

CRATFIELD NEWS

March 2025

THE RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN

FRIDAY 14TH MARCH / 10AM – 12 NOON



CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL



FREE TEA/COFFEE, CAKE & BISCUITS TOO!

Quiz Night at Cratfield Village Hall

Friday 21st March 7.00pm

with quiz master Ian Thompson

Admission 2.50 per person – teams of 4

Light refreshments included

Funds raised will go to Brighter Future International

brighterfuture.org.uk

who run two children's homes in Andhra Pradesh, India. Their work also focuses on helping people affected by leprosy and HIV.

Susan & Graham Nixey

Cratfield Young Artists concerts

Concerts at Cratfield's main season begins on July 6, with concerts at 3pm on July 20, Aug 3, Aug 17, Aug 31 & Sept 14. Details and ticketing information will be announced in early April. To join our mailing list please contact cratfieldinquiries1@gmail.com.

In the meantime, we are hosting two one hour Young Artists concerts in different venues to showcase rising classical music stars. Tickets for both cost £15 and are available via our website www.concertsatcratfield.org

The first is on Sunday April 6 at 3pm at Holy Trinity Church, Middleton, East Suffolk, IP17 3NW and features South African violinist Jordan Brooks.

Jordan is a student at the Royal College of Music, supported by an ABRSM Scholarship. Jason won first prize at the Royal Overseas League Strings Competition and first prize for the Overseas round of the competition in 2024. His one-hour all-Russian programme includes music by Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Tchaikovsky. He is accompanied by Japanese pianist Kumi Matsui.

The second is on Sunday May 11 at 3pm at The Cut, Halesworth, IP19 8BY. American double bassist Levi Andreassen is a sought after soloist and chamber musician, also studying at the Royal College of Music as a Neville Wathan Full Scholar. Levi has just won first prize at the Haslemere International Strings competition, and first prizes at the International Society of Bassists Youth Solo Competition, London Classical Music Competition and the Caneres International Competition. His programme includes Schumann, Franck & Bottesini. He is accompanied by Kumi Matsui.

Reinstating Cratfield ART - CRAFT CLUB

Wednesday mornings 10am – 12 noon Cratfield Village Hall. Bring your own materials. Small fee to cover costs. Tea/coffee available.

Or you might just like to come along for the company and see what people are doing.

Interested? please contact Chrissie on 01986 798764

or chrissie.kitchen@yahoo.com

CATS Coastal Accessible Transport Services

CATS operate in many towns and villages in East Suffolk with services such as Katch, Connecting Communities and Volunteer Car Service.

All their vehicles are wheelchair accessible and are there to assist with journeys to enable people who may need a little more assistance to remain independent to get out and about. They have many different types of journeys being taken every day; getting children to school, people to and from work and trips out. They also hire out minibuses to local community groups.

At CATS they have extended opening hours to now include Saturday bookings between 9am and 12.30pm. You can book a journey with Katch and Connecting Communities for the very same day

HOWEVER volunteer drivers are still desperately needed to facilitate this work. You could give anything from a few hours a week to a whole day, you could either use your own car (vehicle expenses will be covered), or they could train to drive one of their minibuses

Contact 01728 830516 or visit the website www.cats-paws.co.uk

Become a Cratfield Parish Councillor

We have a Vacancy!



Please consider standing for your community

Contact the Clerk on clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk or 07774 734411 for further details
Website on: <https://cratfield-pc.gov.uk>



HISTORY CORNER

A glimpse at Widow Watson's plight in 1826



I came across this poignant letter a few years ago in Suffolk Archives, now The Hold, ref: SRO FC69/G9/16 Acc. 962. A desperate woman writes to the overseers of the parish requesting financial help.

