Thursday 30 July 2026

eNews

Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUFFOLK

Bishop Joanne is delighted to announce the appointment of Revd Canon Stuart Batten as her new Bishop's Chaplain.



The role of Bishop's Chaplain is vital in supporting Bishop Joanne's ministry, serving as a trusted adviser, pastoral companion and theological sounding board, alongside helping to coordinate key aspects of Bishop Joanne's wider engagement with parishes, clergy, communities and partners across the Diocese.

Most recently serving as our Diocesan Director of Ordinands, Stuart is already a trusted colleague to many and he brings extensive knowledge of the Diocese, together with a wealth of experience in nurturing vocations and supporting individuals in their own ministry journey. Known for his exceptional pastoral care, warmth and humility, Stuart combines spiritual wisdom with a collaborative and approachable leadership style.

Bishop Joanne invites you to join in her warmly welcoming Stuart to this new role.

While we celebrate Stuart's appointment as Bishop's Chaplain, we also recognise the considerable experience, pastoral wisdom and diocesan knowledge he brings from his role as Diocesan Director of Ordinands. Therefore Stuart will continue to support this vitally important area of ministry over the summer, before he takes up his new role in September. Plans around Stuart's replacement will be announced in due course.

Churchyard nature project sparks life-long love of nature in schoolchildren

The Eco-Warriors project at St Peter's Church in Holton invites children from Holton St Peter Primary School, and its nursery, for an adventure discovering wildlife in the



spectacular church grounds. Run by Pauline Milsted, the church's Children, Family and Youth Minister, the scheme has been hugely popular, sparking a life-long love of nature in the children who attend.

The sessions are based around the Early Years Foundation Stage 'Understanding of the World', which helps children learn about the world around them and about change and decay over time. Pauline said in the future she would like to expand the scheme, inviting children from other schools. Last year, the church was awarded a Bronze Eco Church Award by Christian charity A Rocha UK. The Revd Alison Alde*r,* Diocesan Environment Officer said, *"As a church, we believe that caring for the environment is an important part of our Christian faith. By welcoming school children into our churchyard to explore bugs and wildlife, we are helping them to see the wonder of creation first-hand too."*

Read the full story here.



Celebrating Care for Creation 🌿 A service at the start of Creationtide to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Eco Church | Saturday 5 September, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Join us for our service of celebration to mark the 10th anniversary of A Rocha's Eco Church Awards. Come together to give thanks, celebrate achievements in caring for God's creation, and be inspired for the future. Please register so we are aware of numbers, register here so we know you are coming to this free event!

The Elizabeth Pathway: A Local Route to Ordained Ministry

The Elizabeth Pathway is a nationally-accredited training route designed for those in whom the Church discerns a vocation to ordained ministry, particularly people who feel called to serve in the communities where they already live and work. Delivered in partnership with Ripon College Cuddesdon, this two-year programme combines theological study, spiritual formation and vocational discernment. If you would like to explore whether ordination might be for you, click here to find out more.



Case study: The Revd Margaret Maybury**:** "*For many years, I have served my local community as a councillor, representing five parishes. My professional life has been rooted in service, whether as a former Cabinet Member for Communities, a director and trustee of various organisations, or through active involvement in local social groups and events.*

Yet alongside my public service has been a much longer and deeper journey of faith. It took over twenty years for that early sense of calling to develop into a recognised vocation. When the opportunity to pursue ordination training

finally arrived, the Elizabeth Pathway proved to be the ideal route.

I needed a pathway that was flexible, part-time and rooted in local ministry to fit in with my other commitments. The training at Ripon College created opportunities to learn alongside others who had different experiences and perspectives. These relationships have provided me with a support system both from clerics and students, and quickly became an important source of encouragement, challenge and support.

I now serve as Curate at Lavenham with Preston St Mary, where I continue to develop my ministry and serve the Church in the community." Read the full story here.

Holy Day 2026 in Bury St Edmunds | All Hallows, St Margaret's and Lindbergh Road churches.



What a joy it is when churches come together in fellowship, and no more so than when that happens in St Edmundsbury Cathedral and the Abbey Grounds.

And that is where members of the congregations of the Ipswich churches of All Hallows, Lindbergh Road, and St Margaret's found themselves on a glorious Saturday in July.

