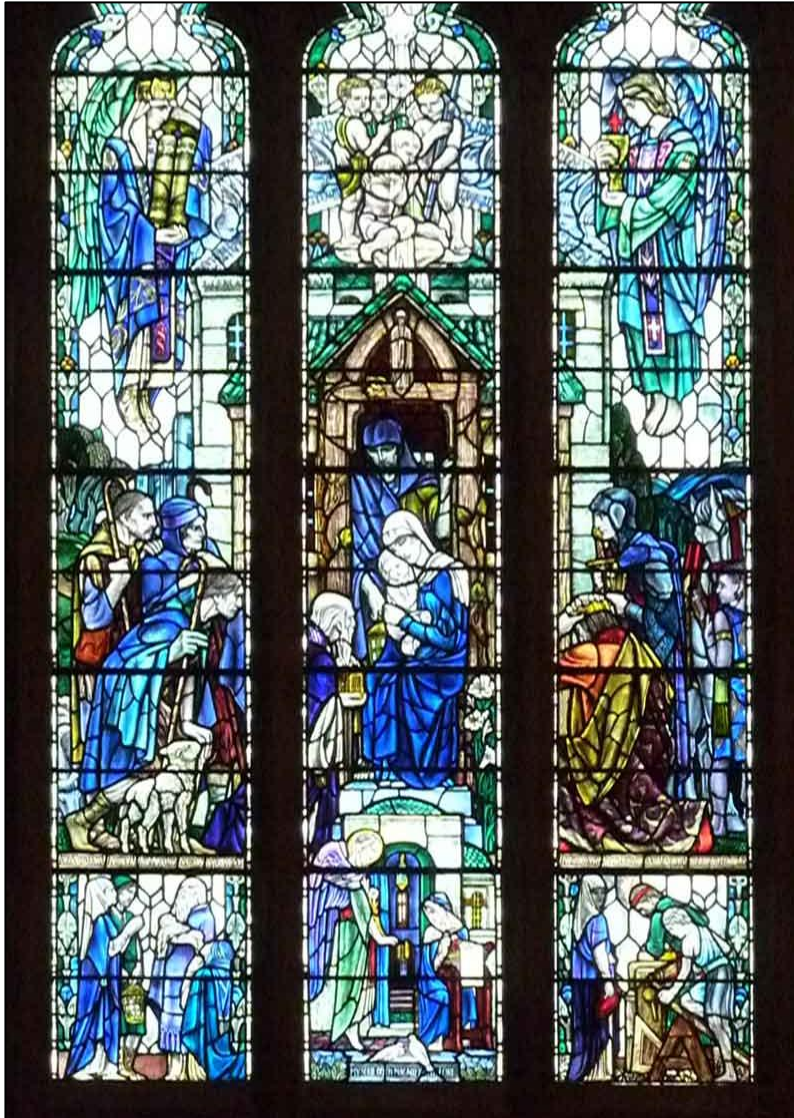


WINCHELSEA PARISH MAGAZINE

December 2025





Christmas Services

Sunday 14th

4pm: Lessons and Carols at Pett

Sunday 21st

9.30am: Lessons and Carols at Icklesham

5pm: Lessons and Carols at Winchelsea

Christmas Eve

4pm: Crib Service at Winchelsea

11.30pm: Midnight Mass at Winchelsea

Christmas Day

9.30am: Christmas Eucharist at Icklesham

11am: Christmas Eucharist at Winchelsea



Friends Christmas Drinks Reception

The Friends of Winchelsea Church will be holding a drinks reception following the Carol Service in St. Thomas' on Sunday 21st December to which everyone is invited.

The Carol Service commences at 5pm and the reception will follow shortly afterwards at about 6pm. There will be wine and soft drinks available, as well as some canapés. There will be no charge for this event for members or for non-members but donations will be welcomed on the evening and a card-reader will be available.

Non-members would be most welcome to join the Friends at the reception where they can pay the subscription by card and leave their details on forms provided by the secretary.

New Inn Bible Study

The next Bible Study session will take place on Thursday 4th December at 6pm in the New Inn. We will be looking at chapters 17 and 18 of Acts of the Apostles. The session last about one hour. Everyone is welcome.

Winchelsea Community Christmas Event

Saturday 13th December at the New Inn

To coincide with the launch of Winchelsea Christmas Windows 2025, everyone is invited to attend a very special informal community event from 6.30 p.m. at the New Inn

During 2026 many members of our community have been involved in raising funds for

Demelza Children's Charity East Sussex

At 7.15 all funds raised will be presented to members of the Demelza care team followed by traditional carol singing

All Welcome



Last year's event in the New Inn, a wonderful happy evening with the pub packed

Many thanks to everyone that has either helped in raising or donated funds for this very worthy local children's charity and we hope to see you there

Wishing you and your loved ones a very Happy Christmas
Peter & Debbie Cosstick



Winchelsea Christmas Windows

On Saturday 13th December at 4.30pm Winchelsea will launch its wonderful tradition of Christmas Windows.

At least 30 properties will decorate and illuminate their windows with a Christmas theme. Town maps which detail all participating properties will be available to purchase for a donation of £1 from The New Inn, The Little Shop and Winchelsea Farm Kitchen. We will also be selling them at the church market on Saturday 6th December. All proceeds from the sale of the maps will be donated to Demelza Children's Charity East Sussex.

