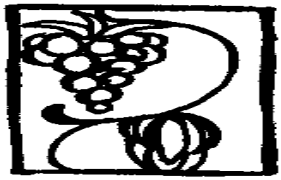
THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



October 2026 No:250

Dear Neighbours,

There's plenty to catch up on in this month's Grapevine, with a packed edition of news, updates and useful information from around the village.

We're also introducing a new feature this month, 'Meet the Villagers', which we hope will become a regular addition to these pages. A big thank you to Simon for coming up with the idea and for kicking things off!

Don't forget that the autumn village quiz takes place at St Clare Village Hall on 9th October, and you'll find details of a few other events coming up, alongside all the usual news and useful information from around the community.

As always, thank you to everyone who has contributed. If you have news to share, an event to publicise, or would like to advertise in a future edition, please do get in touch. Every contribution helps keep the Grapevine going.

Margaret Lovick
Tel: 01284 386662

Sarah Pittard
Tel: 07816754163

Email: stclaregrapevine@gmail.com

Letter from the Rectory

Dear Reader,

We are now in Harvest season across our Churches in the Benefice, a time to come together to give thanks for all those who continually sow and reap crops. Farmers, vegetable growers, those who transport the produce, and those who sell it are at the heart of our thanksgiving, and we pray for them in what for some are very difficult times.

This year we are going to celebrate the harvest in a joint service with Bradfield St George on **Sunday 18 October at 11am** at Bradfield St George Church. Bradfield St George PCC and Bradfield St Clare PCC are now holding joint meetings, which means we can share much together and help each other out. I do hope you will come and join us to celebrate the world that God has given us.

Across Church of England parishes there is deep concern about our world as the climate warms up, and the land and our animals are suffering as a result. We have just had one of the warmest summers ever recorded, and yet there does not seem to be a great rush by those who govern countries across the world to move away from using fossil fuels.

At Bradfield St Clare we are part of a scheme to help us think about our energy footprint, both as a church and as individuals. We qualified for a bronze award from Eco Church (from a Christian Charity called A Rocha that encourages us to think about how we care for the planet).

It may seem that we can do very little to help the situation, but every little helps. It has been great to see the new recycling scheme introduced by the County Council, even with its teething problems! I pray that more initiatives and schemes to help us move towards a greener future will be introduced very soon. We need to preserve our planet for those who come after us.

Yours in Christ,
Sharon
revsharon2@gmail.com
01284 828599 or 07825 086063

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events - October 2026

Friday 2 October	7pm Short act of worship followed by Harvest Supper at Felsham Village Hall - please message Canon Sharon if you'd like to attend.
Saturday 3 October	2-4pm 'Knit & Natter' at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall, refreshments and a space to craft/knit/crochet/sew.
Saturday 3 October	 3-5pm, at 'The Hive', Bradfield St George, IP30 0AZ (outdoor venue). For all children accompanied by parents/carers. Crafts - Food - Fun - Story.
Sunday 4 October **Trinity 18 & Harvest**	9.30am Morning Prayer for harvest at Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St Clare 6pm Celtic-style Communion at Felsham
Sunday 11 October **Trinity 19 & Harvest**	10am Harvest Festival & Pet Service - bring your pets along to Cockfield for a blessing! 11am Communion at Bradfield St George 6pm Praise & Worship for Harvest at Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 13 October	11am Holy Communion at Felsham Village Hall followed by Soup & Sandwiches
Thursday 15 October	2-4pm Village Friends at Felsham Village Hall Filling 'Link to Hope' shoeboxes
Sunday 18 October **Trinity 20 & Harvest**	9.30am Holy Communion at Cockfield 11am Harvest Celebration at Bradfield St George followed by harvest refreshments
Sunday 25 October **Last after Trinity**	8.30am Holy Communion BCP at Gedding 9.30am Holy Communion at Gt Whelnetham 11am Worshipping Together 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

Thursday 15 October
New members welcome!
2-4pm at Felsham and Gedding Village Hall

This month we will be filling 'Link to Hope' shoeboxes to be sent to those who are in need at Christmas

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

Church Warden Report

Nothing to report, all is well at St Clare Church.

Look forward to seeing you if you can.

AKW

KIT CAFE

keep in touch.

Our next opening will be:

Saturday, 17th October 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.

To those of you who enjoy a challenge you may like to have a go at Isobel's monthly quiz. No prizes but very entertaining. September's winners were Will and Sue who got all 21 questions right.

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, 2nd October

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.

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GATEHOUSE FOOD BANK

As many people may know, the Gatehouse Food Bank ceased to operate in August.

This is obviously bad news for those people who, because of varying circumstances, found the need to rely on Gatehouse.

I have identified three alternatives;

“Still Good Food”, Elsey’s Yard, Risbygate. Also at Freedom Church, Great Barton. They ask for a £3 donation from recipients of help.

Salvation Army, St John’s Street. Difficult to get information.

Storehouse Food Bank, West Suffolk Vineyard Church, Northern Way. This organisation is run very much on the same lines as Gatehouse. They work on community referrals and make up parcels specific to each families need.

