Parish Magazine

Wickham Bishops September 2026



Produced by the PCC of St Bartholomew's Church with St Nicolas' Church
for the villages of
Wickham Bishops & Little Braxted
www.churchinwickhambishops.org.uk

Parish Register

Baptisms: None
Marriages: None
Funeral Service and Burial: Shirley Ansell 31st July
Interment of Ashes: None

Enquiries for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals:
Rosie Pollock - Benefice Administrator 07908 776750
office.blackwaterbenefice@gmail.com Tuesday and Friday mornings.

Parish Contacts

Priest in Charge	Vacant Position	
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Revd Derek Clark Permission to Officiate	The Leas Farm Wickham Bishops Road Hatfield Peverel CM3 2JL	01245 380627 07860 235778
Safeguarding Officer	Safeguarding@churchinwickhambishops.org.uk	
Church Warden	Vacant Positions	
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Magazine Editors	Helen Ewers & Louis Filho magazine@churchinwickhambishops.org.uk	
Church Hall Bookings	Kath Adkins kathrynadkins57@gmail.com	01621 891143

Church Services for September 2026

At St. Bartholomew's or, except where shown in red.
Our 10.30am Sunday services at St. Bartholomew's are on FB Live.

Sunday 6th **Festival of Creation in Christ**
8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 13th **Trinity 15**
8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 20st **Trinity 16**
9.00am Holy Communion BCP at St Nicholas'
10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 27th **Trinity 17**
8.00am Holy Communion BCP
10.30am Family Morning Praise

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October
Sunday 4th **Harvest Festival**
8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Holy Communion

All Holy Communion Services are from Order 1 Common Worship except where shown as BCP, i.e. the Book of Common Prayer, 1662 version. The 8.00am Service is a shorter, said service without music and at the 9.00am said BCP at St Nicholas' we usually have a couple of hymns.

NB. Depending on the availability of visiting Clergy services are subject to change.

All are very welcome at any of our services and especially for a chat at refreshment time after the 10.30 service



September 2026
Dear friends

Faith and Duty

I recently came across my old Autograph Book – yes, it must be well over 70 years old. There's an entry written by a Great Aunt, who it emerged some years later was my grandmother [but that's another story!]. She wrote the following:

"It's nice to hear the church bells ring to call us to our Pews,
Better still, by far it is to have another snooze!
Aunt Elsie"

Whooar! Where did that come from and why on earth should she impart such a message to me at the tender and impressionable age of about eleven or twelve? We never saw much of dear Elsie as she was Housekeeper, with her husband the Cook, at the Judges Lodging in Oxford. In recent years I located her Baptism records in Kent and then found her Certificate of Confirmation and her Prayer Book.

So, was she just playing with me as a youngster; who at the time was taking two of my brothers to Sunday School every week, knowing that if you told a child not to do something on the balance of probabilities the opposite was often the case?

Well, I didn't heed her little ditty, although I've often considered it on some Sunday mornings. Being faithful is not always easy but having a responsibility makes it easier, like looking after the younger brothers and then after Confirmation becoming an Altar Server which I've continued to this day.

I guess it was also easier when, after a Vacancy at the church in Cambridgeshire, the newly appointed Rector started a Scout Group (in place of Boys Brigade) and we learnt and made the Scout Promise, repeated when Invested as a member and renewed at subsequent occasions. Many will know that the first part of the Promise was to honour 'Duty to God' and so for me that merged easily with Serving at the Altar and becoming a Sunday School Teacher alongside the fun and adventure that Scouting offered.

So, my faith and duty continue particularly at the simple but very spiritual 8.00am Eucharist Service where I have continued to 'Serve' since the week after Easter in 1970! Oh, and I usually hear the bells of St Bart's clock chime as I park up at 7.30 on Sunday mornings. Perhaps another time I'll explain why I have been committed to this particular service for so long.

I pause in the act of writing this message/invitation to join us or continue to join us on Sundays, to read the following piece from Rev John Chandler, a retired priest who has presided at 8.00 on the first Sunday of each month (and more) since Rev Hilary retired. Here's part of which John just sent to me:

On 2nd August, I had the privilege of presiding at the 8am Holy Communion in St. Batholomew's, when something happened that I can't put down to coincidence. As Barry held the Gospel for me to announce it, and I said the words 'Hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew', all the lights in the Church flickered and went out. I read the Gospel, Matthew's account of the Feeding of the 5,000, in relative darkness; then as I said the words 'This is the Gospel of the Lord', all the lights came back on!

What are the chances of that happening, at those precise moments? Millions to one, I reckon. So I asked the Lord, if it was of His doing – and I am open to His signs – He would explain the message. Later that morning, I attended a beautiful, contemplative service where the same Gospel was read. In the sermon, we were reminded of the context – that just before this reading, Jesus had decided to seek a solitary place, having just heard of the death of John the Baptist. Immediately after this episode, he did the same. And I wondered – perhaps, when we are beset by challenges, it is good to be alone in a darkened place, quietly to contemplate God's word and be fed by Him.

