

Mepal Matters

The newsletter for Mepal

November/December 2023



www.mepalparish.org

Village Hall News

The Defibrillator and CPR training session by East Anglian Air Ambulance on 30th September was well attended and if anyone is unlucky enough to need this assistance there should now be people to hand who are confident what to do in such an emergency.

On Saturday 28th October we were delighted to take the opportunity to arrange a breakfast morning like those that were so popular in the past. We are also planning other events including a quiz night which, if well supported, might become a regular feature – look out for details.

The Warm Hub mornings last winter were enjoyed by those who came and there appears to be a possibility of obtaining a grant to cover the costs again this year. However, these sessions have to be staffed and last winter the responsibility fell on a very few stalwart volunteers. We are seeing whether we can muster enough people to repeat the venture and if we are successful, details will be publicised.

“Pimp my Fish” have resumed their visits to the Hall on the first Thursday evening in each month. Those of us who have previously patronised them can vouch for the excellent quality of the meals they provide, and their efficient service. On the days when they are to visit, orders can be placed on-line at www.pimp-my-fish.co.uk

Mepal Pantry provide a much-needed service in these difficult times, but the existing collection point in the close in Bridge Road is not ideally situated and has suffered some security problems. We have been delighted to agree that it can be moved to the Hall site, alongside the East Anglian Air Ambulance clothing bank.

The shortage of satisfactory storage space at the Hall is a problem for many users, and we have for a long time been pondering how we can adapt the former toilets to improve this. It will be costly to remove the internal partition walls to create a clear useable space, but some grant money exists which might just possibly be available for such a project. We are applying, and any evidence of support from local people and organisations would greatly strengthen our case. If you use the Hall and could do so more effectively if there were better storage, please get in touch.

Chairman: Allen Sallis, Treasurer and Bookings Clerk: Lynne Woodward: 776272 LDSWoodward@hotmail.co.uk, Secretary: David Stazicker 778129 david.stazicker@gmail.com Other members – Tim Bosson, Alan Fayers, June Sallis, Lesley Sculthorpe.

Friendship Club

Where has this year gone? I can't believe we are already heading into the run up to Christmas and organising our Christmas events!

This year we have been really busy, with our meals out and in and the celebrations for our 20th anniversary of the Friendship club, which is quite a feat. Our aim at the club is to try and bring people together and every week our members can meet other people, have a good chat and laugh, and also make new friends. We also have lots of different activities at our meetings. Bingo, bring and buys, card making, quiz's, afternoon tea, to name some. Sometimes we just enjoy having a cuppa and chat. We will be having a go at making Christmas cards shortly so if you think that you would like to join us it's a great way to meet people and learn a new skill.

We have our Christmas trip to Spalding in November which is always a good day out and then in December we have our Christmas events to look forward to including meals in, meals out and our Christmas bingo. Our calendar for the rest of the year can be found on the back page in the diary dates section.

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year.

St Mary's Church

Christmas Market



Sat November 25th

12.30 - 3pm

at Mepal Village Hall

Stalls & games,
Lunchtime refreshments,
Grand Christmas Draw

In aid of St Mary's Parish Church

PASTORAL LETTER

Pride of Place

Dear Friends,

My current post here, as interim Priest-in-Charge of the Ely villages, is to look after what might be called 'a string of parishes', and here I am deliberately avoiding using more technical terms like team, group, benefices, or cluster. What is very clear to those who live and possibly also work in a village is their sense of identity, which is evidenced in any number of areas, be it church, school and catchment, parochial charity, club or sports team. My time in urban Salford also taught me that even the context of back-to-back terraced housing is equally territorial despite what looks homogenously similar...the inexorable question had to be asked there... "where were the boundaries between Weaste, Seedley and Langworthy?!"...but indigenous local folk knew. The Church honours each parish by 'beating its bounds' at Rogationtide, praying for all human activity within its borders, and each parish, be it ecclesiastical or civil, has its own Council, a decision-making body closest to the everyday lives of all who belong to that place.

'Parish - a theology of place' is my current book, written by Bishop Andrew Rumsey, Suffragan (or Assistant) Bishop of Ramsbury, which roughly covers the county of Wiltshire within the diocese of Salisbury. His writing helps us to understand why the presence (and sometimes threatened loss) of a parish church has such a profound importance for people who live there.....the building itself (John Betjeman's phrase 'a sermon in stone' comes to mind) speaks of the presence of God, notwithstanding the number of regular worshippers. This why all parish churches should wherever possible be open during daylight hours, something we achieve in most of those locally, such that people can enter to say their prayers. We also need to remember that God is here among us, without a building or clergy, which is why places of pilgrimage remain so powerful too, such as The Holy Island of Lindisfarne from where I recently returned with a group, having visited Etheldreda's formative place at Coldingham in Berwickshire, where she became a nun. Etheldreda then returned to Ely to begin the dual community of religious men and women, which has ultimately become our inspirational cathedral.