My instinct is to “adopt” the Storehouse Food Bank. If anyone has any further information, or alternatives, please let me know.

In the meantime, please continue to make any donations you can. Either in the box in the church porch or the box at the front of The Maltings, Bury Road.

Many thanks.

Clive Leal – Food Bank Co-ordinator for Bradfield St Clare.
07717 823525.



Bradfield Weather

August 2022	August 2023	August 2024	August 2025	August 2026
15.5 mm	66mm	13 mm	39 mm	16.5 mm
Sept 2022	**Sept 2023**	**Sept 2024**	**Sept 2025**	**Sept 2026**
42 mm	65 mm	85 mm	52 mm	19mm to 27th

It never ceases to amaze me, the recovery of grass. On 20th August I'd taken a picture of the grass in the parkland here at The Lodge. It looked like African tundra before the rains. I had to be away for the end of August and early part of September and returning home was a revelation – it was like when you've had a blanket of snow for a week or two and it melts to reveal colour that surprises the eye. The grass is green, the garden has sprung to life and I'm even overjoyed to see approximately 14 million weeds germinating. After such a difficult summer of gardening, the new growth gives me a lift in the same way as it does in spring.

We've enjoyed some really beautiful late September weather, with warm winds and sunny days. I didn't relish the scorching heat of much of the summer but at this time of year, I revel in a touch of warmth on the skin. The autumn colour is just starting to kick in, I'm not sure how good it will be after the challenges of this year, and many trees dropped at least a third of their leaves in self-preservation several weeks ago. We could do with some cool nights to help with the colours but what we really need is more rain. We're thinking of abandoning spring planting in the garden – too much of this summer was spent trying to keep young trees alive. Autumn is the perfect time to get all sorts of plants into the ground, while the earth is still warm it allows roots to get well established but they would all benefit from a decent bit of moisture.

Alice Ward-Thomas 27/9/26

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When: Every Friday

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

Pat Hipwell - Memorial Service

Pat's memorial service will be on
October 10th - 2:30pm - Cockfield Church.

Tea after at the hall. Wear bright colours and prepare to sing!

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A special memory of Pat Hipwell.

Over the years, many of us arrived in St Clare to live in one of the village houses and left after a few years, meeting, making friends and taking part in gatherings etc. Although I am no longer there, I'm sure many others still look forward to receiving the Grapevine that keeps us up to date with what is happening and who has made their final departure from St Clare.

During our time at The Maltings so many long established residents were there and it's so sad to read of so many who have passed on and I can clearly see their faces, know the names and where they lived in an instant.

Pat Hipwell was such a huge part of the village, she could exhaust you with her enthusiasm, tell you unashamedly if you were taking too long to do something and had the knack of cajoling people who found themselves doing things they had absolutely no intention of doing at the start. Her energy for making things, organising and being a huge essence of the village will be sorely missed.

A special memory for me was in July 2008 when she and Peter had opened their garden to a summer fete. It was the day of the Wimbledon men's tennis final, Roger Federer/Raphael Nadal. My husband, Dave, just casually mentioned if she knew who was winning and she immediately said 'come and see' and put on the TV in the sitting room. Of course after a while at least eight other men had disappeared from the garden and were comfortably sitting watching the match, including Peter Hipwell! She brought in plates of sandwiches etc and it didn't bother her at all that so many people had taken over her house! Such a special memory of a happy day at St Clare Cottage so long ago now.

The village will miss you Pat, you definitely left a footprint !

Pauline Downing (2007/2013)

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Celebrate and Sing

WE NEED YOU



ALL SINGERS OF ALL ABILITIES WELCOME

Come sing carols and share the joy this Christmas.
Performances will be local and throughout the festive season.

REHEARSALS ON MONDAYS AT 7.15PM IN FELSHAM VILLAGE HALL FROM NOVEMBER 2ND.

TO EXPRESS AN INTEREST PLEASE CONTACT CHRIS BY EMAIL ON CHRISTOPHER.CHARLESWORTH75@GMAIL.COM

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 14 Oct 2026	Wed 9 Dec 2026
Wed 11 Nov 2026	

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

BIN COLLECTIONS

Friday 2nd October	Black Bin (+food waste)
Friday 9th October	Blue Bin (+food waste)
Friday 16th October	Black Bin (+food waste)
Friday 23rd October	Grey with green lid (+food waste)
Friday 30th October	Black Bin (+food waste)

For more information, including links to download all leaflets can be found here:

https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bins/better-recycling/

News from Home Field



Thanks to the smattering of rain of late, the grass is starting to grow a bit. The sheep have returned to the front field from opposite the farm. They were getting hay and high energy lick blocks to supplement their diet of crispy grass. Since moving to the front field the grass is sufficient, thank goodness. It was getting expensive with an energy block every ten days and using up some of my winter hay. Thankfully I only have ten mouths to feed, how the bigger livestock units cope I don't know, I appreciate it's on a relative scale but to have to source, say, ten tonnes of forage every week after this year's drought, its tough. Then remembering you are literally eating into your winter feed.

