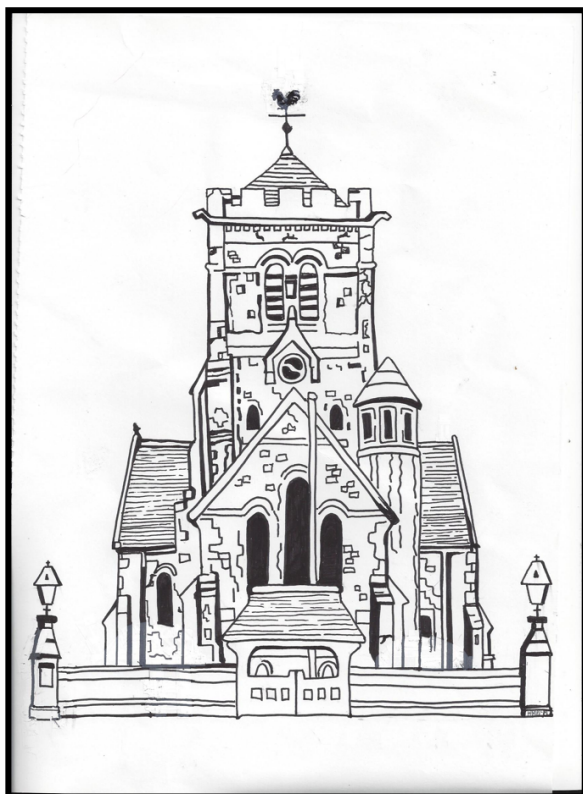


✧ *St Giles' and Shipbourne* ✧ NEWSLETTER



✧ *December 2024* ✧

OFFICERS OF ST GILES' AND VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

ST GILES

Rector of Shipbourne with Plaxtol:	811081
Rev Dr Peter Hayler	Email: RectorSwP@gmail.com
The Rectory, The Street, Plaxtol TN15 0QG	http://shipbourne.com/st-giles-church/
Curate	Mr Mark Packer 07970-709006
Lay Reader	Mr P Brewin 810361
Churchwardens:	Mrs H Leach 07762 241720
	Mr A Boorman 07795 182966

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Secretary:	Mrs C Chambers	382228
Treasurer:	Mr C Keeling	07825 139046
Deanery Synod Rep:	Sir P Britton	365794

CHURCH OFFICERS

Parish Safeguarding Officers:	Ms C Jackson	07729814798
	Miss G Coates (children)	811432
Choirmaster:	Mr J Young	810289
Electoral Roll:	Mrs H Leach	07762 241720
Flower Guild:	Mrs F Ward	810525
Bell Ringing:	Graham Edwards	07487 729549

SHIPBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk:	Sarah Huseyin	886402	shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com
Chair:	V Redman		
Vice Chair:	P Leach		
Councillors	I Bond, S Oram, A Dagger, S Davis		
	www.shipbourne.com		

VILLAGE WEBSITE

SHIPBOURNE SCHOOL

Head:	Mrs Terri Daters	TDaters@bournepartnership.org
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SHIPBOURNE VILLAGE HALL

Chairman:	Peter Leach	shipbourne.villagehall@gmail.com
Bookings:	Helen Leach	07889 362462
		07762 241720

SHIPBOURNE FARMERS' MARKET

Manager:	Bob Taylor	833976
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SHIPBOURNE WI

President	Sue Streeter	810731
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SHIPBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

Secretary:	Mark Fenton
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PLAXTOL & SHIPBOURNE TENNIS CLUB

Membership:	Cilla Langdon-Down	810338
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POLICE

Emergency: 999 Non-urgent: 01622 690690

ST GILES' AND SHIPBOURNE NEWSLETTER

Editor/Adverts:	Lindsay Miles	810439	lindsay_miles@btinternet.com
Copying:	Mary Perry	810797	

Rector of Shipbourne with Plaxtol
Rev Dr Peter Hayler
The Rectory, The Street, Plaxtol TN15 0QG

PARISH DIARY – DECEMBER 2024

Except where indicated below, the main morning service at **ST GILES, SHIPBOURNE** is at 9.30am. Every weekday at 8.00am Morning Prayer will be said at Plaxtol and every weekday evening (except Friday and Saturday) at 4.30pm Evening Prayer will be said at St Giles, Shipbourne.

St Giles Shipbourne is open for organ practice and private prayer daily except Mondays from 9.00am to 3.00pm <http://shipbourne.com/st-giles-church/>

SUNDAY <i>Advent Sunday</i>	1st	8.00am	Holy Communion at Plaxtol Church
		9.30am	Parish Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.00am	Family Service with Communion at Plaxtol Church
		6.00pm	Advent Carol Service at St Giles, Shipbourne
		Readings:	Jeremiah 33: 14-16, 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13, Luke 21: 25-36
Thursday	5th	9-11am	Farmers' Market at St Giles, Shipbourne
SUNDAY <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	8th	8.00am	Holy Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne
		9.30am	Matins at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.00am	Parish Communion at Plaxtol Church
		Readings	Malachi 3: 1-4, Philippians 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6
Thursday	12th	9-11am	Farmers Market at St Giles, Shipbourne
Saturday	14th	9.30-11am	Community Bread Basket "Relax into Christmas" at Plaxtol Church
SUNDAY <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	15th	8.00am	Holy Communion at Plaxtol Church
		9.30am	Parish Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne Visitation of Sir Edward Cazalet
		11.00am	Community@11 at Plaxtol Church (Refreshments from 10.30am)
		Readings:	Zephaniah 3:14-end, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3: 7-18
Monday	16th	9.30am	Shipbourne School rehearsal
Tuesday	17th	5.00pm	Open Air Carols & Sketches at Kentish Rifleman
Wednesday	18th	9.30am	Shipbourne School Carol Service
Thursday	19th	9-11am	Christmas Farmers' Market at St Giles, Shipbourne
		2.30-4pm	Coffee Cake & Company in Plaxtol Church

