

Year of Engagement Dates for Your Diary

Bishop's Teaching Events

Saturday, 13th September, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. Michael & All Angels, Ledbury

Saturday, 8th November, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye

Bishop's Study Day

Wednesday, 22nd October, 2025

10am-3pm

St. Peter's Church, Hereford

Spiritual Question Times

Tuesday 21 October 7:00pm

Hoarwithy, New Harp Inn.

To discuss holding a **Spiritual Question Time** for the Year of engagement, please contact Rev'd Stephen Hollinghurst by email at Stephen.Hollinghurst@hereford.anglican.org

Everyone is welcome to these events. For more information about or to register for these and all our events please visit our diocese Eventbrite page online at <https://bit.ly/HfdDioYOE> or scan the QR Code



Family workers. Pictured are Jane Tate, Children and Families Worker and Administrator at Holmer Church, and Beckie Dotson, Intergenerational Missioner in Sutton Hill, outside Lambeth Palace representing Hereford Diocese at the national RECOGNISE! gathering. The day included a message of thanks from HM The King to all attendees.

Said Jane, "The day was full of hope, joy and promise for the future of children and youth in the church."

Hereford Diocese recognises and thanks all our volunteers and paid workers who make this critically important ministry possible.

Children, Youth and Family workers celebrated in first RECOGNISE! Week

Last month the Church of England held the first, national RECOGNISE! Week, to celebrate all our Children, Youth and



The Diocesan Office • The Palace • Hereford • HR4 9BL

t: 01432 373300 e: info@hereford.anglican.org



Parish News

August 2025

Flush not busted!

by The Very Rev'd Sarah Brown, Dean of Hereford

It is too easy to have our perception of the Church of England prejudiced by media accounts of our general awfulness, our dismal failures and our decline. It is also extremely hard - and sometimes demoralising work - keeping on with a much-loved but apparently unsustainable model of ministry. Are we - we might wonder - doing that against all the odds because it is right and God's will - or because we of a certain generation can't bear to let it go and no obvious replacement is evident? Whether you are part of a tiny church in the middle of a farm or a larger church, priory or cathedral these uncomfortable questions might occur to you from time to time.

I want to offer two rebuttals to the general sense of the weakness of the church. The first is simply that the gospel rather stands on weakness and apparent defeat! Some might say that the Church thrives on it because it stops trying to please the world and focuses on being faithful to the Lord. That is a very hard path, and - for churches in places like North Korea, India, and Sub-Saharan Africa - a devastating one. But

small and weak keeps on keeping on with its eyes on Jesus. Perhaps most of us are not small and weak enough to let go and rely totally on God. I am not brave enough to incite you all to cast aside wealth and community popularity although I'm pretty sure that Jesus was fairly clear about such things - not least because in today's compliance-laden society it would incite breaking the law of the land in many ways and He didn't recommend that. But I am sure that we are less small and weak than we think. Remember Elijah thinking he was the only servant of God left in Israel and God telling him to get a grip because he actually had a sizeable number of faithful Israelites on standby?

The second rebuttal reinforces the point. I sit on the board of trustees of the Benefact Trust, which owns a financial services company that you might recognise as Ecclesiastical Insurance. Benefact gives a significant proportion of its annual profits to the Trust for the sole purpose of providing churches and church organisations with grants to assist with

Contd on p2

www.hereford.anglican.org

CREATING COMMUNITY Year of Engagement 2025



Contd from P1

building projects and community transformation work. I am on the board to represent and articulate the broad needs of parishes and cathedrals and I love the days when we consider applications and see what is going on across the church. What is going on is phenomenal!

Ladies and gentlemen, the Church is

not dead or even dying. Where there is missional vision and aspiration for community there is life. Where there is nothing but steady prayer and faith, God can and will work for the good of those who love him and for the coming of His Kingdom.

The Very Revd Sarah Brown, Dean of Hereford



Diocese welcomes new priests and deacons

The traditional Petertide Ordination services in July saw five new priests and eight new deacons ordained at Hereford Cathedral and welcomed into the Diocese of Hereford.

New priests Angela, David, Tracy, Sam, and William were joined in the morning by friends and family for a glorious service filled with hope and joy, following a time of retreat at the Bishop's Palace. In the afternoon we celebrated the ordination of the new deacons: Alex, Suanna, Geoff, Christine, Kate, Vickie, Philippa and Ewan.

Blessings and congratulations to all! Please continue to keep them in your prayers as they begin this next chapter of service.



Caring for God's Acre

By Harriet Carty



Under your feet

By August, areas of long, flowery grassland should have been cut (unless you have late flowering species such as scabious or betony present, in which case these areas can be left a little longer). With the cutting and raking of long grass there is often an opportunity to spy onto the world of small rodents such as mice, shrews and voles who may have made routes through the sward that are revealed by the cut.

Small rodents are short lived and highly reproductive, wood mice for example tend to live for about a year, during which time they may have up to six litters of between four and eight young. In a churchyard you may have several species of mice, shrews and voles, the most likely being wood mice, field vole and common shrew. Wood mice have large ears and eyes, useful for their largely nocturnal life whilst field voles have blunter noses and smaller ears and eyes, they can be active during the day and night. Shrews are distinctive with a long, pointed nose and tiny eyes. All of these animals need to feed frequently and are always on the move seeking food, with shrews eating 80 to 90% of their body weight each day. They feed on insects and other invertebrates but will also tackle quite large earthworms, far bigger than they are! Mice and voles seek out

seeds, berries and fruits, some of which they may stash for later. Whilst mice can be agile climbers, voles tend to stick to the ground, following the trails they make through grassland that you can see after a cut.

Unfortunately for voles and mice, they are important prey items for a range of other species. Tawny owls, also often found in churchyards, hunt silently for small rodents as do kestrels, weasels, foxes and of course cats. If you are interested to find out more, look for owl pellets beneath a nest or roosting place, these are regurgitated bundles of the inedible parts of their food and often contain bones which can be teased out of the pellet and then identified, giving information on what they have been eating. Shrews by contrast are not such a staple food item, you may find a bitten and dead shrew lying on a path suggesting that it has been hunted but was not very tasty.

Churchyards and other burial grounds are havens for rodents, containing a mosaic of grassland, shrubs, woodland and lots of places to make burrows or use existing cracks, nooks and crannies. Free of herbicides and pesticides they are full of food, both invertebrates and plant material whilst areas of long meadow and tussocky coarse grass provide perfect cover. See if you can spot their burrows and runways and imagine their busy lives in the fast lane!

All the best,

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**