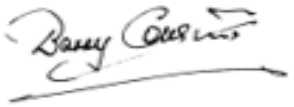
John concludes:

And so, as I take my holiday, I am urged by the Lord to seek a quiet place and contemplate His teaching, His love for me and His miraculous power, leaving others to be blessed by the work of blessing others. And may you too be blessed by God's word and actions.

It is significant that my contemplative and quiet space these many years has been at the Altar rail from 7.30 on a Sunday morning until the 'pilgrims' arrive. I have in the past, when Rev Hilary encouraged me to preach, referred to my journey to the Altar rail each Sunday before the service, as 'the mountain I climb' (but that's also really about the arthritis!).

At 8.00am we used to number about 25, we are now down to 7 or 8 regulars doing their duty – is it me that's the problem -or do some of you agree with 'Gt Aunt Elsie's' little attempt at humour? No excuse for the 10.30 service though, you've time for that extra snooze, and you get coffee afterwards 😉!

Blessings and honour, glory and power... to you all,



Church News

Womens Christian Fellowship

On a very hot day in July we welcomed Marion Pettet, whose talk ' A Peek Behind the Scenes' was about the history of the now sadly closed Chelmsford Ballet Company. What a very interesting afternoon this turned out to be as Marion brought with her some costumes from various productions including The Nutcracker and Sleeping Beauty. We were also shown films and pictures of amazing special affects and how they were achieved. It was also explained how the huge costs (particularly masks and scenery) and then Covid put an end to this wonderful company.

We did not meet in August so our next meeting will be on Wednesday 9th September when Russell Webb will be our speaker. Russell has been to us before and talked about his life as a firefighter, he has now retired and became an author and he will be telling us about this next chapter in his life. Do come, it will be very interesting, time 2.30pm in the Church Hall and visitors are always very welcome.

Denise

REGULAR CHURCH SPONSORED GROUPS

SEPTEMBER

5th 9.30am BEACON PARISHES PRAYER CIRCLE GREAT TOTHAM
7th 2.00pm BIBLE STUDY GROUP in St B Hall
9th 2.30pm WOMENS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP St B Hall
14th 2.30pm DROP IN for tea and cake in St B Hall
15th 7.30pm BIBLE STUDY - check venue
21st 2.00pm BIBLE STUDY GROUP in St B Hall
29th 7.30pm BIBLE STUDY - check venue

CARPET BOWLS CLUB - every Tuesday at 2.00pm in the Hall
EDWARD BEAR CLUB – every Monday at 10.00am in term time
BEACON PARISHES PRAYER CIRCLE 1st Saturday each month at 9.30am - check Venue on Pew Sheet or Website

RIP Rev Canon Christopher John Sly MA 1934 -2026 RIP

Many will remember Chris who was Rector at Wickham Bishops from 1987 -1999 and who also became responsible for St Nicholas', Little Braxted. I can well remember Chris rushing from our 8.00am service with his wife Jean waiting in the layby, engine running to get to Little Braxted for their weekly 9.00am service. It was during this period that our 10.00am Eucharist Service was changed to 10.30am.

Born in Bromley District in Kent in 1934 Chris studied at Selwyn College, Cambridge and Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. He was Ordained Deacon in 1960 and Priest in 1961 serving as Curate at Buckhurst Hill until 1964. He was married to Jean in Epping District in 1963, and their daughter Joanna was born in 1964.

Chris became Vicar of 14c St Michael's Berechurch, a suburb of Colchester in 1964, and three additions to the family were born there – Charlotte in 1966, Jonathan in 1968 and Christopher in 1972.

While at Berechurch, it was decided that the church was too small, and a new church was required. It seems it may have been Chris' wife Jean who dreamt up the idea of 'a self-build' project! Chris along with others took the lead and trained as a bricklayer. The new church of St Margaret's the bulk of which was built by the congregation was opened in about 1970. (Read the story on St Margaret's website). An old Scout colleague of mine in Colchester kept in touch with the Sly family and they are all still fondly remembered at Berechurch.

In 1975 Chris moved on to be Vicar of St Saviour Westcliff where they remained for 12 years. Interestingly Mark and Frances Bodey who became the fourth resident Camp Warden/Managers of Prances were married by Chris in Westcliff in 1987 and moved to Wickham Bishops that year. Chris and Jean must have followed them almost immediately.

As well as taking on the role of Rector at Wickham Bishops and later also St Nicholas' Rev Chris also served as Rural Dean from 1987 -1996 and became an Honorary Canon at Chelmsford Cathedral from 1993-1999.

