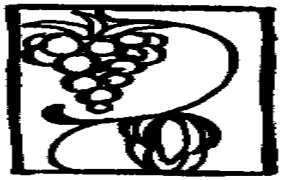
THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



May 2026 No:246

Dear Neighbours,

Welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter, your place to catch up on what's happening across our community.

As always, this is here to keep everyone informed and connected, and we'd love to see even more of that reflected in future editions. If you have something to share, whether it's a favourite recipe, a book or music recommendation, or news of a local fundraiser or event, please do get in touch. Contributions like these all help keep the newsletter going.

We're also pleased to offer local businesses the opportunity to advertise here at a very reasonable rate. Advertising support also helps us continue producing the newsletter, so if you'd like to find out more, we'd be happy to hear from you.

Margaret Lovick
Tel: 01284 386662

Sarah Pittard
Tel: 07816754163

Email: stclaregrapevine@gmail.com

Letter from the Rectory

Dear Reader,

I have always looked forward to the month of May, first because the weather is (normally) getting warmer, and secondly because there are two bank holidays in May. Unfortunately our expectations of bank holiday weather have become very low, and the barbecue equipment is often left in the garage/shed!

Thinking about barbecues has made me reflect on food - or lack of it! 673 million people are going hungry every day in our world – that's 8% of the global population. Poverty, conflict and the climate crisis are keeping life-giving food out of reach.

Every year our benefice churches deliver a Christian Aid Week envelope inviting people to help those who are in poverty and literally going hungry. I have been collecting for Christian Aid for over 30 years, and have encountered many generous people who themselves have not been very well off. Many years ago I was partnered in my collecting by a friend and her two small boys. One of the boys started to look through the letter boxes that were about his height and telling us what was inside. 'There's a bicycle in their hall!', 'there's a fish tank!' – very embarrassing. I have also had several encounters with dogs during my collecting – but thankfully have never been hurt.

It is not easy in our current climate to ask for money, but we feel it is our duty as Christians to care for all in our world, not just our own society. Christian Aid Week takes place this year 10-16 May, so look out for the envelope that will be posted through the door asking for a donation – I hope you will be able to give generously and drop it off at the location indicated on the envelope (we don't go round collecting them anymore!).

Yours in Christ
Canon Sharon

revsharon2@gmail.com, 01284 828599 or 07825 086063
www.cockfieldbenefice.com

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events - April 2026

Saturday 2 May	2-4pm 'Knit & Natter' at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall, refreshments and a space to craft/knit/crochet/sew. All welcome!
Saturday 2 May	10-12.30 Plant Sale & Coffee Morning at Cockfield
Sunday 3 May Easter 5	9.30am Morning Prayer at Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St Clare 6pm Celtic-style Communion at Felsham
Sunday 10 May Easter 6 *Start of Christian Aid Week*	10am Morning Prayer at Cockfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St George 6pm Praise & Worship at Gt Whelnetham
Thursday 14 May Ascension Day	11am Holy Communion at Felsham
Sunday 17 May Easter 7	9.30am Holy Communion at Stanningfield 10am Café Church at Felsham (please note in Church) 10.30am Holy Communion at Cockfield 6pm Evening Prayer at Bradfield St Clare
Thursday 21 May	2-4pm Village Friends (*Over 65's friendship group)* at Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 24 May Pentecost	9.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together - Bradfield St George
Sunday 31 May Trinity Sunday	10.30am Benefice Communion at Bradfield St George

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.*

VILLAGE FRIENDS

An over 65's friendship group

This month's meeting will be on
Thursday 21 May
2-4pm
at Felsham and Gedding Village Hall
This month we will be having a poetry afternoon.
Tea/coffee & other refreshments will be served.
All welcome!

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

John Skelly Fish Limited

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When: Every Friday

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

KIT CAFE

keep in touch.

Our next opening will be:

Saturday, 16th May from 11 am – 1 pm

Tea, Coffee (as much as you can drink)

Cakes, biscuits, sausage rolls, scones

This café is FREE and OPEN TO EVERYONE

Why not make a date in your diary?

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

If anyone would like to contribute a cake or savoury item we would be most grateful.

Village Hall Whist Drive



Our next whist drive will be held on
Friday, 1st May.

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.**

Last month's winner was Jim with a score of 176.

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.

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March Quiz Thank you

Thank you to all those who attended the quiz in March.

We raised £343 which was split 50/50 between Prostate Cancer and Cancer Research UK.

Letters of thanks from each organisation are up on the village hall wall.

Clive Leal

Ernie Warren

It is with great sadness I write of the death of Ernie.

He lived at the bottom of Church Lane in the beautiful house he restored over 50 years ago.

His works were at Newmarket, so although we were neighbours we saw very little of him, he was passionate about his work and would call his son Ben at 5:30 each morning to discuss the day ahead, he was a skilled pargeter.

The passion of his life was vintage cars of which he had an impressive collection, we miss him tootling past waving from one of his favourites.

Both he and his partner Beryl spent many happy weekends in Bradfield. His life was very full, he dined with Princess Ann, he was was granted the freedom of the City of London and sat on numerous committees.

Over years he has worked on our church, often without payment.

We wish his son Ben and daughters Anna and Chris happiness.

Rest in peace Ernie in the place you loved.

Church Wardens Report

We are very grateful to our band of flower arrangers, they keep our church bright all year.