SUNDAY <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	22nd	8.00am	Holy Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne
		9.30am	Family Christmas Celebration at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.00am	Family Nativity at Plaxtol Church
		5.00pm	Carol Service at Plaxtol Church
		Readings:	Micha 5:2-5a, Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45
Tuesday	24th	5.00pm	Carol Service at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.30pm	Midnight Communion 'Enya' at St Giles, Shipbourne
CHRISTMAS DAY	25th	9.30am	Family Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.00am	Family Communion at Plaxtol Church
Thursday	28th	9-11am	NO Farmers' Market at St Giles, Shipbourne – returns on Thursday 16 th January 2025
SUNDAY <i>1st Sunday of Christmas</i>	29th	8.00am	Holy Communion at Plaxtol Church
		9.30am	Parish Communion at St Giles, Shipbourne
		11.00am	Parish Communion with Holy Matrimony at Plaxtol Church
		Readings:	1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26, Colossians 3: 12-17, Luke 2: 41-end



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CHRISTMAS 2024

What does it mean to celebrate Christmas this year? The world seems pretty messed up at the moment, doesn't it. But perhaps no more so than the era in which Jesus was born – the land swarming with a violent army of an occupying superpower, crippling taxes, religious fanaticism, and the threat of genocide enough to turn a poor family with a newborn into refugees. Yet it was into such a setting that God chose to come alongside humanity, to be born as one of us. God didn't wait for everything to be OK before visiting us.

Everybody loves a new baby: tiny fingers, the smell of warm milk. Cuddly? Yes! Fragile and vulnerable? Oh yes, that too? The amazing thing about Christmas is the ordinary smallness of it that somehow represents the vast greatness of God's love. Why so? Because love does not insist on its own way (1 Corinthians 13 v.5). God waits in the small ordinariness of a birth in a garage in a commuter village... waits for our response.

So, here's the toughest question: how will you make meaning this Christmas? Is feasting and drinking and gifting enough? Does worship and prayer get a look-in? How will you make time for the awe and wonder of God's great gift?

Openair Carols and Sketches at the Kentish Rifleman:

Tuesday 17th Dec at 5pm

Family Services with costumed telling of the Christmas story:

Sunday 22nd Dec – 11.00am in Plaxtol Church

Sunday 22nd Dec – 9.30am in Shipbourne Church

Carol Services:

Sunday 22nd Dec – 5.00pm in Plaxtol Church

Tuesday 24th Dec – 5.00pm in Shipbourne Church

Midnight Holy Communion – with the music of Enya:

Tuesday 24th Dec – 11.30pm

Christmas Morning Family Communion:

9.30am in Shipbourne

11.00am in Plaxtol

Peter Hayler, Rector

A Christian writer's reaction to the American Presidential Election result

Reality is telling us that people are sometimes wise and responsible, but sometimes people in large numbers make tragic mistakes with far-reaching consequences. Reality is telling us that liars, con artists, and criminals can fool a majority of the people a lot of the time by giving them someone to blame and playing to their resentment and fear. Reality is telling us that we humans all have biases and resentments that authoritarians can exploit for their advantage. Reality is telling us that older generations, especially of white male Christians, don't want to let go of power. Reality is telling us that while some of us have been waking up to our nation's racism, sexism, and environmental irresponsibility, others are digging deeper into denial. Reality is telling us that our religious communities have, for generations, failed to teach basic critical thinking and ethical discernment skills to their members. Reality is telling us that our political parties – all of them – aren't very comfortable with reality. But there are other realities that are speaking too. The oceans are warming. The ice caps are melting. The poor and oppressed eventually will need solutions ... not just someone to blame or scapegoat.

It's important to remember: Reality isn't only what is. Reality includes potential for what could be.

4 billion years ago, the Earth was a hot molten lifeless planet. Nobody could have imagined it would some day contain coral reefs, Bach, Bob Dylan, and Beyonce ... and you. In this chaos and disappointment is potential. We must become chaos artists, my friends, working with a mess to make something beautiful. Welcome to reality with all its glory and squalor, all its heartbreak and potential. Your breaking heart can hold both ...

My friend and colleague Richard Rohr often says that contemplation is meeting all the reality we can bear. When you can, it might be helpful to get alone, whether it's in your home, on a walk in a forest or city park, or in your car in a parking lot. If you need to cry, cry. If it would help to scream, scream.

Let your feelings flow. It might help to write them down in a rant or rap or prayer or poem. You could begin by writing, "What is reality trying to teach me?" and then write what comes to you. And when you feel ready, you can allow yourself to sink into silence and feel not only your feelings, but the comfort and love that is at the core of who you are. The same love that inspires you to care for others is there to care for you too. You can welcome all the reality you can bear ... and know you are not alone.

Later today, you might intentionally do something kind for some person or living creature. Bake cookies. Write a thank you note. Water a house plant. Play with your dog. Fill your birdfeeder.

