

# WINCHELSEA PARISH MAGAZINE

December 2024



*Natasha Robinson*



## **Advent Carol Service**

at St Thomas' Church on Sunday 1st December at 6pm - a special service of hymns and carols for the Advent season with the Church Choir and guest singers. All are welcome and refreshments will be served after the service.

## **Evening Prayer for Advent**

a said BCP service at St Thomas' Church at 5pm on Wednesday 4th, Thursday 12th and Wednesday 18th December



## **Christmas Services**

Sunday 22nd December

**6pm: Service of Nine Lessons and Carols**

Christmas Eve

**4pm: Joint Benefice Crib Service**

**11.30pm: Midnight Mass**

Christmas Day

**11am: Parish Communion Family Service**





## **Reflections from the Rectory**

It is a constant refrain of clergy, which some of you may find rather tiresome, that we have lost any understanding of Advent. In the western church, the four Sundays before Christmas herald the Advent season and traditionally this has been a time for fasting, repentance and preparation for the coming of Jesus. It is not just a remembrance of the first Christmas but a preparation for the coming of Jesus into the world a second time. Time to examine our consciences and wait patiently for the Lord.

These days we are often overcome by Christmas celebrations before Advent has even begun; this year on the 1st December. By the time we get to Christmas we are frequently exhausted and Christmas Day seems the end of the festive season rather than the beginning. Because we have lost any sense of the Twelve Days of Christmas we fail to see Epiphany as the end of the festive season and do appreciate what that means either. It is probably too much to hope that we will return to this state of affairs but it is worth remembering that it is at the root of our Christian faith.

In the hope that we will time find time to reflect once again, I have organised three sessions of evening prayer during Advent which are a quiet time for reflection and prayer. We will follow the order of the Book of Common Prayer and the

services will only last for about 25 to 30 minutes. In addition to that this year we are organising a service of Advent carols. This is something I have hoped to do for some years and I'm delighted that with the support of some singers from the Pegasus choir and our own choir this service will be taking place on Sunday, the 1st of December at 6pm in St Thomas's.

Like a Christmas Carol Service, it is a series of readings, some of them very short, interspersed with Advent hymns and opening with the wonderful Matin Responsory as we process into a darkened church with a lighted candle.

For obvious reasons and long before the advent of Christianity light was an important aspect of any kind of ritual celebrated at this time of year. The Christmas reading from St John's gospel reminds us of this,

*What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

It is the hope that this Advent service will be an opportunity for quiet reflection on the message of Christmas before we are overcome by the maelstrom of celebration. This year give yourselves a moment to be still and wait for the Lord.

*Jonathan*

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## **Bible Reading in the New Inn**

Our informal Bible reading will continue on 5th December at 6pm in the New Inn Winchelsea. It is a very relaxed gathering and no prior knowledge is required: we always end around 7pm. There has been good attendance. Look at it as Book Club with a difference. This time we will be looking at the St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. All welcome. Contact Jonathan for more details or with any questions, [revdjonathan@btinternet.com](mailto:revdjonathan@btinternet.com) 01797 226254



## **The Lord Warden comes to Winchelsea**

Hard on his installation as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Sir George Zambellas, with Lady Zambellas, came to Winchelsea, meeting members of the Corporation past and present, visiting the Museum and exploring the town.

The mayor presented him with a print of HMS Winchelsea, the seventh and most recent naval vessel the carry the name, which was built in 1917 and remained in service until the end of the Second World War.



In a subsequent letter to the mayor, the Lord Warden wrote.

“Amanda and I thoroughly enjoyed our all-too-short visit to Winchelsea. The plan was weather dependent, but the sun shone! Starting and finishing in the New Inn is my idea of heaven, especially with that splendid buffet lunch.

“We really enjoyed meeting you, the Mayoress and Corporation members, and getting a feel for such a lovely and historic town.

“Thank you for leading the guided tour in our delightful walk around town. The cellar visit (so many to choose from!) was fascinating and St Thomas’ Church and its amazing windows shone in the sunshine. What more could you want?”





## Lighting and Sound Appeal Launch

*The Rector writes:* On the 15th November there was a launch of the lighting and sound appeal in St Thomas's. Over 40 people attended and heard about the plans and were able to ask questions. Since then there has been excellent coverage in the Rye news, thanks to Natasha Robinson: [ryenews.org.uk](http://ryenews.org.uk) We still have not received formal permission but the Diocese Advisory Council is well aware of the plans and supportive of them.

Nigel Ashton explained the importance of this project and Graham Large showed us specimen light fittings and explained how the new lighting would work. We are enormously grateful to him for sharing his expertise and designing the scheme.

Our lighting is currently supplied by high-level sodium lights which are expensive to run, are now redundant and cannot be replaced as well as casting an unpleasant yellow light which does not do justice to the atmosphere of the beautiful space which is our church and responsibility.

In addition to the running costs, the wiring is now in need of replacement and there is no circuit breaker in place. New lighting will enhance the atmosphere for worship and for concerts. It will also be cheaper to run and better for the environment.

The sound system has not been replaced for many years and is now not fit for purpose. A new system will enable those hard of hearing to engage fully with services by means of a loop. We will also be able to install a system for live streaming services to any part of the world. All this will make our church a more sympathetic place for worship, a more attractive place for those wishing to host concerts as well as reducing our carbon footprint as far as we can.

The church have substantial funds from the sale of St Richard's which could be used to help underwrite the work, however as it very expensive to maintain our church and its ministry but the appeal is designed to attract specific support for the project.

The PCC are hopeful that this essential work will be supported by the Friends of St Thomas's Church who are committed "to arouse and foster interest in the Parish Church at Winchelsea among all persons of goodwill and to co-operate with the Parochial Church Council in the preservation and improvement of the fabric furniture, stained glass and monuments of the Church of St Thomas and the Churchyard thereof, and in furthering any other scheme to help in maintaining their safety, beauty and utility."

I am delighted to report that we have raised pledges of £7,000 at our launch but if anyone would like to contribute you can do so by contacting the churchwarden Nigel Ashton, the Rector or David Harris our treasurer, or you can donate directly via the link below or through our QR code.