So, while honouring the significant presence in some parishes of self-supporting (ie unpaid) clergy, and some retired clergy who have the Bishop's permission to minister locally or wider, each parish simply can no longer have its own resident 'vicar'...the Church of England has simply not got enough people sensing God's call so to minister full-time, nor has it the resources to fund either their stipends (salaries), or the houses for them to live in. This is why people such as myself are asked to exercise leadership and oversight of a string of them, but I can only live in one place and travel to the rest, attempting to be as visible as I am able in church, school, and the whole gamut

of social gatherings. In the face of this inexorable situation, which is clearly here to stay, here in our own diocese of Ely, in common with all the other 43 dioceses of the Church of England, we are facing up to this by trying to establish Authorised Local Leadership, which is likely in each parish to comprise a small team of people with particular skills, and in some cases just a team of one. Such folk deserve all our thanks and praise for their heroic work within and for each parish. Such teams will simply embody current distinct roles in a parish, but give them authorisation together, and with the incumbent (i.e. someone like me); in so doing, they locally and best identify what God is up to in each place. The pity is it has taken us too long to get here, as Canon John Tiller's famous report in the late 1980's prophetically said.

In closing, may I wish you and your family a holy Advent, and a blessed and Happy Christmas when it comes, and do come along to a church service that suits you, whether or not in your own parish! You will find a warm welcome.

Mark

Revd Canon Mark Haworth

St Mary's Parish Church

Sunday Services: Parish Eucharist weekly at 11.30am. On 26th November Holy Communion at 9.30am and Morning Praise at 11.30am.

Remembrance Sunday 12th November: there will be an Act of Remembrance at the New Zealand Memorial Garden at 10.40am, then at the Village Memorial at 10.55am, followed by a service at St Mary's Church at 11.15am.

Christmas services: Christingle service 10.30am on 24th December; Christmas Day Eucharist 11.30am. For full details of all our Christmas services and events please see notices at church and Mepal Stores.

St Mary's Christmas Market will be on Saturday 25th November from 12.30- 3pm at the Village Hall. Do come along to browse the stalls- we'll also be serving lunchtime snacks. With Grand Christmas Draw.

It's a little early, but we wish a Happy and Blessed Christmas to all!

Interim Priest-in-Charge: The Reverend Canon Mark Haworth 01354 699491 or 07932160009 email mhaworth50@hotmail.com
For all enquiries in the first instance please contact the Churchwardens:
Elizabeth Stazicker 01353 778129 email eliz.stazicker@gmail.com
Lesley Sculthorpe 01353 777267 email lesleysculthorpe@gmail.com

Mepal Pantry

As you read this the Mepal Pantry has had a makeover and will have found a **new home at the Mepal Village Hall**. Huge thank to the committee for agreeing to this move. This is for Mepal village residents and should be better and safer for access and opportunity. Just a reminder that the containers marked are for everybody to help themselves and we encourage Waste Warriors to the Pantry, however the other containers (also marked) are only for those struggling (with little or no other food available to them)- this ensures everyone who needs immediate food in our village has access to it. All local emergency food parcel contact information and national helpline numbers are posted on the inside of the doors.

There will also be a shelf for the emergency Dinnerize Meal Kits, as part of Re-imagine Pantry Project- these are recipes and all the ingredients for a family of four, packed into a kit for a healthy and filling meal as we know sometimes help is just needed until funds come through the next day. Food insecurity for many local families will deepen as we approach the colder months so it's important we are ready to support our neighbours.

We can all be a part of the Mepal Pantry by contributing when you can, engaging young and older residents with how a Village Pantry works and ultimately helping the planet by using up food surplus, never doubt the value of your support because your actions can truly make a difference.



Priors Field Surgery Patient Participation Group

The PPG is pleased to share the following update, received on 29th September from our friends at the NHS Cambridge and Peterborough Integrated Care Board, with our surgery’s patients in Mepal and surrounding villages.

“As you are aware from our previous discussions, we have been continuing to work on a longer-term solution for primary care provision in Sutton, and work on this is ongoing.

Alongside this work, we have now formally agreed to enact the second year of our interim contract with Malling Health to provide primary care services to the patients of Priors Field Surgery until 31 March 2025. These services will continue to be delivered from Priors Field Surgery’s current location, and this lease agreement is also in place until 31 March 2025.

We remain committed to working with the local community to ensure Sutton and the surrounding areas continue to have primary care services that meet their needs both now and, in the future, and we will keep you updated with further news on longer-term solutions as they progress.”

Priors Field Surgery have also set up their own facebook page for our surgery to give news to patients first hand.

The PPG wants all Priors Field patients to join the new page which can be found by searching ‘Priors Field Surgery’ on Facebook.



Priors Field Surgery

257 likes • 391 followers

A small GP practice based in Sutton, Cambridgeshire.
Managed by Malling Health Ltd since April 2023.

Send Email

Message

Like

...

£1 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MEPAL YOUTH CLUB

AUTUMN TERM

SEPT 14 28 OCT 12

NOV 9 23 DEC 14

MEPAL VILLAGE HALL

6.15PM - 7.15PM YEARS 3-6

7.30PM - 8.30PM YEARS 7-10

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Haddenham Winter Beer Festival

10th & 11th November

3 SESSIONS

Fri 18.00-23:00

Sat 12.00-17:00

Sat 18.00-23:00

£5 per session

Live Music

Great Drinks

Hot Food

For more info: www.haddenham.beer

At The Arkenstall Village Centre

Raising funds for the AVC

Limited tickets - 18+ ONLY - Advanced tickets recommended

Parish Council News

Who are your current Parish Councillors?

