

MAY • JUNE 2024

# Bengeo Magazine

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF BENGELO, CHAPMORE END AND TONWELL







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Monday May 27<sup>th</sup>  
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by Yasmina Reza

An amateur performance by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.  
*This play contains some strong language.*

Tuesday May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Heath Players, Hatfield Heath  
**The Revlon Girl**

By Neil Anthony Docking

An amateur performance by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.

Wednesday May 29<sup>th</sup>  
Hertford Dramatic & Operatic Society,  
Hertford  
**The Laramie Project**

by Moisés Kaufman and the members of  
Tectonic Theatre Project

An amateur performance by arrangement with  
Music Theatre International and Josef Weinberger.

Thursday May 30<sup>th</sup>  
The Company of Players, Hertford  
**The Invisible Men**  
by Laura Ilinca

Friday May 31<sup>st</sup>  
White Cobra Productions, Northampton  
**Lilies on the Land**

by The Lion's Part

An amateur performance by arrangement with Nick Hern Books

Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>  
Barn Theatre Club, Welwyn Garden City  
**Hansard**

by Simon Woods

An amateur performance by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd.

Followed by the presentation  
of the Awards

# Bengeo Parish Magazine and Community News



## Editorial

Summer is coming and we announce the opening of St Leonard's church with a programme of events including concerts, special services, and, of course, the popular Tea and Tour on Sunday afternoons. Please support our historic church by stopping to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere.

Local business Daisy Roots is very busy during the summer months with exhibitions, plant stalls around the country and the nursery in Jenningsbury. Annie Godfrey tells us how she started off making a career in horticulture and how you can benefit from her expertise. See page 6.

We are fortunate in having two local police officers who uphold the law here in Bengeo. They tell us about their work and how you can help in preventing crime. See pages 14–15.

### The Editorial Team

*PS: A reminder: if you would like to guarantee a copy of the Bengeo Magazine as we are reducing the numbers of free copies, then please think about subscribing. The magazine will be delivered to your door for only £6 a year. Details in the panel opposite.*

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.

Front cover:

Annie Godfrey's garden in Gosselin Road. Open several times a year for the National Garden Scheme.

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### Editorial Team

Items for the magazine should be sent to [mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk](mailto:mail@bengeomagazine.co.uk)

### Copy dates for 2024

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### Advertising

Please address all advertising enquiries to [mail@bengeomagazine.com](mailto:mail@bengeomagazine.com)

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Tonwell: Pat Lavis

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# Friends of St Leonard's

There is much to look forward to at St Leonard's Church, the ancient heart of Bengeo, this summer.

## Music

We open for the summer season on Saturday 8th June, with a concert by Coracle, an acclaimed group of three talented musicians. The show in Bengeo is part of their "Pub to Pulpit" tour, celebrating the 150th birthday of folk song collector and composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. Check them out on [www.coracleband.co.uk](http://www.coracleband.co.uk) to find out more.



This picture courtesy of Sarah MacQueen

On 29th June, our local extraordinarily talented viola player Fiona Bonds will be bringing her quartet to St Leonard's. We have been lucky enough to hear several concerts from Fiona and colleagues in Bengeo in recent years. Anyone who was there will tell you what a treat they are. St Leonard's is a brilliant setting for their music. We have more concerts in September and December. We'll advertise details of those nearer the time. Tickets for concerts are available from [boxoffice@parishofbengeo.com](mailto:boxoffice@parishofbengeo.com).

## Sunday Teas

The Friends of St Leonard's are delighted to be opening the church for tea and cakes on Sunday afternoons between 2.30pm and 4.30pm from 9th June. There is no tea on the date of the Pet Service – see below.

Why not drop in to enjoy tea or coffee and some home-made cake while you are on your Sunday stroll. Friends will be on hand to help you explore the nearly one thousand year history of the church and the people who have used it. Children are very welcome – we have a treasure hunt or colouring they can do while parents relax. Well-behaved dogs are also welcome!

You don't have to have tea, you can also just pop in to



This picture courtesy of Bridget Hersant

see the church and enjoy its very special, peaceful atmosphere and learn more about the history of Bengeo. If any readers have a spare tea service/cups and saucers and would be happy to donate them, we would be very grateful. Time and the stone floor have taken their toll on our existing stock!

## Services and Prayers

St Leonard's remains an active place of worship and there will be several special services this summer.

On Saturday 22nd June we'll be holding our first, all-age Wild Worship, 2.30–3.30pm in St Leonard's churchyard. Everyone is welcome (children need an accompanying adult) to this unique form of worship and spiritual enrichment where the young and not-so-young will be immersed in the natural world. We'll be enjoying activities, songs, a Bible story, reflection, prayer, and a final treat of toasted marshmallows and hot chocolate.

We will also hold the very popular Pet Blessing Service at 4pm on Sunday 7th July. Bring your pets to say a special thanks for the joy they bring you.

The Hymns and Pimms Service will take place on Sunday 28th July – put the date in your diaries and get ready to sing.

The church will also be open on Tuesday evenings at 8pm from 4th June for Quiet Time reflection and prayer.

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 what is happening. You can join through our website [www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/friends-of-st-leonards](http://www.stleonards.parishofbengeo.com/friends-of-st-leonards).

