Sandon Voice

Quarterly from St Andrew's 75p for non residents

June 2026



A Few Days Away

A change is a s good as a rest. We think so.
We set off on a Monday in April to go to Carlisle for a conference about church bells and church clocks. We decided to break the journey with a night at Greeting. You have probably never heard of it, neither had we before April. It turns out to be a lovely village, near Sowerby Bridge in West Yorkshire. We stayed in an Air BnB which was a loft in a family house. It was comfortable and provided breakfast, which earned it bonus points in our eyes.
After a good night's sleep in a large double bed, (The bed being one criterion for choosing the Air BnBs!) we set off for Ravenglass in Cumbria to meet up with cousins who were on holiday there from Edinburgh. After coffee we enjoyed a ride on the Ravenglass and Eskdale narrow gauge railway and although it was a bit drizzly, we had a picnic together at Eskdale. We decided to find a warm dry place for an early evening meal before setting off for Carlisle. There we had booked a whole house which was very well-appointed, although we needed to go to the local shop for milk.



Spinning the engine at Eskdale

The conference was at Carlisle Cathedral, so having dropped our bags at our accommodation we joined some of the delegates for evening prayer. Richard ventured up to the bell-ringing room to ring one of their 13 bells. The steps up were at the East end of the building. He then had to get along the length of the cathedral at a high level to access bells, which were nearer the West end. Again, a good night's sleep in a king-size bed and we were off to the conference on the Wednesday morning. The first speaker had researched the sway of towers, or tower dynamics, when bells are rung, finding similar information from earthquake investigations. He presented results which showed it was not just the distance the tower moved, but that distance relative to the tower height and varying with the building material. That is wooden towers behave differently from brick or stone. He hoped some towers previously condemned as unsafe could now be used!
Another speaker told us about keeping church clocks going, even when a change of bells meant diverting originally straight mechanical connections from clock face to clock workings in wild bends to avoid interference with bell ropes and wheels. The Keltek trust is an organisation which tries to preserve church bells, even removing them from redundant churches and offering them to churches who want bells. All inspired by the man who spoke to us, David Kelly. We had information from the Church Building Council and Ecclesiastical Insurance who helped to sponsor the event. All very interesting, including advice about funding. The VAT exemption for church repairs stopped in March 2025, but there may be some funding becoming available later in the year. Suggested churches have building project paperwork prepared for a quick expression of interest when the funds are opened. An interesting day with a good lunch.
We left to set off to Doncaster, our night's rest on the way home. This time the Air BnB was very inexpensive, and it turned out to be a bedroom with ensuite facilities in a family house. It was very noisy when we arrived with a family party downstairs but we had a very comfortable sleep in our large double bed. We left in the morning towards Grantham to charge the car and enjoy a delicious breakfast in a garden centre before heading home.
Also we were able to take a train ride on the Carlisle Settle line and back.
Quite a busy few days but definitely a change from our usual routine. *Judy Cecil*

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Quiet prayers

The little boy was saying his go-to -bed prayers in a very low voice.
"I can't hear you, dear," his mother whispered.
"Wasn't talking to you," said the small one firmly.

Letter from the Wardens

As we approach 2 years of vacancy, I thought I could reflect on our most recent church meeting and how things are. But first let me mention that we have just had a visit from an Area Dean in East London. He is a long-time friend who just dropped in. He was saying that it is very difficult to find priests to fill posts. They have 6 vacancies in their deanery, that is one quarter of the deanery. So, things are not as they used to be.

We have had our Annual Meeting and elected the same 2 church wardens, Andy Horne and myself. There were no big changes and, it seems, no small ones either. However, without special permission church wardens can only serve 6 years in a stretch, which I will have done next year in 2027 and Andy will have done so in 2028.

If you were a crow, you would notice that the roof on the top of the tower has now been repaired and given a facelift by Hilton Property Maintenance, for which we are very grateful. Being buffeted by the wind at the top of the church tower is never much fun as, I am sure, Mike Worboys will readily testify! The work having been largely funded by money given to the church by the Friends of Sandon Church for which we are obviously truly grateful.

If on the other hand you were a swift you would find a welcoming box for you to hatch your young. Four swift boxes were installed near the top of the west side of the tower in the bell chamber. Apparently, the swifts are not concerned by the noise of bells. Once a chick leaves the nest it does not land for 2 years. It eats and sleeps on the wing. It eats insects and sleeps one half of its brain at a time. They can go to 10,000 feet at night and have been recorded flying from this country to Spain and back in a day to get a good feed! Ryanair might make that possible for us!

