

The Bell

Tushingham, Macefen & Bradley Parish Magazine



APRIL / MAY
2026

Welcome

Spring has definitely sprung, and a theme of nature and the outdoors runs through this issue of *The Bell*. Our unique chapel 'alone in the fields' – Old St Chad's – reopens again for monthly services from Sunday 3rd May, there are local picnics and walks, beautiful local artwork, and the annual festivities at *Marbury Merry Days* and the *Whitchurch Walking Festival* coming up in May.

Our local MP, Aphra Brandreth, has been visiting our area to talk to the children and teachers at Tushingham Primary and discover the issues that matter most to the next generation. The school also says a significant 'goodbye', as headteacher Cathy Davies heads to pastures new this Easter (see pages 8/9).

Please send any articles, notices, or photos for our next issue by 16th June.

All good wishes,

Juliet

01948 820343; juliethelen@yahoo.com

Local contacts

Parish Chair, Phoebe Parkinson
tushinghamparishchair@gmail.com

Parish Clerk, Pat Adams
07835 711589; patadams145@outlook.com

Ward Councillor, Rachel Williams
01948 860627; rachel.williams@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

MP for Chester South & Eddisbury, Aphra Brandreth
aphra@aphrabrandreth.com; www.aphrabrandreth.com

Local police, PCSO Rachael McKevitt
Calls to 101 (non-urgent); rachael.mckevitt@cheshire.police.uk



Report It

To report any Council-related issues or to track progress, visit:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/report-it.aspx

Alternatively, you can use the reporting App, and log a report in four simple steps:

- 1) Pinpoint the location on the map; 2) Take a photo of the fault;
- 3) Select a category and provide more information; 4) Submit.

What's On?

Film nights

Bickerton Village Hall



Hamnet [12A]

Monday 20th April, 7.30 pm

Award-winning drama about the tragic events that drove Shakespeare to write his masterpiece, Hamlet. Stars Jessie Buckley and Paul Mescal.

Song Sung Blue [12A]

Monday 18th May, 7.30 pm

Based on a true story about two down-on-their-luck musicians who form a joyous Neil Diamond tribute band, proving it's never too late to find love and follow your dreams. Stars Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson.

Tickets £5 on the door, including snacks; other refreshments on sale



EASTER SERVICES



Join us for Easter breakfast as we welcome the dawn of Easter Sunday at **6.15 am at St Michael's, Marbury** or later that same morning for a **9 am Family Communion service at St Chad's**, or at **St Wenefrede's, Bickley at 11 am**. Don't miss the real Joy of Easter... x

Parish Meeting

Monday 13th April

St Chad's Church, 7 pm

Marbury Merry Days



Sat 9th & Sun 10th May



Traditional country fair

Sealed Knot re-enactment, classic cars, fun dog show, Morris dancing...

Prayers in a Summer Garden

You are invited to join us again this year for 'Prayers in a Summer Garden'. We have six dates and six different gardens to visit within the Benefice – more details to follow! Please come along and share in this experience of reflection and prayer while enjoying the beauty of God's (and our hosts') creation. We will meet at 7.45 for 8.00 pm. The dates are below, and you are very welcome at one, all, or somewhere in between!

Monday 15th June

Tuesday 30th June

Wednesday 15th July

Thursday 30th July

Friday 7th August

Saturday 22nd August

Parish Meeting

Our next Parish meeting will take place on **13th April at 7 pm at St Chad's**, Tushingham.

So far, the agenda includes a review of a local planning application at the applicant's request, and we're happy to add more items. If there's anything you'd like to raise, please email me at tushinghamparishchair@gmail.com, or simply bring it along on the evening.

And if you'd like to join the community WhatsApp group – where minutes and updates are shared – just drop me a note at the same email address and I'll send you the link.

Phoebe

Phoebe Parkinson

tushinghamparishchair@gmail.com



Bradley Lane – road closure

There is to be a road closure on Bradley Lane from 13th April for ~2 weeks, to allow works by United Utilities Water.

The Lane will be closed from the junction at Bradley Chapel, to the sharp bend at Top Farm/Windyridge. Highways state that driving on this section of the lane will be for access only, and a through route will not always be available. For further information, please call 0300 123 7036.

No Man's Heath

Open Gardens

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we have had to **cancel** the Open Gardens this year.

Whitchurch Walking Festival

Fri 8th to Sun 10th May

Various locations:

whitchurchwalkers.co.uk



Cheshire
Wildlife Trust

CWT Spring Membership Offer

Get Spring off to a wild start!

Become a member of Cheshire Wildlife Trust, and join 17,600 people giving a voice to wildlife. As your local Wildlife Trust, together with our members and volunteers, we fight for nature's recovery across the region.