You might feel better in the short term by blaming someone, even yourself, but blame turns out, for me at least, to lead to a dead end of bitterness and disempowerment. So in the long term, I'd recommend taking a different path ... toward kindness, courage, and wisdom. This is real, friends. There is a lot at stake. Just because some dangerous people won the election doesn't mean they have to determine how we choose to live going forward. That choice is ours. Welcome to reality.

Brian McLaren

Community Bread Basket



invites you to

'Relax into Christmas'

Sat 14th December - 9.30-11am

Plaxtol Church

- *Enjoy some special Christmas treats alongside our Bread Basket favourites*
- *Write a message to remember loved ones and put it on our tree*
- *Children invited to colour-in and create their own Christmas cards*



RESTORATION OF ST GILES'

After 4 months' work, our restoration project at St Giles' is now drawing to a close. There have been some hitches along the way which have caused delay, especially the 16 week wait for our order for new tiles for the south transept roof to be fulfilled. And we have had to do some additional work, for which the need only became apparent when the scaffolding had gone up and we could see the building at close hand. This includes the repair of the stonework around the clockface, which proved to be in very poor condition, and of one of the stained glass panels in the west window which has been taken out and is being re-lead at the Easthope workshops near Folkestone (we think that the damage to this panel was done by a WWII bomb which did a huge amount of other damage to the church, long since repaired).

You may have noticed that a splendid new stone cross has been installed on the chancel gable – the original became very eroded and eventually fell, we think in the early 1960s. A new finial will also soon be placed on the north transept to match the one on the south. That transept has a temporary cover at the moment while we strip and re-tile the roof. We are having to take special measures to accommodate any bats, including putting up a bat-box in one of the churchyard yews. The extensive repairs to the tower stair turret, inside and out, are finished.

Some stonework and guttering repairs remain to be done but the scaffolding should soon start to come down and we are hoping to finish in mid-December. We expect the project to be completed within budget.

There will be a special service to celebrate the successful completion of the project in the new year where we hope that everyone who has contributed, not least our many donors, will come. Further details of this service will be communicated once the restoration works are fully completed.

Sir Paul Britton

Shipbourne Village Hall News

We are delighted that Ben Whitehead has very kindly agreed to take care of the flower bed in the hall garden. Ben's own garden was opened for visitors to walk round and enjoy earlier this year for the village Open Gardens event, and everyone was very taken and impressed by what they saw. You missed a treat if you couldn't visit.

The hall flower bed provides a pleasant focal point and splash of colour in the spring and summertime which certainly helps attract bookings. However, it needs some TLC before springtime and Ben's green fingers will help enormously.

Once Ben has had a chance to think through what he plans to do, we may well ask for a volunteer working party to assist in the possible reshaping and preparation of the bed. The soil there is far from ideal and needs a real boost with some good compost and mulching. When ready we would be grateful for contributions of a modest amount of any such materials, and maybe a few plant donations!

Hall maintenance continues to be a pressing issue. The blinds in the main hall are having to be replaced shortly, a new fridge is required for the kitchen and generally the internal and external fabric and decorations need attention.

The windows, particularly, are in a very poor condition and beyond economic repair. The building is Grade II listed; replacements must be like for like which entails considerable cost. We are hopeful that a quotation from a competitive manufacturer recently approached, may allow the large windows in the main hall to be replaced next year.

The mild weather conditions during October were a bonus as we were able to minimise the heating requirements, the cost of which has been and is likely to be the biggest expense. Going forward it is important the building is insulated to reduce this major overhead further.

Regular hirers of the hall include:

Dog Scent Training Classes –Tuesday & Thursday morn - Martina Ramage
Pilates – Wednesday mornings and evenings – Emma Foyle
Yoga – Thursday evenings – Isabelle Khellafi

Full details available on request - 07762 241720 - Helen

If you would like to be kept up to date with future events or wish to make a suggestion for a possible event or activity, please email:

shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com

SHIPBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

The contact details for the Parish Council are:

Shipbourne Parish Council
Clerk – Mrs Sarah Huseyin
Gable Cottage
Ismays Road
Ightham TN15 9BE
e-mail: shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com
Telephone: 01732 886402

PARISH MEETINGS

The Parish Council meetings *usually* take place on the second Monday of each month (except August) at 7pm and the agenda will be posted a few days beforehand on the noticeboard in the bus shelter opposite The Chaser and on the Parish website. If you have anything that you would like to raise or would like to join the meeting, please email the Parish Clerk shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com. Please visit our website **www.shipbourne.com** for further details.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS –

<https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/planning-applications-appeals/planning-view-comment-planning-applications>

KENT POLICE

Our new beat officer is **Thomas Mead PC 46014468**, based at Tonbridge Police Station. For non-urgent matters, please call 101, for emergencies please call 999.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PENSION CREDIT

TMBC are undertaking a range of activities to encourage take up of Pension Credit in the borough. Currently many people eligible to claim are not receiving the benefit, which as announced in this week's budget, will in future determine who receives Winter Fuel Payments.

