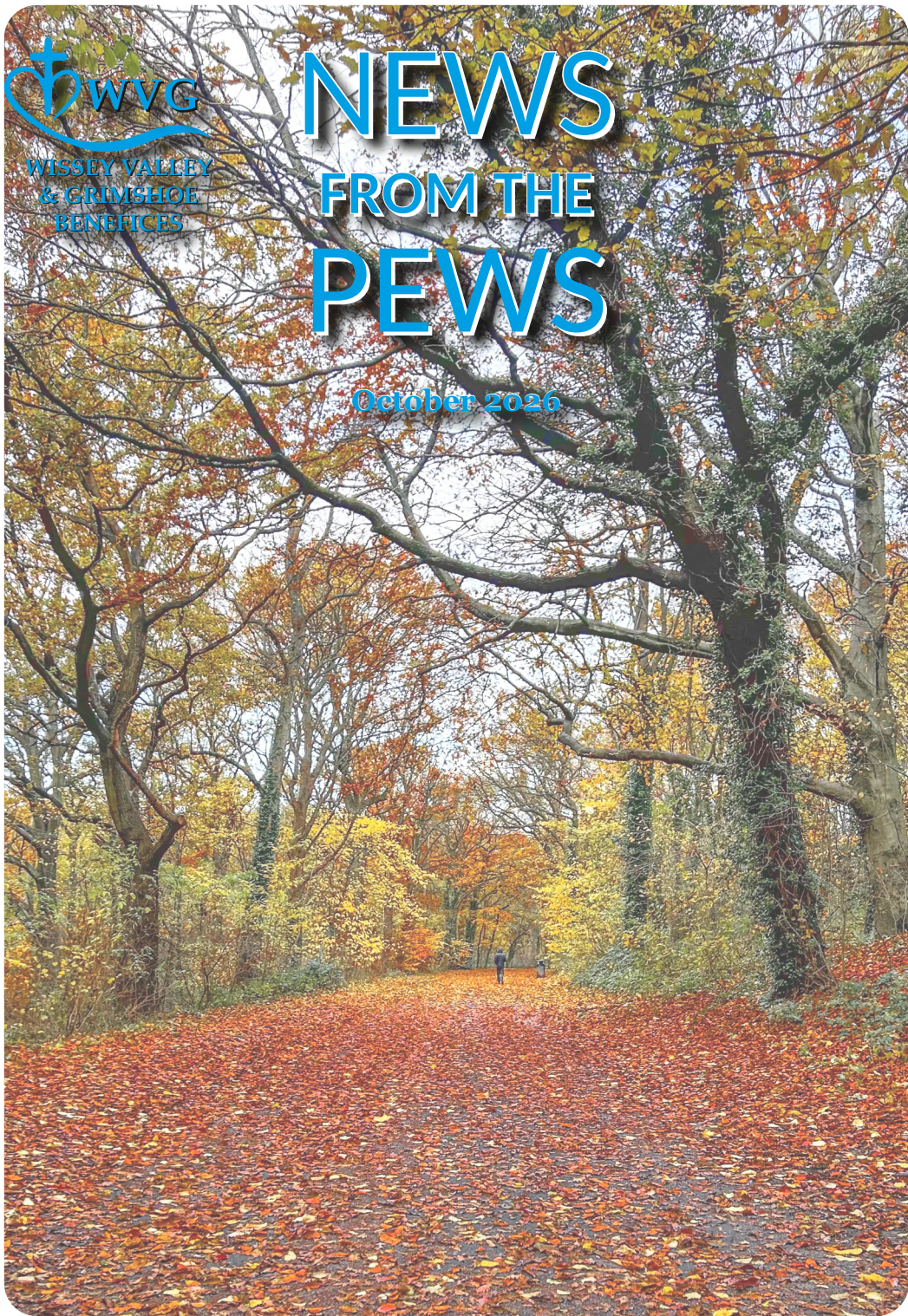




WISSEY VALLEY
& GRIMSHOE
BENEFICES

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

October 2026



WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF 'NEWS FROM THE PEWS'

October paints our world in russet, copper and gold.

Her mornings wear a veil of cool silver mist, and dew gathers like pearls on fading grass. Birds grow less coquettish as daylight recedes.