Chris maintained a low Anglican tradition with us and although a quiet, reserved, unassuming character he was renowned for his Oratory.

Chris and Jean loved caravaning and toured widely. They were in Wales on holiday when Chris was taken ill and hospitalised a few days before our youngest son's wedding at St Bart's. Mary Rothero arranged for a stand-in priest, but we were shocked to arrive at the church to find two priests - Chris had discharged himself the night before; Jean had driven overnight all the way back home with the caravan so that Chris could honour his commitment. Such was his dedication to service.

Chris and Jean enjoyed a long retirement in Little Leighs continuing with caravan holidays mostly in Suffolk where, by chance, a few years ago we met them, walking their dog in Westleton.

They are both now re-united – May they rest in peace.

BJC

St Bartholomew's
Church Hall
Wickham Bishops

Monday 14th September 2026
2.30 - 4.00 pm

Interested? Just come along or call Sue on 01621 892032



Support Starts Here

More Than Just Food

Benefits & Income
Bills & Budgeting
Employment
Housing Support
Health & Wellbeing
Fuel & Energy Costs
Access Local Services

Don't Face Things Alone

Braintree Area Foodbank
Together with Trussell

01376 330694
info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk
braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk

Braintree Area Foodbank

Our current shopping list 2026

Food items

- Tinned Fish
- Tinned Fruit
- Tinned Veg
- Packet Mash
- Packet/Cup Soup
- Biscuits
- Pot Noodles

Non food items

- Soap (Bars or Hand Pump)
- Shampoo
- Washing Up Liquid

We ask for small packs as larger packs do not fit in our boxes making it difficult for our clients to carry home.

We follow the standards set by the Food Standards Agency. We can only accept donations of unopened and undamaged goods that are still well within their "use by" date (no less than six months if possible).

We have lots of ways that you can help including Fundraising. Hold a tea party, do a sponsored personal fitness challenge or just make a monetary donation it will help someone in food hunger

W: braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/collection-points/

T: 01376 330694

Registered Charity Number 1148782 Company Number 08183618

MAUREEN (MO) WEBBER



GONE HOME

1942-2026



Affectionately known as 'Mo', Maureen and Michael moved to Wellands Close in the mid-1970s with three young children; Nigel, Richard and Amanda who were all enrolled in Gt Totham Primary School. Mo was a schoolteacher along with her husband at a secondary school in Chelmsford.

In no time Mo was recruited to start the Shark Pack, a third Cub Scout Pack at 1st Beacon Hill Group. She worked tirelessly with the Pack as Akela for many years earning the Award of Merit for 'good' service. Mo switched to the then relatively new Beaver Scout Section, looking after two Colonies for many years. In District Scouting she was known as Grandma Beaver, overseeing the development of the section in East Essex. In the St George's Day Honours list of 2001, she was awarded the Silver Acorn for 'specially distinguished service' and 'retired' in 2025 when she hit the 50 year milestone and was awarded the 50 year Long Service Certificate.

Known throughout as Akela, there will be hundreds of young people who have benefited from Mo's dedication to their fun and development.

Mo was a long-term member of the United Reformed Church in Witham and was involved in the Book Shop and in Youth Ministry'. Mo had been a widow for some 21 years and kept busy with Beavers, grandchildren and the church.

A memorial and funeral service for Mo was held at a packed URC church in Witham in July and Adult Scout Members formed a guard of honour. The service was presided by Revd Lorna Bantock who co-incidentally did the same for Maureen's husband at St Bartholomew's all those years ago as there was no priest at the time, being in an Interregnum / Vacancy.

BJC

Would you like St Bartholomew's Church to pray for you?



If so please send an email to :

prayer@churchinwickhambishops.org.uk

Do state if you would like your prayer

- Said in a service
- Prayed for by our prayer circle who meet monthly on the first Saturday in the month
- Emailed to those on our prayer chain

There are also Prayer Request cards in the Church which, when completed can be popped in the Prayer Request box.

Church Groups and information

The church has a number of groups for people who wish to learn more about the bible and the Christian faith and fellowship.

There are:

- Study groups that meet during the week
- Home fellowship groups that meet during the week
- Drop in for coffee and chats

For details of meeting times and dates please see the details in the box on **page 6** for September. The weekly pew sheet is also available on the church's Facebook page or via the website **Churchinwickhambishops.org.uk**

Community News

Welcome to the community news pages of the magazine.

We have started compiling a list of all the groups in the village with contact details as a regular feature in the magazine. The current list is inside the back cover.

If you would like your group included please email details to:

magazine@churchinwickhambishops.org.uk or wbmag@outlook.com

WICKHAM BISHOPS WI

REPORT JULY 2026

After the cancellation of our June meeting due to the extreme heat, it was a delight to be back with friends again. We had an amazing talk from Steve Lester showing a completely different side to the Titanic story and it involved members taking part. We would recommend a visit to your group if you are looking for a speaker.