General information about Pension Credit is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit/pension-credit-toolkit-advice-and-guidance-for-stakeholders>



Sunday 1 December	A gentle walk through Mereworth Woods and Swanton Valley before the Tonbridge & Malling Ramblers AGM. Non-members welcome on the walk.	3.5 miles
Thursday 5 December	Fairly flat walk from Shipbourne Common via Point Wood, The Hoad, Cataract Cottage and Coldharbour. Returning via Tinley Wood and Shipbourne Church. Moderate difficulty.	5.4 miles
Sunday 8 December	Circular walk from West Peckham along the Greensand Way and descending through the Oxon Hoath estate with fine views of Hadlow Tower. Return via farmland, orchards and woodland. The second half of the walk is a steady incline. Approximately five stiles. Moderate difficulty.	5.3 miles
Thursday 12 December	Circular walk from Camer Park through vineyards, fields, woods and quiet country lanes. Views across the North Downs towards the Thames. There are some steep descents and ascents. Moderate difficulty; six stiles.	6 miles
Sunday 15 December	Circular walk from Shoreham to Lullingstone. Climb up the side and along the Darent Valley for great views going towards Lullingstone. Moderate difficulty.	7 miles
Sunday 22 December	Circular walk in the High Weald from Penshurst up to Smart's Hill. Moderate difficulty.	6 miles
Friday 27 December	Work off the turkey with a circular walk from Watlington following the Medway river towards Yalding via Nettlestead Green. Then through the deer park, past Royden Hall and the watermill. Mix of footpaths and lane walking. Moderate difficulty.	6 miles

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Have your unwanted Christmas tree collected from your home and recycled, courtesy of Hospice in the Weald.

This popular service is offered to residents covering twenty postcodes in West Kent and East Sussex, from Westerham in the Northwest of Kent to Mayfield in East Sussex, including the Shipbourne TN11 postcode. In fact, anyone living in any of the postcodes TN1 -TN20 can take advantage of this service, so pass the message on to friends in the area. It will save time while raising funds to provide free care for those facing terminal illness and their loved ones.

In exchange for a donation of £20, the Hospice's elves will collect and recycle your Christmas tree. No hassle, no waste, and no needles in your car!

The team of amazing volunteers will be collecting trees from 12th-14th January.

More than £40,000 was raised last year with tree chippings donated for use in the community.

Please register via the Hospice's website hospiceintheweald.org.uk. Registration closes on 7th January.

All proceeds help to fund the free care and support Hospice in the Weald offers to adults and children in our community facing life-limiting illness.

THE MAGPIE CENTRE, CHATHAM

We are committed to helping the Magpie Centre connected to our link parish – All Saint's Church, Chatham.

COLLECTIONS WILL START AGAIN IN FEBRUARY 2025

Collection points will be in both churches on the 4th Saturday of each month

Thank you for your support
Any queries ring Carol Crossley on 810801

SHIPBOURNE VILLAGE HALL

Situated on the Green in the heart of Shipbourne, our village hall with its enclosed and safe garden, is the perfect venue for children's parties, family celebrations, pilates, yoga, exhibitions, fundraising events, training courses or seminars. It has a main hall, an adjoining side room ideal for meetings, blackout blinds, wheelchair access, a well-equipped kitchen, baby changing facilities and disabled toilet.

Wi-Fi with excellent download speed is provided by courtesy of Gigaclear.

In addition, 2 N° 8m x 4m marquees, 3 N° 3m x 3m and 2 N° 2.5 x 2.5m gazebos are available for hire.

For hall rates, enquiries and bookings, please call Helen Leach on 07762 241720 or email shipbourne.villagehall@gmail.com

PLAXTOL SCHOLARS SING CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN THE CHAPEL IN IGHTHAM MOTE

Members of the Plaxtol Scholars will be singing in the Chapel in Ightham Mote on Friday 13th December between 5.30pm and 6.30pm.

Whilst visitors wander the house dressed for a Tudor Christmas, they can listen in to a range of Christmas carols and music suitable to be sung in the Chapel there.

Normal admission prices apply.

Come and join us!



CASP

Merry Christmas from CASP!

Stuck for Christmas present ideas?

How about putting up a swift box ?

A swift box would make a wonderful Christmas present that may attract these wonderful birds back to Shipbourne.

Go to RSPB's website to find out how to buy or make a box and find out if you may have a suitable location under your eaves.

CASP are hoping to have a table at the Farmers' Market in the New Year, which will have tips and ideas for helping us address the challenges of climate.... watch this space!

Looking forward to another year, and wishing you a very happy Christmas

Do join us!

shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com



TALES FROM NIGHTINGALE COTTAGE

Nightingale Cottage is a 'learning hub' where home-educated pupils socialise and learn together. With Christmas just around the corner, the children have been busy working on an enterprise project - making decorations, discussing pricing strategies, and writing and shooting the following advertisement:

Handmade, festive decorations for your home, made with love.

1 pack of 3: £5
2 packs of 3: £8
3 packs of 3: £10

The perfect gift for your loved ones.

You can view the decorations in colour on our instagram, [@nightingale_cottage_shipbourne](#).

Please email nightingalekent@gmail.com to place your order!



www.nightingale-cottage.com

SHIPBOURNE WI

Members were awaiting the talk at our recent meeting with some curiosity, the title being "Wrinkles Don't Matter!" The upshot was a fascinating account of make-up and image through the ages, with a catalogue of do's and don'ts. Helen Kendall-Tobias, who works as a personal shopper and a specialist in colour and style detailed treatments from those of Elizabeth 1st to the present day, including how rose-tinted lenses disguise marking around the eyes.

The theme of the talk was about how we age, rather than worrying about wrinkles, so watch out for a rejuvenated Shipbourne WI!

Events for the future include a walk in Knole Park, lunch at The Swan in West Peckham, and Book Club when we shall be discussing "Death with a Double Edge", by Anne Perry. Members who play Scrabble continue to meet regularly.