[givealittle.co](http://givealittle.co)





# A French Christmas by Candlelight



**Ensemble OrQuesta** *directed by* **Marcio da Silva**

Marc-Antoine Charpentier *Messe de Minuit*  
*based on the melodies of Christmas Carols*

**Thursday 19th December at 7.30pm**

**Winchelsea Arts**

**St Thomas' Church Winchelsea**  
TN36 4EB



Tickets online at  
[winchelsea-arts.org.uk](http://winchelsea-arts.org.uk)

dp

**£24**  
free for under 18s



[winchelsea-arts.org.uk](http://winchelsea-arts.org.uk)



## **The Churchyard in Autumn**

The picture shows a group of Pink Ballerina Waxcap Fungi which appeared in the southwest section again this year. These fungi are indicators of a healthy ecosystem in grassland and there have been quite a few on the back of the hill overlooking the Brede Valley too.

Following a meeting earlier in the year, we decided to plant some spring and early summer bulbs, principally in the wildflower circles, to provide nectar for early pollinators when other sources are less abundant. We have chosen native species where possible, such as narcissus pseudonarcissus, but the range of bulbs reflects our thoughts about the needs of bees and insects and, as part of that ecosystem, the Winchelsea swifts. We hope you enjoy them.

Many of you have commented on the improvements in the appearance of the Garden of Remembrance. The old dead box hedge was removed due to blight and is about to be replanted with a lovely green and silver variegated *Euonymus*. Shrubs have been pruned and new herbaceous perennials, small shrubs and bulbs have been added.

There is still work to be done in our efforts to make the centre space in the Town a place of beauty, peace, reflection and inspiration and perhaps, whilst musing on the past, we should also be looking forward and recognising small ways that we can help our environment for the benefit of all.

On a more personal note, I have really enjoyed working on the Wildflower Circles Project and it could not have been so successful without the enthusiasm and assistance of such a collaborative team. It was great that when we cut the hay this summer there were new people who wanted to get involved too and I hope that a new group of people will band together to carry on this project. If you would like to talk to me about this, please get in touch on [shirleymeyer@btinternet.com](mailto:shirleymeyer@btinternet.com)

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**A very special thanks** to Paul Evans and Suzanne Ludlow for their very generous donation of high quality 2025 Calendars to be sold in aid of the Church Lighting and Sound Appeal. We have reached the grand total of £700 and I have five calendars left which will be available to buy at the 7th December Church Market (if not purchased beforehand). That will mean an overall donation of £800. I cannot thank them enough.

The Sussex Gallery, Castle Street, is their new venture so please visit and support them too.

*Shirley Meyer*



**CHRISTMAS OPEN DAY**

**10.30 – 3.00**

**SATURDAY 30TH NOVEMBER 2024**

**THE SUSSEX GALLERY**

**CASTLE STREET, WINCHELSEA TN36 4HU**

**ENJOY A FEELING OF CHRISTMAS ALONG WITH  
A GLASS OF WARMED SPICED APPLE OR MULLED WINE  
SELLING ORIGINAL PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, GREETINGS  
CARDS, BOOKS AND CALENDARS**

**Enquiries: [thesussexgallery@gmail.com](mailto:thesussexgallery@gmail.com)**



## **John Wesley's Chapel**

On Saturday 14th December the Chapel will be having a Christmas Celebration Service. Meeting around 10.30 for teas and coffees before the service at 11am

We are absolutely delighted that the Revd Tricia Williams, who was a Methodist minister in the Hastings Bexhill and Rye Circuit area until a couple of years ago, will be coming to lead us in this celebration service.

Stephen Page, our musical director, will be providing the music and some glorious singing is guaranteed, so do come and join in the festivities if you can. You will be very welcome.

There will be a collection taken at the service in support of the Christian Aid Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for the Middle East.

*Mike Lambourne*



## Restoring the Crib

Ant Parker is here restoring the figure of Mary that will appear in the Crib at St Thomas's this Christmas.

Our set is one of a series that have their origins about 100 years ago. They are the creation of one of the sisters (and later Mother General) of the Convent of St Mary in Wantage. Before she joined the order, Sister Maribel trained at the Slade, travelled widely in Italy, attended the Oberammergau Passion play and was introduced to Austrian carving.

Soon after she arrived, a clumsy sister dropped and broke the figure of the Christ-child of the Sisters' Christmas crib. Maribel was asked to make another. Instead of making a sweet conventional baby she used her brother's newly born baby son as her model. Jesus was modelled from a real and much-loved baby child. The other figures followed, very much of their time; Jesus and Mary have a White European rather than a Middle Eastern aspect.

Sets went all over the world and a large-scale version is still in use at St Paul's Cathedral. St Thomas's has a reasonably complete group of figures, though it may be that some sheep have strayed. Mother Maribel died at the age of 83, in 1970.



## **Christmas Windows light up on 14th Saturday 14th December**

Once again, Winchelsea is turning on its wonderful Christmas Windows, decorated in tune with the theme of Christmas songs and carols. On Saturday 14th December, thirty windows will be lit between 4:30pm and 9pm and then daily up to and including New Years Eve.

This really is the story of a small town working together to put on a lovely event and raising funds for charity. This year's chosen charity is the Demeza Children' charity.

If you've over-indulged with food and drink, fed up with Monopoly, or just want to get out in the fresh air and take a lovely evening stroll around the town please come. It makes a lovely family event.

Maps will be available from 9th December and can be purchased from The New Inn, The Little Shop and Winchelsea Farm Kitchen for a minimum donation of £1. So, purchase a map, follow the trail and find the wonderful windows. (Good idea to have a torch when visiting)

## **Presentation to Demelza**

At 7pm on 14th there will be a community event hosted by the New Inn to celebrate Christmas, including a presentation to the Demelza Nursing and Support Team of all the money raised by the Winchelsea community since 1st April 2024. This will be followed by some traditional carol singing.

We hope to see you there and wish you a very Happy Christmas.

*The Christmas Windows 2024 Team  
Shirley, Richard, Lyn, Graham, Julian & Debbie*



[demelza.org.uk](http://demelza.org.uk)



## **Bowls Club**

Trophies were presented at the Winchelsea Bowls Club AGM and Dinner at the New Inn on 28th November.

