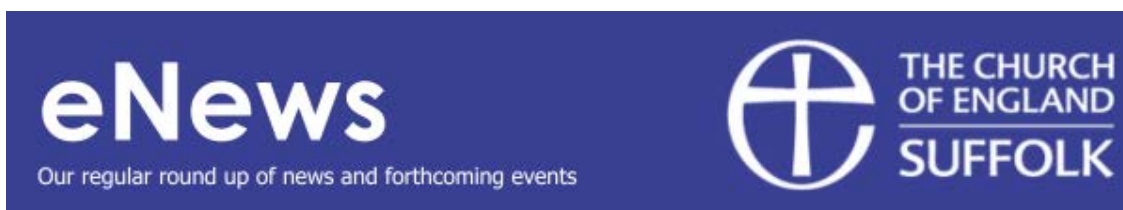


Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events from our diocese

[View this email in your browser](#)

Thursday 6 November 2025



Inter-faith week

This year Inter-faith week is 9–16 November, this is an opportunity to build bridges and celebrate the incredible diversity of faith and belief across the UK. [Inter-Faith Week](#) is a powerful annual initiative dedicated to strengthening inter-faith relations, fostering mutual understanding and showcasing the invaluable contributions of faith communities. Three key events are happening during the week:

Panel Discussion: On Marriage & Meaning | 12 November, at 12.30pm to 4.30pm, at University of Suffolk: Join Panel Chair Dr Amanda Hodgkinson, Director for Suffolk Centre of Culture and Heritage at the University of Suffolk, and panel members Raj Mistry, Hindu community; Shkar Abdullah, Muslim community; Robin Herne, Pagan community; Tom Mumford, Christian community; Dayasara, Buddhist community; Adele Chaplin, Humanist community, for this lively discussion. For more information and to register see: [University of Suffolk Unlocked: An Interfaith Conversation](#)

'A Church for England' talk | Ipswich Minster, 12 November at 7.30pm: Join Rabbi Miriam Lorie of Kehillat Nashira, Jewish Educator and BBC Radio2 contributor, on 'What should a good Church of England look like for people of other faiths? A Jewish perspective'.

Inter-faith Work: The Work of the People of God? | 13 November 7.00pm to 9.00pm, St Lawrence's Church, Brundish: Please join the Revd Tom Mumford as we explore prayerfully what interfaith work looks like, and how we might better build relationships and understanding between people of all world faiths.

£95,350 awarded to Suffolk churches by the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

Grants totalling over £95,000 were awarded to 17 churches; the successful churches were: St Nicholas, Bedfield; St Mary, Bildeston; Holy Trinity, Blythburgh; St Peter, Brampton; St John, Butley; St Peter, Copdock; St Martin, Fornham St Martin; St Margaret, Herringfleet; All Saints, Holbrook; All Hallows, Ipswich; St Margaret of Antioch, Linstead Parva; St Botolph, North Cove; All Saints, Rede; All Saints, Saxtead; and St Peter, Spexhall.

The work that will be undertaken in the churches includes work on roofs, gutters, windows, WCs and kitchens, but the grants included a number of enabling grants for

bigger projects. One was for a payment for archaeological work before building; assessment of a nave wall for movement before embarking on a major project; funding to appoint a fundraiser for a lottery grant and the first phase of a project for restoring wall paintings where they needed a preliminary report to define what had to be done. This will help churches to get the initial work underway, which they find difficult to fund, before applying for major grants for the actual work.

The grant money is raised by the annual Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride Day and the Suffolk Churches vintage and classic car rally, Pedal & Drive. Next year it will be held on Saturday 12 September 2026.

Workhouse dedication in St Peter & St Paul Church, Kedington



The Risbridge Union Workhouse built in 1856, also known as Risbridge Poor Law Institution and Risbridge Hospital, was eventually pulled down. Hundreds of people lived and died there and although all those who died were given a Christian funeral, most were too poor to afford a headstone to mark their grave. Now, thanks to the generosity of local councillors' locality budgets and H.J. Paintin Ltd, Funeral Directors, there is a permanent headstone to remember them. They will also be listed in a book which will be kept in the church so that those who may come looking for the grave of a relative who lived in Risbridge will be able to search for their name and see the

headstone.