All help to keep this lovely church open to the community is very welcome. Please get in touch if you want to have a chat about it.

**Helen Fleming**

**Secretary** [friendsofstleonards@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofstleonards@gmail.com)



# Rooted in Success

## Daisy Roots



Annie Godfrey tells us how she followed her childhood passion for plants which has led to establishing Daisy Roots nursery, showing her own garden and achieving national recognition.

Annie begins, "My Mum was a very good gardener. I distinctly remember the joy of my mum pointing out to me an aquilegia that I

had sown from seed the year before. I thought, yes, that was an amazing bit of alchemy – I will have some more of that, please!

As a teenager I was very into house plants and I had about 60 of them in my bedroom. I very much wanted a career in horticulture from the word go. A Saturday job in a nursery centre turned into a full-time job when I left school with day release at Capel Manor. A little later on, when I was self-employed on garden maintenance, I did a garden design course at Capel Manor. Having done the course I thought maybe I could open my garden at home for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). This put me in touch with the organisers and one of them, who was an assessor for the NGS, came round to my garden. I casually mentioned to her that I was looking for more space to do propagation. Amazingly she had a 3 acre garden, which she would like me to help her with, and that she had a bit of space that I might like to take a look at in Jenningsbury. This led on to having a stall at some of the NGS Open Gardens, which is where I started selling plants, then moving on to Farmers' Markets and other plant fairs.

That was over 20 years ago and we have now expanded to another larger area on the same site with more room to propagate plants and sell to the public."

Daisy Roots nursery is open from 10am to 4pm on Friday and Saturday from March to September. In addition to plant sales Annie will be holding a series of monthly talks at the nursery and in her own garden designed to give all the information and tools you need to get the best from your own plot.

Daisy Roots specialise in hardy herbaceous perennials and grasses and for the big shows concentrate on having a source of drought tolerant plants. You will find the Nursery represented at national shows such as in the main Marquee at Chelsea Flower Show, at Hampton Court, Hyde Hall and the Audley End show. Annie says, "We have been exhibiting most years at Chelsea since 2012 and been fortunate in winning two Gold Medals and have also won the Best in Show at Gardeners' World."



Annie also opens her own garden in Gosselin Road Bengoe up to eight times a year for the National Gardens Scheme, including the display of snowdrops in February.

Annie says, "My own garden is a fairly good sized one for a two-bedroom house and I enjoy sharing it with people. If I am committed to opening it then I keep on top of it. I haven't any more openings this year as I want to find time to lift and divide plants, but I may find time for a pop-up opening for charity. The garden now is very different from when I moved in with Steve, my partner. Then it was mainly lawn with straight concrete paths and flower borders. Over the years we nibbled away at the lawn, expanded the beds and made winding gravel pathways. The lawn shrank and has now disappeared. Getting rid of the lawn and filling the garden with pollen-rich perennial plants was definitely a good idea."

If you want to visit Annie's garden and others in Hertfordshire look out for the NGS annual booklet or go to their website at [www.ngs.org](http://www.ngs.org).

Daisy Roots website [www.daisyroots.com](http://www.daisyroots.com) has a wealth of information about the plants, exhibitions talks and workshops. There is also a monthly newsletter for subscribers.

**Daisy Roots, Jenningsbury, London Road, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG13 7NS**  
E: [anne@daisyroots.com](mailto:anne@daisyroots.com)



# Save Bengoe Field

**There is no news at time of writing on the planning application for Bengoe Field.**

**The Save Bengoe Field team are poised to update the community as soon as there is any news. For now, continue to enjoy all the space and beauty of the field this springtime!**

## Community Garden Update

A garden on the small patch of land on the corner of Duncombe Road and Tower Street was proposed in the Bengoe Neighbourhood Plan some time ago. After some delay due to the underground rubble left from earlier structures, it's now all systems go.

The bench is already there and planting can start after some volunteer weeding, clearing and creating a path.

Thanks to a generous donation from The Coffee Pot charity café, grants from East Herts District and Herts County Council with support from Mudlarks, we should soon have an attractive, wildlife-friendly space open to all.

Expect the garden to take shape in April and look out for notice of an official 'opening' shortly after.

**Veronica Fraser**

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# On the Doorstep in May and June

For this Issue of the magazine, I have decided upon the Viper's Bugloss. This plant produces vibrant blue flowers and creates a glorious blue hue over the grassland where it grows. The plant grows between 30cm to 80cm high. It has tongue shaped leaves that grow in a rosette at the base, both the stem and leaves are covered in hairs. The stem has reddish-brown spots on it and from the stem the plant produces new stalks, that start off curled and unfurl, producing dense spikes of bright blue flowers. The flowers also start off curled up and pink, these uncurl producing funnel-like flowers of blue, with 5 long magenta stamens that protrude out of the flower. The plant is a biennial and has a long flowering time, starting in May and sometimes seen right into September and even October. It is part of the Borage family of flowers.

The Viper's Bugloss is a native of the UK and is widely distributed. It prefers a habitat of chalky or sandy well drained, dry soil and disturbed ground. The plant is a favourite of many insects and the flowers are visited by a large variety of bees and butterflies, including various bumble bees, the Large Skipper and Painted Lady butterflies.

