

Welcome to the June 2026 edition of your United Benefice magazine.

If you know anyone who would like to be added to our mailing list, please ask them to email UnitedBeneficeBMS@outlook.com or, for anyone who is not online, please phone 01254 937123.



St Leonard's Balderstone

St Mary's Mellor



St Leonard the Less
Samlesbury

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Reverend Nathaniel's welcome

By an odd coincidence of dates this year, the 1st of June is the beginning of Ordinary time. Counted as the Sundays after Trinity, this is the longest season of the Church Liturgical year. It can feel like an endless season of green (the liturgical colour of Ordinary time) lasting more than 20 weeks. It is not a season of feasting or celebration like Christmas and Easter, it is not a season of preparation or fasting like Lent or Advent. It is just ordinary, normal, plain. Broken up occasionally with saints' days, by the end of Ordinary time I am tired of Green as the liturgical colour.

Far from being the least important season, though, this reminds us of a central part of our faith. That God is with us, not just in celebrations of joy, not just in sorrow or challenge, but also in the ordinary. God is with us every day, in the boring, the mundane. That our God love us and is as present with us when we make a morning coffee as when we celebrate the great moments of our year.

This should not diminish our view of the importance of major events; there are great moments in our years and in our lives. Instead, this reminder of God's presence should encourage us to elevate our view of the ordinary, the plain. It can remind us that the smallest things we do can praise God, can show love to one another, can change and shape the world for the better.

Parts of life, even most of it, can be normal, ordinary. But there is still a wonder in the ordinary, a sacredness that does not leave even when we do not notice it.

United Benefice church services

	Balderstone	Mellor	Samlesbury
7 th June	11:00am United Benefice Confirmation		
14 th June	11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Family Service	11:00am Mission Praise
21 st June	11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Holy Communion	4:00pm Evening Prayer
28 th June	4:00pm Café Church	9:30am Mothers' Union Holy Communion	11:00am BCP Holy Communion

We continue the normal rota system for Sundays in June, with the exception of the first week, which will be a United Benefice service at St Leonards, Balderstone for the confirmation of this year's participants. The pattern of Services can be seen in the table above. If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rev Nathaniel

Prayer diary

7 th June	Lord God, help us to disciple and nurture children and young people in their Faith. Amen
14 th June	Jesus, continue to inspire us to hold regular worship that is accessible and appealing to children and young people and their families. Amen
21 st June	Father, we pray for growth in the numbers of leaders of children and young people. Amen
28 th June	Lord Jesus, we thank you for our excellent relationships with our Benefice schools, we pray for even closer partnership working and a vision for our 11-16 year olds. Amen.

United Benefice diary dates

Tues 2 nd	United Benefice Communion at St Mary's Church, Mellor	9:30am
Wed 3 rd	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury	7:30pm
Fri 5 th	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor	4:00pm

Tues 9 th	United Benefice Communion at St Mary's Church, Mellor	9:30am
Wed 10 th	St Mary's Choir Practice at St Mary's Church, Mellor	6:30pm
Wed 10 th	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury	7:30pm
Fri 12 th	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor	4:00pm

Tues 16 th	United Benefice Communion at St Mary's Church, Mellor	9:30am
Tues 16 th	Mellor Mothers' Union at St Mary's Church, Mellor	7:00pm
Wed 17 th	St Mary's Choir Practice at St Mary's Church, Mellor	6:30pm
Wed 17 th	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury	7:30pm
Fri 19 th	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor	4:00pm

Tues 23 rd	United Benefice at Communion St Mary's Church, Mellor	9:30am
Wed 24 th	St Mary's Choir Practice at St Mary's Church, Mellor	6:30pm
Wed 24 th	Bell Ringing Practice at St Leonard the Less, Samlesbury	7:30pm
Fri 26 th	United Benefice Evening Prayer at St Mary's Church, Mellor	4:00pm
Sat 27 th	Garden Party at Salmesbury Memorial Hall	12:00pm

Tues 30 th	United Benefice at Communion St Mary's Church, Mellor	9:30am
Tues 30 th	Little Angels at St Mary's Church, Mellor	2:15pm

St Leonards Church, Balderstone

Church Walking Day

What a fantastic afternoon of fun, friendship and community with some very special guests!