The Revd Christopher Giles dedicated the headstone on 27 September 2025. He said that the story of Risbridge has been revealed to him during his five years here by the people who lived and worked in the village. He is immensely pleased that there is now a headstone to mark the place where hundreds are buried. Chris said this project, which has involved many people, reflects the kindness and community spirit he has experienced in Kedington.

Report on the Messy Church Conference 2025



Pauline Milsted, Licensed Children's and Families' Minister in the Blyth Valley Team, attended the Messy Church Conference in June this year. The theme was 'All Together' and the conference offered a fantastic time of coming together in fellowship, encouraging conversations, excitement, inspiration, fantastic food, new friendships and fun. Pauline said, "There were 14

countries at this international conference where we all came together to share how we are sharing God with children and families through Messy Church (or our children, youth and family work). The enthusiasm and passion that worked its way through all conversations truly re-set the fire inside me. In the Blyth Valley Churches, we do many elements of Messy Church but currently do not run a typical Messy Church. This didn't matter as there was still lots of inspiration, encouragement and ideas shared".

The conference outlined the new Church of England Missional Funded project 'Messy Momentum' which focuses on what happens with our 12 to 16 year olds when they phase out of 'traditional' Messy Church, and/or as a group want something different. Pauline

continued, *"It was really inspiring to hear about the pilots that will be launching in Autumn with potential funding for those who already have a Messy Church. We discussed all of the developing ideas in groups, and I was in a group with the amazing Lucy Moore (original founder of Messy Church), trying not to fan girl and concentrate on the task in hand!"* [To read Pauline's full report please visit Insight here.](#)

Housing Justice: The Housing Justice has launched a range of resources for churches looking to address the housing shortage by turning redundant land and buildings into affordable homes for their communities. The Faith in Affordable Housing (FiAH) team has worked closely with churches of all denominations across England and Wales for the duration of the project; providing advice and resources, as well as connecting churches with suitable housing associations, as part of the charity's work towards ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs. [Find out more here.](#)

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Clergy available to visit parishes: Dean Joe and Canon Katy are both keen to be out and about at churches within the Diocese approximately one Sunday a month each. This may, or may not, be to provide cover to churches in vacancy. On a practical note, it is helpful to have as much notice as possible, usually at least three months. To invite the Dean please email his PA, [Erin Seligman](#), or please email [Canon Katy](#) to make her an invitation.



The Revd Jenny Seggar will be leading Together we Pray next week, from Monday - Friday

Mission and Ministry Events

Handling Conflict Constructively Saturday 17 January 9.00am - 4.30pm |
Saxmundham Church Hall, Saxmundham IP17 1ES

As part of the commitment to equip Church Leaders for the challenges of ministry, we are running a Bridge Builders 'Handling Conflict Constructively' training day. The day will start

at 9.00am with welcoming drinks, with the course starting promptly at 9.30am. Lunch is included. For more information on Bridge Builders as an organisation [please see their website](#).

Places are free of charge but numbers are limited and are being offered on a first-to-respond basis. If you would like to take up the offer of this valuable training, please register [here](#).

Save the date - Fieldwork: Celebrating Rural Mission and Ministry in Suffolk



Come and join us on 28 February 2026 for this diocesan day conference for church members, PCC members, those in our church schools, lay ministers and clergy from our rural parishes, as a time to hear from great speakers, share our stories of joy and challenge, and be encouraged and inspired. It is being organised by rural ministers with the help of diocesan staff and is free to attend. More details including a booking link will follow soon.

Flourish | Saturday 2 May 2026, 9.00am | The Salvation Army Hall, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

An invitation to all Readers, Licensed Lay Ministers and Lay Elders to join us for our annual study day. The guest speaker this year is the Revd Dr Thomas Sharp from St Augustine's College of Theology. A core part of Thomas's teaching focuses on human flourishing, especially how Christians care for others in times of hardship. The morning session focuses on Pastoral Care in a Broken World and the afternoon session is on the Theology of Safeguarding – what does it mean to care? Reserve your free space now! Click here: [Flourish - Insight CofE Suffolk](#).

