

# GRASS

THE NEWSLETTER AT THE ROOTS OF THE GRAND UNION BENEFICE  
OF BLISWORTH AND STOKE BRUERNE/ SHUTLANGER,  
WITH GRAFTON REGIS, ALDERTON AND MILTON MALSOR

## Rector's Letter

I have just returned from two wonderful weeks in Cornwall, where Monique and I walked a few of the coastal paths. The weather was glorious; the sea and sky were a mixture of rich blues, adding to a beautiful green landscape. We passed ancient ruins once home to our ancestors; we walked through villages with row after row of holiday cottages that once belonged to people who made up a living community. When the holiday season ends, the streets become a ghost town - so different to when I visited as a young boy with my parents when these villages were home to families who had lived there for generations before the communities were pushed out. We also saw redundant churches falling into disrepair because the Christian community had ceased to be.

On 20 July in Alderton, we celebrated our patron saint, 'Saint Margaret of Antioch'. The theme that we chose this year was 'community'. A few people from the village shared stories of their experiences in their community; they were excellent and moving. I am sure you will agree with me that our communities are essential.

Community life is at the heart of the Christian teachings because we must show hospitality by welcoming others into our lives and looking out for each other. The Christian community is spread throughout the world. Wherever I travel, I find Christian hospitality, whether with Benedictine nuns in the mountains of Pennsylvania while visiting family or Methodist or Anglican families running bed and breakfasts; when I walked the Pennine Way, they shared their faith and went out of their way to make sure I was comfortable.

On my return from my holiday, it was a pleasure to be back within the communities in the benefice. As Christians, we work hard at making sure we keep a presence within the villages, and our churches open for all who wish to step inside for any reason, to worship, attend a wedding, baptism, funerals, art festivals etc. Because once we lose the buildings, they are gone for good and will become like the ancient sites that I am sure we have walked past in our lifetime.

Wherever we go, we are part of a global Christian community.

Blessings, Richard

## Service Schedule for August

### Sunday 7 August, Trinity 8

9.30 a m: Milton Malsor, family Eucharist

11.00 a m: Blisworth, family Eucharist

### Sunday 14 August, Trinity 9

9.30 a m: Milton Malsor, family service

9.30 a m: Stoke Bruerne, family Eucharist

11.00 a m: Blisworth, family Eucharist

### Thursday 18 August

9.30 a m: St Anne's Chapel, Shutlanger, Celtic morning prayer followed by coffee and fellowship

### Sunday 21 August, Trinity 10

9.30 a m: Milton Malsor, family Eucharist

11.00 a m: Blisworth, family service

11.00 a m: Grafton, family Eucharist

### Sunday 28 August, Trinity 11

9.30 a m: Milton Malsor, family service

9.30 a m: Stoke Bruerne, family service

11.00 a m: Blisworth, family Eucharist, Rev'd Lynda Randall

## Useful Telephone Numbers for the United Benefice of Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne with Grafton Regis, Alderton and Milton Malsor

**Rector:** Canon Rev'd Richard Stainer, The Rectory, 37 High Street, Blisworth NN7 3BJ, tel 01604 857619.

**Churchwardens of Blisworth:** Mrs Fiona McKenzie, tel 01604 859541 and Mrs Angela Cheesbrough, tel 01604 858059.

**Churchwardens of Stoke Bruerne:** Mrs Christine Frost, tel 01604 862561 and Mr John Brough, tel 01604 862646/07768 181598

**Churchwardens of Grafton Regis:** Mrs Jean Glanville, tel 01908 543463 and Mr Nieldre Laubscher, tel 01908 542979.

**Churchwardens of Alderton:** Mrs Margaret Hall-Townley, tel 01327 811307 and Mrs Linda Dards, tel 01327 811265.

**Churchwarden of Milton Malsor:** Mrs Sue Bell, tel 01327 351043.

## VILLAGE NEWS



### SHUTLANGER

#### Parish Council

The Parish Council met on Thursday 14 July in the village hall, which is looking ever more splendid inside thanks to the efforts of the Village Hall Committee. Our Ward Councillor Louisa Fowler, gave a helpful update, noting that the planning application for the gigantic DHL development near the Bell Plantation was being knocked back and forth but hasn't gone away. The new road from the junction of Cowpastures Lane and the A5 will be complete in January 2024; we can all see the sporadic construction work going on down there.