Local poet Richard Simmonds writes,

Soon

Soon, soon will not May arrive
Sweetly, softly out of the blue
And succulent green
Life a new
World born for the first time seen.

Soon the swifts to their haunts
Will return, flying high, their tight
Tensioned bow,
Fed in flight
There on the wing, they go.
All too soon, you are gone
Gone leaving naught behind
As summer turns
Seasons signed,
We eager await your May return.

Richard was inspired by the following from Edward Thomas

How at Once

How at once should I know,
When stretched in the harvest blue
I saw the swift's black bow,
That I would not have that view
Another day
Until next May
Again it is due?
The same year after year
But with the swift alone.
With other things I but fear
That they will be over and done
Suddenly
And I only see
Them to know them gone.

There are plans to change the design of plaque used in the cremated remains area and we are exploring other improvements there too. As well we will need to have another similar area before too long.

There are events coming up soon, to which we invite you, including the church Fête on Saturday 27th June from 12 noon until 3:00 pm in the churchyard. Some of the attractions will be a BBQ, teas and coffees, a dog show, handbell ringing, a raffle and various stalls. We pray for a sunny day. (Last year we crowded into the church as the rains came down). We have enjoyed successful Afternoon Teas in church in April and May and invite you to the next on 23rd August at 2:30pm. Bring your friends and relax over tea and scones.

We are delighted that, as you will see, that there is to be a stretch of five Sundays when we have a priest to lead our service of Holy Communion. We are also looking forward to the Tea on the Green on Sunday 19th July, a little earlier this year, when we will welcome Rev Anna Jones, chaplain at Queens' College Cambridge.

Thank you to all who continue to support St Andrew's in many ways in the church and out in the churchyard. It is truly humbling to know that so many of you feel that you are an important and valued part of this community. It also shows that Sandon is both a wonderful place to live in and be involved with.

Andy and Richard
Church Wardens

Car travel

A minister was looking at potential cars down at the dealership. Pointing to one, he asked the salesman: "Cargo space?" Confused, the salesman replied slowly and clearly: "Car no do that…no go heaven. Car go road."

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Prayer and the Power of Prayer…

At some point, we all need God in our lives. Even those who say “we don’t believe”.

When something bad happens, something that scares us, when we need advice on what to do or say, most of us turn to God and ask for help. Yes, including those who say that God is not in their lives, they too pray when the chips are down.

So, why not pray when things are going well? Pray to say thank you. Pray for others. Pray to keep in touch when things turn upside down again.

At St Andrew’s Church, we believe that prayer helps us daily. A lot of people pray regularly first thing in the morning. It grounds us. We listen; God does speak to us, but we need that quiet time to listen.

I personally have started a journal and keep it beside me when I pray, so I can write down anything that I have read or listened to. Is something speaking out to me? If so, I write it down. Hardly a day goes by when there is a blank entry in my journal.

It is just an idea to start you off. There are plenty of daily readings available that start off with a scripture reading. Then an explanation of that reading, then it ends with a very short prayer. There are audio versions too. I personally read the New Daylight which is published by BRF. Or I listen to an audio from Lection 365 which is part of 24-7 Prayer led by Pete Grieg. There are many other books and audios too to listen but I find these both really help with my daily prayer. It allows me to give part of my busy day, focussing on God our Father and the Lord God our Saviour.

Every morning at 8:30 there is morning prayer in St Andrew’s Church. This is open for all to attend.

This past year, St Andrew’s has revisited sending out a Prayer Leaflet to each street in our local community. You may already have received one, if you have not, you will soon.

This leaflet focuses on prayer and praying for something that is troubling us or praying for others. Also, once a month, we pray for those we have delivered to.

There is a section in the Prayer Leaflet, where you can write down something or someone you would like us to prayer for. There is a Prayer Box in St Andrew’s Church, opposite the church entrance on the ‘Welcome Table’. You can use initials or just a first name. You do not need to write the prayer but you will know that what you are praying for or the person, will be prayed for in church by the entire congregation.

