

THURCASTON WITH CROPSTON AND ANSTEY

Heart & Soul

March 2026

of our community

All Saints' Church

St Mary's Church



Come along and ring the bells!
Saturday 14th March from 9.30am
All Saints' Church, Thurcaston.
See inside for details

RECTOR	Revd Matthew Gough	07754 961997
		Email: revgough@gmail.com
ASSOCIATE MINISTERS	Mr Ian Dutton	0116 221 3786
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ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, THURCASTON WITH CROPSTON

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ORGANIST & CHOIR MASTER	Mr David Evans	07733 243 383
PCC SECRETARY	Mr Douglas Gilmour	0116 236 2503
PCC TREASURER	Dr Peter Yardley	0116 236 3485
CAPTAIN OF BELLRINGERS	Mr Peter Hunt	0116 235 9601
HARRISON ROOM BOOKINGS	Jane Lacey	harrisonroomsbookings@gmail.com

ST MARY'S CHURCH, ANSTEY

CHURCH WARDENS	Mrs Marian Driver	0116 348 1587
PCC SECRETARY	Mrs Pat Henderson	0116 221 5981
PCC TREASURER & STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY	Mrs Janet Collins	Mob: 07749 655618 Text messages only
VERGER	Mrs Paula Hayward	0116 367 8563 Mob: 07584 254729
BELLRINGERS	Marion Pegge	
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MUSIC	Mr Harvey Nightingale	
CHURCH ROOM	Booking Enquiries	Stmaryschurchrooms@gmail.com

Inside this month's magazine...

Thanks for the memories!

Sadly this will be the last magazine we will edit and produce, but what a cracker! Lots of events leading up to Easter appear in our pages this month.

As featured on our front page, Peter Hunt and Tim Holland have organised a Bell Ringing Day at All Saints' Church, Thurcaston. What an opportunity to try your hand and see if campanology is for you. As Peter says, "Give it a go - you may be surprised!" Full details are on Page 10.

With Easter coming it is an excuse to clean and tidy up All Saints' ready for the big weekend at the beginning of April. As usual Thurcaston has made it a social occasion by holding the monthly coffee morning on the same day. A bit of toil rewarded by a relaxing cup of coffee - perfect! Turn to Page 11 to get involved and mark the date in your diary.

Six years ago we started producing the Parish Magazine for All Saints' and what a journey. From printing in St Mary's Rooms and relocating the printer to the Harrison



Room. From black and white to full colour. From two parish magazines to one beneficent publication. The uncertainty of Covid and lockdown and then the burst of energy as our two parishes united under Matthew to create a new optimism and confidence, illustrating this world is such a great place to live in. It has been a blast but all good things must come to an end. Good luck to new editor Paul and thanks to you all for your support and kind words and for some special memories over the last six years.

Richard, Barbara and Adam.

Contributions for the April magazine by 20th March to:

Paul, Email: heartandsoulnews@gmail.com

**Church details, events and services can be found at
www.stmarysandallsaints.co.uk**

All Saints Church and St Mary's Church exists for the benefit of the whole community, not simply those people who come to church on a Sunday!

We are always delighted to arrange baptisms and weddings, or to bring Holy Communion to anyone who is unable to come to church.

If we can help in this, or any other way, please contact the Rector or Church Wardens.



Find us on Facebook - [asthurcastonwc](https://www.facebook.com/asthurcastonwc)



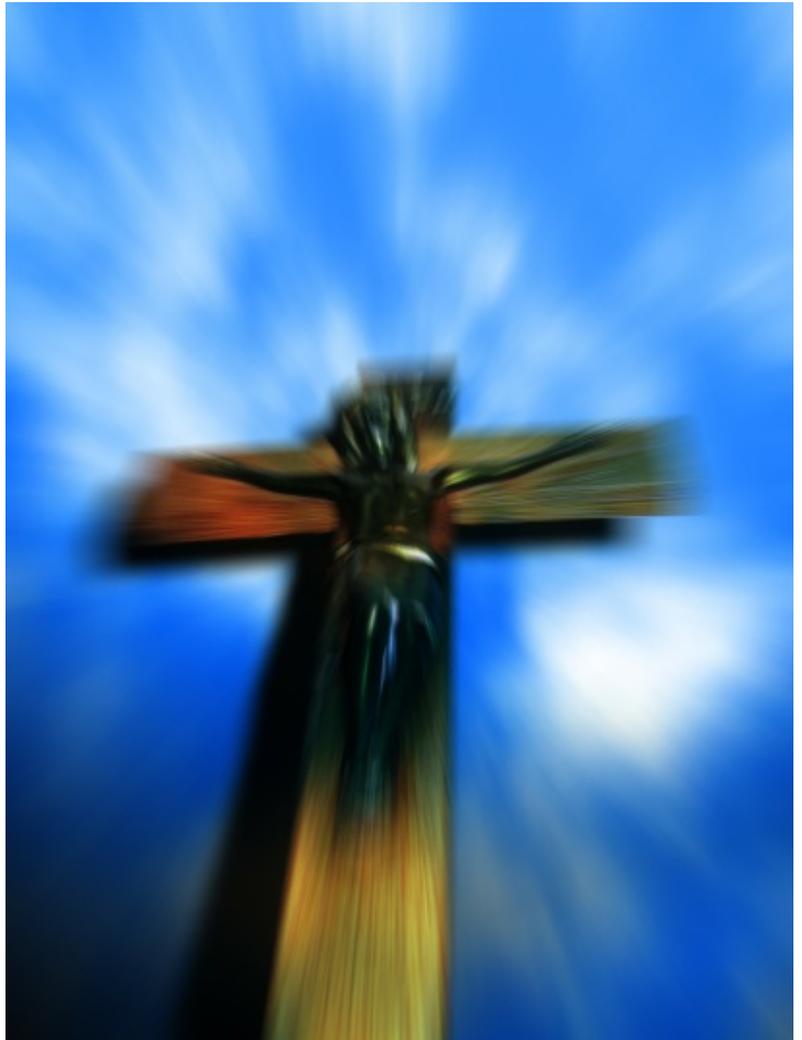
Christianity is back!

This Lent politicians from all shades of the political spectrum are wishing us 'Happy Lent' and 'Ash Wednesday greetings!'. Whether Muslim, atheist or racist-everyone it seems wants to get in on the new found popularity of identifying with civic Christianity. In a nation struggling to find its purpose and identity, Christianity in the public square proves a safe bet alongside the cult of nostalgia and the battle to talk tough on asylum seekers and immigration.

The sacrificial blood of Christ which colours these red cross national flags flying from public lampposts from Newcastle to Nuneaton puts Christianity in the middle of culture wars. To be really English is to know one's traditions and as such, the logic means celebrating our Christian heritage. Of course, that celebration is a noble aspiration as Christian virtue has contributed such goods to culture, law and public life. Should the church embrace, welcome and take advantage of this resurgent popularity? It is tempting especially as Storm Amy pulled down St Mary's flag pole from the tower. Perhaps, the Raise the Colours dubious patriots could give us the money to repair the flagpole and the St George's cross could fly proudly once more?

Although caution is needed when popularity and prestige are close. A wise ex Catholic priest once told me that the church lost its way when it exchanged the dungeons of Rome for its palaces. He was talking about Emperor Constantine in the early 4th century. When Christianity became the religion of empire, it traded persecution for power, but at what compromise and cost to truth?

We may do well to heed the words of an



'unpopular' homeless preacher from Nazareth when it comes to truth and its natural sometimes uncomfortable inconvenience, 'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets,' (Luke 6). The 'badge' of Christianity may be appealing to us all. The Lent season is a journey which calls for a renewed honesty and absence of falsehood—a confrontation with unvarnished truth. When we remove the status, trappings, distractions and comforts of our ego our souls are bared and vulnerable for God to work on our hearts. Jesus' final week had a soundtrack of short lived cheering soon replaced by mocking jeers. Let us too not be guided by applause in our own earthly pilgrimage.