Members receive two copies of *Your Wildlife* magazine, a weekly newsletter, event invites and discounts. From £3.50 per month, you can join as an individual, a pair or a family. Gift membership also makes an ideal present.

www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/membership

Bickley Hall Farm • Bickley Lane • SY14 8EF • 01948 820728

Police Community Support



PCSO for Malpas and Tattenhall

PCSO Rachael McKeivitt

rachael.mckevitt@cheshire.police.uk



Beat Manager Rural South, **PC Steve Gardner**

stephen.gardner@cheshire.police.uk

Dragon Hall Police Station, Whitchurch Road, Chowley, Tattenhall CH3 9DU

Website: www.cheshire.police.uk; **Facebook:** ThallMalpasPol

Dial 999 in an emergency, 101 in a non-emergency

You can also report incidents via the Cheshire Police website

For details of Police Surgeries in April and May, please see social media

Report on Police Cluster Meeting

Tuesday 24th February at the Jubilee Hall, Malpas

Key matters discussed with **PC Steve Gardner** in attendance:



- **PCSOs** – SG advised that the situation regarding the reduction in PCSOs in our area is ongoing and decisions have yet to be made.
- SG advised he is currently based at Dragon Hall police station (nr Tattenhall). There are no planned changes to policing from Dragon Hall.
- SG encouraged residents to report any suspicious activity to the police (call 101, Crimestoppers, or online).
- A new Sergeant has been appointed – Jack Bostock.
- Request made for representatives from the police management and the Rural Crime Team to attend a future Cluster meeting.
- Highways – the following concerns were raised:
 - Speeding on B5395 (Old Malpas Road) – requested police support for speed limit reduction.
 - Safety hazard at the Hampton Health roundabout – vehicles travelling from Whitchurch to Chester on the A41 often fail to stop at the roundabout, which is very dangerous for vehicles approaching from the Malpas direction. Request for a Stop sign at the roundabout junction.



News from St Chad's

Dance then, wherever you may be...

“Our senses are constantly bombarded, and yet we miss most of what happens around us. It goes by us, past us, over our heads. We attend only to a fraction, a tiny fraction, of what we might. Then something strikes us. We don’t know why, but we are paying attention and this thing, event or reality or whatever, begins to matter. This is a blessing: this thing, whatever it is, that is drawing us out of ourselves. Melting our loneliness and forging some kind of connection, making a pathway for sharing with others.

“Rain, for instance,” says Stephen Cherry, “I always disliked the sound of rain, it reminded me of schooldays and wet breaks inside the classroom, until someone suggested that that its drumming sound was a kind of music, a dance even, and that I should listen to it.”

It is suggested, from a psychological view, that our way of responding to things is fight or flight, but recently two new words have been added to this concept about the human condition: freeze and fawn. These interesting words represent two other ways of responding that perhaps reflect today’s pressures, culture, and society. Freeze amounts to being numb and immobilised, where you cannot think or act. Fawn is about our wanting to avoid conflict, ensuring safety by appeasing or complying and sacrificing our own needs to keep the peace.

I suggest the greatest threat to our well-being and good health in our time is the condition of our minds. The brain is the hard drive of our body, and it is beaten to death every day by the amount of information we believe we are to take in. None of us can escape.

The story of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, asking his closest friends to walk through this journey to the cross alongside him, is a beautiful example of this for all involved. The disciples could not stay awake with him and eventually flee from the impending danger of the Romans. And we are told that Jesus Himself sweated drops of blood, so tangible was the fear of what was coming.

Easter is the time we celebrate the Hope that Jesus brought and continues to bring us all! He overcame fear – not by flight, not by freezing or fawning, but by love, grace, and understanding. God became one of us – one of His created beings – and now, as a fully thinking, feeling, experiencing person, He has made a way to rescue us.

Body, mind, and spirit: learn to dance. Allow your spirit to engage with the life God promises you. The truth will set you free – to dance your way through life.

Easter Blessings to all.

Rev Veronica x

Rev Veronica Green

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Services at St Chad's in April and May

Friday 3 April	2–3 pm	Good Friday , Meditations on the Cross
Sunday 5 April	9.00 am	Easter Day , Family Holy Communion
Sunday 12 April	9.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 19 April	4.00 pm	Church at Four
Sunday 26 April	9.00 am	Holy Communion

Sunday 3 May	6.00 pm	Evening prayer at Old St Chad's
Sunday 10 May	9.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 17 May	4.00 pm	Church at Four
Sunday 24 May	9.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 31 May	11.00 am	United Service at St Mary's, Whitewell

Don't forget our new **Church at Four services**: offering a welcome and social time for all, with an opportunity to engage with crafts, music and storytelling.
St Chad's Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Friday 24th April at 7 pm in church
Ascension Day walk and picnic at Cholmondeley Castle Gardens:
 Thursday 14th May, 4–6 pm – more details to come, see flyers and social media!