[wincheseabowlsclub.co.uk](http://wincheseabowlsclub.co.uk)





THE  
**NEW INN**  
WINCHELSEA

**CHARITY CHRISTMAS PUB QUIZ**

**SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 7.00PM**

**THEME 'IT'S CHRISTMAS'**

MAXIMUM 6 PER TEAM, £20 ENTRY (CASH PRIZE FOR WINNING TEAM)

**BOOK YOUR TABLE EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT**

**NEW INN TEL NO: 226252**

**ALL PROCEEDS TO DEMELZA CHILDREN'S CHARITY**





## **More journeys on the Marshlink**

*John Spencer writes:* Some stats from the government Office of Rail and Road on station and rail usage on the Marshlink may be of interest to residents. They show that, for Three Oaks and Winchelsea, the change from a two hourly timetable to an hourly one has helped create more journeys on the railway, just as we predicted. Maybe car parking has helped too.

The good news is that every station on the line reported an increase in the year to March 2024. Overall usage was up by 8%. Thank you to everyone who has helped to encourage train travel on the Marshlink line with the associated benefits that brings for people, communities, businesses and the environment.

The summary shows:

Estimated usage is up at all nine stations on the line (Hastings to Ashford International)

Overall 8% rise in estimated station usage on Marshlink line between April 2023 and March 2024 compared with the year before

Overall station usage on Marshlink now at 86.7% of pre-Covid levels

Use of Three Oaks and Winchelsea stations is now above pre-Covid levels and at the highest level since these records began in 1997-1998

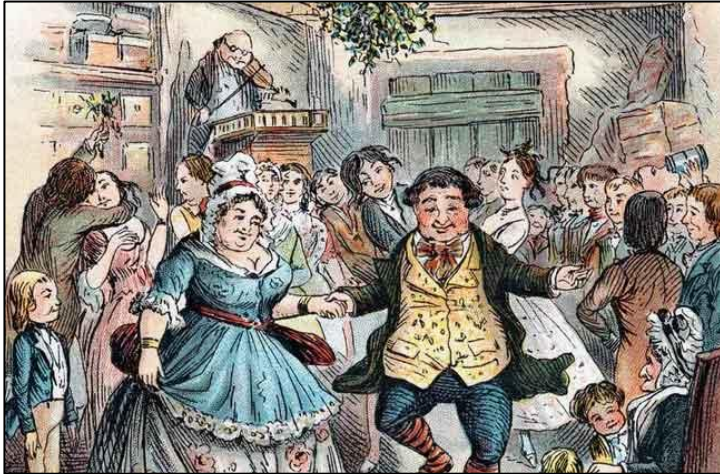
Large percentage rise in estimated use of Doleham station although it remains the least-used station in the South East

Line Chair, Kevin Boorman, commented: “These figures are fantastic for the Marshlink, and show just how important the line is, both to visitors and the local community. Passenger numbers have increased at every single station along the line, from 6% at Rye, which now sees almost 460,000 passenger journeys a year, to 89% at Doleham, despite the latter only having a handful of trains a day.

“Particularly noteworthy is the increase at Three Oaks. The railway is the only public transport serving the village, and it’s great to see that passenger numbers in 2023/24 rose by 22% to 14,938, the highest usage of this station since these records began over 25 years ago. Winchelsea similarly recorded a large increase, of 18% to 14,196 passengers a year.

“The Community Rail Partnership, with other groups, campaigned hard, and successfully, for reinstatement of an hourly service to these two stations some years ago after they had been cut. It is really encouraging to see that this increase in service has driven demand for the train, as we had hoped it would.

“Community rail is all about getting local people to use and enjoy their local train service, and these figures show just what this means in practice. With continued investment in the line, we hope to see passenger numbers grow even more into the future.”



## **Second Wednesday (with mulled wine)**

As another wonderful year of talks comes to an end, the Winchelsea Second Wednesday Society are proud to present our friend and neighbour Mike Stoneham, at our Christmas event on 11th December.

We will be starting at 2.30pm as usual, with a brief AGM. This involves the accountability that we owe you for your membership fees and raffle takings, the election of the Committee and your chance to have your say about SWS.

All of the above will be washed down with mulled wine. Once the formalities are out of the way, we can sit back and relax into Christmas.

As we know, Winchelsea is blessed with supreme talent from every walk of life. Two years ago, Mike dazzled us with his one man show, bringing Falstaff to life in glorious technicolour on the New Hall stage. This year he will be entertaining us with 'What the Dickens, it's Christmas'.

So come one, come all, bring family and friends and enjoy the Winchelsea Second Wednesday Society Christmas Tea Party and raffle. Thank you for supporting us this year, Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in 2025.

*Natasha Robinson*

# Winchelsea Museum The Anne Project 2025

Icklesham Parish  
Council & Winchelsea  
Corporation are working  
on a project to restore the  
museum's 17<sup>th</sup> century gun  
from the Warship Anne &  
mount it on a historically  
accurate carriage.

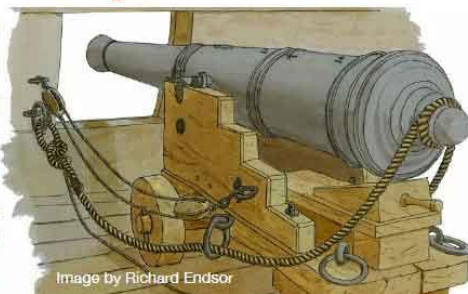
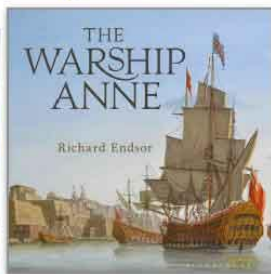
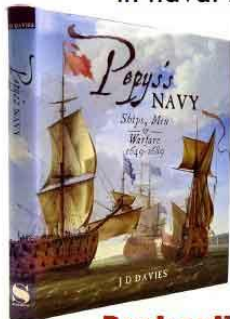


Image by Richard Endors

## Saturday December 7th at 7pm St Thomas' Church, Winchelsea

To launch our **fundraising campaign**, award winning  
naval historians and authors, **Richard Endors & David  
Davies** will be talking about why the Anne is so important  
in naval history and to the local area.