Viper's Bugloss has the scientific name – *Echium Vulgare*. *Echium* comes from the Greek meaning viper and *Vulgare* from the Latin for common. Bugloss part of the common name, is also derived from the Greek word *bou* meaning cow or ox and the Latin word *glossa*, meaning tongue. This is probably referring to the look and feel of the leaves, tongue-like and rough. Other common

names for this plant are, Snake Flower, Adderwort, Blue Weed and Blue Devil amongst others.

So, what's with all the snake references? Well, it is thought that the spotty stem looks like the markings of a snake and that the flowers have a resemblance to a snake's head, with the long protruding stamen looking like a snake's tongue. The seeds that the plant produces are also thought to resemble the shape of a snake's head. The plant was also thought to cure snake bites, but this belief may have come from the 'Doctrine of Signatures' – the plant looks like a snake, so must cure snake bites.

The Viper's Bugloss has been used to cure headaches and fever and was thought by a 17th century herbalist Nicholas Culpeper to 'comfort the heart and expel sadness'. The long tap root of the plant was also used as a dye producing a red colour.

The Viper's Bugloss is said to symbolise protection and healing, but the language of flowers says the flower stands for falsehood, perhaps because of the many snake associations with the plant. The flower is also the county flower of East Lothian.

Locally, we have wonderful displays of Viper's Bugloss on the north side of Waterford Heath where the sculpture stands. This part of the heath is the ideal soil and spot for the plant. If you get a chance to wander over to the heath from May onwards you will be able to enjoy the beautiful blue hues of this lovely flower.

**Bridget Hersant**



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The Bengo Club is a friendly Social Club in the heart of Bengo, it offers its members a great social calendar including live acts on Saturdays, Bingo and Raffle evenings, and live sport on TNT plus sporting activities including Bowls and Pétanque, Darts, Snooker and Pool, Bingo is also on every Tuesday in the Garden room at 8pm. There is a large selection of games available (not just for the children but adults too) including Crib, Rummikub, Dominoes.

## Bowling

The Club is the home of the Bengo Bowlers and also the U3A Outdoor Bowls Group.

Bowling is available on a pay and play basis or by joining the Bowls section (for an added fee). The Bowls section is a friendly group which play socially on Monday afternoons and evenings in the summer months (May to September) as well as running their own competitions, competing in a local mixed league and playing friendly games against local clubs.

Interested? Give Christina (07961 529226) a ring for more information.

## Saturday Entertainment in May

- **4th** Bingo and Raffle (8pm)
- **5th** Back to the 50s (7.30pm), 50s Rock and Roll with a twist
- **11th** Phoenix Blues Band (9pm) Rhythm and Blues Band with sax, harmonica vocals guitar, bass and drums
- **18th** *That's What She Said* (9pm) Dynamic Female Fronted covers band
- **25th** Bingo and Raffle (8pm)
- **26th** The Setbacks (7.30pm) Rock and Roll Dance covers bands (Jive, Bop Swing and Americana)

## Saturday Entertainment in June

- **1st** Radio Video (9pm) party band all the hits from ABBA to Queen and everything in between)

- **8th** Drop the Monkey (9pm) 6 piece band 60s/70s/80s/90s/00s and current day
- **15th** Bingo and Raffle (8pm)
- **22nd** Sax on Fire (9pm) 6 piece SKA covers/tribute band
- **29th** Bingo and Raffle (8pm)

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME – pop in and see us soon.

## HALG Classes in Bengo, in May 2024

Hertford Adult Learning Group (HALG) meets at the Parish Hall, Duncombe Road from 10am to 12 noon on a Tuesday. We are currently enjoying six sessions on '*Women Radicals Who Changed Their World and Ours*'. Our tutor is Janet Berenson, who has given us some very lively and stimulating literature courses in the past.

**Dates:** 9th April 2024 to 21st May 2024  
(no class 23rd April)

**Cost:** £30

If you are not already on our database and would like to receive details of further courses, please contact [halgcontact@gmail.com](mailto:halgcontact@gmail.com).

Hertford Adult Learning Group (HALG) is the independent successor of the Hertford WEA branch which met in the Parish Hall for many years. To keep costs to a minimum we no longer produce leaflets and posters but rely on email and word of mouth to promote our courses. To find out more, you are very welcome to come to the AGM at the Parish Hall at 10.30am on Tuesday 23rd April when tea, coffee and cakes will be available.



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# Upholding the Law in Bengoe



PCSO Graham Warner and PC James Parker.

"The last thing I thought I would be doing in the police was herding cattle back into Hartham," said Graham Warner, our Bengoe PCSO (Police Community Support Officer). On his usual beat Graham is more likely to deal with day to day problems such as following up crimes in the area.

Graham started in the police force 15 years ago as PCSO for Hertford for 5 years, then in Bengoe for about 10 years. He says, "I am basically an old-fashioned bobby on a beat who has a ward to look after. I am there to back up James, the PC, and go round in Bengoe to make sure people are alright. I am the friendly face that they trust and respect."

James Parker, our local Police Officer for Bengoe, has been a PC for 15 years including time with the British Transport Police in London at the time of three terrorist attacks. He came to Hertford in 2017 and has a quieter time in Bengoe but can be called into action any time as he is on the 999 response team. James has the power to arrest suspects, take them into custody, interview them and then take them to court. He also enforces court orders and visits nuisance neighbours.

