

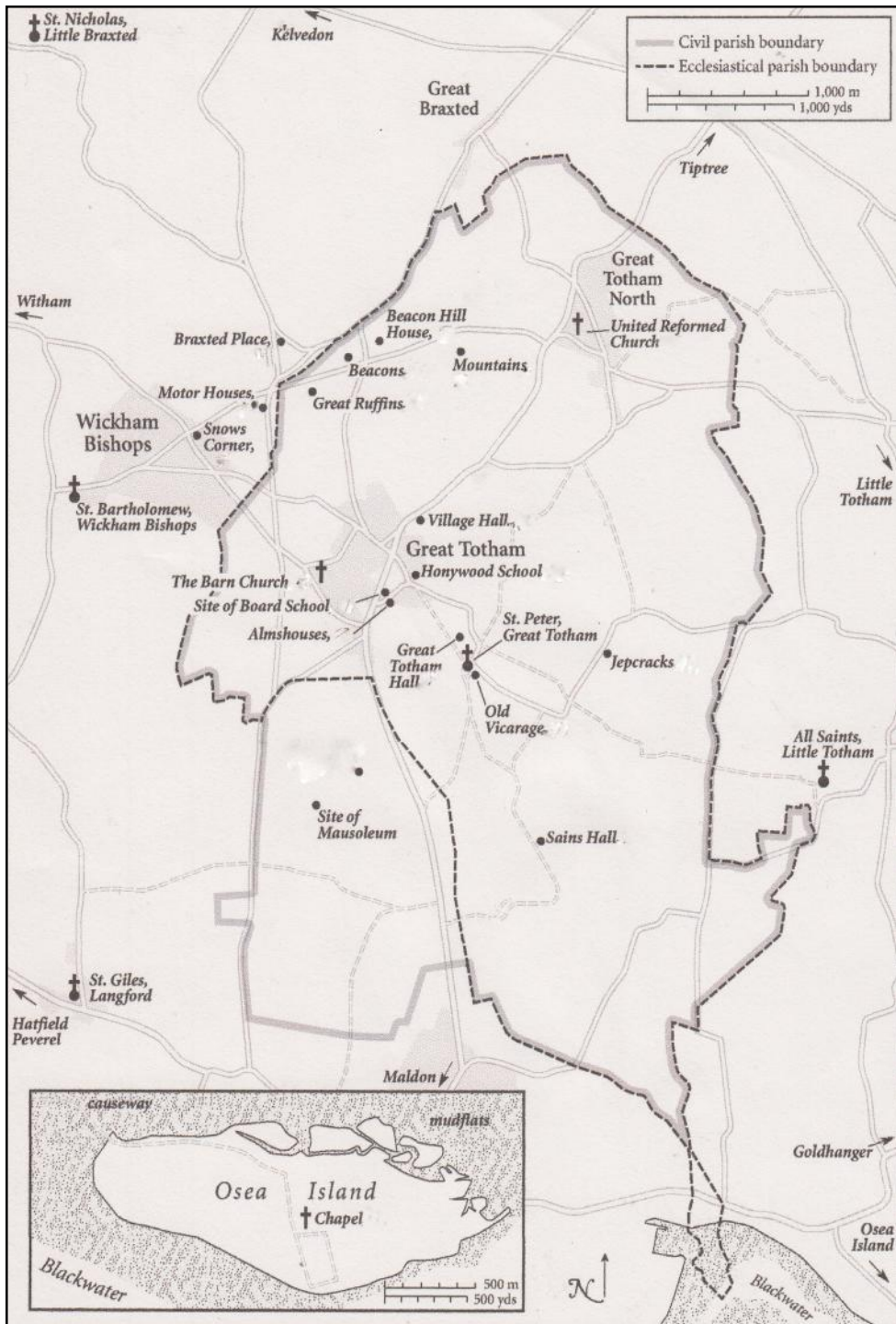


Great Totham Parish Magazine

sent to every home in Great Totham
May 2026



Inside this Edition - 1st Beacon Scout Group: 70 Year Anniversaries
Gardening Club Spring Show Results



Church News



Blackwater
Benefice

Blackwater Benefice Ministry Team Message



Blackwater
Benefice

May is a month full of festivals in the church calendar. For most of May this year we are still in the season of Easter, which comes to a joyful close on the day of Pentecost, when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Christian Church. Ten days earlier is Ascension Day, commemorating the final resurrection appearance of Jesus and his return to heaven.

Immediately before Ascension many churches keep Rogationtide. The word Rogation comes from the Latin “rogare”, meaning “to ask”. At Rogation we ask for God’s blessing on the land and pray for a fruitful harvest. Coming in spring, at the time of young animals and the vivid green growth of crops, Rogation links the new life we see all around us with the Christian celebration of resurrection and new life at Easter.

