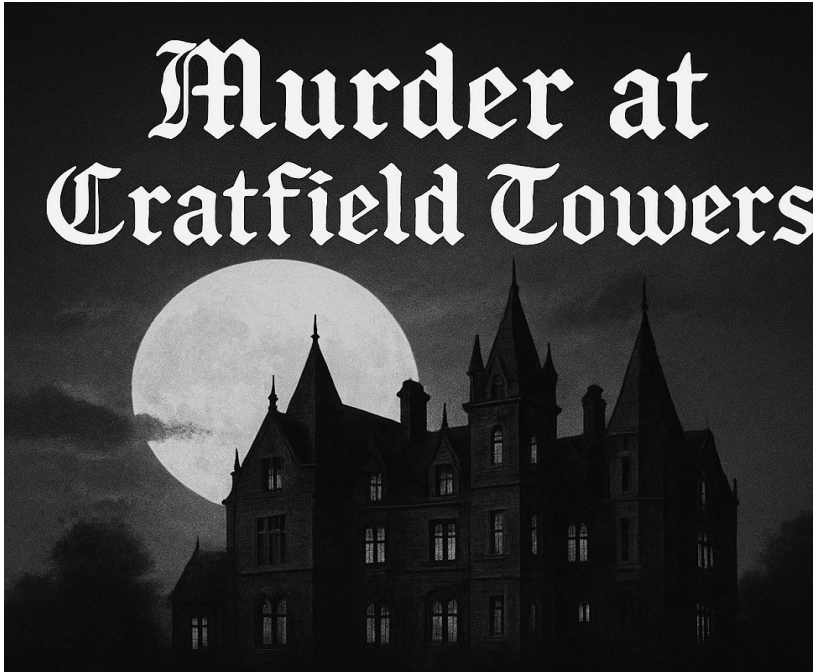


# CRATFIELD NEWS

October 2025



The next Cratfield Talk is on Saturday October 25

Immerse yourself in a world of suspense as author Natalie Meg Evans weaves a tale of murder. Expect twists, red herrings and insights into the crafting of a country house whodunnit

7 pm doors open, 7.30pm start

£6 – pay at the door. Light refreshments and bar open for wine, shorts and bottled beer

Book early as numbers are limited. Book by email at [Cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:Cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

We regret to announce the passing of Frank David Cousin on September 18<sup>th</sup> at his home The Willows. Many of you will remember him from the village hall, art classes and of course carpet bowls.

Jane and Neil would like to thank everyone for their kind enquiries, advice and support over the last few years

Our condolences go to Jane and Neil on the loss of Frank and also to Anna on the loss of Rod.

Rod Sugden died on August 19<sup>th</sup> aged 68. Rod and Anna came to Cratfield in 1991, so very long standing members of the village.

## HELP NEEDED

Are you a handyman? I need a little help at the moment, putting up blinds, changing loo seat etc.

Also bags of house coal free, but need to be collected.

Contact Anna [anna.m.sugden@gmail.com](mailto:anna.m.sugden@gmail.com) or 01986 798760

## ***A FAMILY GATHERS AT THEIR GOTHIC MANSION AND MURDER IS ON THE MENU.***

The next Village Hall talk will be on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October when local author Natalie Meg Evans – who writes murder mystery as Kay Blythe – spins a brand-new tale set in mythical Cratfield Towers.

Alongside the story, she'll explore the history of the maverick sleuth, the slippery art of the red herring, and whether lead piping really does outclass the sharpened letter-opener.

Join us for an evening of dastardly plots and an insight into the captivating world of murder mystery writing. Full details are on the front of this magazine.

## Join us to Celebrate the Harvest

**Sunday 12th October**  
**Harvest Thanksgiving at 1800 hours**  
**at St Mary's Church, Cratfield**



On Saturday morning 11<sup>th</sup> October at 10.00 am  
we will be decorating the church, please come  
along and lend a hand – no special skills required!

With blessings  
Cratfield Parochial Church Council

**CRATFIELD ACOUSTIC SPECIAL**  
is on  
**SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER**  
all proceeds will go to  
**ST. ELIZABETH HOSPICE**

**Booking is essential** – so to reserve your place you **MUST** text 07891 940479 or email [marfleets@doctors.org.uk](mailto:marfleets@doctors.org.uk) stating your name and the number of places required. You will get a confirmation reply. Pay at the door on the evening. £15 per person.

