JULY • AUGUST 2026

# Bengeo Magazine

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# Bengeo Parish Magazine and Community News



Congratulations to the Love Bengeo Community Group on the opening of the Bengeo Mosaic displayed on a wall in Bengeo Street. The Love Bengeo Project Group Team have worked hard over the last year to develop and complete the project by raising funding which paid for the materials and Claire Costello's work with Costello Mosaics. As we have seen over the last few months members and volunteers have come together to help design and prepare the mosaic over a number of events. Well done to all involved.

Also in this issue, Bridget has been out and about on our doorstep to find the Centaury flower, well-established on Waterford Heath.

Further afield, Ralph Abel Smith, the patron of Bengeo Parish, explains how the Woodhall Estate is working to conserve and regenerate the woods, streams and wildlife and farm ecologically.

**The Editorial Team**

*The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team or the PCC. Whilst every care is taken, we cannot be responsible for the action of any of the contributors or advertisers in this magazine.*

*Mosaic opening photograph on cover:* **L to R: Claire Costello of Costello Mosaic, Aśka Pickering (Love Bengeo Mosaic Project Lead), Annette Wright, Becky Hiles, Catie Geering, Sam West.**
*Photograph credits for front and back covers:* **Steve Beeston, Annette Wright, Aska Wisniewska-Pickering.**

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**Editorial Team**
**Items for the magazine should be sent to mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk**

**Copy dates**
**Items should be sent by the middle of the month preceding publication.**

**Advertising**
**Please address all advertising enquiries to mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk**

**Distribution**
***Bengeo:*** **Diana Howarth | *Tonwell:* Pat Lavis**

***The magazine can be delivered to your door for a subscription of £6.00 per year. Contact Diana Howarth on 07711 571272 for more information or email mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk.***

**Individual issue: £1.00.**
**Cheques payable to: 'Bengeo Magazine' or pay by BACS to Bengeo Magazine, 20-05-73, 53580091.**

**6 issues per year: January/February; March/April; May/June; July/August; September/October; November/December.**

**The magazine is designed by GREENGilbert carey@greengilbert.co.uk and printed by MSPC Ltd, Unit 10, Hartham View Industrial Estate, Hartham Lane, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG14 1QN.**

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SCAN ME

HERTFORD SHOWROOM

# Scouts Grow a Greener Future in Bengeo

2nd Bengeo Scouts officially opened their new Scout Garden just before the May half-term, celebrating two years of fundraising and volunteer effort to transform an unused area into a vibrant outdoor learning space. Designed to support both adventurous activities and nature conservation, the garden provides a dedicated area for pioneering projects while contributing to Hertford's biodiversity and rewilding ambitions.



Pictured with Cubs and Scouts throwing wildflower seed bombs is Alex Daar, Hertford's newly appointed Mayor, who joined the group to celebrate the achievement. At the heart of the garden is a new wildlife pond, helping to connect habitats and water



sources across the local area, creating valuable corridors for wildlife. Sustainability features include water butts for rainwater harvesting and composting facilities to recycle garden waste. Alongside generous support from local businesses and charities, the Scouts themselves raised more than £3,500 towards the project as part of their Fundraising Badge.

## Bengeo Afternoon WI

Yesterday Bengeo Afternoon WI held its Annual Meeting in the Church Hall Duncombe Road. Several of our members listened to our Secretary, Treasurer and President Joan's reports before enjoying a Strawberry Cream Tea served by their committee members. Our President Joan was presented with a pot of seasonal plants and other gifts to thank her for her time as President and for her many years on the Committee.

On Wednesday 1st July at 2pm, we will welcome Mr Lloyd Harrison who will be speaking about Tewin Greens, a patch of ground near Tewinbury Farm that grows produce that can be bought when in season.

We will not be meeting in the Church Hall in August as we will be visiting the Quaker Meeting House locally but please pencil in our meeting on Wednesday 2nd September at 2pm when our Speaker's talk is *'Owls and about!'*.

Please come along for the afternoon. We are a small group of ladies that look forward to meeting new members and older members too.

Janet Butler, Secretary **07961 906860** for more information.

## HALG Courses on Tuesday Mornings

**Church Hall, Duncombe Road, SG14 3DA**

**Recent Hertford Adult Learning Group (HALG) courses have continued to be very popular – people enjoy learning something new in a welcoming and convivial atmosphere. No previous knowledge of the subject is required. Last term we studied the poetry of T S Eliot with an excellent tutor, and are looking forward to the return of native Russian speaker Marina Burrell in the autumn.**

**Marina's course is entitled *'Discovering Ukraine through its Culture'*. Her previous course in Bengeo was an exhilarating journey through the history of Russian music. The 10-week autumn course will run from 22nd September to 1st December 2026, with no class on 27th October. Times are 10.30am to 12.30pm with a 10 to 15 minute break. Marina's enthusiasm, depth of knowledge and excellent presentation are guaranteed.**

**We will not take bookings for the autumn until later in the year. Everyone on the mailing list will be notified with course details including the fee. If you would like your name to be added to the HALG mailing list please send your name and email details to me at halgcontact@gmail.com.**

**Janet Sheail for HALG Committee**

# Love Bengeo Community Group

**Love Bengeo Facebook Group**

You can contact us by emailing **info@lovebengeo.org.uk**.

**www.lovebengeo.org.uk**

## Bengeo Community Garden

The Bengeo Community Garden is really beginning to develop and the plants put in earlier in the year are flowering for the first time and attracting more pollinators. The very hot weather at the end of May presented challenges but the Brownies, garden volunteers and other local residents watered the garden to help get the plants established. A big thank you to everyone who helps support the garden in this way – it makes a big difference.