So, having refreshed ourselves after the journey to Bury St Edmunds we assembled for our Communion Service in the Lady Chapel to build on the shared pilgrimage theme of the day, and to reflect on Jesus' teaching about not worrying, but being prepared to receive all that we need, including rest, from God.

We were then treated to a very interesting reflective guided tour of the Cathedral, and then it was soon time for a picnic lunch together in the Abbey Grounds with fun and games, and exploration of the ruins – and of course socialising and getting to know each other better.

Moving back to the Cathedral, we were truly blessed to take part in the Evensong Service which included a visiting Choir from America – we like think that we raised the roof, but perhaps not quite! And after the obligatory group photo it was time to wend our way to our homes, knowing that we had journeyed together, been fed (physically and spiritually), and grown in a deeper relationship with each other, all in the presence of our loving Father.



Bubble Church Training is in full swing. To find out more about Bubble Church visit our website: **HERE**

Growing Younger in our Diocese

Youthscape Essentials is all-round training for every youth leader

Take time to invest in yourself and your youth ministry. The course is free and includes an extensive training manual which will be given to you before the first session. In 2026 there were two streams available for Youthscape Essentials, online and in-person. In-person is now fully booked, but you can still join us online from 7.00pm – 9.00pm on Wednesdays: 16 September, 7 October, 11 November, 9 December, 13 January 2027, 10 February 2027, 10 March 2027, 14 April 2027, 12 May 2027 and 9 June 2027. Please sign up here. *If these dates don't work for you, or if you would prefer face to face training, please email jamie.swinerd@cofesuffolk.org to register interest*

Deep Rooted 2026 | 14 August 2.00pm to 9.00pm | Red Lodge Sports Pavilion, IP28 8FQ



Calling all young people aged 11–17! Join Deep Rooted, a FREE youth event in Red Lodge packed with fun, friendship and faith. Our vision is to see young people rooted and established in their community, knowing they are loved by God and truly valued. Expect an exciting afternoon/evening featuring: live music, inflatables, graffiti wall, Nerf wars, burgers and much more!

Whether you can bring along members of your youth group, want to come with friends, or attend on your own, you're very welcome. This event is open to anyone across the Diocese who wants to engage, encourage, and bless young people. Come and be part of something special! Sign up here.

Diocesan and Mission & Ministry Events

Digital Surgeries
Join members of the Parish Resources Team for a one-to-one session to find out more about enhancing the digital giving presence in your parish:

Tuesday 4 August | St Peter and St Paul's Church, Lavenham | 9.30am, 10.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Wednesday 30 September | Abbey House, Bury St Edmunds | 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Tuesday 3 November | Diocesan Office, Ipswich | 1.30pm, 2.30pm or 3.30pm.
Click here to book any of these dates. Further dates across the county to follow.

PCC Workshop on Parish Giving Scheme: Monday 14 September, 11.00am
Join a monthly PGS webinar with the Parish Resources Team to find out more about the scheme, the benefits and how to join. The PGS is dedicated to serving givers and churches in a shared ministry of giving. Book here: September.

PCC Online Workshop – Linking our faith to living a generous life | Thursday 24 September, 1.00pm
Join us for an online session where we will explore how our faith links to living a generous life, a subject that lies at the heart of our relationship with God and with one another. We will give you an insight into how you might approach the topic of giving and generosity with your congregation, fellow church members, and those in the wider community. Book here.

Enhancing Worship (2026) | Wednesday 30 September | Earl Stonham Village Hall, Forward Green, Earl Stonham IP14 5HJ
This six-week module provides an opportunity to explore the nature of worship, varieties of worship in the Church of England, and the practical skills needed to both design and lead acts of worship. This module is open to all, it is also a requirement for Elders who lead worship and those on the Elizabeth Pathway. For information and to book please click here.

A morning with Julia Mourant | Saturday 3 October, 10.00am to 1.30pm | Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE
You are invited to attend a morning offered by Julia Mourant, author of 'The Spiritual Director: Practising the Charism of Presence and Attention', writer and Spiritual Director. She will explore the distinctive nature of spiritual direction as both vocation and spiritual gift, grounded in experiential formation, theological reflection, and the capacity for personal growth and transformation. The cost will be £10, payable in cash only on the door. Please register here.