**Numbers strictly limited so book early!** Booking goes live from 1<sup>st</sup> September. Don't miss out on this exciting event!

Just a reminder that the Village Hall will be holding its very first

### **PLANT SALE NEXT JUNE.**

Autumn is the perfect time for taking cuttings and dividing plants — so if you're in the garden, why not pot a few extras and set them aside for us?

We'd love to have a colourful, varied selection for our debut sale, and every little contribution will help make it a successful village event.



## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL 2025

Collecting for the Poppy Appeal starts on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, so we will be around knocking on your doors from then onwards. As no-one uses as much cash these days the RBL would be most grateful if you could put aside a little change in readiness. Cratfield has always given most generously to this worthy cause. Thank you in advance.

## TEAK GARDEN FURNITURE FOR SALE

Set of oval table and 6 chairs (2 of the chairs have arms).

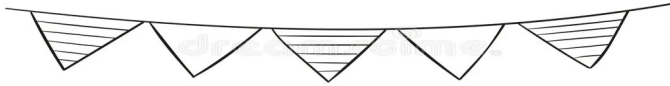
Table: L150cm x W90cm x H70cm

Chairs: H90cm (back of chair) (H40 seat) W50cm (no arms) W54cm (with arms)

Stored in garage/shed over winter. Some rubbing down and re-staining needed, but in good condition and regularly maintained. **The set: £80.**

A second set with cushioned covers for the chairs, in clean good condition, some small marks. **The set: £100.**

Peter and Sue Bell Corner Manse Lane  
01986 798617 07946 034162 07833 940536



## Crafting and cake!

Our Village Hall bunting is looking a little worse for wear, and we'd love your help to freshen it up - using upcycled/left over fabric, your creativity, and just a bit of community spirit. Could you join us for a fun, relaxing afternoon of crafting, chatting, and reviving our Village Hall's bunting?

### Details

**When:** 2:00pm – 5.00pm, Saturday 15th November.

**Where:** Cratfield Village Hall, Manse Lane

### What's Happening

Help us transform left over or pre-used fabric into colourful bunting. Don't worry if you're not a seasoned sewer—we've got a task for everyone:

- **Sewers with machines:** Bring your sewing machine and sew triangles for our bunting.
- **Colour stylists & cutters:** Help pick fabric combos, cut to template, and pin ready to stitch (template and pins provided).
- **Detail finishers:** Trim, tidy and iron ready for attaching the sewn pieces to the bunting string.
- **Fabric donors:** Have you got scraps of pre-used or left over fabric from a project (at least 50cm x 50cm), unpicked, washed and ironed that you would be happy to donate?
- Free tea, coffee, homemade Cratfield cake (of which no Cratfield event is complete without!) - and a celebratory glass of Prosecco to toast our team effort!

All ages and abilities welcome - this is an inclusive, community-loving event.

If you would like to take part, have any fabric donations or any questions please email: [c.hay-davison@sky.com](mailto:c.hay-davison@sky.com) as soon as possible.

MICHAEL OLIVER

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785272 or email [linsteadfarm@btconnect.com](mailto:linsteadfarm@btconnect.com)



# Cratfield Parish Council

*Please help keep your village clean & tidy*

Cratfield Parish Council has litter picking equipment which can be borrowed anytime.

*Your help & support would be greatly appreciated!*

*If you would like to litter pick please contact:*

*Cllr Dan Elford Tel: 07870 462189 - Village collection*

*Cllr Richard Chivers Tel: 07900 187350 - Silverleys Green collection*

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**ICS**

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## **Beau Geste or Legio Patria Nostra<sup>1</sup>**

On our way out to the Gulf in October 1984, to take over the Armilla Patrol during the Iran/Iraq war and to be prepared to give protection to tankers and other merchant shipping, HM Ships Battleaxe and Nottingham stopped briefly in Djbouti,

Djbouti is a tiny, mainly desert, republic in north-east Africa, at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, more or less opposite Aden. Until the late 1970's it had been a French colony, and in 1984 it still hosted a French Naval Base, a regiment of the French Foreign Legion, some French Air Force aircraft, and was served in civil air terms by Concorde flights.

As is usual on such visits, we gave a reception for the senior members of the Djbouti government, the French military commanders and other local VIPs. Amongst these was the commanding officer of the Foreign Legion, a tall, serious and very unbending French Colonel who was full of Gallic pride.