Her afternoons see squirrel kittens displaying their trapeze on the branches, while their mothers industriously gather.

Her early evening sun, low in the sky, and dappling through woodland, displays final leaves, once green with summer's song, now gently floating away and falling to earth; reminding us that nature's quiet turning can be so, so beautiful.



David Ewington

3 Bike Ride 2026 4 Weeting donation received 4 Family Baptism 5 Harvest 6 Church refuge for a species under threat 8 Poetry Corner	8 Book Suggestions for October 9 Monthly Prayer 9 Angels 10 Being a Fabric Officer With Tommy Saward 16 October Services List 19 Contacts
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We try to be open and transparent for the whole community and we would welcome your feedback about this magazine
beneficenewsuk@gmail.com



If you'd like to receive the next issue of your magazine digitally instead of in print

Scan the QR code on the left or visit

<https://news-from-the-pews.kit.com/82de9e2841>

News from the Parishes



On Saturday 12th September, enthusiastic cyclists from across the benefice set off on a sponsored cycle ride in aid of the Norfolk Churches Trust and their own individual Churches. The weather forecast was uncertain. However, it didn't dampen the cyclists' spirits, and they set off determined to complete the ride and raise as much money as possible.



Whilst enjoying the Norfolk countryside, the Intrepid Wereham Wobblers (pictured top left and Bottom right) visited 10 Churches and covered almost 30 miles!! Well done to all the cyclists across Norfolk who took part and to everyone who sponsored them. Your generosity and support are very much appreciated.



St Mary's, Weeting receives **£1,000** Donation from Weeting Steam Rally



Every year the rally donates money to local community groups in Weeting and with this year's success, the committee decided to donate £1,000 to Weeting Church.

This money will be put towards vital repairs.

Rally organiser Kate presenting the cheque to Weeting Church.

Family Baptisms

On a sunny morning in August at St Mary's Feltwell the trinity of baptisms was completed for the Strachan - Jenkinson family. The icing on the cake was that Mum Chrie was also baptised with her youngest son George.

Their journey started in February 2022 when Thomas was baptised, 2 years later Alfred was baptised. Cherie then got in touch in 2026 to say George had been born and that she would also like to consider adult baptism.

Rev'd Burman officiated and he supported her in this part of her faith journey. It has been a privilege to be part of this family's Christian journey.



Tammy Wright, Baptism coordinator.



September 2026

Beachamwell, St Mary

Another wonderful monthly service of worship took place on the village green. What made this September service particularly special was that it happily coincided with the sponsored bike ride.



The Harvest Festival at St Margaret's Church was beautifully marked by a colourful display of locally grown fruit and vegetables, together with non-perishables donated by the congregation.

The abundance of produce provided a fitting reminder of the importance of giving thanks for the food and blessings we enjoy.



A special treat was in store for communicants at St Margaret's Church, Wereham, during their Harvest Festival. As part of the sacraments, they were able to enjoy Peda bread, made from an old Armenian recipe. This traditional bread provided a warm and memorable addition to the occasion.



Celtic Service

A candle-lit service in the Celtic tradition

**St Andrew's Church
Barton Bendish
(PE33 9GF)**

**Sunday October 25th
5pm**

**Come and join us
All welcome**



Pop-Up Café

**Barton Bendish Village Hall
(PE33 9GF)**



Friday 9th October

12 pm – 2.30 pm

Drop by for lunch or afternoon tea and have a chat with friends.

Everyone welcome. No need to book.



**TOMBOLA
PRODUCE STALL**

The profits from the October Pop-up Café will be given to
Macmillan Cancer Support

bartonbendishevents@gmail.com



Church refuge for a species under threat

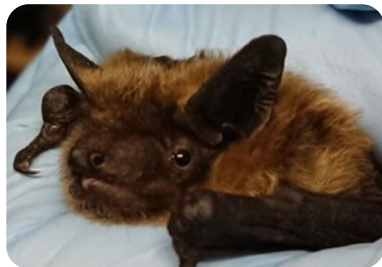
Bats are under enormous pressure due to habitat loss, insect decline, light pollution and climate changes. This year is a good example of the struggle for wildlife – with the excessive dry weather.