For the overseers of Ubbeston to be left at Ubbeston Hall in the County of Suffolk

Westbank? July 30 1826

I Mrs Watson am onder the nisety of whrighting these few lines to you to in form you how bad i am of at This present and i hope that you will be My frend for i have one years rent to pay at Micklemis and i have bean to work part of the sumer to pay a skoo bill and they want all --- cloths and i hope you will pay my rent for me if you pleas for when I did go to work I had to pay 6d a day for the child then if one years rent don't --- I hope that you will pay it for me for I expect To be sold up then so i hope you will do something for me and send me an answer if you pleas so no more from your humble servant the Widow Watson.

Send the answer to me if you pleas for --- don't like to be at no trouble. So excuse me not calling yor name for I do not know it.

How common would it have been for someone like Widow Watson in remote Ubbeston to put her child through school in 1826? (She obviously had some schooling herself.) Or has she fallen on hard times since being a widow and it was something they could afford when her husband was alive? There were a number of dame schools in neighbouring Laxfield. I couldn't find any details about the family so I don't know how the husband earned his living.

I posed the above questions to Dr Nick Sign, who has done considerable

research on the history of education and this is how he responded:
'...my hunch would be that Widow Watson sent her child to school while her husband was alive and providing the necessary income but as for so many before the age of National Insurance and pensions, she was finding it all nearly too much on her own. She expects to be 'sold up' which suggests her husband owned either a house or a business (even if in rented premises) which could have given them enough to spend on a luxury item like educating their child.

'It was not very common for the lower classes to be educated. In 1833 a survey by parish overseers showed 8,000 children in 187 places or 22% of Suffolk's children went to school (Peter Northeast, 'The Provision of Elementary Education in Nineteenth Century Rural Suffolk', *Suffolk Review*, Summer 1981).

'Thus you could say that the Watsons were unusual in 1826.'

Photograph sales catalogue Ubbeston Hall 1936

(Laxfield & District Museum will open again for the 2025 season on Good Friday)

Forest Church

Coming closer to God through nature

Where: meet at Brundish Church car park
Dennington Road IP13 8AY

When: Sunday 9th March 3pm to 4pm

Contact: Rev. Clive Mobbs
rev.clive.mobbs@gmail.com 07340 838639

Forest Church is for people of all ages. Nature-inspired activities, informal outdoor worship and refreshments.

No need to book. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear for being outside in a wood in all weathers. Bring a chair if you want to sit down.

This event is run by the Bridges&Rivers project, part of Suffolk's Lightwave community.

MICHAEL OLIVER

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Cratfield Parish Council

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Cratfield Parish Council has litter picking equipment which can be borrowed anytime.

Your help & support would be greatly appreciated!

If you would like to litter pick please contact:

Cllr Dan Elford Tel: 01986 798649 - Village collection

Cllr Richard Chivers Tel: 07900 187350 - Silverleys Green collection

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Establishing Ourselves in the Adriatic Sea

We entered the Adriatic through the Otranto Strait during the night, in the first week of February 1993, in a loose formation with radio and radar silence and our ships wearing merchant ship lights¹, hoping not to excite too much attention; the next day found us off Bari in SE Italy. Our first task was to establish our operating pattern². No arrangements had been made by the MoD prior to our arrival³ so there was a good deal for us to fix, the more so since we had no idea how long we would be there. In the event, HMS Ark Royal was there for six months and was then relieved by our sister ship, HMS Illustrious. We had already made contact with the Italian navy to seek permission to establish a small (but, as it turned out, exceedingly busy) airhead through which we could embark the people, stores, fresh food and mail that were needed for our Task Group for an indefinite length of time. The Italians could not have been more helpful, giving us office space in Bari airport for free, accepting our regular helicopter travel to and fro, and much more. I am not sure that our own authorities would have been quite so generous if the roles had been reversed.