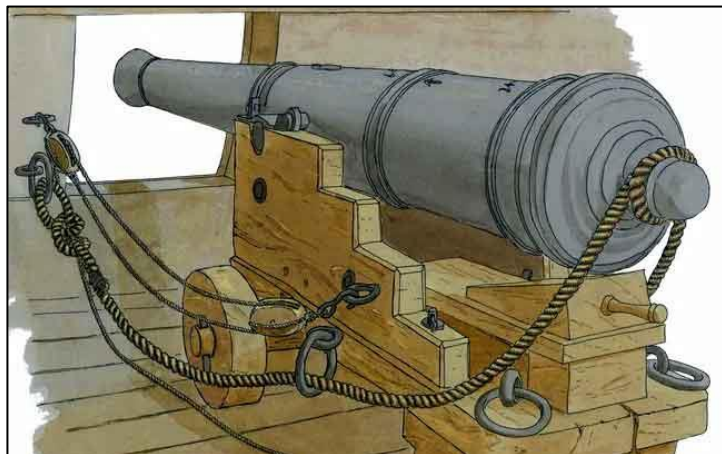


**Tickets £10**



**Book online at [ticketsource.co.uk](https://ticketsource.co.uk)  
or contact Chris Chappell [chriswinchelsea@icloud.com](mailto:chriswinchelsea@icloud.com)**

**Supported by FOAM** 



## **The ‘Anne’ Gun Project**

You may already have seen the posters around town about the Anne Gun project and, of course, you’ve probably seen the gun in the museum garden, although it is often partly covered by a hydrangea.

Now FOAM is working with the Museum and Icklesham Parish Council to display it properly. The plan is to restore the barrel and mount it on a historically accurate carriage, made from elm and hand wrought iron. Similar to the illustration above. We want to do this by next summer, so that we can celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Museum.

All this will cost several thousand pounds to achieve, the Parish Council and Corporation have both pledged money and so has FOAM, but it’s not quite enough, so we will inevitably need to do some fundraising.

Our first event is a talk about the Anne, in the Church on Saturday 7th December at 7pm. Speaking will be Richard Endsor, an engineer and artist, who has written a book on the Anne. And JD Davies, a prolific author who has written several books about the 17<sup>th</sup> century navy, and also a best-selling series of historical naval fiction, set in the restoration period, ‘The Journals of Matthew Quinton’.

They are very entertaining and it will be a great opportunity to find out some more about the Anne’s fascinating story and her importance in naval history and to the local area.

Richard is even bringing some artifacts from the Anne for us to examine.

Tickets are £10 and all money will go towards the project. They can be purchased online at [ticketsource.co.uk](http://ticketsource.co.uk)

The story of the Anne is a fascinating one. In 1690, after being badly damaged during the Battle of Beachy Head, she was deliberately run aground and burnt by her Captain, John Tyrrell, to prevent the French taking her as a prize. Today her lower timbers remain preserved in the mud at Pett Level, where they can be occasionally glimpsed during very low tides. What is believed to be the only remaining gun from the Anne, now lies in Winchelsea, although how it got there is a bit of a mystery.

It wasn't long after her wrecking that work began to retrieve her guns. Teams of horses were used to drag the guns up the beach, and then transport them on wagons to Winchelsea, where they were examined and tested, and those that were in good condition deployed to other ships.

It seems that one gun remained in the area. Charles Trollope, an expert on these matters, has identified the gun as a Saker. The Anne carried 14 of these guns, which were all cast in Sweden. There is evidence that it has been buried upright. Charles speculates that, having failed testing, the gun may have been used as a pivot to support another gun, on a battery that was constructed on Winchelsea Beach.

If you would like to discover more, come along to our talk, and if you can't make it, please consider supporting the project through IPC's 'GoFundMe' page at <https://gofund.me/56708ec2>

*Chris Chappell on behalf of the FOAM Committee  
Friends of the Ancient Monuments & Museum*

*Drawing of the gun © Richard Endsor  
from his book 'The Warship Anne'.*



## **Winchelsea Beach in December**

### **Tuesday 3rd**

Mothers Prayers at 10am at El Indalo, Old Harbour  
Farm Lane, Winchelsea Beach

### **Wednesday 18th**

Carols round the Christmas Tree at Winchelsea Beach  
Community Hall at 6.30pm.

There will not be a Fellowship Lunch in December but the team would like to wish all who usually come a very happy Christmas and New Year.





## **Winchelsea Residents Association**

**Annual General Meeting** We had a good turnout with over 50 residents in the New Hall. Our new Chair, Glen Marks gave the Chairs Report giving particular thanks to the hard work of committee members who have now stood down and to our new members. He encouraged any resident, particularly those with IT and communications experience to join the Committee. The main attraction was our new MP, Helena Dollimore who spoke on local issues, notably the need for better rail services and her support for introducing safer traffic measures in and around Winchelsea. Helena also answered questions from the audience. WRA is very grateful for her attendance and support. Individual Committee members gave updates on activity through the year which are summarised below.

**Committee membership** Glen Marks is our new Chair, David Dickson, Secretary and Ian Menzies, Treasurer. Julie Gurr has joined the committee with a role in progressing new traffic measures and Dave Richards to support our IT and communications. The details of the full committee can be found on our website

**Finance** The 2023/24 Accounts were approved. We confirmed our current bank balance of £1,173 and the savings achieved by changing our website arrangements.

We asked members present to vote on reinstating our membership subscriptions from April 2025, the cost to remain at £10 per member. This was approved. The funds will support printing and publication of material on both A259 and Winchelsea Town traffic, cover our communication and IT costs and provide a modest contingency fund. Requests for payment will be sent out in March 2025.

**Traffic** The Black Cat monitors provided by Icklesham Parish Council are regularly placed at different locations in the Town and the A259, giving consistent data on speed and numbers of vehicles. It shows an average of 14000 vehicles passing through the Town every week, an increase of 16% compared to last year. WRA highlighted the lack of action from IPC and East Sussex County Council (ESCC). WRA has now made direct contact with National Highways. This has been positive, and we are now waiting for a response from ESCC. If they are supportive, WRA will begin a consultation process with local residents.

WRA continues to support improved safety on the A259. We have compiled a leaflet highlighting the 'hot spots' and how we consider they can be improved. This will be sent to national agencies including National Highways, ESCC and Rother DC. We recognise the local geography limits options, but we cannot ignore the dangers of crossing Tanyard Lane and accessing the New Hall.