Our Walking Day procession this year was led by the Thwaites Shire Horses. It was wonderful to see these amazing animals lead the way down to school from Mellor Brook Community Centre. Everyone loved meeting them and they really did make our day special. A big thank you to Thwaites and the Shire Horse team, as well as to John Evans for organising it.



We had a fantastic turnout for the walk and as we approached school, Balderstone Brass Band joined us, playing as we walked up the hill.

Rev. Nathaniel led the service outside school, and the band accompanied us for the hymn. We then all enjoyed tea, coffee and lots of cake inside and while listening to the band play. Thank you to Balderstone Brass Band for joining us for the event.

Luckily the weather stayed dry, so our traditional races were held on the field for the children. We finished the afternoon with the Tug of War, which, after a close contest, the girls' team won!

This year we held a raffle during the event with some great prizes. Thank you to The Bluebird, Tiggis and Taylor's Chippy for donating the prizes.



Thank you to everyone that helped, whether you poured cups of tea, baked, sold raffle tickets, served ice-cream, wrote certificates, marshalled along the route or helped in any way at all, we really appreciate your help! A great team effort and a wonderful afternoon for everyone!

Balderstone Mothers' Union

We have two meetings to report this month. In April Janet was our speaker and, as it is the 150th anniversary of Mothers' Union this year, Janet researched in to the life of our founder, Mary Sumner. We found out lots of interesting facts about her that we did not know! We also sang one or two hymns relating to the talk. A big "thank you" Janet, for all your hard work.

Nathaniel joined us in May. He took a short communion service and then talked about his life and what led him to the priesthood. It was a really interesting afternoon; I think we could have listened to him for much longer! Thank you so much, Nathaniel.

We end on a sad note. We were all so sorry to hear Albert Britcliffe had died. We send our love and sympathy to Maureen and all his family. May he rest in peace.

Susan Baron.

Mellor St. Mary's

Little Angels – 28 years on

Since our first meeting in April 1998, we have continued to meet at 2.15pm in the Narthex on the last Tuesday of each month during school term time, when all pre-school children from birth onwards are welcome to join us with whoever is looking after them.

Our aim is to provide an opportunity for adults and children to come to church and share each other's company in a friendly, informal atmosphere.

There is a 'time together' when we think about 'Caring', 'Sharing', 'Love', 'Listening', or other appropriate topics with a related practical activity which the children enjoy. The children play together with toys whilst the adults have a chat before we share refreshments.

This year we have missed Hilda as she has been unable to be with due to being unwell – we send her our love.

Highlights over the last year have been

- Welcoming the children from school in December and June
- Planting cress seeds in eggs shells for Easter
- Visit from Sarah and her little friend, Jack
- Coming to the monthly Family Service in church
- Our 28th birthday party on 28th April
- Meeting new baby Darcy Jay when she was 2 weeks old
- blowing paint bubbles to decorate our Ascension Day clouds.



We always look forward to seeing our little angels and welcome all pre-school children from across the United Benefice of Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury.

Mellor Mothers' Union

Mother's Union members and Margaret Ashton, who opened our meeting on 12th May 2026, welcomed Richard Jones, who is a well-known local resident and member of St Mary's church choir. Richard wanted to share with us his recent rail trip, including photos, to Florence, passing through Geneva, Milan and Bologna. This journey had special meaning for him as it was to mark the first anniversary of the passing of his late wife.

Leaving the UK by the Eurostar, his breakfast was a welcome sight and Richard mentioned food was a major factor of his trip, including the odd Campari. (And Negroni)!!



The photographs Richard had taken were of a high standard, and he explained each one with very interesting facts (including the Italian food). As he arrived in Geneva, we saw photos of the “Jet d' Eau”, the iconic waterfall which reaches 460ft in the air and is most beautiful when illuminated in rainbow colours.

Going through Milan, Richard managed to snap a photo of Leonardo's magnificent “The Last Supper” in the Santa Maria delle Grazie monastery. He told us about how the monks had destroyed part of it in 1652 by installing a doorway at the lower part of the painting to give easier access to the dining room, which blocked out Jesus's sandalled feet on the painting.