We then set about exploring the Adriatic, trying to understand the normal flow of sea and air activity, obtaining the timetables of all the many ferries that plied between the Italian ports and the other countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, and we managed to get from the air traffic controllers each day the schedule of civil air traffic of all nations, trying to ensure that we understood the usual and so might quickly recognise the unusual. This was particularly the case with the very fast boats conducting the centuries old business of smuggling goods between Italy and former Yugoslavia, in both directions. Most commonly it involved the illegal export of cheap cigarettes from “Yugoslavia” to Italy, and the equally illegal export of luxury cars, often apparently stolen to order, so that the then armed gang bosses in Yugoslavia could flaunt Mercedes or Ferrari cars. It was not our business to intervene – that was the task of the Italian coastguard, but we needed to watch that it did not provide cover for more serious activities. We also identified, and promulgated on the relevant international media, the sea areas and airspaces where we felt that we could operate safely, usefully and without treading on other people’s toes.

Ashore, in Divulje Barracks, in the former Roman town of Spoleto (today Split in Croatia), a British Army unit had established a presence under the United Nations flag, to provide protection to the various charitable aid groups trying to bring support to civilians caught up in the very savage fighting between Croatians and Bosnians on the one hand and Serbian and Montenegrin forces and sympathisers on the other. Two of our mandated tasks were to land our Royal Artillery group to

support our army colleagues if necessary and, *in extremis*, to evacuate the army should serious fighting break out in which they were heavily attacked. I went ashore to meet the Army Brigadier⁴ and open planning discussions with him. As luck would have it, he had been at school with me, which helped a good deal.

I also went ashore on the Italian side, flying to Rome to meet the Head of the Italian Navy, Admiral Mariani, partly to thank him for his help and support, and partly to seek his agreement to our operating our ships and aircraft as we saw fit in the Adriatic, normally seen unofficially as an "Italian lake". And perhaps even to keep ourselves sharp by exercising with his ships. He too had naval ships deployed close to the Yugoslav coast and we wanted both to co-operate with them, and to de-conflict our different tasks. Admiral Mariani was very helpful and facilitated my meeting at sea with the Commanders of the Italian and the NATO squadrons operating in the Otranto Strait and off the coast of Montenegro.

Once all these arrangements were in place, we started to settle into an enduring pattern of operations, in which our main problem was how to keep our crews and aircraft sharp and ready for anything, whilst giving them a reasonable day to day work/recreation balance.

But things would soon become more complicated.

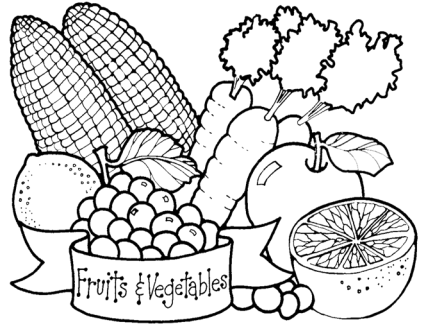
1. This was of slightly dubious legality, but needs must!
2. At that time, the Atlantic was not an area of which the RN had had much recent experience.
3. This may sound a little odd but, from the point of view of the Commander on the spot (me in this case), it has a lot to recommend it
4. This expedition ashore required me to wear a blue United Nations beret which is one my more unusual souvenirs.

Jeremy Blackham

Mobile Library Dates 2025
Silverleys Green 14.00 – 14.20
The Poacher 14.30 -14.45
March 18th, April 15th, May 13th, June 10th, July 8th, Au-
gust 8th, September 2nd, 30th, October 28th, November
25th, December 23rd.

Cratfield Allotment to Rent

CPC has a large allotment
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Chris Kitchen tel. no. 01986 798 764, email: chrissie.kitchen@yahoo.com or write to Bell Green Cottage, Cratfield, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 0BI

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – MARCH

POP UP PUB – 7th MARCH 6 – 10pm

Wow! February's Pop Up Pub was packed – literally standing room only! Many thanks to all our volunteers who enable this to happen, without whom there would not be such a lovely event bringing the whole community together once a month.

RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN – FRIDAY 14th MARCH 10am – 12noon (FREE REFRESHMENTS (INCLUDING CAKE) IF YOU GET THERE QUICK ENOUGH!)