Chaplaincy Gathering | Wednesday 7 October, 10.00am–3.00pm | St Felix of Dunwich Church, Rendlesham IP12 2GG
This special day brings together chaplains serving in a wide range of settings across Suffolk for encouragement, reflection and fellowship. Hosted by Archdeacon Rich, with contributions from Bishop Joanne and keynote speaker Dr Josh Hunt, Chaplain at Felixstowe School, the gathering will offer fresh insights, inspiration and opportunities to connect with fellow chaplains. Whether you serve in education, healthcare, the workplace, community settings, the emergency services or other sectors, this is a valuable opportunity to share experiences, deepen relationships and be renewed in your ministry. Lunch will be provided. Book here.

Christian Activism in Today's World – a study day for Lay and Ordained Ministers | Saturday 10 October, 9.30am Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE
Supported by Mark Sheard (Diocesan World Mission Officer) and Richard Stainer (former Diocesan World Development Adviser) and joined by speakers from the CAP (Christians Against Poverty), Open Doors and the Mothers' Union (on Modern Slavery), this promises to be a rich day of exploration and reflection. For further information and booking please click here.

PCC Workshop: Digital Giving (contactless and online, including QR codes) | Tuesday 13 October
Understand the need, options, availability, cost and impact of Digital Giving. Every parish should have some form of online giving available (includes QR codes) and we can help you find the best option, including tips on how best to promote it to your congregation and wider community. Book here.

Safeguarding Sunday
Safeguarding Sunday is an annual awareness campaign led by Thirtyone:eight, held on 15 November (or when you are able). This year's theme is *Love Protects*, helping churches explore safeguarding as an expression of care, protection and love. Registration is now open for free resources including service-planning materials, and ready-to-use content. Many of our churches hold a Safeguarding Sunday during the year and find it a really positive experience. If you would like some assistance or would like to know more, email safeguarding@cofesuffolk.org

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Safeguarding Training: To book all safeguarding courses - for any in-person safeguarding training visit Insight, where you, or your local safeguarding officer, can book you a place to attend a course. For those people who want to get a head start on completing the pre-work for their Leadership Training, please click here to view and

download the Leadership pre-work materials that all participants need to complete before attending their first booked session of Leadership Training.

Church Community Services and Events

Knitted Bible exhibition | St Mary's Church, East Bergholt CO7 6TA Z | Open until Friday 7 August, 10.00am to 4.00pm.
Come along to see 36 knitted scenes from the Bible, depicting stories from the Old and New Testaments. Associated craft activities and light refreshments available.

Organ Recitals | St Mary's Church, Woodbridge
You are invited to a series of five recitals presenting music from across the centuries. Simon Kirk on 1 August, Mark Blatchly on 8 August, Claudia Burgess on 15 August, D'Arcy Trinkwon on 22 August and David Flood on 29 August. Each concert starts at 12 noon and refreshments are available.

Copt Hall Singers Concert | St Mary the Virgin Church Belstead IP8 3JT | Wednesday 5 August 7.00pm
All welcome, Tickets £10 on the door to include glass of wine/soft drink. Parking and toilets available at Belstead Tudor Barn IP8 3JT.

Hitchin Concert Band on Tour | Friday 14 August, 7.30pm | St Peter's Church, Ipswich IP2 9TH
Join this programme of epic movies and TV music with showstoppers all suitable for the whoel family. Conducted by Alison Eales with guest soloist Richard Ingham (saxophone). £8 adult and £4 per child (family tickets available). Book here.

From Hunter Gatherers to Henges; The Deep Time Sacred Gathering Place of Freston | Thursday 20 August, 7.00pm | Freston Village Hall IP9 1AF
Enjoy an illustrated talk by professor of Anthropology, Tristan Carter. Cheese and wine are provided, tickets cost £10 in advance or £15 on the door. In aid of St Peter's Tower Repair fund. Email Tessa Paul on tessa@hillsidefreston.com to book tickets.

Art Journalling Day | Saturday 19 September 2026, 9.30am | St Edmund's Church, Felixstowe IP11 2HR
This is a relaxed day where you will learn how to make an accordion journal in the morning and then in the afternoon we will begin to create in it, looking at creation using Genesis and the Psalms. Cost £20.00, all art materials included, just bring a packed lunch. To book please contact Penny on rev.pennybrinkley@yahoo.com.

Village Haymaking | Saturday 19 September, 10.00am | St Mary's, Stoke by Nayland CO6 4QU Churchyard
All welcome to a family friendly morning haymaking! The morning will also include a scavenger hunt and Colchester Morris Dancers. Light refreshments available.

