

The Messenger



*Holy Innocents Church Gt. Barton
Newsletter*

*Our on-line magazine can be found on our
website: <http://themessengergtbarton.suffolk.cloud>*

Church Officers

<i>Churchwardens</i>	<i>Tim Frost</i>	<i>01284 787442</i>
	<i>Angela Pearce</i>	<i>01359 230395</i>
<i>Verger</i>	<i>Linda Scoles</i>	<i>01359 230392</i>
<i>PCC Secretary</i>	<i>Jane Dalton</i>	<i>01284 788613</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Kathy Drakes</i>	<i>01284 787746</i>
<i>Reader</i>	<i>Kathy Drakes</i>	<i>01284 787746</i>

Seasonal Letter from Fr Ben

This Christmas time is a little different in the churches of St Peter's & Holy Innocents. This year at Holy Innocents, people will again be displaying Christmas Trees as part of our A Quiet Place For Christmas season. But this time our theme is Follow the Star, reference of course to the star that appeared in the skies to the Wise Men, or Magi from the East, who followed it to where Jesus had been born. Those visiting the church for some quiet time of reflection amidst the hubbub of Christmas preparations will still be under the gaze of Inspiring Angels, in the shape of our Lonely Angel, St Sylvana Hope – even though we can seek solitude from time to time, we can always rely on God's presence to be there with us when we need support.

At St Peter's, the church has decided to take a rest from the Christmas Tree Festival this year, which will perhaps be disappointing to some, but is a necessary part of how the church can pour itself out sustainably over the years – sometimes the church just needs to pause and collect its thoughts, pray about the things we do together that speak to the wider community and how that might be helping feed everyone spiritually. We still have a full compliment of Christmas services on offer, including our Crib Services and Carol Services – do look out for dates and times in this publication.

As you might expect from a message from the Vicar, I can't pass by mentioning the reason for the season, the birth of Jesus Christ. The Nativity story is quite lovely and fluffy on the surface, but was a good deal grittier than we may have come to know. A grittiness that we are beginning increasingly to be able to relate better to in these times. However, at the heart of this tale is a truth that we scarce dare to dream – the coming of the Creator of the Universe and All Things to us, among us, with us and for us, in the shape of a tiny baby.

A baby that would change the entire world, upon whose examples and teachings we would see even deeper truths about God, the universe, creation and everything in it, but more than any of this would signpost us to the greatest truth of all things – love. The whole thing is LOVE. In the light of that truth, a truth perhaps so blinding that we shield our eyes, all things will

eventually succumb. And for all of us, even in the midst of the direst hours of darkness and despair, the light of that truth gives us hope.

Wow. What a thing to celebrate!

My prayer for you this Christmas time and in the New Year is for you to embrace every ounce of love that comes your way and that you pour it out unto others, family, friends, strangers, and enemies, so that it transforms you and the world around you, and that you shine like a light in the darkness.

Merry Christmas one and all, and a Joyous New Year!

*The Rev'd Fr Benjamin Edwards
Vicar of Great Barton & Thurston*

**THE MEETING POINT
COMMUNITY CAFÉ**

At The Church Institute,
The Street,
Great Barton

OPENING TIME:
EVERY WEDNESDAY
11.00AM – 1.30PM
LUNCHES SERVED FROM 12.00 NOON

All Welcome!
A Great place to meet up with friends for lunch or to
relax and enjoy a Tea or Coffee with a slice of Cake.

Come and join us for FREE
Tea and Coffee.

We serve Homemade
Cakes, freshly prepared
hot lunches to order.

VOLUNTEER HELP REQUIRED

Due to increasing popularity the Meeting Point Community Cafe, held each Wednesday at Gt. Barton Church Institute, require additional help between 10.30am and 2pm on a rota basis to assist with serving light lunches, tea and coffee to mostly senior citizens from the surrounding area.

Lunch and tea/coffee will be provided.

Please contact Betty Holdgate on 01284 788196 if you could spare a little of your free time.