Events and training

PCC Workshops | Zoom

You are invited to join topic-based one-hour Zoom meetings led by Diocesan staff and parish experts. Suitable for Treasurers, Churchwardens, PCC members and administrators, as well as clergy and LLMs. Each session will involve sharing information and a short presentation. Here are the details of the workshops:

Digital Giving | 12.00pm, Wednesday 12 November | [Book here](#)

Friends | 1.00pm, Thursday 13 November | [Book here](#)

Writing a Net Zero Carbon Action Plan for your Parish | 12.00pm, Tuesday 18 November | [Book here](#)

Through the Roof – Suffolk Roofbreaker Network Disability Awareness Workshop

Saturday 15 November, 9.00am–11.30am, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Back Hamlet, Ipswich

IP3 8AJ

Hosted by the Suffolk Roofbreaker Network – part of a huge network of volunteers with the charity 'Through the Roof' – working with disabled people, seeking to make our churches places that disabled people can *Access*, can *Belong* in and can be *Commissioned*. Join a free two-hour workshop to see how your church can break down barriers that prevent disabled people from fully taking part in church life; learn from Jesus' approach to disabled people; hear from disabled Christians' lived experience and explore suitable for all roles within your church. [Book here.](#)

Creation Care Network (formally Diocesan Environment Network)

Monday 17 November at 7.00pm via Zoom

This network is for Deanery Eco Champions and anyone else who is keen to take an active part in creation care in their benefice or deanery. The meeting will be looking at the updated Diocesan Environment Policy and exploring how to implement it through practical initiatives. Network meetings are an opportunity to share what's happening, discuss ideas and difficulties and to support each other. For details of the meeting, please contact the Revd Canon Alison Alder at: environment@cofesuffolk.org.

"God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created for the benefit of all and for future generations, and if we have taken care of our brothers and sisters. What will be our answer, my dear friends?" Pope Leo XIV

Digital Surgery

Tuesday 18 November – St Edmundsbury Cathedral from 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm

Join members of the Parish Resources Team to find out more about enhancing the digital giving presence in your parish. Come along and have a one-to-one session with one of our Giving Advisors to find out about purchasing or borrowing a contactless device, setting up online giving (including QR codes), get your contactless device repaired or updated with new campaigns, and finding out how to have an effective online giving presence on your ACNY or website pages. For more information email [Emma Denton](#), Diocesan Giving Advisor. [Book here.](#)

The Challenge of Changing Funeral Ministry | Wednesday 19 November, 9.30am - 1.00pm | Zoom

This event, held by Transforming Worship, will explore how changes in culture are significantly changing funeral practices. This can be seen particularly in light of a new trend, that of immediate cremation after death, often called 'direct' cremation, with no formal funeral service at all. Without a funeral, how do relatives and friends experience a 'proper ending', a 'good send-off', and a putting a loved one 'to rest'? Cost of the event is £5, to book please contact the [Revd Helen Bent](#).

Understanding and working with relationship and family dynamics, Friday 28 November, 9.00am to 4.00pm | St Andrew's Church Hall, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich IP5 1DH

This workshop is offered by Inspire Counselling and Training. Facilitated by Dr Jan Fish, an

accredited counsellor, supervisor and trainer. This day is suitable for student and qualified counsellors, supervisors, ministers and church leaders, pastoral and youth workers, teachers and teaching assistants together with anyone with an interest in working with families. The day will be interactive and experiential, exploring approaches to understanding the human need for relationships and the powerful unconscious dynamics that occur within families. Full information is available [here](#).

Advent retreat day - 'I am the Vine, you are the branches' - led by Sarah Wallington-Smith

Thursday 27 November | Lark Rise, 230 Ferry Road, Felixstowe (limited to 12 people)

Friday 28 November | Metfield, near Halesworth

Saturday 29 November | Lark Rise, 230 Ferry Road, Felixstowe (limited to 12 people)

All days run from 10.00am – 4.00pm and cost £25/person including refreshments and lunch. More details and bookings are on www.larkriseretreats.org or call Catherine Bond or Jane Pearse on 01394 284213.