The windows will remain lit from 4.30pm to 8.30pm every day up to and including 31st December.

Please show your support by purchasing a map and taking a stroll around the town to enjoy the fantastic creativity of your friends and neighbours. May we send an enormous 'Thank you' to everyone who is hosting a Christmas Window this year. This event could not happen without you. Wishing you all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas

Richard Plumb, Julian Cloke, Graham Large, Lyn Davidson and Debbie Cosstick - The Christmas Windows Team

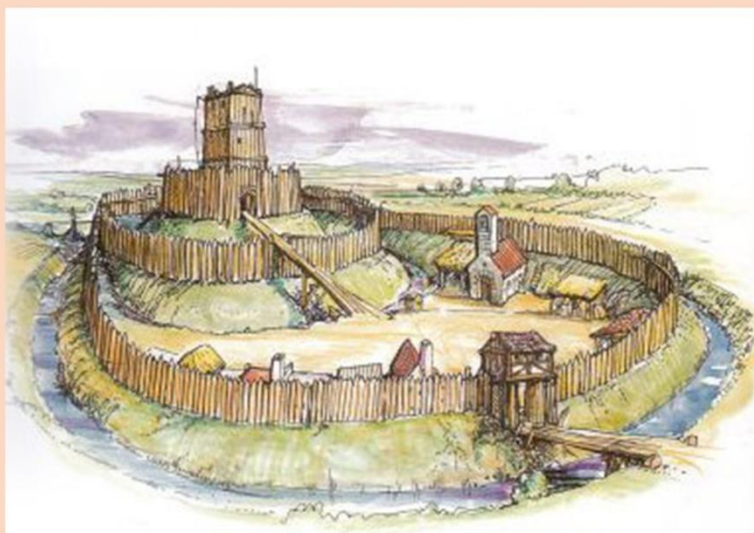
Winchelsea & Area Archaeological & Historical Society

Stephen Gray

(Retired Architect & Building Consultant)

On

**“The difficulties in launching the Norman Invasion
of 1066: Metrics, Logistics and ‘Flat Pack Castles’”**



Saturday 6th December, 11.30 (refreshments from 11.00)

The New Hall, Winchelsea TN36 4AA

£5 Entry (or join), Free to WAAHS Members

WAAHS investigates 1066

Historians continue to debate the location of the Battle of Hastings, how many combatants there were, how they got to the battlefield, how many died, and where the dead were buried. But there is no archaeological evidence for the Battle and many take absence of evidence as evidence of absence.

Whilst there are written reports of the Norman Invasion in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle, and by Norman chroniclers such as Guy d'Amiens, Orderic Vitalis and Wace, they do not always agree and are open to interpretation. Looking at the many different maps showing the disposition of the armies in the battle, each represented by lines of wildly different length, it is clear that many historians may not be very good at mathematics.

Stephen Howard Gray MSc DIP Arch ACIFA IHBC RIBAret'd. whose career spans fifty years has combined architecture, project management and archaeology.

Using the skills from each of these disciplines he examines whether arithmetic calculation can support or debunk the 'established' story and other competing theories, about the preparation of the invasion fleet, Harold's campaign in the prelude to the battle, and whether a battle of some fifteen thousand men and 2000 horses, would fit within the confines of the competing sites claimed for the battle.

Stephen is a resident of Battle whose family traces its ancestry to Anchetil de Graye, one of the Normans listed on the Abbey's battle roll. He is a retired conservation architect, now a buildings archaeologist and Trustee of Battle Museum of Local History.



Poppy Appeal 2025

Although subject to audit, a little under £2,600 was raised during this year's appeal. This is just £40 down on last year, which is remarkable given the financial uncertainty being experienced by so many. This figure does not include Gift Aid, or any e-donations that might have been made, so the final figure will be higher.

This really does represent another excellent effort in Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach and the RBL will be immensely grateful to all those who supported and helped out with this year's Appeal. As the local organiser, I am really grateful for the support and generosity of so many people in Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach.

This appreciation extends to all those who donated, to all those who hosted a collection box, to those who contributed at the October Fellowship Lunch, to those who came to the New Inn quiz and to those who took part in the Acts of Remembrance and wreath laying at the War Memorial, as well as the Service of Remembrance. Thank you all very much.

John Rodley



Pregnant with Hope

Reflections for Advent

An evening of reflections for Advent, along with poetry and music. The evening will be led by Professor Tina Beattie at St Thomas the Apostle Church, Camber, New Lydd Rd, TN31 7RJ.

Tina is Professor Emerita of Catholic Studies at the University of Roehampton in London and a well-known Roman Catholic theologian. In addition to her academic publications, Tina is also a published novelist and a regular contributor to the media, including BBC Radio 4's "Thought for the Day".

Please join us for what will undoubtedly be an interesting, thought-provoking and stimulating evening.
Wednesday 10th December at 7pm.
Wine and cheese will be served after the talk.

There's plenty of parking in both the church grounds and the neighbouring street. For more details, please contact The Revd. Jacques Desrosiers, on 07931 217458 (including WhatsApp) or email jtm-desrosiers@gmail.com.