West Northants Council (WNC) remains determined to hand over many of its responsibilities it currently undertakes to parish councils and a first harbinger of this is that Shutlanger Parish Council is being asked to take over maintenance all of the roadside verges in the parish. While there are opportunities for us to get mowing done more often and to a better standard, residents will have to pay for the work through the Parish Council precept in future (currently WNC pays as part of its precept). We are getting quotes on how much this mowing will cost. More such handovers will follow.

We looked again at whether Shutlanger should put together a village development plan. Such a plan would have some weight in planning decisions in the parish. If, for example, a developer wanted to build 500 houses in one of the fields adjoining the village, then the village's views expressed in a village development plan could help deter such development. However, preparing the plan involves a lot of work over several months and comes at a financial cost to the Parish Council. If several people in the village are interested in putting in their share of this work, please let the clerk know as otherwise it isn't going to happen.

We are looking to improve access round the parish. We have already replaced the cast iron bollards at the end of the footpath on Twitch Hill so that people with restricted mobility can get through onto Main Road. Next, we will put in a wider gate into the playing field and longer term will seek to replace the few stiles on footpaths in the parish with kissing gates, also suitable for people with restricted mobility.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 8 September at 7.30 p m.



### GRAFTON REGIS

#### Defibrillator

Grafton Regis now has a defibrillator affixed next to the village hall main door; it is a fully automatic machine that talks the user how to apply it.

Derek Bird

#### Gilbert Wilson RIP

My sincere thanks to all those who helped to make the day of Gil's funeral a real celebration of his life - the team who erected the marquee (and took it down afterwards), the team who arranged and laid the tables, the team who served drinks, the team who cleared the hall the following day. Too many to name but you know who you are.

Special thanks to Jean, the chief 'arranger', to Sue for the collage tribute to Gil's life and of course to Lulu for conducting the service so beautifully as only she could.

From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU ALL. Joy

#### Celebration of Life Gathering for Gilly Wilson

Joy tells us that she and Gilly made plans for their funerals several years ago; the celebration of life service was to be at St. Mary's Church at Grafton Regis and the refreshments after the service was to be at the village hall.

Somehow, family and friends in Alderton and Grafton Regis pulled together and it happened. We did not always know what each other were doing, but what a turn out by everyone who wanted to come along and join in the celebration. Lulu Pelly took the service and pulled all the strings of Gilly's life together so that whatever role we had played in the company of Gilly, we recognised the person and we hoped that he enjoyed the day watching down on us.

Rest in peace, Gilly, you will be sorely missed.

#### New Bell Ropes are Hung

After a long gap of 2 years, the bells are ringing again at St. Mary's. The old bell ropes had started fraying just before the tower restoration project started; Diane and Mark Rogers took on the task of ordering new bell ropes with the intention of having them hung once the work was completed. The ropes duly arrived and Diane and Mark marked out where the holes in the new floors would need to be for the ropes to pass through. As we all know all our plans were upset when Covid came along and by the time to hang the ropes came, the specialists told us that work needed to be carried out before they could be hung, so that meant more fund raising.

One evening recently, with the new ropes in place, our bell ringers came along to the church to try the bells out; it was a lovely summer evening and the bells could be heard all over the village. They came along on Sunday for our monthly service and everyone who came to the service was fascinated at being able to see the bell ringers on their new mezzanine floor through the new internal window.

Our thanks to Diane and Mark for their support through during the project.

Jean Glanville





**BLISWORTH**  
**St John's Church**

Over the last few weeks, we have enjoyed welcoming several retired priests who have kindly offered to come to Blisworth to lead our worship and to celebrate Communion with us. It has been a joy to meet and get to know them a little more.