On reaching Florence, highly renowned as the birthplace of the Renaissance, his extraordinary photographs showed us the most magnificent places, sculptures and paintings being a treasure trove of art and architecture, all of which were breathtaking. He pointed out about the powerful and wealthy Medici family who built so many of the now famous buildings, particularly a corridor across the river, known as the Vasari corridor. This private walkway runs from the Uffizi Gallery, passes over the shops of the Ponte Vecchio, and through to the Boboli Gardens. Richard's pièce de resistance was the “Last Judgement” fresco inside the Duomo, which covers the interior of the dome.

His photographs were extraordinary and everyone was very impressed with the whole content, and particularly the end photo of the hazelnut gelato he enjoyed. Christine Redwood thanked him with a bottle of wine on members behalf.

Frances Jackson

Deputy Roving Reporter

United Benefice Service

Everyone is welcome to come to our U.B. Holy Communion service each Tuesday at 9.30am followed by coffee in the Narthex, where we share fellowship and friendship.

In May we all sang Happy Birthday to Frances our MU Deputy Roving reporter.



Mellor's Marvellous Musical Melodies

.... and it was indeed a marvellous musical Friday evening in church! Queueing from the lychgate, over a hundred villagers came to enjoy the music.

Plenty of variety in store! A rousing start from the choir with audience participation, followed by the choir singing music from a well-known show and a stunning and moving solo performance by Ruby. Rev Jane, in costume as Mary Magdalene, sang a song from a famous musical beautifully, and Margaret B, Rita and Julie, dressed as geishas with fluttering fans, colourfully rendered a familiar operetta piece - to much laughter!



A dance mix really livened things up! Singing, dancing and arm waving, enthusiastically encouraged by our ABBA lookalikes, Helen, Debbie, Tony and Geoff!

Next up, our sparkly dressed school children sang a starry song followed by a School of Rock number that got us loudly "na na na-ing"! Excellent!

The instrumental group, who ably accompanied the choir at the start, also played for us before the break for refreshments.



After the break, Balderstone Brass Band, resplendent in their brand new jackets, played some favourites, which sounded wonderful in our church. Everyone joined in for a well-known musical thank you - an appropriate end to a marvellous musical evening! What a night - well done all!

Thanks and bouquets closed the show which raised £2,230.50 for the Church Building Fund!

Richard Jones

A sensationally stupendous evening of show songs!

What a fabulous evening of musical entertainment!

The evening kicked off with men of the choir singing Food glorious Food and then songs from the church choir, solos from Rev Jane and Ruby, the Terrific Trio of Rita, Margaret and Julie, a duet from Mark and George... and then Helen, Debbie, Geoff and Tony displaying their dancing skills to the ABBA mix with audience participation. The children from school delighted us with their enthusiastic singing – thanks again to Helen. Chris, Catherine and Jane with their instruments, and then finally the BBBB: the Brilliant Balderstone Brass Band playing more tunes from the shows.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening!

Special thanks to Margaret and George, and all those who work quietly behind the scenes to enable this event to take place.

An amazing £2,230.50 was raised for the church.

A friend of mine who bought a ticket commented, "Where, for only £5, could you go for such an enjoyable evening of entertainment?" I'm sure many would agree!

Hilary Williams

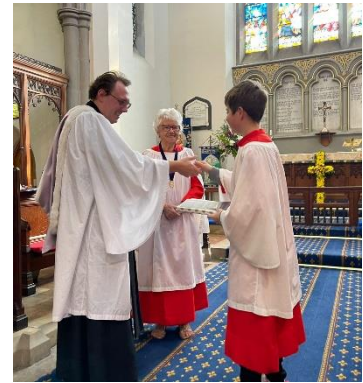
Mellor Choir

Many thanks to all our performers, but a special thank you to everyone who came along to support our Church Choir at the recent event.

Reverend Nathaniel presented Jasper with a book and a certificate for his excellent attendance and service to the church over the last 3 years.

New members are always welcome, and practices are held every Wednesday, in St Mary's Church at 7:30pm.

Margaret Baldwin



Tuesday Morning Coffee

Each Tuesday we get together in the church and this month we had an extra special reason to get together as it was Reverend Nathaniel's birthday. It also doubled up as he has now been vicar of the United Benefice for a whole year.