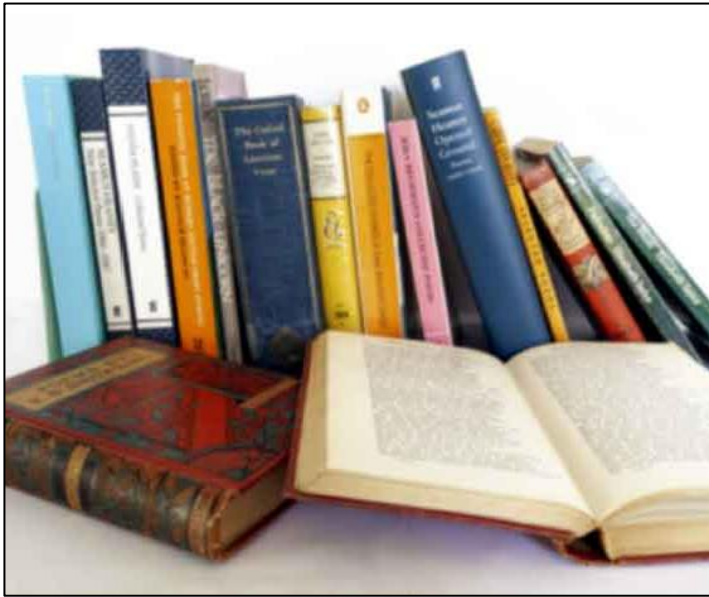
**Toilets** This remains a live issue between Icklesham Parish Council and Rother District Council. We are waiting for the outcome of yet another survey. In the meantime, WRA has offered information on options for a new non-traditional structure on the current site and will continue to press for a long-term solution. The Town is a tourist destination and needs good standard facilities.

**Accessible pavements** Rother DC has completed the dropped kerbs at all locations and particular thanks to Ali Casey who made sure the works went ahead.

Thank you for your continuing support

[winchelsea.com/ra](http://winchelsea.com/ra)

[RA@winchelsea.com](mailto:RA@winchelsea.com)



## **With Great Pleasure**

Angela Hill, a long-standing member of Winchelsea Literary Society will introduce readings from books that have been important to her during her life on Friday 13th December at 7pm for 7.30 in the Court Hall.

Members free, non-members £5.



## **Winchelsea 2025 Book**

A big thank you to every household in the community that filled in a questionnaire for our successor to the Millennium Book. We reckon that about 70% of households have done this - about the same proportion as in 2000 and a good result given the number of properties that are just changing hands or where nobody regularly lives.

Everyone's responses have been edited down to make a short paragraph which will accompany the photos Jonathan Murphy has been taking. There aren't many still to take but if yours is still outstanding you can get in touch with Jonathan at [albertmurf@gmail.com](mailto:albertmurf@gmail.com)

We are on course to publish early in the New Year and intend to hold a pre-publication event when you can see examples of the book and place orders.



## **Poppy Appeal Result**

Although subject to audit, slightly more than £2,600 was raised during this year's appeal. This is a little better than last year and this figure does not include GiftAid, or any e-donations that might have been made. It is likely, therefore, that the final total will be higher, but we will not know that for some months.

This really does represent another excellent effort in Winchelsea and Winchelsea Beach and the RBL will be immensely grateful to all those who supported and helped out with this year's Appeal.

This appreciation extends to all those who donated, to those who hosted a collection box, to those who contributed at the October Fellowship Lunch, to those who came to the New Inn quiz and to those who took part in the Acts of Remembrance and wreath laying at the War Memorial, as well as the Service of Remembrance. Thank you all very much.

*John Rodley, Local Appeal Organiser*



## Muse of Metroland

An enthralled Lit Soc tuned into Peter Southgate's account of the Troubadour of Suburbia's biography. Describing a varied and productive life, Peter introduced Betjeman with the poem *Executive*, neatly skewering that rapidly proliferating 1960s novelty and his fetish for soundbites and buzzwords plus his expense account and firm's car (a Cortina).

The audience learnt that whimsy, satire and nostalgia were Betjeman's basic ingredients along with a sense of place embracing counties in several *Shell* travel guides, underground stations like Ruislip Gardens and even private addresses, 189 Cadogan Square! *Middlesex* lamented the remorseless encroachment of Metroland onto that county's rural landscape all personified in a notional symbol, whimsically christened Elaine, accoutred in now long forgotten brands.

Boarding at Oxford's Dragon School and Marlborough bequeathed a lifelong aversion to compulsory games, beatings and bullying while Magdalen College, Oxford sharpened the sense of social inferiority arising from his family being "in trade". He did mingle with Evelyn Waugh, Osbert Lancaster and Cecil Beaton and the don, Maurice Bowra, considered him talented; thereby diverging sharply from John's tutor, C. S. Lewis's, assessment.

Although John went down after 2 years without graduating, his teddy bear, Archibald, left his own literary legacy in Aloysius, Sebastian Flyte's companion in Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*.

The evocative *Death in Leamington* brought pathos to the melancholy nursing home end of an elderly lady, fated to fade out gently in a faded spa town but confirming the author as "a sensitive versifier".

Becoming Assistant Editor of *The Architectural Review* wove another thread into Betjeman's cultural tapestry, highlighted by his second book, *Ghastly Good Taste*, emblematic of his later take on the built environment. He became a campaigner for our Georgian and Victorian architectural heritage scoring a notable success with the rescue of St. Pancras station but failing to preserve Euston's Arch.

As for *Loves*, John played the field – pledging his troth to five women including one "double booking" before marrying Penelope Chetwode, the daughter of a horrified Field Marshall. Their stormy marriage produced two children and Penelope's extreme equine enthusiasms made her horse a permanent house guest. Their shared High Anglican bond fractured when Penelope embraced Roman Catholicism in 1948, and *Christmas* displays the poet's personal faith oscillating between doubt and affirmation.

Betjeman found solace with Elizabeth Cavendish, a daughter of the Duke of Devonshire and 20 years younger, who became his mistress sharing their *pied-à-terre* in Smithfield's Cloth Market. John's existence now comprised a trinity of married, mistress and bachelor life.