Reverend Anne Slater and Reverend Lynda Randall have helped us out in the past, but Canon Michael Webber, who only recently retired from a senior post in Daventry, was new to us. We thank each of them for their ministry and for giving up their time to be with us, and we hope that we shall see them again. We also say thank you to Helen, who month by month comes to us so cheerfully to present the Gospel message. For me personally, it is a pleasure to see how she has spiritually grown and developed, and I know that many others will agree with me. She juggles her family and home life and a demanding job with her study and church work and always brings a relevant and up to date message to us.

It is a pleasure to have Canon Richard and Monique back with us again and we trust that their holiday was a time of rest and refreshment for them. Thank you all for what you do in the Lord's name. Angela Cheesbrough



**ALDERTON**  
**Church Cleaning Rota**

August Emma & Sarah Myners  
September Maureen & Mel  
**No service in August**

**Churchyard Rota** Second half of August Betti & Gary  
Bob Halsey to strim etc before tents go up for Art Festival

**Ride and Stride**

The Ride and Stride event will take place this year on Saturday 10 September and it would be lovely if some villagers could participate in this. You can walk, cycle, ride etc to as many churches as you feel able to during the day and hopefully be sponsored for this by your friends or relations. It's an opportunity to see the insides of local churches as well as enjoying our beautiful surroundings. There is a welcome at all the churches, with a drink and a piece of cake, and we will be offering the same hospitality here in Alderton as well as having a little stall with things to buy, including some jam, pickles and preserves.

Any money raised from sponsorship is divided equally between the Historic Churches Trust and our own church here in Alderton (and the money is desperately needed as we are still struggling to find enough to complete the toilet/servery project) as well as maintaining the day-to-day aspects of the building.

I have all the details if you would like more information and you can contact me to obtain sponsorship forms. Last year, several people from the village took part and all said that they had enjoyed it. Linda

**Service for St Margaret of Antioch**

Our service to mark St Margaret of Antioch was well attended; Richard had returned from his holiday in time to lead the service and it was a delight to hear from various villagers what the community means to them. It's not easy to stand up and speak to a church full of people so we are more than grateful to Doris, Ruth, Anita, Jackie and Amanda for doing so and it was interesting to hear their different yet similar views on our life in the community of Alderton.

As usual, refreshments were served after the event, and this gave people time to enjoy a drink and something to eat in our lovely church. We are so pleased that so many people came along to support us – we really need your help to keep our church the hub of the village that it currently is. Margaret and Linda

**Alderton History Talks**

On two consecutive Saturdays in late July in St Margaret's Church, we gave history talks with cake and tea to two local history groups. The first was to Potterspurty local history group who had heard of us through Keith Harry at Grafton. They wanted to know about the Queen's Oak project run by Geoff Lucas, Linda Dards and myself in the 1990s.

This was a project to trace and grow a young oak to replace the old tree that had been fatally damaged by fire, and also to research its history and retell the story of the famous meeting between king Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville, the first commoner Queen of England, mother to the two ill-fated little Princes in the Tower and of Elizabeth of York, mother to Henry V111 and grandmother to Queen Elizabeth I. This project resulted in 5 trees planted on the eve of the Millennium to carry the story through into a new age and also a play written by Paul Drewitt and acted by local children. This was repeated three times, once at Alderton at Christmas, once at Stoke Bruerne on St Valentine's Eve and once at Grafton on 1 May, the King and Queen's wedding anniversary.

The talk went very well and the group was enthusiastic and keen to help in the future. All of this was helped hugely by the copious amounts of cake and tea consumed by everyone, both when they arrived in church after a talk by Charles Reece and after the talk about the Oak. Charles gave his talk on and about the Mount, its history and the archaeology carried out by 'Time Team' during the first half of the 21st century that revealed some of the amazing story of the Alderton ring work. The event was supposed to end with a walk over to the Queen's Oak from Alderton but by then the temperatures had begun to rise and we decided it was too hot to expose anyone to a fairly long walk across open fields.

The second history talk was to the Roade local history group. They wanted to know about Sir William de Combemartin, our Knight. Once again, the offer was for a talk with tea and cake and once again the afternoon went incredibly well. The group was lively and interested in Sir William's story and the recent conservation work carried out by Elizabeth Cheadle for Hugh Harrison Conservation. They wanted to know about the rare wooden effigy, who he was and how he came to live in Alderton.