The Card Ladies

This month, we have donated to Alzheimer's Society in memory of Brian Buckley, North West Air Ambulance in support of Harry Shaw's tractor ride, East Lancs Hospice in memory of Peter Hallet, and the British Heart Foundation in memory of David Beattie, Rita's son-in-law. All these charities were chosen by the families of the deceased. We again thank you all for your support - we couldn't do it without you!

The Card Ladies

Loose Change Matters

As you will be aware, we have been collecting your small, loose change for some time now. This was originally managed by Hilda Hilton, who did a wonderful job, but it has now been passed over to me. All the proceeds from these collections have been used to send donations to charities. In the past, overseas charities have been selected. Please let me know if you have any particular overseas charity you would like us to make a donation to, I would love to hear from you. Thank you,

Jean Freeman

We recently received a lovely "thank you" from the Samaritans, who we recently donated to. We couldn't do it without all the cards we receive, and those who buy them from us.

I would like to say a BIG thank you for donating £200 from your Church bake sale. As you are probably aware from when you volunteered with our branch, we receive no funding and must raise over £30k to be able to be there for our callers every year.

Without donations and fundraising we would not be able to be there for callers requiring emotional support.

Best wishes

Paula Fairbairn

Director

Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn & Ribble Valley Samaritans

St Leonard the Less, Salmesbury

Salmesbury School

What a wonderful and busy few months it has been at school since our last contribution. There is so much to celebrate and share with you all!



Our Christian value this half term has been **Service**, rooted in the beautiful words of Galatians 5:13 — *"Serve one another in love."* It has been so heartwarming to see this lived out every day — in the tidying up, the role-modelling, the helping hands, and the giving to charity. The children really have embraced what it means to serve.

Reception children have been busy welcoming some very special visitors as part of their "People Who Help Us" theme. We are so grateful to Adam and Luke, two of our local PCSOs, Asma, a midwife, and Reece, a paramedic, who each gave their time so generously to come and speak with the children about the vital and life-giving work they do in our community.



A special mention too must go to our wonderful Year 6 pupils, who dressed as dentists and vets and delivered brilliant presentations on caring for animals and

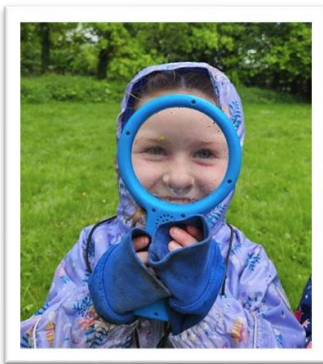
looking after our teeth — they were absolutely superb, and the reception children were captivated!



Our youngest learners in the Infant class had a truly magical time.



We held a Forest School session to mark Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday recently. The children spent time exploring nature, discovering wildlife, and taking part in outdoor activities inspired by Sir David's extraordinary love for our planet. It was a joyful and fitting tribute to a man who has spent a lifetime helping us all see the natural world through fresh eyes!



Over in Year 3 and 4, there has been some fantastic scientific discovery happening! The children have been exploring States of Matter, getting hands-on with investigations into melting, freezing, condensing and evaporating. Their curiosity and enthusiasm have been a real delight to witness.



Our ever-dedicated Pupil Council has been hard at work planning their next fundraiser for our school charities, Derian House and our sponsored child

Bristy. This time, they have organised a board game afternoon — a wonderfully wholesome, screen-free afternoon that everyone is very much looking forward to!

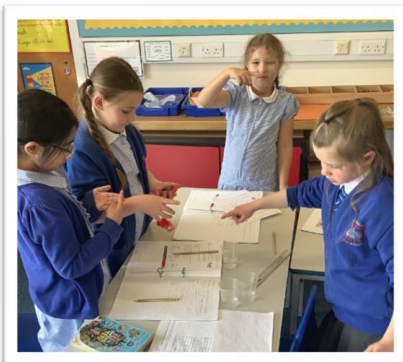


In year 5/6 one of their highlights has been learning about Carl Linnaeus the scientist who created the binomial system which all scientists use to name every living thing today.

