

# WINCHELSEA PARISH MAGAZINE

February 2025



*Ian Rowlands*



## **Farewell presentation**

If you would like to join the congregation of St Thomas's to say farewell to Jonathan and Shirley Meyer and wish them well in their retirement, please do come to the New Hall on Friday 7th February at 6pm. It will be an opportunity to thank them both for their work in the parish. There is no charge, but this is a ticketed event. You can book by following this link: [ticketsource.co.uk](https://ticketsource.co.uk)

The PCC are organising a collection and will be making a presentation during the evening. There is still time to make a contribution to the gift if you haven't already done so.

You can put cash or a cheque made out to 'PCC Winchelsea' in an envelope marked 'Gift' in the black box in the church. Alternatively, you can make your contribution by bank transfer with the reference 'Gift'. (Sort code 30-90-28 Account Number 01964020).

Jonathan's final service at St Thomas's as Rector will be on Sunday 2nd February (and it's his birthday on 1st).



## Reflections from the Rectory

You may read this before my final service in the benefice which is taking place on Sunday 2nd February in Winchelsea at 11am, the Feast of Candlemas. The first service I presided at in the benefice was at Icklesham on Wednesday, the 14th of February 2018, which as well as being St Valentine's Day was Ash Wednesday. Although my time will be six days short of a year, I will have covered each of the major Christian festivals seven times.

It has been a great privilege to have been Rector here in Winchelsea and Icklesham. When I saw the advertisement for the post in the *Church Times* we were intrigued, as we had been to Winchelsea before and liked it. It was also a

place that my father quite often spoke of but I am not aware of him visiting it, although perhaps he did in his youth.

When we came down to have a look. it was a wet and drizzly day in July and we went away feeling it wasn't quite right for us. But as I began to reflect upon things I realised that Winchelsea was a beautiful and important church with a strong and lively congregation.

Although I could see that Saint Richard's, Winchelsea Beach and All Saints and St Nicolas, Icklesham were not as well supported as they might be, I could also see that ministry in such a place might be rewarding and that I would gain encouragement and strength from the congregation. The idea of applying grew and we feel blessed to have spent nearly seven years here.

One of the great surprises of my ministry in the benefice have been the series of Bible readings which have taken place once a month in the New Inn in Winchelsea. They have endured for over two years now. The group are planning to continue when I leave. It has been an illuminating and interesting way to share our impressions and different approaches to holy scripture.

In January we looked at the rather obscure book of Haggai. Haggai is one of the shortest books in the Bible and was probably written around 520 BC just as the second temple was being rebuilt in Jerusalem after the return of the Israelites from exile in Babylon.

After deciding to read it I rather regretted the decision and wondered what we would find to say. More than one person had a look at it and felt the same. As it happened, it was one of our more fruitful gatherings. The prophet Haggai - pictured in the icon that heads this article - appeals to the people not to take life easy in their panelled rooms, leaving the temple ruined at the centre of Jerusalem but to stir themselves to rebuild it and rededicate it.

It made us think about the importance of sharing our faith in a sacred building. It is a good thing to retreat to one's home to relax and, if so inclined, to pray and stimulate an inner spiritual life but it is also important to gather as a community. For Haggai it was important to honour the Lord God in a sacred space.

You have a sacred space in Winchelsea. I pray that you continue to cherish it and develop it. It has been suggested that Winchelsea could be a 'hub' church: a centre not only of worship and spiritual encounter with God but also a centre that celebrates community and the arts in many different ways. Of course to an extent it already is that but I hope that with the development of better lighting and a sound system it can thrive in many ways as well as being a beacon of the gospel of Christ.

Reflecting on the words of the prophet Haggai made us think of both these aspects of faith. There is undoubtedly a need for a personal encounter with God but there also is a need for a shared encounter with God in a sacred space: as it happens a space that requires effort and money to keep it alive. I pray that the community holds those two things together, learning to honour the importance of each and the importance of one another.

*Jonathan*

## **Bible Reading at the New Inn**

Our informal Bible reading will continue on 6th February, 6pm in the New Inn Winchelsea. We will look at 2 Kings Chapters 4 and 5, which relate part of the ministry of Elisha including the healing of the Syrian general, Naaman. It is a very relaxed gathering and no prior knowledge is required. We always end around 7pm. All are welcome. Contact Jonathan for more details or with any questions, [revdjonathan@btinternet.com](mailto:revdjonathan@btinternet.com) 01797 226254.





# WINCHELSEA FILM NIGHT

In conjunction with Winchelsea New Hall



**SATURDAY February 8<sup>th</sup> 6.30 for 7.30 SCREENING**

**Admission Free**

**Refreshments, Pay Bar.**

**Come early, enjoy a drink or two.**



## **Church Services during the vacancy**

There will continue to be a weekly Parish Eucharist at St Thomas's at 11am, but the 8am BCP Holy Communion service on the first Sunday of the month will not take place during the vacancy.

There will be a BCP service of Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month at the Chapel of Saint Nicholas at Pett Level at 8.30am. Howard Norton will lead most of these.

Services continue in Icklesham on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 9.30am with Parish Communion. Mostly these will be conducted by David Page who will also preside at Winchelsea at 11am on the same two Sundays. We are very grateful to other retired local clergy who have agreed to help.

There will be a service of Parish Communion at Pett once a month on the third Sunday. There will also usually be a united Benefice Service on the 5th Sunday of the month.



## What happens next?

*Jonathan writes:* There seems to be a bit of confusion about the process for appointing a new Rector. I hope this brief note will help to explain the process.

The period during which a parish is left without a priest in post is generally called an 'interregnum' although recently it is more often referred to as a 'vacancy'. Some people have asked me whether a new person has been recruited and when they will take over.

It has always been the case that after the end of someone's ministry there is a period of reflection and prayer before the process of recruitment begins. This is a deliberate policy intended to allow the parish to reflect on what has been good about the previous ministry and what has not been good. It also allows time for the parish to discern how things have changed since the last appointment was made and what changes may have taken place during that time.

There is also evidence that, provided it doesn't go on for too long, a vacancy can have a positive effect on parishes because it allows people to cooperate and work together in a different



way and often it unlocks particular gifts and energies. It is worth remembering that the previous vacancy was just short of a year and, although a shorter period is desirable, it is not unusual for vacancies to extend to around a year.

After my retirement on 7th February that process will begin. As it happens, a parish 'away day' has already been planned for 15th February with the aim of considering the future of the parish. This will encompass issues of finance and stewardship, worship and Christian mission.