Our usual lunch outings will resume next month together with walking group and craft get togethers.

Our meetings are held in Wickham Bishops Church Hall on the last Thursday of the month 2 – 4 pm. We are always happy to welcome visitors and new members.

Please contact Margaret on 01621 815161 for further information.

Margaret Curtis



WICKHAM BISHOPS JAZZ CLUB

PRESENTS LIVE TRADITIONAL JAZZ

AT

WICKHAM BISHOPS VILLAGE HALL CM8 3JZ

(Doors open 6:30pm for 7:30pm start until 10:30pm)

2026

SEPTEMBER 19: DAVE BROWNING'S JAZZ CATS

OCTOBER 17: SIMON NELSON'S DIXIEMIX

NOVEMBER 21: JAZZ INC.

DECEMBER 19: WICKHAM BISHOPS NEW ORLEANS ALLSTARS

Email wickhambishopsjazzclub@gmail.com

Or ring Pete on 07548 775777



Beacon Wine Circle



We've held a couple of events since the last report; our garden party and a treasure hunt. The former was held, as usual, in Terry & Judith Wilson's beautiful grounds with the sun shining, perhaps a little too much. The itinerary involved a mixture of eating very good food, drinking and playing silly games. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves although, for various reasons, we've decided to have a break next year and do something different.

In July we moved on to a treasure hunt and dinner in Maldon. We were lucky as the previous day was so hot that the event would have had to be cancelled. In the event, the heat was bearable and there was a good turnout of people roaming the streets looking for answers. We finished with dinner at The Queen`s Head where they looked after our large group very well, bearing in mind the throng of customers sitting by the river.

Our new season starts on 11th September at 8pm in the village hall when Steve Scruton, well-known on the radio, hosts a musical quiz. Why not come and join us, we charge £5 per person, per meeting for prospective members. Enquiries to Simon Morrison at beaconwine81@gmail.com

u3a Maldon and District

Maldon and District U3A is a non-commercial organisation for people in Maldon and the surrounding areas who are no longer in (nor seeking) full time employment. There are 400 members in this area with many members from Wickham Bishops. We are part of a UK-wide movement of locally run interest groups that provide a wide range of opportnities to come together and have fun.

Monthly meetings are held in Wickham Bishops village hall on the 3rd Monday of the month, new members are welcome. There are also circa 40 interest groups that meet in the area in halls, online and in members homes.

For further details on how to become a member and upcoming events please see their website www.maldonu3a.co.uk, details are also in the local groups page inside the back cover.

WICKHAM BISHOPS VILLAGE HALL

welcomes you

PER CHILD
£2
(SIBLINGS +50P)

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

WEDNESDAY
(DURING TERM TIME)
10AM TO 11:30AM

WICKHAM BISHOPS VILLAGE HALL, CM8 3JZ

LOTS OF TOYS
SING-ALONG SESSIONS
ARTS AND CRAFTS ACTIVITIES
FRIENDLY CHAT
GOOD FUN

TEA, COFFEE & BISCUITS
PROVIDED - PLEASE BYO CUP

FOLLOW US @
WICKHAM BISHOPS BABY & TODDLER GROUP

Wickham Bishops Biodiversity Group



We would love to see anything that you have done to support local wildlife. Please share here:

Jane.Williams@wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

Alternatively, there is a sticker chart in the library for you to show anything you offer wildlife in your garden.

Please also look for local wildlife news on our Facebook page: Wicki Watch. Thank you.

Wendy.

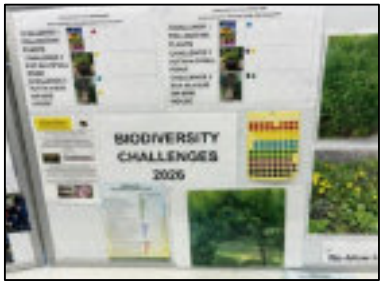
Challenge 3

Building a **wildlife log pile** boosts garden biodiversity. A thriving log pile mimics a fallen tree, acting as a shelter and food source for insects and birds.

1. Gather branches or bits of old untreated wood. Try to use pruned material from gardens rather than taking from the wild as you may be disturbing someone's home!
2. Choose a damp, shady spot under a hedge or at the back of a border. Locating a log pile near water for frogs and newts increases their chances of survival.
3. Bury the biggest logs slightly in the soil and stack the smaller logs on top. Fill the gaps with natural materials like dry leaves, bark chippings, and twigs.
4. Plant bluebells and primroses close by for a woodland feel.

Just a few logs with gaps will provide a great habitat.

Children are welcome to draw a bug, hedgehog or ladybird sign and submit this for our little competition by the 30th of September 2026.