James says, "We have to deal with many things but the main crime in Bengoe is anti-social behaviour and opportunist crime, such as theft from motor vehicles when people forget to lock their cars properly. They might have had a busy day and leave tools or golf clubs in the car. Vans especially are a target as thieves will drill the lock in and just take the items." Graham adds, "Yes, I have been telling people when we have a chat that you really have to lock your car. People think nothing ever happens in Bengoe, but if I had a chance I would get a sign put up on Port Hill saying, 'Lock your car'. Nowadays most modern cars have keyless entry so the message is, put your keys in a Faraday bag to isolate them and don't leave your keys near the front of the house. This is because organised crime thieves have a scanner to access the signal."

"Unfortunately, there is also theft of meat and other items from Sainsbury's and Co-op supermarkets. These are carried out mainly by repeat offenders. It has led Sainsburys to improve their security by scanning the barcode on your receipt when exiting from the self-service tills and having a security guard which has reduced crime considerably. Other issues are anti-social behaviour in Hartham Park which also comes under Bengoe, but this has reduced since the Leisure Centre has opened as we don't regularly get called there now. There are large events that happen in Hertford, such as Oktoberfest, which takes up a lot of police resources. Although there was concern beforehand, the event last year was very well run and there was no trouble. Our duties include attendance at events throughout the year, such as Halloween, fireworks nights and Remembrance Day. Fortunately, crime overall is 13% down on last year in Bengoe."

In order to find out what has been happening in your area, some householders have signed up to the OWL Messaging service. However, OWL has been replaced by a brand new software system found at [www.hertsconnected.co.uk](http://www.hertsconnected.co.uk). This is a free interactive messaging service from Hertfordshire Constabulary. You can choose who you would like to receive messages from – including the Police and Crime Commissioner, Neighbourhood Watch and Action Fraud. It's quick and easy to sign up.

Much of the officers' time is taken up with crime



prevention and liaison with the community. They do work with the Scouts and WI and schools. The officers have a good working relationship with schools and offer them a Mini Police Course over 6 weeks. They also help to plan and attend Bengo Day. Part of their role is to talk to residents and meet groups such as joining in Mental Health walks in Bengo and Hartham. Graham can carry out bike checks, marking and put the bike on a national register. He can give an evaluation of house security on request.

James adds, "On another note, we also see a darker side of life than most members of the public. We never know what we have to deal with next."

You can contact our local police by email at [graham.warner@herts.police.uk](mailto:graham.warner@herts.police.uk) and [james.parker@herts.police.uk](mailto:james.parker@herts.police.uk).

## Tips to prevent vehicle crime

- Ensure you lock doors and shut windows when leaving your vehicle unattended.
- Always remove keys, even if you're just stopping to buy fuel.
- Never leave valuables in your vehicle, even carrier bags – not even in the glove box or boot.
- Be aware of your keys. Don't leave them unattended, or in pockets in changing rooms, or visible through your windows or front door.
- If you have a vicinity key, keep it in a signal blocking pouch away from the front of your house.
- Store car ownership documents at home, not in your car.
- Secure number plates with anti-theft screws.

## Tips to prevent house crime

- Make sure doors and windows are closed and locked when leaving the premises.
- Install a monitored burglar system.
- Fit a doorbell and/or internal camera.
- Attach exterior movement sensitive spotlights.
- Add timer switches to give your home a lived-in look.

## HODDESDON MODEL AND RAILWAY CLUB

### MODELLING EXTRAVAGANZA

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**10.00am to 4.00pm**

**At The Club Site**

**The Old Mill**

**Mill Lane**

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**EN10 7AX**

**Working Model Railway Layouts**

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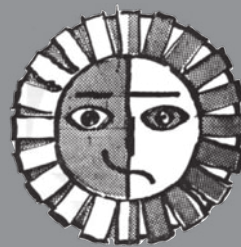
**For Further Information, Telephone 07708 579822**

**Free parking at Broxbourne Lido (Riverside) off Nazeing New Road (B194).**

**Follow the footpath from the car park, under the railway line to the club site.**

**The club is a five-minute walk from Broxbourne station.**

**[www.hoddesdonmrc.org.uk](http://www.hoddesdonmrc.org.uk)**



## The Company of Players (Hertford)

*present*

**The Invisible Men**  
Adapted from the HG Wells  
novel and directed  
by Laura Ilinca

**7th–15th June 2024  
at 7.45pm**

**at The Little Theatre,  
6 Christchurch Place,  
Balfour Street, Lower  
Bengo, SG14 3BB**



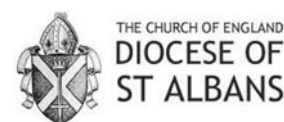
A fast-paced comedy inspired by the original novel. Jack Griffin dreams of discovering the secret to invisibility. At The Cock & Bull Inn, his friends the Halls spend their days helping him plot silly revenges against his ex-wife and her new boyfriend. What could go wrong? Not much... until one day unexpected guests arrive, bringing secret agencies who seem quite interested in the invisibility business as well.