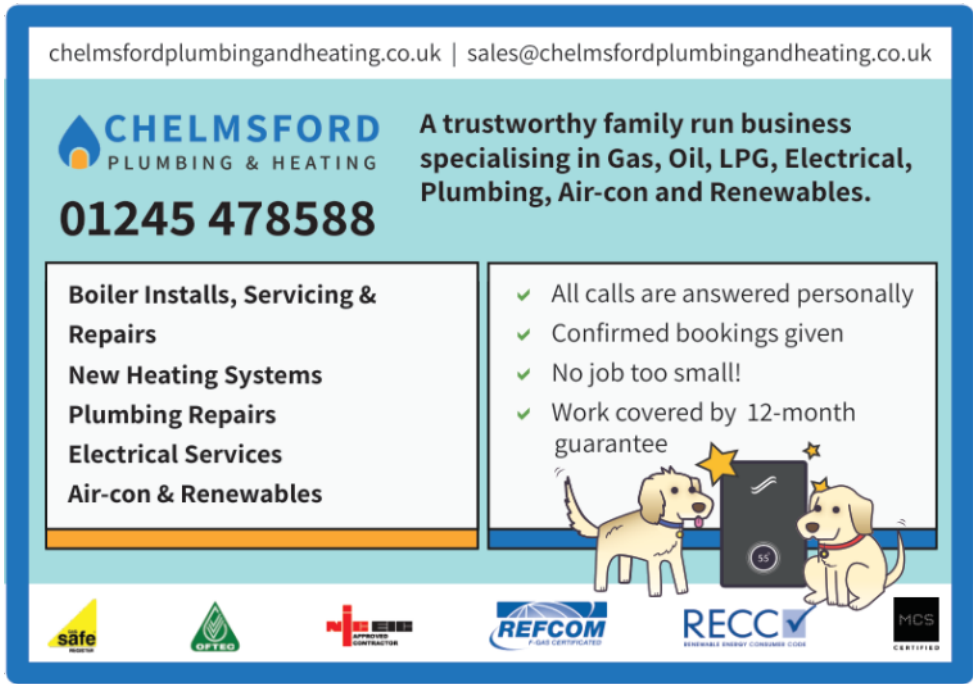
There is such power in prayer and even more in group prayer.

So, when you feel that things are at a loss, you do not know where to turn or you simply want to reach out, God is always there and will always be listening.

Let us end this with a prayer:

Loving Lord, Heavenly Father, we pray that you give us space in our busy lives to spend time with you. To allow others who need you to come to you. Be with us, listen to us, guide us and comfort us. Circle us with your love and peace. Amen.

Claire Jefferies



Thank you

St Andrew's church aims to give 10% of its receipts to some form of mission activity. That is via 3 charities, Made for More which works in schools in the Chelmsford area supporting young people and explaining the gospel. It is via the Friends of Marsabit. Marsabit is a town in



Bishop Qampicha has visited Sandon at least twice

the north of Kenya and the centre of a very large diocese of the same name. Judy and I visited there last autumn as we reported in the last magazine. Bishop Qampicha, bishop of Marsabit, regularly expresses his gratitude and his predecessor, Bishop Rob Martin, regularly speak at St Andrew's. The third is Christian Aid who have sent thanks and say, Thank you for your generous gift. Your donation will soon be working hard in communities across the world, supporting people and helping to ensure that we create a world where everyone can live a life free from poverty.

Your donation makes a real difference. For 80 years, we've been standing with the poorest of our neighbours. We work in 25 countries, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice.



Together with our trusted partners, we support families to survive violence and poverty against all odds. Our voices and actions are stronger together. And with your help, we can make an even bigger difference.

Richard Cecil

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Sunday 14th June
10:30 am – 4:30 pm.



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Tickets: Adult - £7 in advance, £8 on the day. Accompanied under 16s – free.
For more information and to book now, go to www.farleighhospice.org/gardens

Tea on the Green

Sunday 19th July
3 pm to 5 pm



At 3 pm there will be tea or coffee and cake.
At 4 pm we will be joined by the Chelmsford Salvation Army Band for Songs of Praise.
The chaplain of Queens' College Cambridge, Revd Anna Jones, will speak to us.
Do join us and make sure you bring a chair.