They are an important part of our environment, as pollinators and within the food web – a single bat can consume up to 1,000 mosquitos in a night.



The UK is host to only ‘micro-bats’ which are the very small species, with folded wings they can be overlooked as they can be very small. We have about 18 species of bats in this country but there are migrants who visit. The most common is the ‘Pipstrelle’ weighing around 5 grams the same as a 20p coin.

Churches have been home for bats for as long as churches have been built. There are books written about them (see below). Bats live in social groups and are much safer roosting in quiet, dark recesses which are far from the ground.



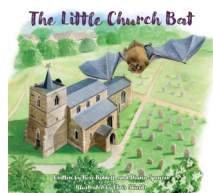
There is little risk to human health from bats. Fortunately, bats aren’t aggressive and avoid contact with humans, so there’s no risk at all if you don’t handle bats.

If you do have to handle a bat, for example a dead or injured bat, please wear gloves.

.....
The Little Church Bat by Rose Riddell and Diana Spencer
Recommended by Fiona Hearn

Mo the bat who lives with her friends inside the chimney of an old tumbledown cottage on the edge of a village. When the cottage is knocked down, Mo and her friends take shelter in an old church, but their presence causes cleaning problems for Bob the churchwarden so he calls on a local ecologist and church architect for help....

Inspired by the real-life case of All Saints, a Grade II listed 12th century church in Braunston-in-Rutland. The book is a lovely gift for anyone interested in bats, or churches, and tells the story of how churches and bats can live in harmony alongside each other.



We found a bat...

It was just the end of a hot day when we were showing Nancy around St Andrews Church, Northwold.



On the floor was what looked like a dead bat. Closer inspection showed it was still alive - but only just. Because I worked for the Wildlife Trust (and had bat handling training) I knew what to do. I always keep a bat box in my car – and I transferred the little creature, to keep him safe.

We could of used a shoe box with a few holes put in it – and a yellow duster – they love the folds and can cling easily to the fabric and I put a bottle top with a drop of water in, and popped him on a shelf in a corner out of the way.

The Bat Conservation Trust helpline is 0345 130 0228. They can find the closest bat rescue person in your area. I was given a number to call straight away and Sam came within a couple of hours. She took our little bat, who was badly dehydrated and underweight. A young male common pipistrelle, he happily rallied and within a few days was ready for release back where we found him.

It was about 8.45pm and getting dark but still fairly warm. Sam met me outside the Church and we went to the back of the Churchyard where there were lots of trees.

Little Pip was waiting on a warm pad, to keep him active and ready for his release flight. I have a short video of his release if anyone would like to see it. And watching him fly away was a really good feeling.

Sam had a bat app attached to her phone so we could hear the bats calling and we heard about three different types of bat while we were in the Churchyard



Sam volunteers as a bat conservationist and she advised me to share her number – so that if anyone finds a bat, she can come out and collect, for rehabilitation. Of course, some of them don't make it – but it's the right thing to do, to try.

Sam's number is 07711 362462. I am also happy to come and help.

Fiona Hearn, Benefice Administrator
wisseygrimshoebenefice@gmail.com



Poetry Corner

His eternal car-park
Is hidden from our eyes.
Trust in Him and you will have
A space beyond the skies.

Jesus, in His goodness and grace,
Wants to find you a parking space.
Ask Him now to reserve a place.
Sound the horn and praise Him!

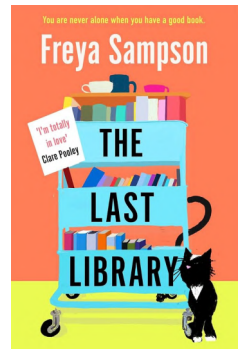
Book Suggestions for October

The Last Library by Freya Sampson

Recommended by Rev Burman

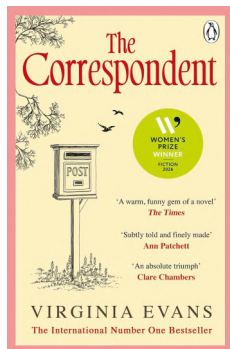
Lonely library assistant June is much more comfortable with books than people. When her mum – the beloved local librarian – passed away, June stepped into her shoes. But shy June has always felt that she could never live up to her mum's legacy.

