

THE BRIDGE October/November 2025

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

Village website: sweffling@onesuffolk.net,

The Rev. Claire Kiddy, revclairekiddy@gmail.com, Tel: 07469 718695



We are looking forward to the **Harvest weekend in Sweffling**. As in previous years, instead of fresh produce we are asking for gifts of tinned, dried and packaged foods, toiletries etc. so that the gifts can be donated to a local food bank to be distributed to those in need in our area. Any items you can provide can be brought to the church on Wednesdays and Sundays between now and the **Harvest Festival Thanksgiving service on Sunday, October 5th at 9.30 a.m.** in St. Mary's Church. We will be decorating the Church with flowers and berries for this service, as well as the Harvest gifts. If you would like to help, please contact Amanda Daniel on 663341.

The Harvest Lunch will also be on Sunday, October 5th, at 1.00 p.m. in Sweffling Hut. All proceeds from the lunch will go to TEAR Fund for famine/disaster relief. Please book with Diana (663578) or Sheila (663518) so that we know how many to cater for. More details on the back page of The Bridge.

From the Rev. Claire Kiddy:

I am writing this 'letter' on the first anniversary of my licensing as Priest in Charge of the Upper Alde Benefice. Little did I realise on that night a year ago I would be licensed and installed as Rector of the benefice, nine months later. It has been a year of joys and challenges and I can't quite make up my mind on whether it has been a quick year or not. Time is rather like that, it speeds up, flies past and yet when you are rooted in the present the time seems slower. It is difficult to think of the time when I didn't belong in this benefice. In some ways I am pleased to have made it through the year and to have experienced the rhythm of life, seasonally and liturgically in each parish. On the other hand, I no longer have the excuse of being new in the parish when I make a mistake! Time is both slow and fast.

Our journey through life is the same, I look back on my life through the lens of being a wife, mother and priest which makes anything that happened before that difficult to imagine. Life experience adds layers to our understanding of who we are, so when I remember being a child, I am doing so with my life experience since that time. Yet sometimes we are shocked when we realise that something which seems recent in our life is 10 or 20 years ago. How time flies then!

The beginning of the academic year is a new beginning in lots of different ways for many of us, we don't have to be in education ourselves for it to have an impact on our life. The pattern of our common life is set by academic terms, a new rhythm in our life might be set by children or grandchildren in school, or our work in school or a myriad of other reasons.

The seasons of the year are reflected in the different merchandise stocked on supermarket shelves which seem to speed the year up – and yes Christmas foods available to buy before the end of August.

The turning of summer into autumn adds to the speed of life, can those new green leaf shoots really be turning orange so soon? I think we have to be intentional about noticing the vibrancy of autumn and slowing down to appreciate the season we are in. I am sure this newsletter will be filled with all that is going on in each of our parishes and there will be lots of dates to put in your diaries. But I encourage you not to be so rushed along with it all that you miss those little joys of life which are all around us. *Revd Claire Hut.*

Sweffling Parish Council News

The draft minutes of the meeting held on September 9th have been posted on the village notice board at the end of Holden's Lane. Items discussed included an update of flood prevention, Jubilee field, dog fouling in the village, grit bins and defibrillator training. The possibility of obtaining funding for two village items was discussed with the District Councillor, Vince Langdon Morris, who was present at the meeting.

Following Councillor Ashurst's departure from the village and the subsequent advertisements for new Councillors on the village notice board and the village website, an application was received from Eleanore Fitzgerald. Her CV had been circulated to all Councillors who had considered and approved her application.

There is currently **one further vacancy for a parish councillor**. If you would like to apply, please contact Peter Grogan, the Parish Clerk on clerk@sweffling-pc.gov.uk and he will advise what information needs to be provided.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday, November 11th at 7.30 p.m. in Sweffling Hut. All village members are invited to attend this meeting. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the village notice board ahead of the meeting.

Matters arising from the Parish Council meeting

1. Dog fouling.

It has been brought to the notice of the Parish Council that people walking their dogs around the village, and particularly on the Jubilee field are not cleaning up after their animals. As children play on the field and walking is encouraged, **PLEASE ENSURE** that you clean up any dog mess. There are bins provided around the village into which bags can be deposited, i.e. by the gate on Jubilee field, on the side of the road behind the Townland Meadow pavilion, at the bottom of the footpath by the front of Church, at the end of Holden's Lane close to the village notice board, and adjacent to the footpath that goes from Rectory Hill across the field towards Great Glemham. There is no excuse, therefore, not to take a bag, pick up after your dog and leave the bag in a suitable bin.