WINCHELSEA FILM NIGHT

In conjunction with Winchelsea New Hall

CHRISTMAS MATINEE
THE SHOP AROUND THE CORNER

**MGM'S 1940'S
CLASSIC FILM**

A Romantic Comedy Drama

Starring

Margaret SULLIVAN

and

James STEWART

SUNDAY 14th December 3pm for 4pm SCREENING

Admission Free

Mince pies & Mulled Wine

Come early, enjoy a drink or two.

'The Shop Around the Corner'

A seasonal treat of a film.

Please note, this event is a Matinee: doors open at 3pm for a 4pm screening. We will be serving mulled wine, mince pies, and other seasonal treats.

We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Merry Christmas!.



The One and Many, Grayson Perry

We are looking forward to welcoming you to our last meeting of the year on 10th December at 2.30pm, in the New Hall. Doors open at 2:15. Visitors welcome.

The meeting starts with the AGM, at which we will be offering mulled wine and mince pies. All are welcome but only paid up members can vote or speak. We do need to discuss the future of the teas. Up until now they have been wonderfully organised (and often made) by Jane Eastell but she no longer lives in Winchelsea. So people need to come forward to take on the role, otherwise we'll have to rethink how we do the teas and what is offered..... Any other items for the agenda, please submit to 2ndweds@gmail.com

After the brief AGM, our speaker will be Andrew Ashton, ceramicist, artist, lecturer in art history and gardener. Andrew has given us several interesting illustrated talks in the past - Beryl Cook, Festival of Britain, Paul Nash, Statues to name a few. This month his subject is the artist Grayson Perry who is well-known for his ceramics, tapestries and cross-dressing. The messages his works carry are incisive and insightful into modern society. We look forward to learning more at what promises to be a fascinating and entertaining talk.

Natasha Robinson, Hilary Roome, Kim Zanes, Tessa Potts, Bill Doherty, Jenny Cyster

WINCHELSEA GOES TO...

HOLYROOD

...again!

Saturday 24th January 2026 / 6.15 for 6.30

Burns Night Supper & Dance

WINCHELSEA NEW HALL

The CATSFIELD STEAMERS live Ceilidh Band

Bring your own drinks

All proceeds to the
NEW HALL

TICKETS

Contact Hilary -
on **07923 451431**

£20

**Including a welcome
drink on arrival**

Contact Jane -
on **07958 251742**

TICKETS on sale from SATURDAY 3rd JANUARY at the CHURCH MARKET

Burns Night Supper and Dance

Saturday 24th January is a date for your diaries - Winchelsea Goes To Holyrood.....Againin the New Hall.

We are pleased to announce that there will be a community Burns Night Supper and Dance brought to you by the team that took you to Bollywood, Mamma Mia's taverna and Holyrood '25. Proceeds to the New Hall.

Of course there will be delicious haggis, neeps and tatties, and indulgent cranachan to follow. And then we'll dance it off to the lively Catsfield Steamers who were so great last year. Prizes for the best dressed person and the most entertaining dancer.

Tickets cost £20 which includes a welcome drink on arrival, but for the rest of the evening please bring your own drink. There won't be a bar.

Please note - Ticket numbers are strictly limited. As this is a community event Priority Tickets will be on sale only to residents of Winchelsea - Upper and Lower Town - at the Church Market on 3rd January. You'll be able to pay by cash or bank transfer as previously. We will need to know numbers in good time to order the food. Or you can contact us direct....

Hilary Roome 07923 451431, Jane Archutowska 07958 25174) and David Dickson 07758 962824

NB. Last year we were asked for tickets by non-residents and the Catsfield Steamers have their fans following so *please please* buy your tickets in good time. If there are any tickets remaining on 17th January we may let them go outside the town (there'll be a waiting list).

WINCHELSEA
NEW HALL

W. A. MOZART

English translation by Amanda Holden,
with additional material by the company

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

'THEY ALL DO THAT'

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21ST 2026

7.15pm

The New Hall

Rectory Lane
Winchelsea
TN36 4AA

General Admission
£25 (plus booking fee)

Box Office:
<http://www.merryopera.co.uk/>



The Merry Opera Company
www.merryopera.co.uk/
Registered Charity No. 1140904



Opera in New Hall Centenary Year

As part of the Winchelsea New Hall's 2026 year of special centenary celebrations, the Merry Opera Company has been invited with their production of Mozart's "Così fan tutte" on 21st February.

Playful deception meets its match in Mozart's sparkling comic opera, reminding us that love is rarely as simple - or as certain - as we'd like to believe.

Set to some of Mozart's most radiant and intricate music, this production is sung in English (translation by Amanda Holden see below) by a cast of young professional opera singers. Così fan tutte blends razor-sharp wit with moments of truth and reflection in this vibrant production that proves Mozart knew the human heart all too well.

Merry Opera is a professional opera company that tours across the UK and abroad. It is a registered charity and over the last 17 years has acquired a reputation for producing shows that keep audiences awake. This performance in February is part of its larger Spring and Summer tour.

Performance in Winchelsea on Saturday February 21st 2026 at 7.15pm. Tickets £25 available at merryopera.co.uk or through Hilary Roome 07923 451431 which will save you the booking fee.

This will be a Winchelsea New Hall community social event, and further details will follow. Please contact Hilary Roome 07923 451431 to reserve seats with friends, etc. The Merry Opera company are selling the tickets online which will be readily available to anyone so, to avoid disappointment, don't delay in buying your tickets.