The Archdeacon of Brighton and Lewes, who has oversight of this archdeaconry at present, will be attending. We expect that he will give some guidance on the process ahead. Once the aims and direction have been ascertained, a Parish Profile will be prepared which will form the basis for the recruitment process.

It is important to remember that this parish is one of three for which the minister will have responsibility. Currently it includes the benefice of Winchelsea with Icklesham and the parish of Pett. There is a legal process underway to form a new benefice including all three parishes and it is likely that this will be completed by the end of June.

As I understand it, the hope is that, by then, a Parish Profile will have been agreed by all three parishes and the process of recruitment will begin. This may be through advertisement or by direct approach.

The Guild of All Souls are patrons of the parish of Winchelsea. Patrons will need to be involved in the process of making the appointment. In this case it will be a shared responsibility with the Bishop of Chichester who is the patron of Icklesham and Pett. This will mean that our diocesan bishop will have considerable influence on how the appointment is made.

The churchwardens of each parish and the three PCCs will all have a part in this process and comments from the congregation will be welcomed over the next few months. It will be my prayer that the process leads to a creative appointment and that it doesn't lead to a long vacancy.



## **Future of the Little Shop**

There will be an important town meeting about the future of the Little Shop on Sunday 23rd March at 3pm in the New Hall. Hold the date!

Stephen Rumsey, who owns the Little Shop, plans to sell up shortly. A small number of local residents have been in discussions with him about taking the shop back into community ownership (it having been a successful community shop in the past).

Were this to happen, it means that the shop would be owned and run by the residents of Winchelsea.

Please come along on 23rd March to hear more about how we can all make sure we keep our vital community asset.

If you can't attend, we will update you all on the Winchelsea Community Corner WhatsApp group, on the Little Shop noticeboard and in the Parish Magazine after the meeting.



Debbie and Peter with the Lord Warden and Lady Zambellas in 2024

## **Peter to be Mayor for a second year**

The Corporation are delighted that Peter Cosstick has agreed to serve as Mayor of Winchelsea for a second year. This will be formally confirmed at the Corporation AGM next month and celebrated at the Mayoring ceremony on Easter Monday. Debbie will be Mayoress.

Accepting the nomination, Peter said, “I am honoured to be selected for a second term and thank all Corporation members and the community of Winchelsea for their support during my first term”.

At their January meeting the Corporation also voted to invite Sue McGeown and Jerry Moss to become Freeman, recognising the skills and experience they will bring to the work of the charity. We are very pleased that both of them have agreed. They will be sworn in at the Mayoring. Former town clerk, Lorna Challand will be made an Honorary Freeman.

# A Murder Mystery Evening



A Murder in a 1960's Holiday Camp!

**Saturday 15th February 2025**

**Winchelsea New Hall**

Brought to you by the Rye Players on behalf of the Winchelsea Mayor

**Ticket price £20.00 (includes 2 course meal) & cash bar**

**Doors open at 6.30pm**

**Booking & Enquires call 01797 229087 or**

**email [peterrcosstick@btinternet.com](mailto:peterrcosstick@btinternet.com)**

There has been a very high demand for this event, and at the time of writing there are ten tickets still available so please book quickly. This is a ticketed only event, and sadly tickets will now be issued on a first-come-first-serve basis. Dress is optional.

[peterrcosstick@btinternet.com](mailto:peterrcosstick@btinternet.com)



## **Icklesham Parish Council**

### **Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach Toilets**

IPC have had a further discussion with Rother District Council regarding the toilets and Rother have confirmed that the toilets will be marketed until the end of January. RDC have been told by us that if the sale goes ahead the toilets would need to be open seven days a week and IPC would expect Rother to ensure this happens. Essentially, they are testing the water to see if the toilets have any commercial value. We expect to hear from RDC with an update at the end of January and we will of course keep residents informed.

### **2025-26 Budget**

The budget was agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 13th January and we are pleased to report that a 14.8% decrease on the 2024-25 precept has been achieved.



## **Anne Gun Carriage Fundraising**

The Parish Council are still fundraising to have a gun carriage made for the gun at the Museum and any donations would be most welcome.

You can do this via the [GoFundMe page here](#) or direct to IPC account no 01966791 sort code 30-90-28 using the reference 'Anne' in your transaction, or send a cheque to PO Box 148 Winchelsea, TN31 9FP made payable to 'Icklesham Parish Council' with 'Anne' written on the reverse. IPC reassures residents that all donations are held separately in reserve and all donations will go to Winchelsea Museum.

## **Recreation Ground Charges and Allotment Rents**

Good news... at the Full Council meeting on 13th January IPC decided there will be no increase in the current charges for the use of recreation grounds and allotment rents.

## **Allotments**

IPC have very short waiting list for all of the allotment sites across the Parish. If you would be interested in applying for a plot, please complete our Allotment Application Form available on our website [icklesham-pc.gov.uk](http://icklesham-pc.gov.uk) or from the Clerk.

## **Potholes**

East Sussex County Council leader, Councillor Glazier, reiterated at our meeting on 13th January the importance of reporting potholes which can be done online via [East Sussex Highways' website](#) or by telephone 0345 6080193. His message was not to assume that someone else has already reported it as often this is not the case.

## **Upcoming Meetings at Winchelsea Court Hall**

Monday 10th February

Planning Meeting 6.15pm.

Monday 24th February

Planning Meeting 6.15pm followed by Open Spaces.

Monday 10th March

Planning Meeting 6.15pm followed by Full Council.

We would like to wish all of our residents a happy and healthy New Year and would urge you to continue engaging with us so that we can try and deliver the service you require.

Please remember IPC are here to represent you and welcome your views on any matter. Please send your views and requests to [clerk@icklesham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@icklesham-pc.gov.uk) or write to PO Box 148 Winchelsea TN31 9FP 07714 169901

[icklesham-pc.gov.uk](http://icklesham-pc.gov.uk)



## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Catherine Burnett and Alan Danskin who were married at St Thomas's on 18th January, a thoroughly happy occasion in the midst of their many friends, and members of the Winchelsea choir and congregation who all joined to wish them every happiness.

# Saturday 22nd February

New Hall at 6.30pm

Avoid a dull February

come to our famous...



In a world of fake news can you spot the real answers?



Winner of the Winchelsea Critic's Award in 2024

"A treasure trove of local trivia and eccentricity." The Ryde News

"If you take part in one quiz this year,  
make sure it's this one!"