Great Barton and Thurston Benefice Services
December 2023

Sunday 3rd December:

Benefice Service, Sung Eucharist, at Holy Innocents, Great Barton at 10.30am
Advent Carol Service at Holy Innocents, Gt Barton at 5.00pm

Wednesday 6th December:

Holy Communion (CW) at Montana at 11.15am

Thursday 7th December:

ATC Carol Service at St Peter's at 7.00pm

Sunday 10th December:

Holy Communion (BCP) at Holy Innocents at 8.30am
Benefice Service, Sung Eucharist, at St Peter's, Thurston at 10.30am

Wednesday 13th December:

Holy Communion (CW) at Holy Innocents, Great Barton at 10.30am

Sunday 17th December:

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter's at 8.30am
Together Family Church Thurston at St Peter's for Christmas. (Together Family Church take over St Peter's at 10.00am)
Holy Communion at Holy Innocents Church at 10.30am
Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Peter's Church at 6.00pm

Wednesday 20th December:

Holy Communion (CW) at St Peter's at 10.30am

Friday 22nd December:

Carols by Candlelight at Holy Innocents Church at 7.00pm

Sunday 24th December:

Crib Service at St Peter's, Thurston at 2.00pm
Crib Service at Holy Innocents, Great Barton at 4.00pm
Midnight Mass at St Peter's, Thurston at 11.30pm
Midnight Mass at Holy Innocents, Great Barton at 11.30pm

Monday 25th December:

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter's at 8.30am
Christmas Morning Holy Communion (CW) at St Peter's, Thurston at 10.00am
Christmas Morning Holy Communion (CW) at Holy Innocents, Great Barton at 10.00am

Wednesday 27th December:

No Service

Sunday 31st December:

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter's at 8.30am
Songs of Praise at Holy Innocents Church at 10.30am

Great Barton and Thurston Benefice Services
January 2024

Wednesday 3rd January:

No Service

Sunday 7th January:

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter's at 8.30am

Sung Eucharist at Holy Innocents (Patronal Service) and Epiphany at 10.30am

Wednesday 10th January:

Holy Communion (CW) at St Peter's at 10.30am

Sunday 14th January:

Holy Communion: Plough Sunday at St Peter's at 10.30am

Evensong at Holy Innocents at 3.30pm

Wednesday 17th January:

Holy Communion (CW) Holy Innocents at 10.30am

Sunday 21st January:

Together Family Church Thurston Primary Academy at 10.00am

Holy Communion (CW) at Holy Innocents at 10.30am

Evensong at St Peter's at 3.30pm

Wednesday 24th January:

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Peter's at 10.30am

Sunday 28th January:

Holy Communion (BCP) at Holy Innocents at 8.30am

Holy Communion Candlemas at St Peter's at 10.30am

Wednesday 31st January:

Holy Communion (CW) Holy Innocents at 10.30am

(CW Common Worship, BCP Book of Common Prayer)

200 Club Draw for October 2023

The draw was made at Meeting Point, In the Church Institute on Wednesday 15th November 2023.

£100 Mel Smith (141)

£25 Geoffrey Potter (123)

**Tim Frost
Administrator**



MOTHERS UNION

We meet once a month on the **second Tuesday at 2.30pm** for November and our new wintertime of **11am for December – March**.

We shall be making Angels in December, simple to make, under the guidance of Sheila whilst enjoying mince pies and carols. **12th December 11am in The Institute, Great Barton.**

Also, small craft groups for Christmas decoration making etc. Twiddle muffs for dementia sufferers also being made.

9th January meeting will be **11am in The Rock**. Please bring favourite poems, songs, bible readings etc. to share with each other and decide which MU charities we wish to support in 2024.

Holy Innocents Church Christmas Tree Festival



9 December-5 January

“FOLLOW THE STAR”

We invite families, individuals, schools, organizations, and businesses to put up a tree to help our community celebrate Christmas, and to find a quiet place at Christmas.

Contact Linda Scoles (01359) 230392 for more information.

9 Lessons and Carols

Hear the story of Christmas and join us in song with traditional Christmas Carols'

St Peter's Church
Thurston, 17th December
6.00pm.

Tea and Coffee available after the service

**St Peter's Thurston and Holy
Innocents' Gt Barton
Crib Service
Sunday 24th Dec.**

**St Peter's at 2.00pm
&
Holy Innocents at 4.00pm**



**A service for all the family to enjoy at Christmas.
We look forward to seeing you.**



**Holy Innocents' Church Gt Barton
&**

St Peter's Church Thurston

11.30pm Sunday 24th December



Please note the start time of 11.30 pm

***You are welcome to join us at either of our Churches for this
popular Christmas Mass***

DECEMBER ONLY



Together Family Church Takes over
St Peters Church Thurston

Sunday 17th December Starting at 10.00am

TOGETHER FAMILY CHURCH
ALL ONE IN CHRIST
Christmas Crafts, Carols, and treats.