Come along for a cup of tea or coffee – with biscuits and home-made cakes too! There will be a wide range of information available on local services and opportunities should you need it, **along with the free refreshments.**

VILLAGE HALL TALK – SATURDAY 12TH APRIL – 7 FOR 7.30 / £6 on the door

St Kilda: beautiful, remote, dangerous – and its lost civilisation

Places are selling fast! If you have read the articles covering Andrew's travels across the Scottish Islands then come along to find out more about his experiences on the hard-to-reach and unforgettable St Kilda. Alongside the talk about the island and why the last residents were evacuated in 1930, there will be never seen before archive footage of the St Kildans making perilous rock climbs to harvest seabirds and eggs, and their dangerous seafaring exploits. Fine Scottish fayre and a dram of whisky (or two!) available during the interval! **BOOK NOW VIA** cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

INDOOR BOWLS – ALTERNATE TUESDAYS

Dates for 2025 = February March 4 + 18 / April 1 + 15 + 29 / May 20 / June 3 + 17 / July 1 + 15 + 29 / August 19 / September 2 + 16 + 30 / October 14 + 28 / November 25/ December 9. Do come along and have a go – no experience required – all good fun! Tea & Coffee available and there is a suggested donation of £2 to play. Any queries please contact Nigel 07445351861 or Elliott 07963676207.

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – MARCH WINNERS

Drawn by D Britton - the winners for March are: 1st prize (£15) number 6 - Jo Cerullo; 2nd prize (£10) number 69 - Tracey Aryaenia; and 3rd prize (£5) number 75 - Anne Bedford. Congratulations to all the winners!

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

CRATFIELD DOG SHOW – SUNDAY 4TH MAY

Back by popular demand – even if you do not have a dog, come along for the sheer entertainment of 'best sausage catcher'! Tell all your family and friends

Too, a great day out.

ACOUSTIC NIGHT – SATURDAY 17TH MAY

Watch this space and save the date! More details to come soon

MURDER MYSTERY & FOOD NIGHT – SATURDAY 19TH JULY 6.30 FOR 7PM

Welcome to Midsomer Cratfield.....

"A Murder is Announced"

Fancy yourself as a modern-day Miss Marple, Bergerac or Barnaby?

Then come along for an evening of food, drink, good company and work out 'whodunit'- with a prize for the winning table. An evening not to be missed - watch the drama unfold and piece the clues together to work out who the murderer is.

Price £20 per head - to include a welcome drink, 3 course meal, coffee and petit-fours. Bring Your Own - and bar open for wine and beer / cider / soft drinks by the bottle/can.

Places very limited - book now via cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

Payment on the night on the door

CLASSIC CAR EVENT – SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

Watch this space...

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL MEETINGS – 7.00pm

Thursday 15th May / 14th August / 13th November + Open Forum/AGM/
Committee Meeting

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Our 2025 Lent Course is Living Hope

in which you are invited to ‘...explore the hope God offers us, not wishful thinking, but something real, robust, alive.’

**Six sessions on Thursdays
starting Thursday 6th March**

Laxfield Vicarage, 7pm, with Revd Chrissie Smart

or

Worlingworth Community Centre, 2.30pm, with Revd Ron Orams

Also on Zoom

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Virginia Skoyles on fouerriversbenefice@gmail.com or 07900 350117 for further details. The course booklet will be provided to each participant at the first session. The children’s version is being shared in the four primary schools of our benefice.

**Revd Chrissie 07803 134301
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Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!
St Kilda (Population: 0 – last inhabitants evacuated in 1930)
Part 5: The St Kildan way of life (iii)

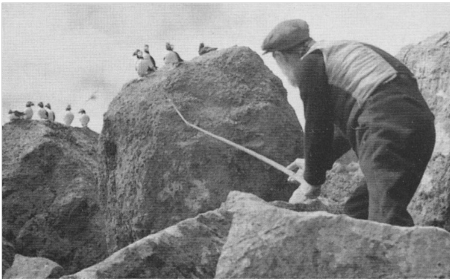


Photo 1: Aerial view of Hirta, and Village Bay, home for the St Kildans

Photo 2: The village 'elder', Finlay MacQueen, snaring puffins

The St Kildans learnt how to climb from childhood, fathers lowering sons down precipitous cliffs by rope from an early age. With so many generations climbing their entire lives, the ankle of a St Kildan male evolved to be almost half

as thick again as that of an average person: additionally, they had large feet, with toes set further apart. Boots would be removed and their thick socks would help the St Kildan to grip the slippery rocks, as they left their boats to scale the heights. The islanders had their sheep, a few cattle, a meagre crop of potatoes, barley and corn – but without the flesh of the sea birds, they could never have survived; the



