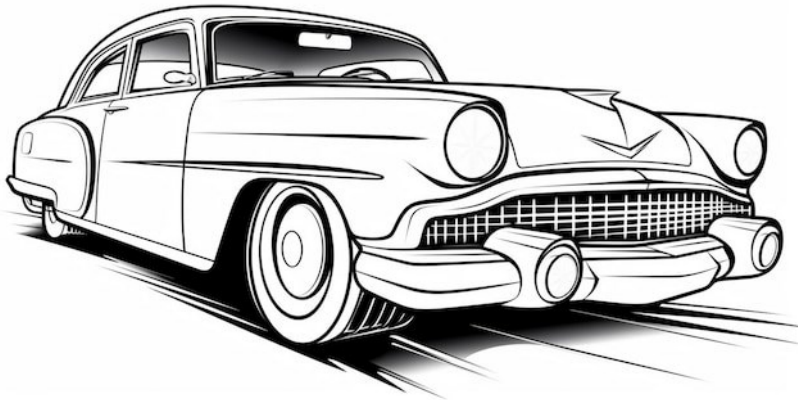


CRATFIELD NEWS

September 2025

CLASSIC CARS, MOTORBIKES & BREAKFAST



SUNDAY 14th SEPTEMBER, 2025 10.00 am – 2.00 pm

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL

*Come to see beautiful, gleaming cars and motorbikes from a bygone age in
Cratfield's very own classic car and bike show.*

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Trophies awarded for Best Car and Best Motorbike in show

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 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 1st September. Don't miss out on this exciting event!

Recycling – a reminder

Just a quick reminder about the box at the back of the church for the collection of used ink cartridges. There have been a few contributions, but with a few more they could be sent off to be recycled which will generate a donation to Macmillan Cancer Support. So don't just chuck them in the bin, the box is next to the bookcase at the back of the church.

Fressingfield Sounds – Autumn Concert Series 2025

Following two very successful sell-out concerts, Fressingfield Sounds presents its Autumn 2025 Series: three performances at Chapel Hall Arts, Fressingfield, Suffolk (IP21 5QD), all at 7.30pm.

Saturday 13 September – Adrian Brendel (cello) and Tim Horton (piano): Bach, Beethoven, Shostakovich

Saturday 11 October – Heath String Quartet: Schumann, Larcher, Beethoven

Saturday 1 November – Liturina Baroque Ensemble: Bach, Handel, Telemann, Couperin

Tickets from £5 (for under-25s), standard £23 or £25. Season tickets and patron packages also available. For full details and bookings, visit: www.fressingfieldsounds.org.uk or call 07900 350117.

SUFFOLK CHURCHES RIDE AND STRIDE



**SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2025
9.00AM – 5.00PM**

Join Ride and Stride and sponsor your cycle or walk to raise money for Suffolk's wonderful church buildings.

Suffolk has over 500 churches, chapels and meeting rooms across all denominations and you will be amazed at the local history you will find in each and every one.

Sponsorship forms can be found at the back of the church. Sponsorship money raised will be divided between Suffolk Historic Churches Trust and the church or chapel chosen by the participant.

Local organiser Anne Scoones – 01379 586 238

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We look forward to seeing you.

All Welcome!



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Update from Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP

Over the past few months, I've been working with colleagues in Parliament to take a closer look at how national policy reflects life in rural areas. Too often, decisions made in Westminster are shaped by the needs of towns and cities, and don't always reflect the reality of living in places like Cratfield, or other parts of Suffolk Coastal.

To help change that, I've helped to establish - and now chair - a new group in Parliament: the Labour Rural Research Group. This group brings together Labour MPs who represent rural or semi-rural areas, and aims to ensure rural communities are properly understood and reflected in national policy. As I said in my recent East Anglian Daily Times opinion piece, successive governments – of all political persuasions, and for many decades – have had a 'rural blind spot' and they've failed to grasp the realities of rural Britain, and the challenges of delivering public services or driving investment into our rural communities.