Advent Course

This year's Advent Course will be looking at the Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Difference Course – The power of Faith in a conflicted world'. If you are interested in attending, could you please sign up on the sheets at the back of both Holy Innocents and St Peters.

Thank you

Kathy Drakes

Treasurer

Can you help?

The Treasurers in both St Peter's Thurston and Holy Innocents are retiring after many years of service to their respective churches.

We are now looking for someone to take over the role of the treasurer. The treasurer will be an integral part of our team and will be supported by the relevant PCC's.

If you have experience and would like to know more, please contact the following people.

For St Peter's:

Fr Ben at revdbenjaminedwards@gmail.com

Gill Bush at gillianbush@metronet.co.uk

Pat Sadler at patsadler@hotmail.com

For Holy Innocents:

Fr Ben at revdbenjaminedwards@gmail.com

Kathy Drakes at kathy@drakesfamily.org

Tim Frost at timfr0st@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you

Choir Leader

The Benefice Choir of Holy Innocents Great Barton and St Peter's Thurston are looking for a Choir Leader.

Our choir is looking for someone who will take them forward with new hymns and Anthems; someone to arrange regular practice and lead the choir into the future.

You would work with the organist and Fr Ben the Vicar.

Our choir sing at all our services including evensong and on occasions at Funerals and Weddings.

The choir would also like someone who would encourage them to sing in other venues arranged by the Royal School of Church Music.

**For more information, please contact Fr Ben at
revdbenjaminedwards@gmail.com**

From a Gardeners Notebook, November 2023



This month's "notebook" is for all those wonderful ladies in the united benifice who have an interest in "floral art", possibly for the two distinctive churches or, possibly, just for self expression. Can you imagine Christ's Mass without flowers, evergreens, accessories and a Christmas tree?

As a member of the Society of Florists I have a rule book and guidelines for arrangements. Christmas is the only time when society members do not have to be purists – meaning , anything goes. You may mix fresh and silk flowers; bows and any other decorations are acceptable. For economic reasons this is helpful, because flowers are very expensive. Also when daylight hours are short stems are weak and break easily.

Evergreens are truly "Queen" in December, looking at their best. (You might not be so happy in May and June when Hollies and Grandiflora magnolias drop their leaves). As we know, our Christian festivals were placed at the time of the old pagan ones in this country, (it is called 'good marketing') to get people to accept them and become Christians. Coloured shrubs and evergreens will make a glorious display very thriftily without flowers.

Today the Holly is strongly thought of as our most important foliage for Christmas, with it's fruiting occuring late in the year. This accolade may have been taken from the Evergreen Oak, originally from Greece and Rome, and introduced here in the 16th Century.

Now, some suggestions to get your creative thinking going.

1. Try to be original, bold and decisive. Have the design in your head before you begin.
2. If you have gleaned Holly and Ivy make sure that it is clean of dust, dirt or the birds.
3. Surprise everyone –“ You didn't do that Mum?“. An S shape or a curve. Place it in the hall and buy an enormous candle to stand at the back. Go for it!!
4. Remember to keep the oasis moist during the holiday. The warmth of the central heating will soon dry it out. Foliage drinks much more water than flowers.
5. Buy flowers from the supermarkets or market traders. Although classed as Bar C flowers this grade is determind by the length of the stem and not the

- beauty of the flower. If you buy Chrysanthemums leave them in a cold shed in a full bucket of water for 24 hours. This will improve them considerably.
6. Lastly, if you think that the candles look a little tawdry and should be thrown away, polish them with a pair of tights and they will look like new!

Good luck. May your arrangements look beautiful.

Rest up, ready for that garden in 2024. I guarantee that I'll be motivating you into good things next season.

No article for January, reading and observe your garden. February will soon be with us, and I shall have you out in the fresh again.

My best wishes to all my gardeners for Christmas, and a Happy 2024.