Traditionally, the observance of Rogation has involved processions with prayers for the blessing of the land, often around parish boundaries – sometimes known as “beating the bounds”. More recently the scope of these prayers has been widened, often including prayers for the life of the local community; all the labour and activity that goes on there; and for good stewardship of the natural world. Rogation also provides an occasion for churches to unite in praying for God’s blessing across wider groups of parishes – not to mention a wonderful opportunity to share a walk, a meal and a time of worship together. The three Layer parishes, for example, will be marking Rogation Sunday once again on 10th May with a shared service, walking between Layer de la Haye and Layer Marney, via Layer Breton, stopping for prayer and refreshments at various points along the way.

This May, one particular focus for prayer in our churches is the recruitment process that is currently underway for two new clergy to join our Team Ministry: a Team Rector who will have oversight of the new Team Ministry across all 18 parishes, with particular responsibility for the Heathland Parishes (Tiptree with Tolleshunt Knights and Great Braxted, Messing, Inworth, Layer Marney and Layer Breton with Birch); and a Team Vicar who will look after the Beacon Parishes (Wickham Bishops with Little Braxted, Great Totham, Little Totham and Goldhanger). Please do join us in praying for everyone involved in the recruitment process, for the interviews taking place towards the end of May and in early June, and for the people God is calling to come and be part of the team.

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Church News

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Whether or not you take part in a Rogation Service, May is a good time to get out and about and enjoy the beauty of the countryside in this lovely part of Essex. As you do so, whether on foot, by bicycle, or in a car, you might like to take a moment to give thanks for the many blessings God provides and to pray for God's blessing on the places and people you pass along the way.

"A blessing is pure goodness. It is not just words: it has the power to accomplish good things in the lives of those who are blessed." (Graham Dow)

Remember, Lord, your mercy and loving-kindness towards us.

Bless this good earth and make it fruitful.

Bless the labours of those who work on land and sea.

Bless our work and give us all things needed for our daily lives.

Bless our communities and our churches.

Bless the homes of our parishes and all who live within them.

Bless our common life and our care for our neighbour.

Grant us the grace always to rejoice in your love and care for us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Rev'd Jo Wood,
Team Vicar Designate, Waterside Parishes*

Rotas	Church Flowers	Church Cleaning
3rd May	Sally Buckley	-
10th May	Pat Eaton	Heather Gulliver
17th May	Sue Morgan	-
24th May	Sue Keyes	-
31st May	Lucy Bettley	-

Church Extension and Kitchen Cleaning: Jenny Barclay/Brenda Keeble

Donations



To donate to St Peter's Church:

- scan the QR code;
- make a BACS payment to St Peter's Church (sort code 20-54-30, account number 20882739);
- send a cheque (payable to 'St Peter's Church, Great Totham') to:
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Church News

Services at St Peter's Church

St Peter's Church is open for private prayer
10am-3pm Monday to Saturday
11am-3pm on Sundays

Date	Time	Service	Readings
3rd May Fifth Sunday of Easter	10am	Morning Service of the Word	Acts 7. 55-end 1 Peter 2. 2-10
	6pm	Evensong by Zoom	Gospel: John 14. 1-14
10th May Sixth Sunday of Easter Rogation Sunday	10am	Morning Service of the Word	Acts 17. 22-31 1 Peter 2. 13-end
	6pm	Evensong by Zoom	Gospel: John 14. 15-21
14th May Ascension Day	10am	Holy Communion at Goldhanger Church	Acts 1. 1-11 Eph. 1. 15-end Gospel: Luke 24. 44-end
17th May Seventh Sunday of Easter	10am	Family Communion	Ps. 68. 1-10, 32-end
	6pm	Evensong by Zoom	Acts 1. 6-14 Gospel: John 17. 1-11
24th May Whit Sunday Pentecost	10am	Family Communion	Acts 2. 1-21
	6pm	Evensong by Zoom	1 Cor. 12. 3-13 Gospel: John 20. 19-23
31st May Trinity Sunday	10am	All Benefice Service	Isa. 40. 12-17, 27-end
	6pm	Great Totham Evensong by Zoom	2 Cor. 13. 11-end Gospel: Matt. 28. 16-end

Church Registers

Baptism

12th April Monty William Andrews of Great Braxted

Coffee Morning at The Honywood



Our next Coffee Morning is on Saturday, 23rd May. We look forward to seeing you then for bacon butties, tea, coffee, cake and chat, 10am to 12 noon, in The Honywood, Hall Road.

Sheila Allen

Church News



Benefice Worship



Visit the website or Facebook page for up to date information on services, or contact Karin Mann (01621 891215) or Karen Tarpey (01621 892122).

<https://www.achurchnearlyou.com/church/6657/>

<https://www.facebook.com/StPetersChurchGreatTotham/>



For details of Evensong by Zoom contact Rev'd Sue Godsmark

Book of Common Prayer Communion Services:

10am Wednesdays at St. Nicholas, Tolleshunt D'Arcy
5.30pm Saturdays at All Saints Little Totham

Visit the website or email blackwaterbenefice@gmail.com for details of other Benefice events and activities.

