

# CRATFIELD NEWS

*January 2026*



## HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS FROM THE CRATFIELD NEWS TEAM.

Here's wishing you all a healthy and prosperous 2026

### SOME THANK YOU MESSAGES

Many thanks to Pete and Graham for keeping Cratfield News going for yet another year.

Also, thanks to our faithful team of deliverers Julie/Andy, Keira/Ivor, Robert/Rebecca, Linzi/Dan, Andre, Maisie and Mary who, come what may, make sure everyone in the village receives a copy.

Thank you also to those of you who read it, it makes it all worthwhile!

On behalf of **St. Mary's Church** I would like to thank all of you who donated gifts towards the Christmas Raffle. Your generosity enabled us to produce 3 splendid hampers, plus a bonus extra prize. £348 was raised for the church fabric (building) fund. The lucky winners were 1<sup>st</sup> Freddy (from Laxfield), 2<sup>nd</sup> Ros Webster, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sandra and Paul (from Dunnets) and 4<sup>th</sup> Caroline Wisby-Brown.

Thank you all those in the village who decorated their homes and gardens with sparkling lights to brighten the dreary December days and celebrate the Christmas season.

And, on behalf of the **Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal**, I would like to thank Cratfieldians for their generosity whether from the door-to-door collection or the church collection, which is very kindly donated to the Poppy Appeal. A grand total of £494.21 was raised for this worthy cause.

We know we are blessed to live in such a great village and the above just goes towards proving what a super community we have here.

### BUNTING RETURNS

'We're back at the Village Hall on the **7th March 2026 (2.00pm – 5.00pm)** to continue our bunting making! Whether you're a cutter, sewer, pinner or iron-er, there's a job for everyone! We will be adding to the fabulous bunting lengths we made in November, ensuring we have plenty for all future Village Hall events.

We had such a wonderful afternoon last time, and it would be fantastic to see everyone who joined us before, along with as many new, enthusiastic crafters as possible, to help finish what we started.

As with everything Cratfield, tea, coffee, cake and a glass of Prosecco to round off the afternoon.

Please email Caroline Hay Davison at [c.hay-davison@sky.com](mailto:c.hay-davison@sky.com) just so we know how many cakes to make!"

There have been reports of two unattended dogs (described as a terrier and a spaniel type) seen chasing deer in the fields near Cantley Farm in the week before Christmas.

If anyone recognises these dogs please could their owners be made aware and reminded to keep dogs under close control, particularly around livestock and wild life.

For everyone else a general reminder that dogs should be kept under control when walking near fields with animals. Thank you

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Thursday 29th January 2026

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## General Drills

In the “Old Navy”, by which I mean the Navy before the late 1970s, we were still basking in the fading glory of a WW2 victory, and a large fleet with several overseas bases, and not always a lot to do other than to deter others and be “ready.” This sometimes irritated Admirals and their staffs who felt we should be kept on our toes. One way in which this was done was by ordering unexpected “General Drills”. These were sudden orders to do things, prepare for action, send out rescue parties on wild goose chases, or indeed anything which might test a ship’s ingenuity, imagination and response. They were even sprung on us at Dartmouth.

One evening in my first term at Dartmouth in October 1961, we Cadets were recovering from the usual hectic day at about 8pm, when suddenly over the Main Broadcast<sup>1</sup> came the words “Away all boats, Away all boats.” As we looked at each other in puzzlement, a couple of Midshipmen burst into our dormitory and told us to get down to Sandquay<sup>2</sup> at the double. By the time we got down the hill to the river, about 300 Midshipmen and Cadets were milling about, trying to get out to their allotted boats which they were told to get up the Dart above Dittisham Lake towards Totnes before returning. Of course, it was dark and there was no buoyage in Dittisham Lake but by now we were well trained and knew that the right response was “Aye, aye Sir” followed by rapid action of some sort, so off we went, and a flotilla of assorted craft moved up the Dart, propelled in various ways. As luck would have it it was also spring tides and to complicate things further, there had been a cloudburst on Dartmoor and so there was, temporarily, much more water than usual in the river. It also happened that the flood tide was almost on the turn. The consequence of this was that when we set off the boats were able to reach areas which were normally too shallow, but when the tide turned, they were quickly aground. Indeed, although it sounds like an apocryphal fairy tale, one of our fellow cadets, “Bill” Bailey by name, drove without noticing it through a field gate on what was normally the riverbank and soon found himself aground. A crane and a transport vehicle had to be sent next day to collect the boat, by now surrounded by happily cud-chewing cows. Fortunately, I cannot now remember what dreadful punishment was inflicted on Cadet Bailey, but for the rest of the term he was regularly greeted by people singing “Won’t you come home, Bill Bailey, won’t you come home? I would but my boat won’t float.” And whenever he asked permission to do anything, the staff member or instructor used to say, “Whatever floats your boat, Cadet Bailey.” He left the college (and the Navy) before the next term started. And I can promise you the story is true, although I cannot tell you how I know that.