TripAdvisor

**Includes a delicious hot meal & pudding!**

**Tables of 6 - £15 per person**

To book contact Chris Chappell  
[chriswinchelsea@icloud.com](mailto:chriswinchelsea@icloud.com)



FOAM - helping to maintain our ancient monuments & museum



## **Winchelsea Residents Association**

A belated Happy New Year to Winchelsea residents. WRA Committee continues to work on the important local issues and our current activity is summarised below.

### **Public Toilets**

WRA has been pressing for a long term solution to providing suitable public toilets in Winchelsea since 2021. We succeeded in keeping them partially open but, as many residents will know, Rother DC (RDC) recently put the building up for sale. This was done without notice.

The building is in poor repair and we do not know if there is interest in purchase or what use it may have in the future. WRA supports a long term solution that may require demolition and installation of a new structure.

We have raised our concerns with our local MP Helena Doolimore and RDC councillors and will support IPC, where we can, in any future negotiations with RDC. In the meantime, we are asking RDC to keep the toilet open during these negotiations.

## **The Little Shop**

Residents may know that the owner intends to sell the building. Negotiations on who may buy it and any future operation are at an early stage. While WRA is not able to buy or manage the shop directly, it is strongly supportive of retaining shop services. We are in direct contact with the owner and there will be an independent group of residents coming together to liaise with the various parties, evaluate proposals and identify relevant funding. Watch this space!

## **Traffic Safety**

This continues to be a priority. Following our contacts with National Highways in October and December last year, we understand their senior officers have had positive discussions with East Sussex County Council on introducing safety measures in the town and on Tanyard Lane without the need for new construction.

However, we are waiting for further information from National Highways before we can set out a specific proposal to residents. We will update residents as soon as we have a response from National Highways.

The Black Cat data provides regular evidence of the increasing traffic numbers and extent of speeding. On 6th December, 7300 vehicles were recorded on Rectory Lane, with 5% exceeding 40mph. On 10th January, 1746 vehicles were recorded on the High Street with 13% exceeding 30 mph. These are snapshots only. The detailed data is available from IPC.

## **Bins**

IPC has agreed to provide a new larger bin adjacent to the public toilets. We are grateful to them and hope this will reduce the incidence of loose rubbish in the area.

## **WRA Members Meeting**

Our next members meeting will be on Saturday 29th March 11 am at the New Hall. It will be an opportunity to find out more on what we do and to hear from you on how we can help in the future.

*Glen Marks*

[RA@winchelsea.com](mailto:RA@winchelsea.com)



**Winchelsea  
Garden Society**

Coach outing to  
RHS Garden

# Wisley

Friday 14 February

Departing at 9 am from  
German Street and  
returning by 5 pm

Travel and entry **£20**

Places are limited to 33 people. To guarantee your place, please book and pay Judith Payne by cash or cheque at Castle Cottage, Castle Street, Winchelsea TN36 4EL

For further information, please contact Howard Norton on 01797 226524 or [howard@ryeview.net](mailto:howard@ryeview.net)





## **News from the Churchwardens**

### **Sound and Light project**

A great deal of work has been done to answer all the questions posed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and provide additional information, including mock-ups of the effects of the lighting and the positioning of speakers and the projector and cameras. A Winchelsea group visited Steyning in January (pictured above) to inspect a very similar scheme.

The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) are very supportive of the project and the impact it will have on the building, and they are also conscious of how vital it is to re-wire the church and provide a much-needed surge breaker. We are hoping we will be granted permission when the DAC next meets in February and we can then proceed to tender.

We are grateful to Graham Large for all his work on the project. The PCC is delighted with the initial donations and is pleased that the fundraising launch last November produced several pledges from Winchelsea residents.

The building will still be able to be used for services and pre-booked events during the three months it is expected the work will take, but we will need to be flexible on the use of the space during that period with safety being a prime concern.

We are pleased to learn that grants for VAT under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme are to continue for a further year, although limited to £25,000 for each building. It is imperative that work on the Sound and Light Project begins during the next financial year in order that as much VAT as possible may be recovered.

New hangings for the St Nicholas Chapel are being made from vintage fabric salvaged from St Richard's Winchelsea beach, we hope to hang them in time for Easter.

### **The Vestry Roof and North Chancel Window**

The PCC has agreed to re-lead sections of the vestry roof that are badly deteriorating and the repair the tracery of the North window in the chancel where the stone is badly decayed. We are hoping the work can be completed by Easter when we expect the Swifts to arrive. The Diocesan architect invited four contractors to tender. The PCC accepted a quote from Prestigious Stonemasonry Ltd. Total costs with architect supervision fees will be approximately £13,000.

### **The Quota or Parish Share**

The PCC have agreed to pay a Parish Share of £60,000 to the Diocese of Chichester in 2025 which covers most of the costs of an having an incumbent. A large proportion of this expense is covered by planned giving by members of the congregation and collections at services. Though the Rector's stipend is only about a third of this, the diocese advise that the average cost of paying, housing and supporting a parish priest is £81,455.

### **Organ Update**

As members of the congregation are probably aware, there have been some problems with the organ recently. A meeting was held in January with the organ builders Manders to assess the effectiveness of the major refurbishment and what else now needs to be done to make the organ as robust as possible.

They outlined that the work carried out in 2019 was not a complete rebuild of the instrument as this would have been prohibitively expensive. It was agreed that the project was largely very successful and many improvements had been made.

Following the widest possible consultation, with David Birchenough our organist and many other players who use the organ, the nationally-regarded organ expert, Paul Hale, produced a comprehensive report on how we should proceed. We are delighted that Manders will be repairing some parts of the instrument within the original contract. This work will take about a week to complete.

We would like to thank Ben Chishick for his superb record keeping which allowed Paul Hale to get a clear picture of the history of the organ, and for Ben's expertise and enthusiasm for this project.





## **It's that time again!**

Every six years, the Church of England undertakes a significant and essential process known as the Sexennial Electoral Roll Renewal. This ensures the electoral roll is accurate, up-to-date and reflects the current membership of the Church. This year is the year that update occurs.

### **What is the Electoral Roll?**

It is a list of members who are entitled to participate in key church decisions including elections for churchwardens, as parochial church council (PCC) members, and other leadership positions. As such, it is a vital component of the Church's governance and decision-making processes. It is also used to gauge the size and engagement of the local congregation. Our current list consists of 105 members, many of whom are regular worshippers. The roll is updated annually, but the sexennial renewal is a more comprehensive review.