Now the Foreign Legion is, or was, a strange and, to an outsider, slightly sinister organisation whose main allegiance seemed to be to itself. I met some of its soldiers in bars in Djibouti. They came from many different nations and were happy to talk about the Legion. However, if you asked them where they came from, or why they joined the Legion, you would be met with complete silence and, usually, with the person you were talking to moving well away from you. I quickly learned that these people were to be respected, or even feared, but certainly not pressed for answers.

Be that as it may, and we had on that first night still much to learn, some of my sailors decided to "liberate" the Colonel's distinctive red kepi.<sup>2</sup> When the Colonel came to leave, he was (to put it mildly) furious, partly at the treacherous behaviour of the English sailors he rather despised, and partly at the humiliation of being obliged to return to his barracks bare-headed. Of course, I promised to do all I could to retrieve it and, unwisely, deferred further consideration until the next morning.

As I finished my breakfast the following morning, my First Lieutenant appeared at my door looking somewhat pale. He reported that we had received a message from the Foreign Legion that unless the Colonel's Kepi was returned by mid-morning, none of our two ships' companies could hope to go ashore safely. I had by this time little doubt that this was a serious threat, and we immediately commissioned a thorough search of the ship and doubled our gangway watch "just in case." About an hour later, a

couple of young sailors knocked at my cabin door, looking very sheepish and a little frightened, and handed me the now notorious red kepi. Their “It was only a joke, Sir” did not, I am afraid, cut much ice with me and they were fortunate to escape with only a flea in their ear.

I then set about writing a letter of abject apology, appealing to the better nature which I hoped the Colonel might have, found a significant donation to the Legion’s welfare fund and had myself driven to the barracks in full ceremonial uniform, having sent a message in advance. On arrival, I was greeted by a formal guard, and by the Colonel, in a (presumably borrowed) kepi and, in a ceremony of the utmost formality, accompanied by copious salutes, handed over my gift, my own humble apology and the red kepi. It was received in silence, and after a further exchange of salutes, I returned to the ship, and a stiff gin at 11am! I needed some Dutch courage for I was due to lunch onboard the French naval vessel, FS Jules Verne.

Shortly afterwards, we received a message that our sailors might now go ashore safely but that they would do well to avoid members of the Legion in any bars they visited and our brief stopover in Djibouti proceeded in a rather downbeat manner. We were not too sorry when the time came for us to sail for the Gulf and our operational patrol.

France 1, England 0, I am afraid.

### **Jeremy Blackham**

1. The motto of the French Foreign Legion. It means “My fatherland is the Legion”, suitable perhaps for a force made up of people from a variety of nations. Beau Geste is, of course, the title of PC Wren’s famous trilogy about the Foreign Legion.
2. Kepis are worn ceremonially by various nations’ forces, but nowhere with such symbolic pride as in France.

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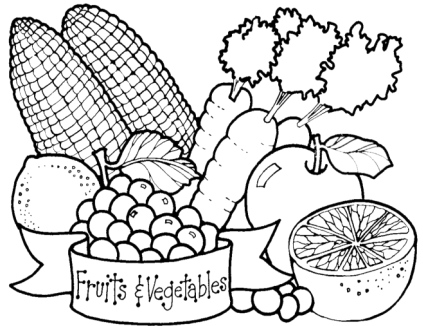
## **MOBILE LIBRARY DATES**

**Silverleys Green 14.00 – 14.20      The Poacher 14.30 – 45**

**October 28<sup>th</sup>, November 25<sup>th</sup>, December 23<sup>rd</sup>**

## **Cratfield Allotment to Rent**

CPC has a large allotment  
available  
from 1<sup>st</sup> October for  
Cratfield residents



**For further details contact the Parish Clerk:  
Tel: 07774 734411  
or Email: [clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk)**



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## **VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – OCTOBER**

### **CRATFIELD POP UP PUB**

The last Friday of the month in Suffolk means it's time for an evening at the Cratfield Pop Up Pub! This is a great way to catch up with neighbours and friends from around the village - and to meet new people. The bar stocks a choice of wines plus cider, soft drinks, G&T and always a barrel of something cheering. Plus, there's great food! An essential date for the diary!