Funerals At St Chad's, the late George Raymond Lowe on 4th March and the late Margaret Elizabeth Feery on 11th March.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory...

Church Wardens: Karen Kirk, 01948 860988; karenkirk45@gmail.com

Andrew Dawson, 01948 820305 / 07436 072278; a78dawson@hotmail.com

Safeguarding Officer: Alison Hunter Johnston safeguarding@stchadstushingham.org

BACS: Tushingham PCC 01366084 55-81-16

Marbury, Tushingham and Whitewell Benefice website: www.parishmag.org

Services at St Wenefrede's, Bickley

April

5 Easter Day

Family Holy Communion, 11 am

12 Morning prayer, 11 am

19 Holy Communion, 11 am

26 Service of the Word, 11 am

May

3 Holy Communion, 9 am

10 Morning prayer, 11 am

17 Holy Communion, 11 am

24 Service of the Word, 11 am

31 United Service at Whitewell, 11 am

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Sunday 19th April at 12.30 pm in church

Bradley Unaffiliated Independent Congregational Chapel

Bradley Lane, Bradley SY13 4QY



I would think that you may be reading this during the Easter period. For most, that will mean a few days' holiday. A short break from work or a longer break if you are in education. The word holiday comes from Holy Days.

In my early days of work, most of the Bank Holidays were associated with Christian holidays, Easter, Whit and Christmas, the only exception to this was the Bank Holiday which was at the beginning of August.

Easter is the period when the Christian church remembers that Jesus was crucified on a cross, then 3 days later was risen from the dead. Many will find this statement very hard to believe. I believe that God created the world in which we live, so accepting that he can bring his own son back to life is possible. Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will have everlasting life," *John Chapter 11 v 25*. We know that at some point, our earthly bodies will die, but in trusting Jesus we can know that our spirit will live on.

Around us we see the signs of new life, first the snowdrops, followed by the crocuses and then the daffodils. In the fields, skipping about are new born lambs. The retail market encourages us to mark this occasion with chocolate eggs, creamed, hollowed or filled with a gift of more chocolate.

At Bradley Chapel, we meet together with the spirit of Jesus to pray for others, have fellowship and encourage one another in the faith.

During the period of this *Bell* magazine, we will celebrate the Chapel Anniversary being 135 years since it was built.

Upcoming services at Bradley Chapel

12th April at 2.30 pm, led by Pastor Mike.

10th May at 2.30 pm, led by the Rev Jon & Rev Frances, with after service refreshments.

Pastor Brian Faulkner

01948 664898; brianfaulkner@btinternet.com

Pastor Mike Valentine

07763168448; mjvmeglwyswen@talktalk.net



The hare – myth and mystery

Although numbers are declining, we are fortunate to see hares regularly on fields and lanes in our locality.

Larger than a rabbit, with a pale belly, white tail, and long ears with distinctive black tips, the hare is the fastest land mammal in the UK, and can reach speeds of up to 40 mph. In Spring they can also be seen up on their hind legs ‘boxing’ and pulling fur, as females ward off unwanted male attention!

In folklore, this shy, largely nocturnal creature has a mystical reputation, often associated with the moon. The hare was also the original ‘Easter bunny’. This began in Germany in the 1600s, where the Easter hare played a similar role to Father Christmas, keeping an eye on whether children were good or bad, and carrying a basket with coloured eggs, sweets and toys.

The origins of this legend are uncertain, but there are many interesting theories. In Europe, there was a long-standing belief that hares laid eggs, which may come from the nests of ground-nesting birds like the lapwing being mistaken for the hare’s ‘form’ – a shallow depression in the grass, that hares make to rest, hide, and give birth. A more fantastical idea is that the hare was the sacred companion of the European Spring-Goddess Ēostre (from where we get the name Easter), or another story is that Ēostre freed a frozen bird by turning it into a hare that continued to lay eggs, which it gave away...

The hare was also popular in medieval church art, including the mysterious ancient *Three Hares Motif* – an optical illusion where three hares appear to have



two ears each, but only share three ears in total. It appears in many 15th century churches in Devon, but the earliest examples date back to the 6th century in Buddhist cave temples in China. Part of the shared medieval heritage of Europe and Asia (Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism), the symbol may represent the Holy Trinity, fertility, or eternity, and still inspires creative art today.