### **Can I join online?**

No. Some parishes are pushing ahead with a new digital register, however we have decided not to adopt this on this occasion. The paper version of the form, though, does now ask for an e-mail address as we move into the digital age of communication. While we are not going fully digital, you



can download a form here, to fill out manually, or pick one up from the back of the church.

As the electoral roll officer I will ensure the safety of everyone's digital data and at no time will your email be published publicly or the list sent to anyone else.

### **Do I qualify?**

New applicants will be reviewed to ensure all members meet the criteria. Any discrepancies or issues can be clarified at this stage. You must be baptized, aged 16 years or more, and have attended St Thomas' for at least the prior six months.

You do not have to be a resident of the parish and you can be on the roll of more than one parish at the same time. There are other qualifications which can be found by [clicking here](#).

### **What now?**

As the Electoral Roll Officer, I will be coordinating this process through a series of steps including an official notification on the church noticeboard. Members who are already on the list will be invited to renew and those who feel they qualify and would like to be on the new roll can apply using the same form.

The paper version of the new electoral roll form is now available at the back of the church. If, however, you'd like to download a form, [click here](#). I am accepting applicants for the new roll with immediate effect. If you would like to apply, please either drop the completed forms into the Black Box at the back of the church, or post them through my front door at *White Cottage*, Friars Road.

The deadline is to have the new roll updated and closed on 29th March, which is two weeks before the date of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 12th April.

The electoral roll is primarily for those who identify with the Church of England. If you are not Anglican, but would like to contribute to other aspects of the vitality of the church, as part of Winchelsea town life, I would direct you to the [Friends of Winchelsea Church](#).

*Jeremy Naylor*  
*Electoral Roll Officer*

**Winchelsea  
Garden Society**

# **Graham Spencer**

talks to us about

## **Geraniums**

A welcome return from the gardening expert, who will focus this time on one of his favourite plants including its annual, biennial and perennial varieties

**The New Hall  
Winchelsea 2:30 pm  
Saturday 22 February  
2025**

**Admission £5**





## **Agape Meal and Songs of Praise**

At Wesley's Chapel on Saturday 15th February, meeting at 10.30 for 11am, there will be the rarely celebrated 'Agape meal', which is otherwise known as a Methodist Love Feast. It is similar to the Eucharist or Holy Communion but informal and usually includes water and cake.

This is a bring-and-share event and the invitation is open to all, and the food can be cake, sausage rolls or other simple foods. We will eat what is there. It will be a communal gathering seated round a single table (or group of tables) and will be led by Rev'd Philip Wagstaff, the superintendent of the Hastings Bexhill and Rye Methodist Circuit.

Then on Sunday 16th March at 3pm, there is a Songs of Praise service with Stephen Page providing the music.

If you would like to come and have a hymn that you would like to be included in the service, please contact Stephen direct by email: [spage999@btinternet.com](mailto:spage999@btinternet.com) and also indicate

if you would like to speak briefly during the service to say what that hymn means to you. We would hope to be able to include your suggestion but we cannot guarantee to include them all.

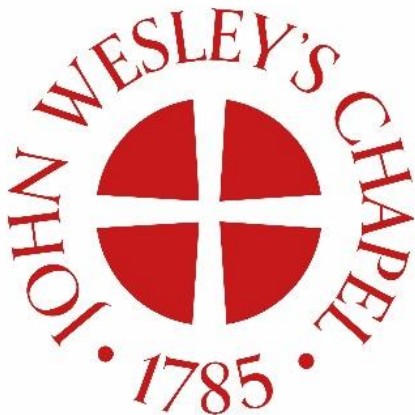
We were hoping that there would be a united service with St Thomas's during March, but this sadly won't be possible this year for a number of reasons – next year maybe.

Looking further ahead, on Wednesday 16th April at 7.30pm, there will be a Reflections for Holy Week service conducted by Rev Jonathan and Dr Julie Todd

You will be very welcome at any of the Chapel events.

*Mike Lambourne*

[winchelseachapel.org](http://winchelseachapel.org)





## **World Day of Prayer 2025**

This year's service, which has been prepared by Christian women in the Cook Islands, will be held in St Anthony's RC Church in Rye on Friday 7th March 2025 at 10.30am.

Everyone is welcome to take part in the service and join in a wonderful wave of prayer which encircles the globe, praying with, and for, the Cook Islands and its people.





## WAAHS

Winchelsea And Area Archaeological And Historical Society

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 15th February in the New Hall, Winchelsea. Coffee and biscuits from 11am. The meeting starts at 11.15am and all are welcome.

After an eventful end of 2024, the AGM enables the Society to take stock of the approved constitutional changes and the fascinating research results - all happening in the past six months:

A new name for the Society and new objectives that clarify the ability of the Society to carry out research not just in Winchelsea but also in its environs, particularly the Brede valley. These were passed unanimously at the Extraordinary Meeting on 12th December.

We have come to realise that the very short stretch of Roman Road, identified through excavation in an Icklesham garden in 1982, extends eastwards along the Icklesham ridge towards Crutches Farm. It was thought that the vicinity of Winchelsea was largely devoid of evidence from Roman

occupation. So the research is proceeding carefully. Supervision by a Professional archaeologist has been arranged to ensure that any conclusions are accepted by the wider archaeological community.

Before the formal business of the AGM, Cameron Ross, the archaeologist in charge of the excavations in Philip Merricks' field, will show some of the LIDAR, and magnetometry data from David Staveley, which strongly indicated the presence of the trackway.

He will also describe initial results from the excavation and follow-up activities. Cameron will be in an informal discussion with Andrew Scott, lasting up to about 30 minutes. In this format, we will try to include the very latest results.

The photograph shows from left to right, Cameron Ross, Andrew Scott, David Staveley and Philip Merricks.

*Andrew Scott*  
[andrewscottb@aol.com](mailto:andrewscottb@aol.com)



*Draft street intro for the 2025 Book*

## Winchelsea 2025 Book

Work is coming on apace. The last few questionnaires have been returned, Jonathan Murphy has almost completed taking everyone's photograph and Chris Chappell is busy creating the layout, with introductory material about each street. Proof readers are combing through the text.

There will be profiles of long-term residents, features on the school, the church, the chapel, the shops, the pub, the chip van: all of Winchelsea's significant institutions, including - of course - the man who knows who we are and where we live, Philip Laverton.