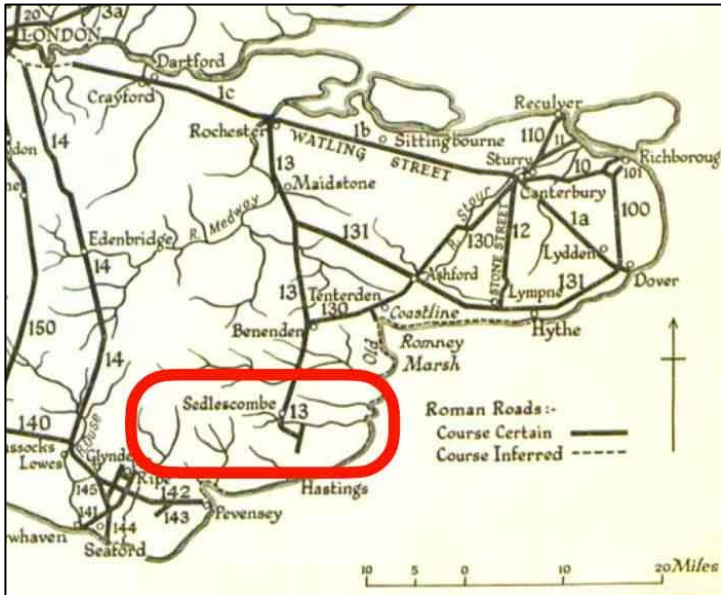
Betjeman experienced a creatively barren tenure as Poet Laureate from 1972 until his death in 1984. Previous campaigns on his behalf were scotched by advisors who dismissed him as a *songster of tennis lawns and cathedrals* although his supporters held that he lyricised everyday life for everyday people. Invited to supply an epitaph in his sunset years, he ruefully concluded *I wish I had had more sex* but that ship, having sailed, could not even be discerned on the horizon. *Bill Doherty*



## **Literary Society 2025**

- 17th January David Page:  
*Emile Zola: Dissecting the French Second Empire.*
- 21st February AGM, followed by Alan Judd:  
*The Evolution of Spy Fiction.*
- 21st March Gavin Esler:  
*Does Britain Get the Leaders it Deserves?*
- 18th April Lord Gawain Douglas:  
*The Four Quartets (a mini-lecture and reading)*
- 16th May Members' Evening
- 20th June Marek Urbanowicz:  
*The Life and Poetry of Ted Hughes.*
- 18th July Summer Party
- 19th September Tomiwa Owolade:  
*James Baldwin: What it Means to be an American.*
- 17th October An Evening with James Walton,  
Literary Presenter on Radio 4
- 21st November Gillian Southgate:  
*Ways of Seeing: The Work of William Blake.*
- 12th December With Great Pleasure:  
Sue and Tony Moore and Readers.





## Winchelsea Archaeological Society

A talk will be held in the New Hall, Winchelsea on Saturday 14th December. Coffee and biscuits from 11am. Talk starts at 11.15am.

Andrew Scott will discuss, *Does the Roman Road identified in Icklesham in 1982 extend eastwards towards Winchelsea?*

The WAS Walk on 10th August viewed the Roman bloomery site at Icklesham, and the site where excavations by the Hastings and Area Archaeological Research Group (HAARG) in 1981/82 discovered a considerable Roman Road.

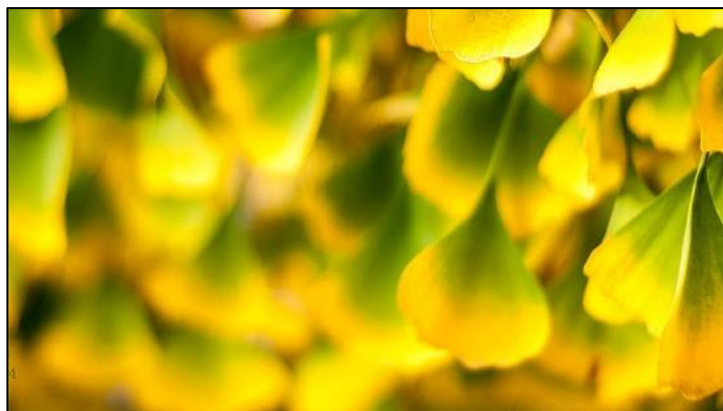
The talk will focus on LIDAR data, often used to identify the presence of Roman roads in the UK, which will be shown to demonstrate the value of such data; An explanation of how Roman roads were built; Other research data and theories, that might support a Roman presence to the east of Icklesham; LIDAR data of the Icklesham ridge will then be shown.

Following this talk, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society will be held. There will be two items of business,

associated with revision of the constitution; this is necessitated by a need for clarification:

1. That the Name of the charity should be changed to the "Winchelsea and Area Archaeological and Historical Society" (WAAHS).
2. The words 'Area' and 'Historical' are additions to the name to demonstrate that understanding of Winchelsea's history only comes from appreciation of the whole geographic environment in which the town has existed, as exemplified in the talk.
3. That the Objectives of the charity be updated to reflect the change of name.
4. These amendments to the Constitution must be passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place on Saturday 15th February 2025



## **Claire Large**

With great sadness we record the death of Claire Large on 11th November. Claire's funeral will take place at St Thomas's on Thursday 12th December at 2.30pm. Our sympathies go to Graham and Ellen.

## What's On Weekly At Winchelsea New Hall

Mondays 09.30-10.15	Pilates with Hannah	Suitable for all. Contact Hannah on 07936 151529 or email <a href="mailto:hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com">hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com</a>
Mondays 15.00-15.50	Zumba Gold	Suitable for all. Contact Daisy at <a href="mailto:fitnessbythesea@outlook.com">fitnessbythesea@outlook.com</a>
<b>Mondays</b> <b>16.00-17.00</b>	<b>Pilates</b> <b>with Celia will</b> <b>resume in 2025</b>	<b>Suitable for all ages and abilities.</b> <b>Contact Celia on <a href="mailto:kingcelia54@gmail.com">kingcelia54@gmail.com</a></b>
Tuesdays 10.00-11.00	Yoga with Natasha	Suitable for everyone from beginners to experienced. Contact Natasha on 07946 399211 or email <a href="mailto:nn@natashanandiniyogini.com">nn@natashanandiniyogini.com</a>
Tuesdays 14.00-15.30	Tune In Winchelsea	Fun singing group run by local tenor Gary Marriot. All ages and abilities welcome. Contact Rosemarie on 07941 458628
Wednesdays 18.00-19.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel at <a href="mailto:rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com">rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com</a>
Thursdays 09.30-10.30	Scottish Dancing	A fun, friendly class, suitable for beginners. Contact <a href="mailto:maddycoelho@hotmail.com">maddycoelho@hotmail.com</a>
Thursdays 18.00-19.00	Rother Fitness	Contact Rachel <a href="mailto:rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com">rotherfitnessgroup@outlook.com</a>
Fridays 09.30-10.15	Pilates with Hannah	All welcome. Contact Hannah on 07936 151529 or email <a href="mailto:hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com">hannahpilateshastings@gmail.com</a>

\*\*The hall has Table Tennis, Badminton and Pickleball equipment and can be booked on an ad hoc basis for £2 per person per hour (£1 for under 16's) – contact Rosemarie on 07941 458628 or WhatsApp



## **Winchelsea New Hall**

### **Christmas Fair**

On Saturday 16th November we held our annual Christmas Fair. The hall was beautifully decorated by Hilary and Rob with stylish white bunting and white Christmas trees for our twenty-four artisan and craft stallholders.

