

# 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

### Lent

It always excites me as the days begin to lengthen, and snowdrops and other bulbs break through the darkness of the soil - a clear sign of the resurrection occurring again in nature. At the beginning of February in the Celtic cycle of the year, the festival of Imbolc, a time to think about the resurrection and rebirth of the sun, is celebrated. This festival comes halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. On 2 February, in the church's calendar, we celebrate the Presentation of Jesus in the temple, also known as Candlemas, 40 days after Jesus's birth; this festival ends the Christmas season. Both are celebrations of light, physically and internally, calling us to grow in our awareness of ourselves and our relationship with God.

We have many daily opportunities to look after and care for our physical well-being, but what about our inner spiritual lives? Have you ever wondered what the Christian faith is about but never had the opportunity to ask questions but would like to know more? This Lent, we are running a course called Christianity Explored in a relaxed and informal way, for anyone enquiring about the Christian faith without being asked to commit. We will be finding out more about the person at the heart of the Gospels by following Mark's account of the life and ministry of Jesus. This is also a good opportunity for anyone who wishes to look again and deepen their relationship with Jesus. Lent is a time of inner transformation for us all, a time to let new life grow within each of us to fulfil potential.

The course starts on Wednesday 1 March at 7.00 p m and then each Wednesday after, finishing on 12 April in Holy Cross Church Milton Malsor. If you would like to know more, please speak with me, and if you would like to come along, please let me know in advance by emailing me at [canon.stainer@gmail.com](mailto:canon.stainer@gmail.com) Everyone will be very welcome. Blessings, Richard

## Service Schedule for February 2023

### Sunday 5 February, 3<sup>rd</sup> Before Lent

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Milton Malsor  
11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

### Sunday 12 February, 2<sup>nd</sup> Before Lent

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Stoke Bruerne  
9.30 a m: Family service, Milton Malsor  
11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

### Thursday 16 February

Prayer service, 9.30 a m, St Anne's Chapel, Shutlanger

### Sunday 19 February, Sunday Before Lent

9.30 a m: Family Eucharist, Milton Malsor  
11.00 a m: Family service, Blisworth

### Wednesday 22 February, Ash Wednesday

7.00 p m: Eucharist, Blisworth

### Sunday 26 February

9.30 p m: Family service, Milton Malsor  
9.30 a m: Family service, Stoke Bruerne  
11.00 a m: Family Eucharist, Blisworth

## 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

### STOKE BRUERNE



#### Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

The Parish Council was very sad to receive the resignation of Ruth Smith from the Council. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ruth for all of her hard work over the last six years.

Ruth's resignation means that we have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. If anybody has a couple of hours to spare every 6 weeks and is interested in community matters, please contact Bobs, the Clerk for more details: [clerk@stokebruerneparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@stokebruerneparishcouncil.org.uk). Current members will serve until May 2025 when elections will be held.

There are eight meetings a year held on Tuesday evenings at the village hall. Meeting dates and details are on the website.

#### Parish Council Meetings

The dates for Parish Council meetings for the year are as follows: 31 January, 14 March, 25 April, 30 May, 18 July and 12 September.

#### Stoke Bruerne C of E Primary School

We were very excited at the start of this year as we started the term off with a bang! Yardley Gobion school has recently joined with our wonderful Federation of schools so we are now a Federation of five. We held a day of celebration during our first week back and the children all had a wonderful time celebrating and making new friends.

This term class 3 will be looking at the Greeks. Class 2 are looking at the Romans and class 1 are researching explorers. I am sure that we will be having a very exciting term!



### SHUTLANGER

Website: [www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk](http://www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk), phone number: 01327640547, Twitter: @ShutlangerVHall  
Facebook: Shutlanger Village Hall, Instagram: shutlangervillagehall

#### Coffee Morning

Our monthly coffee, cake and chat morning was on Thursday 19 January from 10.00 a.m. until 12.00 noon. It was lovely to see so many people there, enjoying a friendly community time in a warm welcoming environment.

We have free Wi-Fi and contactless payments. Paintings by local artists are displayed in the hall for you to browse and buy.

We serve excellent coffee and delicious homemade cakes. The bacon rolls are very popular we added sausages in a bun too this month.

Our coffee mornings are always on the third Thursday of the month; put a note in your diary so you don't miss it.

#### Prayer Service in St. Anne's Chapel

The coffee morning was preceded by a short Prayer Service in St. Anne's Chapel. We always have lots of support for this charming service with time for quiet reflection. It would be great to see you there.

#### Tote Draw

The latest draw was, as always, during the coffee morning. The winning numbers were: 5 and 7 and the prize was £170.00. The tote has raised nearly £3,000 towards keeping our hall as a centre for community and celebration.