The team are planning a drop-in launch event on Thursday 3rd April when copies of the completed book will be available for you to see and order.



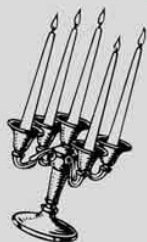
*Jonathan Murphy*

The Rectory 10.30am  
Saturday 22nd February

☀️ **COFFEE  
MORNING**  
AND



**ATTIC SALE**



All welcome !



*Ian Rowlands*

## **Winchelsea Beach**

### **Mothers' Prayers**

Tuesday 4th February at 10am at Solstice, Sea Road.

### **Coffee Morning**

Wednesday 5th February at Winchelsea Beach Community Hall 10.30am until 12. Everyone welcome.

### **Fellowship Lunch**

Friday 28th February at Winchelsea Beach Community Hall at 12.30 for 1pm. Booking essential.  
Call Mary Parker on 07927 107678.





## Winchelsea went to Holyrood

Residents enjoyed a celebration of Burns Night in the New Hall organised by David Dickson and Hilary Roome, Delane Shigadia and Rob Mortimer, following on from the fun of 'Winchelsea Goes To Bollywood' last summer.

The hall was decorated with plaid, tartan, thistles and antlers (is there anything Nigel Ashton doesn't have stashed away?) and Robbie Burns merch, while chopping and cooking went on all day in the kitchen.

62 guests were greeted with spectacular 'Glaswegian Cullin Skink' cocktails, then a grand haggis held aloft by John Lusk was "piped in" by Gavin McFadyean (both in splendid full bekilted attire) and addressed enthrallingly by Bill Doherty as tradition dictates, followed by David Dickson's re-interpretation of 'Haggis, neeps and tatties', with Cranachan for afters.

The customary toasts were made, albeit in more modern guise, but poems were foregone because everyone was eager to start dancing. The Catsfield Steamers (a seven piece live band) entertained to the highest standard and Patsy their caller helped hold the dancing in some order. The celebration was a sellout, comfortably covering the expenses of putting on the event and generating a surplus of £406 which has been donated to the New Hall.



Sparrowhawk at Backfields *Jim Kay*

## **Wildlife returning to the Brede Valley**

*Jim Kay writes:* It's that time of year when we all need a little bit of good news to get us through the last of winter. We are perhaps all painfully aware of the catastrophic decline of wildlife, particularly birds and insects associated with farmland, happening across the United Kingdom.

It should therefore bring us some comfort that right here on our doorstep, in and around Winchelsea, we are seeing a wonderful response to the changes in land management underway. On behalf of the Winchelsea Wildlife Group and fellow enthusiasts who spend many hours a week walking the footpaths and fields, we would like to regularly share our sightings in the Parish Magazine, and of course welcome any sightings by other residents.

Briefly, last summer saw a flush of colour in Hollow Field and the slopes behind the Beacon as a reduction in grazing

allowed wildflowers to flourish. The happy consequence of this was increased numbers of Six-Spot Burnet Moths, and Small Copper, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Common Blue and Skipper butterflies. Speckled, Conehead, and Roesel's Bush Crickets made an appearance, with damselflies and dragonflies having a particularly good year.

With an increase in plant seeds and invertebrates came the resulting boost in small mammal and reptile numbers, evidenced by the spectacular sight of up to nine Kestrels in a line catching the updraughts along the ridge between Hogtrough Lane and the Beacon.



Barn Owl perched just beyond the Beacon, and a Kestrel *Jim Kay*

Apex predators, such as birds of prey, are a good indicator of a healthy ecosystem, and there are few more ethereal and beautiful representatives than the Barn Owl, which we can happily report now haunt the land between the Beacon and the Pumping Station on an almost nightly basis. Many in our group have watched the Barn Owl patrolling just as the light fails, and it never ceases to be a special experience.

The National Trust have employed cattle to control grasses around Chapel Field and Brede Valley, and being such messy eaters they encouraged a flock of fourteen Cattle Egrets to join them for a while last autumn. Add these to the Herons, Swans, Cormorants, Little Egrets and five or so Great White Egrets, large birds are now well represented in the Brede Valley. Intermittent visitors include Ravens (listen out for their deep croak; they sometimes settle in the trees along the A259), and Marsh Harriers.

Behind Crutches Farm we are seeing a particularly healthy numbers of threatened farmland birds such as Skylarks, Stonechats, Warblers and Linnets, and the odd Kingfisher. I was shocked to learn this year that Swifts, House Martins and Starlings are now on the Red List of threatened birds, but again, all represented here in Winchelsea and benefiting from the sensitive changes in land management by the National Trust.



*Ian Rowlands*

Closer to home, Ian Rowlands and Hilary Roome were fortunate in spotting a tiny Firecrest in their gardens, Ian even managed to capture it on film. Small and very fidgety birds, Firecrests are similar to Goldcrests but with a brighter, more defined pattern and a bronze collar - and far less common.

Right now the Rooks are busying themselves with nest building in and around the town, Sparrowhawks are 'farming' residents bird feeders, and Starlings frequently gather atop the weathervane and mimic the surrounding soundscape - listen out for their take on blackbirds, curlews, buzzards and car alarms among other things. Another familiar sound is the piercing 'laugh' of Green Woodpeckers, frequently heard in the sloping woods close to the Beacon.

This is just an introductory update on our local wildlife, and we will endeavour to provide a more direct and current list of observations month by month. In warmer months some residents may be aware of the moth recording that takes place, the Swift count, morning chorus meetings and work on the Church wildflower meadows. More on those in the future.

One thing we have learned is that nature is extremely forgiving, all it asks is a little space, and it rewards you tenfold. We ask that you try and support the local initiatives to boost biodiversity wherever possible. The thought of future generations not hearing the song of a Skylark or watching murmurations is truly depressing, but we have a wonderful opportunity in the town to prevent this happening.





## **Basketry : A traditional and contemporary craft**

Marianne Van Niekerken will be giving a presentation to Second Wednesday Society at their meeting on 12th February.

When you think about it, or even have a go, you realise that the ancient craft of basket making is simple and yet very developed and actually quite difficult to do well. Marianne will explain and demonstrate how she creates beautiful functional baskets, and why she fell in love with this timeless and versatile craft. We think Marianne will have some baskets for sale on the day.