Our cleaners keep the church in a wonderful state, visitors always comment on the friendly atmosphere.

Thank you Betty and Angela.

The evening prayer is moved to 6pm for the summer months.

Next Sunday will be holy communion if you ever feel like joining us, please do, we will make you very welcome.

Church Wardens



Bradfield Weather

March 2022	**March 2023**	**March 2024**	**March 2025**	SoilMoisture content
30.5 mm	86.5 mm	43mm	1 mm	0.3 m^3/m^3
April 2022	**April 2023**	**April 2024**	**April 2025**	**April 2026**
10mm	48mm	32 to 19th	16mm to 20th	0.2 m^3/m^3

'Houston, we have a problem' – well I'm very glad Artemis touched down safely but we have a hitch closer to home in that Tom's weather station is 'under the weather' and thinks that we have had 980mm of rain this month. I'm not going to go so far as to say 'If only!' but we are in need of rain and soon. At the time of writing, the country is sitting under a glorious high pressure and there is no rain on the horizon.

For the moment the best way of measuring is looking at the soil moisture content from Tom's station which has dropped by 10% in the past month and is now at 20% moisture. I'm not an expert on ideal moisture content but a quick internet search suggests for flowers and shrubs it should be 21-40%. We were in a similar position last year and a pattern could be emerging. Even if it isn't, the best thing you can do for your gardens is to spread a thickish layer of mulch which acts as a great weed suppressor and is excellent for holding in what moisture is there.

I'm currently in Northumberland and the swallows have returned this week. Every year I have a surge of joy when I see the first flash of blue black swooping down over the ponds. Fancy making that journey twice a year! As I was leaving to head north, I had a word with the apple blossom to ask it to wait a few days for me to return. I don't expect it listened and am looking forward to seeing it when I get home in a couple of days.

Some tiny touches of frost on early morning windscreens are still happening so resist the temptation to plant out anything sensitive to cold as yet – which is good news for me as I haven't got round to sowing any of it. Must get a move on!

Alice Ward-Thomas (22st April 2026)

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Library Van update

The route 6 library bus still stops at Bradfield St George (Holly Bush Corner at 9:35 - 9:50) and Cockfield (Windsor Green (10:05-10:25) on the following days:

Wed 27 May 2026	Wed 16 Sep 2026
Wed 24 Jun 2026	Wed 14 Oct 2026
Wed 22 Jul 2026	Wed 11 Nov 2026
Wed 19 Aug 2026	Wed 9 Dec 2026

Contact: help@suffolklibraries.co.uk Telephone: 01473 35124

BIN COLLECTIONS

Check dates (Bank Holiday)	Brown Bin
Check dates (Bank Holiday)	Black Bin
Wednesday 13 May	Blue Bin
Tuesday 19 May	Brown Bin
Wednesday 20 May	Black Bin
Check dates (Bank Holiday)	Blue Bin

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/binday

Bishops Farm

The end of an era.

For the last fifteen years I have carried on farming, taking over from my father and grandmother before, trying to carry on their legacy. Farming has changed, not only with the climate but politically and economically. Inputs are ever increasing and our prices for produce, cereals at a level where they were 20 years ago, with ever diminishing margin. Also age is catching up with me. It is for that reason I have decided to hang my boots up.(I don't like that word retire)

For that reason it is time to move on and the farm will be sold, and will hopefully still be farmed well and the countryside cared for in the same way. After all we are all only tenants for the short time we are on this earth.

Lorraine will be keeping and improving the bungalow, Mitch will have Bromley Wood and Tom will have Plantation Cottage, Dairy Farm Barns and purchase two fields. Good luck to them all with their projects.

For myself as many of you know, I have travelled to Kagera in Tanzania two years running and have become involved in helping very poor people improve their agriculture. I feel I can pass on my basic knowledge to help many improve their lives. This is already beginning to happen. This I feel is my future, teaching and helping others, to do some good with what time I have left. I have to keep active and have a mission, work and faith go hand in hand.

Thank you for your support over the years. Not easy decisions to have made for any of us, but I feel will be the right ones in the end, for many reasons.

Thank you all

Mike

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Now playing…



Black Label Society - Engines of Demolition

I haven't included a "Now Playing" section for a while, but as there was a bit of space and a great new album to mention, it felt like a good time to bring it back.

This time it's *Engines of Demolition*, the new album from Black Label Society. I've not listened to as much Black Label Society as I probably should have, but I've always been a big fan of Zakk Wylde, the unmistakable guitarist many will know from his years with Ozzy Osbourne, and more recently as part of Pantera.

The album came out at the end of March and delivers exactly what you would expect, big riffs, heavy grooves, and that signature Zakk Wylde guitar sound throughout. If you are looking for a place to start, the singles "Broken and Blind" and "Name in Blood" are well worth a listen.

It has also sent us back through Black Label Society's twelve album catalogue, which should keep us going for a while. We are lucky enough to be seeing Zakk twice this year, once with Black Label Society, and again with Pantera supporting Metallica, not a bad run of gigs at all.

We would love to hear your recommendations too, from any genre, so do drop us a message at the Grapevine email address.

Sarah & Adam

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 Hall Bookings	Mrs Val Nunn - 01284 388830 / 07483245825
Bradfield 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	Father Sean Connolly 01284 754358

Hire Bradfield St Clare Village Hall for just £12 per hour!

Contact Val Nunn for bookings (details above)