The Parish of St. Peter's Great Totham

Charity Number: XN 12862

100+ Club Draw Winners March

1st Prize: James Bettley
2nd Prize: Gerry Gunton
3rd Prize: Sue Lucas

Over the course of a year, 50% of subscriptions is returned in prizes. For every 100 members, the prize value will be £50 per month: 1st prize £25, 2nd prize £15 and 3rd prize £10. More members means bigger prizes.

Membership runs from 1st May to 30th April the following year, although you may join at any time. If you would like to join the scheme, whose proceeds benefit the church, please complete the form on page 21 or contact Roger Allen, 100+ Club Administrator, on 01621 892334, email: rw_allen@yahoo.co.uk

Subscriptions (£12 per year) may be by standing order, online bank transfer (sort code 20-54-30, account number 30603562, reference your surname) or by cheque/cash.

Subscription Renewals

If you are already a member of St Peter's Church 100+ Club, your £12 annual subscription is now due for the year commencing 1st May 2026.

Members who have a Bank Standing Order need do nothing; all others should pay by BACS (see bank details above), alternatively by cheque payable to 'St. Peters Great Totham Donations A/C', or lastly by cash to Roger Allen.

Church News

News from the Belfry

In last month's Parish Magazine, I wrote about The Swan Tower in Perth, Australia. I concluded the article by referring to a surprise connection with the bells and the City of London. Australia celebrated its bicentennial year in 1988. This marked the arrival of Captain Arthur Phillips in 1788 with 11 ships of the First Fleet into Sydney Harbour and the founding of the City of Sydney and the colony of New South Wales.



To commemorate this special occasion, the 12 bells from St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, were presented to the University of Western Australia, the City of Perth and the people of Western Australia. Permission for the removal of the bells was granted by the London Diocese and the Parish of St Martin-in-the-Fields. The origin of these bells can be traced back from before the 14th century; they were recast in the 16th century on the order of Queen Elizabeth I. The bells were again recast between 1725 and 1770, on the order of the Prince of Wales, later King George II, by three generations of the Rudhall family, bell founders from Gloucestershire. They are one of the few sets of royal bells and are the only ones known to have left England. These bells rang out to celebrate many historic events, such as victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the World War II victory at El Alamein in 1942. They have also traditionally rung in the New Year at Trafalgar Square for more than 275 years, celebrated the coronation of every British monarch since King George II in 1727 and the homecoming of Captain James Cook after his voyage of discovery in 1771. In April 1770, Cook, sailing on The Endeavour, became the first known European to reach the east coast of Australia.

The ring of 12 bells was then augmented to 18. The additional six bells, cast in 1988 by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, included two from the cities of London and Westminster, and a further three bells were gifted by a consortium of British and Australian mining companies. To complete the ring of 18 bells, a sixth bell was commissioned by the Western Australian Government to mark the second millennium. The Swan Tower also houses the Great Anzac Bell. It was cast in 2018 to commemorate the centenary of the World War One Armistice on 11th November 1918. The bell weighs 6.5-tonne (14,000 lb) and was cast in Perth. Unlike the other bells in the tower, it is swung electronically using a motor.

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Church News

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Perhaps the most interesting feature of The Swan Tower is the 26 bell carillon mounted on an ornamental steel tree adorning its rooftop. This was lowered into place on 8th November 2008 by a giant crane. The bells that form the carillon were originally the upper octaves of the 53-bell carillon on Aspen Island in Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra. This carillon was originally cast by John Taylor & Co of Loughborough in 1969, but in 2002, to improve the volume and tonal balance of the instrument, it was decided to replace the top two octaves with new bells. Can you remember coin operated jukeboxes? You put your money in the slot, selected a record and it dropped onto the turntable to be played. The bells of the carillon are sounded by electrically operated hammers and similarly can be played by the public using a coin-operated, computer-controlled unit. The bells can also be played using an electric keyboard.



St Peter's has had two more successes with the Learning the Ropes training scheme. Joanne passed her Foundation Skills Level 2 on 20th February and Dean passed the Introduction to Change Ringing Skills Level 3 on 9th March.

Do you fancy learning to ring our bells? For further information please contact Janice, our Tower Captain, on 07790 354338 or visit www.greattothambellringers.org.uk

Catherine Hood

Volunteers wanted!

Many people, including those who are not regular churchgoers, undertake small tasks which help to run St Peter's Church. We're now looking for people for the following; please speak to Karen (892122) or Helen (891067) for further details:

- Compiling and maintaining the church and extension cleaning rotas.
- Joining the cleaning rota(s); training will be given and equipment provided!
- Serving refreshments after the 10am Sunday service (about once a month).
- Joining the rota of people 'meeting and greeting' those coming to services.
- Helping to deliver the Parish Magazine in Maypole Road.

Children's Page

National Lost Sock Day - 9th May

This is a whimsical occasion dedicated to all those single socks that seem to mysteriously disappear in the laundry. While the phenomenon of lost socks may remain unsolved, this day encourages us to embrace the humour and creativity that arises from the perpetual mystery of missing footwear.