Suffolk Harvest Festival | Sunday 4 October, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral.
Bringing the community together for a county Harvest Festival to celebrate people and

organisations across Suffolk who work the land and sea, and to give thanks to God for this year's harvest.

Notices

Stand for Synod: General Synod is the national assembly of the Church of England—often described as the Church's Parliament. It plays a vital role in shaping the life, mission and future direction of the Church. It agrees new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level.

New clergy and lay members are being elected to General Synod this year – and you are invited to stand as a candidate. Almost anyone who attends church regularly is likely to be eligible to stand as a lay member. You don't need to be a member of a PCC, Deanery Synod or Diocesan Synod. Those elected will serve for five years.

If you think you could help shape the future of the Church please consider standing for General Synod - you can find all the information needed on our website here. This includes a handy timeline and the next key date is **14 August when nominations open.**

Extension to the deadline for the Return of Parish Finance: Thank you to all parishes who have already submitted their Return of Parish Finance. The deadline for this return is tomorrow: **31 July 2026** to enable the collection of more data for its end of year report to dioceses. Please submit your Return via the Online Parish Returns System here. If you require login details or any other assistance regarding the online portal, please email statistics@cofesuffolk.org. Further information on the Return of Parish Finance and other returns is available on Insight here: Parish Returns resources - Insight CofE Suffolk.

Inter Faith Week 2026 (8-15 November) Microgrants Available: the National Steering Group is pleased to be offering small grants to help bring people together through creative, meaningful and community-led projects, activities and events. All the information on eligibility and how to apply is on their website here.

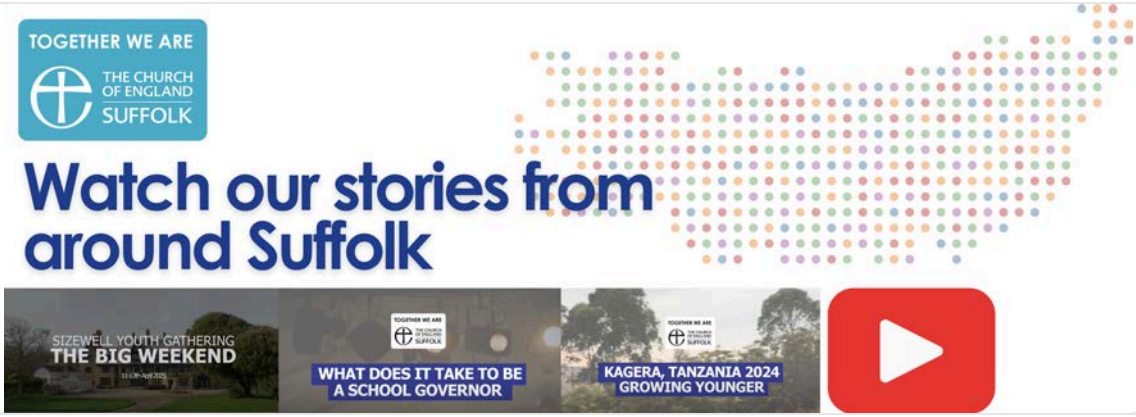
Need to contact CollecTin for support? When submitting support requests to CollecTin, identifying which CollecTin More model and card reader the church is using enables CollecTin to diagnose and resolve issues more quickly and efficiently. Click here to find out how to quickly identify your device.

Launch of Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride/Pedal and Drive 2026
Cyclists, walkers, vintage and classic car owners and even horse-riders, can start to plan their route for Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride and Pedal and Drive day, which will be held on Saturday 12 September**.** Details of how to get involved are now in churches and on the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust website here.

Vacancies

Associate Vicar | St Augustine's Church, Ipswich | Closing date: 31 July
Chief Operating Officer | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 3 August
Children and Families Worker | Great Barton and Thurston | Closing date: 28 August
Rector | North Bosmere Benefice | Closing date: 1 September
Rector | Sancroft Benefice | Closing date: 30 September
Team Vicar | Forest Heath Team Ministry
Associate Mission Priest / Lightwave Hub Leader | Bungay Benefice
Kids Pastor | Full-time | River Church
Internship for 18-30s with theological training from St Mellitus College | River Church
Volunteer Manager | Senior Fundraiser | Tenor Vicar Choral | Non-Executive Safeguarding Chapter Member | Volunteers | Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member, Finance Committee Member | Senior Non-Executive Chapter Member | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

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