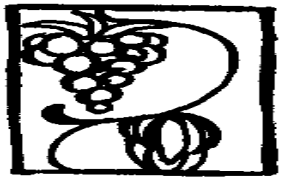
THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



April 2025 No:234

Dear Neighbours,

Spring is in full swing, and after a sunny March, the month ahead offers plenty to keep you busy. We've got our favourite regular articles, updates, and news, along with a special call to action for volunteers to join the **churchyard tidy-up on April 5th**—let's get St Clare looking its best as the season blossoms.

It's also the perfect time to start planning ahead for some key dates later in the year, like the much-anticipated Ride and Stride and the Open Garden with jazz. And with the brighter weather already upon us, why not fire up the barbecue early? Be sure to grab some **Bishops Farm Beef** to make the most of those al fresco meals.

We hope you enjoy this edition and find it a handy guide for the month ahead.

Margaret Lovick
Tel: 01284 386662

Sarah Pittard
Tel: 07816754163

Email: stclaregrapevine@gmail.com

Letter from the Rectory

Dear Friends,

'April is the cruellest month...' T.S.Eliot begins his epic poem 'The Wasteland', although we will undoubtedly be rejoicing at the (hopefully) warmer weather and the land being flushed with flowers.

I am reminded of Eliot's poem, because it is just as the earth is awakening from winter and the creation of new life that the church commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus, on that black Good Friday. Those who had been close friends and followers of Jesus felt that their world had been torn apart. The man who had taught them, inspired them, irritated them, but most important of all - who loved them, had gone from them in such a cruel and humiliating way. But then three days later - what joy! Jesus is back with them - and he sends them out to tell everyone else the good news.

Good news is something that we rarely have in our media today. If an alien were to land on our planet and only had our newspapers and TV to learn about us then he/she/it would have a very lop-sided view of our planet. But we know that there is more to life than the misery and pain which is often shown on our TV screens. There are many signs of the beauty and goodness of life being shown by people.

Life is meant to be lived in community, we human beings are social creatures, and we are programmed to live with each other and to take care of each other. And that is also the message of the Christian church, which is here to support families and communities to thrive.

So, as we celebrate Easter in April - the cruellest of months - and we finish our Lenten fast and begin to eat chocolate again, let us also celebrate the fact that we can live together in community, serving each other as Christ serves us.

Yours in Christ,
Canon Sharon

revsharon2@gmail.com
01284-828599, 07825 086063
Cockfield website: www.cockfieldbenefice.com

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events - March 2025

Sunday 6 April Passion Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion - Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm Six2seven - Felsham Village Hall
Tuesday 15 April	11am Holy Communion - Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 13 April Palm Sunday	Walk of witness from Gedding to Felsham, gather at Gedding Church at 9.30am, followed by: 10.30am Palm Sunday Communion - Felsham
Monday 14 April	7.30pm Compline - Bradfield St Clare
Wednesday 16 April	7.30pm Compline - Bradfield St Clare
Thursday 17 April	2-4pm Village Friends - Felsham Village hall
Thursday 17 April Maundy Thursday	7pm Agapé Communion - Bradfield St George Village Hall (places limited - please book via Canon Sharon)
Friday 18 April Good Friday	2pm Reflections on the Cross - Gt Whelnetham
Sunday 20 April Easter Sunday	10am Easter Day Communion - Stanningfield 10am Easter Day Communin - Cockfield 10am Praise God Together at Easter - Felsham
Sunday 27 April	9.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together - Bradfield St George 10am Holy Communion - Gedding

A service of Celtic-style Morning Prayer is usually held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am.
Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at www.cockfieldbenefice.com.
For any other matter contact Rev Canon Sharon Potter, revsharon2@gmail.com, tel: 01284 828599 or 07825 086063.

VILLAGE FRIENDS

An over 65's friendship group

The next meeting will be on
Thursday 17 April
at Felsham and Gedding Village Hall

If you would like to come please contact:
Canon Sharon 01284-828599 or 07825 086063
revsharon2@gmail.com (drivers are able to provide lifts, just let Canon Sharon know)

Organised by the Cockfield Benefice

Bradfield St Clare Parochial Church Council is looking for a new Treasurer.