Our first report, *Understanding Rural Britain*, published in August and available on my website, draws on the views and experiences of over 1,400 people living in rural parts of England, Scotland and Wales. It highlighted some important concerns - including the lack of opportunities for young people, and the sense that many feel they have to move away from rural areas in order to get on and succeed in life.

As someone who grew up here and moved away, only to return in my late 30s, this resonates with me deeply. I know we need to do more to create (and sustain) opportunities for young people in places like Suffolk Coastal and Suffolk as a whole.

Our next area of work will explore rural poverty and how we best tackle it, and I'll be working with local and national partners to make sure our experiences here in Suffolk Coastal are properly heard and understood.

As ever, if you need support, get in touch via the details below.

Email: jenny.riddellcarpenter.mp@parliament.uk

Telephone: 01394 330260

Website: www.jennyforsuffolkcoastal.org

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Cllr Richard Chivers Tel: 07900 187350 - Silverleys Green collection

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Mail is Now Ready for Collection

Rather than bore my readers with tales from my last nine years in the Navy, spent mainly in the MoD and Fleet headquarters – “The corridors of power” - I thought I would go back to earlier years and fill in some gaps.

In the 1960s, '70s, '80s, even 90s, a deployment abroad of up to 12 months (unaccompanied if you were married) seemed a long time. There were no cheap flights and fewer airports so the option of hopping round the world didn't exist; you couldn't just fly home if there was a problem, nor could your family fly out to see you – there was no knowing where the ship might be on a particular day. There were no mobile phones or emails. If you wanted to ring home, you had to wait until you were in harbour, then go ashore to the local telephone exchange, book a radio call, sometimes with a very long wait and even then the call might, or might not, have a clear non-crackling line. Home seemed a long way away. Moreover, some sort of gremlin dictated that, whenever you rang, it was always 2am in England, the children always had chicken pox, and the car was broken. A harassed wife did not always appreciate an account of a “run ashore” in Bangkok or an idyllic Caribbean beach with rum and coke, and phone calls could sometimes run “out of control.” Amazingly, wives and families somehow coped with this and still waited for their husbands' return and greeted them lovingly when they did get back. I doubt the nation fully understands the debt they owe to service families, a debt that I fear is not always honoured with decent accommodation and support at home.

All this made snail mail a vital lifeline. Writing home was straightforward enough – you posted it from wherever you were in a sealed bag which was sent by commercial airlines to the British Forces Post Office¹ and then, perhaps the riskiest part of the whole thing, consigned to the Royal Mail for forwarding to the addressee. Sometimes, you could risk transferring outgoing mail to shore post office as you sailed by, or ask a passing British merchant ship to send it from their next port of call if it was before your own.

Receiving mail was more complicated. Every ship had a BFPO address to which all kits mail was addressed. You sent a “Mail Diversion” signal, advising BFPO of your schedule, giving a first and last day in each port and mail was sent there by commercial airline in sealed bags, addressed to the ship. On arrival in port, a first priority was to send the ship's “postie”² to

collect the mail, either from the local civil post office (often with language problems!) or, if you were lucky, from the British Embassy or Consulate. Sometimes, we would receive mail by air drop into the sea in watertight cannisters from an RAF Maritime Patrol Aircraft, with occasional heart stopping moments when it looked as if one had sunk!³ When a group of ships was exercising somewhere abroad, you could sometimes concoct an excuse to send a ship into harbour, or close enough to use its helicopter to collect everyone's mail, although this required diplomatic clearance from the country concerned. Whatever the method, the resultant "pipe"⁴ after what always seemed an interminable wait, "Mail is now ready for collection" was always a longed for, hugely welcome and exciting sound, and few things were worse than not receiving any.

Of course, sometimes ships' programmes were changed at very short notice for operational reasons, and it was necessary to track down wherever the mail had been sent to and try to recover it. And sometimes for good reasons it might be a couple of weeks or so between mail deliveries - a bit like today's London mail! So the gap between sending a letter and getting a reply could easily be three weeks or so, but there was no alternative.