Established as a light-hearted way to acknowledge the experience of losing socks, National Lost Sock Day invites us to find joy in the absurdity of everyday life. Whether you blame the dryer or suspect a mischievous sock thief, this day is an opportunity to celebrate the quirks and idiosyncrasies that make us human.

- Host a "Lost Sock Exchange" where participants can swap mismatched socks or share creative ways to repurpose single socks.
- Organise a scavenger hunt or contest to find the most unusual places where lost socks have been discovered.
- Maybe you could donate spare socks to homeless shelters or textile recycling programs to give purpose to those lonely singles.

Can you find the pair of socks in this picture?



/continued on next page

Children's Page

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Can you design your own sock?



Sourced by June Eaton

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Church News

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Return to: Roger Allen, 01621 892334, email: rw_allen@yahoo.co.uk

Church News

A Lovely Day Out for the Great Totham Bellringers!

A Saturday in early March saw members of Great Totham's bell ringing band, and several friends, 13 of us in total, go on a visit to ring at five other towers in the north-eastern region of the Essex Association of Change Ringers.

First up was the church of St Peter and St Paul in St Osyth, a ground floor ring of six bells. After ringing there, we went to Thorrington, to the church of St Mary Magdalene, another six bell ring. Great Bentley was the next stop, St Mary the Virgin. This is an eight-bell ring which, for some of us, is an experience we don't have often.

We then stopped for a very pleasant lunch at The Plough Inn, giving us energy to tackle the next set of bells at the church of St George at Great Bromley, another eight-bell ring. Interestingly, here we saw a collection of hats on a ledge up high, these each apparently represented previous Tower Captains and the earliest went back to the 18th Century!

The last stop was at Ardleigh, St Mary the Virgin. This is a 10-bell ring, so was a great experience for most of us to ring all 10 bells together!

It was a long but really interesting and fun day for everyone, brilliantly organised by our Tower Captain, so thank you Janice. Perilous ladders and stairs to climb and beautiful stained-glass windows and paintings to admire.

For most of our group these bells represented 'Tower Grabs', meaning that it is the first time someone has rung there. For bellringers this is: "A Really Exciting Thing!"

Thanks must go also to the churches and their respective Tower Captains who allowed us to ring their lovely bells. Each church was different, but all so very interesting and packed full of history, well worth visiting even if not a bellringer.

Mandy Mickelsen

In your prayers at home this month, please include:

Our 'Friendship Church' - Bragernes Kirke, Drammen, Norway
John and Nina

Published by the PCC of St Peter's Church, Great Totham

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Parochial Church Council of Great Totham nor can the Church guarantee the credentials or performance of any of the advertisers within this publication.

The support of our advertisers means that we are able to deliver the magazine free to every home in Great Totham. Please consider using their services and mention the magazine when contacting them.

Community News



Great Totham Gardening Club Spring Show 21st March



Thank you to all those who helped make our Spring Show such a success, and to those of you who came along to enjoy the exhibits during the afternoon. The results were as follows:

Division	Most Points	Best Exhibit
1: Flowers	1 st Leigh Arnold 2 nd Karen Tarpey 3 rd Hannah Dundon 3 rd Helen Mutton	Leigh Arnold
2: Floral Art	1 st Kay Mehrstens 2 nd Karen Tarpey 3 rd Yvonne Hawley	Kay Mehrstens
3: Photography	1 st Leigh Arnold 2 nd Rebekah Clark 3 rd Karen Tarpey 3 rd Sally Dunn	Rebekah Clark
4: Cookery	1 st Sue Watts 2 nd Yvonne Hawley 3 rd Pauline Wright	Karen Tarpey
5: Vegetables	1 st Norman Wright 2 nd Pauline Wright 3 rd Helen Mutton 3 rd Kay Mehrstens	Kay Mehrstens
6: Arts and Crafts	1 st Brenda Steele 2 nd Paul Mutton 3 rd Jean Cloughton 3 rd Kay Mehrstens 3 rd Sally Dunn	Brenda Steele
7: Children's Classes	1 st Chloe Kenneally 2 nd Grace Kenneally 3 rd Anthony Dundon	Anthony Dundon
Overall Spring Show Winner	Leigh Arnold	

Our next Assembly is at 7pm on Monday, 18th May in Great Totham Village Hall, when Sheila Allen will give us a talk on Jam Making. All welcome, members free, visitors £3. During May, we're also planning a visit to Annie Northfield's garden in Witham. For details, please email Norman.escala1@btinternet.com

Norman Wright

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Community News

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Photos
courtesy of
Karen Tarpey
and Nicole
Jayne



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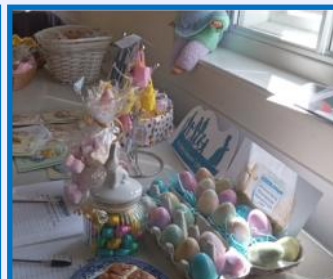
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Church News



Hot Cross Bun Coffee Morning



I would like to say a big thank you to all the people who supported our Mothers' Union Hot Cross Bun Coffee Morning. We made a grand total of £329.50, which will go towards three or four of our Mothers' Union Charities, both here in Essex and across the world. Also, a big thank you to the cooks, coffee and tea makers, and not forgetting the raffle ladies and the support of the Knit and Natter group.