Matthew

Thank you to Team Bradley and welcome to Paul



I am very sorry to say goodbye to the Bradley editorial team. It has been a delight working with them. They are so good humoured and patient with us all even when folk are way past their print deadline (Ahem!)...They have brought skill and professionalism to the magazine and built on the community heart which Audrey Geary and predecessors built up so well.

Richard as editor has been incredibly solution focused and creative in pioneering new ground and he has been so positive to create a range of covers celebrating our local natural landscapes. He initiated the coverage of Anstey, resurrecting this much needed parish magazine for the whole benefice. People ought never to complain that there are not enough Anstey features when it really is up to people in Anstey to provide the copy (an ongoing plug..).

Barbara's laser sharp focus on copy writing and grammar betraying a commitment to word play and scrabble championships. Her

ability to translate my jumbled ideas into coherence has usually(!) been a much appreciated improvement. Adam, the junior Bradley has been a dry wit and solid presence with front line delivery insight and helping with the thankless task of copying and wrestling with the photocopier. We should all be thankful for their 6+ years of service as they kept people in touch during covid and have been a key bridge for church and community. Their latest development, rebadging as 'Heart & Soul' speaks of their, mine and our aspiration to maintain relevance, authenticity and value in matters of faith and community spirit.

We look forward to welcoming Paul, who being Anstey based, may bring a different slant and space to develop his own creative gifts with this ongoing enterprise. Long may the Bradley enthusiasm evident in the magazine continue to burst forth in their ongoing ventures.

Matthew

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Funerals

Wednesday 4th February

Barbara Temple of Thurcaston,

All Saints followed by committal Cropston Cemetery.

Saturday 14th February

Susan Bosworth of Anstey,

Interment of ashes Anstey St Mary's Garden of Rest.

Wednesday 18th February

Wendy Layton of Anstey,

St Mary's followed by Committal Anstey Cemetery.

Thursday 19th February

John Healey of Birstall,

Gilroes Crematorium, Leicester.

Wednesday 25th February

Joyce Hilda Holton,

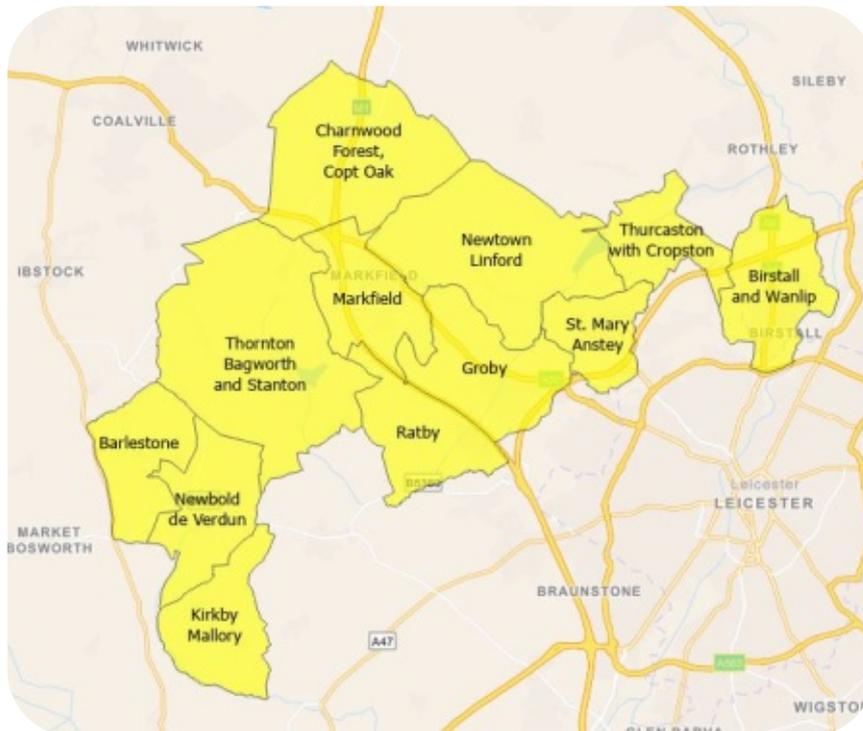
St Mary's followed by Committal Anstey Cemetery.



March Readings for Sundays

March 1st	Genesis 12. 1-4a
Lent 2	John 3.1-17
March 8th	Exodus 17, 1-7
Lent 3	John 4. 5-42
March 15th	1 Samuel 1.20-end
Mothering Sunday	John 19.25b-27
March 22nd	Ezekiel 37.1-14
Passiontide	John 11.1-45
March 29th	Psalm 118.1-2, 19-end
Palm Sunday	Matthew 21.1-11

Minster Community Update



All Welcome

**Birstall St James The Greater
March 14th 10-12**

Hear back from the different work groups as we share findings and priorities for our area and help shape a vision for the future.

Just turn up. St James the Greater, Church Hill Birstall,
LE4 4DN (limited street parking)
Free Public parking 4 min walk away
*School Lane **LE4 4EA***

Links and information for our Benefice

Parish Contacts - Marian Driver, Peter Yardley

Reps - Jane Westby, Douglas Glimour, Marian Driver
and Ian Dutton

Work Group members - Matthew Gough, Marian Driver,
Jane Westby, Chris Denton, Fiona Moss

My good friend Wendy...



Wendy Layton and I met at St. Mary's Church. It was 2006 and I'd just moved to Anstey. Wendy was also a newcomer having moved to Anstey the year before. I became churchwarden at St. Mary's in 2008 and Wendy joined me 3 years later, serving for a total of 15 years. As churchwardens we were interested in developing social activities, attractive to the wider community. Together with other pals we started the SAF (Social and Fundraising) group to raise funds for the church and a toilet!

Together we planned all sorts of events involving food. You name it we did it: 70's /80's disco's, forties night, themed dining feasts e.g. Chinese, Indian, Italian, games evenings etc. We shared the church warden role well with Wendy happier with the practical side of things and me doing more administrative tasks on the computer. We were good together! This was particularly helpful when I moved away from Anstey to Glenfield as I was not so near church or church rooms. I would ask Wendy if she

could do something and she would always reply 'yes that's ok'. She was so flexible and willing to help and always managed to get there early. Four years ago, along with



the support of Soar Valley Food project and St. Mary's Church Wendy and I started the Food Bank in Anstey. We welcomed people and encouraged them to stay and have refreshments. Wendy loved dogs and used to breed bull dogs. She often came home and made friends with our sons two British bull dogs. Wendy was particularly worried



about pets and encouraged donations of cat and dog food to the food bank. In many ways we were able to show Love in action. In all the activities we planned for the church Wendy was always kind and friendly, welcoming, willing and eager to help.

Wendy was so proud of her family and often shared photos and videos of her lovely grandchildren and great grandchildren. She had a fondness for all children and loved meeting and greeting children as they came to church or when we saw children at the Little Gems playgroup in church rooms.

As friends Wendy and I did many things together. When Nev was alive we persuaded him to have a trip on our narrow boat and he enjoyed it despite his aversion to water. We both enjoyed dancing and did many Zumba classes at Jubilee Hall. We often shared Chinese take away meals together. I suggested Indian but Wendy would laugh and say a definite No! She didn't like spicy food! We shared the love of gardening and spent many happy hours in each other's gardens, even leading up to organising our own 'Open Gardens in



Anstey' for a few years. We both enjoyed sewing and knitting. Wendy was keen to learn to crochet and from this shared love of crafting we started the Tea and Crafts in church rooms on Friday afternoons. We also shared the love of cake and for many occasions we were seen in the kitchen making teas and coffees and serving delicious home - made cakes for church fairs and many other occasions. Wendy and I were members of the Anstey WI and in the past have taken part in their organised group holidays. Wendy just loved socialising and being with other people. I was lucky enough this year to spend 4 days holiday with Wendy at a Warners hotel at Alvaston organised by the WI. Wendy was well throughout the week and we enjoyed the planned excursions, the shopping, the delicious food and all the concerts. We had a great time! I didn't realise those would be her last days. We have lost a very warm, kind and loving friend.