Quotes

All but God is changing day by day. – *C Kingsley*
We expect our young people to lay down their lives for our nation, but most of us are not willing to lay down our bank accounts for God. – *Anon*
We trust not because 'a god' exists, but because THIS God exists. – *C S Lewis*
Our life is scarcely the twinkle of a star in God's eternal day. – *B Taylor*
God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame. – *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*
God loves His children in adversity as well as in prosperity. – *T Watson*
Grace is the sum and substance of New Testament faith. – *J I Packer*

William Henry Stibbard
c 1850—1911

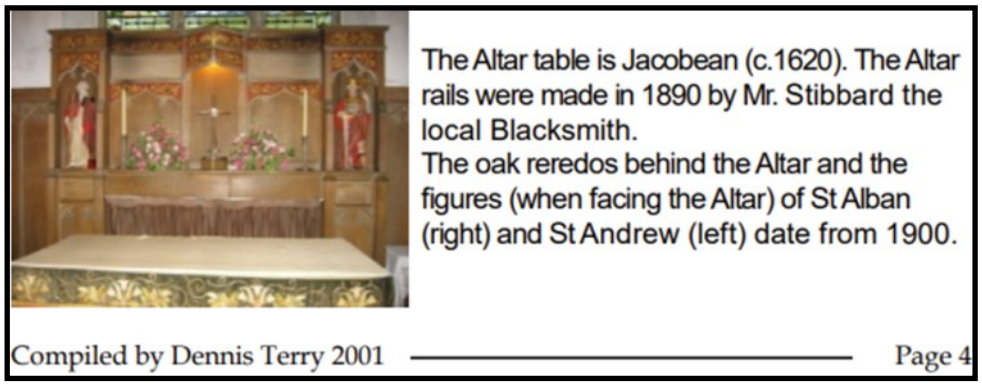
Steve and I enjoyed our brief visit to Sandon. We appreciated the opportunity to meet you and visit the church. We were interested in seeing the town where Steve's grandfather, Albert Edward Stibbard, was born.

Steve's great-great grandfather was William Henry Stibbard, who lived in Sandon from approximately 1850 until the early 1900's. The 1881 England Census records state that William Henry Stibbard was a "Smith Wheelwright And Carpenter Employing 3 Men". My research indicates that William moved to Thundersley after his wife passed away and resided with his daughter until his death in 1911.



Steve on the seat made by his great great grandfather, William Henry Stibbard

I could not find any official records stating that William Henry Stibbard built the iron bench surrounding the original Spanish



From the current St Andrew's Church Guide referred to at end of the article.

Oak tree. I did see that the tree was planted in honour of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, and several sites indicated that erecting the bench was a part of that celebration. I have been corresponding with one of Steve's second cousins, Barry Stibbard, in Canada and he is the person who told me about the bench. Barry visited Sandon years ago and when I mentioned that Steve and I planned to visit Sandon, he told me to look for the giant oak across from the church. He said that the iron bench surrounding the tree was built by William Henry Stibbard.

Barry was very surprised to hear that the giant oak had to be removed due to disease and replaced by another tree. (In fact it dramatically collapsed in 2001. Prior to that it was known to be diseased, possibly because it had been spiked in the crown which gave it its special shape. Ed)
I sent a picture to Barry of Steve on the bench and asked him what he knew of the history. Here is his reply:
"With regards to the tree picture with Steve all I can say is WOW. The girth of the tree in the picture is about the size of the wooden logs that they used to support the branches of the old tree. I am not exaggerating; the old tree actually had the bench bite into its bark and the spread of the limbs I would estimate at easily 50 feet in diameter; thus the log supports.

With the bench, my grandfather, who is grandson of William Henry Stibbard had a Kodak picture of the tree and told us the story. There had originally been a wooden bench around the young sapling and one night William Henry came home drunk and tripped over the tree and damaged the bench. He subsequently built the iron bench to totally surround the tree allowing room for the tree to grow. That's the family folklore. I would not be surprised about the ironwork in the church because my grandfather who lived in Sandon until coming to Canada said his grandfather was an excellent ironworker."

The ironwork in the church, that Barry is referring to, is from a document that I found online called "Saint Andrews Church Sandon Guide". Page 4 mentions the Altar table.

Stephanie Ewing-Warner

Our Church is open!
The church is open for quiet contemplation and prayer every day from about 8:30am to 5:00pm (exact times will vary).

Church Services — St. Andrew's, Sandon

Services currently planned online via Zoom are shown in italics.

Also, we hope to say Morning Prayer at 8:30 am each morning, Sunday to Thursday.