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust gave valuable advice on installing a pond in the garden. Kate Sheard from HMWT gave a talk to the 1st Bengeo Brownies on ponds as wildlife areas before the Brownies then planted up the pond and volunteer Charlotte completed it with stone edging. The pond has already seen 2 frogs and other wildlife enjoying this addition to the garden.



A bug house has been built (thanks to Paul Hoggarth from the Men's Shed) and the Brownies had a lot of fun collecting resources and filling all the spaces in the bug house. We're looking forward to the wildlife this addition will hopefully also attract. The Brownies have also decorated small stones you may find around the garden – these are for people to take and enjoy!

In other news we will be holding a Bengeo Gardens Community Event on Sunday 11th October 2.30–4.30pm at Bengeo Parish Hall. There will be a plant/seed swap stall, Love to Sing Choir, a talk from HMWT and refreshments – everyone is welcome! We are also planning a fundraising quiz evening in the Autumn to raise funds for more planting.

We continue to hold monthly garden volunteer sessions and if you'd like to join us you'd be very welcome – please email garden@lovebengeo.org.uk if you are interested. Follow us on Facebook (Bengeo Community Garden) for all our updates and photos.



## Bengeo Front Gardens and Wildlife Corridors

Bengeo's Front Gardens and Wildlife Corridors Facebook group numbers are now over 200. Recent posts have promoted the Mudlarks plant sale, the Bengeo 'bus stop garden' in Revels Road, the 'Churches Count on Nature Initiative', the coffee morning and plant sale at St Andrew's Church, and insects and poppies in local front gardens. There's more information on **www.lovebengeo.org.uk/bengeo-front-gardens**. New Facebook Group members are always welcome.

## Bengeo Bus Stop Garden

Can you help? We are looking for volunteers who are able to help with the amazing Revels Road Bus Stop Garden. If you are interested to help with making it even more stunning – please get in touch on **info@lovebengeo.org.uk**.

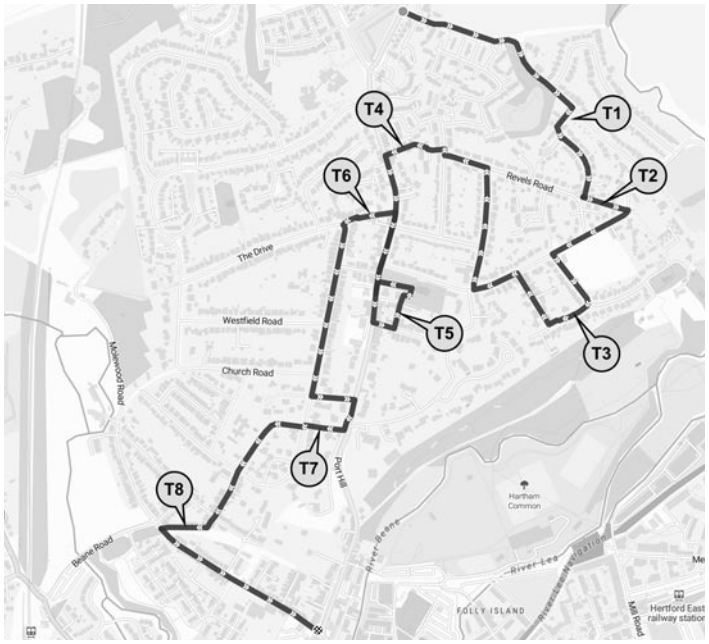




## Bengeo Trails

Four local walking trails have been added to the Love Bengeo Community Group website, bringing the total, so far, to 16 trails. Bengeo Trails 13 and 16 visit the beautiful landscapes of Waterford Heath and Waterford Marsh, and the ancient Great Mole Wood. Bengeo Trail 14 explores eight of Bengeo's twitchels – the passageways joining some of Bengeo's streets between Watermill Lane and Port Vale. Bengeo Trail 15 views Hartham Common and The Warren Woodland through the eyes of naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, who played on the Common and in the woodland as a child. Bengeo Trails 3 and 6 both pass the Bengeo Mosaic on Bengeo Street.

All 16 trails are now assembled in a 'Bengeo Trails Compilation' with comprehensive information on local landmarks, important views, green spaces, listed buildings, and community facilities. The trails are also available on the Bengeo Trails Facebook Group.




## Love Bengeo Community Group planning application responses

The Love Bengeo Community Group supported the recent Wallace House planning application to return the Grade II Listed St Andrew Street building to four homes. The proposals are compliant with the Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan 'Listed Buildings and Structures' Policy. As swifts occupy Wallace House, we recommended that appropriate advice was sought from the Hertford Swift Group.

Following refusal of 'planning in principle' permission for up to 4 homes on land near Fanshawes, Ware Park, the applicant lodged an appeal with the Planning Inspectorate. The Love Bengeo Community Group responded to the appeal, reiterating their original objection to the planning application. Both responses are on **www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog**.

The Love Bengeo Community Group are responding to the Scoping Consultation on the new Local Plan and will share the response on the Love Bengeo Community Group website. The consultation is open until the 10th July and is on the East Herts District Council website.

## Bengeo Litter-Less

Loathe litter and want to see less of it in beautiful Bengeo? Please join our monthly Litter Picks. We meet at different locations across the ward including Bengeo South at 2 pm on the last Saturday of the month. You can get your own litter pick equipment from Hertford Town Council **www.hertford.gov.uk/services/community-litter-picking-project** which you can use at the monthly Love Bengeo Litter Pick events or on your own in your own street. We advertise the location for each monthly event on Bengeo Residents and Love Bengeo Facebook Groups. If you want to find out the location of the next litter pick please email the initiative's coordinator Alex Daar on **litterpick@lovebengeo.org.uk**.