Marian Driver

Stress and Relaxation

Our talk was given by a regular Club member, Adele Fricker, who has studied healing massage, helpful essential oils and beneficial crystals. Stress can be acute or chronic, and it can be emotional pain. If alone, you could put a tennis ball into an odd sock and use this to massage your own hands, feet, shoulders and back, in a circular motion, lying down on a bed when necessary. This will help your blood circulation. Other helpful means of relaxation include listening to music, or walking in a garden and smelling the flowers. Massaging the back of your ears can be helpful.

Some essential oils can help such as neroli, geranium and orange. Massaging your feet, yoga or meditation could help you to sleep. Playing music is also beneficial.

The speaker demonstrated with a volunteer how the location of pain could be identified, and how concentrating on that part resulted



Cropston Evangelical Free
Church
9th February 2026

in it becoming warm, and beginning to heal. Such exercises normally begin with gentle, controlled breathing in and out which has a generally calming effect.

After refreshments, our meeting closed around 4pm.

* * *

Meetings start at 2.15pm, on the second Monday of each month. Annual membership is £15.00, plus an entrance fee of £2.00; and it is only £4.00 for visitors, to include tea / coffee and biscuits. New members and visitors are most welcome at the Church Room – just turn up. Our next meeting is 9th March, when we have a talk about the Origin and Meaning of Surnames. On 13th April we shall learn about "Folklore, Folk Tales & Funny Folk".

Mrs Maja Tompkins

Contact mobile 07709 201881.

Come along and ring the bells!

Saturday 14th March from 9.30am

All Saints' Church, Thurcaston.



Thurcaston Bell Tower is recruiting and you'll discover a fantastic hobby that is very sociable and fun to learn.

Sessions led by Peter Hunt & Tim Holland who are members of the Association of Ringing Teachers.

For more information ring Peter on 0116 235 9601

The Big Spring Clean at All Saints'

Saturday 21st March



It is now the time of year with spring around the corner that the shafts of very welcome sunlight show up the nooks and crannies where the spiders lurk.

We like to make a special effort to spruce up the Church with our big Spring Clean. It will take place on Saturday 21st March from

9.30am. Please come along and help make our lovely Church bright and shining for Easter. Many hands make light work, there is something for everyone to do.

We will be refreshed as it coincides with the monthly coffee morning.

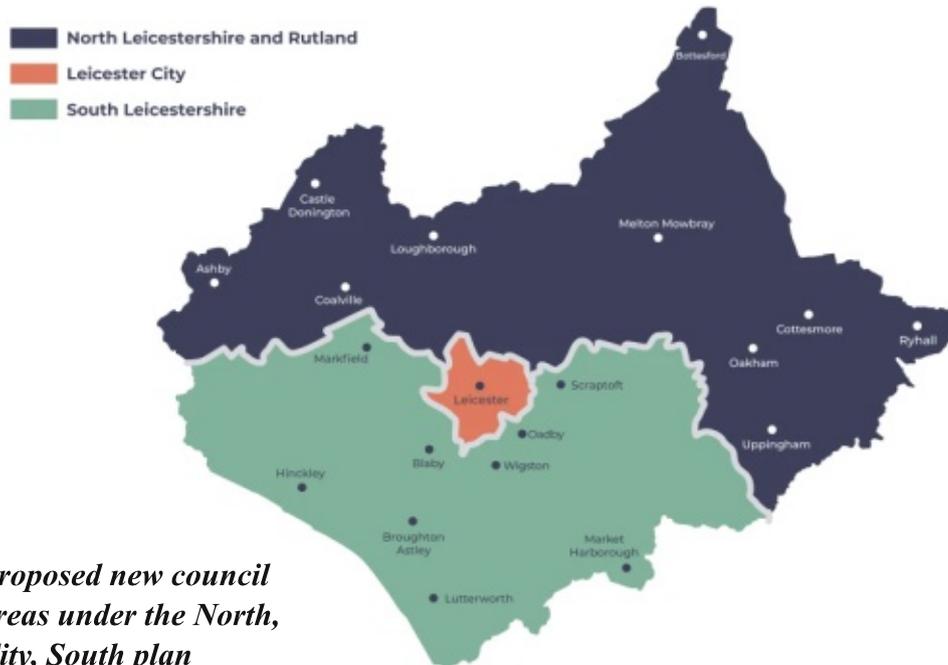
How God works

A grandmother was taking her young grandson for a walk in the park. The daffodils were in bloom, and it was a beautiful Spring day. Wanting to encourage her grandson's spiritual understanding of the world, she said: "Doesn't it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God did all this?"

Her grandson replied: "Oh yes, and God did it left-handed, too." In astonishment, the grandmother asked what he meant. "Well, He must have done," said her grandson, "because we learned at church last week that Jesus sits on God's right hand."

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Launch of Government consultation into local government reorganisation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland



The Government has launched a public consultation on future local government reorganisation arrangements for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

This consultation seeks views on three proposals that would reshape the current structure of ten councils into a smaller number of unitary authorities responsible for all local services.

This seven-week consultation provides an important opportunity for residents, organisations, partners, and businesses to share their views.

The Government is inviting feedback on the following options:

1. Two councils, with Leicester City Council's preferred proposal involving an expanded Leicester city boundary and a single council covering the rest of Leicestershire and Rutland (submitted by Leicester City Council)

2. Two councils, with one for Leicester on its existing boundary and one for Leicestershire and Rutland (submitted by Leicestershire County Council)

3. Three councils, with a council for North Leicestershire and Rutland, a council for South Leicestershire and one for the city on its existing boundary. It is known as the North, City, South proposal and has been submitted by the seven district and borough councils together with Rutland County Council.

To take part in the consultation visit the consultation website.

The deadline for responses is 23.59pm on Thursday 26 March.

Following the consultation period, Government is expected to decide on a final proposal by the summer, with any new arrangements anticipated to take effect from April 2028.



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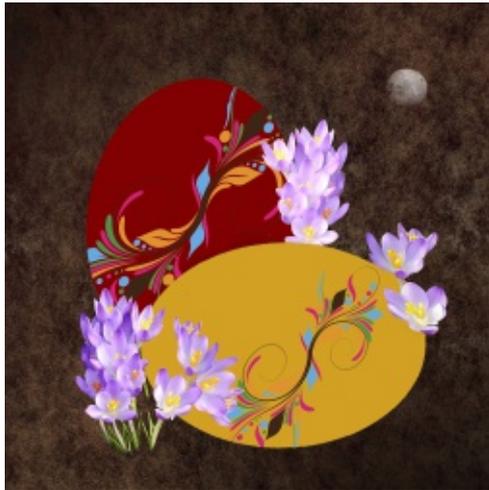


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Easter Flowers

We will be meeting in Church at 10.30am on Saturday 4th April, and will be pleased for anyone to join us in decorating the Church ready for Easter Day. You do not need to be a seasoned flower arranger, all new and aspiring flower arrangers are very welcome to join us and learn more about flower arranging. We try to be as eco friendly as possible using garden flowers and foliage, and sustainable



products.

If you would like to make a donation towards the Easter Lilies in memory of a loved one, please see Jane Westby or Jane Lacey. If you would like your loved one's name recording on the list, please advise of the details.

We will also be creating an Easter Garden in the

Churchyard, so donations of appropriate flowering plants welcome.