June

Tuesday 2nd	9:30 am	Said Communion Carol Ball	
Wednesday 3rd	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 7th	**Trinity 1**		
	10:00 am	Agape Meal	
Tuesday 9th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Mark Pape
Wednesday 10th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 14th	**Trinity 2**		
	10:00 am	Worship Together	
Tuesday 16th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Carol Ball
Wednesday 17th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 21st	**Trinity 3**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist and Baptism	Andrew Merchant
	3:00 pm	Afternoon Worship at Howe Green URC Chapel	Anne Sardeson
Tuesday 23rd	9:30 am	Morning Prayer	
Wednesday 24th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 28th	**Trinity 4**		
	10:00 am	Morning Worship	
Tuesday 30th	9:30 am	Morning Prayer	

July

Wednesday 1st	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 5th	**Trinity 5**		
	10:00 am	Worship Together	
Tuesday 7th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Carol Ball
Wednesday 8th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 12th	**Trinity 6**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist	Andrew Merchant

Tuesday 14th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Mark Pape
Wednesday 15th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 19th	**Trinity 7**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist	Anna Jones
	3:00 pm	Afternoon Worship at Howe Green URC Chapel	Jo Clare-Young
	4:00 pm	Songs of Praise	
Tuesday 21st	9:30 am	Said Communion	Carol Ball
Wednesday 22nd	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 26th	**Trinity 8**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist	Jonathan Croucher
Tuesday 28th	9:30 am	Morning Prayer	
Wednesday 29th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	

August

Sunday 2nd	**Trinity 9**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist	Bishop Adam
Tuesday 4th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Carol Ball
Wednesday 5th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 9th	**Trinity 10**		
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist	Andrew Merchant
Tuesday 11th	9:30 am	Agape Meal	
Wednesday 12th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 16th	**Trinity 11**		
	10:00 am	Morning Worship	
	3:00 pm	Afternoon Worship at Howe Green URC Chapel	Jo Clare-Young
Tuesday 18th	9:30 am	Said Communion	Carol Ball
Wednesday 19th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 23rd	**Trinity 12**		
10:00 am	Agape Meal		
Tuesday 25th	9:30 am	Morning Prayer	
Wednesday 26th	8:30 pm	*Night Prayer*	
Sunday 30th	**Trinity 13**		
	10:00 am	Songs of Praise	

Saint Andrew's Parish Church Contacts

Rector	Vacancy	
Church Wardens	Richard Cecil*+ Andy Horne*+	224747 475279
PCC Secretary	Judy Cecil*+	224747
PCC Treasurer	Nick Bobeldijk*+	471756
Safeguarding Officer	Alison Read*	474858
Electoral Roll	Liz Bobeldijk	471756
Bell Ringing	Mike Worboys	224612
Tiny Tots	Alison Read*	474858
Flower Arranging	Lesley Worboys	224612
Organist	Cathie Horne*	475279
Choir	Gill Haddington	529305
Magazine Editor	Richard Cecil*+	224747
Parochial Church Council Members	as * above and Colin Bryan+, Christine Mennie+, Janet Terry+ and Lisa Wiseman	

Authorised to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion
As + above and Valerie Grimwood, Gill Hodge and Michael Puffett

Regular Events see pages 14 & 15 for full details of worship.

Sundays	10:00 am	Morning Worship/Communion
	8:30 am	Morning Prayer with Compass Group (Zoom) compasschurches.org.uk
Tuesdays	9:30 am	Communion/Morning Worship/ Agape Meal
	7:45 pm	Ringing Practice
Wednesday	8:30 pm	Night Prayer (Zoom) sandon-church.info

Zoom services links can be found at the websites just prior to the service.

St Andrew's, Sandon

www.sandon-church.info

Editor Richard Cecil
Advertising Claire Jefferies
Distribution Manager Alison Read

Copy for September's magazine by 10th August 2026 please.
magazine@sandon-church.info



At the following we commend to God's care:

the interment of ashes of
John Wood 13th February

the funeral of
Kay Tyler 17th March

the burial of
Ann and Peter Elwell 13th May



Howe Green URC

We have had a busy few months. Our main news being that we welcomed our new Minister Jo Clare-Young to the mission partnership. Jo moved to us with her husband Alex who is also a minister and we welcome them both and look forward to growing in faith with them. Jo is taking our May anniversary service where we will be celebrating over 150 years of our chapel at Howe Green. We also had two very successful coffee mornings and look forward to welcoming everyone to our events in the future.