Our May meeting will take place on 25th May at 1.45pm in the Honeywood Hall. This will incorporate our AGM.

For more information on the Mothers' Union meetings, please contact me on 01621 891315.

June Eaton

St Peter's Church Annual Meeting 11am, Sunday, 3rd May at St Peter's Church

The meeting is open to all, but votes may only be cast by those registered on St Peter's Electoral Roll. The 2025 Accounts will be presented, together with a report on the numerous and varied activities of our church community over the past year. Come along to hear what we have been doing in 2025.

Community News



Great Totham Parish Council Report for March and April



Sometimes the dates of Parish Council meetings make it impossible for a report to be immediately included in the Parish Magazine, and the Annual Parish Meeting now seems rather distant. In his address, the Chairman referred to the many new policies that have been adopted and the purchase of a new overhead projector to reduce paper and printing costs. He spoke of work carried out within the village, for example, the pruning of the trees around the cricket pitch and the ongoing work at the Bull Green Recreation Ground, including the securing of a grant to provide a Monkey Climbing Wall. In addition, measures being undertaken by Maldon during this time of Local Government reorganisation, focussing on the development of a sound financial strategy and productive partnerships to ensure Maldon's identity is preserved and its long-term future sound. Councillor Atkinson also took the opportunity to thank Councillor Siddall for his report and members and volunteers for their individual contributions to the life of the village.

No members of the public were present and, at this point, I would usually make a comment about assuming residents were happy with the work of the Council, but I have to confess I have recently been taken to task for a comment I made that surveillance reports from both our Speedwatch Team and the Community Officers indicate an 'improvement in driving standards'. Speeding is not only dangerous and antisocial but illegal and, yes, offenders *are* more likely to slow down when they see patrols, but despite the huge increase in the number of vehicles passing through the village, the speeds recorded have been consistently lower and the number of people breaking the speed limit fewer which, at the risk of being a 'Pollyanna', still indicates a welcome improvement!

The presence of an unsupervised dog in the Jubilee Recreation Gound has now been reported to Maldon District Council, together with video footage. There is no evidence of the dog fouling but, given this is a public space, it is clearly worrying. One possible action discussed was the installation of a small camera with, of course, all the necessary safeguards. Unusually, a report of dog fouling was received regarding Braxted Lane, and it was agreed to relocate the dog bin, previously within the recreation ground, to the verge in the lane itself. Residents might also have noticed the Amenities team has begun a Spring clean of the play areas and, following this month's playground inspections, has provided a list of suggested improvements. Please assist them by placing your litter in the bin or taking it home.

/continued on next page

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Community News

/continued from previous page

Thus far, we have received over 200 replies to the consultation regarding recreational provision for the older children of the village. There have also been comments from the village Facebook group and on the Parish Council pages, but it was felt that, currently, the number of responses was rather small to be totally representative, and more opinions and suggestions would be welcome. For those seeking inspiration, the Park Road installation in Tiptree was identified as a good example of climbing apparatus for this age group. Realistically, funding will be an important consideration, and it was interesting that the provision of, what might be called, the more traditional activities - football, basketball/netball - and the need for safe, social spaces were highlighted.

Councillor Henry Bass from Wickham Bishops attended the April Meeting and shared his concerns that, due to the number of planning applications involving large numbers of houses on pleasant green areas, our two villages were in danger of 'combining' and losing their individual identities. Also, the amount of time taken to determine the applications was unsettling. At a previous meeting, our members had also raised the question of applications granted but failing to materialise, and the growing pressure on infrastructure.

Finishing on a more cheerful note, the Clerk reported that Maldon CV's Green Space Games were very successful and greatly enjoyed by the many children who attended the two-hour session. While it is understandable that large projects will be provided centrally in Maldon, it is always pleasing when the 'surrounding areas' are treated to something out of the ordinary .. and for free. Perhaps they will do it again!

The next meeting will take place on Monday, 11th May.

Vicky Heaviside

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Community News

The Great Exhibition



Some people may remember The Festival of Britain which was held during the summer of 1951 but exactly 100 years before this was The Great Exhibition or, to give it its full title, the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations. It was also known as The Crystal Palace Exhibition as the venue was held in a purpose-built glass and steel building constructed in Hyde Park, London.

The exhibition was opened on the 1st May 1851 by Queen Victoria and lasted for 5 months and 2 weeks until 15th October 1851. This became the first of many “World Fairs” or exhibitions held in the late 19th century. It was organised by Prince Albert and Sir Henry Cole, who was a civil servant and inventor and was the man responsible for introducing the world’s first commercial Christmas cards in 1843! Prominent members of the Royal Society were also involved in the organisation with the aim of showing that Britain was a global industrial leader. This was largely in response to the French Industrial Exposition held in 1844. Other countries also exhibited at the Great Exhibition, but it was Britain which dominated.