Christmas festivities include a Christmas lunch at The Rifleman, and a Murder Mystery party at Dene Park, which we are all anticipating eagerly.

On behalf of Shipbourne WI, we wish everyone a very Happy Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Glynis Coates

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No job too small, based in Dunk's Green.
Any jobs that the trades aren't interested in.
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SHIPBOURNE SCHOOL NEWS

It has been some time since writing an entry for the village magazine. We hope that you are all well and have had a good year. At Shipbourne School, we have had a busy start to the year, having finished last year with a glowing Ofsted inspection topped off with a whole school trip to Godstone Farm and an inflatables and ice cream fun day. We welcomed nine new pupils and their families back in September, meeting together for a PTA Family Social to welcome everyone back to the new school year. We have also held two open events for prospective families and have two more sessions in the diary if you know any families who are looking for Reception places from September 2025. Details are on our website. Excitingly, we are in the process of developing a brand new website. Look out for this online next month.

The PTA's main focus until last weekend was on our ever popular Bonfire and Fireworks party. Thank you for patiently allowing us to continue with this event which we know impacts the entire village. Fairlawne Estate generously permitted the use of the Back Lane field and once again we attracted over 1500 people on the night, accompanied by great weather for the first time in a few years. Through the incredible efforts of our PTA chair and her fabulous team, over £11,000 was raised which will provide us with the ability to enhance our school environment and resources so much more, benefitting every pupil.

Over the past two months, we have already enjoyed fantastic learning and enrichment opportunities. We have clubs after school every day and now offer wrap around care from 7.45am to 5.30pm. Our older pupils in Fairlawne Class have visited both the Churchill War Rooms and Science Museum, supplementing their history and science knowledge, and the whole school have been visited by a local dental practice and our PHSE provider Kate, from Coram Life Skills. We will all be heading off to enjoy Snow White at the EM Forster Theatre in December and are looking forward to further celebrating the Christmas season with carols around our tree, gratefully received from Fairlawne Estate, joined by Mr Swartz who will once again turn on our lights; carols at the Farmers' Market and a party and craft day, to which Father Christmas has been invited!

Looking ahead to next term, our older children are busy preparing for the event of the year: Young Voices at the O2. We join thousands of other children and sing throughout the afternoon and evening with professional musicians, to the joy of all the parents in the

audience. At the end of the Spring Term, our long-serving Business Manager, will be retiring, as did Mrs Leafe, last Easter. Losing staff that have been a central and vital role to our school for many years brings unwelcome change, but we know that they both have certainly earned a rest and a break from the daily school routine. The role of Partnership Business Manager has now been advertised on Kent Teach, if you know anyone with the skills for this role. We are also seeking additional governors to join our experience board. If you or someone you know would like to find out more about either of these opportunities, please get in touch by email, over the phone or by calling into school.

We wish you all well for the Christmas Season and for a very happy and healthy 2025!

Terri Daters
Headteacher, Shipbourne School
Part of The Bourne Partnership

USED STAMPS FOR THE R.N.I.B

I would like to thank everyone who has left used postage stamps at the back of the Church. It has taken over a year to collect sufficient stamps to weigh a total in excess of 1 kilo, but I have now managed to achieve this. 1 kilo of stamps should raise £20 for the RNIB, so I think it is a worthwhile thing to do.

So please keep collecting for me.
Jenny Porter

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Please send any articles and adverts for the January Newsletter by **15th December**. A digital version of the Newsletter is also uploaded on www.shipbourne.com. Please email articles to lindsay_miles@btinternet.com or call 01732 810439.



A Tudor Christmas at Ightham Mote

With a roaring fire, a Tudor feast and music of celebration there is lots for the whole family to discover and enjoy at Ightham Mote this Christmas.

Family Activities

Mice at the Mote Christmas Trail

23 November - 5 January

There's a mouse in the house! See if you can spot all the mice hidden around the garden and house this Christmas with this FREE trail.

A Taste of Tudor Christmas

15 & 22 December

Discover traditions of a Tudor Christmas with festive cooking demonstrations, bringing history to life for the whole family. (Booking not required, check website for details.)

Children's Tudor Christmas Crafts

8 & 14 December

Little ones can create tree decorations and festive cards with our learning team.

Music & Choirs

Carols in the Courtyard

Enjoy the beautiful voices of many local groups and choirs.

1 December: Plaxtol Singers

13 December: Plaxtol Scholars (New Chapel.)

6 & 19 December: Tonbridge Rock Choir

20 December: A Capella Choir

7 December: The Martlets

21 December: Musical Memories

8 December: Show of Hands BSL Choir

29 December: Kent Recorder Society

11 December: Ightham School Choir

(Check website for timings & details.)

GreenMatthews Historical Musicians

23 & 24 November

Get in the Christmas spirit 16th-century style with Tudor songs, tunes and carols played on a variety of weird and wonderful historical instruments.

Christmas Crafts

Wreath Making Workshop

30 November

Create an elegant festive wreath with Flower & Glory's expert florists, whilst enjoying a glass of prosecco. (Booking required, £75 per person.)

Potterati Ceramic Decoration Painting Workshop

7 December

Bauble Painting - Create personalised ceramic baubles for your tree or as unique gifts. (Booking required, £20 per bauble.)

Plate Painting - Design and create a festive-themed ceramic plate, perfect as a gift or for christmassy snacks. (Booking required, £25 per plate.)

(Check website for timings & details.)