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 6pm-10pm

After a well-earned "rest" over the summer, we welcome back Cratfield Kitchen at the October Pop-Up. Judith and the team will be returning to the ovens, reprising their role as purveyors of varied, and always popular, sustenance to complement the bar offerings and to keep us well fed throughout the darker months.

### **CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – OCTOBER WINNERS**

This month's winners are: first prize (£15) number 91 – Jon Walford; second prize (£10) number 73 – Sara Leveratt; and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize (£5) number 61 – Bryan Leveratt. Draw by D Britton. Many congratulations to the winners!

### **INDOOR BOWLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL – ALTERNATE TUESDAYS**

Dates for 2025: October 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>//November 25<sup>th</sup>//December 9<sup>th</sup>. Come along and have a go – no experience needed, just have fun! Tea and coffee available. Suggested £2 donation for use of the hall. All enquiries to Nigel 07445351861 or Elliott 07963676207 - or just turn up!

### **CLASSIC CARS, MOTORBIKES & BREAKFAST - Sunday 14th September**

A big thank you to all the indefatigable organisers and volunteers who made our second Cratfield Classic Car Show such a success. The rain held off just long enough to allow motor enthusiasts - and the rest of us - to stroll around, bacon butty in hand, to view the exciting and eclectic mix of vehicles on show. A wonderful village event and effort. A special thanks to those who took the time to share their special motors with us. Very much appreciated!

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:**

And the fun continues into Autumn

**ACOUSTIC NIGHT SPECIAL - Saturday 18th October.** This popular Cratfield event returns with a twist: performers will all be a surprise – to be revealed on the night! All proceeds will go to St Elizabeth Hospice so this is a must for your diary. See booking details elsewhere in the magazine.

**A MURDER AT CRATFIELD TOWERS – Saturday 25 October.** Cratfield Talks proudly presents the village's own Natalie McKay. Another excellent reason not to leave the village this month so secure your place, £6pp, at [cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com) for a killingly good evening.

**CHRISTMAS FAIR – 7 December** – the wonderful Cratfield Christmas Fair returns for 2025 so you can relax - all your present buying, and bacon butty eating, requirements will be met!

### **PLANT SHOW – 7 June 2026**

*A call to all keen Cratfield gardeners! Next year we will hold a village plant sale to raise money for the village hall. So, as you tidy your garden ready for the first frosts, don't forget to pot up those extra seedlings and maximise the use of your propagator, ready for a fun filled day (OF COURSE there will be coffee and cake!) of horticultural hurrahs and frenzied plant buying next June.*

And don't forget

**CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL AGM – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025** – Open Forum AGM at 7pm, followed by the Committee Meeting – come along, have your say about how the village hall is used, and, if you would like to get involved, stand for a role on the friendly committee.

### **CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – TIME TO RENEW!**

If you haven't yet had a chance to renew – or join – it isn't too late! Please just fill out the form which appeared in May's edition of Cratfield News or text Helen on 07818046955.

The 100 Club has benefitted the Village Hall for many years, contributing towards such items as the glass washer, picnic benches and water heaters.

*Don't forget - You have to be in it to win it!*

**If you have submitted your form/paid your subscription but have not yet had an acknowledgement, please text Helen as above!**

**VILLAGE HALL FOR HIRE!** Don't forget our hall is available for hire for a very reasonable price! For any future booking enquiries please contact us on [cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com)

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## ME AND MY BIG MOUTH

There is a well-known piece of advice along the lines of “make sure your brain is engaged before putting your mouth in gear”. I sometimes wish I had followed this. For example.

Susanne and I had driven up to North Berwick, on the east coast of Scotland, for a holiday. We arrived early in the early evening and decided to go straight out to find something to eat. We went into a rather pretentious Italian restaurant on the High Street and asked if they had a table for two. The lady at the front looked down her nose at our jeans and asked in an icy Edinburgh accent, “Have you a reservation?”

“Yes,” I replied, “but we are so hungry we have thrown caution to the winds.”

So we ate in the Chinese restaurant further down the road.

Charlie Wilson

# Forest Church

*Coming closer to God through nature*

**Where: meet at Brundish Church car park  
Dennington Road IP13 8AY**

what3words: ///coil.acid.pebble

**When: Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 3pm to 4pm**

Contact: Rev. Clive Mobbs rev.clive.mobbs@gmail.com 07340 838639

Forest Church is for people of all ages. Nature-inspired activities, informal outdoor worship and refreshments.