The Great Exhibition proved highly popular with over 6 million visitors (about one third of Britain’s total population at the time) and Queen Victoria herself visited 37 times! Other famous people of the time who also attended included such people as Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Michael Faraday, and Samuel Colt. Well-known authors such as Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Charlotte Bronte, Lewis Carroll, and Alfred Lord Tennyson also visited. Much of the profit made from the Exhibition was used to found the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Science Museum, and the Natural History Museum. All the statistics about the Great Exhibition can be found inscribed on The Albert Memorial behind the Royal Albert Hall.

There was a total of 13,000 exhibits with displays of fabrics, furnishings, locomotives, hydraulic presses, and musical instruments. Other items displayed included the Koh-i-Moor diamond and the Dan-i-Moor diamond. There were also many demonstrations of new industrial methods and products. One quite amusing aspect of the Exhibition for us now is that the first modern public flush toilets were installed with 827, 280 people paying one penny (i.e., Spending a penny) to use them! This actually led to public toilets being opened across the country in the following year!

Chris Bingham

Community News



Looking for something to keep the children busy this May half term?

Alongside their much-loved regular sessions such as Rhymetime, Block Builders, and Storytimes, Essex libraries will also be hosting themed craft sessions, stories, and activities for all ages. Relax and spend time as a family, all for free!

Pop into your local library or visit <https://library-events.essex.gov.uk/> for info.

Great Totham Post Office and Stores

Hello, my name is Jenny Walling and I am excited to be taking over the Great Totham Post Office and Stores. I have lived in Great Totham for over 30 years, have been a Brownie Leader for 10 years and am closely involved in organising church/community events such as the Christmas Fayre. I am also a member of the Great Totham Community Choir.

You will have seen that the whole store is currently undergoing renovation. Apologies for any inconvenience caused during these works,



however, the Post Office is now open again and your new village shop will be open by the beginning of May. With further developments planned, a self-serve community café will be operating by the end of the summer. Our focus will be to provide good value products and use local produce where we can.

Lyndsey and I look forward to welcoming you back into your community store!

Jenny Walling

Tiptree Jobserve Bowling Club

Tiptree Jobserve Bowling Club are holding an Open Day on Sunday, 24th May 10am-4pm. We are a lively and social club with the opportunity to make new friends as well as learning a new sport. Everyone is welcome and full instruction will be given. Please wear casual clothes and flat soled shoes.

For further information please email catherinehood@btinternet.com

Catherine Hood

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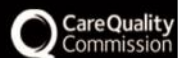
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Community News

70 YEAR ANNIVERSARIES 1956 - 2026

Two connected anniversaries occur this year and came about because of the shortage of leaders (nothing's changed!) for the two local Scout Groups. The 1st Wickham Bishops and the 1st Great Totham (St Peter's) Groups had existed for some years and considered pooling resources and possible merger. The problem was where to relocate a new Group. Wickham Bishops met in the Church Rooms and had a small hut on the playing field near the old village hall. Great Totham met in the Honywood School.

Leaders of the two Groups, including Charles Cass and Bill Meehan met early in 1956 at the crossroads of Kelvedon Road, Walden House Road and Great Totham Road. The corner was onetime known as Prances Corner or Prances Woods after the owner of Baxters Cottage and property to which Miss Edith Prance had moved from 'Five Acres'; She had lived at Five Acres with two brothers until it was leased to Barnardo's for a Girl's Home at the start of World War II. Local children had been allowed to play in the grounds.

One of the leaders was encouraged (pushed, I'm told!) to knock on Miss Prance's door and enquire about using part of the grounds as a base for the 'scouts'.

Long story short, Miss Prance contacted an old friend from World War I ambulance driving days in Serbo-Croatia, Elsie Cameron-Corbett, whose brother Thomas was Lord Rowallen, then third UK Chief Scout. The advice from Scout HQ suggested that Miss Prance talk to the local Scout Commissioner, Peter Church, solicitor (and 40 years Churchwarden of St Nicholas' Little Braxted). The result was that Miss Prance entered a Deed of Gift signing over her property, including the cottage, to East Essex District Scouts on 28th April 1956.

The 1st Beacon Hill Scout Group was formally registered within a few weeks in May 1956 and the four nominated Trustees of the Scout District gave the Group right to occupy part of the grounds to the Scout Group for 'as long as it remains a viable Scout Group'. ('minimum standards' in today's jargon). The Group red and blue halves 'neckerchief' is from the colours of the two former Groups.



Miss Prance attended the formal opening ceremony of **Prances** in September 1956 with her friend Elsie, who brought with her a signed photo postcard from her brother, 'The Chief'. Edith Prance remained in occupation of Baxters Cottage until she died in May the following year.

The first task was to move the small hut complete with cast iron stove from the village hall playing fields to their new home in Great Totham Road.

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Community News

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Charles Cass became the Group Scout Leader and Bill Meehan the Scout Leader. The Group has provided a wonderful second home for the youth of the area ever since, as well as campers from further afield, including Europe.