The rest of us got back to the college in the wee small hours and managed a few

hours' sleep before instruction started as usual the next day at 6.30am. Tiredness was a permanent feature of life, and we soon discovered that the best time for catching up sleep was during the many instructional films we watched about seamanship and other things. Fortunately, the following term was spent at sea in real naval ships, so we were able to learn on the job which was much more helpful.

We had however also been introduced to a very important feature of our future lives in the real Navy. It was a life in which you never knew what might happen next and in which you had to be prepared to respond to any kind of emergency, be it earthquake damage in Sicily, a volcanic explosion in the West Indies, a merchant ship in trouble in bad weather, a man overboard, or even an unexpected military action, always prepared for the worst and learning from your mistakes<sup>3</sup>. I think, looking back at Dartmouth, that that was the main thing that was being drilled into us during our Cadet training. And it was the reason why crusty old Admirals ordered ships to do "General Drills." I should know – after all, I am one!

### **Jeremy Blackham**

1. The public address system in Naval ships and establishments is known as "The Main Broadcast" and all announcements over it are known as "pipes" after the ancient system of using a Boatswain's Pipe to pass orders.
2. Sandquay is the College's boathouses and Jetty on the river Dart off which a large number of power, rowing and sailing boats were moored. A place where we spent a

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### **LIBRARY DATES**

**Silverleys Green 14.00-14.20      The Poacher 14.30-14.35**

Jan 29<sup>th</sup>, Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, Mar 17<sup>th</sup>, Apr 14<sup>th</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup>, June 9<sup>th</sup>, July 7<sup>th</sup>, Aug 4<sup>th</sup>,  
Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>, Nov 24<sup>th</sup>, Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>

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# Cratfield Parish Council

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*If you would like to litter pick please contact:*

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## HISTORY CORNER

### Heveningham School



Above is a photograph of a group of children attending Heveningham Primary School c.1940. The school building has long since been converted to a private home. One of the children in the picture is Ethel Smith, daughter of the miller in Ubbeston. She attended the school from 1936 to 1942 and took her 11+ scholarship exam, going on to Mills Grammer in Framlingham (Thomas Mills School). Ethel remembered her Infants' teacher being Miss Allerton and her Junior Class teacher, Mrs Robinson. Ethel went on to become a teacher herself and in her scrapbook of memories describes the school as excellent.

Ubbeston never had its own school and shared the facilities of Heveningham's. However, in the 1930s many of the Ubbeston children attended school in Laxfield despite the longer walk or cycle ride. An advert in the Ipswich Journal 1837 sought to employ a Sunday School teacher for Ubbeston, who would *be required to teach the children to read...*

According to Heritage Suffolk, a daily school was recorded in Heveningham in 1515 and in 1818 there is a record of an Endowed School, which has 35 pupils with 15 free places. There was also a Sunday School with 63 attending. Various directories tell us that the building, which is still standing, was erected in 1859 to hold 85 children and 70 attended then. It

was enlarged in 1895 to accommodate 100 pupils, although this would appear to be quite a tight squeeze and, probably thankfully, the average recorded attendance was 73. By 1916 the school was deemed to hold 76 children – a bit more elbow-room?

Admission records held by Suffolk Archives date from 1884 to 1948 and list the school as Heveningham Voluntary Primary School. Presumably 1948 is when the school closed? Earlier descriptions of the establishment refer to a *Public Elementary day school*.

How was the school funded? White's 1855 directory states *The Town & Poors' Estate provides £10 per annum towards the support of the school*. In 1879 Kelly's Directory has the entry: *Here is a Public Elementary day school for the poor, which is supported by an endowment from the Heveningham Charities ... and partly by voluntary subscription*. From the Vanneck Papers Accounts of 1894 – 1904 the school appears to be supported by the family at Heveningham Hall.