Instead, she's retreated into herself, surviving on takeaways-for-one and her favourite stories. When the library is threatened with closure, June is distraught. Yet when a ragtag band of eccentric but dedicated locals establish the Friends of Chalcot Library campaign, June is forbidden from joining their cause.



The Correspondent by Virginia Evans

Recommended by Rev Burman



The story centres on Sybil Van Antwerp, a witty, sharp, and occasionally stubborn 73-year-old retired lawyer living in Maryland. Sybil spends her days writing letters to a wide cast of people - including her children, famous authors, neighbours, and local organisations.

Sybil is slowly losing her sight, and she holds onto one deeply personal, un-sent letter concerning the darkest period of her past - the tragic loss of her young son and the subsequent unraveling of her marriage. When correspondence from her past resurfaces, she is forced to confront her grief and find a path toward self-forgiveness.

Monthly Prayer

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us
and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



I've been interested in angels ever since I can remember. Not the sentimental effeminate looking individuals of popular culture but the fierce, powerful figures whose first words to those they visited in both old and new testaments were usually 'fear not' or 'don't be afraid' and with good reason.

The Greek 'angelos' means messenger but they are also defenders of people where necessary, like the mighty warrior Michael. Or bringers of healing like Raphael.

So I love the idea of these beings watching over us not just through the dark hours but always wherever we are.

This ancient prayer from the night service of compline seems to me suitable for all

places and times and circumstances and remarkably comforting.

However, Angels also come in many forms and guises including in the guise of humans.

When I was very young my little car slid on ice off a lonely lane and got stuck. I looked around and prayed (no mobiles then!) and quite soon a van appeared and out got a smallish man in a boiler suit who I immediately realised was an angel. He got the car out and benignly sent me on my way with instructions about attending to the damage.

Space does not allow for more, but keep alert for 'some have entertained angels unaware'! (Hebrews 13.2)

Rev Pippa Blackall

Being a Fabric Officer

With Tommy Saward, Churchwarden

What is the main role of a Fabric Officer?

You're in charge of looking after the church building itself (what we call the "fabric"), keeping its grounds in good shape, and making sure all the historic items inside stay safe and well-maintained.

You'll be working hand-in-hand with the Churchwarden and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to get all of this done.

Being a fabric officer comes with its fair share of challenges, yet it's incredibly fulfilling! While there's plenty to discover about maintaining historic buildings, you'll find tons of helpful resources ready to support you along the way.

Catching issues before they become serious is important, but as a fabric officer, your first priority should be getting to know your building inside and out. Once you've done that, you'll be in a much better position to make smart choices about how to properly look after your church and everything in it.

Who are you accountable to?

You work directly under the Churchwarden and the PCC's oversight. Before moving forward with any significant spending, major agreements, or building changes, you'll need to get the PCC's green light first—they're ultimately responsible as the charity's trustees.



What is a Quinquennial Inspection (QI), and what is your role in it?

A QI is a thorough structural inspection report created by a qualified professional either an architect or building surveyor who's selected from the diocese's approved inspector list.

This required five-yearly survey takes a comprehensive look at every element of your building's structure. When the inspecting architect or surveyor spots any defects, they document them in a standard report and suggest how to prioritise repairs. It's really important that your fabric officer fully grasps these recommendations so they can take the right steps to fix any issues.

While the quinquennial inspection typically happens often enough to catch problems before they become serious, your fabric officer also carries out less formal inspections throughout the year.

Your role is to help coordinate the inspection, go through the resulting report together with the Churchwarden and the PCC, and make sure everyone's on the same page.

What records do I need to keep up to date?

Maintain two key documents:

The Church Log Book: Keep a thorough, time-ordered account of every change, fix, and upkeep work done to the building and grounds.

The Inventory: Create a detailed catalogue of everything moveable, precious, and textile items that belong to the church.

Put together a fabric report to share with the churchwarden and present at your PCC meetings.

Do you need permission to do repairs around the church?

It really comes down to what kind of work you're planning! The Church of England uses a Faculty Jurisdiction system that's organised into three straightforward levels:

List A (Routine Maintenance): Simple jobs like cleaning out rainwater gutters or swapping out lightbulbs that you can tackle without needing to ask for formal permission first.