And we still have so much to look forward to before the end of term! Sports Day, the House Football Tournament led by our House Captains, the Infant class trip to Blackpool Zoo, the KS2 Summer Show, Year 6 Transition Day with our cluster primary schools, the legendary Talent Show in the final week, and of course our much-loved End of Term Celebration Worship. As ever, it's going to be a very busy half term — but we wouldn't have it any other way!



Thank you, as always, for your continued support and prayers for our school community.



Garden Party

SATURDAY 27th JUNE - 12 NOON

SAMLESBURY MEMORIAL HALL

ROSE QUEEN CROWNING – BBQ – TEAS – ICE CREAM

TOMBOLA - BOTTLE STALL – PLANTS – RAFFLE

CAKES - FAMILY FUN - TUG OF WAR

FAMILY FUN – CHILDREN’S GAMES - COMPETITIONS

Tea and Music

“CREAM TEA & MUSIC IN THE GARDEN”

SATURDAY 25th JULY 2pm

£6

Woodnook Farm, Roach Road, Samlesbury

Book with Grace Eastham 01772 877076

United Benefice Community News and Events

Open Gardens Month – 13th June to 19th July

This year we'll be holding our popular Open Gardens month, with lots of different gardens open around the community. Funds raised will include a donation to Parkinsons UK.

We would still like to add a few more open gardens to our programme so if you have a garden, however small or large, neat or tidy, and would be willing to open it for an hour or so and maybe serve some simple refreshments, please let us know (sianriddell1@gmail.com).

We'd love to get as many people involved across the Benefice, so whether you're from Mellor, Samlesbury, Balderstone or anywhere else in our community, we'd love you to come along or maybe open your own garden.

Look out for the Open Gardens leaflet with a list of the dates.

Mellor Village Hall

Regular Classes and Groups at Mellor Village Hall

If you are interested in any of the following activities, please click on the link below to find out more about the regular classes and groups at Mellor Village Hall.

Girl Guides - Knit and Natter - Line Dancing - Singing - Indoor Bowls - Walking Netball

Walking Football - Dog Ways - Genjitsu - Badminton - Mellor Tots - Aerobics - Games Night

Yoga - Ukulele Lessons - Arts and Crafts - Balderstone Brass Band - Saturday Café - Pickle Ball

<https://www.mellorvillagehall.org.uk/classes-groups>

Samlesbury Area Civic Society

The Civic Society would like to confirm that the society will again be selling our home-grown tomatoes from the little table next to the Memorial Hall. This year we have extended our range of tomatoes and also confirm that they will be sold at the same price as last year, (only £1.50 per plant.)

As last year all the sales of these plants will go to help us run the community garden and make the hanging baskets around the Hall. It is only with your help that we can continue to do this.

Should anyone want to come and help us, please contact John Evans 07962 121 678 or John Greaves 07910 235 256, when you would be made very welcome.

United Benefice Contacts

St Leonard's Church, Balderstone

Churchwardens: Mary Shorthouse – mary.shorthouse@outlook.com – 07880 715 547
Ryan Dixon – ryandixon466@gmail.com - 07976 323 221
PCC Secretary: Kathy Evans - kabelliveau@btinternet.com
Treasurer: Keith Roberts
Headteacher: Victoria Gow - 01254 769 150

St Mary's Church, Mellor

Churchwardens: Sarah Lees - sarahlucy93@hotmail.co.uk - 07450 295 417
Lloyd Brown – 07714 791 256
PCC Secretary: Ann Doolan - anndoolan@btinternet.com - 07969 047 984
Treasurer: Mary Brown – 07832 625 646
Headteacher: Jo Embley-Peers - 01254 812 581

St Leonard the Less Church, Samlesbury

UB Licensed Lay Minister: Canon Pam Daunton - 01772 877 017
Churchwardens: Paul Daunton - 07979 496 499
John Eastham - 01772 877 076
PCC Secretary: Dr Nick Buckley – nickb2505@gmail.com - 07542 762 941
Treasurer: Gaynor Dockerill - 07563 262 784
Co-Headteachers: Lucy Sutton & Louise Quayle - 01772 877 200

United Benefice

Administrator: Andrew UnitedBeneficeBMS@outlook.com
Vicar: Nathaniel Gilmour rev.n.gilmour@gmail.com - 01254 937 123