St. Mary's Church, Anstey



The World Day of Prayer Church Service

Friday 6th March at 7pm

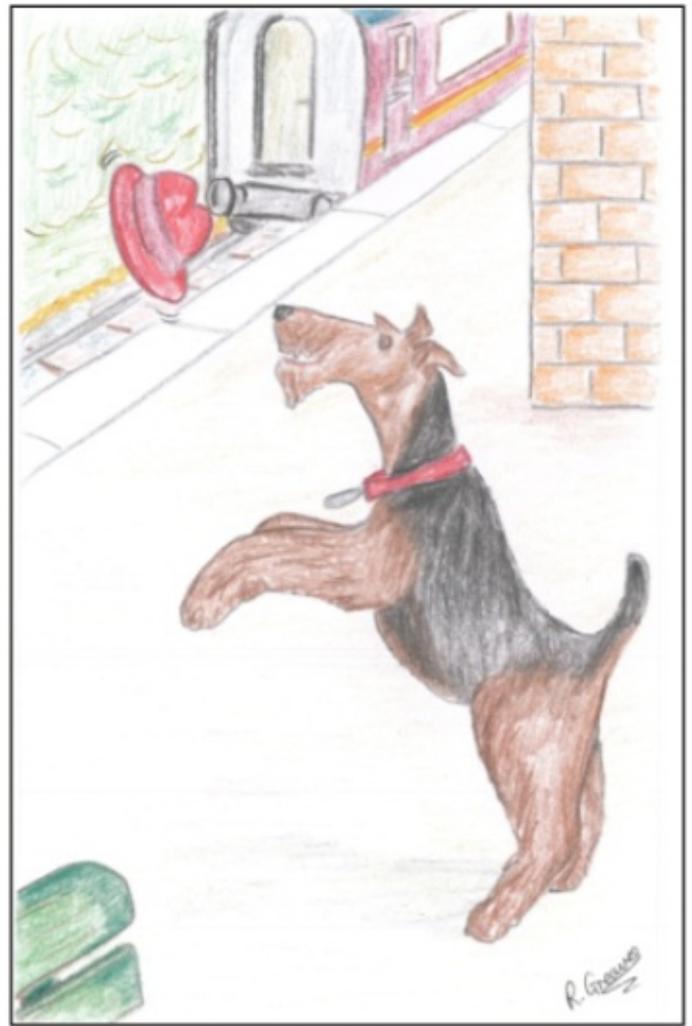
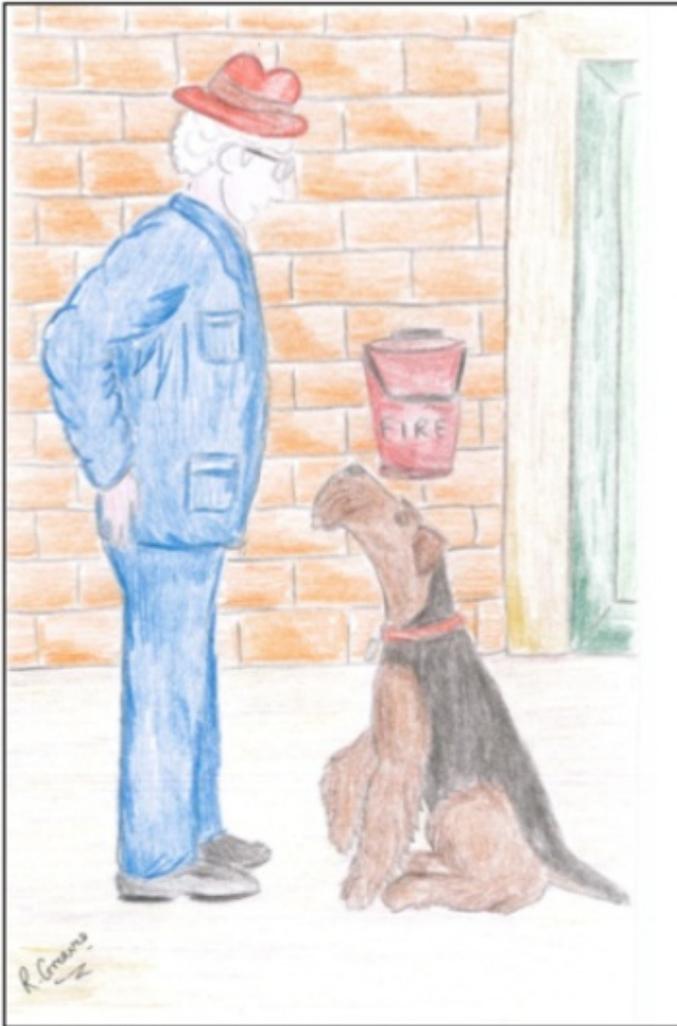
There will be tea, coffee, squash and biscuits following the service.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

We continue our series of short stories about Ruffle, a mischievous Airedale Terrier, and his adventures on a steam railway...

Ruffle and the new hat!

By Rachel Greaves



The wind was blowing strongly as Ruffle walked along the platform.

His ears and beard were being blown about in the strong wind storm.

There was Eric! But something was different thought Ruffle as he sat.

Yes! Perched upon Eric's head was a brand new red felt hat.

'Don't you look at me like that either, Ruffle!' with a frown Eric said.

'It's my new red hat - all the fashion - sat upon head!'

But as Eric spoke a gust of wind swept the hat up into the air.

It landed next to a bench and instantly Ruffle was there!



Ruffle liked these games! He tried to grab the hat but just as he got close,
Another gust of wind blew and, like magic,
the hat rose.

Ruffle's teeth snapped at the hat but to no avail.

'Mind my hat Ruffle! No teeth marks please,' Eric was heard to wail.

But the wind was playing with the hat and took it high into the sky,

Ruffle and Eric watched as over the high hedge the red hat did fly.

Ruffle ran down to the hedge and squeezed through a small gap.

Eric followed quickly behind eager to get his hat back.

Ruffle (with Eric following) found the hat - ripped and covered in mud. 'I can't wear that now!' Eric joined Ruffle and beside him stood.

For the red hat had landed perfectly upon a head of hay,

'I think it suits him better,' said Eric. 'On the scarecrow it can stay!'

Visit www.ruffletheraildog.co.uk for more information about Ruffle's adventures.

Social Events and Activities at All Saints', Thurcaston 2026

Don't miss out, put these dates in your diary

Saturday 21st March *The Big Spring Clean in Church and coffee morning* Many hands make light work. 9.30 – 12noon

Saturday 4th April *Easter flowers* from 10am

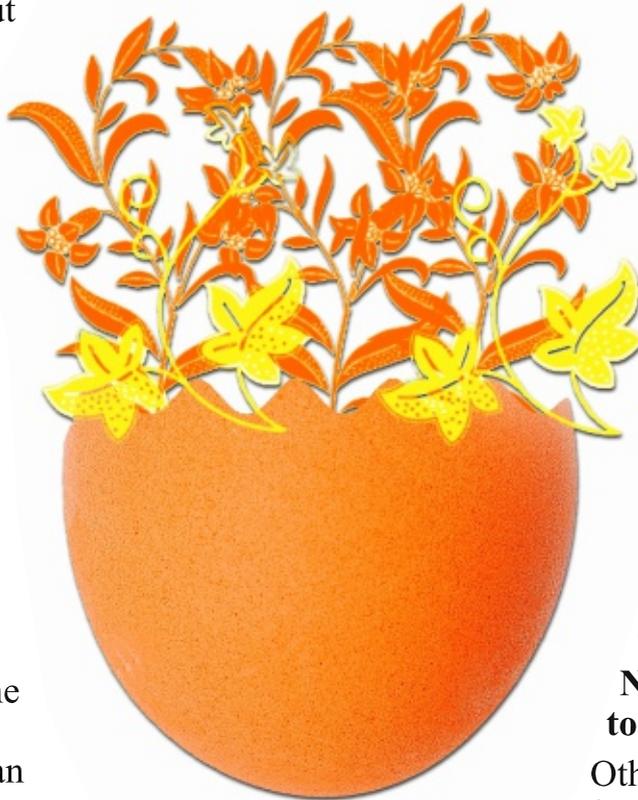
Saturday 18th April *Coffee morning*

Saturday 9th May We welcome the return of the *Loughborough Concert Band* who will provide an evening of high-quality music.