This story is earlier than that of the Queen's Oak and happened during the reign of Edward I (Queen Eleanor's Edward). Our Knight was a wool merchant and one of the richest men in England. He supplied wool to the Netherlands for the weaving of cloth and the beautiful early medieval tapestries; he was an Alderman of London and a Member of Parliament under Edward. He also supplied a great deal of money to Edward for his castle and empire building. Once again, the afternoon was a big success. The group was very interested and lively and the cake went down unbelievably well - so much so that we were in the grand position of having nothing but dirty plates to take home with us!

Both events were warm in atmosphere, lively and happy. The people who came to both were incredibly generous and although we had asked for a small basic charge, they insisted on paying extra which raised approximately £360 across both events and took our Knight fund very close to the £11,000 mark and a big step nearer our goal to pay for his new tomb chest. Two very successful afternoons in Alderton's beautiful little church.

Margaret Hall-Townley

### Art Festival

Plans are well underway for this year's art festival, which will take place on 3 and 4 September. There will be several village stalls, including a pre-loved clothes stall, two bric a brac stalls (one for the general church funds and one for the knight fund), a plant stall and, if there is enough produce around, a home produce stall. There will also be the much-loved tea stall and a barbecue as well as a bar and a raffle. As always, we are most grateful for any donations towards the stalls and also general help is needed with regard to manning the tea stall, stewarding in the church and various other essential jobs, including the setting up. All help will be very much appreciated – speak to Charlie in the first instance or one of the stall holders (Katie, Carol or Linda)

### Noticeboard

Our new noticeboard is now in place. Should you wish to post any items on it, please contact [aldertonplanning@gmail.com](mailto:aldertonplanning@gmail.com) or [anitasolan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anitasolan@yahoo.co.uk) There will be a nominal charge for out of parish posters/advertisements.

## GENERAL NEWS How to Contact the Police

Your Neighbourhood Policing team covers all South Northants villages and this ensures villages are covered across all shift patterns.

TO REPORT AN INCIDENT OR CRIME PLEASE USE THE 101 NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER OR 999 IF AN EMERGENCY; do not contact the team direct. All reports must go via the Force control room. You can also use the online report form via the Northants Police website [www.northants.police.uk](http://www.northants.police.uk).



If you have any events or should you wish to discuss a particular issue or meet a member of the NPT, then please contact team via: [NT-SouthNorthantsTowcester@northants.police.uk](mailto:NT-SouthNorthantsTowcester@northants.police.uk)

We have new local identified priorities for the area these are for the next three months:

1. Road safety and road traffic offences including speeding, driving uninsured, tax, using mobile phone no seatbelt whilst driving or drink/drug driving (40.3%, 208 people)
2. Burglary (40.1%, 207 people)
3. Drug dealing/misuse (33.3%, 172 people)

And Force Matters of Priority have changed for the year they are now

- Violence against women and girls
- Drugs harm
- Serious and organised crime
- Serious violence

We use social media (Twitter: [@SthNorthantsNPT](https://twitter.com/SthNorthantsNPT) and Facebook: 'Daventry and South Northants Neighbourhood Policing Team') and Neighbourhood Alert in order to inform you about crime and incidents relevant to your area and some of the work that the team undertake – please see recent updates on catalytic convertor thefts and recovery of stolen property. Unfortunately, there are a lot of aspects of our work that we cannot report on due to the vulnerabilities of the people involved. You can also follow the work of our Rural Crime Team via Twitter: [@hutch472](https://twitter.com/hutch472) & [@NorPolRural](https://twitter.com/NorPolRural)

Neighbourhood Alert is an email messaging system that all schools, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch and community members can sign up to. Register your email address to receive up to date information. Sign up to Neighbourhood Alert Messaging System at: [www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk](http://www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk)

If you wish to have up-to-date crime statistics for your area then we recommend that you visit [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

C7029 Charlotte Morris, Neighbourhood Police Community Support Officer, Daventry & South Northants | Northamptonshire Police.