## Durkan development on Bengeo Field

Andrew Stevenson and Aśka Pickering, who are the Chairman and Deputy Chair of Love Bengeo Community Group, met with senior representatives of Durkan company, to discuss in more detail the development plans, timelines and some of the questions raised by the residents. Durkan reassured that any contractors arriving to the site through Bengeo are sent away, and they offered to share the information about specific cases should this occur. If you have any concerns, please contact us on **info@lovebengeo.org.uk**. We will be soon sharing further updates on Love Bengeo Facebook Group and our website.

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# Annual Pet Service Sunday

## St Leonard's Church, Sunday 5th July, 4pm

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People



This year we are supporting the Hearing Dogs for Deaf People Charity.

Reg and Denise Newman, who volunteer for the Hearing Dogs Charity, will be coming to the service. Denise will tell us all about the Charity and how it helps those with hearing loss gain independence and improve their sense of safety and mental health. We hope to also have a beneficiary of the charity there with their hearing dog.

This is a very worthwhile Charity to support so we do hope that you will come along. It doesn't matter whether you bring a pet with you as fluffy toys are also most welcome. The event is always a delightful service for all ages.

Refreshments will be available after the Service for our four-footed friends as well!

We look forward to seeing you there. Do come and join us and please spread the word to anyone who would be interested. For any further information please contact me on **01992 583979**.

Best wishes
**Libby Shillito**

# The Company of Players

**The Little Theatre, Balfour Street**
***presents***




## Bleak Expectations

***By Mark Evans***
***Directed by Paul Morton***

**From Friday 3rd July to Saturday 11th July nightly at 7.45pm (except Sunday and Monday) with matinees at 2.30pm on 4th and 11th July**

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**Mark Evans' play, based on the award-winning BBC Radio 4 series, is a hilarious, chaotic caper, featuring dastardly villains, preposterous names, pulse-quickening romances, heart-rending death scenes, and definitely, probably, hopefully a happy ending.**

**For tickets and more information visit www.cops.org.uk.**

The Children's Society

# Bring and Buy Coffee Morning

Thank you to everyone who helped or supported us in any way at our Coffee Morning held at the end of April, we had glorious weather, a most successful day and were able to raise £866 for the work of the Children's Society.

In addition to our usual stalls and the raffle we had a plant stall again and our thanks go particularly to Kath Burrows and Penny Hawkins for providing so many beautiful plants which proved to be so popular and a great money raiser.

We have received a lovely thankyou from the Society saying that the money we raised will go towards their work with vulnerable children who are dealing with issues of hardship, abuse and neglect, often without anyone to support them. This is really gratifying to know and makes our fundraising activities so worthwhile.

Many thanks again to all our Helpers on the morning and to all our Supporters.

**Libby Shillito**




# Bengeo Health Walks

Regular walking improves health by helping your heart and lungs work better and keeping your bones and muscles strong. You don't have to walk alone as Hertfordshire Health Walks offer volunteer-led short walks in the Bengeo area. Our First Steps walk starts and ends at The Bengeo Club and we have longer walks in Hartham and from The Avenue shops.

Find out more **www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks**.




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# On The Doorstep – Centaury



Common Centaury, is a beautiful, delicate little flower, flowering between June and September. It is a low growing plant found on heaths, grassland, dunes, quarries, favouring sunny, sandy or chalky/limestone ground. Centaury is part of the gentian family of flowers and its scientific name is Centaurium erythraea, centaurium stemmimg from an Ancient Greek legend of Chiron the centaur. The legend says that Chiron the centaur used the common centaury plant to heal a wound, that was inflicted by the poisonous arrow of Hercule's who hit him by accident. Erythraea, means reddish and derives from the ancient Greek word erythros which means red.

The plant has several common names including feverwort, bitter herb, earth gall and Christ's ladder. As usual the common names come from the various uses, myths and legends that surround the plant. The plant is said to be very bitter to taste (bitter herb), the Anglos Saxons would use it when they felt unwell hence feverwort. The name Christ's ladder comes from Irish and Manx folklore where the plant was also known as 'Blessed herb' and it was said to ward off evil spirits. According to legend the plant grew on the exact spots where Jesus trod walking to Calvary.

The plant grows to around 30cm in height with a slender stem and a cluster of pretty, pink flowers at the top. The flowers create a star like shape and have five petals about 1cm across. The leaves are lance-like in shape and form a rosette at the base of the stem growing up the stem in opposite pairs. The flowers also shut in the afternoon.

The plant has traditionally been used medicinally as a mild appetite enhancer, liver tonic and for general digestive health, although as mentioned before, with a bitter taste. Another folklore said that the flower helped with self-esteem and was thought to instil courage to stand up to bullies and ward off emotional manipulation, when carried.

The flower symbolises graceful happiness, simple pleasures and understated beauty. To me that sounds perfect and sums up this beauty, a real delicate little gem of a flower. Look out for it on Waterford Heath. You may find it as I did nestled alongside self-heal and a carpet of yellow Bird's Foot Trefoil.

**Bridget Hersant**

# Courtyard Arts: A summer of creativity, celebration and community

As Hertford's much-loved creative hub marks an important milestone – 30 years at the heart of the community – Courtyard Arts is stepping into summer with renewed energy, new talent, and a vibrant programme designed to inspire residents of all ages. From the success of the town's first Hertford Photo Festival to the arrival of a new fused-glass tutor and a rich season of adult workshops, 2026 is shaping up to be one of the centre's most exciting years yet.

## Celebrating 30 years of creativity in Hertford

This year, Courtyard Arts celebrates three decades of nurturing creativity, supporting artists, and providing accessible arts opportunities for the whole community.