Annual membership £15 - Visitors £5 - Homemade tea £2 -  
BACS preferred Winchelsea Second Wednesday Society  
09-01-55 43784800 [2ndWeds@gmail.com](mailto:2ndWeds@gmail.com)

Winchelsea Second Wednesday Society  
February 12th at 2.30pm in the New Hall  
Doors open from 2.20pm



## Holocaust Memorial Day

*For Ruth*

How to remember so many?  
How to grieve for six million?  
Let the heart break its sinews,  
the mind slip its moorings:  
it isn't enough.

What words can be said  
or dirges sung, what sackcloth  
or ashes, penance or prayer  
can expiate the horror  
of these dead?

What words can explain  
the imposition on the innocent  
of such sadistic pain, torture  
and death? Even history  
holds its breath—

What words can condemn  
such carnage, such violation  
of a nation? It isn't enough  
simply to say the refrain,  
*never again*;

What words of reparation?  
What atonement for Auschwitz?  
*No* words are adequate  
to remove this stain  
on humanity:

ERGO—

Start with your own heart:  
remove resentment and fears  
of the *otherness* of others—  
then install a plenitude  
of tears...

*Richard Ormrod*



## **The Evolution of Spy Fiction**

Alan Judd is the speaker at the Literary Society meeting at the Court Hall on Friday 21st February at 7pm for 7.30.

Alan is the author of sixteen novels, including a spy series. He is a journalist and award-winning biographer of Ford Madox Ford. The talk will follow the Society's AGM.

Members free, non-members £5

[literarysoc.winchelsea.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:literarysoc.winchelsea.secretary@gmail.com)



## Zola and the Second Empire

Ladies gripped pearls tightly and men bit nervously into their milquetoast as the Lit. Soc. membership gathered in reassuring number behind the Court Hall's former prison walls awaiting the irruption of the *Rye View Communards*, headed by David Orator Page.

Swiftly drawing the audience close, like a Victorian print of an anatomy tutorial in an autopsy room, David explained he proposed to dissect the cadaver of Napoleon III's Second French Empire using, as his scalpel, Zola's twenty volume *Histoire naturelle et sociale d'une famille sous Le Second Empire*. These two eventful decades would be examined through three familial lenses: the legitimate Rougons, the underclass Macquarts and the in-betweeners Mourets.

Written after the fall of the Empire in 1871, the novels benefitted from hindsight and the disruptive wave stirred by Manet's painting *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* where a gratuitous female nude is inserted into a picnic group. Zola had defended Manet in the ensuing controversy.

Despite Marx predicting Napoleon III's coup d'état would be a farce, the Second Empire was a period of extraordinary

dynamism in France, giving Zola the canvas to depict the consequences of the emerging, unrestrained appetites. Our speaker led us through an illustrative selection from the novels like a honeybee buzzing purposefully from flower to flower, collecting nectar for the intellectual sustenance of his audience.

A reading from *Le Ventre de Paris* evoked the new cast-iron and glass construction, Les Halles, highlighting the cheese department with a vivid word picture of changing colours, smells and textures in the steadily rising daytime temperatures. In *Au Bonheur des Dames*, Zola reworks appetite as consumerism when we follow the two mistresses of the principal male protagonist in a verbal fencing match as they progress through one of the new-fangled department stores.

*L'Oeuvre's* depiction of the Art market was sufficiently realistic to permanently fracture Zola's friendship with Cézanne who saw too much of himself unfavourably realised in the work. *L'Assommoir* highlights the damage wrought on the urban working class by the addictive consolations of alcohol, resonating with Degas' portrayal of a raddled female patron of such a drinking den in *L'Absinthe*.

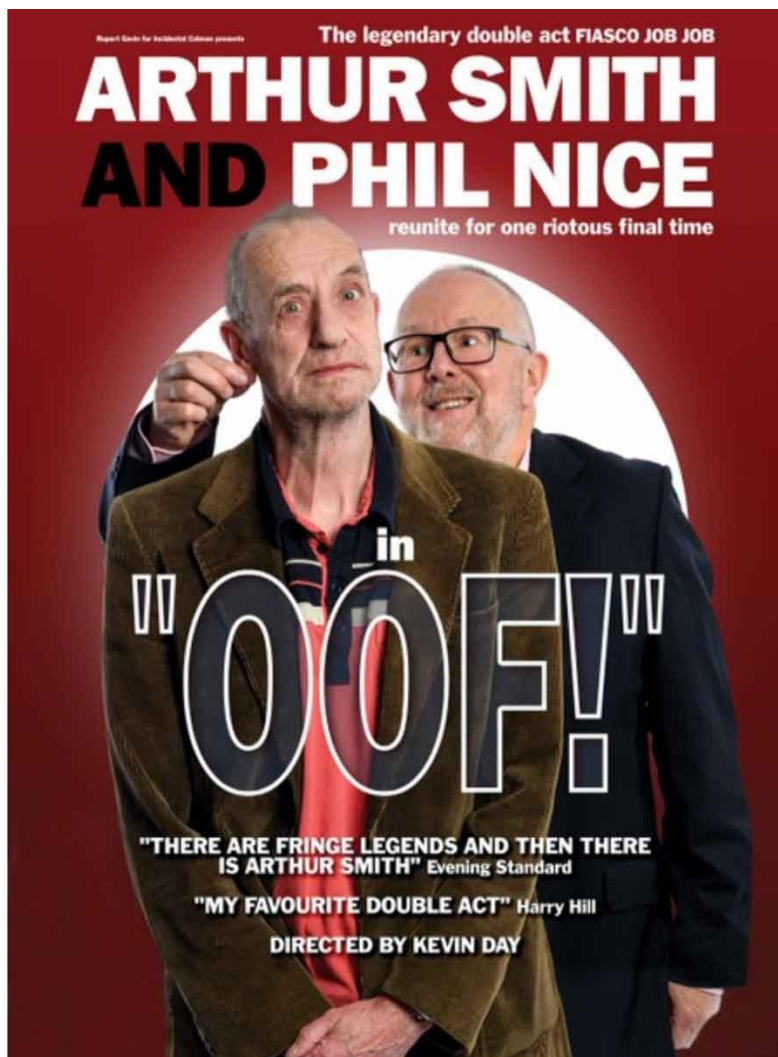
*Nana* unveils an unlikely career path as the heroine rises from prostitute to courtesan. British readers would likely identify the future Edward VII in the narrative, unimaginatively disguised as Le Prince d'Ecosse.