Do you have some time to spare and have a head for figures (and computers!)?

You do not need to be a member of the worshipping community as you can be co-opted onto the PCC. The PCC meets 4/5 times a year. For an informal chat if you are interested please contact Rev Canon Sharon Potter, revsharon2@gmail.com, 01284 828599 or 07825086063.

KIT CAFE

keep in touch.

Our next opening will be: Saturday, 19th April from 11 am – 1 pm

This café is FREE and OPEN TO EVERYONE Why not make a date in your diary?

There was a fantastic atmosphere at our March opening. The whole hall was buzzing with everyone enjoying meeting up with friends and neighbours. It was lovely to see John and Sally again who were real stalwarts of the village and very much missed when they moved to Bury St Edmunds. We were all pleased to see Siobhan and Derek too. They moved to Redgrave last year and cycled the 28 miles to join us!

Special thanks to everyone who provided something for the table. There were some delicious cakes and savouries! We now have a list of people who are happy to bake occasionally but if you haven't put your name down and are willing to be included please let us know.

Please come and join us for our next opening on **Saturday, 19 th April any time between 11 am and 1pm for coffee, tea, cakes and savouries.** It is the Easter weekend too so expect some special treats! Pop in for five minutes or stay for the whole two hours. There are games, colouring books and pencils to keep our younger visitors amused. We have quite a selection of books in the hall too so please feel free to take some home to read. There are also a few jigsaws that can beborrowed/exchanged.

There is something for everyone at the Kit Café and you can be sure of a very warm welcome and plenty of lively chat.

For further information please contact Val on 07483245825.

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council scheduled meetings for the remainder of 2025 are as follows:

- **13th May 2025** - Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.
- **12th August 2025**
- **11th November 2025**

SCC Funded School Travel

Is your child currently receiving SCC funded school travel?

If so you must opt-in before 31 May 2025 to continue to receive it in the 2025/2026 school year.

For more information visit:
https://www.suffolkonboard.com/school-travel/eligibility/opt-in/

Suffolk County Council

Village Hall Whist Drive



Seventeen players attended our whist drive in March which was a very good turnout. There were more ladies than gents so Val and Justine played as men. As we had a good number we were able to pay out to winning ladies and men. Many thanks to Margaret and Justine for providing the refreshments once again.

The winners were:
Ladies – Anne won the first prize with a record breaking **187** points! In second place was Sylvia with 172 and third place was Vera on 165. The wooden spoon was awarded to Victoria with 132 points.

Gents – Val (playing as a man) came first with 175 followed by Ian in second place on 164 and third was Mike with 161. Adrian took the wooden spoon on 141.

Our next whist drive will be held on **Friday, 4th April.** Entry is £2 per player with all proceeds handed out in prize money. Tea and biscuits are served at the half way stage. There is also a prize draw the proceeds of which go towards village hall funds for the upkeep of the hall. **Donations of draw prizes would be much appreciated.**

We are always on the lookout for new players. So if you or anyone you know enjoys playing cards please come along. Whist is a simple game and lots of fun but it's much more enjoyable when there are a few more tables.

For further information ring Val Nunn on 07483245825.

Churchyard Tidy up

We are having our annual tidy up on April 5th starting at 10:30, please, please support us. We will be serving bacon butties and coffee, all very welcome, especially children. If you can bring some tools please do. To let us know you're coming, to help with catering, ring Lorraine on 07742151664 or me on 01284 386662.

If you would like to bring flowers for Easter Sat 19th, I will leave vases in the porch, place your flowers anywhere in church, or just leave them. I will be there to decorate from 2pm after KIT Cafe and would love your help.

Margaret



Open Garden with Jazz

St Clare Church is hosting an Open Garden / Jazz afternoon at The Lodge, Bradfield St Clare on **Sunday 15th June.**

£10 per ticket, including strawberries and cream tea/coffee
(under 16, free entry)

Please purchase tickets in advance to help with catering quantities.