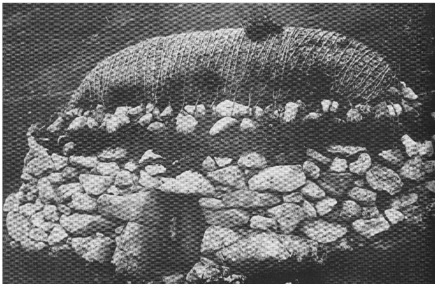
dangers of harvesting sea birds and their eggs was therefore a necessity. Swarms of puffins would return to the islands in March after a winter at sea, and as soon as they did, they were harvested for their meat. Gannets would return in January, but they would be left alone until April, whereupon the boats would be launched for harvesting expeditions to Stac Lee and Stac an Armin, off Boreray. Fulmar eggs were left alone (as the female lays

only one), but those of the gannet and guillemot were taken in their thousands. During June and July, only puffin was available for consumption, while the young gannets and fulmars hatched and grew. Young fulmars were harvested in August (before they could leave the nest) and young gannets, maturing more slowly, were harvested in September.

With regular, hazardous expeditions to Boreray and the stacs required to harvest the seabirds, at least one boat was essential equipment for survival. This precious item was protected from warping under the strong summer sun by being covered in turf when not in use, but having just a single boat was living dangerously if the boat was damaged; in 1861, philanthropists on the mainland provided a fully equipped new second boat. 2 years later, it was tragically lost at sea, with all hands.

The fang-like Stac Lee was perhaps the most dangerous place to climb and its sole use, in later years, was for the provision of eggs. Leaving some of the team in the boat, others would scale the giddy heights of the stac and collect the eggs, placed in boxes that they carried on their backs. A vast array of eggs were collected and then the hardest part – the descent – would begin. One islander, reminiscing, said, "There would be anything in the box from half a hundredweight to a hundredweight. And you hadn't got to break them!" Most eggs were for eating, but in later years,

when St Kildans became accustomed to money and commercial activities, they sold eggs to visiting collectors; the most highly prized being the egg of the St Kilda wren, a bird unique to Hirta. Harvesting fulmars, though, could be a messy business because, when alarmed, they spew out an obnoxious oily mess targeted straight at the assailant. However, the fulmar was a valuable harvest: the feathers were a good source of income and were sacked up; the stomach of the bird produced up to half a pint of oil – useful for wick-burning lamps (it also had alleged medicinal qualities) – and this was poured into cannisters and bartered with the factor when it came to rent day. When the fulmar harvest was landed, a production line immediately sprung into life: after plucking, the young boys cut the birds’ feet and head off, the old men salted them and the women took the guts out – and, as with most things, the islanders were great sharers, the birds being shared equally out amongst every household. The birds to be saved for winter eating were split down the back and filled with salt to preserve them: they were then packed like herrings into barrels. Even the entrails of the birds were used as fish bait: nothing went to waste. But for added protection, St Kildans used little, dry-stone storage buildings unique to the islands. They were called cleits and these provided a relatively dry storage area on what was otherwise a damp and wet island. The ever-present wind whistled through them and air-dried whatever was housed inside: whether the items were stored sea birds, meat, ropes, climbing equipment, nets – even your best Sunday suit! Making the most of their islands, in the most unusual of ways, it seemed that the St Kildans had adapted perfectly to their environment. But sadly, it wasn’t going to end well...