List B (Minor Alterations): Works that require written approval from your Archdeacon though they don't require the full Faculty process. For example, light tree trimming work.

Full Faculty (List C): Major structural works, extensions, or significant changes that require approval from the Chancellor of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC).

What routine maintenance should be done?

The most effective approach to tackle the long term care of church buildings is to concentrate on regular preventive maintenance. By keeping the fabric of a building in good condition. By spending a little bit of time and effort (and perhaps money) on maintenance every year it may even be possible to avoid the rather more difficult challenge of remedying major defects caused by leaking roofs or broken rainwater goods.

Regular inspections can save you thousands of pounds. Focus on:
Autumn/Winter: Clearing gutters, downpipes, and gullies to prevent damp.

Spring: Checking the roof for slipped tiles after winter storms.

Testing: Schedule yearly checks for fire extinguishers, lightning protection systems, organs and electrical equipment.

What are your responsibilities when it comes to Health and Safety?

You need to confirm that any contractors working on the building are covered by appropriate insurance and have submitted their Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS).

It's also important to keep the parish Accident Book easily available and to maintain key safety features like clearly marked fire exits in good working order.



St George's Church, Methwold

**Sunday 4th October
at 09.30**



**Bring along your pets for a special service
of thanksgiving and blessing.**

All pets and their owners are welcome



St. Margaret's Church,
Wereham



Pet Service

*A thanksgiving for our
beloved pets*

**Sunday 11th October
at 3pm**



*Bring your treasured companions
along and stay for cakes and
company after*



Thank You, Blue Light Services

**A Service of Thanksgiving and Honour
St George's Church, Methwold**

**Sunday 18 October
9.30 am**

Join us as we give thanks for and honour the dedicated people
of our emergency services — police, fire, ambulance, nurses and
all who serve our communities in times of need.



Thank you to all who serve, protect,
care for and respond whenever help is
needed. Your courage, compassion and
commitment are deeply appreciated.

*Lord, bless and protect all who serve in
our Blue Light services. Give them
strength in danger, wisdom in difficult
moments, and peace after every call.
Amen.*

All are welcome

**Evensong
Together With
All Soul's Service**

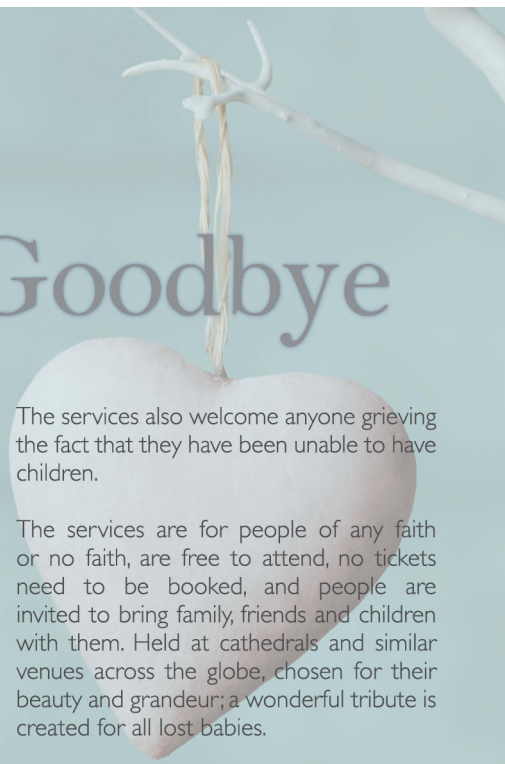
*Remembering the lives
that touched ours*

**Sunday 1st November
2026
at 3pm**

**St. Margaret's Church
Wereham**



Website: westermyway.com



Saying Goodbye

When a baby is lost, whether during pregnancy, at birth or in infancy, it is a devastating experience for the parents and the extended family.

Sadly for people that lose prior to 24-weeks gestation, services to commemorate the life that has been lost are seldom held, while for parents who lose later in pregnancy, at birth or in early years, the parents are usually in the depths of grief when a service is held.

The Saying Goodbye services are the first international set of remembrance services, for people who have suffered the loss of a baby at any stage, and whether that be recently or decades ago. **They provide a time and place to acknowledge and remember your baby, whilst collectively 'saying goodbye'.**

The services also welcome anyone grieving the fact that they have been unable to have children.