Saturday 16th May *Coffee morning*

Saturday 6th June *All Saints' Garden Fete* in the Church, Churchyard and Harrison Room. 1.00pm until 4.00pm

Please start saving items for the various stalls, tombola, raffle and bric-a-brac. Also plant a few extra seeds and pot up any spare plants when doing your garden.



Sunday 28th June *Choral Evensong* 6.30pm

July (date to be confirmed) *Annual Skittles Challenge Match & Supper* at The Wheatsheaf Inn, Thurcaston.

September 12th *Ride and Stride*

October 10th and 11th *Harvest weekend* with a Mental Health and Poetry theme and coffee morning

November Winter Fair to be confirmed.

Other events are in planning and more details including price and refreshments for each event will follow nearer the time, as plans are confirmed. As is usually the case at All Saints' most events will include food and drink, and possibly music, so watch this space! The Social Group are working hard to deliver an interesting programme for everyone to enjoy.

No coffee morning in June, July and August.

Adam and Eve's true nationality

A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian were viewing a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden. "Look at that garden they are maintaining so well," mused the Brit. "They must be British."

"Nonsense," the Frenchman disagreed. "They're naked, and so beautiful. Clearly, they are French."

"Ah, but no clothes, no shoes, no shelter," the Russian pointed out, "they have only an apple to eat, and they're being told this is Paradise. They are Russian."

Dates for your diary

Four pages of Events and Activities this month

Date	Time	Event
Sun Mar 1	10.30 am	<i>Sunday Worship Cropston Evangelical Free Church (CEFC)</i>
Mon Mar 2	11:00am	<i>Bible Study - CEFC</i>
Tue Mar 3	Noon	<i>Leics MS Tuesday Group - coffee/tea, biscuits & chat ANSTEY JUBILEE HALL (AJH) Stadon Rd LE7 7AY</i>
Wed Mar 4	2.00pm	<i>Wednesday Hub - coffee/tea, cake & chat -Thurcaston All Saints' Harrison Room</i>
Fri Mar 6	9.15 am	<i>Coffee Morning - St Mary's Church Rooms</i>
Sat Mar 7	11:00 am	<i>Charity Coffee Morning - The charity for 2026 is LOROS.(CEFC) -</i>
Sun Mar 8	10.30 am	<i>Sunday Worship - CEFC</i>
Mon Mar 9	2.15pm	<i>Monday Club -Sandy Leong: "The Origins & Meanings of Surnames" Why do we have surnames?</i>
Tue Mar 10	Noon	<i>Leics MS Tuesday Group - coffee/tea, biscuits & chat (AJH)</i>
Wed Mar 11	2.00pm 7.45pm	<i>Wednesday Hub - coffee/tea, cake & chat - Harrison Room</i> <i>Gardening Club Susie Lickman - How to Enjoy Your Houseplants</i>
Fri Mar 13	9.15 am 7.30pm	<i>Coffee Morning St Mary's Church Rooms</i> <i>Friday Film - The Penguin Lessons Thucaston Memorial Hall (TMH)</i>



Sat Mar 14	9.30am	<i>Come along and ring the bells - All Saints' Church. See Page 10</i>
Sun Mar 15	10.30 am	<i>Sunday Worship - CEFC</i>
Mon Mar 16	11.00am	<i>Prayer meeting CEFC</i>

All Saints', Thurcaston with Cropston March Services



Sunday 1st

8.30am Prayer Book Communion
(followed by 9.15 Breakfast)

10am Morning Praise

Sunday 8th

10am Holy Communion

Sunday 15th

8.30am Mothering Sunday Prayer
Book Communion

8pm Night Prayer Lent Compline

Sunday 22nd

10am Holy Communion

Sunday 29th

6.30pm Palm Sunday Eucharist

St Mary's, Anstey March Services



Sunday 1st

10am Holy Communion

Sunday 8th

10am All Age Welcome

Sunday 15th

10am Mothering Sunday
Communion

Sunday 22nd

10am Fresh Praise Worship

Sunday 29th

10am Palm Sunday Churches
Together in Anstey
at St Mary's

Every Wednesday

9.30am Prayer Book Communion

Dates for your diary

Events and Activities this month continued

Date	Time	Event
Tue Mar 17	Noon 7.30pm	<i>Leics MS Tuesday Group - coffee/tea, biscuits & chat (AJH) - History Society -History of Board Games Peter Liddle</i>
Wed Mar 18	2.00pm	<i>Wednesday Hub - coffee/tea, cake & chat - Harrison Room</i>
Fri Mar 20	9.15 am	<i>Coffee Morning St Mary's Church Rooms</i>



Sat Mar 21	9.30 am 10.30 am	<i>The Big Spring Clean in All Saints' Church see Page 11 Coffee Morning All Saints Harrison Room</i>
Sun Mar 22	10.30 am	<i>Sunday Worship - CEFC</i>
Tue Mar 24	Noon 14:00	<i>Leics MS Tuesday Group - coffee/tea, biscuits & chat (AJH) - Just for Ladies - Bring a craft, play board games or just have a chat. There will be a short Christian thought for the day. (CEFC)</i>
Wed Mar 25	2.00pm	<i>Wednesday Hub - coffee/tea, cake & chat - Harrison Room</i>
Fri Mar 27	9.15 am 2:00 pm	<i>Coffee Morning St Mary's Church Rooms Tea & Crafts - St Mary's Church Rooms</i>
Sun Mar 29	10.30 am	<i>Sunday Worship - CEFC</i>
Mon Mar 30	11:00am	<i>Bible Study - CEFC</i>
Tue Mar 31	Noon	<i>Leics MS Tuesday Group - coffee/tea, biscuits & chat (AJH)</i>
Wed Apr 1	2.00pm	<i>Wednesday Hub - coffee/tea, cake & chat - Harrison Room</i>
Fri Apr 3	9.15 am	<i>Coffee Morning St Mary's Church Rooms</i>
Sat Apr 4	10.00 am	<i>Easter flowers from 10am</i>

*To place your event in our Diary next month, email Paul at
heartandsoulnews@gmail.com*

The times for services at St Mary's and All Saints' can be found on the centre pages.

The Latimer Players take to 'The Park Bench'

Following the success of the pantomime last November the Latimer Players are pleased to announce their next production will be the comedy play 'The Park Bench' by Ashley Burgoyne. As it suggests, the action takes place in a local park. Charles always shared the same bench in the park with his wife. Now Charles is alone, with only memories of Rose sitting at the other end of the bench. That is until various people start to share the bench with him. These people may, or may not, be the cause of Charles misplacing something important to him.

Discover if the missing item was misplaced, or was it stolen? And find out who are the two mysterious people constantly checking their mobile phones and looking furtive!