Please stack wood with safety in mind

Wickham Bishops Groups You May Not Be Aware Of

YOGA

Yoga is a medium where the body and mind become one to help improve physical and mental wellbeing. There are over 30 frequently practised, different disciplines, and there is most definitely one out there for everybody. Between them they are all working towards the same goal of improving body strength, flexibility, posture and balance. As we age our bodies begin to struggle with all these elements, and yoga is a sure way of helping to maintain them, or to regain some of what you may have already lost. As well as the obvious physical benefits, there are a multitude of reasons why yoga may be for you. It can relieve stress, improve brain function, cut down and alleviate chronic pain and decrease levels of inflammation.

Some of you may feel you are not the right age to start a new physical activity, or that it may be boring. I promise you there is no need. It is for everyone. When I began practicing yoga I was always on the lookout for picture-perfect poses. I soon realised that yoga isn't about performing the pose perfectly but being perfectly okay with your mind and body in that moment. We all work at different levels, and yoga gives back from any small amount you are able to put in.

Some of you may have even suffered ill health or an injury that you believe will prevent you from participating. Well, yoga is for everyone of any ability level and at any age – even those suffering ill health. It is proven to aid conditions such as heartburn, panic attacks, arthritis, asthma, diabetes, fibromyalgia, heart conditions, high blood pressure, joint replacement, migraine, osteoporosis, Parkinson's, sciatica and many more.

I myself was diagnosed with a spinal disease just eighteen months ago where individual vertebrae in the spine fuse together stripping away flexibility and mobility and causing agonising pain. For a while I thought I may not be able to continue, but with exercise being a huge part of my life and having been a qualified exercise instructor for 45 years, I knew I had to carry on. And I am so glad I did. Yoga continues to aid me and allows me to stay as active as I can under the circumstances.

If any of these reasons appeal to you and make you want to try your hand at yoga, you may like to know there is a class right here in the village. It takes place every Wednesday morning in term time at 9.00am. It is a friendly and supportive class where all are welcome. The cost is £8.00 per class, and mats are provided should you need one.

You will find us at The Peter Church Hall, Prances, Great Totham Road, Wickham Bishops (opposite the tennis club). Please feel free to pop along and join in or if you would like any further information, call me on 07729 635170. Many thanks and I hope to see you soon.

Sam Hammerson

Great Totham WI



We had a most enjoyable visit to Braxted Bakery for a social get-together in July, taking part in a quiz on tea, coffee and cake with varying degrees of success, and having a train ride or two, not to mention partaking in a buffet supper!



We entered a team for the inter-WI quiz, and some of our members enjoyed an afternoon at Maldon Croquet Club.



In August, Bryan Thurlow took us 'Through the Green Baize Door', describing a butler's journey as he progressed from boot boy, lamplighter and clock winder through to valet, and finally became butler of a large country house in Yorkshire.

In September, Tony White will be telling us about his time on the BBC Sewing Bee programme.

We always like to see new members and welcome you as a guest at any of our meetings, held on the second Thursday of the month at Great Totham Village Hall, commencing at 7.30 pm.

If you would like any more information about our group, you can find us on our website at www.greattothamwi.weebly.com or, alternatively, email greattothamwi@gmail.com.

A General Meeting of the Parish Council was held on the 7th July. The minutes of the meeting can be read on:

www.wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

There was no meeting held in August.

Previously, a notice board for use by the Parish Council and the BHSA stood outside 'The Chequers', now 'The Bear'. It had fallen into disrepair and was considered to be dangerous, and so was removed. Both parties now hope to install a replacement notice board on the opposite side of the road, on the triangle of grass where there is a bench seat. This area is Essex Highways land, and so their permission to place it there is being sought. If agreed, a new board will be installed later this year.

Recently, there have been several road traffic accidents at the War Memorial corner on Tiptree Road. We do not believe that there were serious injuries, luckily, but motorists are asked to approach this junction with care, slow down, and watch for vehicles emerging from the side roads. We are grateful to the nearby residents who are reporting the incidents to us as these enable us to inform Essex Highways of the dangers of this junction and ask for some action to improve road safety.

'Saturday Surgeries' will be held in the village library, from 11 am until 12 noon, on Saturday 19th of September. If you would like to discuss anything about Wickham Bishops, in a less formal way than at a monthly meeting, we would encourage you to come along and speak to the councillors on duty.

A General Meeting of the Council will be held in the boardroom of the village hall on Tuesday 1st September, starting at 7:30 pm. All residents are invited to attend and may raise questions about any agenda item or other matter of concern, during the Public Forum section of the meeting.

Councillors may be contacted individually or you may contact the Parish Clerk on 07542 190176 or by email at

info@wickhambishopsparishcouncil.org

You can view the Council website on your mobile phone, by scanning this QR code:

Wickham Bishops Horticultural Club

In July, our members listened to a fascinating talk from Ann-Marie Purvis on the subject of developing a large plot of 'jungle' into a garden in Southern Australia. British gardeners may be finding the recent prolonged drought challenging but at least we don't have to contend with the Eastern Brown Snake which possesses the second-most toxic land snake venom in the world.