Today there are facilities which didn't exist in those days – satellite telephones and worldwide internet, so maybe the excitement of the mail arriving is less. But even today ships must sometimes keep complete radio, radar and internet silence for operational security, to avoid giving away their precise location, and so I imagine that the stirring pipe "Mail is now ready for collection" has not yet quite disappeared from naval life at sea.

Jeremy Blackham

1. The BFPO's HQ is at Ruislip, near Northolt airport, with offices around the country in major military centres.
- 2 Ship's postie was a popular additional job since it got a small extra pay, frequent words from his/her shipmates, and a small "shoe leather" allowance! It was also of course a post for a trusted and reliable person.
3. And yes, it has happened.
4. All public address announcements in naval shops are called pipes, dating back to the days when all orders were passed by Bosun's call – a small whistle.

Mobile Library Dates 2025

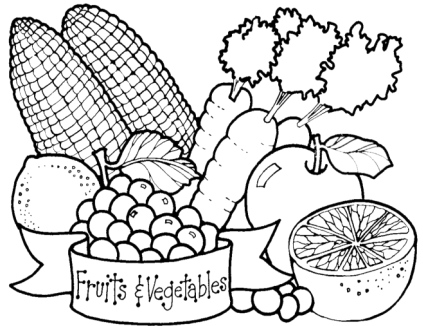
Silverleys Green 14.00-14.20

The Poacher 14.30- 14.45

September 2nd, 30th. October 28th. November 25th. December 23rd

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VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – SEPTEMBER

CRATFIELD POP UP PUB

Join us the first Friday of the month throughout the year at the Cratfield Pop Up Pub! This is a great way to catch up with neighbours and friends from around Cratfield - 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. There's even great food! Why would you want to be anywhere else?!

Friday 5th September 6pm-10pm

After the huge success of the village BBQ in August, we have the welcome return of Oli's Mexican night at the Pop Up this month so come along and enjoy a proper village event! From October we welcome back Cratfield Kitchen to keep us well fed throughout the darker months.

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – SEPTEMBER WINNERS

This month's winners are: first prize (£15) number 86 – Alan Simms; second prize (£10) number 1 – Chrissie Kitchen; and 3rd prize (£5) number 11 – Sue Eade. Draw by D Britton. Many congratulations to the winners!

INDOOR BOWLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL – ALTERNATE TUESDAYS

Dates for 2025: September 2nd, 16th and 30th//October 14th and 28th//November 25th//December 9th. 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!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

An exciting Autumn ahead...

CLASSIC CARS, MOTORBIKES & BREAKFAST - Sunday 14th September

Last year's event was so successful, we're going for 'bigger and better' this year, doubling (at least) the number of classic cars, and inviting classic bikes as well. We're also extending the event by an hour (ending at 2pm), so you can buy that extra bacon or sausage bap you always promised yourself! Come to the village hall to see some stupendous machines in all their gleaming glory, and enjoy breakfast or brunch with your friends and neighbours! Tea, coffee, soft drinks and Duckhams also available! *Do you (or does a friend) have an interesting vehicle to display? Please book early via cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com to reserve a place.*

RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN – Thursday 25th September 10am-noon. A chance to catch up with other villagers over tea, coffee and cake and to learn more about the services and help which are available in our area.

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 definitely deserves a place holder in your diary.

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 autumn!

CHRISTMAS FAIR – 7 December – the wonderful Cratfield Christmas Fair returns for 2025 so you can relax - all your present buying 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 at the end of summer, 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.

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL MEETINGS – Open Forum AGM at 7pm – come along, have your say, and, if you fancy it, join the friendly committee)

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – TIME TO RENEW!

Subscriptions are now due for the club's 2025/2026 season. Don't forget for just £1 a month for a year, you are in the draw to win **£15, £10 or £5 prizes EACH MONTH.** So fill out the forms which appeared in May's edition of Cratfield News, text Helen on 07818046955 or pick up a spare form at the pop up if you have lost yours. 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!