Winchelsea's own community choir, 'Tune in Winchelsea' led by Gary Marriott added to the Christmas atmosphere by singing a number of carols and Christmas songs for which stallholders and visitors showed their appreciation.

A massive thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event by starting their Christmas shopping early and yet again we raised a substantial amount, £2,848 after costs, for the New Hall and for the Rye Food Bank. This will significantly help the New Hall towards ongoing maintenance and renovation needed (currently the upgrading of the men's toilets).

The Grand Raffle and Tombola together impressively raised over £1600. We are so grateful to all those who donated raffle prizes including Strand House Bed and Breakfast,

Charles Palmer, Rye Chocolates, Rye Retreat and The Little Shop (and many more.) and the residents of the town who donated items for the tombola (and made some fantastic mince pies). And of course, a big thank you to everyone who supported us by buying tickets.

A further thank you needs to go to the wonderful array of different stall holders who make the event such a success, many were new participants in 2024.

Thank you to the New Hall Christmas Fair subcommittee, Diana, Jerry, Rosemarie, Hilary and Ali for once again putting on a very festive and well received event.

If there is anyone who would like to help organise the 2025 Christmas Fair (it is a lot of fun) please contact Ali Casey or Rosemarie Roberts.

There's a report and more photos [here, in Rye News](#)

### **100 Club**

The winning number for the 100 Club this month is 71. You should have already been contacted by the time you read this. Congratulations!

### **Gents Toilet**

The gents toilet will be closed from 2nd December until March for the much-awaited renovation work. The accessible toilet at the front of the hall will be available for use during the closure.



## **Christmas Eve**

There's feasting in the lighted hall. Assembled knights,  
Their ladies too, greet Christmas with good cheer.  
Robust and full of wine, they cannot comprehend  
That next Spring, all may alter that is here.  
None sees the sparrow fly above their space,  
Nor where its tiny body briefly flings  
Swift but pervading shadows that portend  
Another who will come, on beating wings.  
Yet when the new year dawns, yes, very soon,  
Some will renew, some will have left or gone,  
Another night will fall, another winter moon,  
But life is brief, when all is said and done.  
Look to the sparrow, mark its headlong flight  
From birth to death across a lighted space.  
This is our time on earth, our sacred hall,  
Laugh and take courage. Strive for a state of grace.

*Gillian Southgate 2024*



# WINCHELSEA FILM NIGHT

In conjunction with Winchelsea New Hall

There will be no  
screening in December.

Our next screening will be on

**January 18<sup>th</sup> 2025.**

*(Watch this space for further details.)*

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Many thanks to all our supporters.

Wishing you a very

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

and a

**HAPPY NEW YEAR.**



stm

st michael's  
hospice

# Christmas on the Coast

Saturday 7th December

11am - 4pm

Stade Hall, Hastings Old Town

Join us for a festive family fun day - with Father Christmas, crafts and more!

For more information call **01424 456396**.  
[stmichaelshospice.com/event-diary](http://stmichaelshospice.com/event-diary)

Free  
entry

Registered charity number 288462 



## **St Michael's Hospice**

St Michael's Hospice would like to thank everyone in the community for their support and generosity over the past year. Running the Hospice costs £5.5 million per year, with only a third of their income coming from the NHS. This means they have to rely on generous donations from their community. Whether you've attended an event, enjoyed a cup of tea or cake, made a donation, completed a sponsored challenge or shopped for pre-loved treasures, you've directly contributed to the vital services which St Michael's Hospice provides to Hastings and Rother, to support and enable people to live well with dying death and loss. Thank you for being such an important part of the community.

### **The Big Give**

One donation, double the impact. From the 3rd – 10th December, every contribution made online, through the St Michael's Hospice BigGive campaign, will be doubled by match funders. If you're thinking about supporting a local charity this Christmas, or had already planned to donate to the Hospice, you have the opportunity to double your impact. The money raised will go towards creating a Christmas for patients and their loved ones to remember. For more details, please visit [stmichaelsospice.info/big-give](http://stmichaelsospice.info/big-give) or call 01424 456396.

### **Christmas Crackers**

Christmas is almost here, and the St Michael's Hospice Lottery Christmas crackers are a fun way for you to celebrate. Each cracker includes a scratch card, for a chance to win cash prizes, as well as the traditional hat, joke and trivia. With every cracker pulled, not only will it bring a bit of fun to the festivities, but it supports the vital work of the Hospice in the community.

But that's not all, the Hospice will also be selling beautiful Christmas cards, perfect for wishing a merry Christmas to your loved ones, friends, neighbours or colleagues. Pick up your Christmas crackers and cards from any of the St Michael's Hospice shops. You can find your local shop here: [stmichaelsospice.com/retail](http://stmichaelsospice.com/retail) or call 01424 728728 to find out more.



stm

St Michael's  
hospice

# Lights of Love

## Remember a loved one this December

Take time to reflect and remember  
those we miss at our Lights of Love  
celebrations.

Dedicate a star and watch the tree  
lights shine bright.

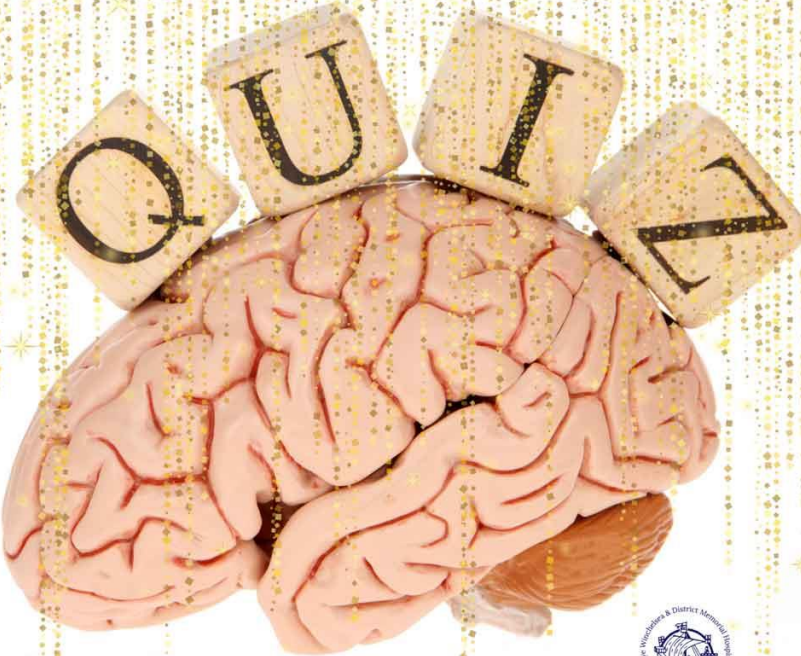
Sunday 1st - Sunday 8th December

For more information, visit  
[stmichaelshospice.com/lights](http://stmichaelshospice.com/lights)  
Registered charity number 288462