*La Débâcle* brings the curtain down on the Second Empire, crushing military defeat by Prussia at Sedan and the bloody civil strife of the Paris Commune. Culture parading of social realism never draws universal approbation and in a range of anti-Zola cartoons we see him charging his quill with faeculent 'ink' from the chamber pot.

Zola resurfaced later to defend Dreyfus and his front-page article in *L'Aurore*, banner headlined 'J'Accuse' challenged the French Establishment, even naming 'the guilty men'. Condemned by a French court, escaping to London was deemed politic. He failed to master English in his time in Upper Norwood so the revelatory denunciation of moral turpitude in "Sarf Lahndun" remains unwritten.

*Bill Doherty*





Two old men on a bench reflect on religion, politics, life and happy slapping. But it transpires that there is more to their relationship than we realise. A hilarious sit down drama about age, showbiz and the cartography of friendship.

Saturday 22nd March at 8pm at Winchelsea New Hall

Tickets cost £15 (plus booking fee) *and you can buy them online here*



## **Rye Food Bank**

The next Winchelsea doorstep collection will be on the morning of Tuesday 18th February. Stuart Raine is deputising this month while Cam gets his second knee done. You can contact Stuart on 07736 774348

You can also take contributions directly to the food bank on any Wednesday morning before 11.30. Rye Food Bank is located at the Baptist Church in Cinque Ports Street and has its own car park to the rear of the building. Jempson's in Rye also has a collection point for donations in store.

Financial donations are also much appreciated.

For further details about Rye Food Bank and how to make a donation go to [ryefoodbank.com](http://ryefoodbank.com)

*Donald Cameron-Clarke 01797 226414*

# Five Villages House Icklesham



Situated in the lovely village of Icklesham, Five Villages House provides safe and affordable housing for people aged 60 years and over. Our flats are designed for Independent Living, this allows residents to live completely self-sufficient lives with communal hubs to socialise and connect with their neighbours.

Join our waiting list for a  
one or two bedroom flat today.

Five Villages Home Association Limited

01424 814608

[office@fivevillages.org.uk](mailto:office@fivevillages.org.uk)

[www.fivevillages.org.uk](http://www.fivevillages.org.uk)

[fivevillages.org.uk](http://fivevillages.org.uk)

[office@fivevillages.org.uk](mailto:office@fivevillages.org.uk)

## Choose to support St Michael's Hospice in 2025

There are so many simple ways that you can get involved to help St Michael's Hospice raise the funds they need to provide their vital care. Getting involved is easier than you may think, and there's something for everyone:

**Take part in their events.** The Hospice hosts a variety of events throughout the year, from sponsored walks to seasonal family fun days. Whatever your interests, there's a chance to have fun and raise funds for the Hospice.

**Join the Hospice Lottery.** For just £1 a week, you could be in with a chance of winning a weekly top prize of £2,000—plus 57 other cash prizes! It's a fun way to support their work and maybe even treat yourself if you win.

**Volunteer your time.** If you've got some time to spare, want to give back to your community or want to connect with others, you could volunteer at the Hospice. They offer a range of volunteering opportunities, from helping in their shops to supporting events, or assisting behind the scenes. Whatever your availability or talents, you'll make a real difference.

**Shop with us.** Need a new coat, jumper or hat this winter? Why not visit a St Michael's Hospice shop, or visit their eBay store at [stmichaelshospice.com/retail](https://stmichaelshospice.com/retail). Every purchase helps the Hospice support the community, whilst promoting sustainable shopping. You can also donate good quality items to their donation centre, call 01425 728728 to book.

**Leave a gift in your Will.** Thinking about your legacy? Even leaving just 1% to St Michael's Hospice while keeping 99% for your loved ones can make a huge difference. One in three patients' care is funded through gifts in Wills, making it a powerful way to leave a lasting impact.

Your support, big or small, is vital in helping St Michael's Hospice support and enable the community of Hastings and Rother live well with dying, death and loss. To find out more about how you can get involved, visit [stmichaelshospice.com/support-us](https://stmichaelshospice.com/support-us) or call 01424 456296.



# QUIZ NIGHT

GATHER YOUR FRIENDS FOR A FUN NIGHT OUT!

Form a team of up to 6 and get ready to battle it out for a host of wonderful prizes!

**Friday 7th March | Doors open 7:00PM**  
**The Tudor Room at The Mermaid Inn, Rye**  
**Quiz starts at 7:30PM**

Tickets £5 (including snacks) | Sandwiches can be ordered for an additional charge | Licensed bar | Raffle

To reserve a table email [fundraising@ryehospital.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@ryehospital.org.uk) or call 01797 228842



In aid of Rye, Winchelsea & District Memorial Hospital Ltd

Charity no. 1014232 Company no. 02740665

[fundraising@ryehospital.org](mailto:fundraising@ryehospital.org)



## What's On Weekly At Winchelsea New Hall

Mondays 09.30-10.15	Pilates with Hannah	Suitable for all. Contact Hannah on 07936 151529 or email <a href="mailto:hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com">hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com</a>
Mondays 15.00-15.50	Zumba Gold	Suitable for all. Contact Daisy at <a href="mailto:fitnessbythesea@outlook.com">fitnessbythesea@outlook.com</a>
Mondays 16.00-17.00	Pilates with Celia	Suitable for all ages and abilities. Contact Celia on <a href="mailto:kingcelia54@gmail.com">kingcelia54@gmail.com</a>
Tuesdays 10.00-11.00	Yoga with Natasha	Suitable for everyone. Contact Natasha on 07946 399211 or email <a href="mailto:nn@natashanandiniyogini.com">nn@natashanandiniyogini.com</a>
Tuesdays 14.00-15.30	Tune In Winchelsea	Fun singing group run by local tenor Gary Marriot. All ages and abilities welcome. Contact Rosemarie on 07941 458628
Tuesdays 18.00-20.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel at <a href="mailto:rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com">rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com</a>
Wednesdays 18.00-19.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel at <a href="mailto:rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com">rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com</a>
Thursdays 09.30-10.30	Scottish Dancing	A fun, friendly class, suitable for beginners. Contact <a href="mailto:maddycoelho@hotmail.com">maddycoelho@hotmail.com</a>
Thursdays 18.00-19.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel <a href="mailto:rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com">rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com</a>
Fridays 09.30-10.15	Pilates with Hannah	All welcome. Contact Hannah on 07936 151529 or email <a href="mailto:hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com">hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com</a>

\*\*The hall has Table Tennis, Badminton and Pickleball equipment and can be booked on an ad hoc basis for £2 per person per hour (£1 for under 16's) – contact Rosemarie on 07941 458628 or WhatsApp