Plans for special anniversary events will be unveiled over the coming weeks, and will include:

- **27th July – 8th August:** An Artists in Residence exhibition, featuring the founders of Courtyard Arts
- **1st and 9th August:** Community sessions for Courtyard's Community Fused Glass Celebration project led by Courtyard's new fused glass tutor, Jane Ducarreaux (see below)
- **8th August, 2.00–6pm:** Members' Celebration Party
- **27th July – 22nd August:** '30 Pieces of Art' Treasure Hunt
- **22nd August, 11.00am–3.00pm:** Community Open Day
- Free workshops and community events. Check **www.courtyardarts.org.uk** for details.

## Welcoming Jane Ducarreaux

Courtyard Arts is delighted to welcome Jane Ducarreaux, an acclaimed fused-glass artist with more than 20 years' experience, as the centre's new Fused Glass Tutor.

Based in Ware, Jane is the owner of A Touch of Glass, where she creates kiln-formed artworks and teaches highly sought-after workshops.

Her appointment marks an exciting expansion of Courtyard's glass-based arts provision, with new fused-glass courses and workshops planned for the coming month.

## Adult workshops: A summer of hands-on creativity

Courtyard Arts' Adult Summer Programme offers a rich and varied selection of workshops suitable for beginners and experienced artists alike. Places are limited, so early booking is recommended. For full details and booking, visit www.courtyardarts.org.uk. Look under the Classes tab for the Medium you require.

### JULY WORKSHOPS

- **Friday 10th July:** En Plein Air Workshop
- **Sunday 12th July:** Magical Watercolour Landscapes
- **Friday 24th July:** Intense Landscape Painting Inspired by André Derain
- **Tuesday 28th July:** Pet Portraits – Acrylic Painting

### AUGUST WORKSHOPS

- **Tuesday 4th August:** Lino and Drypoint Printing – Day Workshop
- **Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th August:** Two-Day Reduction Lino Cut and Print Workshop
- **Saturday 15th August:** Make Your Own Silver Rings
- **Sunday 16th August:** Matisse Inspired Collage Workshop
- **Monday 17th August:** Make Your Own Silver Pendant
- **Tuesday 18th August:** Watercolour Flowers Workshop
- **Sunday 23rd August:** Life Drawing Summer Day Workshop




With its 30th anniversary celebrations, a thriving exhibitions programme, and a summer full of creative opportunities, Courtyard Arts continues to be a vital cultural force in Hertford. Whether you're a seasoned artist, a curious beginner, or simply someone who enjoys being part of a vibrant community, there has never been a better time to get involved.

# Continuity of Purpose

***Ralph Abel Smith is Patron of the Parish of Bengeo, and a local landowner. Here he reflects on legacy, past and future.***

Our family came to Hertfordshire when Samuel Smith, my great great great grandfather, bought Woodhall Estate in 1801. I am the 6th generation lucky enough to inherit it and to have been its custodian during my lifetime and to be able to pass it to our oldest son Thomas who is the 7th generation and counting.

The principal land use is agriculture which mainly involves the growing of wheat (for bread and biscuits), barley (for malting and animal feed), oats (for human consumption in porridge and animal food) and oil seed rape (for cooking oils, etc); also sheep are grazed on the permanent grassland. Nearly half of the Estate's farmland has been taken out of food production and placed into conservation, including many natural regeneration projects.

There are some 155 kilometres of hedgerows which are ideal habitats for wildlife including buntings, bullfinches, blue tits, linnets, chaffinch and dunnock. There are approximately 60 kilometres of footpaths and bridleways, byways and permissive paths for recreational use.

About 1,000 people live, work and learn on the Estate. The Estate also hosts weddings with guests staying in our luxury accommodation, as well as not-for-profit school visits and learning days.

Extensive work has recently been carried out along the stretch of the River Beane between Watton-at-Stone and Stapleford. This is a chalk stream, being only one of around 200 globally. Its natural course would have meandered across the valley but in the 18th Century the watercourse was concentrated along canal like stretches with water levels being controlled by weirs to create more grazing on the





adjacent water meadows. Through the recent works, the 'meanders' have been reinstated, with a proliferation of birdlife including widgeon, teal, pochard, snipe, geese and swans and other environmental benefits have followed.

As well as the farmland, the river and wetlands, there are large areas of woodlands, which not only exist for hardwood and softwood production in the long term but in the short-term hornbeams for chipping for firewood and cricket bat willows are grown. They are ideal sources of wildlife habitats and biodiversity. Barn owls, little owls, kestrels, woodpeckers, lapwings, wagtails proliferate.

To learn more, please visit the website **www.woodhallestate.co.uk**.

Much of the Estate's land lies within the Parish of Bengeo, including Tonwell and it is through this that the estate can be associated with the Parish and I do appreciate my connection with the Parish through my Patronage.

The custodianship of land and the maintaining of an ancient Church such as St Leonard's run in parallel in that the custodians of each need to think long term, but yet allow changes to evolve whilst maintaining the traditions of the past. It is a rolling programme of respecting those traditions, whilst accepting the responsibilities of the present with a view to handing on those responsibilities to succeeding generations.

We have been very pleased to have participated in the making of the new doorway by donating the oak to 'connect' the Parish with the Estate. So may successive generations who pass through this newly restored doorway to worship in St Leonard's look around at this monument of the past and trust that it will continue to be loved and cherished by many generations to come.

**RAS**

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# Friends of St Leonard's

## Sunday Openings

St Leonard's Church Bengeo is now open on Sunday afternoons throughout the summer. Join us from 2.30–5pm and explore the history of this ancient church. Tea, coffee and cake are available for a reasonable charge.

You can do a self-guided tour. Children are very welcome – we have a treasure hunt or colouring they can do while parents relax. Well-behaved dogs are also welcome!

We reckon it is the coolest place in Bengeo on a hot day (if they come back)!