There will be a plant stall, cake stall, games and tombola - **Please bring CASH!**

Tickets to be purchased from Lorraine Morley - 07742151667

Sunday 23rd March 2025 - Bishops Farm update

A much kinder start to the spring than 2024 despite the cold mornings first half of March. Spring beans are drilled next to Sheepgate lane, and below the Rectory. Spring Barley is drilled behind the church and behind Bromley Wood, and just the oats still to go in after a welcome dose of rain this morning.

We've experienced multiple tractor issues this spring with both our main workhorses; which has made fertiliser spreading, spring cultivations and drilling quite stop-start. Very typically now both machines are out of warranty and so the repair bills I'm sure will knock a chunk out of this season's profitability. However, we can't farm without the tractors and are very grateful for local independent engineers and their willingness to assist in such crucial times of the year.

The cattle have been growing well again over winter, private meat orders have increased this spring and having the livestock certainly has kept Mike's sanity as crop prices deteriorate further and the latest Government policy changes have revoked almost all support for UK Agriculture.

The winter wheat and winter barley crops are growing away nicely now in response to Nitrogen fertiliser and the vigour in the grass leys is phenomenal with the Italian ryegrass on the Tower field growing to mid-calf height already despite cold temperatures in late Feb and early March. Clearly our combination of organic manures and over winter grazing is working well to give crops the best early spring vigour possible.

Many hedgerows and wild flowers are on the cusp of bursting into flower to enhance our farmed landscape over the next 6 months. Spring always shows wonderful signs of promise, and we are so lucky to farm in such a wonderful part of Suffolk, despite the ever-increasing pressure we face for infrastructure locally.

Tom Rouse
Dairy Farm House

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hello@tldesignworks.co.uk
01983 613237
07919 105374

Bishops Farm Beef

Home produced Aberdeen Angus Beef
Grass fed available for collection.

Beef is hung in a chiller for 6 weeks after slaughter which enhances the tenderness and flavour.

All meat is prepared by Thurston Butchers and vacuum packed.

Steak mince, burgers and casserole beef available.

Order from Mike Morley om 07768 6688 86 or
bishops.farm@yahoo.co.uk - or pop along to see the cattle.



Bradfield Weather

Feb 2021	Feb 2022	Feb 2023	Feb 2024	Feb 2025
38 mm	42mm	6 mm	128 mm	36 mm
March 2021	**March 2022**	**March 2023**	**March 2024**	**March 2025**
34.5 mm	30.5 mm	86.5 mm	43 mm	Zero so far!

What a difference a year makes. Last March's report started with "ENOUGH. RAIN. NOW" – this month I'm going to say it, I make no apology, "SOME RAIN PLEASE!". The weekend apparently saw some heavy downpours on Saturday but they seemed to pass us by – a mere sprinkling, and I found myself getting the hose out to give the new onion sets a bit of moisture. A wander around the garden this afternoon caused anxiety!

But let me not linger on the negatives. We've had some glorious sunshine in March so far – a fair few frosts, nothing worse than -3.7°C which is good for killing off the bugs and helps some seeds germinate (after a period of cold). As Tom-across-the-road pointed out when he kindly sent me the data from his weather station, there were some quite extreme diurnal air temperature shifts at the start of the month. Once I'd looked up what that meant (!) I saw his point – a 20 degree shift in temperature during the course of the day! March's highest temp so far is 21.8°C, Feb's was 17.9.

The spring bulbs are faring much better than last year. The snowdrops were glorious for weeks in January and February, and although I'm always sad to see them go, as they start to fade the daffodils trumpet forth. Shoots are appearing all over the garden, a huge range of colour from glaucous greys, every shade of green, to vibrant reds and so many different leaf forms. If you're planning new plants, don't just dwell on their flower colours, there's so much interest to be gleaned from their young growth too. This has to be the best time of year.