Church Community Services and Events

Heritage Morning and 'Gift Day' | Saturday 8 November, 9.30am to 12.30pm | St Mary's Church, Woodbridge IP12 4LP

As a focal point of Woodbridge for many centuries, St Mary's Church has so many stories to tell and you are invited to come along for a rare opportunity to: join a mini church tour led by Canon Roy Tricker BEM; climb the 52 steps to the ringing chamber; view the church from high up in the vestry; look inside the organ and view the amazing five-volume record of all the church artefacts. There will be activities for children, and refreshments will be available. This day is part of Building Project Appeal fundraising for replacement heating. To find out more please visit the website [here](#).

Requiem and Gloria | Saturday 15 November, 7.00pm | Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford CO10 9DL

A concert to honour the 80th birthday of John Rutter with an invited orchestra. Tickets £18 (children and students £5) available now from Sudbury Tourist Office in the Town Hall, Juniper Flowers in North Street and from [TicketSource](#).

War Graves Talk by Nik Chapman | Sunday 16 November 2.00pm, St Mary's Church, Wortham IP22 1RJ

Join a talk by volunteer Nik Chapman on War Graves and the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Tickets £8 available from Wortham Post Office, from Bridget McAuslan (07747 620003) or on the door. Tea/coffee and cake available after the talk. In aid of the Nave Roof Appeal.

Safeguarding Sunday | Sunday 16 November

This initiative, spearheaded by Thirtyone:eight, invites communities to come together to reflect on their safeguarding journey, and highlight all the good work that is being done to

create safer places. [Find out more about Safeguarding Sunday here](#). Last year over 5,000 churches took part in Safeguarding Sunday, with an estimated reach of 250,000 people. If you [register](#) you will have access to lots of free digital resources to help make your event a success including sermon ideas, children's talks, intergeneration service ideas, bible study, videos, victim-survivor support and more.

Light Up a Life Remembrance Events | St Nicholas Hospice | Various locations starting from 23 November. Full list of dates and locations [available here](#).

The Light Up a Life events are free and open to all. They offer a meaningful way to come together as a community during the festive season and share a moment of reflection, with music and readings. You are invited, should you wish, to have the names of those you want to remember read out at an event. You can do this by visiting their [website here](#).

Christmas Crib Weekend | 29-30 November, 10.00pm to 4.00pm, All Saints Church, Great Glemham IP17 2DA

The Christmas crib or Nativity scene originates from Saint Francis of Assisi's first "living" nativity in Greccio, Italy, in 1223, inspired by his pilgrimage to Bethlehem. This weekend, why not visit the church which will be full of cribs so you can enjoy many versions of this traditional scene and read their stories. Refreshments will be served. At 4.00pm on Sunday 30 November there will be a Advent Service of Darkness to Light with special music from the Alde River Choir.

Coptic Pilgrimage | Tuesday 2 December, 10.00am - 4.00pm | Arranged by St Edmundsbury Cathedral,

Shephalbury Manor in Stevenage has been home to The Coptic Orthodox Church Centre in the UK for over two decades. The pilgrimage includes an audience with Archbishop Angaelos of London, and the option to celebrate an Anglican Eucharist. Tickets cost £15 and will cover drinks and lunch. Transport will be via rail or shared cars. If you are interested in taking part in the trip, please contact [Mark Haworth](#).

Hexachordia: Heigh-ho, the Holly! | Sunday 7 December, 4.00pm | St Margaret's Church, Ipswich IP4 2BT

Music, mirth and merriment for the festive season, as this hour-long concert reveals what Christmas and New Year was like for folk at all levels of society in the 16th and 17th centuries. Come along and hear the Medieval and Tudor origins of today's familiar carols in one of Hexachordia's final concerts together as they play the gittern, vielle, crumhorn, lute, viol, recorder and bagpipes. Complimentary hot drinks and cake served after the concert. Tickets £8.00 standard, £5.00 concession for children, students and carers. [Click here](#) to secure your tickets or contact office.stmagsips@gmail.com or text/phone 07733 609661.