## Music



The Pagoda Project visit us on Saturday 4th July at 4pm for an afternoon concert with tea and cakes. The concert is free but donations are very welcome. It is a return visit for the musicians who previously played as Coracle. Expect folk-based music from accordion, fiddle and clarinet.

We are also hosting a return visit from Bengeo resident Colin Eldred, talented clarinet player, and Eleanor Potter, harpist, on Saturday 29th August for a short afternoon concert at 3.30pm, followed by tea and cakes. Entry is free, and a collection will be made for the Friends of St Leonard's.

## Pet Service

Once again, the Pet Service returns on Sunday 5th July at 4pm. This is always a very sociable occasion with all sorts of different pets making an appearance. This year the charity is Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

## Raffle

A generous Friend has donated four framed pictures that we are raffling over this summer to help us raise funds. Pop into St Leonard's to take a look at them and buy tickets on one of our Open Days.

## How you can help

The work of The Friends of St Leonard's to maintain this lovely, but fragile, building goes on. The Friends fund this work so all donations are very welcome.

If you want to get more involved, we would be happy to welcome you into the Friends. Becoming a Friend of St Leonard's Church will also give you advance warning on our events and a newsletter updating you on activity in the church.

You can join through our website **www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/friends-of-st-leonards**.

Help with keeping the church tidy or running the teas is always welcome. Please get in touch if you want to know more.

**Helen Fleming**
**Secretaryfriendsofstleonards@gmail.com**



# Bengeo Primary School

We were delighted to take part in a mini tennis event at Hertford Tennis Club on Tuesday. The children enjoyed developing their skills through a range of engaging drills before competing in a friendly Bengeo vs Bengeo match. Although torrential rain meant the session couldn't finish as planned, it was a fantastic experience for everyone involved.



Year 2 pupils recently took part in a Scooterability workshop, where they developed their confidence, balance, and control. Through a range of fun activities, they practised safe manoeuvring and learned important safety skills. The children thoroughly enjoyed the session and showed great enthusiasm throughout.








Year 5 enjoyed an exciting trip to Hertfordshire Zoo, where they had the opportunity to see a wide range of animals up close. The children explored the zoo, learning about different species and their habitats, and showed great curiosity throughout the day.

It was a fantastic experience that brought their learning to life, and the pupils represented the school beautifully with their enthusiasm and excellent behaviour.



# Amwell View School – Tonwell Satellite



## 'These are the days'

During the same week as the Amwell View School main site (Stanstead Abbotts) Show, the staff and pupils at the Tonwell Satellite School were busy rehearsing and preparing so that they could also perform to their audiences of parents, carers, family and friends the week before May half-term.

The Tonwell Satellite School Show was held during the afternoons of Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st May 2026. The three classes acted out the following Celebration Days: Tonwell 1 – Chinese New Year Day; Tonwell 2 – Christmas Day; and Tonwell 3 – St Patrick's Day.

Hayley Warrington, Tonwell 1 Class Teacher and Middle Leader said "We are so proud of all of the pupils. It was the first time they had performed a show at the Tonwell site and they exuded confidence throughout. It came together beautifully and we are all so pleased for all of the pupils and the families that came to watch them".

Ellen-May Shipp, Senior Leader said "It was a wonderful afternoon and a great celebration of all the pupils' skills and achievements. The pupils narrated, sang, danced and acted brilliantly, using music, dance, costumes and props to bring their individual performances to life. The Tonwell Show was also a resounding success thanks to everyone's hard work and enthusiasm".

Duncombe School

# September 2026 places available.

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Independent School in Hertford for children aged 2-11 years.

w: duncombe-school.co.uk

Duncombe School
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# Duncombe School




## Duncombe pupils donate more than 200 items to support Hertford families

Pupils at Duncombe School have donated more than 200 items to Hertford Food Bank, helping support local families.

Children aged 2 to 11 from across the school came together to contribute a wide range of non-perishable food items, including pasta, tins and cupboard essentials, to show kindness to those in need.

Pupils in Years 1 to 6 also took part in a non-uniform day to boost donations, while three Year 6 pupils helped prepare 50 Easter treat bags for children in the local community, which included handmade treat cones, biscuits and cakes.

The activity forms part of Duncombe's wider charity programme, where its House Charity Captains select causes to support each term. This term, Woburn House chose to support Hertford Food Bank, encouraging pupils to engage with and contribute to their local community.

The school also plans to raise money for Lister Hospital Sunshine Appeal in the summer term to help transform the outside area of its ICU so patients can enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

Hayley Johnson, Director of Sport at Duncombe School, who led the project, said: "We are incredibly proud of our pupils for their enthusiasm and generosity in supporting Hertford Food Bank. Initiatives like this are a wonderful way for children to understand the importance of helping others and making a positive difference within their local community."

"Creating a caring community and nurturing our children's strength of character outside the classroom are central to everything we do at Duncombe School, and it has been fantastic to see so many pupils and the wider school community come together to support this important cause and to give their time and effort to help families in need."

## A Word from The Rectory

# Going somewhere?

**From The Vicar, The Revd Robert Thompson**



'Going anywhere nice on your holidays?' It's the kind of question asked by someone who doesn't care about your answer. So here's a better question: are you a traveller or a tourist?

Apparently, there's a difference. In previous centuries, there was a time for travellers, the kind of people interested in unfamiliar settings and wild encounters that enlarged their perspective and widened their horizons. 'The traveller was active,' writes the historian Daniel Boorstin, 'he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience'.

In contrast, he says, 'The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He goes sightseeing'. Tourism, in this historian's assessment, is a spectator sport full of cut-out, off-the-shelf, prefabricated experiences.