With the objective of giving a boost to a young 'scouting associated' couple or family, Baxters Cottage, now Prances Cottage, has been home to a voluntary resident 'Warden/Manager' since 1957, firstly by Geoff and Vera Higgs, through to Louis and Rose Filho, the current residents.

In December 1974, the whole property ownership was transferred by the remaining Trustees to the 'safety net' of The Scout Association Trust Corporation, with the local District Scout Executive Committee acting as 'managing trustees'.

The daughter of an Anglican Minister, Miss Prance was a member of St Bartholomew's congregation; in retirement her brother, Padre Prance, assisted successive Rectors. A memorial plaque was placed in the Lady Chapel recognising her significant donations for re-decorating the said Lady Chapel, commemorated by a piece in the Magazine by Rev'd John James.

It's interesting to note that most of the site, including the Scout Group portion, is within Great Totham parish, with the cottage in Wickham Bishops, The garage and outbuildings were in Great Totham and, prior to 1974, two separate Council Rates demands were issued by the then Maldon Rural District Council. A new purpose-built District Scout Headquarters was opened in 1998 by yours truly, with Peggy Church, and which spans the parish boundaries.

A biography of the Life of Miss Prance "*Driving to the Limit*", written by the late Ian Valentine, Chairman of Trustees for many years, is available from Prances Activity Centre. Baxters Cottage was renamed Prances in 1968. While researching the life of Miss Prance, Ian produced a presentation which we delivered to many clubs and associations in the area accompanied by a PowerPoint as a visual aid.



The above has been recorded from conversations with Bill Meehan, Charles Cass and Peter Church, all sadly no longer with us, and compiled alongside copies of the official documents of the time.

Barry Cousins

(Totalling 67 years adult membership, Barry Cousins has been associated with Beacon Hill Group, Prances and District Scouts over the past 58 years, currently as District President. Former roles include: Prances Warden, District Commissioner and County Commissioner for Essex.

Louis, Editor of Wickham Bishops with Little Braxted Magazine)

Community News

What's on in your Community

The Treehouse Club Pre-School

Monday to Friday, Village Hall

Rainbows

Monday, Church Extension

Carpet Bowls

630pm-830pm Tuesday, Village Hall

Baby Signage

9am Wednesday, Church Extension

Bible Study Group

1030am Wednesday, Honywood Hall

Community Choir

730pm Wednesday, Church Extension

Edward Bear Club

1030am Thursday, Church Extension

Great Totham WI

730pm 2nd Thursday, Village Hall

Wickham Bishops Gardening Club

730pm third Thursday,
St Bartholomew's Church Hall

Wickham Bishops WI

2pm last Thursday,
St Bartholomew's Church Hall

Knit and Natter

10am Friday, Honywood Hall

Bellingring Practice

745pm Friday, St Peter's Church

Mothers' Union

145pm some Fridays, Honywood Hall
Contact June Eaton 01621 891315 for dates

St Peter's Church Coffee Morning

10am 4th Saturday, Honywood Hall

URC, Great Totham North

Art Club

Monday, 2pm-4pm

Upholstery Classes

Monday, 7.30pm-9.30pm

Tuesday, 10am-12 noon;

12.30pm-2.30pm

Lunch Club

10.30am—2pm

2nd and 4th Wednesday

Craft and Chatter

1.30pm—3.30pm 2nd Thursday

Piecemakers

Patchwork and Needlework Group

1.30pm—3.30pm last Thursday

Church Coffee Morning

10am—11.30am 2nd Saturday

*See page 39 for contact details
To include your group here, email:
parishmagazinetotham@yahoo.co.uk*



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Community News



Great Totham WI



At our April meeting we welcomed Rick Thompson, a volunteer for the Helen Rollason Charity, to tell us about the aims of the organisation. Founded in 1999, the charity is the legacy of BBC broadcaster Helen Rollason, whose vision was to provide the best quality of life while coping with cancer. Their support centres in Essex are vital in helping people living with the disease. They offer a range of complementary therapies to patients in an environment of peace and tranquillity, including counselling and reflexology and also provide spaces for people to support each other.

After a break for tea, coffee and hot cross buns, we held our AGM. The current committee and officers have all agreed to carry on in their posts for a further year. We continue to grow in numbers, which is very encouraging.

We are always pleased to see new members and welcome you as a guest at any of our meetings held on the second Thursday in 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 www.greattothamwi.weebly.com or, alternatively, email greattothamwi@gmail.com.

Sue Pulford



Wickham Bishops WI



On a lovely spring March day, we were entertained by Chris Turan, a former SOCO (Scene of Crime Officer) with the Metropolitan Police. His stories were of basic stupidity by criminals which led to arrests and there were no unpleasant tales.

We also discussed the two Resolutions to be voted on before the Annual Meeting, followed by enjoyable tea and hot cross buns.

Our walking group is now out and about again in this brighter weather.

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 me on 01621 815161 for further information.