Francis Young "Terrors made flesh: M. R. James and the theology of the Christmas ghost story" | Friday 12 December, 6.00pm | St John the Evangelist, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1SN

Join this lecture by Francis Young, a historian and folklorist who was born and brought up

in Bury St Edmunds. He is the author of over 20 non-fiction books including *Twilight of the Godlings* and *Silence of the Gods*, as well as a couple of collections of ghost stories. Tickets from [We Got Tickets](#) or contact Adrian Mann on 01284 753984 or at adrian.mann@btinternet.com.

Advent Event for Bury St Edmunds | Sunday 14 December, 7.00pm | St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RT

St Edmundsbury Cathedral's InHarmony project is working with Cantus Firmus Trust and Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District to present an Advent event for the town, entitled "Sharers in the Promise". The presentation uses music and drama to reflect on the coming of Jesus Christ – a promise of hope and salvation in which all can share. Admission is by free ticket, available at cantusfirmus.org.uk There will be a collection to help cover costs.

Parish Giving Scheme Digital Platform is now live!

Watch Grant Forrest's introduction: [Parish - The new Parish Giving Scheme platform is live!](#)

The next time you visit the PGS website, you'll need to reset your password and set up multi-factor authentication (MFA). This new feature has been introduced to further strengthen security and help protect against today's increasingly sophisticated cyber challenges (Using 'tkos.co.uk' for the authentication process, which ensures all your credentials are encrypted and secure).

There is a new parish portal, which can be accessed at: <https://parishportal.parishgiving.org.uk>. You'll find the 'parish portal' button under the 'Parishes' menu on the website. Please note, givers will use the login button located at the top right of the main website. If you need any assistance accessing your account, please email info@parishgiving.co.uk or call 0333 002 1260.

Upcoming webinars for PGS Statement Receivers: Getting to know the new PGS platform

PGS are hosting a series of webinars. During each of the sessions they will walk you through the refreshed website, highlight the new features, and demonstrate how to access and use the dynamic reporting tools.

Thursday 13 November | 10.00am [register here](#); 12.30pm [register here](#); 2.00pm [register here](#); 8.00pm [register here](#);

Friday 18 November | 10.00am [register here](#); 12.00pm [register here](#).

Updates and new PGS Registration Forms:

- Updates will continue to be shared via email to Statement Receivers and Givers, so please keep an eye on all communications from the PGS to stay informed. If you need any help or assistance please contact the PGS directly on info@parishgiving.org.uk or the Parish Resources Team pgs@cofesuffolk.org
- Find the new Registration Form and Terms & Conditions [here](#).

If you need any help or assistance please contact the PGS directly info@parishgiving.org.uk or the Diocesan Parish Resources Team pgs@cofesuffolk.org

Notices

Online Parish Returns System (OPRS): This is open to parishes wanting to input attendance figures on the number of people attending their church in person for services and other acts of worship during the first four weeks in October. This includes the number of people attending on Sundays and during the week (Monday to Saturday) .The OPRS can be accessed via following link <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org>. If you need help creating an account for the Online Parish Returns System, please send an email to statistics@cofesuffolk.org and we will be happy to help you.

Vacancies

[Choral Scholar](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 7 November
[Cathedral Safeguarding Officer](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 12 November
[Early Years Estates Pioneer](#) | Perfect Peace Project Lead | Closing date: 12 November
[Giving Advisor](#) | Parish Resources Team | Closing date: 13 November
[Rector](#) | North Bosmere Benefice | Closing date: 14 November
[Diocesan Treasurer](#) | Mothers' Union | Closing date: 15 November
[Regional Net Zero Carbon Fundraising Officer](#) | Closing date: 18 November
[Executive Assistant to the Diocesan Bishop](#) | Closing date: 21 November
[Vicar at St Peter & St Mary's Church](#) | Closing date: 27 November
[DAC Chair](#) | Voluntary Role | Closing date: 30 November
 Treasurer | All Saints' Church, Thorndon | Closing date: 30 November | Please [email here](#) for more information.
[Kids Pastor](#) | River Church | Closing date: 30 November
[Worship Pastor](#) | River Church | Closing date: 30 November
[Non-Executive Chapter Member](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral
[Cathedral Volunteers](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral
[Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral
[Architect and Fabric Surveyor](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral
[Associate Chaplain](#) | Sizewell C
 Part-time Youth Worker | All Saints' Church, Ipswich | Please [email here](#) for more information

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