**** Amanda Holden (1948-2021) Laurence Olivier Award winner, musician, librettist and opera translator. Not to be confused with the TV personality and actress!**



Wesley's Chapel

Thank you to everyone who came to the All Saints Day celebration service. It was exceptionally well attended and we are particularly grateful to Rev Carol Cockcroft for leading us in such an inspiring service and husband John for bringing some home baking for all to enjoy. Thank you both so much.

The last event of the year is an Advent Service on Sunday 7th December at 3pm, and this will be led by the new Chair of the Management Committee, Rev Ian Couchman. The Chapel is decorated ready for Christmas and we will be delighted to welcome everyone who would like to come. Seasonal refreshments will be served after the service.

Looking ahead into the new year, we meet again on St Valentine's Day for a Coffee Morning from 10am to 12pm.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Chapel events through 2025. We have had some really lovely times this year and the numbers coming is a great encouragement to those of us responsible for the programme. So whether you have come to one or more service or events this year – thank you. Wishing all readers a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

Everyone is always welcome at any of the Chapel events



During the interval of the Quiz there will be a quick 'pop up auction' which includes 3 lots of unique Christmas gifts to bid for, making a special Christmas present. All funds raised will be donated to Demelza East Sussex Children's Charity.

If you are unable to attend the night but are interested in making a reserved bid please contact Peter Cosstick on 01797 229087 or email peterrcosstick@btinternet.com to find out what is on offer, and if interested place a reserved bid. Reserved bids need to be registered by Saturday 6th.



Congratulations to Angela

Family, friends and residents of Winchelsea say, 'Happy 90th Birthday!'

A well-known and respected member of Winchelsea community, Angela Hill has been secretary of the PCC and is a regular worshipper at St. Thomas' Church. A former Town Clerk she is now an Honorary Freeman of Winchelsea.

A great supporter of many societies, Angela is always out and about – be it Winchelsea Arts, The Literary Society or Open Gardens, Angela is there supporting and enjoying herself. And we must of course remember the Bridge players.

Winchelsea says 'Keep well and happy Angela!'



Winchelsea Beach in December

Coffee Morning

On Wednesday 3rd December there will be a coffee morning in Winchelsea Beach Community Hall from 10.30 to 12 noon. As usual there will be tea and coffee and homemade cakes available. Everyone is welcome to meet up with old friends and make new ones and a few games if wanted.

Christmas Carol Sing Along

Wednesday 17th December at 6.30pm in the Community Hall. Free entry. Hot drinks and snacks available.

No Fellowship Lunch in December

As usual there will be no Fellowship Lunch this month because of all the other things that are happening at this time of year. The team would like to wish everyone a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year and we look forward to seeing you again at the next lunch on Friday 30th January 2026.



Christmas with Winchelsea Beach Community Association

WBCA Members Christmas Meal

Friday 12th December 3.30pm for 4 at the Community Hall. This is a ticket only event which is free for paid up members of the WBCA. Tickets must be collected in advance from the Post Office.

Carols Round the Christmas Tree

We welcome you to join us on Wednesday 17th December at 6.30pm for a fun hour singing carols, followed by complimentary refreshments served by the elves!

Christmas Party

for all primary school age children on Sunday 28th December from 4.40 to 6.30pm at the Community Hall. Free for children living at Winchelsea Beach. If you would like to bring a relative or friend there will be a charge of £3. Please give names to Natalie - 07817 962680 - by Friday 20th December.

winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk



Rye railway view to Winchelsea *Richard Hutley*

A Slow Burn

John Spencer writes Twenty years of campaigning (2005 – 2025) to keep our two rural stations (Three Oaks and Winchelsea) on the Ashford – Eastbourne Line open.

Beeching had nearly succeeded in closing our line in the 1960s. But after a sort of reprieve, four stations on the line were in 2005, threatened with closure. The decision regarding Appledore was almost immediately reversed, but Three Oaks, Winchelsea and Doleham were, without adequate warning, to have their services slashed.

A few trains early in the morning and late at night were allowed to call, but as was very well known, few passengers could be expected to use such a poor service and thus closure would undoubtedly follow. Notices were not posted at any of our stations to warn of this closure, so only a very few people were aware of what was to happen.

Angered by this, Monica Betson from Three Oaks and myself formed what Monica called THWART (Three Oaks and Winchelsea Action for Rail Transport). We needed to act and keep focussed but felt possibly wrongly that the case for Doleham would at this early stage be difficult to pursue.

Multiple protests at Winchelsea station were well supported by the Town, even including Carol singing at Christmas. Reports were published in local papers and the sitting MP Michael Foster began to weigh in and support us. He was aware as were many of us that if Three Oaks lost its train service there would be no public transport for that village. Community support was invaluable as was Michael Foster's office. We attended meetings in Westminster with at least one Transport minister. However the Rail company remained intransigent and claiming that a slower service overall would result if stops at our rural stations were reintroduced. They continued to be very negative.

Maybe the adverse publicity began to effect change. So that by 2010 the Rail company began to give way a little. An alternate hourly service for only six days of the week was finally allowed by the rail companies. But it took five more years of campaigning and multiple committee meetings to achieve a seven day service and some years later the vital and more usable hourly service followed.