The root words for travel and tourist prove the point. At the risk of going all Susie Dent on you, travel comes from the same word as travail, meaning trouble, work, or even torment. So the traveller is one who takes risks, plunges into diverse cultures, and seeks to learn local customs. Unplanned experiences are right up the traveller's street, so to speak. Travellers eat whatever food is placed before them. They'll give the local language a good go. Shopping for souvenirs, however, plays no role in their adventures – they're not there to take selfies.

A tourist, by contrast, sacrifices less. The word tour, from the Latin tornus refers to a tool for making circles – it literally means 'one who goes round in circles'. A tourist is a pleasure-seeker who passes through different exotic experiences only to return to a comfortable bed at night. Insulated from the noise, the smells, and the local people, a tourist's circle is complete once back home unpacking mementos, sharing photos or stowing away the duty-free.

As a vicar (and not being Susie Dent) I've often wondered if congregations are made up of both travellers and tourists. Travellers would be those who come to church to immerse their lives and refocus their values. They want to breathe the language of faith and discover something greater than themselves, even if travail may be part of the bargain. They want to look up to heaven and down into their souls and ponder what's going on there.

The tourists, meanwhile, show up for a more passive experience, happy to drop in whenever they're in the mood. They spectate and consume, glad that the post-service biscuits taste fresh. They apprise and assess, evaluate the worship and mark the sermon out of ten.

Jesus said, 'I am the Way.' His life is a Way to follow. We can choose a spiritual journey or path that works for us. Will it be one rich in wild mystery, full of unknowables and incomprehensibles? Or will it be a safer course where we pick up a word here and a phrase there, making a few social acquaintances in passing?

Be assured, there is no correct 'true path' to tread or better way to go. My own wish for the Church is that there be more people prepared to engage with faith on any kind of level, that there be a home there for both travellers and tourists, soulful pilgrims and cultured enquirers, the wonderer and the wanderer alike.

When Jesus said, 'I am the Way', it's not our mode of journeying he's talking about, but the company we share. 'In my father's house there are many rooms,' he said. That's where he's going, and, so I'd like to think, it's where he's taking us.

Whether traveller or tourist – we'll get there in the end.

*With my prayers,*

**Robert Thompson**

## Monday Parish Lunches

**The lunch in May was on the later date of Monday the 18th, because the people at The Lobster Pot were away for the first two weeks of May. For once it was a nice day, and the village hall looked as it always does, well laid tables with carafes of red and white wine and bottles of water, and each table had vases of flowers.**

**A few more people had come, which was encouraging.**

**The menu began with Parma Ham and Melon, and the main course was Chicken Stroganoff served with rice. The pudding was a really delicious lemon meringue pie. There was tea and coffee to follow, served with peppermint creams.**

**The lunch in June was the 8th, and it was a very cold rainy day, not at least what one would have expected! However, the hall looked as inviting as ever, with flowers and wine on the tables, and our cheerful host waiting for us.**

**The menu was tomato and cheese salad with roll and butter. The main course was chicken in tomato sauce with small tomatoes stirred into it, served with broccoli and sliced potatoes. A very tomato menu, but quite delicious!**

**The pudding was Eton Mess, served with a small slice of chocolate brownie, very good indeed. Tea and coffee followed with peppermint creams.**

**The next lunch will be on July 13th and the one in August will be on the 10th. We hope more people will come, because it is very good value, £20 for three courses, and in a very friendly atmosphere, where the service is excellent.**

**There could possibly be a slight increase in the bill in July, because the people at the Lobster Pot sometimes celebrate the beginning of the French Revolution, which means that there is a French tone to the menu and some interesting extras!**

**Anyone wishing to come should ring Claire at the Lobster Pot on 07887 543464 to make a booking, preferably seven days in advance.**

## Ware Choral Society Summer Concert

### Ware Drill Hall, 18th July 2026

For its summer concert this year Ware Choral Society is planning a treat of summery baroque delights. Regally heralded by Handel's *Zadok the Priest*, the first half will include Purcell's seductively titled *Welcome to all the Pleasures*, as well as Pachelbel's well-known *Canon in D* showcasing the talents of the Orpheus Sinfonia. The second half will be devoted to a concert performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, an opera that explores the full range of human emotions from delight to despair.

Rosie Howarth conducts proceedings from 7.30pm at the Drill Hall on 18th July. Tickets can be ordered from **www.warechoral.org** or members at £20 (£10 for under18s).



# Parish Calendar JULY 2026

| | |
|---|---|
| No Thursday 10am Holy Communion in July | |
| **Wednesday 1st July** | |
| 2pm | Bengeo Afternoon WI, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| 2.30–4pm | Bereavement Café at Nourish Café, 43 Cowbridge Hertford |
| **Thursday 2nd July** | |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Saturday 4th July** | |
| 4pm | Concert at St Leonard's Church: A musical tea party with Pagoda Project Band – Modern English Folk Music |
| **Sunday 5th July** | **Fifth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 10am | Celtic Service at St Leonard's Church |
| 4pm | Annual Bengeo Pet Blessing Service at St Leonard's Church, followed by refreshments |
| **Tuesday 7th July** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Wednesday 8th July** | |
| 10am | Craft Club Duncombe Hall – all home crafts welcome |
| **Thursday 9th July** | |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Sunday 12th July** | **Sixth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Monday 13th July** | |
| 12 noon | Parish Lunch, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Tuesday 14th July** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 16th July** | |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| 6.30–8pm | Bereavement Café at Manic Ceramics Pottery Shop, 22 Port Vale Hertford |
| **Sunday 19th July** | **Seventh Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Tuesday 21st July** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 23rd July** | |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Sunday 26th July** | **Eighth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at St Leonard's Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Tuesday 28th July** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 30th July** | |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |

# Parish Calendar AUGUST 2026

| | |
|---|---|
| **Sunday 2nd August** | **Ninth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Tuesday 4th August** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 6th August** | |
| 10am | Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Sunday 9th August** | **Tenth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Monday 10th August** | |
| 12 noon | Parish Lunch, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Tuesday 11th August** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Wednesday 12th August** | |
| 10am | Craft Club Duncombe Hall – all home crafts welcome |
| **Thursday 13th August** | |
| 10am | Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Sunday 16th August** | **Eleventh Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Tuesday 18th August** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 20th August** | |
| 10am | Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Sunday 23rd August** | **Twelfth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |
| **Tuesday 25th August** | |
| 8pm | Quiet Time at St Leonard's Church: Prayer and Meditation |
| **Thursday 27th August** | |
| 10am | Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road |
| **Saturday 29th August** | |
| 3.30pm | Concert at St Leonard's Church: A musical tea party with Colin Eldred (clarinet) and Eleanor Potter (harp) |
| **Sunday 30th August** | **Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity** |
| 9am | Holy Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 10am | Parish Communion at Holy Trinity Church |
| 2.30–5pm | St Leonard's Church: Tea and Tour |

# Parish Prayers

## Daily Prayers for July

1. Christians in Tajikistan
2. HMP Forrest Bank
3. St Thomas
4. American 250 Independence Celebrations
5. Americans living and working in Hertford
6. Parkhurst Road
7. Age Concern
8. Christians in Laos
9. HMP Fosse Way
10. Tonwell School Amwell Satellite Provision
11. FIFA World Cup Events
12. Friends of St Leonard's Afternoon Tea
13. Peel Crescent
14. Our work in Beane River View
15. Christians in Tunisia
16. HMP Foston Hall Young Offenders Institution
17. Our work in local schools
18. Local clubs and pubs
19. FIFA World Cup Final
20. Pitteway Walk
21. Future Hope Hertford
22. Christians in Nicaragua
23. HMP Frankland
24. Young Life Hertford
25. Herts Young Carers
26. Our Church website and social media outreach
27. Poplar View
28. Mission Aviation Fellowship
29. Christians in Bangladesh
30. Modern day slavery and trafficking
31. Rochester Cathedral

## Daily Prayers for August

1. HMP Full Sutton
2. Our Parish Magazine
3. Port Hill
4. The Samaritans
5. Christians in Bhutan
6. HMP Garth
7. Hertford and Ware Street Pastors
8. Oxfam Head Office, Oxford
9. Our Memorial Garden at Holy Trinity Church
10. Port Vale
11. Poor Clares, Christian Communities
12. Christians in Turkmenistan
13. The Florence Nightingale Foundation
14. HMP Gartree
15. Mercy Ships Africa
16. Our Church and Church Hall maintenance
17. Redwoods
18. Our Bereavement Café
19. Christians in Ethiopia
20. The Salvation Army
21. HMP Grendon
22. Local sports clubs
23. All who use the Church Hall
24. Revels Road
25. Local doctors and dentists
26. Christians in Cameroon
27. HMP Guys Marsh
28. Salisbury Cathedral
29. The Children's Society
30. Our Choir
31. Revels Close

### Register

26th April Burial of Ashes
**Jill Burgess**

28th May Burial of Ashes
**Cleone Gardner**

16th June Funeral
**Frances Patricia Lavis**

17th June Funeral
**Raymond Muncer**




### Quiet Time

During the months of July and August Quiet Time will be held at St Leonard's Church at 8pm on Tuesday evenings.

There is a Celtic Service of quiet reflection at 10am on Sunday 5th July at St Leonard's Church.

# Church Contacts

**Rector: The Reverend Robert Thompson**
**The Rectory, Byde Street, Bengeo, SG14 3BS**
T: **01992 413691** E: **info@parishofbengeo.com**

**Associate Priest: Fr. David Pepper**
T: **07583 985266**

**Reader: Bob Kelly**
T: **01763 274653**

**Churchwardens:**
**Diana Howarth** T: **07711 571272**
**Graham Squires** T: **01992 553465**

**Parochial Church Council**
*Chairman:* **Rev Robert Thompson**
*Honorary Secretary:* **David Greely**
T: **01920 412485**

**Director of Music and Organist:**
**Dr Andrew Sentance**

**Assistant Organist: William Sarjeant**

**St Leonard's Church**
Friends of St Leonard's
*New Member Secretary:* **Sue Patterson**

**Addresses**
**Holy Trinity Church**
**New Road, Hertford SG14 3JJ**
**St Leonard's Church**
**St Leonard's Road, Bengeo, SG14 3JW**

# Local Contacts for Help and Advice

Below are links to local services.

**Medical and Health Advice**
**www.nhs.uk**

## Domestic Abuse

**Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline**
**0808 808 8088** [Freephone Monday to Friday, 9am–9pm; Saturday and Sunday 9am–4pm]

**Refuge Free and Confidential Helpline 24/7**
**0808 2000 247**

## Financial Advice

**Hertfordshire Support Fund**
If you need help, regardless of whether you qualify for benefits, please call HertsHelp on **0300 123 4044**, email **info@hertshelp.net** or visit **www.hertshelp.net**.

For more information about the support on offer for residents both locally and national, please visit **www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/costofliving**.

**Money Advice Unit**
**www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits**

## Citizens Advice Service – East Herts

**Local Message Line 01920 459944**. Monday to Thursday, leave a message with your details, and an adviser will call you back Monday to Thursday, between 10am–4pm.

**Out of Hours Helpline 0800 144 8848**. Monday to Wednesday, 4–8pm, Thursday and Friday 4–9pm, and Saturday 10am–4pm.

Local contact centres: **Hertford Sele Community Hub, 18 Fleming Crescent, Sele, Hertford, SG14 2DJ**. Open Wednesdays 11am–1pm. **Ware Contact Centre, Ware Priory, High Street Ware SG12 9AL.** Open Tuesdays 11am–1pm.