Tel: 101 or 03000 111222 ext: 346089/ Mobile: 07557 776333 |

Address: Towcester Police Station, Watling Street, Towcester, Northants NN12 6DE

Twitter: [@SthNorthantsNPT](https://twitter.com/SthNorthantsNPT) | [@DaventryPolice](https://twitter.com/DaventryPolice) | [@NorthantsPolice](https://twitter.com/NorthantsPolice)

Facebook: Daventry and South Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Policing Team

Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Alert <https://www.northants.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/wsi/watch-schemes-initiatives/as/northants/neighbourhood-alert/>. Crimestoppers 0800 555111 - a non-police organisation you can contact anonymously about crime

UNDERTAKE OUR LOCALLY IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES SURVEY FOR YOUR AREA:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NorthamptonshireLocallyIdentifiedPriorities>

### News from The Old Mail

For events and happenings in the nearby villages: Cosgrove, Potterspurpy and Yardley Gobion, see the newsletter, The Old Mail, is available online at various websites: [www.cosgrovevillage.co.uk](http://www.cosgrovevillage.co.uk); [www.potterspurpy.org.uk](http://www.potterspurpy.org.uk); [www.yardleygobionpc.wordpress.com](http://www.yardleygobionpc.wordpress.com)

**SNIPPETS:**

*There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle; the other is as though everything is a miracle. Einstein*

*Blowing out someone's candle won't make yours shine brighter.*

*Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.*

**PDC**  
Computer Solutions



Windows 7 has reached end of life, and it will no longer receive security updates; it is time to change.

I can upgrade it to Windows 10, but still keep the look of Windows 7; all your documents, pictures and programs will transfer as well.

Looking for a laptop? I have a number of refurbished laptops, prices starting from £150.

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City & Guilds  
NPTC

## United Benefice Calendar for 2022

All groups and organisations within the community are warmly invited to include events here.

### August

- 1 Monday Club meet in Milton Malsor Church, 2.00 p m
- 3 PCC meeting, 1.00 p m, Blisworth in church
- 6 Coffee morning, Milton Malsor Church, 10.00 a m – 12.00 noon
- 11 WI meeting, a local trip
- 12 Farmers' market, Towcester
- 13 Working party in Stoke Bruerne churchyard, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 26 Coffee morning, 7 Pond Bank, Blisworth, 10.00 a m
- 28 History tour, Shutlanger

### September

- 3 & 4 Alderton Art Festival
- 8 WI meeting, the story behind the story, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m
- 8 Shutlanger Parish Council meeting, 7.30 p m
- 10 Coffee morning, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, sale of cards
- 10 Ride and Stride event
- 14 Shutlanger & Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, demonstration, Roade village hall, 7.30 p m
- 17 Working party in Stoke Bruerne churchyard, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 24 1,000 years in 100 minutes, Grafton Regis, 2.30 p m
- 24 Harvest meal in churchyard, Alderton, time tbc
- 30 Coffee morning, 7 Pond Bank, Blisworth, 10.00 a m

### October

- 8 Working party in Stoke Bruerne churchyard, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 13 WI meeting, AGM and supper, Blisworth village hall
- 28 Coffee morning, 7 Pond Bank, Blisworth, 10.00 a m

### November

- 9 Shutlanger & Stoke Bruerne Flower Club, demonstration, Roade village hall, 7.30 p m
- 10 WI meeting, a visit from Queen Victoria, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m
- 10 Shutlanger Parish Council meeting
- 25 Coffee morning, 7 Pond Bank, Blisworth, 10.00 a m

### December

- 8 WI meeting, celebrating Christmas, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m
- 10 Coffee morning, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, sale of cards

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 20 August**  
**If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated**

Please send any copy to: Linda Dards, Moarend, Spring Lane, Alderton NN12 7LW tel 01327 811265, e-mail: [linda@dards.net](mailto:linda@dards.net)  
**Could you please include your name & phone number with entries in case we have any problems.** If you would like to add photographs or drawings to your text these are welcome and can be supplied via email or as photos, and returned after scanning. Contributions by email are most welcome, we can accept most formats; please request a response from us on receipt – so you are sure that we have your submission. Word (any version) is preferred.