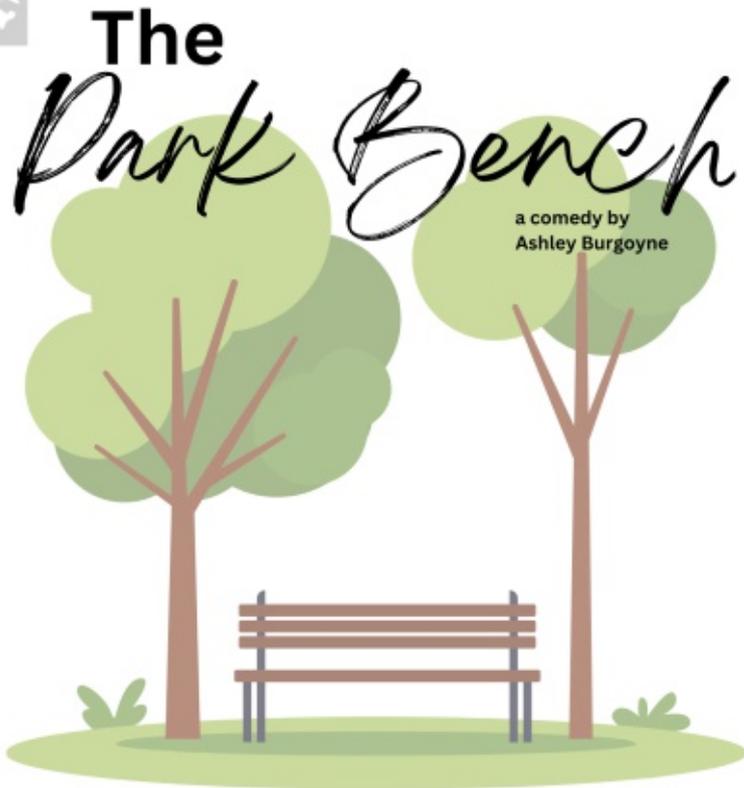
The production will take place on 23rd, 24th, 25th April in the Memorial Hall, Thurcaston, starting at 7.30pm. Doors open at 7pm. There will be café-style seating and you are invited to bring along drinks and nibbles.

Tickets at £8 each are available from the secretary Christine Deavin by phoning 07740 477746 or by email to christinedeavin@gmail.com.

The Latimer Players have been putting on performances in Thurcaston since 1952 and have a thriving membership but are always on the lookout for new members. If acting is not your thing, they would welcome set builders, back-stage people, lighting and sound managers. Even if you have no experience of these things but just feel the



Latimer Players present



urge to do something different why not go along? As well as putting on two productions a year, Latimer Players have monthly members' meetings where they hold various events such as theatre trips, visits to local places of interest, skittles matches and social events arranged by members.

In November Latimer Players will be performing their annual pantomime and will be looking for new members to take part or help behind the scenes. It may seem a long way off, but auditions will take place in August, so if you think you might be interested get in touch with the secretary Christine Deavin. Christine says, "You're never too old or too young to join us and it's never too late to start, we would love to meet you".

Christine Deavin 07740 477746; email christinedeavin@gmail.com

Gentle comedy with much to think about.

The **Penguin Lessons** will be shown on 13th March and lasts 110 minutes.

March's warm and witty, true comedy drama, stars Steve Coogan as Tom, an unconventional teacher. For some reason, Tom moves to Argentina to teach but, following a military coup, he travels to Uruguay. Here, Tom rescues a mischievous penguin from an oil slick on a beach. Strangely, a beautiful friendship forms between these two unlikely pals. This is an unexpected, yet uplifting, comedy that you'll love.

The Ballad of Wallis Island will be on 10th April and lasts 100 minutes.

Our April film has been nominated for the 2026 British Academy Film and Television Awards. Charles, played by comedian Tim Key, is an eccentric Lottery winner who lives alone on a beautiful remote Welsh island. He dreams of getting back together his favourite musicians so has contracted Herb to play privately on this Wallis Island. Carey Mulligan, one of our favourite actors, plays a former folk singer, thrown back together with her former singing partner. This film is a wonderful comedy drama with



superb cinematography.

Thurcaston and Cropston Parish Council will be showing these films in **Thurcaston Memorial Hall, starting at 7.30pm.**

Tickets for March will cost the same as for the last ten years, only £5. Our costs have risen so from April onwards, tickets will cost £6, which still includes wine/fruit juice and a lucky prize draw, during the interval. You can pay for your tickets at the door, if there are any left, or buy in advance from Diana 0116 2362 619 or Sylvia 0116 2352 873 or the Parish Office 0116 2367 626.

Share the Easter story – with an Egg

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

There are six types of eggs to choose from. Each Real Easter Egg comes with an Easter story in the box, the stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book

versions. So, buy a 2026 edition Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

The 2026 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01925 877004.

Candlelit Strings

Saturday 14th March

Featuring

Highly Strung String Trio

2026

Doors open: 7pm

Performance starts: 7.30pm

Last entry 7.25pm



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Tickets from £22.50 *plus booking fee
includes a glass of fizz on arrival.



Charity Grants Announced!



Richard Hill Church of England School Charity is excited to announce the latest round of charity grants deadline of March 31st for young people aged under 25 whom either live in Thurcaston or Cropston or who are current or ex-pupils of Richard Hill CofE Primary School, Thurcaston

Charity number: 527935

Typical Available Grant Amounts to benefit young people aged under 25 for educational (including sports, music, culture) and Christian faith related purposes

£100 to £1000

For more information and how to apply, please visit All Saints' Church, Thurcaston
www.stmarysandallsaints.co.uk
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office@bradgatechurches.org.uk

History Society learns what's on the menu at 17th Century Bradgate House

What might an investigator be able to work out about you if they got hold of your supermarket receipts? Do you follow a special diet, have a young family to feed or regularly entertain friends? Maybe you succumbed to a cheeky rosé during “dry” January? For her PhD, Rachel Small carried out a similar process to research the lives of the Grey family at Bradgate. She visited the Society to give us an accessible presentation of what she discovered.

Although Bradgate House was abandoned in 1739, leaving few written records, we are fortunate to have a surviving Household Account Book for the years 1678-81. It records the items purchased by the steward, Richard Frost, each week, and on a facing page it lists what was used in the kitchen and what remained in stock. At that time, the house was occupied by Thomas and Elizabeth Grey, the Second Earl and Countess of Stamford, whose turbulent marriage ended in divorce a few years later. (Elizabeth was a wealthy heiress who hated life here, so far from London. She described the locals as “brutes” and is rumoured to have set fire to the house in order to get away!) Though the couple had three children, sadly none of them survived. Rachel estimates that the entire household comprised about 40 people, basing this figure on the consumption of weak beer, which was the standard drink at the time.

The Greys (if not their servants) led a lavish lifestyle, even by the standards of other country houses of the period. The accounts record 181 different food items, though the menus were dominated by rabbit and chicken. Some of the rabbits were bought from a Thurcaston huntsman called Mr

Palmer. Many of the chickens were “wood-hens” provided as part of the annual rent by the Greys’ tenants – including those in our two villages – in exchange for the right to collect wood from the estate. Other food items were more seasonal, including songbirds and waders in autumn and lobsters in summer, when the roads were good enough to bring them from the coast. Each year a flock of sheep was bought and fattened on the estate. Venison rarely featured as hunting deer was considered to be for sport, not food. The bones found during recent archaeological excavations in the ruins correlate remarkably closely with the mixture of creatures recorded in the accounts. The Greys laid on a feast each St Swithin’s Day and the items consumed suggest it was for local people, not gentry.

Wine was imported from various countries, including claret and sack (fortified wine from Spain). Rachel can tell that, even though French wine was banned and was not recorded as being purchased, the stores in the kitchen were still being replenished!

Theories of disease at the time involved restoring the balance of the four “humours” in the body. At times when Elizabeth Grey was ill – indicated by payments to an apothecary and perhaps connected with pregnancy – the household diet can be seen to change to milder foods, which accords with the theory.

Our next meeting will be at 7.30pm on 17th March. In a change from the published programme, our friend Peter Liddle will return to tell us about the history of board games. All are welcome. The fee for visitors is £4.

www.thurcastoncropstonhistory.org.uk

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Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal 2026 – as it celebrates 40 years

Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will be holding its annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life.

And one chance for you to help give care that makes all that possible. Care that protects someone's dignity – instead of leaving them alone or in pain. This Great Daffodil Appeal is that chance.

Now in its 40th year, the appeal raises vital funds to help Marie Curie provide end of life care and support in homes, hospitals and hospices across the UK. By donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the



illness.

Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to

die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

Whether it's taking part in a fundraising challenge, organising a bake sale or volunteering your time to collect donations, every penny will help Marie Curie deliver quality care to those who need it most.