2. Defibrillator training.

St John's Ambulance have been contacted and have agreed to provide training on the use of the defibrillator, which is now installed outside Sweffling Hut. The training will probably be on a Saturday morning, date to be confirmed. Instruction in CPR will also be given. It is hoped that as many people as possible will attend the training session. One never knows when live-saving help might be needed.

3. Flood maintenance.

A reminder to householders of Riparian rights and responsibilities, i.e. if your property borders onto a watercourse you are responsible for maintaining the length of the watercourse adjacent to your property such that the water can flow freely.

Tennis Club

Sweffling Tennis club has enjoyed a busy summer. We have several new members and now, with an active What's App Group, it is easier for members to arrange games and book the court.

As always, we welcome all new members from Sweffling, Rendham and other surrounding villages. For any information please contact **Sue Rusack 07904 088794**.

Keep Fit Class

A new physiotherapy-based Keep-Fit class has started in Sweffling Hut on Thursday mornings from 10.30 a.m. – 11.20 a.m. The classes are organised and run by Emma Strachan and are designed to suit individual levels of fitness. If you would like more information, please contact Emma on 07821 055404.

Sweffling Fete report:

'Sweffling Fete and Dog Show was a most enjoyable day with many happy dogs and their owners thrilled with their rosettes and goody bags. Grateful thanks to Toby's Pets for their sponsorship and to the Wonderful Dog Show Team!

Many Sweffling families and their friends worked extremely hard in preparation, and on the day to make the Fete a success. Numbers were down a bit this year as there was competition in Framlingham and elsewhere, but the atmosphere was great, with all the traditional stalls, rides and games to be enjoyed. Our food and drink stalls were busy with customers all afternoon, providing the most delicious fare.

Huge thanks to everyone who helped in any way, not forgetting those who donated goods or draw prizes, or who silently helped behind the scenes including Sue & Steve Ashurst who did much of the groundwork earlier in the year before escaping to foreign parts. It all made a difference and we can be proud of putting on such a fun community event. Profits of around £3,600 will be disbursed at the AGM on 14th October at 7.30 p.m. in the Hut.. For a report of the Fete Wash-up meeting see page 6. **Fete Co-Ordinator for the last time! Jill Abbott.** Pictures from the fete can be found on pages 4.

History Day report

On the afternoon of Sunday, September 7th, there was an exhibition on the Townland Meadow of the history of Sweffling in photographs, maps and parish records. Julian and Sandy Rowe provided a fascinating selection of photographs from their personal collection. The maps, title records, other parish records and the Village Millenium books were brought from the church. The latter items are also available to view in the history room at the church. It was a fascinating display, which drew visitors from near and far who were interested to follow up family history or just learn more about the village. There was no charge for the exhibition but delicious sweet and savoury cream teas were sold and raised approximately £450 for Hut funds. Thanks to everyone who helped in any way, especially the Rowe family, who brought and erected the marquees, as well as providing the photographs, and to those who baked the scones. It was a very successful and enjoyable afternoon. **Sheila Tesh.** Pictures of the event can be found on pages 4.

Sweffling Fete



Sweffling History Exhibition



Nature Notes October/November 2025



This may be the last Nature Notes from Dernford, if our move to Framlingham finally happens. The Editor wants them to continue, so I am working out how to do this. Another good excuse to come back and visit the old haunts?

Several people have asked me about a plant with a pretty bright blue flower, on the verge opposite the Townland meadow.

Sometimes verge plants after cutting have a second flowering, so perhaps it will still be showing in October. This is Chicory, not strictly a native plant, but what botanists call an archaeophyte, a plant introduced in the distant past. It was long cultivated for fodder, and its

roots were roasted and ground as an additive to coffee.

(A factory near Lakenheath was doing this up until the 1980's). You may be able to see in the picture a small, dark, solitary bee, gathering the blue pollen. In the same verge is another late flowering plant, the Tansy, with its heads of bright yellow button flowers, and a strong, pleasant scent when you crush the leaves.