Shopping

Christmas Shopping Weekend

23 & 24 November

Join us for a Tudor Christmas opening weekend and get a head start on your Christmas shopping in our stunning new shop. Local creators will be offering one-of-a-kind gifts, handcrafted items and delicious seasonal treats.

Late Night Openings until 7pm

6, 13 & 20 December

Join us for a late-night opening and enjoy our festive decorations, full of twinkling lights, flickering candles and greenery from our garden. (Booking not required.)

Walks & Talks

Author Talk and Book Signing with Melita Thomas

28 November

Discover the rise and fall of the Grey family and their history at Ightham Mote with historian Melita Thomas. (Booking required, £25 per person. See website for more details.)

Winter Walks

26 December & 1 January

Walk off that Christmas dinner or get the New Year off to a good start with our winter walks. (Booking required, £18 per person, see website for details.)

For more information on our Christmas offer or to book your place on our exciting events visit nationaltrust.org.uk/ightham-mote or call 01732 810378

Scan me!



THE WEATHER IN OCTOBER

The average day temp. was 19.7°C, the average night temp. was 8.7°C, the highest day was Wednesday 16th with 25.5°C, the lowest night temp. was Friday 11th with 3.0°C, the total rainfall was 105mm, the average rainfall over the last 30 years was 96.6mm, with the highest year being October 2000 with 218mm, the lowest year was October 2015 with 11.0mm.

Lionel Stielow



**FOLLOW SHIPBOURNE ON FACEBOOK FOR VILLAGE NEWS,
INFORMATION AND EVENTS**

@shipbournevillage



Carols and Christmas Celebrations with Hospice in the Weald

Book the **17th of December** in your diary for these events

Children's Christmas Celebration.

A magical hour for young children to sing along with festive favourites, play games and listen to Christmas stories and poems. Doors open at 1-30pm for the fun to start at 2-00pm!

Tickets: Children, £5, Adults, £10, Children under two, free.

Carols at Christmas

An occasion for all the family, of festive music, readings and performance.

This year, for the first time, The Royal Tunbridge Wells Orpheus Male Choir, and the Tonbridge Community Singers will be performing. Doors open at 6.00pm for a 6.30pm start, with an 8.00pm finish.

Afterwards you are invited to join us for a drink and mince pie.

Adult tickets are £30, and £15 for children.

Venue and Booking

Both events are taking place in the atmospheric and beautiful Chapel of St Augustine at Tonbridge School, High Street, Tonbridge, TN9 1JP.

To book your tickets, and to receive more details, visit the events section at hospiceintheweald.org.uk, or contact the Fundraising Team on 01892 820533.

We look forward to seeing you there.

All proceeds help to fund the free care and support Hospice in the Weald offers to adults and children in our community facing life-limiting and illness.

FROM YOUR LOCAL MP

As I write my final column of the year, I wanted to reflect on how momentous 2024 has been, both in Shipbourne and across the country too.

My year has hardly been quiet - a General Election in which I am honoured to have had so much support, and a leadership election that was, well, less successful!

We have also seen a change of Government and some unexpected outcomes from elections around the world, including most recently in the US. Many of these results have happened for similar reasons - economic outlooks are challenging, and we need to support those building a future. That's why the Budget was so disappointing. We all want better public services and the reforms that deliver them, but we also know that you can't tax your way to growth any more than you can use the brakes to accelerate.

Now that I am no longer in Government, I am looking forward to bringing even more attention to the communities that we share and the needs that we have in our corner of Kent. Our future, our security and our prosperity are all dependent on the choices that we make. I look forward to continuing to play my part.

I hope everyone across the village enjoys a restful Christmas and New Year period. After an intense few years, I am looking forward to spending some time with my family. As always, I will remain available to help anyone in need throughout Christmas and into the New Year. My contact details are as follows:

E-mail: tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

Phone: 01732 441563

Social Media: @TomTugendhat

Tom Tugendhat

EVERGREEN CHRISTMAS

As Christmas approaches wreath making using all sorts of coloured material is a popular pastime in our villages and we will admire them as a decoration and sign of welcome hung on our front doors and in our porches. But only greenery will decorate our churches during Advent, the four weeks leading up to Christmas Eve. The clergy explain that this is in preparation for the birth of Christ but this practice may have been based in pagan traditions and customs.

In Britain there are very few native evergreen trees: yew, box, holly, juniper and Scots pine are the major ones. Where the gulf stream touches these isles the strawberry tree, *Arbutus unedo*, is another. There are many woods in Shipbourne - Point Wood in Dene Park, The Hoad, Peacock and Barrwood, Cold Blows and South Seers Wood south of Ightham Mote - and some on the edges of Plaxtol - The Hurst to the east of the Parish and High Beeches and Scathes Wood west towards the Mote. And among the oak, beech and coppiced chestnut that flourish in them are seedlings of yew and holly whilst the ancient ground cover and climber of ivy is everywhere, a haven for wildlife.

*The holly & the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.*

Holly has been used as a holiday decoration for over 2000 years. In Celtic and Druid Britain holly was sacred associated as it was with the winter solstice of Yule on 21 December. Celts used holly to decorate their houses not only to give protection to fairies from the forest but also to safeguard their houses against evil spirits.

It was thought then that holly was a very male plant, ivy a female one. Holly represented life, ivy represented birth. The Celts revered the evergreen properties of the holly leaf and the green of its leaf and red of its berry have come to represent the colours of Christmas.