The extra time spent stopping at both stations was offset in time by an increase in line speeds which helped our case. But crucially a number of local and one national Rail Action group supported us in this campaign. Membership and attendance at their meetings made such a difference.

Latterly an overarching series of meetings with enlightened officials from Southern was pivotal in finally achieving an hourly service. These meetings between Southern officials and some representatives of Bexhill, Hastings and

Marshlink Action groups and THWART have become a template for other National rail companies to copy.

Support also came from the Sussex Community Rail Partnership, an organisation which helps groups volunteering at stations, supported very successfully by Rail companies nationally. The idea here is that communities get involved safely with improving the appearance of their local station by planting up flower beds, getting artwork into community noticeboards, in our case with the help of children at St Thomas' School.

There are many other community activities too many and varied to mention. There is no doubt that by starting flower displays in planters at Winchelsea station early on in the campaign, pleased visitors, passengers and Rail officials, earning us brownie points. But having a small group of station volunteers watering, litter picking, pruning etc., has been an amazing support. Just putting up adverts for Winchelsea events in the station community noticeboard (donated by Southern some years ago) has had its own benefits. One individual recently donated four jars of fruit jam to the Church market. So, some rural stations survive and even thrive. Usage is going up.

But this little history has been written to help residents should there be further challenges in the future to our lovely rural stations. What has happened in the recent past should help alert us very fast to any future threats to Three Oaks and Winchelsea stations and thus our entry to the UK Rail Network.





Vineyard Open Day

Christmas Open Day at Charles Palmer Vineyards from 12 to 7pm on Saturday 20th December

Join us for a festive afternoon at the vineyard with delicious food, fine wine and live music — the perfect opportunity to stock up on your wines in time for Christmas.

- Tonio's Pizzas will be serving freshly made wood-fired pizzas from 1–6pm
- Live music by Jack Stevens from 3–5pm
- Complimentary winery tours led by our Wine Makers at 2pm and 4pm
- Rare and special Charles Palmer vintages, available to buy by the bottle
- Grab a glass of wine in our Cosy cellar door and unwind by the log burner

Charles Palmer Vineyards, Wickham Manor,
Wickham Rock Lane, Winchelsea, TN36 4AG.



Mike Stoneham bringing the tales to life *John Josiah*

Tales from the Court Hall will return

Following the two sell out performances in October, due to public demand, we are delighted to announce the 'Tales' will return to Winchelsea Court Hall on Saturday 31st January 2026, to enable those who missed the event to attend this repeat performance.

These are not ghost stories, but are true tales based on characters that have lived in Winchelsea and have been 'guests' of the Court Hall over a 200 year period. Some strange, some sinister, some moving and some amusing.

Should this event sell out at an early stage, we may add on an extra performance on Friday 30th January 2026. If you have not already done so, please book early to avoid disappointment. See poster for full details, reservations are now being taken.

*Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and New Year -
Celia, Mike, Debbie and Peter*

TALES FROM THE COURT HALL



An atmospheric event featuring strange, sinister, & amusing true tales from Winchelsea Court Hall

Saturday 31st January

Doors open 6.45 p.m.

Limited places- Booking essential

Tickets £15 (includes free drink on arrival)

To book tickets contact Peter Cosstick

peterrcosstick@btinternet.com or phone 01797 229087

This event is unsuitable for children

All proceeds to Winchelsea Corporation Charity no: 1192506

peterrcosstick@btinternet.com

01797 229087



The Turn of the Screw

Produced, designed and directed by Nigel Ashton and Phil Mack, 'The Turn of the Screw' at the Court Hall played to capacity audiences over five performances. The play was enthusiastically received with special congratulations being given to our two local young actors William and Audrey playing Miles and Flora. Over £4,000 was raised for FOAM.



Little Shop Christmas Update

As 25th December nears, we would like to wish everyone, who has supported the Little Shop this year, a very Happy Christmas!

We've been on quite a journey over the last few months as we transition towards a community business. And that wouldn't be possible without the help of our lovely volunteers, Nathan, Stephen Rumsey and of course all of us who use the shop.

For those who help behind the counter, it is a particular busy time as we help Nathan with the Christmas orders. But there are lots of other things happening. As we move towards leasing the premises, we've received useful legal advice from Simon Kemp, while Rob Mortimer has been surveying the

building. Meanwhile, retail experts, Nicola and Mark Harris have been diving into the sales data generated by the till. Thank you very much to all four of you, we really appreciate your expertise and time! As a thank-you to the growing number of residents helping to ensure the future of our much-loved shop, the Steering Group will be hosting a Volunteers' Christmas drinks party on Wednesday 10th December in the New Hall.

Early in the new year we will be sharing with you more details on our share offer and seeking your pledges as we get closer to full community ownership. In the meantime, don't forget to use the shop as much as you can over the holiday period (there is still time to get your festive food orders in) and have a wonderful Winchelsea Christmas.

The Little Shop Steering Group: Ali Casey, Glen Marks, Dave Richards, Rosemarie Roberts, Ian Rowlands





Winchelsea New Hall

100 Club The winning number for the 100 Club for November was 9. Congratulations to the winner of the £100 prize. Your prize money should now be in your account!

A Very Successful New Hall Christmas Fair

A huge thank you to the Christmas Fair organisers (Hilary, Berni, Diana, Jerry, Sue, John, Rosemarie, Rob, and Ali) for putting on another successful event. The fair raised £2,551 for the New Hall and £735 for Rye Food Bank.