The services are for people of any faith or no faith, are free to attend, no tickets need to be booked, and people are invited to bring family, friends and children with them. Held at cathedrals and similar venues across the globe, chosen for their beauty and grandeur; a wonderful tribute is created for all lost babies.

Together we will stand and say, "our children may have only been on this earth for days, weeks, months or years, but they were truly loved, and will always be missed!"



Ely Cathedral, Thursday, the 15th of October, 7.30pm

For up to date service details, please see www.sayinggoodbye.org

Saying Goodbye is a division of the bereavement support charity, Mariposa International, and is supported by a wonderful set of Ambassadors including Kym Marsh, Kate Ferdinand, Jools Oliver, Sally Phillips, Professor Lord Winston, Kate Beckinsale, Baroness Floella Benjamin, Nigella Lawson & more.



St. James Church,
Hockwold-cum-Wilton



HARVEST COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 24th October 2026

10 a.m. – 12 Noon



ST ANDREW'S CHURCH
NORTHWOLD



COFFEE MORNING

JOIN US IN THE CHURCH

ON THURSDAY 15th OCTOBER

AT 10.30am



TEA & COFFEE

HOMEMADE CAKES

RAFFLE

BOOKS & JIGSAWS



St George's
Church
Methwold

COFFEE MORNING

*Every 2nd and 4th
Tuesday of the Month
from 10 till 12 noon at the
Church*

Barton Bendish

Quiz Night

In the Village Hall (PE33 9GF)

Saturday 10th October

at 7.00pm

Teams of up to 6



£5 per person –
tea/coffee provided

(bring your own refreshments)

Bookings:

Email: bartonbendishevents@gmail.com

phone: 01366 347563 (Linda & Tim)

01366 347983 (Janice & Chris)

Proceeds in aid of St Andrew's Church



THE COMMUNITY SPACE
IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH,
FELTWELL

THE FOOD PANTRY

open to all villages in the Benefice.

Tuesdays 9 – 10am,

Wednesdays 9 – 11.30 am,

Saturdays 10 – 11 am

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING

Wednesdays 9 – 11.30am

TECH SKILLS

coaches from Norfolk County Council
offering advice about technology

First Friday of every month

10am - 12pm



St Andrew's Church
West Dereham



Family
Breakfast
Church

Sunday
October
25th

9.30am



Everyone Welcome
FREE BREAKFAST
Just come along
It's church... but not as you
know it!

Sunday 4th October Trinity 18

Feltwell	St Mary's	9:15am	Service of the Word	JT
Methwold	St George's	9:30am	Pet Service	Rev RB
Whittington	Christ-Church	9:30am	A Celtic Morning	MP
Weeting	St Mary's	11am	Service of the Word	JT
Wereham	St Margaret's	6:30pm	Evensong	CM

Sunday 11th October Trinity 19

Hockwold	St James'	9.15am	Service of the Word	MP
Wretton	All Saints	9:30am	Service of the Word	TM
West Dereham	St Andrew's	9:30am	Holy Communion	Rev PB
Beachamwell	St Mary's	11am	Harvest Festival	TM
Boughton	All Saints	11am	Harvest Festival(no HC)	Rev PB
Northwold	St Andrew's	11am	Service of the Word	MP
Wereham	St Margaret's	3pm	Pet Service	Rev PB

Sunday 18th October Trinity 20

Feltwell	St Mary's	9:15am	Holy Communion	Rev KW
Methwold	St George's	9:30am	Celebration of 'Blue Light' agencies	Rev RB
Whittington	Christ-Church	9:30am	Breakfast Church	TM
Weeting	St Mary's	11am	Holy Communion	Rev KW
Wereham	St Margaret's	11am	Holy Communion	Rev PB

Sunday 25th October Trinity 25

Hockwold	St James'	9:15am	Harvest Festival	Rev KW
Feltwell	St Mary's	9:15am	Harvest Festival	CW
West Dereham	St Andrew's	9:30am	Family Breakfast	JT/MP
Methwold	St George's	9:30am	Service of the Word	MC
Boughton	All Saints	11am	Brunch Church	Rev PB
Northwold	St Andrew's	11am	Holy Communion	Rev KW
Barton Bendish	St Andrew's	5pm	Celtic Service with Holy Communion	Rev RB