The local *Lights of Love* service this year will take place at St Mary's, Rye at 3.15pm on Sunday 8th December

[stmichaelshospice.com/lights](http://stmichaelshospice.com/lights)



In aid of Rye, Winchelsea and District Memorial Hospital Ltd



## **Quiz Night at The Mermaid Inn Thursday 12th December at 7.30pm**

**Gather a team of up to 6 quizzers to play for great prizes!**

**Doors open in the Tudor Room from 7pm**

**Tickets £5 per person**

**Sandwiches can be pre-ordered at an additional cost**

**Licensed Bar & Raffle**

**To book email [fundraising@ryehospital.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@ryehospital.org.uk) or call 01797 228842**

Registered as a Charity in England & Wales no. 1014232 Company no. 02740665

Winchelsea Church and Town Calendar

**December 2024**

- Sun 1st Dec** **8am: BCP Holy Communion at Winchelsea**  
*Advent Sunday* **9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Pett**  
*11am: No Service at Winchelsea*  
**6pm: Benefice Advent Carol Service at Winchelsea**
- Tuesday 3rd Mothers' Prayers - 10am
- Thursday 5th Bible Reading - New Inn - 6pm
- Saturday 7th Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12  
Anne Project presentation - St Thomas's - 7pm
- Sunday 8th** **8.30am: BCP Holy Communion at Pett Level**  
**9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Icklesham**  
**11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea**  
Charity Pub Quiz - New Inn - 7pm
- Wednesday 11th Second Wednesday AGM and Meeting - New Hall - 2.30pm
- Thursday 12th Funeral of Claire Large - St Thomas's - 2.30pm
- Friday 13th Literary Society - Court Hall - 7pm for 7.30
- Saturday 14th Christmas Celebration Service - Wesley's Chapel - 10.30 for 11am  
Archaeological Society talk and EGM - New Hall - 11am for 11.15  
Christmas Windows daily until 31st - 4.30 till 9pm
- Sunday 15th** **9.30am: Parish Eucharist at Pett**  
**11am: Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea**
- Thursday 19th Winchelsea Arts Concert - St Thomas's - 7.30pm
- Friday 20th FOAM Carols in the Court Hall - 6.30 for 7pm
- Sunday 22nd** **9.30am: Parish Eucharist and Carol Service at Icklesham**  
**11am: Said Parish Eucharist at Winchelsea**  
**6pm: Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at Winchelsea**
- Tuesday 24th** **4pm: Crib Service at Winchelsea**  
**11.30pm: Midnight Mass at Winchelsea**
- Wednesday 25th** **9.30am: Christmas Eucharist at Icklesham**  
**11am: Family Christmas Eucharist at Winchelsea**
- Sunday 29th** **11am: Said Eucharist at Winchelsea**
- Sat 4th Jan Church Market at St Thomas's - 10.30 till 12

**Further ahead**

- Sat 22nd Feb Garden Society Winter Lecture  
FOAM Quiz

**Please send copy for the January Magazine to [ryeview@gmail.com](mailto:ryeview@gmail.com)  
before Monday 30th December**

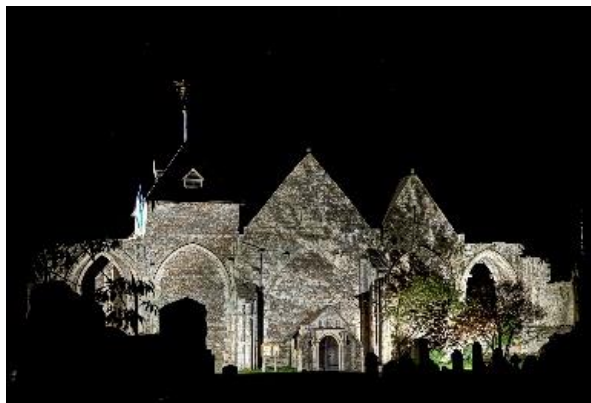


For Winchelsea Beach information go to  
[winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk](http://winchelseabeachcommunityassociation.co.uk)

For Winchelsea information go to  
[winchelsea.com](http://winchelsea.com)

For more information about the Church go to  
[winchelsea-icklesham-churches.org.uk](http://winchelsea-icklesham-churches.org.uk)

For weekly news from the local area go to  
[ryenews.org.uk](http://ryenews.org.uk)



## **Rector of Winchelsea and Icklesham and Priest in Charge of Pett**

The Revd Jonathan Meyer  
The Rectory, St Thomas Street, Winchelsea TN36 4EB  
01797 226254 [revdjonathan@btinternet.com](mailto:revdjonathan@btinternet.com)  
The Rector's day off is Monday

## **Churchwardens**

Celia King  
Stargazer, Morlais Place TN36 4LG  
01797 227858 [kingcelia54@gmail.com](mailto:kingcelia54@gmail.com)

Nigel Ashton  
Winchelsea Cottage, High Street TN36 4EA  
01797 222023 [nigelmarkashton@gmail.com](mailto:nigelmarkashton@gmail.com)

## **St Thomas' Primary School**

*Headteacher* Dale Saxby  
Friars Road TN36 4ED 01797 226479  
[office@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-thomas-winchelsea.e-sussex.sch.uk)

## **Friends of Winchelsea Church**

*Chairman* Ben Chishick  
Tower Cottage, Barrack Square TN36 4EA  
01797 226653 [towercottage@btinternet.com](mailto:towercottage@btinternet.com)

## **Parish Magazine**

*Editor* David Page  
4 Kent Close TN36 4EX  
01797 226524 [ryeview@gmail.com](mailto:ryeview@gmail.com)