A huge thank you also to everyone who contributed to its success by donating, helping, coming to the fair, buying raffle and tombola tickets and publicising it. We hope you had a good time, enjoyed meeting the makers and getting some original handmade Christmas gifts. Thank you again!

*New Hall Management Committee – Rob Mortimer,
John McGeown, Sergio Rebecchi, Mary Tidyman,
Rosemarie Roberts and Ali Casey*

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 hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com
Mondays 15.00-15.50	Zumba Gold	Suitable for all. Contact Daisy at fitnessbythesea@outlook.com
Mondays 16.00-17.00	Pilates with Celia	Suitable for all ages and abilities. Contact Celia on kingcelia54@gmail.com
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 rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com
Thursdays 09.30-10.30	Scottish Dancing	A fun, friendly class, suitable for beginners. Contact maddycoelho@hotmail.com
Thursdays 18.00-19.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com
Fridays 09.30-10.15	Pilates with Hannah	All welcome. Contact Hannah on 07936 151529 or email hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com

**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 Residents' Association

Thank you to all who attended our Annual General Meeting at the end of October. Our guest speakers Helena Dollimore MP and Simon Everitt, National Trust Ranger gave informative and helpful updates on matters concerning the town. We thank them both again for their attendance.

For anyone unable to attend the meeting a full record can be found at winchelsea.com/ra.

A number of suggestions for future WRA priorities were made at the meeting. Subsequently, these have been discussed by the committee. The committee has agreed to progress the following, in addition to current projects:

To create a small group including committee members to reinvestigate the opportunity to reduce the speed limit throughout the town to 20mph with a particular focus on Monks' Walk; to investigate how to create a safe crossing outside the New Hall; to communicate with www.greenwaysandcycleroutes.org regarding how the WRA can assist in promoting cycle paths around Winchelsea; to contact the National Trust to see what progress can be made to create a safe path for pedestrians from the station to the town. If you have any comments on the above, or suggestions, please email ra@winchelsea.com.

We have a vacancy on the committee for any resident who would like to get involved in leading any of the work streams mentioned above. Please contact us at the above email address. We wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Icklesham Parish Council

Save the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Campaign

At the last full council meeting Cllr Mrs. Stanford explained the terrible state and near collapse of the Mary Stanford Lifeboat House, and the disintegration of the beach at Rye Harbour. This is due to the coastal management plan adopted by Natural England, the Environment Agency and others.

Meaning over the last 10 years the EA have been prevented from repairing groynes on the instruction of Natural England who have adopted a “non-intervention policy”

allowing the shingle to wash away Although the Friends of the Mary Stanford Lifeboat House did persuade NE that shingle should be replaced there during the EA's winter shingle moving, this is a sticking plaster to the bigger issue which means that over the next 50 years Icklesham Parish Council could lose the Nature Reserve at Rye Harbour which is important SSSI land.

She asked Councillors to adopt a "Save the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve" campaign which they agreed to do. Then at the Harbour of Rye Advisory Committee she attended a few days later IPC's campaign was explained to the Committee who agreed their support.

Grant Funding

At the Parish Council meeting on 10th November councillors agreed the following: grant £1,000 to Icklesham Church - £600 for the annual church yard maintenance and £400 towards repairs to the organ. Granted the annual £1,725 to the Winchelsea New Hall Management Committee towards the running costs of the New Hall. Gave a donation of £500 to Action Against Abuse in recognition of the important work they do supporting vulnerable women and children.

Remembrance Day

The Chair and Vice Chair were honoured to attend the Remembrance Day service at St Thomas' Church on Remembrance Sunday, with the Chair laying a wreath at the war memorial honouring all those who gave their lives in service to our country. The Parish Council also installed large poppies around the Parish as a poignant reminder of the importance of remembrance to the Parish Council and our Parishioners.

Mary Stanford Lifeboat Memorial Service

The Chair and the Clerk also attended the Church of the Holy Spirit in Rye Harbour on Sunday 16th November service remembering Mary Stanford Heroes of Rye Harbour. The Lord Lieutenant was in attendance and wreaths were laid.

Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach Toilets

The District Council approved the Parish Council's expressions of interest and business plans have been submitted for each asset as requested by RDC. IPC are

waiting to hear, but are pressing RDC to get the transfers completed asap.

Installation of Memorial Bench

At the Full Council meeting held on 10th November, the Parish Council also agreed to install a memorial bench at the Manor Close bus stop in Icklesham in memory of Ian Nunn, who was the local Operations Manager for the Environment Agency. Very sadly, Ian passed away suddenly in August and will be enormously missed as a great friend of IPC and our local issues in relation to projects in Rye Harbour and Winchelsea Beach.

Rye Harbour Car Park and Toilets

Another Parish Council success is to have our small business rates relief claim accepted for the car park. This means that the Parish Council are no longer paying business rates for the car park and have secured a refund of £7,130.

IPC have been carrying out pothole repairs in the car park and have also recently installed new safety flooring in the public toilets in Rye Harbour following reports of the tiled floor becoming slippery over the winter months.