The pumpkins,squashes and butternut squashes have all been harvested, left to cure and are now in the store shed awaiting their fate of winter soups or scary faces. Both red and white onions have been dug up and put away for later, a good crop of medium sized onions this year. The runner beans have been cleared, we had maybe two meals off them this year so the French beans made up the shortfall. They were very productive and we even had enough for freezing. I saved some seed from the older beans and planted a row out, so maybe a later crop of beans. It's worth a try, as mid-September they are 6” out of the ground. The beetroot have now come into their own after sitting still for two months. The purple

sprouting broccoli has recovered and is looking good. There are still two or three cabbages left, if I get them before they burst out - brilliant, if not the sheep are very partial to them, along with any bolted beetroot, it helps with their 5-a- day. The allotment tomatoes are average in size but very slow to ripen, so I've put the bigger ones in the poly tunnel hopefully to speed up the process.

Now for the sunflower competition…..I managed to produce an 11ft 4” specimen (no idea how it happened). Sorry girls….but it's the taking part that counts.

We have picked apples, pears and plums which all looked very nice but at least 50% had the worm. There is only a small exit hole but inside they have had a feast. I suspect it's the codling moths maggot so I'll investigate a protection package for next year.

Finally to the powers that be “thank you” for the rain and cooler temperatures. It has been so nice to brag “I got absolutely soaked this morning” or “It was a bit cooler this morning”. However, the nights are drawing in so fast now. There's just no pleasing some people…..guilty as charged 😊.

Glyn

Bon Voyage

This month we say goodbye to Mike Morley.

His family have farmed in this village for generations, Mike being the last in line.

Who will we turn to when we need help, with the many jobs he did for us, including keeping the village tidy cutting the grass verges, always ready to lend a hand or tractor.

He has served our church and village well.

We wish him all the best in his new venture.

Bon voyage Mike.

Plum Harvest

We are very grateful to Peter, Jade, Olivia and Elliot, for not only giving us the whole plum harvest, but picking and delivering to me. I sold them and we made £100 for church funds.

Also thank you to Donald for all his apples which made another £42.

Thanks very much

Margaret

Autumn Village Quiz

October 9th at 7:30pm

Bradfield St Clare Village Hall

We are having to replace the fire door in the Village Hall and need to raise funds for it.

There is no fixed charge for entry, just donations please

Tables of four, though we can always accommodate strays!

Please indicate your intention to attend by calling or texting Isobel Payne on 07888 649809

Meet the Villager - Simon Hardingham

My grandparents arrived in Bradfield St Clare in 1961, when they bought Maynard House Orchards on returning from Darjeeling, where they had spent years farming tea. My father, India-born but UK-schooled from age eight, studied Horticulture at Wye College and ended up on a hop farm in Kent, where he met my mother at the Deal tennis and squash club. I was born in Canterbury, and when I was two we moved to Maynard House so Dad could farm alongside his father and uncle. We lived with my grandparents while Lark Hill, their new house, was built; somewhere there's a photo of me "helping," aged two or three.

My brother, sister and I grew up attending Cockfield primary, St James Middle, and Thurston Upper, with summers spent picking fruit and minding the PYO and farm shop. The rest of my time was spent at West Lodge, home of the Cardale's, where William's nephew Robert came to stay each summer. We built treehouses, hollowed out straw stacks into camps, and cycled everywhere, an idyllic, vanished kind of childhood.

After A-levels, Robert and I inter-railed Europe before I started an Electrical Engineering Masters at Manchester, sponsored by GEC Marconi in Chelmsford. I graduated five years later just as this the "Internet" was arriving. Robert and I, reunited at West Lodge in the summer of 1995 with an idea: a searchable global hotel directory. That "summer project" grew and we built a lean-to office on the farm. After many months of 14-hour days, a real business started to emerge.

I moved to Lavenham, filling my evenings with tennis and hockey, and met Samantha there. We married at Bradfield St Clare church in 2004, with the reception by the lake on the farm. We moved to a farm bungalow in 2007 with her two horses, and after my grandmother died in 2008, we bought the very house I'd "helped" build in 1974. Holly arrived weeks later; Lexie completed the family in 2011.

By this point the business had grown into hotels.com and a sale was nearly done but for 9/11 and the collapse of international travel. We pivoted into websites for charities and membership bodies, sustaining around 30 staff until a 2019 private equity sale. COVID-era weekly forecasting to new owners wasn't fun, so I left in 2021. After six months “off” and a 50th birthday, Robert invited me into his new venture, Solar for Schools, where I now work part-time.

Farming stayed in my blood though. When my parents retired to Lavenham, we took on the remaining land, making hay here ever since, and supplying kiln-dried firewood each winter, all a welcome excuse to leave the screen behind. I wasn't born here, and may never be truly local, but fifty-two years on, Bradfield St Clare is home.

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Email: lee.jardine@outlook.com

Useful Local Contacts

Anglian Water - Emergencies	03457 145145
Borough Council	St Edmundsbury Offices - 01284 763233
Local Member	Sara 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	Bobby Bennett - 07813551959 bobby.bennett@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
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)