Tickets on sale at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cops](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cops)  
[www.cops.org.uk](http://www.cops.org.uk)





# Tonwell School News



In February we celebrated Feeling Good Week where the children learn about physical and mental health. We share the 5 ways to wellbeing which are just as helpful for adults to use as well as for the children. Give, Be Active, Take Notice, Connect and Keep Learning.

Thank you to the school council and Mrs L for organising our healthy snacks each day. The whole school had fun together at Hartham Soft Play. We are grateful for this free session and would like to thank the centre for offering it to us. It was a great way for the children to keep active. The children loved their afternoon with local artist, Julie Stedham, who helped them create a collaborative piece of art using recycled materials.

Friends of Tonwell organised a fun afternoon of pancake making and decorating for pancake day. Children enjoyed trying different toppings!

The whole school was excited to meet visiting



author from Ray Star books to help celebrate World Book Day. Children (and adults) were inspired by her stories and enthusiasm for writing. Children shared some of their favourite books and had a go at their own creative writing pieces.

The whole school enjoyed their visit to The Hive in March. We took part in a variety of activities, including a mini beast hunt, using keys for tree identification and handled animals. We showed our courage to try holding snakes, cockroaches and giant snails!

It was great fun celebrating World Book Day. Children had some incredible outfits inspired by favourite books. They took part in a book swap and other reading challenges. Thank you to Miss Fitzgerald for organising the day.

Our active Friends Group organised a lovely Easter activities afternoon with craft and games. We are so grateful for all they do for the school.

To find out more about the fun activities we do at Tonwell St Mary's C of E Primary School please follow us on instagram @tonwellstmarys.

## **Tonwell St Mary's C of E Primary School**

**Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Bridgman**

We are offering 30 hour places in our Nursery class.

We also have a Breakfast Club from 8am and After School Club until 5pm daily.

Visits are warmly welcomed.

Please speak to Mrs Moorehead on 01920 462894 between 8.30am and 12 noon to arrange a visit or email [admin@tonwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@tonwell.herts.sch.uk)





# Bengeo Primary School



## Bengeo School News

### Tottenham defender visit – 21st March

Young defender James Rowswell returned to his old school in Bengeo, to chart his rise through the Club's Global Football Development Programme to signing a professional contract. One of the afterschool sessions he attended around the time his talent was first identified was at Bengeo Primary School, and James celebrated the signing of his first contract by paying them and the coaches who supported him on the Development Programme a visit.



## Sportshall Athletics County Final

### 19th March

Year 5/6 children had the chance to compete in the County Finals at Wodson Park.

Twelve of the best teams across Hertfordshire turned up to the hotly anticipated event. The girls came a very credible 7th and the boys just missed out on a medal finishing 4th.

To put this into perspective, 420 schools across Hertfordshire initially entered their regional competitions!



# Excellent in all areas.

ISI Inspection Report 2022

*"Pupils relish the opportunity to learn in every lesson"*  
*ISI June 2022*



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TOUR**

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**Search Duncombe, Hertford**



# Duncombe School's Community Chronicles

## April 2024



Hello Everyone!

Can you believe how quickly the Spring Term has flown by? Team Duncombe will be practising for Sports Day and our end-of-term productions before you know it!

Once again, Duncombe School and Treetops Pre-School have brought learning to life in so many different ways since we last wrote to you. We've enjoyed numerous enrichment activities, workshops and a fair amount of sporting success! In this edition, we've chosen our favourites to share with you in a bit more detail, so please do read on.

Beyond our daily enriching and imaginative learning, we have also enjoyed welcoming parents into the school to share in the delights of Open Mornings, Class Assemblies, Breakfast Music Concerts, Open Classrooms, and Information Evenings. It's been a busy one!

What an incredible term it has been! It truly reaffirms that learning comes to life here at Duncombe.

So grab your coffee, catch up on Team Duncombe's news, and we look forward to sharing more exciting adventures in the next edition!

*Team Duncombe*

### Year 6 scholarship and senior schools destination success!

Congratulations to all our Year 6 children on the success of their Independent Schools 11+ Examination results.

Building upon our past achievements, Duncombe School has once again demonstrated excellence by securing a sector-leading number of offers and scholarships. Impressively, 100% of our pupils sitting for the 11+ exam have gained places at their first-choice schools. This reaffirms Duncombe's status as the leader in scholarship offers within the area at 11+, with an outstanding offer percentage of 94% for all entries!

Adding to this success across the cohort, 10 academic and music scholarships have been offered at a range of leading Independent Secondary Schools including Bishop's Stortford College, Haileybury College, St Albans High for Girls and St Albans Boys, St Edmund's College, St Johns, and Queenswood. In addition, places were offered for the highly prestigious independent schools City of London Freemans and selective state schools Reigate Grammar and Dame Alice Owens School. We could not be prouder of all the children's achievements and success.



### Duncombe Regional Champions in IAPS Swimming Success

Congratulations to these two Year 5 children for their remarkable achievements at the IAPS Swimming Regionals this Spring! One pupil showed exceptional skill and determination, highlighting her dedication to sports. The other pupil's outstanding performance earned them the title of U10 IAPS Front Crawl Regional Champion, showcasing their talent and hard work. Together, their success exemplifies the results of perseverance and passion in Duncombe's PE and Games curriculum.