No need to book. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear for being outside in a wood in all weathers Bring a chair if you want to sit down.

This event is organised by the Bridge4Rivers team, part of Suffolk's Lightwave community

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## Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!

### St Kilda (Population: 0 – last inhabitants evacuated in 1930)

#### Part 12 – Final Experiences of St Kilda

**Recap:** After my gut-churning voyage to St Kilda on the MV Cuma, the 3 days I spent there were sun-drenched: a far cry from the foul and merciless winter weather that the island endures each year. I had befriended the last work-party of the season and enjoyed a drunken evening in the Puff Inn!

The next day, there was much excitement, because the Rainbow Warrior drew into Village Bay, complete with celebrity on board in the form of Julia Sawalha ('Saffy' from Ab Fab.). That night, in the Puff Inn, she had numerous photos taken of her pulling pints! But the following day, a Royal Navy boat silently crept in and, suddenly, rather ominous looking pairs of men were seen, dressed in navy blue from top to bottom, walking around the island. The Rainbow Warrior was being trailed, it seemed, and the demeanour of the dark blue men seemed slightly threatening, for they exchanged no pleasantries (as if to say, "We're watching you, you bunch of weirdos!"). I passed a pair of RN men in the village 'street' and, to counter the eco-warrior impression they obviously had of me, I thought I would take on the persona of a Monty Python-style London commuter! In my best, over-confident commuter accent, I said, loudly, "Morning!" Without a word, they almost barged me out of the way! A rather unexpectedly dark mood had descended on St Kilda.

However, Murdo (Captain of the Cuma) cheered everyone up by passing around the message that, in light of the good weather, he was offering a sailing trip around Hirta and its close neighbour, Soay ('*Sheep island*'). The work-party, some Rainbow Warriors, me, and anyone else who was interested crammed onto the Cuma and we enjoyed a wonderful, leisurely trip, in bright sunshine, around the dramatic islands. As with the bizarre crossing I made between Colonsay and Oronsay as a pedestrian in bare feet, so again, on St Kilda, a diverse group of strangers shared stories, had a laugh, and bonded. It didn't matter what anybody's name was: we just knew we all had something in common, and that was a love for islands.

The work-party had bonded so well, in fact, that they decided to go, as a group, on successive island holidays in future years; and I was invited too. We holidayed on Canna (meeting the eccentric, but wonderful, Margaret Fay Shaw (the American lady who discovered the islands as a teenager, settled there, and amassed a (now) world-important collection of the vanishing Gaelic music and literature)) - and also Colonsay, where the smooth and stylish laird visited to repair our cooker: as he bent over, his loose-fitting jeans revealed an early moon that day, causing all the ladies to fall in love amid much face-fanning and swooning! (Thereafter the group holidays continued, but in smaller numbers, chiefly involving the Scottish ladies.)

So many happy memories... but when I got back home to edit my film, I found that my lapel mic had broken and I had lost all my soundtrack on St Kilda. I had to start the painstaking work of re-working all the commentary (trying to sound spontaneous!) *and* adding music where I thought appropriate. I contacted Eric (who drew up the order form) and explained that it would take some time before everyone received their video tape. They had only just returned from their 2 week work-party stint, but Eric sounded sombre, not his usual self. "Remember Kris, the Belgian journalist fellow?" he said. (I instantly remembered him, for he was unmistakable in his black Goth/Punk fashion-sense.) "The day after you left St Kilda, he went for a walk and, being the rebel that he was, he crossed over a roped off area and carried on walking. He didn't return. We took a boat out in the morning and found his body at the bottom of the cliffs."

St Kilda had claimed yet another young life, albeit the first one since the evacuation in 1930. Just as the original islanders had had to endure, an innocent day, full of happiness, had ended in tragedy. To conclude the story of St Kilda, I end with further images of its resourceful and hardy inhabitants...



Mary Gillies: her death at 21, from acute appendicitis, was the final straw for the islanders.



The St. Kildan ladies were never far from their knitting and weaving.



The girls and ladies were distinctive for their centre partings.