Our forthcoming services are:
Sunday June 21st at 3 pm with Anne Sardeson
Sunday July 19th at 3 pm with Jo Clare-Young
and Sunday August 16th at 3 pm with Jo Clare-Young

We have our strawberry tea on Saturday 6th June at 3 pm where all are welcome to come and share in friendship and fellowship with us. *Jane Clark, Secretary*

Peter and Ann Elwell

One of the most extraordinary phone calls I have received was on the morning of Wednesday 22nd April. Sarah Pennack rang to say that the funeral planned for the afternoon was being cancelled. Why would you cancel a funeral?
She then explained that Peter Elwell, widower of Ann Elwell, the deceased, had been taken ill and was not expected to survive the day. He died an hour later, 5 hours before Ann's funeral was due. Peter had been a keen supporter of the choir at Sandon and was a very good singer. In the autumn he fell and broke his hip. It was repaired but he never really got on this feet again. He did get home and was cared for at home receiving visitors. He remained positive each time he





was visited. He and Ann were buried at Sandon church in what must be a rare double funeral on 13th May by Revd Ivor Moody. Their daughter Lucy read 'If I Should Go' by Joyce Grenfell.

If I should die before the rest of you,
Break not a flower nor inscribe a stone.
Nor, when I'm gone, speak in a Sunday voice,
But be the usual selves that I have known.
Weep if you must,
Parting is hell.
But life goes on,
So... sing as well.

Their children, Simon, Adam and Lucy were able to be with Peter when he died and he was visited by all his grandchildren shortly before he died.

Farming Today

All fertilizer applications have been completed and fungicide applied to all crops. Fungicide is applied to crops to prevent, inhibit, or eliminate fungal infections like Septoria, rust, and mildew. Fungicide application protects yield potential and grain quality by controlling pathogens. It is often applied at specific growth stages (T0-T3) to ensure leaf and stem health. To find out more about the growth stage of crops search for The growth stages of cereals on the AHDB website[1].

The continued dry weather is proving to be challenging with cereal crops struggling. 200 acres of Spring barley were planted in Mid March. This was planted for a HDP contract which is a high nitrogen contract for malting barley.

Harvest is looking to be early again this year. A good rain is desperately needed to keep the quality of crops high. If we have no rain, crops are likely to die off early sacrificing yields and quality. Holidays are being rejigged to accommodate an early harvest. The Iran and Trump war is having a huge impact on fertilizer supply and higher pricing. Another disastrous harvest for farmers? Only time will tell.

Three harvest students have been recruited, two from Ireland attending an Irish agricultural college and one from Harper Adams. All experienced and extremely keen to learn and work hard.

Haylage for the sheep was made at the end of April. Early cutting ensured a maximum quality product in time for lambing next year. The first 80 lambs have been sent away, with another 60 due to leave the farm in the coming week. Lamb weights and prices are proving to be high with lambs leaving at 42kg plus each. Lambs will be weaned from their mothers after shearing on the 18th May. Shearer Fergus, is coming from Scotland to shear 370 ewes, 70 ewe lambs and 26 rams. The rams have had no end of foot trouble this year, but we think this is now under control.

All new hedges planted in the last couple of years are now established and doing well.

Richard & Charlie

And many thanks to Gillian for several years of contributions too.

[1]The AHDB website, ahdb.org.uk, describes many growth stages GS1 - 9 with subdivisions e.g. 'GS47: Flag leaf sheath opening' as well as a fungicide program T0 - T3. *Ed*

Sandon WI

February at was not only Valentine's meeting, but also afternoon tea. Sue provided all the lovely teapots and china cups and saucers, with matching side plates. The hall was set out to perfection. Fran and Karen had worked really hard making the sandwiches and small cakes that were placed on each table for members to enjoy. Sitting across from me was our guest speaker Lucy Lewis. Her talk was about her life as a Bomb Disposal expert. While chatting over our tea, Lucy told our table that unfortunately for her, the government had changed a few things since she had retired. The main change was that any person who had retired from the armed forces would be called back to serve their country again if war were to break out. When asked why, her answer was straight to the point: “we have been trained to kill.” No training would be necessary. After ex-service persons, TA members would be next. I think she said, Regardless of age.

After lunch, Lucy filled the hall with her funny and frightening stories from her army career. Lucy Lewis was the first ever female Bomb Disposal Expert.