Singing Robins have been very much in evidence this September, and will be going on into the winter. A few

of our birds sing occasionally at this time of year – a wren has been singing in our garden – but they don't persist. The theory is that the length of day is similar to that in their breeding

season, which fools their brains into triggering song, although only briefly. Robins are different. Their winter song is, as in the spring, intended to advertise and defend a territory. This is not designed, as it is in spring, to provide a resource for the pair to raise their broods, but to provide a single bird with a secure supply of food and shelter. It is more commonly, but not always, a male which stays, (many of the females migrate southwards, sometimes as far as France, for the winter). The winter song which you will hear is different from that of the

spring, quieter and, people say, more melancholy sounding. If a female is the winter guardian, then she will sing, just like the male, most unusual in the bird world. Migrant birds return, and pairs re-form, towards the end of the winter.

At the time of writing most of our summer migrants have already departed southwards. The Swifts have long gone (early August), but the later broods of Swallows and House Martins (very few of the latter this year) may still be around to be seen into October.

It always surprises me that so few of the huge crop of Blackberries are eaten by birds, although they are sugar-rich, and must be very nutritious. You may see Blackbirds eating them, or Bluetits pecking them for their seeds, but most of them are left dry and withered by the end of autumn. In fact many are eaten by small mammals, Wood mice and Bank voles, which can climb well, and the larger Foxes and Badgers. In winter I have seen the dry seeds eaten by Bullfinches, which specialise in taking seeds from plant stems.

Please do keep the feedback and the questions coming. *Geoffrey Abbott*



Report of Fete Wash-up Meeting

The Wash-up meeting following this year's fete was held in Sweffling Hut on Thursday, September 18th. It was chaired by Geoff and Katy Boulton, who have agreed to co-ordinate the Fete for 2026. Geoff welcomed those who were present and expressed everyone's thanks to Jill Abbott who had stepped into the breach and co-ordinated the fete after the departure of Steve and Sue Ashurst. Jill, in turn, thanked all those in the village, and visitors, who had worked so hard before and after the fete. Geoff said that it had been a very enjoyable and happy day, which had brought the village together. He then went through a list of the stalls and attractions and asked for comments as to what went well and where improvements might be made for next year. He again thanked all stall holders for their efforts and the personal contributions that they had made.

The total of profit of approximately £3600, although slightly lower than in 2024, was still an excellent amount. According to the fete constitution, half of the money will be donated to the church, the remaining money is available for distribution to village organisations, with a small amount available for a village project, if a suitable project is proposed

If your organisation would like to make a bid for a share of the money, or if you have a project in mind, allocation will be decided at the Fete AGM on Tuesday, October 14th, 7.30 p.m. in the Hut. Please come along and give your reasons why you would like/need some funding.

What's on at the Hut Oct/Nov 2025?

October:

- Sunday 5th** Harvest Lunch in aid of Famine relief – see later
Monday 6th Chat & Craft with coffee and cake 10 - 12noon
Wednesday 15th Soup Lunch 12 noon - 3pm with jigsaws and craft in the warm.
Wednesday 22nd Rural Coffee Caravan - free refreshments & advice 10 -12 noon
Saturday. 25th. Curry and Quiz Night 7pm in aid of the Hut- see later

November:

- Monday. 3rd** Chat & Craft with coffee & cake - all welcome 10 - 12noon
Wednesday 5th Soup Lunch 12 noon - 3pm with jigsaws and craft in the warm
Saturday. 8th Jane Austin talk by Helen Blackwell - see later
Tuesday. 11th Parish Council Meeting 7.30pm all welcome
Wednesday 19th Soup Lunch 12noon - 3pm with jigsaws and craft in the warm
Wednesday 26th Rural Coffee Caravan - free refreshments & advice 10 -12 noon
Saturday. 29th Christmas Brunch and Market 10 -12noon – see later

Advance notice:

Wednesday December 17th Christmas Lunch with all the trimmings.

Numbers limited so please book early. Cost £10 a head. More details to follow.