Sunday 1st November All Saints

Feltwell	St Mary's	9:15am	Service of the Word	MP
Methwold	St George's	9:30am	Holy Communion	Rev RB
Weeting	St Mary's	11am	Service of the Word	MP
Wretton	All Saints	11am	Holy Communion	Rev RB
Wereham	St Margaret's	6pm	Evensong	TM

Service list correct at time of publication

For the latest Service list please tap here

Midweek Services

Morning Prayer

Tuesday
Hockwold St James' 9:30am

Wednesday
Wretton/SF All Saint's 9:00am

Evening Prayer

Tuesday
Methwold St George's 5pm

Wednesday
online Compline 5:30pm
<https://bit.ly/WisseyValleyCompline>

Holy Communion

1st and 3rd Thursdays
(1st, 15th October)

Boughton All Saint's 10am

Saturday Services

Harvest Breakfast Church

Barton Bendish, St Andrew's
Saturday 10th
9:30am
Rev RB

Tuesday Prayer Group 5pm

<https://bit.ly/WVBTuesdayPrayer>

One in Christ Jesus

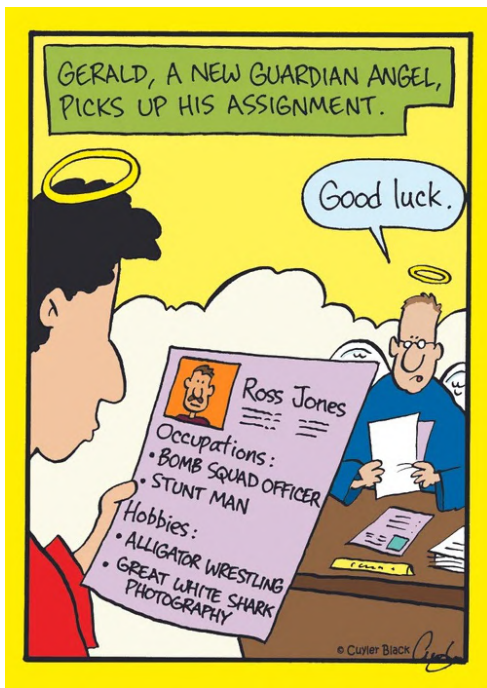
Online Service of the Word

Every Sunday at 6:30pm
<https://bit.ly/OneinChristJesus>

Rev PB	Rev Pippa Blackall	JT	Janet Tanton	LLM
Rev RB	Rev Ray Burman	DM	Diane Mantle	LLM
Rev KW	Rev Ken Waters	TM	Tony Mills	LLM
Rev NR	Rev Nigel Ransom			
		CW	Churchwarden	
MP	Michael Poole	ALM	Mary Cumbers	
CM	Chris Murray	ALM		

Bible Readings - October

Day	Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
4th	Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20	Philippians 3:4b-14	Matthew 21:33-46
11th	Exodus 32:1-14	Philippians 4:1-9	Matthew 22:1-14
18th	Exodus 33:12-23	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Matthew 22:15-22
25th	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	1 Thessalonians 2:1-8	Matthew 22:34-46
1st	Revelation 7:9-17	1 John 3:1-3	Matthew 5:1-12



IF YOU ARE CONCERNED

that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from a safeguarding adviser or if necessary, report the matter to the local authority social care services or the police without delay.