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

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BENEFICE HARVEST CELEBRATION

Brundish Church
Sunday 28th
September

09:30

HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE
A short service based on the liturgy of the Iona Community

11:00

**BENEFICE HARVEST
CELEBRATION**
Please do bring along a donation for local food bank. They need items like long-life milk, tinned goods, rice, pasta, tea, coffee, sugar and toiletries.

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Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!
St Kilda (Population: 0 – last inhabitants evacuated in 1930)
Part 11 - Experiencing St Kilda first-hand



We were lucky: the glorious sunshine - which emerged after the tumble-drying experience of our crossing – stayed for the duration of my 3 day stay on St Kilda. In this photograph, you can see the later cottages, built in 1862 (some re-roofed and restored) with the old blackhouses in between. The empty

cottages each have a round stone placed in the site of the fireplace, with, painted on - rather poignantly - the names and dates of the last residents who lived there. Every year, people volunteer to join a St Kilda work-party; they stay for a fortnight, repairing and maintaining the 5 restored cottages, schoolhouse, old feather store and church as necessary – for it's guaranteed that they'd have had a lashing over the winter months. It also could be that ancient dry-stone sheep enclosures need rebuilding, perhaps a cleit has collapsed – and any number of other things. There are 6 work-parties each year and 3 restored cottages are set aside for them: dormitories (male & female) and a communal room where meals are provided by the work-party cook. Another cottage has been restored to house a rather lovely museum.

Hirta is dramatically undulating and, within a short (but steep) climb, you can find yourself with a bird's-eye view of Village Bay. If you climb to one of the summits, the side is entirely sheered off, as cliffs (the highest in the U.K.) plunge vertically straight down to the sea. In addition to the church in the village, there were two others, noted, in the 1600s, as thatched buildings – but all traces are now gone; at one time, the island's population was as high as 180.

As soon as you bump into someone at St Kilda conversation inevitably strikes up, usually something along the lines of, "So how did you get here then?" Other boats or yachts were dropping in through the day; it seemed (whilst the sun was out!) to be quite busy. I made sure that I filmed the rare

St Kildan wren, which nest in the dry-stone walls around the village – and pretty soon, I found myself in conversation with someone from the work-party who (after a horrific crossing with much sickness) had recently landed. They were the 6th and last work-party of the year. I then found myself invited to join them all for mid-morning coffee and scones: there was about 15 of them, they were extremely friendly and clearly loving their time on the island. The work-party leader was Archie, a genial counsellor from North Uist whose task was to co-ordinate the work effort; though I got the firm impression that ‘work’ was a long way down the list and ‘having fun’ was much higher up! The rest of the group was a complete mix, from student age to retirement age, and there were one or two from abroad too: one was quite notable, as he was a bit aloof and dressed in a sort of Punk/Goth style and had already gained a reputation for being a bit of a rebel: his name was Kris Decavele and was a Belgian journalist. Once it became known that I was making a film of my journeys, an order form was swiftly drawn up by a chap called Eric; it contained everyone’s name and address, together with their order for a video (this was before DVDs), which rather put the pressure on for me to turn out something semi-respectable!

One of the military buildings housed the island’s pub: The Puff Inn. On payment of £1.00, you were then a member of the ‘club’ and, as far as I can remember, this entitled you to pretty much unlimited drinking hours! The pub was absolutely plastered in weird and wonderful memorabilia from those who had visited it over the years: international flags, and pennants from boats, adorned the ceiling. There were ships in bottles, stuffed seabirds, ships’ buoys - and trophies, shields and dioramas depicting ‘record-breaking’ competitive feats done by military folk on the island; and every spare inch was covered in graffiti. (I found a space and wrote a few words!) The atmosphere was sheer, unadulterated freedom and joy! We were all on our own ‘desert island’, I suppose, and there was an unspoken bonding: apart from the military types (who didn’t have a say in being there!), everyone in the Puff Inn had a fascination and a love for islands - and we were on St Kilda, the pick of the bunch! What’s more, we were all pretty eccentric, we were all extremely drunk, and we just didn’t care! Even our old Murdo was seen chuckling into a pint glass! Getting home for the night entailed perching precariously on the side of an inflatable dinghy, whilst worse-for-wear Murdo guided it until we drew alongside the Cuma, ready to climb up the ship’s ladder. I chose not to think too carefully about it: as a non-swimmer, and a plastered one at that, it was probably one of the daftest things I’ve done!