School Staff: 1844 James Harrold, Schoolmaster; 1855 Sarah Kindred, Schoolmistress; 1879 Charles Wood, Master; 1888 John Jones, Master; 1892 & 1896 Charles Jesse Ashworth, Master; 1900 Allen Hassall, Master; 1916 Miss E M Mully, Supply Teacher; 1930s/40s Miss Allerton & Mrs Robinson.

There is evidence in the form of newspaper adverts that the Heveningham School building was put to good use out of hours for evening classes, although maybe not well attended. One article in the EADT in 1893 reported this:

*Book keeping class of Ubbeston run by Mr Charles J Ashworth in the Heveningham Schoolroom.*

*Certificates to Miss L J Howell – gained first position\**

*Miss F Newman*

*Misses Edith & Ethel Skinner*

And footnote with asterisk *\*not enough attendance to win a prize!*



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## VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – JANUARY 2026

### CRATFIELD POP UP PUB - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 6pm-10pm (NOT 2<sup>ND</sup> January)

Join us for the **first Cratfield Pop Up Pub of 2026** at the village hall, on the SECOND Friday of the month, for January only! Put the New Year Resolutions on hold and catch up with neighbours and friends from around the village. There will be the usual barrel of local beer – plus a choice of wines and cider, lager, soft drinks, G&T and all that's needed to get 2026 underway. The bar accepts card & cash payment.

**Cratfield Kitchen** will be in the kitchen so skip the cooking and washing up for an evening! Cash only for food. The kitchen takes orders from 6.30pm so arrive in good time to avoid disappointment.

**Thank you!! WHAT a village!!!**

A [big thank you to](#) everyone who came along and made the Cratfield Christmas Fair 2025 a great success - as well as to everyone who supported all the other events at the Village Hall last year. By participating you have helped to keep this friendly space, as well as the land around it, available for the enjoyment and use of the village. You are The Best!

### INDOOR BOWLS AT THE VILLAGE HALL

New Year, New Hobby? Why not try out indoor bowling? Anyone who is interested can turn up at the door and join the friendly regulars at the village hall, 7pm, with no prior experience needed. Tea and coffee available. Suggested £2 donation for use of the hall.

Dates for 2026 are:

January 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> /// February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> /// March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> /// April 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> /// May 19<sup>th</sup> /// June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> /// July 21<sup>st</sup> /// August 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> /// September 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> /// October 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> /// November 17<sup>th</sup> and /// December 8<sup>th</sup> (& possibly 22<sup>nd</sup>!).

### *Village Hall Events - 2026 Dates for the Diary:*

**CRATFIELD RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN – Thurs 29 January 10am-noon**

If you need a lift to the Coffee Caravan please contact Helen on 07818046955.

### **CRATFIELD TALKS – Saturday 21 March - *Cake for Breakfast, Lobster for Tea***

Come and join us for an insight into how the big restaurant chains successfully and more importantly, consistently, cater for thousands of people every day.

Following a long career working for some of the most recognisable brands, most of

whom still have restaurants today, Caroline Hay-Davison will take us through the menu development process from the scientific research through to the far-flung factory visits sprinkled with anecdotes from the funny to the slightly frustrating. There will be an opportunity to test your own taste buds. Ticket details to follow so keep watching this space!

### **CRATFIELD ACOUSTIC SPECIAL NIGHT RETURNS - Saturday 18 April**

After the amazing success of Acoustic Special in October 2025, we can all look forward with great excitement to Acoustic Special Two! Again, this will be to raise funds for St Elizabeth Hospice and the performers will all be a surprise! Two acts already booked and a third waiting to confirm. April 18th

2026....don't forget to pop in your diary straight away!

### **CRATFIELD DOG SHOW 2026 – Sunday 3 May**

The popular Cratfield Dog Show will return with pedigree and fun classes to please every dog lover – and dog! Further details to follow.

### **PLANT SHOW – Sunday 7th June**

A call to all keen Cratfield gardeners! This year we will hold a village plant sale to raise money for the village hall. So don't forget to pot up those extra seedlings and maximise the use of your propagator, ready for a fun filled day (there will be refreshments!) of horticultural happiness.