It's easy to join the tote, it costs just £5 a month; half the money goes to help the village hall and the other half to one lucky prize winner. The odds are much better than the national lottery! There are application forms in the hall, you can call 01327 640547 or email [secretary@shutlangervillagehall.org.uk](mailto:secretary@shutlangervillagehall.org.uk) any of these make it easy for you to join our ever-growing band of supporters.

#### Events

##### *Village Christmas Party and Carols*

The village Christmas party was held on 17 December. We started with games for the children and continued into the evening with dancing, drinks and snacks for the adults. It brought the community together and into the Christmas spirit! The party was followed on 23 December by carol singing in the village hall garden. There was a great sing-along with mulled wine and mince pies.

#### Renovations

Work will start on the roof project on 18 March. We are looking forward to seeing a beautiful new roof and clock tower repairs to the hall. The committee is not stopping there though! We have more projects planned.

#### Upcoming Events

We have an exciting programme of events planned for next year including quizzes, craft evenings, Coronation celebrations and open gardens. Watch this space for more information in the coming months.

#### Fundraising

As ever, we continue to raise funds to renovate the excellent facilities within our most important community asset. There are several opportunities to get involved:

Direct donations via the website homepage and by using QR codes in the hall and at events.

The 'donation station' in the lobby at the entrance to the hall, lets you put a cash donation in the box or use your phone to scan the QR code.

You can also recycle your old ink cartridges in the hall.

We are members of JustGiving, Smile and Easyfundraising where you can easily make donations.

There are links on our website [www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk](http://www.shutlangervillagehall.org.uk) which will guide you through the donation process.

To donate through Amazon, choose [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk), then Shutlanger village hall and pay for your shopping in the usual way. Unfortunately, Amazon smile will be closing the programme on 20 February 2023.

Sign up for Easyfundraising, chose Shutlanger village hall, search for retailers, the site will redirect you to the retailer's website, there is a handy donation reminder too. Both sites are free, easy to use, and the hall gets a donation.

Thank you for all your support. Your help matters to us. EVERY penny counts! Shutlanger Village Hall Management Committee



## GRAFTON REGIS

### Grafton Regis: 1,000 Years in 100 Minutes

Spring isn't far away, so why not plan to spend an afternoon in our beautiful and historic village? Learn about Grafton's colourful past from some of its famous and infamous characters, and finish up with tea and cakes!

We start in the village hall, where you meet characters from the early history of the village, all in authentic costume - the Abbot of Grestain, members of the Woodville family, and Richard III. of the FitzRoy family, Dukes of Grafton, and of the Grafton portrait of Shakespeare. There's also an opportunity to see the impressive new heritage centre which has been created with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Then, back to the hall to meet a couple of more recent residents and for refreshments.

This year we're planning three historical walks, all on Saturday afternoons and starting at 2.30 p.m. The dates are 13 May, 17 June and 23 September. The cost, including tea and cakes, is £9.50 per head, under 16s £1.00, under 5s free, with all profits being shared between the funds for maintenance of the village hall and of the church.

Booking is essential. For further information and to book, please ring Kathy on 0791 009 2132 or email [keith.harry@btinternet.com](mailto:keith.harry@btinternet.com)



Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn await the arrival of Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio, who will report that the Pope will not annul Henry's marriage to Katherine of Aragon.



Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio

### Grafton Regis Village Hall Lunch

On Thursday 19 January, we had our first EHO inspection since the outbreak of Covid. Needless to say, we were a little apprehensive as we had not met Alison, the EHO, before. We did our revision to check that the processes we used still met current standards and that we were up to date with any changes. What a relief to be told that we still met the coveted 5-star standard and now have a new 5-star sticker to put on the village hall front door.

Thursday 19th was also lunch day; on the menu was turkey and mushroom pie, mashed potatoes, carrots and red cabbage. Just what you needed on a cold frosty day. Our next lunch is on Thursday 16 February.



### Our Church Services

After a busy January, with the New Year's Day Benefice service and the monthly service on the 14th, we are having a break in February and not holding a monthly service. It is very difficult to heat the church during these winter months. Jean Glanville



## BLISWORTH

### 2023 Monthly Coffee & Cakes, Last Friday of the Month 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon at 7 Pond Bank Blisworth

If you haven't been before, it is a really friendly, chatty atmosphere where everyone is welcome! There is a good selection of homemade jams, cakes, and savouries with gluten free and vegan options. Dates are as follows:

follows:

27 January, 24 February, 31 March, \*28 April, \*26 May, \*30 June, \*28 July, \*25 August, \*29 September and 27 October.

The November date depends on date of Christmas bazaar and there is not usually a coffee morning in December.

\*Al-fresco on the front drive depending on the weather – we are usually very lucky!