Helplines

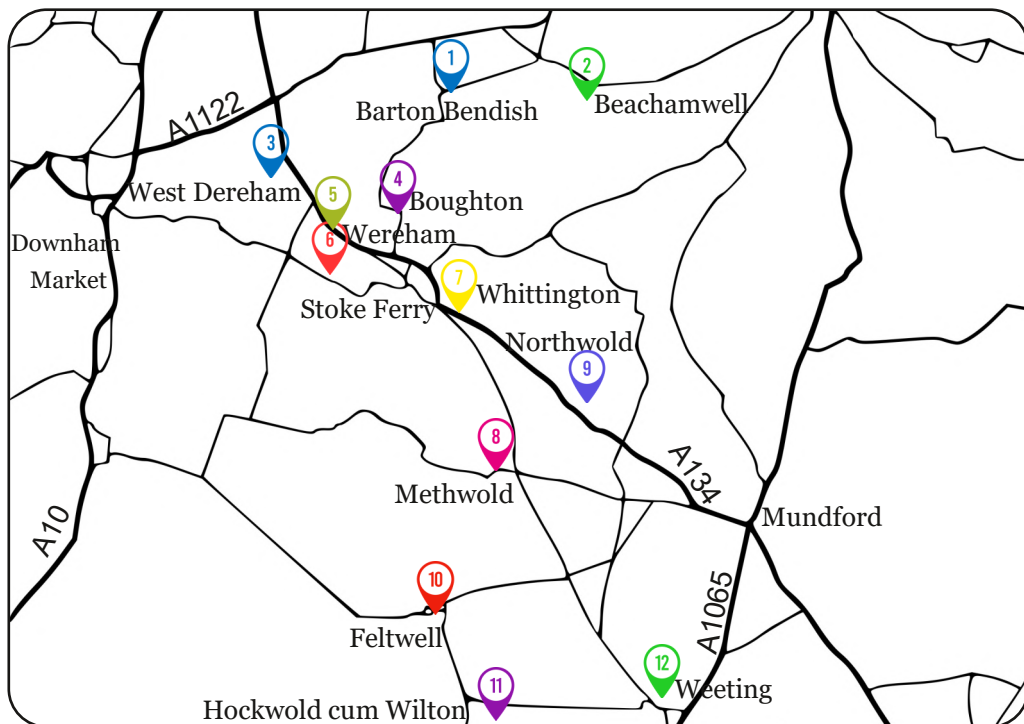
NSPCC:	0808 800 5000
Childline:	0800 1111
Stop It Now:	0808 1000 900
National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC):	0808 801 0331
Samaritans:	116 123
Family Lives:	0808 800 2222
Men's Advice Line:	0808 8010 327
National Careline:	0800 0699 784
Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141
National Domestic Abuse Helpline:	0808 2000 247

Promoting a safer church

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church

For further parish safeguarding information including parish safeguarding policy and parish safeguarding officers please go to A Church Near You, Details on back page.

IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE RISK OR DANGER PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999.



1 Barton Bendish, St Andrew's,

Linda Webster linntim@btinternet.com

2 Beachamwell, St Mary the Virgin

Peter Berendt petesout@hotmail.com

3 West Dereham, St Andrew's,

Open daily 10am - 4pm

Graeme Pressley graemepressley@live.co.uk

4 Boughton, All Saints.

churchwardenboughton@gmail.com

5 Wreham, St Margaret of Antioch

Open daily 10am - 3pm

Karen Rodgers karen_rodgers@live.co.uk

6 Wretton, All Saints with Stoke Ferry

open daily

Anita Horgan

Elaine Taylor

anita.tyler@hotmail.co.uk

etelainetaylor1@gmail.com

7 Whittington, Christ-Church

Elaine Taylor

etelainetaylor1@gmail.com

8 Methwold, St George

Open every weekend

Alan Burbridge alanburbridge@btinternet.com

Paul Smith

paulsmith50@msn.com

9 Northwold, St Andrew's

Open daily 9am - Dusk

Ann Howarth

ann15howarth@gmail.com

10 Feltwell, St Mary the Virgin

Open daily 9am - 4pm

Christine Parker

grimshoebeneficeoffice@gmail.com

11 Hockwold cum Wilton, St James'

Sue Annear

sue.annear@gmail.com

12 Weeting, St Mary the Virgin

Tommy Saward

weetingpcc@gmail.com

YOUR CHURCH CONTACTS

Weddings, Funerals, Interments
and Memorials

Benefice Administrator:

Fiona Hearn

wisseygrimshoebenefice@gmail.com

07817 821316

Baptisms/Christenings

Baptism Co-ordinators:

Tammy Wright

grimshoebaptism@gmail.com

or

Susan Parker-Smith

wvbsusan@gmail.com

for specific church contacts
please see page 19



**WISSEY VALLEY
& GRIMSHOE
BENEFICES**