The Great Daffodil Appeal only happens once a year. This is your chance to make it count. For information and to donate visit: Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil

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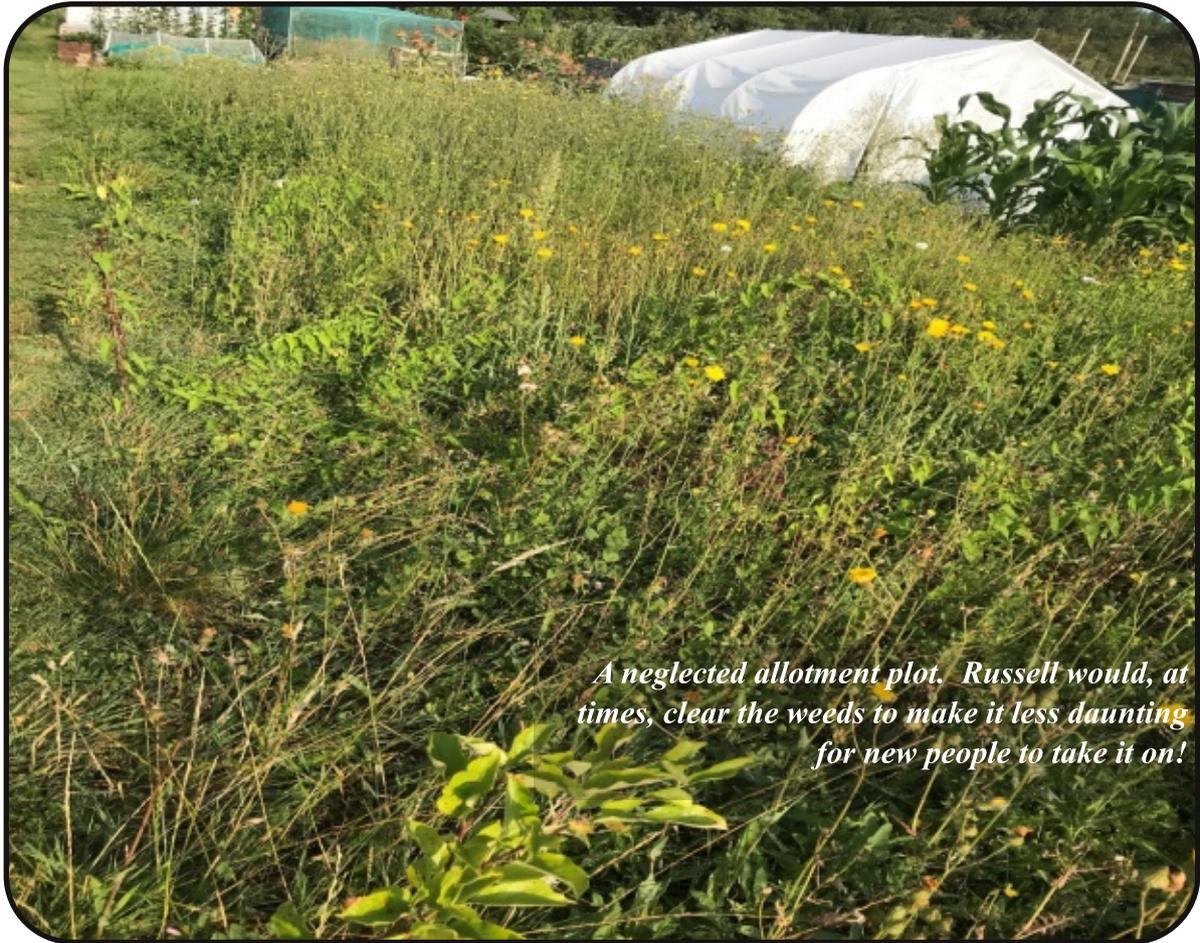
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Weeds and How to Love Them

with Russell Attwood



A neglected allotment plot. Russell would, at times, clear the weeds to make it less daunting for new people to take it on!

Another full house attended the Thurcaston and Cropston Gardening Club's February meeting to listen to Russell Attwood share his wisdom on how to love weeds!!

Russell is a retired biology teacher, has three allotments in Kettering and is Chair of the Kettering allotment committee. The focus of the talk was from the allotment perspective. He supplied a quick summary of the evening – live weeds are bad and dead weeds are good (as they can be composted)!!

Weeds are 'a plant in the wrong place' or 'a plant you don't want'. They are also competitors to our plants in relation to light, water and minerals. He asked the meeting 'if a weed is not competing is it a problem?' On an earlier walk round his allotment, he found four weeds. These were easily plucked with gloved hands. However, if weeds are left, they get taller and roots

deeper. Thus, by April they will require digging out and may produce lots of seeds. Weeds can also harbour plant diseases and can spread to those in the same biological family. Weeds such as an unwanted dandelion can hide pests such as slugs (as a competitor to any gardener).

Weed seeds can lay dormant for many years. A helpful rhyme was shared 'one year's seed gives seven years weeds'. Weeds are often more successful than the plants we want to grow because of evolution – many weeds are millions of years old unlike modern plants and cultivars. Russell shared some solutions: eternal vigilance, prevention through early intervention. Cover weeds to deprive them of light (110 gsm fabric or cardboard is effective) if left for six months. Some weeds are almost impossible to get rid of such as ground elder and mare's tail. Russell doesn't use chemicals to control weeds.



Mares Tail is a very invasive weed – but one that evolved almost 300 million years ago and has very deep roots. It is very difficult to kill but is easy to pull off the tops to stop it taking over and becoming unsightly.

Many weeds are very beneficial to wildlife and gardeners are increasingly creating wildlife areas in their gardens.

Russell was an animated and humorous

speaker and the talk was well received by Club members.

The Gardening Club meets in the Thurcaston and Cropston Memorial Hall. Whether an experienced gardener or an enthusiastic beginner we are sure you will find something of interest in this year's programme. New members are made most welcome. What's more, it's excellent value!! The membership fee is only £15 for the year (pro rata) or £3.00 per meeting. So, if you are interested in gardening - come and give the Club a try.

For more information about the Club, please contact

**Dave Haddon (0116) 235 9758:
david.haddon22@gmail.com**

**Or Richard Elks (0116) 236 8313:
cropston161@hotmail.co.uk**

The next Club events are:

Wed 11 Mar 2026 - How to Enjoy Your Houseplants - Susie Lickman

Wed 8 April 2026 – Growing Vegetables in Small Space – Anthony Norman

Free **COFFEE** *Morning*

Saturday 21st March
10.30 - 12.00

*Harrison Room, All Saints' Church,
Thurcaston*

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Cedar House... residential care that keeps the spring in your step.



February was another busy month for us at Cedar House... We continue to try old and new things!

We received lots of visitors and had special visits from Lilliput Nursery Group and Sidney Shakers.

This month the residents enjoyed being entertained by guest singers Rebekah and Steve O. There was lots of singing and dancing. There were some funky dance moves.

On Thursday 5th February 2026 we tried something new... poke, poke art... It was very relaxing.

On Monday 9th February 2026 we did arts and crafts with the nursery group to

celebrate Valentines Day.

On Tuesday 10th February 2026 some of the residents and staff, from the care home, logged into Maureen Gray's funeral so they could attend and pay their respects to a dear friend.

You will be greatly missed. RIP in peace. Lot's of love from all the residents and staff at Cedar House xxxx

On Friday 13th February 2026 the residents, staff and visitors enjoyed having a go at operating remote-control cars. They went down a storm. Some of the residents didn't want to hand them back.

Next time we need to create an obstacle course. It also brought back lots of





memories of cars and driving and destinations driven to.

On Monday 16th February 2026 the residents, staff and visitors enjoyed an animal therapy session with Lion Learners. There was lots of snuggles and hugs.

To celebrate Chinese New Year some of the residents created their own Dala horse. They looked very colourful!