Yule, the Wheel of the Year, celebrated both the shortest day and the rebirth of the sun. The Celts believed that the 'Holly King' ruled over winter and the 'Oak King' - or the Green Man - over summer. The Celts were skilled craftsmen who could make not only good tools but also beautiful objects.

The Celtic Yule tree, usually a pine, was hung with their bright, handmade decorative objects symbolising the sun, moon and stars. In the past apples would sometimes be used to decorate pine branches in church – the apple representing the forbidden fruit – and red or green apples often feature on our garlands, wreaths and Christmas trees today.

Holly was also sacred to the invading Romans as being associated with their Sun God, Saturn. When the Romans retreated the Jutes – the original ‘Men of Kent’ - settled in Kent in the 4th century, followed elsewhere by the Angles and Saxons. The pagan customs, rituals and beliefs of all these ancient peoples of Britain were assimilated into the Christian church calendar to encourage acceptance and participation.

In the Middle Ages and certainly since the 15th century wreaths and garlands of holly and ivy have been used in homes to ward off evil spirits. Today these are often augmented by conifer branches embellished with decorative coloured objects for cheering effect whilst those used for decoration in our churches at Christmas time remain simply green. Perhaps, this Christmas time, keep with tradition and Middle Age madrigals and ‘Deck the hall with boughs of holly, Fa-la-la-la-la, la, la la’!

Libby Cohen



02/25)

CHRISTMAS AT SHIPBOURNE FARMERS MARKET **(Local produce made/grown by Local producers)**



The Market will be open every Thursday as usual up to and including Thursday 19th December. A special “pick up” Market will take place on Monday 23rd December from 8.30am to 10.30am, mainly for pre-orders of meat and vegetables but other stallholders may also attend.

We are delighted to be welcoming an array of carol singers to the Market in December. Shipbourne Primary School will sing on Thursday 12th December and the Tonbridge Community Choir will sing at the final 2024 Market on 19th December.

The Co-operative Stall will be selling Christmas cards, with all proceeds going to the St Giles’ Restoration Fund. This year’s image depicts a beautifully lit Christmas Eve carol service at St Giles and cards will be sold in packs of 5.

We have added a few additional stalls for Christmas and welcome back ‘Patisserie Lingaud’ (Ira) who will be bringing her delicious chocolates and ‘Sandhurst Flower Hut’ (Jo) who will be bringing dried flowers and wreaths and bulb arrangements. Natasha will be bringing her pottery, Ightham Wood Products will be at all December markets with their beautifully crafted wooden boards and Christmas decorations and Littlehouse Stars will return with uniquely upcycled wooden barn stars.

As well as his usual breads and pastries, our baker, Ridwan, will be drawing on his German heritage for Christmas and will be offering bakes you would usually find at a German Christmas market. These include Linzertorte, Stollen, Spekulatius, Zimsterne and Eilsen Lebkuchen. Samples will be available at Ridwan’s stall.

Christmas presents can be ticked off your list too. Mittens, scarves, hats, toys and tree decorations made by Rosemary from yarn provided by her herd of alpacas are perfect presents. Or how about some interesting spirits made by our own local Greensand Distillery, including G&T gift bags for £10 or sparkling and still wines to rival the best in the UK, created by our local vineyards - Yotes Court and Meophams. To improve your leftovers once Christmas Day is over, try the variety of chutneys made by Winsford House Produce (who

will also be selling jar gift boxes which you can mix and match yourself). A variety of cheeses will be available from Winterdale and beautiful cards, Christmas decorations and stationery items will be available from Arty Bee Designs. Don't forget to pre-order your Christmas cake and/or pud from Debra Cake and Bake and stock up on cobnut granola from Roughway Farm before it runs out.

Support your local producers and buy local this Christmas. We have a great selection of meats – maybe a haunch of venison, or a magnificent roast of beef on the bone, pork, or lamb? Or keep with tradition and stick to turkey or goose. If you are catering for smaller numbers how about pheasant or duck? For fish lovers, smoked salmon, fresh turbot or halibut are available (please order in advance). Whatever you choose, buying locally means you are supporting small local producers and have the satisfaction of caring for the environment too.

We have a great selection of vegetables from Watts Farms so try something different. If you are unsure how to cook (or store) it have a look at our 'What's In Season' section of our web site (www.kfma.org.uk) where we are building a comprehensive directory of produce in season plus how to prep and store it.

To order Christmas produce in advance, individual stallholders will organise their own order lists so please ask them for details and make sure you order as early as possible.

Please note the market will re-open after a Christmas break on January 16th 2025.

We would like to thank all of our customers, stallholders and volunteers for supporting Shipbourne Farmers' Market throughout 2024 and send our best wishes to everyone for a peaceful Christmas and 2025.