**National Debtline**
**www.nationaldebtline.org**
**Helpline 0808 808 4000**. Monday to Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 9.30am–1pm, Sunday closed.

## Advice on avoiding scams

Sign up for scam alerts from trading standards
**www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme**

**Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline**
**0808 223 1133**

## Mental Health Advice and Support

**NHS Mental Health Services in Herts**
Call for free **0800 644 101** this number is open 24/7 or call **111** and choose option 2
E: **hpft.spa@nhs.net**

**Herts Mind Network**
**www.hertsmindnetwork.org**
**020 3727 3600** | **0300 777 0707** [8am–7pm]
Nightline: **01923 256391**

## Emotional Support and Practical Help

**Samaritans**
**116 123** lines open 24 hours a day, calls are free
**www.samaritans.org**

**Childline**
**0800 1111** or webchat
24-hour counselling service for children and young people 24/7
**www.childline.org.uk**

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WELWYN • 01438 714686
HERTFORD • 01992 582052
WARE • 01920 468551
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# On The Doorstep – Centaury

See Bridget Hersant's article on page 11.









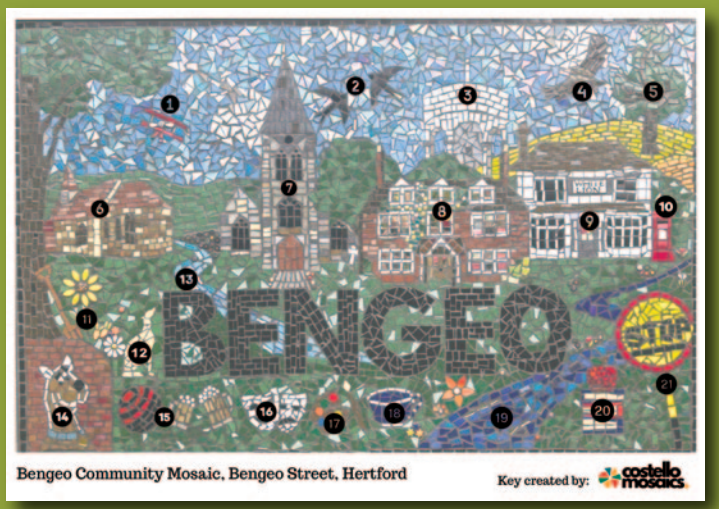




# Love Bengeo Community Mosaic

This mosaic was created by residents of Bengeo. As part of the Love Bengeo project, local people were invited to share what Bengeo means to them and to vote for the features they felt best represented their community. The images included in the mosaic reflect those responses, capturing the places, memories and landmarks that are most valued by local residents.

From historic buildings and local rivers to familiar meeting places and everyday community life, each image tells part of Bengeo's story and helps create a lasting picture of the area and the people who call it home.



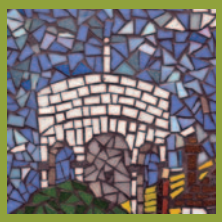

## Bengeo Community Mosaic Key



**1. Biggles Aeroplane**
A tribute to Captain W.E Johns, creator of the famous Biggles books, who was born in Bengeo.



**2. Swifts**
Celebrating the swifts that return to Bengeo each summer.

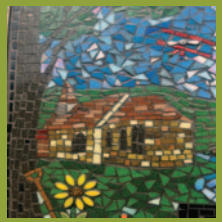


**3. Bengeo Water Tower**
One of Bengeo's most recognisable landmarks.

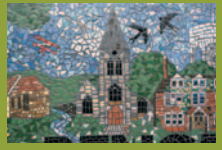
**4. Kites**
Often seen soaring above Bengeo countryside.



**5. The Lonely Oak**
A much-loved landmark in Bengeo Field.



**6. St Leonard's Church**
The historic Norman church dating around 1120, making it one of the oldest buildings in Hertford.



**7. Holy Trinity Church**
The parish church on Bengeo Street.

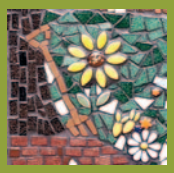


**8. The Pest House**
The Old Pest House, built in 1763, used to isolate and treat smallpox patients.

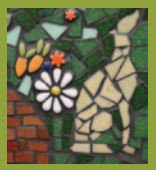


**9. The White Lion**
One of Bengeo's best-known meeting places.

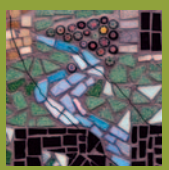
**10. Avenue Shops and Post Box**
Representing the Avenue shopping parade and the iconic red post box outside the Co-op and found in the Avenue.



**11. Bengeo Allotments**
Representing the thriving allotment community.



**12. The Greyhound**
One of Bengeo's historic public houses.



**13. River Beane**
The chalk stream that flows through Bengeo.



**14. Scooby-Doo Graffiti**
The much-loved artwork on the Port Vale wall.



**15. Bengeo Club**
The Bengeo Club and Bowling Green, a popular hub for sport and community life.



**16. COPS Theatre Company**
Celebrating local theatre and performance.



**17. The Arts Hubs**
Supporting creativity and community arts across Hertford.



**18. The Cafés and Tea Rooms**
Celebrating favourite local cafés and gathering places. Hope to see the Avenue one to reopen soon!



**19. River Rib**
The river that joins the Beane in Hertford.



**20 and 21. Local Schools and Lollipop Staff**
Representing Duncombe School, Mill Mead School and Bengeo Primary School, together with a tribute to the dedicated lollipop staff who help children cross safely on Bengeo Street and The Avenue.