with Liz's work you must visit to view the beautiful artwork she has created. For more information, contact lizeaton@gmx.co.uk

Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association – Working for a safer Suffolk

Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch has received funding from the Lottery Community Fund and is revitalising the scheme. For further information, go to ourwatch.org.uk or suffolknwa.co.uk, or contact Nick King, Suffolk Watch association on 07910 175223.

IMPORTANT!!! SWEFFLING VILLAGE FETE NEWS

Preparations are well under way for our next Village Fete on **Saturday, 15th August** on Townland Meadow. Please put the date in your diary and start collecting items for the various stalls as well as planning your delicious contributions for the cake and produce stall. Also, we are looking for original and unusual raffle prizes, so do get in touch with your suggestions.

The next planning meeting is on **Thursday, July 9th at 7.00 pm** in the Village Hut - all welcome. Please email swefflingfete26@gmail.com with any offers of help, enquiries or suggestions. *Geoffrey and Katie Boulton*



**SWEFFLING
FÊTE
& DOG SHOW**

SATURDAY 15 AUGUST 1-4PM

**We need your help in supporting this year's village fête
and would welcome donations for the stalls.**

Bric a Brac and the Clothes Stalls
Good quality clean clothes, china, glass and bric a brac donations can be brought on the day in the morning to The Townland Meadow or delivered beforehand to Jenny Tyson at 4 Holdens Meadow. Please leave in the porch if no answer.

Bottle Tombola
The Wilkinsons would like in date bottles of any sort and cans of drink for the tombola. Please deliver to Wayside, Glemham Road, Sweffling or phone 01728 663256 if needed to be collected.

Books
Any books will be gratefully received at The Old Rectory by Jo and Leaf.

Cakes, Biscuits, Preserves and Plants
We are hoping to have a delicious array of homemade cakes, biscuits, preserves and plants. Please deliver any contributions either by 14th August to Liz Eaton, Shingle Bungalow, Low Street, Benhall, IP17 2BH, Tel. 07701 004879 or alternatively to the cake stall at Townland Meadow between 12 noon and 1 pm on 15th August. Gluten free, vegetarian and vegan bakery always welcome.

Grand Draw Prizes
We are looking for original and unusual raffle prizes. Please email swefflingfete26@gmail.com with details or suggestions of prizes you can source.



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 of charge to all houses in the Village**