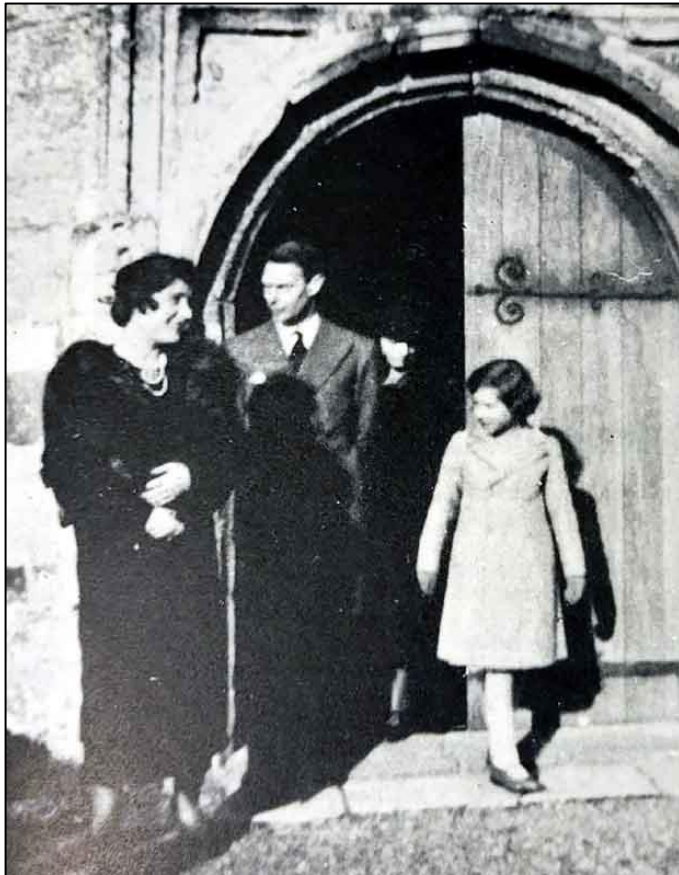
## Winchelsea Church and Town Calendar February 2025

Saturday 1st	Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12
<b>Sunday 2nd</b> <i>Candlemas</i>	<b>11am: Eucharist at Winchelsea</b> <i>Jonathan's farewell service</i>
Tuesday 4th	Mothers' Prayers - Solstice, Sea Road - 10am
Friday 7th	Rector's Farewell Event - New Hall - 6pm
Saturday 8th	Film Night - New Hall - 6.30 for 7.30pm
<b>Sunday 9th</b>	<b>9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Icklesham</b> <b>11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea</b>
Wednesday 12th	Second Wednesday Society - New Hall - 2.30pm
Friday 14th	Garden Society Wisley Outing
Saturday 15th	Parish Away-Day - Bexhill Agape Meal - Wesley's Chapel - 10.30 for 11am WAAHS AGM - New Hall - 11am for 11.15 Murder Mystery - New Hall - 6.30pm
<b>Sunday 16th</b>	<b>9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Pett</b> <b>11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea</b>
Friday 21st	Literary Society - Court Hall - 7pm for 7.30
Saturday 22nd	Coffee Morning and Attic Sale - Rectory - 10.30am Garden Society Winter Lecture - New Hall - 2.30pm FOAM Quiz - New Hall - 6.30pm
<b>Sunday 23rd</b>	<b>9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Icklesham</b> <b>11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea</b>
Friday 28th	Fellowship Lunch - WB Community Hall - 12.30 for 1pm
Sat 1st March	Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12
<b>Sun 2nd March</b>	<b>8.30am: Holy Communion (BCP) at Pett Level</b> <b>11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea</b>
Weds 5th March	Ash Wednesday Service - St Thomas's

### Further ahead

Fri 7th March	World Day of Prayer
Sun 16th March	Winchelsea Arts Concert
Sat 22nd March	Garden Society Spring Show
Sunday 23rd March	Little Shop Meeting

Please send copy for the March Magazine  
to [ryeview@gmail.com](mailto:ryeview@gmail.com)  
as soon as you have it to hand but, in any case,  
before Thursday 27th February



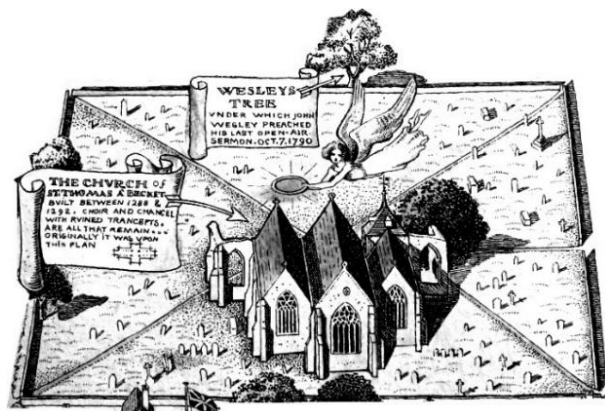
The Duchess and Duke of York (George VI) and Princess Elizabeth (Elizabeth II)  
Royal visit 1935

For Winchelsea Beach information go to  
[winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk](http://winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk)

For Winchelsea information go to  
[winchelsea.com](http://winchelsea.com)

For more information about the Church go to  
[winchelsea-icklesham-churches.org.uk](http://winchelsea-icklesham-churches.org.uk)

For weekly news from the local area go to  
[ryenews.org.uk](http://ryenews.org.uk)



## **Rector of Winchelsea and Icklesham and Priest in Charge of Pett**

The Revd Jonathan Meyer retires this month.  
During the vacancy, please contact the PCC Secretary,  
Mary Parker, with any enquiries about Baptisms,  
Weddings or Funerals.  
For all other matters, please contact the Churchwardens.

### **Churchwardens**

Celia King  
Stargazer, Morlais Place TN36 4LG  
01797 227858 [kingcelia54@gmail.com](mailto:kingcelia54@gmail.com)

Nigel Ashton  
Winchelsea Cottage, High Street TN36 4EA  
01797 222023 [nashton364@gmail.com](mailto:nashton364@gmail.com)

### **PCC Secretary**

Mary Parker  
07927 107678 [parkermmary848@gmail.com](mailto:parkermmary848@gmail.com)

### **St Thomas' Primary School**

Headteacher Dale Saxby  
Friars Road TN36 4ED 01797 226479  
[office@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk)

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