Next month: Part 12 - My trip concludes... and a tragedy unfolds

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 or Tel: 07774 734411



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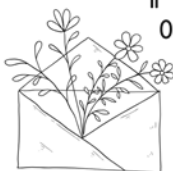
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email
judith@fireandfeastsuffolk.co.uk
Phone/text
0777 5706002

AUTUMN

The Tlpi closes on the 14th of September!

The summer season may soon finish but we still have lots of exciting events planned...

- **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.



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Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

the church's Ordinary Time of summer is meant to be a kind of Sabbath season. Just as Sabbath in the week is a time to rest, reset and receive, so this part of the year encourages us to slow down, to breathe, to pay attention. After the high seasons of the Church, this quieter time gives us space to let the roots of faith sink deeper. So, what have I been doing since January which is manifesting outcomes now? I have been watching, listening, and learning about our eight parishes to help me to consider during this season of quiet formation – often invisible, sometimes uncomfortable, where we may go to grow the Kingdom of God in the Four Rivers Benefice of churches.

And it is the time of year when we are reminded too of what is happening in creation, in the gardens and fields that surround us, which brings me to reflect upon the agricultural services that were reintroduced at the beginning of this year for the benefice to celebrate together. Plough Sunday was at St Mary's Cratfield, Rogation at St Mary's Wilby and Lammas at St Mary's Worlingworth and the Benefice Harvest Festival will be at St Lawrence's Church in Brundish on 28th September when Archdeacon Sally and the Agricultural Chaplain for the Diocese, Graham Miles, will be present. And I must give a big shout out to Bridge4Rivers, led by Sheila Pipe who have worked extremely hard to create the services that have contributed to their success.

So, where am I? On the surface, things might seem still – but, to use an agricultural leaning, beneath the soil, roots are stretching out, drawing in nourishment and preparing for the harvest to come. Growth below the surface may not be obvious, but it is vital. God often works in quiet ways - a quiet walk, a moment of prayer over coffee, a conversation that brings unexpected grace. These may seem ordinary, but they are often where God does his most lasting work in us and with us.

So, I pray that your summer, has allowed you time to rest and that you have made space to listen, to reflect, to pray to our Father every day. God is always at work – gently, steadily, faithfully. May this season of green be for you a season of quiet transformation and may we, together, learn to welcome the sacred gift of ordinary time as we grow the Four Rivers Benefice.

Prayers and blessings.

Reverend Chrissie – 07803 134301 – rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com

September Services Cratfield

Sunday 7th	Sunday 14th
9.30am Village Worship	9.30am Holy Communion
Jeremiah 18:1-11 Philemon 1-21 Luke 14:25-33	Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28 1 Timothy 1:12-17 Luke 15:1-10

Benefice Services

September	7th	14th	21st	28th
Bedfield		10.30am Morn- ing Praise		10.30am Holy Communion
Brundish				9.30am Holy Communion 11.am Bene- fice Harvest Archdeacon Sally
Laxfield	10.30am Celtic Morning Pray- er	10.30am Holy Commun- ion	10.30am Morning Ser- vice	6.00pm Hartismere House
Monk Soham	11.00am Family Ser- vice	11.00am BCP Morning Pray- er	11.00am BCP Holy Commun- ion	
Tannington				
Willby	10.30am Holy Commun- ion		10.30am Village Worship	
Worlingworth	11.00am Holy Commun- ion		6.00pm Let's Celebrate Harvest Festi- val	

Friday 19th September Harvest Service at Monk Soham 7.30pm

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