Next month Lewis

Andrew Weight

# Cratfield Parish Council

## Meeting Dates 2025

*All meetings are held in The Village Hall, Manse Lane, Cratfield, IP19 0DJ*

- Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 7.30 pm  
– Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 7.30 pm

*The agenda is displayed on village noticeboards and on CPC's website (<https://cratfield-pc.gov.uk>) three days before the meeting. Planning meetings and additional meetings may be arranged as needed.*

*~ Members of the Public are Welcome to Attend all Meetings ~*

**For further details contact the Clerk:**

**Email: [clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk) or Tel: 07774 734411**



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0777 5706002

# AUTUMN

*The Tipi has now closed for the Summer season but we still have a couple of events coming up!*

**Autumntide: Supper & Story Telling.** Celebrate the changing of the seasons with an evening of food, stories and merriment led by the Yarnsmith of Norwich with a seasonal supper cooked for you by the Fire & Feast Team.  
11th October.

**Supper and Star Gazing.** The last chance to have a taste of Fire & Feast this year, join us for supper and after dinner star gazing and talks with Dash Astro.  
8th November.

**IF YOU'RE STUCK FOR GIFT IDEAS WE OFFER VOUCHERS FOR ALL OF OUR WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS!**



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**Mace**

## Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

What a turbulent time we are going through as a country! In this year's Lectionary, we are following the Gospel of Luke, and he really challenges us to review the way we treat other people. I wonder how many people do we 'write off' each day as 'useless' or 'beyond redemption', a 'waste of a skin', or just 'plain evil'? When talking, have we ever labelled groups as 'unworthy of my help', as 'cheats, drunks and criminals' as 'them' – as if they were invading aliens from another planet? The homeless, prisoners, 'boat people', immigrants, the poor, those on drugs, people with a different colour skin from ours....so many! I could go on.

Every one of these people, every one of the 'them' are individual human beings, and every person on our earth is made in the image and likeness of God and loved eternally by God.

It would be so sad if basic human qualities like compassion, kindness, respect and dignity become so little experienced in our world that we cease to expect them of ourselves and expect them only of God. Have we become immune to human suffering? Are horror and tragedy becoming so commonplace among us that it is accepted as inevitable and not challenged as wrong? Have we become cold, hard, cruel people, unable and unwilling to see beyond our own tiny worlds? Regardless of what we are told and what we see around us, compassion and respect for others are possible and worthwhile.

A huge thank you to all the people in the churches across our benefice of churches who have been involved with the Harvest festivals and Harvest suppers. A wonderful tradition when we are able to share so much with so many. Oh, and before I go, I joined in with the Church of England's seminar about options for our Advent study the other day and will be sharing and discussing with the Ministry Team what we might do this year. Watch this space next month for further details. Prayers, peace and blessings to all.

Reverend Chrissie  
07803 134301  
rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com

## October Services Cratfield

Sunday 12th	Sunday 26th
6.00pm Harvest Festival	9.30am Holy Communion
Jeremiah 29:1,4-7 2 Timothy 2:8-15 Luke 17:1-19	Isaiah 45:22-end Romans 15:1-6 Luke 4:16-24

## Benefice Services

October	5th	12th	19th	26th
Bedfield		10.30am Harvest Festival		10.30am Holy Communion
Brundish		<b>Forest Church</b> <b>3.00pm meet in Church car park</b>	10.30am Holy Communion	
Laxfield	10.30am Harvest Festival	10.30am Holy Communion	10.30am Morning Worship	6.00pm Hartismere House
Monk Soham	11.00am Family Service	11.00am BCP Morning Prayer	11.00am CW Holy Communion	
Tannington		11.00am ?		
Wilby	10.30am Harvest Festival		10.30am Village Worship	10.30am Holy Communion
Worlingworth	11.00am Holy Communion		11.00am Let's Celebrate	11.00am Morning Prayer

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October Laxfield School Harvest Festival in church, 1.45pm**  
**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October Wilby School Harvest Festival in church, 2pm**  
**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October Bedfield School Harvest Festival in church 2pm**

# DIRECTORY:

## Local Officers:

### **Church:**

Priest in Charge of the Four Rivers Benefice

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07803 134301

Assistant Curate Rev. Clive Mobbs 07340 838639

### **Parish Council:**

Chairperson Lotty Barbour 01986 798099

Parish Clerk Sally Chapman  
[clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk)

07774 734411

Parish Council Website

[www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net](http://www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net)

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

### **Village Hall:**

Chairperson TBC

Vice Chair Jo Cerullo  
01986 798656

Bookings Robert King 01986 798975

### **Laxfield All Saints C of E Primary School**

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