### **CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – DECEMBER WINNERS**

This month's 100 Club winners are: first prize (£15) number 34 – Emma Loades; second prize (£10) number 75 – Anne Bedford; and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize (£5) number 55 – Graham Nixey. Draw by D Britton. Many congratulations to the winners!

***If you have submitted a 2025-2026 100 Club form/paid your subscription but have not yet had an acknowledgement by email/paper, please text or call Helen on 07818046955.***

**VILLAGE HALL FOR HIRE! Don't forget our hall is available for hire for a very reasonable price! For any future booking enquiries please contact us on [cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com)**

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## Defibrillator and Bleed Control Kit

The public access defibrillator and bleed control kit are located at Cratfield Village Hall, Manse Lane, Cratfield, Halesworth, IP19 0DJ.

Cratfield Parish Council is committed to supporting community safety and wellbeing, and this equipment is available for use in a medical emergency.

The defibrillator is designed to provide immediate assistance to someone suffering a cardiac arrest while awaiting the arrival of the emergency services. Call 999 and clear voice instructions are provided, and it can be used by members of the public with no prior training.

In addition, the Parish Council has installed a bleed control kit in the village as part of its ongoing commitment to public safety. A bleed control kit contains specialist first aid equipment designed to help control severe bleeding following an accident or emergency until professional medical help arrives. In rural areas, where ambulance response times may be longer, having rapid access to this equipment can make a vital difference and could help to save a life.

Parishioners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the location of both the defibrillator and the bleed control kit so they can be accessed quickly if ever needed. In all emergencies, 999 should be called immediately. When contacting the emergency services, the defibrillator cabinet code will be provided along with instructions on how to use the defibrillator. If any parishioner would like the cabinet code in advance (can be stored on your mobile phone), please speak to a Councillor.

For further details contact the Clerk at [clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk)



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## Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!

### Orkney (70 islands, 380 sq. miles, Total population: 22,500)



**Intro:** In my articles so far, I've focused on the Inner and Outer Hebrides – collectively known as 'The Western Isles'. Orkney, on the other hand, together with Shetland, form 'The Northern Isles'. (*You don't say "The Orkneys", or "The Shetlands", it annoys the locals and they will tell you so!*) Though collectively bunched together, the two groups of islands are very different: Orkney is low-lying and gently undulating, whereas Shetland has a much harsher and spectacular topography – vividly bringing back memories of school lessons about glaciation!

Like most islands, the two groups have remained largely unspoilt by development (apart from the odd oil terminal!) and are therefore incredibly rich in history, going right back to prehistoric times: in fact, Orkney is described as containing "some of the oldest and best-preserved Neolithic sites in Europe." There are also many references to when the islands were part of the Norse Kingdom which comprised of Shetland, Orkney, Hebrides and the Isle of Man – and Orkney derives its name from its old Norse name which, translated, means 'Seal Islands'.



### **Mainland (Pop. 17,805) – Part 1.**

Mainland is the largest island in Orkney (in fact, the sixth-largest island in Scotland) and 79% of the population live here. This particular island provides a transport hub for ferries and air travel to the other islands - and Kirkwall, the 'capital', is found where the island pinches into a narrow neck. Outside Kirkwall, population is generally sparse: only two other settlements have populations greater than 500. Kirkwall, though quite small (current population about 10,000) does have a magnificent cathedral named after St Magnus, giving Kirkwall city status. The building was founded in 1137 and is built in early Norman style.

**Scapa Flow:** Orkney is perhaps best known for Scapa Flow: this refers to the area of water to the south of Mainland where the other islands form a protective 'ring'. It

is therefore a natural choice for sheltering vessels – and, at the outbreak of the First World War, it was chosen as a northerly base for the British Grand Fleet. However, Admiral Jellicoe was nervous that incursions could be made through narrow channels between the islands, so over 60 ships were deliberately sunk to block the channels and/or to assist in other enemy-deterrence tactics. Only two attempts to break through were made by U-boats and both were unsuccessful. Driving around today, many rusting hulks still rest in the shallow waters and if you travel to Orkney without prior knowledge, it's a very surprising sight to be confronted with!