Mary

Great Barton Film Night



The January film is on Saturday 20th January and we are showing "Gigi" 1958 Cert PG

Doors Open 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Cost £4

Teas, Coffees and Ice Creams On Sale

Great Barton Village Hall

One of my favourite things.....

is Christmas. I have always loved Christmas, though not now with the child-like excitement of my young days.

Every Christmas at home was a Winter Wonderland with skiing, sledding, community and family parties, and something exciting under the tree. Well, with the exception of the year I found the presents before they were wrapped. I had to work very hard to appear surprised when I opened my package. It was awful, and I never peeked again.

Our son, Kevin, was born on Christmas Day – the best and worst Christmas ever. I had a baby – very good. But I missed my Christmas Dinner – very bad.

For many years Kevin carried the cross up the church isle for Mid-night service, then carried it back down a year older, with “Happy Birthday” wishes following him all the way. James and I ring him when we come out of church to sing Happy Birthday to him at his home in Ohio. Kevin will be 60 years old on Christmas morning. Whew!

We will soon be putting up Christmas Trees in the church. I really enjoy the time Holy Innocents is lit daily by trees, big and small, leading us to the crib with the beautiful figures made in 1971, and on display in the church at Christmas since then. It is a great blessing that, in the hustle and bustle of the season, we have “A Quiet Place at Christmas” where we can come to centre ourselves, to pray or relax. Thank God for Christmas.

My need and my prayers are for peace this year and always.

With love, Linda

St Peter's Church News

The Coronation Year: St Peter's Church supporting the next generation



Happy Christmas!

We are writing this before our Christmas Bazaar and Coronation Quiz, so we have no update on our fundraising total to bring you.

However, as we reach the end of 2023, we did want to **thank everyone** who has supported our fundraising campaign, primarily for our beautiful church and also for the work of 'Nicky's Way' at St Nicholas Hospice. We have had incredible support from the people and businesses of Thurston, Great Barton and the wider area and are truly grateful.

We will back in January with a further update. In the meantime, we wish everyone a **Happy Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year.**

Together Family Church

Join us for this monthly family-orientated church service and learn more about God, your family and you!

Breakfast, Songs, Crafts & Prayer

TOGETHER FAMILY CHURCH

ALL ONE IN CHRIST

Every 3rd SUNDAY
@ Thurston Primary

10am for 1030 start (40mins)

NEW MEMBERS WANTED ST. PETER'S CHURCH DRAW CLUB

What is it? The Draw Club has been in existence for many years as a way of raising funds for the daily workings of your village parish church.

How does it work? Every member can buy as many Draw Club numbers as they like, at £15 each per annum. There is a small monthly monetary prize which is usually drawn during coffee after church, plus a Summer and Winter Draw with 3 larger monetary prizes. The greater the membership the larger the prize amounts. We generally have a strawberries and cream afternoon in the church grounds for the Summer Draw with a chance to socialise and maybe do a quiz. The Winter Draw is held after one of the Christmastide services.

Over the years we have sadly lost a number of members due to relocation and old age and we are eager to recruit new members

This is an easy way to support your church and you may even be a lucky winner!

Please consider becoming a member –
contact Ann Reeve (01359 270491) if interested. Thank you.

Thurston Library News

**SUFFOLK
LIBRARIES**

**WHERE
I BELONG**



FESTIVE FORTNIGHT: CHRISTMAS CRAFTS THURSTON LIBRARY

SUNDAY 3RD DECEMBER 11-1PM

SEWING CRAFT: FELT BAUBLES

BOOK YOUR PLACE

TO MAKE FOR YOUR TREE OR AS A GIFT

FOR AGES 10+

SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER 11AM-1PM

DECORATIVE PAPER STARS

DROP-IN

FOR ALL AGES



A Winter Evening of Wine and Song

7pm

**Friday 8 December
Thurston Library**

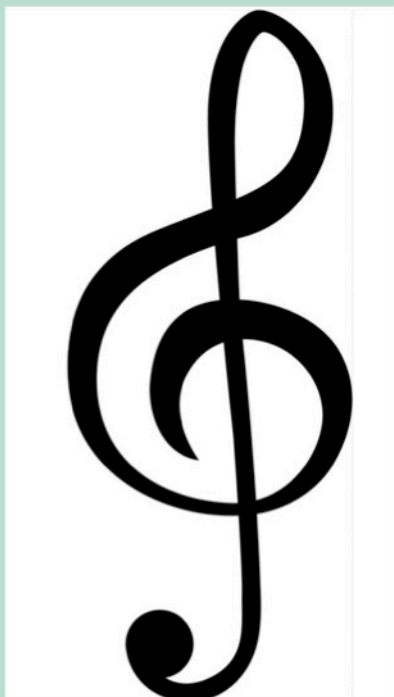


A wine tasting with a difference:

Seasonal wines & perfect port

Notable nibbles & chocolate

**Mellow music &
vibrant vocals**



**Tickets £15 from
Thurston Library**

**Details in Thurston Newsletter,
on social media and from
Thurston Library**

Thurston Library
2.30pm Friday 15 December

Blackbourne U3A Play Reading Group
perform a unique live reading of the light-hearted festive ghost story

SPIRIT LEVEL
by Pam Valentine



2.30pm - 4.30pm with an interval for light refreshments.

Book a free place in Thurston Library. Donations gratefully received.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with
Music Theatre International on behalf of Josef Weinberger Ltd.

www.mtshows.co.uk I www.josef-weinberger.com

allhomes
town and country

Thurston Library – Thurston’s Warm Welcome this winter

Thurston-based allhomes estate agent has generously provided funds for
Thurston’s free hot drinks in
the library – a welcoming warm space for everyone this winter.

Anyone is welcome to visit the library just to keep warm and, if you wish, find someone to talk to. You don’t have to take part in an activity or be borrowing something: it’s ok just to come in to get out of the cold and be around people.

Lots of other things are free in the library including free computers and wifi access for your computer or other device. And, of course, free book loans for everyone.

Suffolk Libraries is also working with BBC Radio Suffolk on an appeal to collect donations of *new* small toys to regift these to children who would appreciate a little extra this Christmas with all libraries, including Thurston, taking donations until 8 December.

Do come along to warm, welcoming Thurston Library this winter.

Children's Author Event
Saturday 16 December 2pm - 3pm

Book now ...
Not just a date for the diary!



Join us for a special event with children's author Dominique Valente! Dominique will be visiting Thurston Library to talk about her *Starfell* series, and host some fun reading and activities for children to enjoy. She will also be selling and signing copies of her books.

Suitable for 7-to-12 Year-olds.

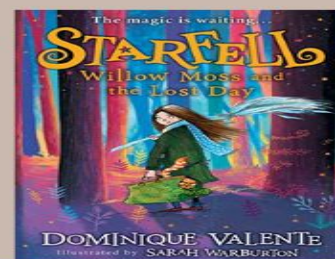
Tickets are £3 each. Each ticket includes admission for one child and one adult guardian. Price includes refreshments. Tickets are available to purchase from Thurston Library or [online via Eventbrite](#) →



Dominique Valente
Reading & Activity
Thurston Library

Saturday 16th December
2pm until 3pm

(approx. age guide = 7-12 years old)



AUTHOR EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

Volunteers Needed in Thurston Library

We are looking for people who have a couple of hours a week spare to help with looking after our collection of book donations. Basic computer skills are helpful as this is a research-based project.

If you are interested, please see Ellie at the desk, call the library during opening hours, or email ellie.longman@suffolklibraries.co.uk

The Community Team from Wellbeing Suffolk, the NHS Talking Therapies provider in Suffolk, will be visiting Thurston Library in December with a pop-up info session on:

**Friday 1st December from 10am til 1pm
and**

Wednesday 13th December from 10am til 1pm

We know that supporting you to live your life means more than just clinical care.

Come along and have a chat with us to find out what free support is available, and if needed, get help with referring into the service.



**SUFFOLK
LIBRARIES**



for anxiety and depression

0300 123 1503

wellbeingnands.co.uk /suffolk

Email: suffolk.communityteam@nsft.nhs.uk



**Friends of Thurston Library
A Christmas present from Thurston Library**

***Christmas Festival Fortnight:
Friday 1 December – Saturday 16 December***

We will be having a Christmas Festival for all the family: A Winter Evening of Wine and Song – a wine tasting with a difference, a visit from Dominique Valente the children's author, Christmas music, Twenty Minute Tales, Christmas crafts, and Christmas trees from groups and organisation that use the library.