Margaret Curtis

Community News

Contacting the Police

In an emergency dial 999

For non-emergencies dial 101 extension 412335 / 01245 491491

Send non-emergency police related information/intelligence to your North Blackwater Neighbourhood Policing Team at:

<http://www.essex.police.uk/> or text 07624 80010

Maldon Police 0300 333 4444 or 101
Maldon District Council Offices, Princes Road, Maldon



Visit essex.police.uk/your-area for news and updates on:

- The work of the Community and Local Policing Teams
- Crime trends
- Crime prevention



Great Totham Neighbourhood Watch

Visit Maldon District Neighbourhood Watch website for up to date local crime reports, non-urgent news and links to the police and national NHW websites:
<http://www.maldondistrictnhw.co.uk/index.htm>

For Totham Hill Green, phone Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, Ian Barratt, on 891949, email: ianbarratt43@gmail.com

For local crime reports, visit <https://www.police.uk/essex/28/crime/>



Wickham Bishops Library

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Wednesday: 2pm-5.30pm
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Ancestry: Wednesdays 3.30pm-4.30pm. Help to research your family history.

Code Club: Saturdays 9am-10am.
Learn how to make cool games, animations and websites.

Contacts for Community Activities (See page 3 for Church Activities)

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers		www.girlguiding.org.uk	
Rainbows at St Peter's Church	Rosie Pollock		893168
Scouts, Cubs, Beavers at Prances	Brenda Heal	bjheal@btinternet.com	
Great Totham Cricket Club Colts	Paul Marks		07709 793958
The Treehouse Club Pre-School	Village Hall		01621 468020
Edward Bear Club (Toddler Group)	St Peter's Church	Rosie Pollock	893168
Gardening Club	Village Hall	Pauline Wright	892855
WI: GT Evening 2nd Thurs. 7.30pm	Village Hall	Sue Pulford	892063
GT & WB last Thurs. 2pm	St.B Church Hall	Di Mellor	892247
Day Centre Wednesdays	URC	Jean Johnstone	892293
Carpet Bowls Tues 6.30pm-8.30pm	Village Hall	Jean Cloughton	892286
Tollesbury Table Tennis Club	Paul Freeman	freemans21@hotmail.com	
		862510 / 07855 204505	
Maldon Croquet Club		maldoncroquetclub@gmail.com	
Wickham Bishops Drama Club		www.wickhambishopsdrama.co.uk	
Knit and Natter (Honywood Hall)	Sandra Smith		893153
Wickham Bishops Gardening Club	Stewart / Wendy	HortiClub@outlook.com	893360


Useful Telephone Numbers

Honywood Hall Hire		Karin Mann	929866
St Peter's Church Extension Hire		Karin Mann	929866
Village Hall hire		Sue Pulford	892063
URC hall hire		Sue Bowyer	893285
St Peter's—Interment of Ashes and Iron Crosses		Chris Munton	891817
Great Totham Parish Council		Clerk: Nikki Smith	07811400803
District Councillors	Jade Hughes	cllr.jade.hughes@maldon.gov.uk	
	Richard Siddall		07979 853947 / 890809
County Councillor	Mark Durham		01245 227249 / 07850 967239
Great Totham Primary School			891091
Maldon District Council			854477
Maldon Citizens Advice		email: manager@maldoncitizensadvice.org.uk	875774
Police Community Support Officer			101
Water			01245 491234
Electricity			0845 6014516
Frank (Drugs Helpline) (free)			0300 1236600
Childline Helpline for children			0800 1111 (free)
Maldon District Health / Wellbeing advice		emily.fallon@maldon.gov.uk	
NSPCC 24 hour helpline for children			0800 800 500 (free)
The Samaritans			116 123
DIAL UK (Disability Information & Advice Line)		www.dialuk.info	
Church of England, St. Peter's	Contact Rosie Pollock		07908 776750
Totham Barn Free Evangelical Church	Contact Danbury Mission:		01245 227428
United Reformed Church			01376 500958
Wickham Bishops St Bartholomew's Church			07544 973705
Maldon Methodist Church Office	Rev'd Clifford Newman		853423
Maldon Roman Catholic Church	Parish Priest - Fr. Jerold Savio		852259
Society of Friends (Quakers)	Clerk to the meeting - Sue Smith		854056
Salvation Army			853942
Christian Growth Centre (CGC), Maldon	Rob & Jeannie Saggs Pastors		855855

WORLD BEE DAY

20TH MAY

THE LAST BEE

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a purple flower. The bee is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing right. Its body is covered in yellow and black fur, and its wings are visible. The flower it is on is a vibrant purple color with many small, tubular florets. The background is a soft, out-of-focus field of similar purple flowers.

**After the last bee
had buzzed its last buzz,
the birds and the butterflies
did what they could.
But soon the fields lay bare,
few flowers were left,
nature was broken,
and the planet bereft.**

BRIAN BILSTON

Great Totham Parish Magazine is published by The Parish Church to help everyone feel part of the community, recognising people's achievements and the value of community activity, and to encourage support of local businesses. Please contribute by sending us your good news, suggestions and details of any events and advertisements for the next edition by: 10th May.

Email: parishmagazinetotham@yahoo.co.uk

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