2026/27 Budget

IPC has had a successful initial discussion regarding the 2026/27 budget at the last Full Council meeting. There is another meeting scheduled for 8th December for further discussion and the budget will be finalised at the Full Council meeting on 12th January. Please do let us know if there are any projects you would like the Parish Council to consider taking forward.

Upcoming Meetings

Monday 8th December – 6.15pm Planning meeting followed by budget meeting at Rye Harbour Village Hall

Monday 12th January – 6.15 pm Planning meeting followed by a Full Council meeting at Winchelsea New Hall.

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 or write to
PO Box 148 Winchelsea TN31 9FP 07714 169901



‘Your Young Men Shall See Visions’

The Lit. Soc. membership slid through *The Doors of Perception* to hear about the visionary William Blake's ways of seeing, the subject of Gillian Southgate's talk to the November meeting.

Blake was a Londoner through and through, born in Broad Street Soho in 1757, the son of a hosier – an occupation doomed to extinction by developments in textile manufacturing technology. The family were Dissenters and young William seems to have marinated himself in the King James Bible greatly influencing his artistic output.

Aged 4, he reported seeing the face of God, (*the Countenance Divine?*) at his bedroom window and on one of his customary, long, solitary walks saw a tree filled with angels in Peckham Rye. He went to drawing school where he excelled at engraving which suited his bold temperament. In 1789 he enrolled on an Anatomy course to more realistically portray the human form.

He married Catherine Boucher “on the rebound” when he was 25 and although their union was childless, she offered great support for all his artistic endeavours and in life's more mundane trials.

His personality and character were an exotic cocktail; a committed non-denominational Christian who cared for

animals, a political Radical who admired Tom Paine and supported American independence and the French Revolution, he believed the Earth was flat and he was easily seduced by esoteric knowledge.

The resulting anti-authoritarianism manifested itself in strong personal dislikes for Sir Joshua Reynolds who dominated the Royal Academy and the long deceased Isaac Newton. Early paintings depict Nebuchadnezzar eating grass as a punishment for his arrogance (? Reynolds' sin) and a rather deflated, downcast Newton with a pair of compasses at his feet looking like a man defeated by his Geometry homework.

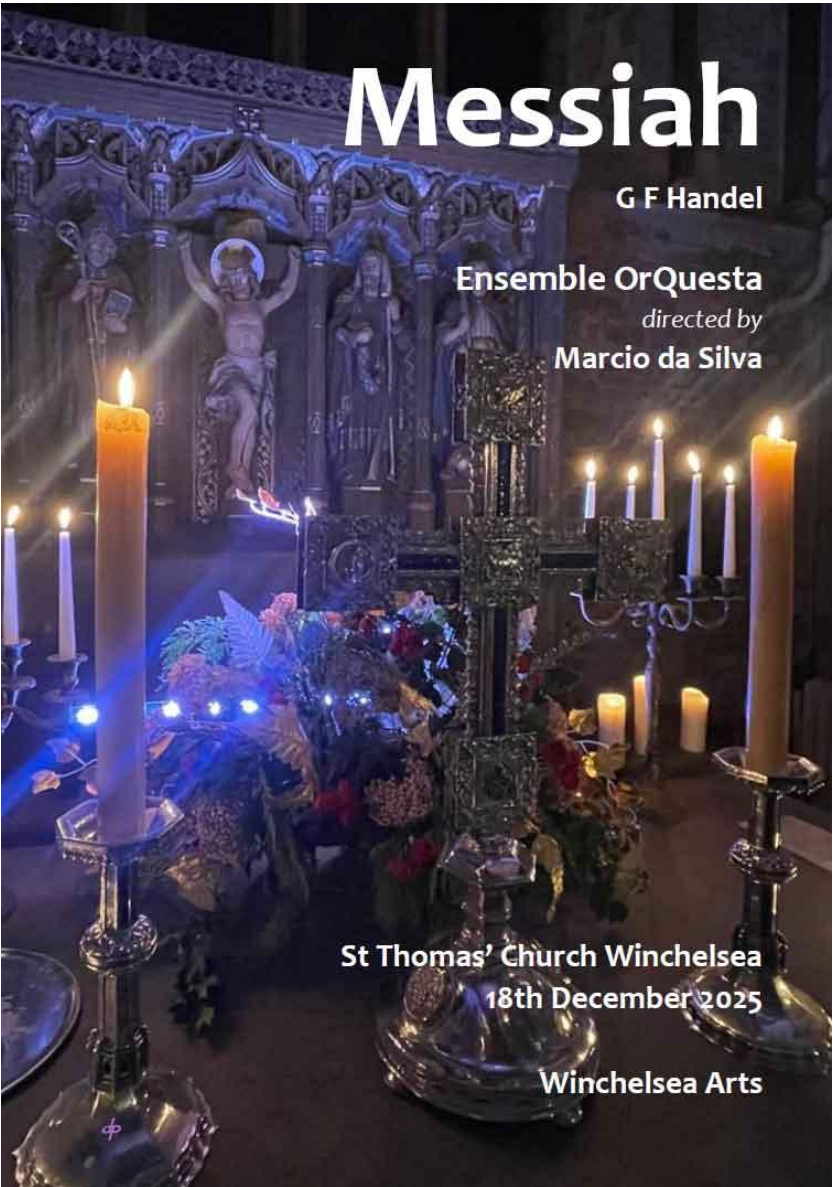
Although he was hailed as the first of the Romantic poets Blake was always a realist, able to see the worm in the flower but also capable of empathising with humans like the boy chimney sweep who had to negotiate flues only 7 inches in diameter and uttered repetitive, plaintive, mispronounced cries of "weep, weep".