Friends of Thurston Library

Thurston Library on Norton Road is open for all children and adults in Thurston and the surrounding area

Come to Thurston Library: we'd love to see you and it's free for everyone

Thurston Library Opening Times Monday Closed, Tuesday 2pm-6pm;
Wednesday 10am-1pm; Thursday 2pm-6pm; Friday 10am-1pm
Saturday and Sunday 10am-3pm

In the Library during the week

Sunday

Lego Club

The Lego Club meets every Sunday
10.30am - 2.30pm.

Monday

Simply Sing

7pm - 8pm Monday 6 November.

If you like to sing, come along and join us for Simply Sing.

You will be made most welcome.

For more information contact

Angie Murray on 07870 383526.

Thurston Mini Movers

Mini movers weekly 10am - 11.30am.

For more information & to book, please contact zoe.ablitt@danceeast.co.uk or phone 01473 295230.

Thurston Mini Movers is supported by Mid Suffolk District Council

Tuesday

Chat'n'Chill ...

After school 3.15pm - 5pm every Tuesday during term time.

The Last Tuesday Baking Club

Tuesday 28 November.

Contact Ellie in the Library for details.

Wednesday ...Wordplay:

Baby Bounce for 0 - 4year-olds

Wednesdays 10.15am - 10.45am.

Bring along your babies and pre-schoolers in the Junior Library.

Wednesday Watercolour Art Club



2pm - 5pm every week.

New members welcome. Just turn up!

Thursday

Twenty Minute Tales

Weekly after school story time.

Friday

Friday Sewcial

10am every Friday. Just turn up. Bring an ongoing project to work on whilst having a chat.

Saturday

Knitting and Crochet Workshop

Every Saturday 10.30am - noon. Free. Ever wanted to learn how to knit? Join us for this weekly session for beginners. Or you may have a project on the go and need some assistance – just come along.

Ancestry Club

Who do you think you are?

10am - noon 1st & 3rd Saturdays

Everyone welcome!

No expertise needed: friendly help is at hand on from 10am - noon. Email Jayne at thurstonancestry@gmail.com for more information.

Tea & coffee of course! And a good natter! You'll be very welcome!

Home Library Service

If you or someone you know is having difficulty getting to the Library to select books, then Carol, our friendly Home Library Service Volunteer will do that for you. She will visit once a month with your books and return any you have finished on your behalf.

Get in touch with Ellie on 01359 235048 to find out more or to sign up for this fabulous service!

Did you know?

Your library card gives you access to thousands of eAudio and eBooks, Newspapers and eMagazines (Pressreader) indie films, documentaries and courses (Kanopy) and you can download and stream music (Freegal). All for free!

Visit

<https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/eli-brary>

Friends of Thurston Library

Like to be involved with the planning activities and events with Friends of Thurston Library? Pick up a leaflet in the Library or contact Richard Fawcett Thurstonlibfriends@gmail.com or 07889 427476.

More Information: Please visit the Suffolk Libraries Thurston Library page www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/visit/locations-and-times/thurston-Library

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram (thurstoncommunityLibrary) and thurstonLibraryfriends.suffolk.cloud

for all the latest information on our groups and activities.

Thurston Library: Norton Road, Thurston, IP31 3PB 01359 235048

Library Manager: Ellie Longman





**ST PETER'S & HOLY INNOCENTS
UNITED IN CHRIST**

Get Involved with The Messenger

Would you like to contribute to Your Messenger? We would love to hear from you, share your favourite recipe, a funny story, your favourite holiday memory. If you would like to share something you feel will be of interest to your neighbours or anyone living in Gt Barton, please contact:

The Editor: 07814 946841 or email: beneficepr@gmail.com

The following Business Adverts are in the on-line version Supporting The Messenger.

Pest Control Services: N.J.Leonard: 07979 648857

John Ranson. 01284 788248 07770932799

jwransonbuilding@gmail.com

Metcalfe, Copeman, Pettefar LLP. Dawn.collier@mcp-law.co.uk

Home Support – Mrs Eden. 07557 337872 or Mrs Drewry 01638 730469 pauladrewry@hotmail.com

ELITE FENCING & LANDSCAPING 01359 221128

trevor@elite-fencing.co.uk

Ian Ball, General Builder. 01359 250697, or 07785 988191.