You may recall the treasure hunt sparked by author and illustrator Kit Williams, who buried a golden hare in 1979 and published a picture book of clues called *Masquerade*. The hare

was finally unearthed in 1982, but the 18-carat jewel remains highly prized, selling at Sotherby’s as recently as last November for £82,550.



This half-term, we were so proud to show our local MP, Aphra Brandreth around Tushingham. She was really impressed with our school, and the children asked many intelligent questions about her work and the Houses of Parliament. We hope Aphra learnt about the things we think are important, to take to London to a parliamentary debate.

The children say that our teachers make learning fun – and on World Book Day, they didn't disappoint when they dressed up in spectacular style as Envy, Joy, Sadness, Disgust and Anxiety! The children were equally fabulous, with a wonderfully creative range of costumes to represent a whole host of adjectives – from sparkly and sleepy to mysterious and magnificent – while throughout the day, classes enjoyed lots of reading and book-themed activities.

We were also proud to take many of our children to Young Voices at Co-Op Live in Manchester. It was truly special to sing with 8,000 other children.

Back in school, Class 3 have been very busy across the curriculum, exploring the poem, *The River's Tale* by Rudyard Kipling in English, early civilisations in History, volcanoes and earthquakes in Geography, famous buildings in Art, and different food names in French. They have also enjoyed Forest School sessions linked



to both Geography and Science, building erupting volcanoes from natural materials and exploring habitats. Class 4 have also been enjoying lots of science activities and, together with Class 3, demonstrated their science skills at the Bishop Heber Science Fair, with some fantastic experiments.

Class 2 have loved their new book, *Grandpa's Gift*, learning that you can find magic and beauty in the strangest of places. The children then painted their own beautiful pebbles with messages for the people who might find them. They have also been learning about living things and habitats in Science, and exploring microhabitats with plants and minibeasts in Forest School.

Class 1 have been enjoying the story *Let's All Creep Through Crocodile Creek*, which has inspired lots of exciting learning. The children designed and built their own Crocodile Creeks both in and outside the classroom and even wrote warning signs to keep everyone safe! They have also been busy creating sentences to describe crocodiles, making story maps, and playing maths games using the stepping stones in Crocodile Creek.

We break for Easter on Wednesday 1st April, returning on Monday 20th April.



A word from Cathy Davies: *"As I come to the end of my time at Tushingham, I would simply like to say thank you to this wonderful school community. Being part of Tushingham has truly been both a privilege and a joy, and I have LOVED every minute. There have been so many memorable moments, from the swimming pool to the 1940s day, residential and trips, science weeks and celebration days – I could go on and on. I am incredibly proud of all that has been achieved, alongside the remarkable staff and governors I have had the pleasure of working with. I really have been the luckiest headteacher in the world to share in the lives of all the wonderfully unique children, staff and families that we have at Tushingham."*



This Spring, join **The Wildlife Trusts** and **Timmy Time** for a wild adventure that helps protect nature!

From 30th March to 30th April, little legs across the country will be taking big steps for wildlife in **The Hedgehog Walk** – a family-friendly fundraising challenge.

We're on a mission to create more safe spaces for hedgehogs to thrive. That's why we're inviting **families, schools, nurseries, clubs and learning groups** to walk 3 km and raise vital funds for nature. Did you know a hedgehog can travel up to 3 km in one night? That's why this challenge is perfect for little explorers – full of big adventures and meaningful impact!

Sign up now and get your fundraising pack, including posters, factsheets and activity sheets. Whether you're toddling through the park, marching through the woods, or counting laps in the playground, every step helps build a better future for wildlife. Visit: www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/hedgehog-walk



From Countryside to Canvas – Art by C.A. Jones



"Who left the gate open"

Local artist Caroline Jones brings the landscapes and wildlife of the area to life through her expressive oil paintings. Born and raised in No Man's Heath, Caroline has always drawn inspiration from the countryside, animals, and the quiet moments of nature that surround everyday life.

Working primarily in oils, her paintings celebrate colour, atmosphere, and detail, inviting viewers to pause and appreciate the natural world. From peaceful rural landscapes to characterful wildlife studies, each piece reflects Caroline's deep connection with her surroundings.

Alongside her original artwork, Caroline also paints pet portraits, creating bespoke pieces for owners who want to celebrate the personality of their much-loved companions.



"Urban Fox"

When she is not painting, Caroline works locally as a pre-school teacher, a role that nurtures creativity and curiosity – qualities that often find their way into her art. Through her work, Caroline hopes to share the beauty she sees every day in the countryside and the animals that live within it.



"All is Well"



art_by_cajones



www.artybids.com/art-gallery



caroline@artybids.com