Shipbourne Farmers' Market Christmas Dates

12th December:	Carols from Shipbourne Primary School
19th December:	Carols from Tonbridge Community Choir
23rd December:	Pick up Market
16th January:	Market returns

COOKERY CORNER

JAMIE OLIVER'S BRILLIANT BRUSSELS

Serves 10 / Takes 55 mins

Ingredients:

- 2 onions
- ½ a bunch of fresh thyme (15g) or sage (10g)
- 6 rashers of smoked streaky bacon
- olive oil
- 200g vac-packed chestnuts, roasted and peeled (shelled weight)
- 1kg Brussels sprouts
- 2 large knobs of unsalted butter

Method:

1. Peel and chop the onions, then pick and finely chop the thyme leaves.
2. Place a large pan on a high heat to get nice and hot. Slice the bacon into chunky strips and put in the pan with a drizzle of oil, then immediately turn the heat down to medium. Fry for a few minutes, or until lightly golden, then crumble in the chestnuts.
3. Fry for about 5 minutes, or until deep golden, then add the onions and sage. Turn the heat down to low and cook slowly for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Meanwhile, trim the Brussels and peel away any tatty outer leaves, halving any larger ones through the core and keeping the smaller ones whole.
5. Place the Brussels in a large saucepan over a high heat for a couple of minutes, then, once the pan is nice and hot, cover with boiling salted water.
6. Boil for 5 minutes, or until just tender but with a little bite. Taste to check – they should be slightly undercooked.
7. Drain the Brussels, then stir through the chestnut mixture, scraping up any lovely sticky bits from the bottom of the pan.
8. Add the butter and season to perfection, then serve right away, or cover and store in the fridge, reheating in the pan when needed.



The Kentish Rifleman

Dunk's Green, TN11 9RU 01732 810727

Born in the 1500s, our traditional family run pub is open daily from 11.30am. By the cosy fire or out in the beer garden, we offer home-made food, local beers, a lovely selection of wines and spirits and a friendly atmosphere. Please book your table on 01732 810727 or on our website.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

www.thekentishrifleman.co.uk

02/25

REPAIR CAFE Tonbridge



DO YOU HAVE BROKEN HOUSEHOLD ITEMS ?
Bring them to our repair cafe

REPAIRS OFFERED :

Electrical : Electronics : Mechanical : Wood : Clothing :
Textiles : China repair : Toys : Knife & Scissor sharpening

Saturday 11 Jan

Saturday 8 Feb

Saturday 8 March

Saturday 12 April

Saturday 10 May

10am - 12:30pm

Last repair accepted at 12:00pm or
when capacity has been reached

FREE Voluntary contribution welcome

ENJOY Refreshments at the St Stephen's Cafe

St Stephen's Church

Waterloo Road, Tonbridge, TN9 2SW



tonbridgerepaircafe.uk FB: @tonbridgerepaircafe IG: @tonbridgerepaircafe
Email: tonbridgerepaircafe@gmail.com Tel: 07470 141035



SHIPBOURNE CLASSIFIEDS

Simple Domestic and Personal Advertisements, up to four lines, are free to Newsletter readers. This free category includes items for sale or wanted, baby-sitting, dog walking, domestic needs etc. **To ensure Shipbourne Classifieds is kept up to date, each domestic/personal advertisement will be published in the Newsletter for three months and then removed unless requested otherwise.**

Business Advertisements up to four lines are charged at £1 per monthly issue or £10 for a whole year of 12 issues Also available are up to half-page display advertisements, charged at £10 per monthly issue, or £100 for a full year of 12 issues.

All revenue raised from Shipbourne Classifieds goes towards St Giles and the printing costs of the Newsletter.

Disclaimer: Please note that the St Giles and Shipbourne Newsletter cannot be held responsible for the quality of the goods or services advertised in the Newsletter.

NEW: YAMAHA ELECTONE HS-4 ELECTRIC ORGAN SYNTHESISER WITH STOOL

Model introduced 1987 and probably bought that year. Inherited recently. Seems good order but cannot give any assurances. One careful lady owner! We live in Ivy Hatch. No charge but donation to St Giles' Church Restoration Appeal suggested. Please message 07584 517383. (02/25)

FOR SALE DUE TO SELLING HOUSE:

- Pale blue covered chaise longue
- 6 John Lewis dining chairs with cream linen seats
- Reupholstered fireside chair (blue fabric)
- Reupholstered fireside chair and small sofa (light maroon/stone linen floral print)
- Set of white bathroom furniture (small cupboards, shelves, etc)

All items in excellent condition. Please text 07881 621036 for photos (12/24)

JOANNE LOUISE BEAUTY - Offering Gel Nails, builder gel, ELIM pedicures and LVL lashes from my home studio in Shipbourne. I am fully insured and accredited, offering evening and Sunday appointments. Keep an eye on my Instagram for updates @joannelouisebeauty_ For any questions or to book an appointment I can be contacted on 07894054015 or email joanne@joannelouisebeauty.co.uk (02/25)

FOOT CARE PODIATRIST/CHIROPODIST at my clinic in central Hildenborough. Gentle and effective care for your feet. Alice Neale MRCPod BSC Hons HCPC registered. Contact telephone 01732 832524 or text 07951949015 (02/25)

HAIR BY SHARON - Mobile hairdresser, for prices or to make an appointment please call 01732 773043 (02/25)

SALLY OSBORNE - ELECTRICIAN: NAPIT Part P approved. All domestic electrical work undertaken. To arrange a free quote please contact me on 07710 443079 or email salvioz@blueyonder.co.uk (02/25)

DAVID ROWE Plumbing & Heating, a reliable engineer for all your domestic requirements including: boiler installation, servicing and repairs, full heating systems, radiators, hot water cylinders, power-flushing, gas fires, gas cookers, bathrooms. Please contact David, 07715266311 or email droweph@virginmedia.com (02/25)

LOCAL WASP NEST TREATMENT: Fast, efficient, reliable. Andy Wasp 07833 558773 (02/25)



Thank you to everyone who contributes articles to the newsletter and those who help with the printing and distribution – your help is very much appreciated.

Sending very best wishes and good health to all our readers for Christmas and 2025.