A



cleit: found nowhere else, there were 100s on St Kilda

Dry-stone bothy: rudimentary shelter

Next month: Part 6 - More on the St Kildan way of life

Don't forget to book your places for Andrew's talk and film show on April 12th at the Village Hall.

Book now via cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com. See centre pages for more info. Sears are selling fast"

Cratfield Parish Council

Meeting Dates 2025

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

- Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 7.30 pm
– Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 7.30 pm

The agenda is displayed on village noticeboards and on CPC's website (<https://cratfield-pc.gov.uk>) three days before the meeting. Planning meetings and additional meetings may be arranged as needed.

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

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Email: clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk or Tel: 07774 734411

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TO
FIRE FEAST

Spring Workshops ...

Mar 21st: Woodfire Cooking - The Basics Workshop

Mar 22nd: Woodfire Cooking II - The Ember Edition

Mar 23rd: Spoon Carving and Supper

Apr 27th: Folk Painting and Supper

May 17th: Foray & Fire Cooking

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Mace

Letter from the Vicarage

I seem to be spending a lot of time in reflection at the moment as I explore the potential in the building of the Four Rivers Benefice churches. I expect you find too that when you are in a reflective mood, your thinking can stray, and I could not help noticing the headline that said many more Marks and Spencer outlets are to close. What?! How can they do that? Where will I be able to shop now for new clothes (yes, I do that occasionally)? How can such a much-loved institution disappear from our High Streets? Oh, where is Debenhams? What happened to Woolworths? At least with those names disappearing from our high streets, we know we can still buy their products, albeit online, but I know, it isn't the same, is it?

And then through the Envoy course that I have been pursuing, I was introduced to 'Modality' and 'Sodality' terms which have been around in the church for over 40 years! What? Why didn't anybody tell us about it? Ah! They have. Sodal church is the one that is a tradition – the one that many of us enjoy every time we attend our church be it for a family service or for Holy Communion. It is a service that we are comfortable with. Modal on the other hand is about that new stuff; those services that we could run alongside the traditional, in such a way that we do not destroy what is good. IT works for many people now and celebrates the creation of a deliberate diverse way of being church – to ensure that our churches are still there when we are not.

We cannot take everything online like the high street stores and I certainly would not want to. I recognise the importance of online worship and the opportunity for the Four Rivers Benefice of churches to worship twice a week with those not only within our own benefice but also in the deanery, the diocese and the Church of England in Essex and Cheshire.

So, what else might we do? What can we offer to potential new congregations who are setting out on their faith journey, for those who are seekers? What do you think? What are your ideas that could create new growth alongside the resilience of that which has been nurtured over the last 50 plus years? I love the passage from 1 Corinthians 3 where Paul said, "I have planted, Apollo's watered, but God gave the increase." What are we going to do to be like Paul?

Prayers and blessings. Revd Chrissie

March CRATFIELD CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 9th	Sunday 23rd
10.30am Village Worship	10.30am Holy communion
Deut 26:1-11 Romans 10;8b-13 LUKE 4:1-13	Isaiah 55:1-9 1 Cor 10:1-13 Luke 13:1-9

MARCH BENEFICE SERVICES

March	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Bedfield		10.30am Holy Comm		10.30am Morning Praise	9.30am Mothering Sunday Services Holy Comm
Brundish		3.00pm Forest Church See page 5	10.30am Holy Comm		
Laxfield	10.30am Celtic Morning Prayer	10.30 Holy Comm	10.30am Morning Praise		10.30am Mothering Sunday Service
Monk Soham	11.00am Family Service	11.00am BCP Morning Prayer	11.00am BCP Holy Comm		
Tanning- ton					
Wilby	10.30am Holy Comm		10.30am Village Wor- ship	10.30am Morning Prayer	11.00am Mothering Sunday Service
Worling- worth	11.00am BCP Morning Prayer		11.00am Morning Praise	11.00am Holy Com- munion	11.00am Let's Cele- brate Moth- ering Sun- day

Ash Wednesday 5th March Worlingworth 6.30pm
Deanery Ash Wednesday Service at Mendham 10.30am

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