Useful Website Links

Our United Benefice <https://www.facebook.com/BMSBenefice>

St Leonard's Church, Balderstone <https://www.facebook.com/balderstonestleonards>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11534/>

St Mary's Church, Mellor <https://www.facebook.com/mellorparishchurch>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11535/>
<https://www.mellorparishchurch.org/>

St Leonard the Less Church, Samlesbury <https://www.facebook.com/stleonardlessamlesbury>
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11517/>

Blackburn Cathedral <https://blackburncathedral.com/>

Mellor Brook Community Centre <https://mellorbrook.org/>

Mellor Village Hall <https://www.mellorvillagehall.org.uk/>

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall <https://www.samlesburymemorialhall.co.uk/>

Whalley Abbey <https://www.whalleyabbey.org>

Magazine Adverts

For full contact details of the businesses listed below, please view their adverts in our two advert supplements.

An advert costs just £25 for 12 months.

To join our community of advertisers and place an advert, please contact the United Benefice Office by emailing unitedbeneficebms@outlook.com

A&G Chimney Sweeps	07944 099 871
Absolute Enigma Studio	07817 398 494
Andrew Ball Plumbing & Heating Ltd	07817 844 002
Balderstone Logs	07976 323 221
Ben Lewis Tree Services	07843 018 973
Bowland IT Support Services	01254 947 082
Bowland Vets	01254 311 311
Canberra Fitness Centre	01254 765 084
Community Ukes	01254 813 210
C P Simm Fencing & Landscaping	07807 337 717
Creations Gardening Services	07950 242 171
Crochet Classes & Tuition with Keely Robertson	07904 590 552
D.J. Worcester Chimney Sweep	01772 616 467
Evabel Sundecks	01254 813 089
Fabric Box	07712 413 904
Fired 4 U (Paint, Pottery and Clay Studio)	01772 203 060
G.Cross Agricultural Engineering Ltd	07802 278 525
GO Driver Training	07931 316 109
Hair By Amy Campbell	07770 238 258
Hatha Yoga – Live Yoga UK with Blair	07511 591 880
Heritage Café at Samlesbury Hall	01254 812 010
Hoghton Contractors: David Devaney	07887 843 085
Hoghton Village Vet	01254 782 737
Home Care Mellor	01254 689 981
Homewise Society: Home Improvements Handyperson	01254 232 249
Hoze-It Power Cleaning Services	07841 348 290
Ian Wilde Independent Funeral Directors	01772 902 345
James L Knowles Electrician	01772 877 469
Let's Foster Carers (Mike Dixon)	07855 963 740
Lilac Tree Interiors at Holland House Garden Centre	07714 794 623
Mellor Brook & District Community Centre	07436 271 153
Mellor Plant UK	01254 812 937
Mellor Pharmacy	01254 812 999
M J Barton Contractors	07999 711 926
M W Holdsworth Builder & Property Repairer	07970 200 371
My Adventure Campers	07383 449 449
N & T Construction	07503 053 375
North West Autocare	01772 314 873
NSS News	01772 455 421
Old Oak Farm Nurseries Garden Centre	01254 852 065
Pennine Service Station Ltd	01254 812 715
Peter Whalley Plasterer	07709 673 310

Pete's Sports Massage	07584 655 855
Preston Garden Services Ltd	07855 974 540
Promedica 24 Care At Home	01254 411 004
Red Rose Insurance Solutions	01254 790 796
Ribble Home Surveys	07764 490 589
Right At Home Carers	01254 658 899
Samlesbury Secure Dog Run	07798 575 750
Stones Young Estate Agents	01254 682 470
Stove Installer	07787 858 585
Stuart Taylor International Ground Care & Trailers	01254 813 175
Taylor's Chippy	07999 192 884
T.Forrest Pet Food	01254 852 873
The Old Coach House Antiques and Interiors	07598 878 498
The Retro Bungalow	01254 852 723
The Wilpshire Clinic	01254 246 144
Tiggis Italian Restaurant	01254 769 133
Wherry Gardens – Bespoke Garden Maintenance	07508 455 694
Wilpshire Dental Clinic	01254 205 529
W.M.Alty & Sons Ltd: The Alty Funeral Service	01254 503 240
X-Press Ironing Services	07712 413 904