At the end of the First World War, 74 German ships were interned at Scapa Flow and, in 1919, the Germans scuttled their ships to prevent them falling into British hands. There was then a massive peacetime salvage operation which ended just as World War II was starting: once again (because of its great distance from German airfields), Scapa Flow was selected as the main British naval base. Unfortunately, the WWI defences had largely deteriorated and, in 1939, a U-boat penetrated Scapa Flow and sank HMS Royal Oak, with the loss of 833 lives. Rather belatedly, new blockships were sunk, and booms and mines were placed over the main entrances. [Winston Churchill](#) ordered the construction of a series of causeways to block the eastern approaches to Scapa Flow; they were built by Italian prisoners of war held in Orkney. These "[Churchill Barriers](#)" now provide road access from Mainland to Burray and South Ronaldsay, and as you drive across, you can see the seemingly random concrete blocks deposited in the shallow waters upon which the road is laid. It all seems to work rather well though! *More next month.*



*The incongruous, but common, sight of a blockship*

**Next month: More Mainland**  
**Andrew Weight**

# Cratfield Parish Council

All meetings are held in The Village Hall, Manse Lane, Cratfield, IP19 0DJ

## Meeting Dates 2026

Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 7.30 pm

- Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7.30 pm – Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 8th September 2026 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 10th November 2026 at 7.30 pm

Agendas (3 days before the meeting) are on the noticeboards & website:

[www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net](http://www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net)

Planning meetings are arranged as and when required.

*~ Members of the Public are Welcome to Attend all Meetings ~*

**For further details contact the Clerk:**

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April 19<sup>th</sup> : Woodfire Cooking - The Basics

June 5<sup>th</sup> : Woodfire Cooking - The Basics

June 6<sup>th</sup> : Woodfire Cooking - The Ember Edition

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**Mace**

## Letter from the Vicar

Dear All,

By the time you will be reading this, another Christmas will have come and gone, and the New Year festivities will be coming to an end. We will be entering Epiphany on 6<sup>th</sup> January when we await the arrival of the Kings. And I am in a very reflective mood! I completed my first year as Priest in Charge of the Four Rivers churches on 17<sup>th</sup> December and cannot begin to thank you all for the support that you have given me following the loss of Michelle just after my appointment in 2024 and subsequently the death of my little dog Bunty just a month or so ago. But life goes on and the good Lord always finds way to help us through the darkest times and brings us back into the light.

So, what do your New Year resolutions look like? Mine surround peace and love particularly reflecting upon the atrocities we saw in 2025 around the world, particularly in Gaza and also on Bondi Beach at the Hannukah festival in December to name but a very few. My prayer for 2026 is that we will all learn to live together, to love one another and to learn forgiveness as our Lord taught us to do. I pray that people who may have fallen out with one another will make it up and that we may see the fruits of this in our congregations throughout 2026.

So Happy New Year to you all! May God bless you and may you feel his love as you journey through 2026. Prayers and blessings,

Reverend Chrissie. 07803 134301 – [rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com](mailto:rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com)

## January Services Cratfield

Sunday 4th	Sunday 11th	Sunday 18th	Sunday 25th
			9.00am Holy Communion
			Jeremiah 1:4-10 Acts 9:1-22 Matthew 19:27-end

## BENEFICE SERVICES

January	4th	11th	18th	25th
Bedfield	10.30am Holy Communion			10.30am Family Service
Brundish	10.00am Cafe Church		10.30am BCP Holy Communion	
Laxfield	10.30am Celtic Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion 11.00am Benefice Plough Sunday	9.30am Café Church	6.00pm Hartismere House
Monk Soham			11.00am CW Holy Communion	11.00am BCP Morning Prayer
Tannington				
Wilby	10.30am Village Worship		10.30am Village Worship	10.30am Holy Communion
Worlingworth	11.00am Holy Communion		11.00am Let's Celebrate	11.00am Morning Prayer

# DIRECTORY:

## Local Officers:

### **Church:**

Priest in Charge of the Four Rivers Benefice

Rev'd Chrissie Smart [rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com](mailto:rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com) 01986 743339  
07803 134301

Assistant Curate Rev. Clive Mobbs 07340 838639

### **Parish Council:**

Chairperson Lotty Barbour 01986 798099

Parish Clerk Sally Chapman  
[clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk)

07774 734411

Parish Council Website [www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net](http://www.cratfield.onesuffolk.net)

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

### **Village Hall:**

Chairperson TBC

Vice Chair Jo Cerullo  
01986 798656

Bookings Robert King 01986 798975

### **Laxfield All Saints C of E Primary School**

Head of School Mrs Minns 01986 798344

### **Doctors' Surgery**

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Stradbroke 01379 384220

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