### Hertford RFC - Team Duncombe's Home Ground

This term, hosting rugby events at Hertford RFC, our home ground, has been incredibly rewarding. We've celebrated victories and seen notable growth in our children's rugby skills and character development. Witnessing some students' progress over the past 24 months has been particularly gratifying.

As we wrap up the rugby season, we can look back on a successful campaign with triumphs against local prep schools. These victories highlight the dedication and hard work our pupils have put in to overcome challenges and give their all.



### Cross Country with Team Duncombe

We're proud to announce the triumph of our U11 Duncombe Cross Country squad in a local event this term. Two pupils seized the top spot in the boys' race, but also a commendable third place. Congratulations not only to them both but to the entire team for their outstanding performance and effort. Your achievements inspire us all as we continue to nurture and support our children's passions and talents on all sporting fronts. Let's keep up the great work and strive for even more medals next year!



**CROSS COUNTRY**



Book a tour and discover a Duncombe education  
Search Duncombe School, Hertford





# A Word from The Rectory

## Sit down and take a load off

From The Vicar, The Revd Robert Thompson



Recently widowed, my father has been taking his first brave steps out of bereavement by taking himself off on holiday. He's got as far as Inverness, Truro and the Isle of Skye – hours sat on a coach don't seem to trouble him at all. His only real concern centres around the vexed issue of catching a coach from the bus stop at the top of his street.

Now the council have removed the bus shelter there is nowhere for him to sit whilst he waits.

'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step,' goes the old Chinese proverb, the voice of an old Chinese sage speaking from experience, I imagine. Maybe he had cause to bemoan the lack of street furniture in his community essential to people with aching feet and wobbly knees.

So it is with a certain sympathy that I pitch up at church to find the porch bench lined with people my father's age all taking their ease. They have not come for spiritual counsel. They have not come to pray and bend the knee in reverent devotion. Just put their feet up and use the church loo before the bus arrives to take them off to a West End Show or some U3A adventure.

Which certainly keeps my feet on the ground, I must say. It's a helpful reality-check for any vicar with inflated spiritual ambitions for their parishioners: when it comes to public service it's feet first and souls second. There'll always be more people wanting to use the church loo than light a candle at its altars. There's more attention paid to the word of Lee Childs in the churchyard bookswap than there is the Word of God in the church next door. A churchyard bench is not intended for profound reflection on the Holy Spirit. It's for people catching their breath.

All of which works for me. Churches have often

served as stress relievers and relaxation havens. Accompanying people on their journey of life may be a simple matter of pulling up a chair and stopping long enough to listen. Forrest Gump could tell his whole life story to anybody willing to hear. I've had many interesting conversations with people sat on the bench in Holy Trinity's Garden of Remembrance, surrounded by absent friends.

In urban areas today, benches are becoming an endangered species. Hostile architecture is the name urban engineers give to public space designs that discourage people from settling in. Examples include sloped window sills, retaining walls with spikes, skateboard-inhibiting metal rivets, and benches with multiple armrests to deter those looking for a bed.

Comfy benches are rare, and rarer by the minute if

### Pet Service



**Sunday 7th July 4pm at  
St Leonard's Church**

This year we will be raising money for The Cinnamon Trust, a National Charity which helps look after animals when their owners, through

illness or for other reasons, can no longer care for them.

Bob Kelly, our Lay Reader with his dog Oskar, will be leading the Service which is a lovely occasion for all ages. You don't have to have a pet to join us: you will be welcome either with a pet, toy animal or just yourself.

Catherine Flanagan from the Cinnamon Trust will be telling us about the work of the Trust.

Refreshments will be served following the Service, so do stay around for a chat.

For more information, please contact Libby on **01992 583979**.

**Libby Shillito**

current experience is to be believed. One morning last summer, I noticed the bench in Holy Trinity churchyard looking suspiciously wonky. Two nights later it was missing an arm. By the weekend it had been reduced to a pile of timber, as if sat on by a passing elephant. Never before had any church matter produced such heartfelt dismay – ‘Who has destroyed our bench?’ ‘Why ruin something special?’ ‘Is nothing sacred anymore?’ You’d have thought there’d been some sort of desecration.

And then, a few nights later, the entire pile of timber mysteriously disappeared. The sacred treasure of the churchyard bench had been first ravaged by vandals, then removed altogether, plundered like King Tut’s tomb.

So it was with a heavy heart that I pulled up outside the home of the original donors of the memorial bench ready to break the sad news of its passing. And there, in their garden, was a happy sight – the same memorial bench, reclaimed and renewed by the family who’d presented it, with a few patched-up planks, but otherwise all in one piece and ready for service.

There isn’t any deep theological lesson to be learnt from these musings, except maybe this: that we love most what we need most, and what we miss the most. That said, the lack of a decent place for a nice sit down was certainly enough to register a rare grumble from Jesus, that ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’

Which familial comment reminds me of my old dad struggling up the road with his suitcase. The lack of benches in public spaces is but one small symptom of what will shortly become a massive problem: our woeful lack of preparation to accommodate a rapidly ageing population.

Those with experience to share on such issues can come sit next to me.