In his poem *London* inspired by a walk through the city he ruminates on the collateral damage from the transmission of venereal disease:

*But most through midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the newborn infant's tear
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse*

Gillian's convincing demonstration showed us how Blake's famous Tyger Tyger, burning bright stanza's cleverly crafted scansion created a menacing beat. His preface to the poem "Milton" gave us England's much loved unofficial anthem "Jerusalem", the mention of which elicited a spontaneous rendition from the Lit. Soc. audience.

The work tries to reclaim England from the horrors of industrialisation represented by the *dark Satanic mills* of Lambeth's Stamford St. where he used to walk. This and his emergence as the patron saint of 60s and 70s drug culture form his best-known legacy. He died *in harness* illustrating Dante's *Divine Comedy* and was buried among his fellow Dissenters in Bunhill Fields. *Bill Doherty*



Messiah

G F Handel

Ensemble OrQuesta

directed by

Marcio da Silva

St Thomas' Church Winchelsea
18th December 2025

Winchelsea Arts

winchelsea-arts.org.uk

[Click here to see the full Season programme](#)



Rye Food Bank

Cam writes: I am writing to advise you that the next Winchelsea doorstep Food Bank collection behalf of Rye and Winchelsea Rotary Club will be Tuesday 16th December between 10am and 1pm. As this is our Christmas collection, I would be most grateful if you could include an item of Christmas Fayre in your donation as these along items with separate Rotary Christmas goodies purchased, will form the basis of a small Family hamper for each FB Family.

If you wish to talk to me, please use my 01797 226414 number.

As ever, grateful for your support throughout this past year. Happy Christmas and every good fortune in 2026.

Cam Clarke, Old Malt House, Winchelsea

For further details about Rye Food Bank and how to make a donation go to ryefoodbank.com

Winchelsea Church and Town Calendar

December 2025

Thursday 4th	New Inn Bible Study - 6pm
Saturday 6th	Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12 Archaeological Society Talk - New Hall - 11am for 11.30
Sunday 7th	8.30am: Holy Communion (BCP) at Pett Level 11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea 3pm: Advent Service at Wesley's Chapel Charity Quiz - New Inn - 7pm
Wednesday 10th	Second Wednesday Society - New Hall - 2.30pm
Friday 12th	Literary Society - Court Hall - 7pm for 7.30
Saturday 13th	Christmas Windows until New Year's Eve Presentation to Demelza - New Inn - 6.30pm
Sunday 14th	11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea 4pm: Lessons and Carols at Pett Winchelsea Film Night - New Hall - 3pm for 4
Thursday 18th	Messiah by Candlelight - St Thomas's - 7.30pm
Friday 19th	FOAM Carols - Court Hall
Sunday 21st	9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Pett 9.30am: Lessons and Carols at Icklesham followed by Communion 5pm: Lessons and Carols at Winchelsea followed by a reception hosted by the Friends
Christmas Eve	4pm: Crib Service at Winchelsea 11.30pm: Midnight Mass at Winchelsea
Christmas Day	9.30am: Christmas Eucharist with Carols at Icklesham 11am: Christmas Eucharist with Carols at Winchelsea
Sunday 28th	11am: Benefice Eucharist at Winchelsea
Sat 3rd Jan	Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12
Sun 4th Jan <i>Epiphany</i>	8.30am: Holy Communion (BCP) at Pett Level 11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea

Further ahead

Sat 24th Jan	Burns Night at the New Hall
Sat 21st Feb	Cosi fan tutte
Sat 28th Feb	FOAM Quiz

Please send copy for the January Magazine
to ryeview@gmail.com
as soon as you have it to hand but, in any case,
before Sunday 28th December



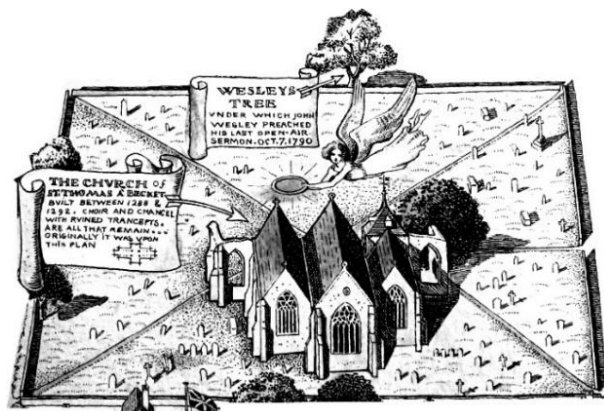
Salutation Cellar

For Winchelsea Beach information go to
winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk

For Winchelsea information go to
winchelsea.com

For more information about the Church go to
winchelsea-icklesham-churches.org.uk

For weekly news from the local area go to
ryenews.org.uk



Parishes of Winchelsea Icklesham and Pett

Until the Revd Nathanael Hayler is in post, please contact the PCC Secretary, Mary Parker, with any enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals. For all other matters, please contact the Churchwardens.

Churchwardens

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Stargazer, Morlais Place TN36 4LG
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