This month the residents also enjoyed decorating their own pancakes whilst

enjoying some wine and socialising. They even decorated some for the staff.

The monthly residents meeting was very well attended this month. It's a great chance to have your say, suggest some ideas and offer your feedback.

On Saturday 21st February 2026 some of the residents had a go at flower arranging. Flower power! Awesome everyone!

Spring is on its way!

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On the nonsense of having a lavatory at church.

The Rectory
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

This year, the rigours of Lent have taken second place to a far more pressing matter: the installation of a lavatory at St James the Least of All.

Personally, I entirely disapprove of this additional sign of decadence in our moral fibre; we have survived perfectly happily for the last 800 years without one, so why is there such an urgent need now? And being surrounded by acres of fields, there seems to be a completely acceptable alternative.

It also spoils the pleasure I used to take, informing ushers at weddings, having liberally refreshed themselves at our local pub before the Service, that we have no facilities and that they would just have to wait. Their look of pained resignation, developing to clear signs of repentance as the Service progressed, was most cheering. It also meant that wedding parties did not linger after the Service but disappeared with commendable speed to safe havens.

I anticipate that now we have the thing, a sub-committee will form to devise a commissioning Service for the person who will be in charge of its maintenance. I can already foresee Lady Bartlett proposing an appropriate set of robes for the office holder – although it will need some tact to select suitable insignia on the sleeves.

In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly. A hymn book has been installed as an aide memoire.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly; they can enter the lavatory unseen by anyone, but on flushing, water is drawn through pipes running the length of the inside of the building with a thunderous roar.

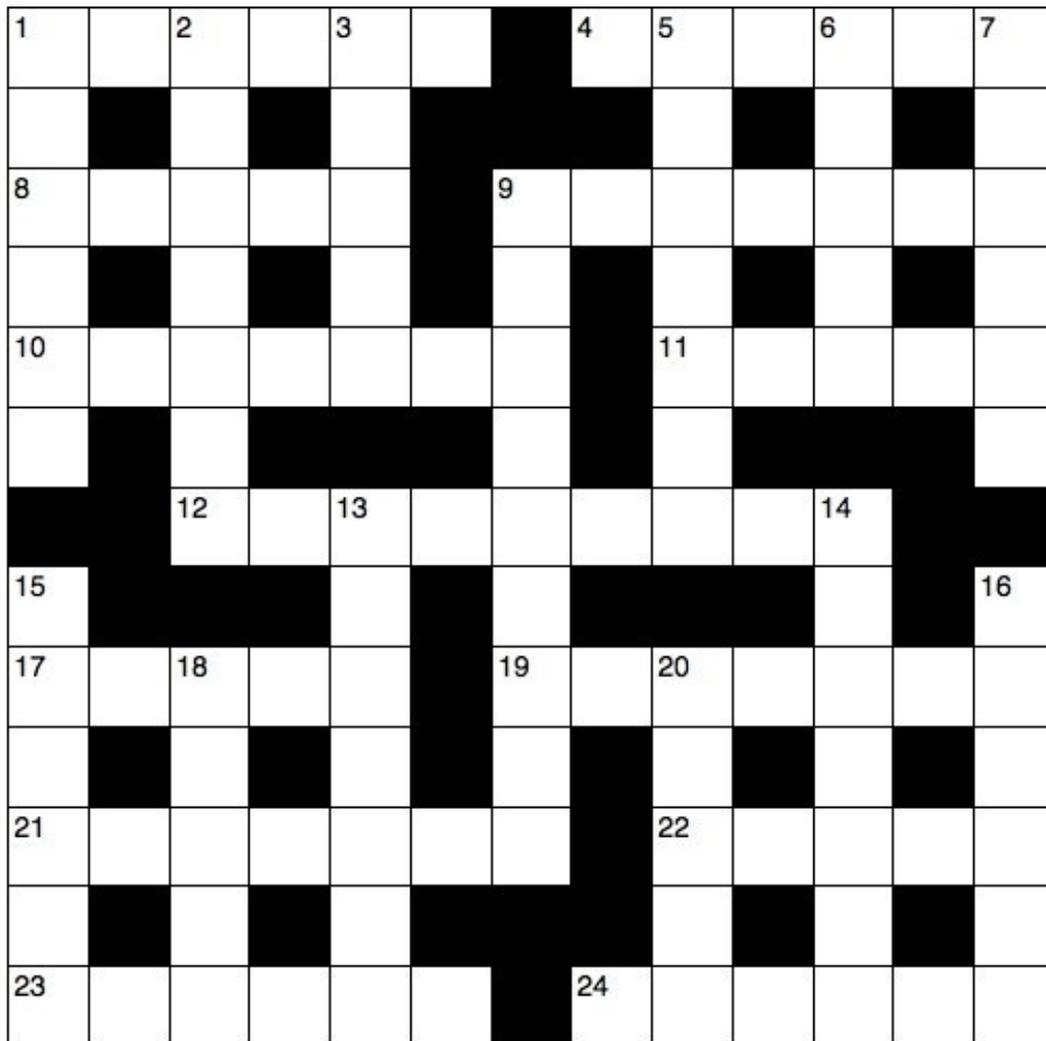
I am sure that in your worship centre you will have lavish cloakrooms furnished with colour co-ordinated walls and towels, baby-changing facilities and video monitors relaying everything going on in the service. But we are made of sterner stuff, and I maintain that our congregation should be grateful that they now have a lavatory at all. And to think that someone suggested it should even have heating!

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Sudoku

2					3	4	1	
	1		8					5
		6		9				
5							6	
	2	4		7		8	3	
	6							2
				8		6		
6					4		2	
	4	1	9					8

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Crossword**Across**

- 1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
 4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
 8 “They — — ,” you will say, “but I’m not hurt!” (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
 9 Unhappiness (Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
 10 Jewish (7)
 11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
 12 ‘A truthful witness gives honest — , but a false witness tells lies’ (Proverbs 12:17) (9)
 17 Paul quoted from the second one in his address in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
 19 ‘Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature’ (Galatians 5:13) (7)
 21 ‘As you can see, he has done nothing to — death’ (Luke 23:15) (7)
 22 Name applied by Isaiah to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)

23 'All the people — — one man, saying, "None of us will go home"' (Judges 20:8) (4,2)

24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham's side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)

Down

1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)

2 'In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea' (Acts 27:30) (7)

3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)

5 'But I have a baptism to — , and how distressed I am until it is completed!' (Luke 12:50) (7)

6 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — — ' (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)

7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)

9 'For I desire mercy, not — , and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)

13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)

14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)

15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)

16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)

18 Donkeys (5)

20 Raked (anag.) (5)

Solution on Page 38

Sudoku Solution

2	9	8	7	5	3	4	1	6
3	1	7	8	4	6	2	9	5
4	5	6	2	9	1	7	8	3
5	7	9	3	2	8	1	6	4
1	2	4	6	7	5	8	3	9
8	6	3	4	1	9	5	7	2
9	3	2	5	8	7	6	4	1
6	8	5	1	3	4	9	2	7
7	4	1	9	6	2	3	5	8

Crossword Solution

A	W	A	K	E	N		Q	U	E	N	C	H
G		T		J			N		O			A
H	I	T	M	E		S	A	D	N	E	S	S
A		E		C		A		E		N		T
S	E	M	I	T	I	C		R	I	D	G	E
T		P				R		G				N
			T	E	S	T	I	M	O	N	Y	
S				A		F				E		D
P	S	A	L	M		I	N	D	U	L	G	E
I		S		A		C		R		L		A
D	E	S	E	R	V	E		A	R	I	E	L
E		E		I				K		N		E
R	O	S	E	A	S		B	E	G	G	A	R

*All Saints 200 Club winners...***JANUARY 2026 Draw****1st** *JENNY KENNINGTON***2nd** *MARGARET COLLIER***3rd** *BARBARA BRADLEY****Congratulations to January's winners!***

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