*With my prayers,*

**Robert Thompson**



## Bengeo Parish Handbells

It will be two years in September since we started up a new group of handbell ringers, none of whom had played the instrument before. During that time we have had a few members come and go but now have a core team. At Christmas we played ‘*Good King Wenceslas*’ at the end of Holy Trinity Church’s Sing Noel Service (see photo) and we are now working on a couple of pieces which we hope to play in the summer at the end of a 10am Sunday Service.

We meet from 10.30–11.30am on the second and fourth Friday of each month at Holy Trinity Church. Do come along if you would like to hear us and/or have a go. Everyone is welcome.

And... to hear a superb handbell concert at Ware in June, see the poster on page 13 for details. You will be guaranteed an incredible experience.

**Jackie Downs**



# Parish Calendar MAY 2024

Wednesday 1st May	
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Secret Garden Café, The Avenue
2pm	Bengeo Afternoon Wl, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
Thursday 2nd May	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
Sunday 5th May                          Sixth Sunday of Easter	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 7th May	
	No Quiet Time this evening
Wednesday 8th May	
10am	Craft Club, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
Thursday 9th May	
10am	Holy Communion for Ascension Day
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Oasis Café, Ware Road Methodist Church, Hertford
Sunday 12th May                          Seventh Sunday of Easter	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 14th May	
8pm	Quiet Time, Holy Trinity Church
Thursday 16th May	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
6.30–8pm	Bereavement Café at Secret Garden Café, Bengeo
Sunday 19th May                          PENTECOST	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 22nd May	
8pm	Quiet Time, Holy Trinity Church
Thursday 23rd May	
10am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road
Sunday 26th May                          TRINITY SUNDAY	
9am	Holy Communion
10am	Parish Communion
Tuesday 28th May	
	No Quiet Time this evening
Thursday 30th May	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road

# Parish Calendar JUNE 2024

Sunday 2nd June		First Sunday after Trinity
9am	Holy Communion	
10am	Parish Communion	
Tuesday 4th June		
8pm	Quiet Time, St Leonard's Church	
Wednesday 5th June		
2pm	Bengeo Afternoon WI, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Café at The Secret Garden Café, The Avenue	
Thursday 6th June		
10am	Holy Communion	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
Saturday 8th June		
7.30pm	Concert at St Leonard's Church: Coracle Folk Band	
Sunday 9th June		Second Sunday after Trinity
9am	Holy Communion	
10am	Parish Communion	
2.30–4.30pm	St Leonard's Church: Tea & Tour	
Tuesday 11th June		
8pm	Quiet Time, St Leonard's Church	
Wednesday 12th June		
10am	Craft Club, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
Thursday 13th June		
10am	Holy Communion	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
2.30–4pm	Bereavement Cafe at The Oasis Café, Ware Road Methodist Church, Hertford	
Sunday 16th June		Third Sunday after Trinity
9am	Holy Communion	
10am	Parish Communion	
2.30–4.30pm	St Leonard's Church: Tea & Tour	
Tuesday 18th June		
8pm	Quiet Time, St Leonard's church	
Thursday 20th June		
10am	Holy Communion	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
6.30–8pm	Bereavement Cafe at Secret Garden Café, Bengeo	
Saturday 22nd June		
2.30–3.30pm	Wild Worship, St Leonard's Church All age activities in and around the church	
Sunday 23rd June		Fourth Sunday after Trinity
9am	Holy Communion	
10am	Parish Communion	
2.30–4.30pm	St Leonard's Church: Tea & Tour	
Tuesday 25th June		
8pm	Quiet Time St Leonard's Church	
Thursday 27th June		
10am	Holy Communion	
10.30am	Coffee Pot Charity Café, Church Hall, Duncombe Road	
Saturday 29th June		
7.30pm	Concert at St Leonard's Church: Music for String Quartet	
Sunday 30 June		Fifth Sunday after Trinity
9am	Holy Communion	
10am	Service of the Word	
2.30–4.30pm	St Leonard's Church: Tea & Tour	



# Parish Prayers

## Daily Prayers for May

1. Philip and James Apostles of Jesus and church leaders
2. HMP Isis, South London
3. Bengo Bus Service
4. Bengo Cricket Club
5. Our Memorial Garden
6. Revels Road
7. Christian Churches in Gaza
8. Mercy Ships UK working in Africa
9. Ascension Day Services
10. The five local pubs
11. Local farms and landowners
12. Our choir
13. Revels Close
14. Christian Churches in Israel
15. Mercy Ships office in Stevenage
16. HMP, Isle of Wight
17. Future Hope bus working in Hertford and Ware
18. Friends of the River Rib and Quin
19. Pentecost, The Holy Spirit in the Parish of Bengo
20. Rib Vale
21. Christian Churches in Turkey
22. Mercyships.org.uk
23. HMP Kirkham, Lancashire
24. The Methodist Church in Hertford and Ware
25. Future Hope in the Pioneer Hall, Ware Road
26. Trinity Sunday
27. River Court
28. Christian Churches in China
29. Mercy Ships work in Madagascar
30. Thanksgiving for Holy Communion
31. Bristol Cathedral