The Hut is in need of more villagers to help run it or to become trustees. If you would like to help in any way please contact Mike or one of the committee <swefflinghut@gmail.com>. You will have skills that we need to keep the Hut running, so get in touch and there will be ways that you can help

CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES: October/November 2025

October 5th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Harvest Thanksgiving
October 12th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
	Sweffling	6.30 p.m.	Taize Service
October 19th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
October 26th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
November 2nd	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
November 9th	Rendham	10.55a.m.	Remembrance Day Service Note start time
November 16th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Stir-Up Sunday: Family Service Come and make and eat a Christmas Pudding
November 23rd	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
November 30th	Badingham	10.00 a.m.	Benefice Holy Communion
December 7th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

Midweek Holy Communion, Wednesday at 11.00 a.m. rotating round the Benefice:
Ist – Rendham, 2nd Sweffling, 3rd Cransford, 4th Bruisyard

Alde Community Council Christmas Shopping Bus to Norwich, Friday November 28th.

Leaves Rendham White Horse at 9.00am, Bruisyard at 9.10am and Sweffling at 9.20am
returning from Norwich at 4.00pm We need a nearly full bus in order to keep the price down.
Please ring Lynda on 01728 663325 to book.

Advance Notices:

“CHRISTMAS BRASS” CONCERT in SWEFFLING CHURCH FRIDAY DECEMBER 12TH, 7.30 P.M.

Leiston Royal British Legion Brass Band will play a concert
of popular and Christmas music, with Sing-along Christmas
Carols. **The perfect start to Christmas in Sweffling!**

Tickets: Adults £8.00, Children £4.00 to include interval
Refreshments. Book with Diana (663578) or Sheila (663578) or pay
at door. Proceeds in aid of St Mary’s Church



**St. Mary’s, Sweffling, Sunday December 21st 5.00 p.m.,
Carols by Candlelight** followed by mincepies and coffee/tea.
All welcome. Christmas readings and Traditional Carols

Christmas Eve, Midnight Holy Communion, Sweffling, Start 11.30 p.m.

Please e-mail any news items, events or short literary items for consideration for inclusion in
the December/January edition to john.tesh@talk21.com before November 12th 2025.

The editors welcome contributions for The Bridge but reserve the right to edit. Accuracy of the
content is the responsibility of the submitter. We are limited to 8 pages and so may not be able to
publish everything we receive. Dated items of village interest will be given priority. Please include
your name and contact details in case we need to get in touch. **The Bridge is sponsored by
St. Mary’s Church and is delivered free to all houses in the village.**



Sweffling St Mary’s Harvest Thanksgiving Service

Sunday October 5th 9.30 a.m.

Gifts of dried and packaged foods, toiletries etc welcomed to be
donated to local food bank. Please leave in church beforehand.
The Church will be open on Wednesdays and Sundays and also
on Saturday 4th for decorating.

Please contact Amanda (663341) if you would like to help.

Followed by: Harvest Lunch in Sweffling Hut 1.00 p.m.
Adults £10.00, children £5.00. Booking essential for catering. Ring Diana
(663578) or Sheila (663518). Proceeds to Tear Fund for famine relief.

**St. Mary’s Church,
Sunday October 12th 6.30 p.m.**

TAIZE SERVICE

**Join us for a special service of music,
meditation and prayer. ALL WELCOME**



**Curry and Quiz night
Saturday October 25th 7.00 pm**

In aid of Hut Funds

Book your place early with Mike Smithson to
avoid disappointment! 07753 825938

Tickets £12.00 per head; bring your own drink



Saturday November 8th 7.00 p.m.

On the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen’s Birth

“An Evening with Jane Austen”

Supper and Talk in Sweffling Hut in aid of church funds

Speaker: Helen Blackwell

Helen is the ex-president of the London branch of
the Jane Austen Society and is an excellent speaker
Tickets (including supper) £12.00. Soft drinks provided.

Booking essential for catering. Ring Diana (663578) or Sheila (663518)



CHRISTMAS BRUNCH AND MARKET, SWEFFLING HUT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29th 10.00 A.M. – 12 NOON



Bacon and egg rolls, Freshly brewed coffee/tea
Christmas-themed stalls, Cakes, Presents, Preserves,
Pickles, Winter Plants etc. Raffle – donations of prizes
welcome. *Proceeds in aid of St. Mary’s Church*