## Christingle

A well-attended service was held at St John's on Christmas Eve, with 128 parents and children singing along to the carols and listening to the stories. The service was led by Helen Halson and many of the children dressed up and took part in the nativity scene.



The traditional oranges were prepared and handed out to all, with candles to be lit at the end of the service. Donations on the day were given to the Children's Society.



## ALDERTON

Church Cleaning Rota

February

Katie Steele & Jo Hemenstall

Sale for the Knight

We will be having one of our sales for the knight on Saturday 11 February from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon in the church. There will be the usual array of jams, pickles etc, including some freshly made new season's marmalade, together with a selection of ornaments, jewellery etc and our usual array of cakes, sausage rolls etc.

Do come along – tea and coffee will be provided free of charge. It's so nice to see everybody and we are so grateful for everyone's support. We still have a little way to go to pay for the final installation of the effigy in the church and every single penny goes towards achieving this.

We have recently been in contact with the 23<sup>rd</sup> great grandson of Sir William; he lives in Canada and is descended from Sir Will's daughter, Joan, the wife of Nicholas Audley, and he has very kindly contributed to our fund. Margaret and Linda

## GENERAL NEWS

### Police Information

#### Burglary Prevention Advice

Our aim is to prevent Northamptonshire residents falling prey to criminals. We are taking a more scientific approach to repeat victimisation. Due to the location of recent burglaries, we know that your home is at heightened risk of being burgled. An opportunistic type of criminal is enticed into a situation as a result of an insecurity or easy opportunity. If we simply remove that temptation and make it difficult, then it is estimated that a staggering 90% of crime would be prevented. We have compiled a short home security checklist to help guide you through your security arrangements. Working through this checklist will help you ascertain whether you have any security weaknesses. Please remember to call 101 if you see any suspicious activity or 999 if you see a crime in progress. Alternatively, if you have any information about crime or criminals in your area, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

#### Outside the property:

- Make thieves feel exposed when they approach the front of your property by using low hedges or low fencing. Keep any gates shut when you're out.
- Use garden lighting to deter trespassers. If the property is well overlooked, choose lights which come on automatically at dusk and stay on all night until dawn. Low wattage bulbs can cost less than 1p per night in electricity.
- You can reinforce your boundary by using prickly plants. Use of natural plants is exempt from the Occupiers' Liability Act 1984 - because it is natural.
- Don't leave tools and ladders lying around for burglars to use. Remember to keep the shed as secure as possible. Thieves often search for tools nearby to break into properties.
- Where possible, keep bins chained up away from the main house and out of sight. Criminals often use them as climbing aids or ways to transport stolen property.
- Thieves often look for subtle changes in the environment. Open gates, empty driveway, letters left in the mailbox are all invitations to a criminal.

#### Inside the property:

- Keep all doors and windows locked - even if you are in the house. If you leave a room, close and lock the doors and windows.
- If you have an alarm, use it! Most alarm systems can be 'zoned', which means parts of the house can be active at night time.
- Always remove the keys from locks to stop someone breaking a small pane of glass and entering using the key. Keep keys out of sight and in a safe place.
- Leave lights on in multiple rooms. Automatic timers can switch on lights and radios. Remember that in the winter it can get dark in the early afternoon.
- Make items traceable. Mark your property with your postcode using a UV pen or consider specialist liquid forensic coded solutions. Following the above measures will make you a less attractive target for thieves. People who are security conscious are less likely to be burgled than those who are not.

For more crime prevention advice visit:

[www.northants.police.uk/crimeprevention](http://www.northants.police.uk/crimeprevention)

For approved security companies and products, visit Secured by Design - [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

Sold Secure - [www.soldsecure.com](http://www.soldsecure.com)

Security Systems Alarms Inspectors Board - [www.ssaib.org](http://www.ssaib.org)

National Security Inspectorate - [www.nsi.org.uk](http://www.nsi.org.uk)

Register your property on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

#### **Charlotte Morris**

**Police Community Support Officer PCSO 7029**

Neighbourhood Policing Team – Towcester

Northamptonshire Police

Telephone: 101 Ext: 348069

(03000 111222 if outside Northamptonshire)

Mobile: 07557776333

Address: Towcester Police Station Watling Street Towcester

Northamptonshire NN12 6DE



### 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)

### Royal Mail Scam Alert

On 13 January I received a text message which appeared to come from the Royal Mail. It read: "James attempted to deliver your parcel today but no one was home. You can reschedule your parcel for a new deliver date, via; <https://uk-redirect.com>"

Note the misspelling of "reschedule" and the web site given; it was a spoof which looked like a genuine Royal Mail site, but now no longer works. The site asked for a £1.42 redelivery fee to be paid by credit card, which sadly, I did, as I was expecting a parcel, and the site looked genuine so I paid in good faith.