A very enjoyable meeting, and we had the opportunity to purchase



Lucy as Marshal of Cambridge University

Lucy’s book titled "Lighting The Fuse." *Julie Fisher*

This is not the first time Lucy has spoken in Chelmsford. She spoke at the Cambridge Society in May 2024 in Chelmsford. She was introduced as Marshal of Cambridge University & First women bomb disposal officer. Lucy joined the Army on the spur of the moment and after training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, was chosen in 1989 to become the first woman to operate as a Bomb Disposal Officer with the Royal Engineers. She subsequently served with the

Royal Military Police in Germany and Northern Ireland, retiring in the rank of Major to start a family. In 2018, Lucy made history for a second time by becoming the first woman to be appointed University Marshal at the University of Cambridge and now leads one of the oldest Constabularies in the world.

Lucy spoke about some of her work in bomb disposal and the care which is needed as the soldier approaches a potential land mine, face down flat to the ground. On one occasion she was tasked with defusing land mines in the dark. She moved carefully forward and found a firm round object. So she cleared around it as she had been instructed. She was being observed through night glasses. She dug a little deeper and there was no depth to this mine. It also smelt odd. There was much merriment amongst her colleagues as this was revealed to be a cow pat! *Richard Cecil*

Back to Julie Fisher

Kay Lodge had informed members that she would be stepping down. It was a time for members to step forward if they would like to be president for the coming year. The health of the anticipated new president caused a bit of uncertainty as to the future officers of Sandon WI. So elections were called a month early. Julie Fisher accepted the position of president, possibly in a temporary position. Julie thanked Kay Lodge for her leadership in the past year and hoped that all members would be on hand to help the group stay together.

In March, our speaker was Steve Scouting from BBC Essex. His talk covered the very start of his career of doing free jobs just to get his foot in the door.
After a long service of 30 years, he still carries out broadcasting work.

Back to the president. Ladies interested in the position all stood, and members cast their votes. Gloria Williamson was voted in as the new president for Sandon. Karen West remains secretary for another year, as does Fran Luke as Treasurer.
The membership is growing older and many members have already been officers in the past so it is becoming harder to fill these roles. All ladies were pleased that Gloria had volunteered. We were set for another year to continue. Tea and cake were served, and the meeting business was completed.

In April, Gloria welcomed all ladies to the meeting, and we were asked to stand and sing

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Jerusalem. When seated, the month's business was dealt with quickly. On the stage, five ladies dressed in an array of red clothes set up microphones. They called themselves, 'The Ladybirds'. An afternoon of entertainment was in store. What followed was a hall full of song, expertly sung, with old and new tunes, which had us all toe-tapping and a few singing along—a most enjoyable time. Thank you to The Ladybirds.

Tiny Tots Pre School

We meet in the St Andrew's Room on the second Wednesday of the month 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm so come along.
Further information
Contact: Alison 01245 474858 or e-mail: tots@sandon-church.info

When

When seated southward on wooded bench
The sky in bluest bluebell afore my eye
From the worlds worries, my mind unclenched
As I ponder the seamless endless sky

When sitting still in peaceful frame of mind
To ponder a world in pained distress
I wonder if we learn, from that left behind
In our race for more, our race to progress

When the rhythm of nature slow unfolds
And suns slant rays in wooded copse appear
And muddied track to silted earth slow rolled
Then west wind it warms this time of year

When daffodils, their heads dropped and brown
Leave but their green spears in clumps to stand
Celendines do show their golden yellow crown
Across the glistening grassed fielded land

When the earliest buds do rise and break
And leaf do open on the south faced bough
When blossom like snowflake showers do make
Then here we together stand in springtime now.

13th April 2026

I Hear You Bright Above The Roar

I hear you bright above the roar
Of a world intent on noise and speed
Of wanting so much more and more
Loosing life in bigger needs

A sound I oft in the garden hear
Or on a walk in forest glade
An unmistakable voice so loud and clear
That, perhaps, only a bird had made.

A tweet that starts and then a squeak
Of an ancient wheelbarrow wheel
That needs an oiling or a tweak
A sound of metal rubs drying steel

The call of blue tit to a mate
Saying 'look at me I'm here close by'
Hoping it's not gone too late
A blue tit call to catch a girlfriend's eye

So oft the call lost in the noise
Of motor cars that speed and growl
Or sounds of cheerful playing boys
Rarely the croak of a passing fowl.