Our meeting in August was a social event. 46 members and guests joined a 'Safari Supper' where we were provided with food and drinks in the gardens of three committee members. The weather was perfect, not too hot but dry, the food was delicious and the company was excellent.



Although the Horticultural Club focusses on gardening and garden related topics, we also enjoy two social gatherings each year, several visits to local gardens and, for the past three years, a three-day trip to places further afield. With 70 members, it is a thriving and welcoming club in the village.

We now have an exciting programme of talks and events planned for the autumn and winter months, starting with a talk about 'Plants for Pollinators' on Thursday 17th September at 7:30 pm in St Bartholomew's Church Hall. Visitors are welcome to come along, enjoy a glass of wine or soft drinks, and listen to a fascinating talk.

For more information, please phone Wendy or Stewart on 01621 893360 or email HortiClub@outlook.com

To view our website on your mobile phone, scan this code.

…and more snippets from the memories of Rev T G Gibbons, Rector 1899-1907

Following on from July/August magazine the next paragraph is headed:

THE CHURCH HOUSE

Soon after I came the Rev. Charles Leigh called to say that the old house near the Old Church had somehow become legally his property, but that he wished to set the matter right and arrange for a transfer to Trustees. I am not convinced as yet that it was his property, but as he was then old, I was afraid to delay matters and a legal deed was settled whereby it became vested in myself, Mr. Fairhead and Mr. A.B. Williams for the benefit of the church.

THE OLD CHURCH

Now I come to the building which is the oldest and most interesting structure in the parish. The older people, and especially Mrs. Warren, encouraged me to do such repairs to the roof and fabric as would prevent any further mischief to the house of God, which has been the place of worship for many generations of inhabitants since the time of William the Conqueror. The ivy made it look picturesque but was gradually pushing off the roof, and the mischievousness of boys for fifty years had almost reduced it to a ruin. But through the able help of Mr. W. Williams and his son the building is now watertight, the gaping cracks at the West End are filled up and the old altar stone has been lifted from the floor and placed in its former position. Now with a little care the church can be kept standing and ready for use when the population increases, as it is sure to do so, near the railway station.

It has been a pleasure to me and to many others to meet there for worship once a year near St Peter's Day, and with the help of some of the musicians to sing and pray within its hallowed walls.

OTHER ANTIQUITIES

I have tried to find flint instruments, old pottery, coins and other relics of former inhabitants, but, with the exception of one broken jar of the time of the Roman occupation and fragments of pottery on the glebe and the Rectory garden, I have been unsuccessful. Some little amusement was caused not long ago when there really seemed a chance of an interesting discovery. I was lead on by the vivid description of old Joe B. to go and dig for bricks and bones near the old church. So, armed with spades and the help of a pony carriage to convey the ancient inhabitant, a party went to explore. He found just the place, we removed the turf and dug down here, and then there – yes, there was a bone, and another bone and some teeth – alas! Some old cow only had been put under ground!

A bit more next month…

Barry C



Submission Dates for WB Parish Magazine 2026/27:

Magazine Month	Submission Date
October 2026	September 11th 2026
November 2026	October 15th 2026
December 2026/January 2027	Novmber 13th 2026
February 2027	January 13 2027
March 2027	February 12th 2027
April 2027	March 12th 2027

The Battle of Maldon and the Maldon Embroidery
Vibrant History 42 feet (12.8m) long and 35 years old



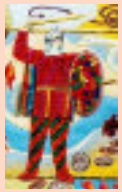
"In this year Olaf came with 93 ships to Folkstone, and ravaged round about it, and then went on to Sandwich, and so from there to Ipswich and so to Maldon"
Entry from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 991.

Much is known about the ensuing Battle of Maldon because of the remaining 325 lines of the heroic Anglo-Saxon poem of that name believed to have been written shortly after the event.

On the 10th or 11th August 991, the Battle was fought on the banks of the River Blackwater (then known as the Pant) between the English defenders, mostly militiamen, commanded by Byrhtnoth the Ealdorman of Essex, and some ninety three boats of Danish Viking invaders. Byrhtnoth rejected the Danes' demands for tribute (that is, protection money) and instead invited them across the river to fight on open ground. The result was bloody, with heavy losses on both sides including Byrhtnoth himself.

Although the Danes won, they lost so many men that they had difficulty in manning their boats to leave. The English King Ethelred then decided that it was better to pay the tribute (which became known as Danegeld) than be attacked and 3300 kg of silver were paid to the Danes. The attacks soon resumed!