A few days later the fraud department of my bank rang to inform me of a scam relating to the Royal Mail, where the villains obtain credit card details by asking for a small amount of money, and the bank asked me if I had any knowledge of two transactions amounting to £1,000 which they had blocked. As I had not authorised the payments, I expressed my thanks for their diligence.

We live in nasty times, when it is easy to be duped. I hope this piece may stop you from falling into the same trap that I did. I was so lucky that the bank was on the ball and alerted me to the scam.

Paul Dards

**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.

I repair laptops down to component level; ask for a free quote.

Contact Paul Dards on 07540 000844 or 01327 811265 or [paul@dards.co.uk](mailto:paul@dards.co.uk)

PDC, Moorend, Spring Lane  
Alderton, NN12 7LW  
[www.dards.co.uk](http://www.dards.co.uk)

### **R. Wilson Garden & Tree Maintenance**

Robert Wilson is a qualified tree surgeon and gardener based in Hartwell covering the Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire area.

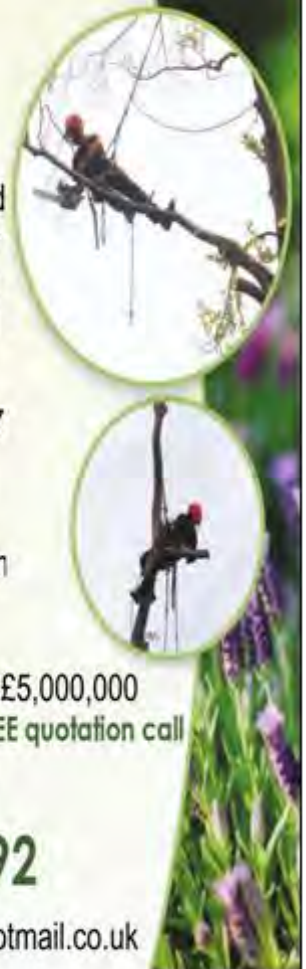
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### **SNIPPETS:**

*If you feel like you're losing everything, remember that trees lose their leaves every year and they still stand tall and wait for better things to come.*

*The cost of your mistake is the price you pay learning from it.*

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

## United Benefice Calendar for 2023

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

### February

- 4 Coffee morning, Milton Malsor church, 9.00 a m to 1.00 p m
- 9 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'Sole to Soul'
- 11 Sale for the knight, Alderton church, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon
- 16 Coffee morning, Shutlanger, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon
- 16 Grafton Regis lunch club, 12.30 p m, village hall
- 24 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### March

- 9 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, AGM and guest speaker
- 14 Parish Council meeting, Stoke Bruerne
- 18 Coffee morning, St Mary the Virgin Church, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon (raffle)
- 25 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 31 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### April

- 13 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'Kinky Boots'
- 22 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 25 Parish Council meeting, Stoke Bruerne
- 28 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### May

- 6 Coronation of the King
- 11 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, Resolutions and refreshments
- 13 1,000 years in 100 minutes – walk and talk in Grafton Regis, 2.30 p m
- 20 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 26 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank
- 27 Coffee morning, St Mary the Virgin Church, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon (plant stall)
- 30 Parish Council meeting, Stoke Bruerne

### June

- 8 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, Northamptonshire walks – open meeting
- 17 1,000 years in 100 minutes – walk and talk in Grafton Regis, 2.30 p m
- 24 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 30 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### July

- 13 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'What Emily did'
- 18 Parish Council meeting, Stoke Bruerne
- 22 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 28 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### August

- 10 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, local trip – watch this space
- 12 Coffee morning, St Mary the Virgin Church, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, raffle
- 25 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank
- 26 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon

### September

- 2/3 Alderton Art Festival
- 12 Parish Council meeting, Stoke Bruerne
- 14 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'A taste of the Camino de Santiago'
- 23 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon
- 23 1,000 years in 100 minutes – walk and talk in Grafton Regis, 2.30 p m
- 29 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank

### October

- 12 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'Three in Accord Entertain'
- 27 Coffee morning, Blisworth, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, 7 Pondbank
- 28 Stoke Bruerne churchyard working party, 9.30 a m to 12.00 noon

### November

- 9 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, 'The Blisworth Tapestry'
- 11 Coffee morning, St Mary the Virgin Church, Stoke Bruerne, 10.00 a m to 12.00 noon, Remembrance weekend

### December

- 14 WI meeting, Blisworth village hall, 7.30 p m, - Christmas party

### **THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 18 February 2023**

#### **If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated**

Please send any copy to: Linda Dards, Moorend, 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.