## Daily Prayers for June

1. Local tennis clubs
2. Our Worship Band
3. Russell Street
4. Christian Churches in Hong Kong
5. Holy Trinity Bereavement Cafe
6. D-Day 80th Commemorations and Armed Service Chaplains
7. HMP, Kirk Levington Grange, Stockton on Tees
8. Hertford Work in the Community
9. Bengo Coffee Pot charity café
10. Sacombe Road
11. Barnabas Fund and all who encourage others in faith
12. Craft Club, our crafts and hobbies
13. HMP, Lancaster Farms, Lancaster
14. Young Life Hertford and Ware, outreach to teenagers
15. The Royal Family
16. Our fathers
17. Shepherd's Court
18. Christian Churches in Libya
19. All Nations Christian College, Easney
20. HMP, Leeds
21. Local shops and businesses
22. The Diocese of St Albans
23. Hertford and District Churches Together
24. Our handbell ringers
25. Christian Churches in Yemen
26. Mission Aviation Fellowship
27. HMP, Leicester, Leicester City Centre
28. Canterbury Cathedral
29. River Beane Restoration Association
30. Friends of St Leonard's

### Register

Baptism 31st March – **Hugo Evra**



### Quiet Time

Quiet Time at 8pm on Tuesday evenings will move from Holy Trinity to St Leonard's Church from the 4th June for the Summer months. Please note that there will be no Quiet Time on Tuesdays 7th May and 28th May.

# Church Contacts

## Team Vicar

The Reverend Robert Thompson  
The Rectory, Byde Street, Bengoe, SG14 3BS  
E: [info@parishofbengeo.com](mailto:info@parishofbengeo.com)  
T: 01992 413691

## 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, Bengoe, SG14 3JW

# Local Contacts for Help and Advice

## Bengeo Residents Support Network Against Coronavirus

Many volunteers from Bengoe and the vicinity are offering help and support to vulnerable neighbours. Ring 01992 230155. Call if you need food or other items, information or just for a chat.

There is a Facebook group to get help or to volunteer: [www.facebook.com/groups/bengeo.residents.against.coronavirus](https://www.facebook.com/groups/bengeo.residents.against.coronavirus)

Below are links to local services that Herts CC have sent out about the coronavirus assistance.

## Medical and Health Advice

[www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

## Information about local council services

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Domestic Abuse

[www.sunflower.org](http://www.sunflower.org)

## Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 808 8088

[Freephone Monday to Friday, 9am–9pm  
Saturday/Sunday 9am–4pm]

## Financial Advice

### Money Advice Unit

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits)

### Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service

03444 111 444

### National Debtline

[www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)  
0808 808 4000

## Advice on avoiding scams

Sign up for scam alerts from trading standards  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme)

### Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline

0808 223 1133

If you are interested in volunteering  
[www.thvolunteering.org.uk](http://www.thvolunteering.org.uk)

HertsHelp 0300 123 4044

## Mental Health Advice and Support

### Herts Mind Network

[www.hertsmindnetwork.org](http://www.hertsmindnetwork.org)  
020 3727 3600  
0300 777 0707 [8am–7pm]  
Nightline: 01923 256391

## Emotional Support and Practical Help

[www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)  
[info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)  
HertsHelp: 0300 123 4044

*Inside back cover:*

**Bridget's photographs of Viper's Bugloss.**

See the article on page 9.



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KNEBWORTH • 01438 812365

BUNTINGFORD • 01763 274111

WELWYN GARDEN CITY • 01707 390018

WELWYN • 01438 714686

HERTFORD • 01992 582052

WARE • 01920 468551

LETCHWORTH • 01462 684292

HODDESDON • 01992 471709

HARWOOD PARK • 01438 812515

HARPENDEN • 01582 762570

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# Viper's Bugloss





# St Leonard's Church, Bengoe Calendar of Events for 2024

## OPENING TIMES FOR VISITORS –

**Sundays 9th June to 22nd September, from 2.30pm to 5.00pm**

**TEAS from 2.30pm to 4.30pm**

**QUIET TIME – every Tuesday evening at 8pm for one hour from 4th June**

### June

**Saturday 8th** CONCERT: Coracle Folk Band, 7.30pm

**Sunday 9th** Start of Visitor Season and Teas

**Saturday 22nd** Wild Worship in the Churchyard, 2.30pm

**Saturday 29th** Concert: Fiona Bonds Quartet, 7.30pm

### July

**Sunday 7th** Annual Pet Service at 4pm, followed by refreshments

**Sunday 28th** Service of Praise with Hymns and Pimms, 6.30pm

### September

**Saturday 7th** Heritage Open Day  
Herts and Beds Historic Church Trust 'Bike and Hike'

**Sunday 8th** Heritage Open Day

**Saturday 14th** CONCERT: Andrews/Massey, 7.30pm

**Sunday 22nd** Harvest Festival Songs of Praise and Service of Thanks  
for 40 years of the Friends of St Leonards, 6.30pm  
Followed by the Friends of St Leonard's AGM

### December

**Saturday 7th** 'A Christmas Wassail' with Folk Band Magpie Lane, 7.30pm

### Further information

Concert bookings: £15.

Email [boxoffice@parishofbengoe.com](mailto:boxoffice@parishofbengoe.com)  
or call 07910 822069.

For latest information visit our website  
[stleonards.parishofbengoe.com](http://stleonards.parishofbengoe.com).