Alice Ward-Thomas 24th March 2025

The Library Van Dates 2025

Contact: help@suffolklibraries.co.uk Telephone: 01473 351249
The Library Van will call at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall from **9.40am until 9.55am** on the following dates:

	Wednesday 20 August
Wednesday 2 and 30 April	Wednesday 17 September
Wednesday 28 May	Wednesday 15 October
Wednesday 25 June	Wednesday 12 November
Wednesday 23 July	Wednesday 10 December

BIN COLLECTIONS

Wednesday 2 April	Blue Bin
Tuesday 8 April	Brown Bin
Wednesday 9 April	Black Bin
Wednesday 16 April	Blue Bin
Tuesday 22 April	Brown Bin
Wednesday 23 April	Black Bin
Wednesday 30 April	Blue Bin

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bindays

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Tel: 01284 361 986 Mob: 07444 272 472

Email: lee.jardine@outlook.com

Ride & Stride

Get the date in your diary - this year the event will take place on **Saturday 13th September.**

For those not familiar with the Ride and Stride, the idea is to cycle or walk to any number of churches in Suffolk, getting sponsorship on the basis of so much per church, or per mile covered - or more usually nowadays a flat fee.

Of the sponsorship money raised, half goes to the church for which you are riding and the other half to the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, who offer grants to Suffolk's many ancient churches requiring money for repairs or improvements such as disabled access or toilets.

Please do consider taking part, there's plenty of time to get some training in! Or you can sponsor someone for their efforts. If you would like to participate or want further details, contact 01284 386 169.

John Skelly Fish Limited

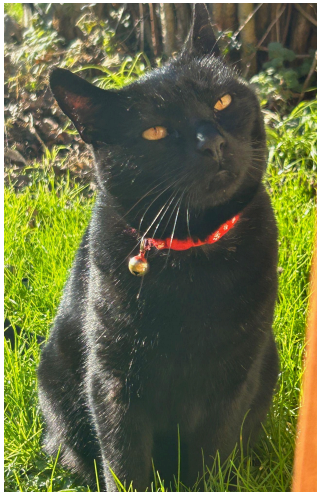
Brings fresh fish from Lowestoft to you locally in Bradfield St Clare

When: Every Friday

Where: Bush Cottage @ 9.40am and Village Hall Car Park @ 9.50am

Tommy is home!

I'm delighted to make a last minute edit to this issue to say that our beloved cat Tommy is home!



Thank you so much to everyone who helped look for him and supported us with kind messages and checking in for the 9 days he was missing.

Our home is complete again!

Thanks so much,

Sarah, Adam & Tommy

Useful Local Contacts

Anglian Water - Emergencies	03457 145145
Borough Council	St Edmundsbury Offices - 01284 763233
Local Member	Sarah Mildmay-White - 01359 270580 Sara.Mildmay-White@stedsbc.gov.uk
Bradfield St Clare Village Halll Bookings	Mrs Val Nunn - 01284 388830
Bra dfield Grapevine Magazine	Sarah Pittard - 07816754163 stclaregrapevine@gmail.com Mrs Margaret Lovick - 01284 386662
Bury Stray Cat Fund	01284 388455
Charity for the Relief in Sickness	Secretary: Mrs Vicky Spall - 01284 386357
Suffolk County Council Switchboard	01284 763233
Local Councillor	Mrs Karen Soons - 07864601887 Karen.soons@suffolk.gov.uk
Dentist (Emergency)	By appointment Sat and Sun pm 0300 130 3065
Doctor – Suffolk Doctors on Call	Ring your own Surgery
	Or alternatively call 111
Electricity	UK Power Networks Supply Faults 0800 783 8838
Footpath Warden	Mrs Fenella Fraser - 01284 388310
Gospel Hall	Mr Keith Arknett - 01359 240910
Mobile Library	Mr Carl Bell - 07721 879855
Member of Parliament	Peter Prinsley - Labour peter.prinsley.mp@parliment.uk
Neighbourhood Watch Contact	Mrs Dianne Bullard - 01284 386598
Parish Council Clerk	Mrs Nicola Sturgeon - 07817170906
Parish Council Website	http://bradfieldstclare.one Suffolk.net
Police	101 (non-urgent) 999 (urgent)
Post office Delivery Office	01284 358201
Schools:Cockfield Primary	01284 828287
Thurston Community College	01359 230885
West Suffolk College	01284 701301
St Clare Church	Rev. Canon Sharon Potter revsharon2@gmail.com 01284 828599 / 07825 086063
St Edmunds RC Church	Fr David Bagstaff - 01284 754358