"Once you have paid him the Dane-geld/ you never get rid of the Dane."
"Dane-geld" a 1911 poem by Rudyard Kipling.



From his bones found in Ely Cathedral, it appears that Byrhtnoth was a 6 feet 9 inches giant. He was also about 68 years old and, fighting on foot, could not have been at his most nimble. He must have been an obvious target and was wounded several times before finally being killed. In the poem a dying Byrhtnoth spoke his final words thanking God for the joys of his life and asking that his soul be safely escorted to Heaven.

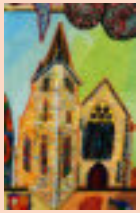
There is a popular walk in Maldon's Promenade park to John Doubleday's dramatic statue of Byrhtnoth looking out over the likely battlefield. There is another statue, far older, on the walls of All Saint's Church in Maldon High Street and there is a memorial window in St Mary's Church by Maldon Quay.

The window is one of the two legacies of the Maldon Millennium Society which was formed in 1987 and charged with marking the forthcoming 1000 years since the Battle and the history of Maldon since then.

The other is the Maldon Embroidery, designed by the celebrated artist Humphrey Spender (1910 – 2005) (who lived in Ulting), translated into the embroidery medium by the late Lee Cash and sewn by eighty-six local ladies. The 42 foot long Embroidery commemorates not only the Battle but much of Maldon's culture and heritage and is now housed in its permanent home in the Maeldune Heritage Centre.

"Each time I look at the panels I see something that I`d not noticed on previous visits. The amount of thought in the design is phenomenal; the colours are so harmonious; the use of background fabrics inspirational".

The Heritage Centre occupies the ground floor of St Peter`s Building (also known as the Plume Building) standing in the very middle of Maldon High Street. There had been a church on this site from Saxon times until the then church was made redundant in 1577. The base of the current tower is fifteenth century but the upper part, along with the brick attachment, was built by Thomas Plume DD (1630 – 1704). The upper storey still houses Dr Plume's library of some 8000 books and pamphlets.



The ground floor became vacant in 1992 when the public library moved to new premises and exactly suited the Millennium Society's intentions that the Embroidery should be displayed in the town centre.

Maeldune (translated as the cross on the hill) was the Old Saxon name for Maldon. As a link back to its past, the ground floor of the St Peter's/Plume Building was named the Maeldune Heritage Centre. The Maeldune Trust (a charity) was formed to operate the Centre as a heritage and cultural space.

For nearly thirty years the Trust has been custodian of the Embroidery (now 35 years old), a focus for knowledge and scholarship ensuring that current and future generations understand and appreciate their heritage. The Trust offers tours and talks to groups and individuals and has a particular programme for schools. A special series of 35th anniversary seminars are planned this autumn.

The Centre is open free to the public, Tuesday to Saturday 11am to 4pm year round (except for a refurbishment closure after Christmas trading). It is also home to changing artists' exhibitions, a craft shop, the Maldon Visitor Information Centre, the Maldon Society Listening Station and video and photographic archives, and other local historical displays.

To book a talk, tour or for more information please contact the Centre manager Nigel Crowley via the Maeldune Heritage Centre website *maelduneheritagecentre.org* or ring 01621 851628. For an in depth insight into the fabrication of the Embroidery, see "The Embroiderers' Story" collated by Jill Hipsey available to study at the Centre.

The Maeldune Trust August 2026

Bryhtnoth`s final prayer is recorded in the Battle of Maldon poem. There are many translations from the Anglo-Saxon. This is one appears in "The Anglo Saxon World - An Anthology" by Kevin Crossley-Holland:

"O Guardian of the people, let me praise and thank You for all the joys I have known in this world, Now, gracious Lord, as never before, I need Your grace, that my soul may set out on its journey to You,
O Prince of Angels, that my soul may depart into Your power in peace."

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Editor's afterword

September always feels like a fresh start, with schools and universities beginning again. We've had a long, hot summer this year — although my garden definitely hasn't appreciated it! It may now be coming to an end, but a bit of rain and some greenery returning would be very welcome.

There are new beginnings for the magazine too, as we've had to replace our editing package because Publisher is being withdrawn. I've been using Publisher since the late 1990s, so learning the new system has been quite a challenge. The magazine may change a little as Louis and I get used to the new features, but hopefully any changes will be for the better.

This month's magazine includes several new items; if your local group would like to contribute something, please let us know.

Helen Ewers and Louis Filho

This month's "fantastic Mr & Mrs Fox" photo was taken by Harmoni Fenton in Wickham Bishops. Would you like to see your photo of the local area on the front cover of this magazine? Submit your photo to wbmag@outlook.com

Items for the **October** magazine should be submitted to the editors by:

11th September 2026

Please send items by email to wbmag@outlook.com in no larger than A5 format, ideally in Word. Images are better sent in PNG, TIFF or JPG format. Brevity and clarity trumps volume.