The wheelbarrow squeak it carries on
Still it chirps its cheerful tune
Long after all else has gone
Then it flies from branch, alas too soon.

11th April 2026

Richard Simmonds

A Joy and Privilege to be Received by the Pope, Says Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury has praised the Pope for speaking out against injustice and about hope; has commended working together for the common good; and has endorsed the strengthening power of common witness, in an address after a recent private meeting at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican.

She prayed with Pope Leo and said: “It is a joy and a privilege to be received by you, together with this delegation from Lambeth Palace.”

She said: “Your Holiness, you have spoken powerfully about the many injustices in our world today, but you have spoken even more powerfully about hope. The world needed this message at this time — thank you. It reminded us that, despite our sufferings, people long for life in all its fullness, and countless people are working each day for this vision of the common good.”

She continued: “May we continue to work together in that hope, trusting that the one who has begun this good work among us will bring it to completion. Please be assured of a warm welcome from the Church of England should you honour the United Kingdom with a visit.”

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Grilled Strawberries, Pimm's and Vanilla Ice Cream

Ingredients

500g strawberries,
a couple of pieces of stem ginger in syrup and 3 table spoons ginger syrup from the jar,
1 vanilla pod split and seeds scraped out,
a couple of splashes of Pimm’s,
8 shortbread biscuits,
vanilla ice cream,
a few sprigs of fresh mint.

Method

Preheat grill to high.

Hull strawberries and cut off a little flesh so they stand flat with points up. Place in a bowl. Mix together stem ginger syrup, vanilla seeds, Pimm’s and stem ginger chunks. Put the strawberries on their flat bottoms in a snug-fitting ovenproof dish, tips pointing up. Pour the juices and ginger pieces from the bowl over the strawberries. Put the vanilla pod on top and place under the grill for 3-5 minutes until bubbling and delicious looking.

Next put the biscuits in a plastic bag and bash to form quite fine crumbs.

Divide the hot strawberries between 4 bowls. Scrape up all the juices and stir.

Pour the delicious juices over the berries and top with a dollop of vanilla ice cream. Sprinkle with the smashed shortbread biscuits and place a few mint leaves on top. *Narelle Arnold from Jamie Oliver*

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There Was A Time

There was a time when the world
was quiet
When people lived in peace
When there existed friendliness
To countries west and east;
Oh now a lost mem'ry perhaps
Of historians war relapse;
Yes, there was a time.

There was a time when children lived
When all were fed, put safe to bed
When evil thoughts were not in
mind
And wives in homes were not in
dread
Of their husbands coming through
the door
And they hit, them laying on the floor;
Yes, there was a time.

There was a time, self was little
used
When we, was the preferred term
And thoughts were of our fellow
folk
The less able, the elderly infirm;
When the gap between those rich
and poor
Was not in billions and billions
more;
Yes, there was a time.

There was a time sadly when
things once bought
Would last for many a year
When they would not wear out as
they do
When repairs ensured that they
endured
But now we take things to the tip
As earth's resources used in a click
Yes, there was a time

There was a time when church clocks
Ruled the hours at a slower,
measured pace
When the incessant cries were
rarely heard
Of economic growths embrace;
Before technology ruled the day
And news relied on what people say,
When folks were satisfied with
their lot
Sadly now a time forgot.
Yes, there was a time.

Richard Simmonds
26th to 28th March 2026



Our British bumblebees

Did you know we have about 270 kinds of bee in the UK, including 24 types of bumblebees? Here are just three of them:

Early Bumblebee: – Found throughout the UK. Rather small, with distinctive lemon-yellow bands on thorax and abdomen, and an orange tail. An important pollinator of our soft fruit.

Common Carder Bee: – One of our most common bees, and often still feeding in November. Fluffy, brown and orange, with sometimes darker bands on the abdomen.

Tree Bumblebee: – Found in England and Wales, and recently Southern Scotland. A fuzzy bee, with brown-orange hairs on its thorax, a black abdomen, and a white tail.

St John the Baptist Church, Danbury
2026 Monthly lunchtime concerts in the church
Fridays at 12.15pm

12th June The Grammaticus Choir come back for another superb concert Directed by Clive Smith, accompanied by pianist Tim Carey
10th July Danbury Flutes – our local flute quartet
14th August Hannah Ambrose (Soprano) and Duncan Archard (Piano)
Lunch will be available from 11:45 am or bring your own.
Entry is free





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