Priority is given to church events and community information connected with Wickham Bishops and Little Braxted.

For enquiries regarding distribution of the magazine, please phone Jayne Jennings on 07767238849

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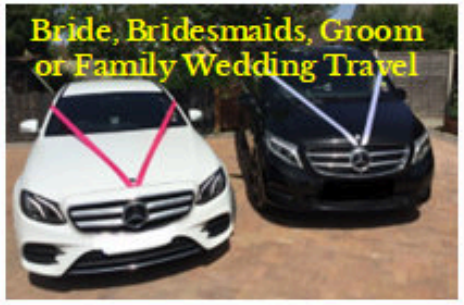
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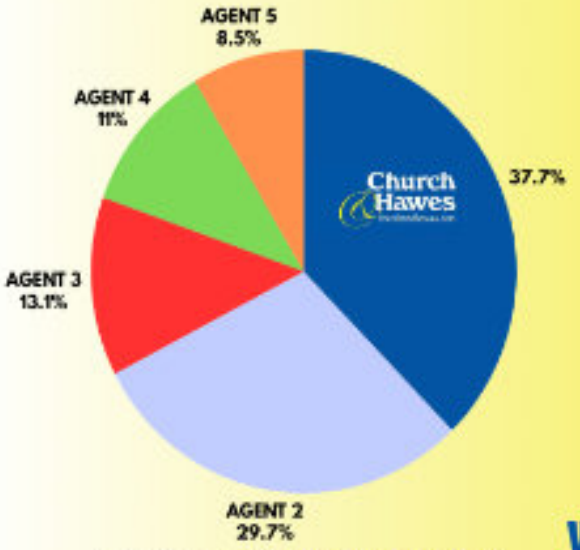
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Local Groups Contact details	Day	Time	Place	Contact
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Drop In	2nd Monday	2.30-4pm	Church Hall	Sue 01621992032
Edward Bear Club	Mondays Term time	10-11.30am	St Bartholomew's Church	
Great Totham WI	2nd Thursday	7.30pm	Great Totham Village Hall	www.greattothamwi.weebly.com greattothamwi@gmail.com
Happy Hearts Exercise	Thursdays	10am and 11am	Church Hall	Lucy West lucy@happyheartsexercise.com
Maldon and District U3A	3rd Monday	1.15pm for 1.45pm	Wickham Bishops Village Hall	Malcolm Case Membership Secretary 07869 871502
Frances Hire Scouts and Guides Information				01621 892876 www.pranees.org.uk
Wickham Bishops Drama Club	Mondays and Thursdays	8-10pm	Wickham Bishops Village Hall	wickhambishopsdrama@gmail.com
Wickham Bishops Horticutural Club	3rd Thursday	7.30pm	Church Hall	Wendy or Stewart 01621 893360 HortiClub@outlook.com
Wickham Bishops Jazz Club	3rd Saturday	6.30pm for 7.30pm start	Wickham Bishops Village Hall	Pete 07548 775777 wickhambishopsjazzclub@gmail.com
Wickham Bishops Parish Council	1st Tuesday every month except August	7.30pm	Village Hall Boardroom	Parish Clerk 07542 190176 info@wickhambishopsparishcouncil.co.uk
Council Saturday Surgery	3rd Saturday	11.00am to Noon	Wickham Bishops Library	
Wickham Bishops WI	Last Thursday	2-4pm	Church Hall	Margaret Curtis 01621 815161
Womens Christian Fellowship	2nd Wednesday	2.30pm	Church Hall	Denise Yelland 01621 891987
Yoga with Sam	Wednesdays Term Time	9.00am	The Peter Church Hall, Frances	Sam Hammerson 07729 635170

Would you like your groups contact details added? The above has been compiled from the regular contributors to the magazine and your groups can be added to the list for a central reference point.

Wickham Bishops Library opening times

Monday - 2pm to 5:30pm
Wednesday - 2pm to 5:30pm
Friday - Closed

Tuesday - Closed
Thursday - Closed
Saturday - 9am to 5pm
Sunday - Closed

Facilities and services available:

* Wifi
* Bookstart Packs
* Battery Recycling
* Study Space
* Computers
* Printing
* Scanner & Photocopying



Wickham Bishops Drama Club

WANT TO TRY SOMETHING NEW?

Be part of a fun community!



WWW.WBDC.ORG.UK

WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW PEOPLE TO JOIN US ON AND OFF THE STAGE!

Get involved in:

- ACTING
- BUILDING & PAINTING SETS
- BACKSTAGE & TECHNICAL
- FRONT-OF-HOUSE
- AND MUCH MORE!

WE MEET:

MONDAY & THURSDAY
8–10PM

WICKHAM BISHOPS
VILLAGE HALL

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

JUST ENTHUSIASM!