The up-to-date list of your Parish Councillors is always available on the Parish Council Website, so please take a few minutes to look us up!

www.mepalparish.org/parish-council/councillors/

Mepal Parish Councillors



Lorna Williams



Jack Hickman



Sam Knightley

Be Kind

Social media can be a useful tool for the community and when used properly can pull a community together, linking people with the same interests and spreading important messages. Unfortunately, it can also be too easy to slip into using language that can be hurtful or to say things in a way that can be upsetting or even be taken as bullying. If you are trying to say something important, you should always stop and think before hitting the post button.

To avoid miscommunication and offending people there are some steps you should consider. Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes. How would you feel if you were receiving this message?

Unfortunately, social media can often bring out a level of unkindness and we would urge you all to try to be kind when posting any content and try to avoid making personal comments. If you have witnessed criminal or antisocial behaviour – social media is not the appropriate forum to discuss the detail of any alleged offences and we urge you to report these types of activity to the relevant authority.

Thanks to retiring Councillor for his dedicated service

We would like to extend our thanks to our former Chairman, Brian Rollason, who has recently announced his retirement from the Parish Council. Brian has volunteered his time to serve as your former chairman and has spent many years working hard on your behalf.

We are very grateful for the service he has put in over the years and will miss his contribution to the work of the Council.

Councillor Vacancies

Mepal Parish Council has been in existence since 1895 and has 7 Councillor posts. As of 12 October 2023, we have 3 Councillors in post and vacancies for 4 new Councillors.

Mepal Parish Council has a wide range of responsibilities including parish council owned community buildings, parish council owned recreation fields and playgrounds, planning permissions and decisions, street lighting, allotments and can represent the rural communities on some council committees.

We need people from all backgrounds and experiences who reflect this community to put themselves forward for cooption, so if you think you are able to set aside some time each week to become a parish councillor please get in contact with the Clerk.

Reminder of Crime Reporting

You may believe that low level crime and antisocial behaviour is not worth reporting to the Police, but we would like to urge you all to please report all incidents to 111, or via the easy online reporting tool:

www.cambs.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/howto-report-a-crime/

Whilst it may be true that specific incidences, particularly of antisocial behaviour may not feel like they are being investigated, your reports are vital so that a pattern of behaviour is established, and if enough reports are submitted the Police will act.

It is a certainty that if you do not report ASB or crime then the Police will definitely not take action. Reporting it at least gives us a chance that we can try to change behaviour.

Football returns to Mepal Recreation Field

We are really happy that, after a lot of effort over recent years (and some setbacks) we finally have a sustainable solution for the football use of the Pavilion and Field and are now seeing regular Saturday football.

We have two Mens teams and also hope to be able to welcome a ladies team in the future and also some youth games. With a merger between Sutton Rangers and Mepal Sports this has resolved the funding gap, and we are all hoping that you enjoy the matches this season.

Perhaps you might also consider volunteering to help with the new Mepal and Sutton Football

Club? Both new Mens teams are currently sitting mid table in their Cambridge County Leagues (4B and 3B) and we wish them both success this year and hope for many years to come.

Useful Contacts for Mepal & Sutton Football Club

If you have any questions or interest in our club, please don't hesitate to get in touch by email at infosuttonrangers@gmail.com

If you are interested in signing-on your child to play or even just to come for a free try-out, you can either contact the email above or speak to one of our managers, they'll all be keen to help.

Club Secretary – Chris Moore –
infosuttonrangers@gmail.com

Child Welfare Officer – Charlotte Daleworth –
infosuttonrangers@gmail.com

Chairman – Jamie Chamberlain –
infosuttonrangers@gmail.com

Treasurer – Darren Ayres –
suttonrangersfinance@gmail.com

2023/24 Season

Mini Strikers – Ryan Storey

Under 9's manager – Darren Ayres &
Chris Green

Under 10's manager – James Brennan &
Roly Gurner

Under 11's manager – Edmundas Karpinas

Under 12's manager – Louis Corfield &
Rob Davies



THE LIBRARY PRESENTS

Bringing arts activities to
venues across Cambridgeshire
October – December 2023

November

Sat 4 The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Film with live music) Ely Library
Mon 6 Screen Printing Workshop Chatteris Library
Tues 7 Call Mr Robeson (Theatre) St Ives Library
Wed 8 Call Mr Robeson (Theatre) St Neots Library
Sat 11 'Home & Refuge' Poetry Workshop Sawston Library
Sat 11 Samba Drumming Workshop Bar Hill Library
Sat 11 Writing a Neurodivergent Fairytale Cambridge Central Library
Sat 11 The Zoo That Comes To You (Puppetry Show) Burwell Library
Sat 11 Willow Sculpture Workshop Papworth Sunley Centre
Sat 11 Willow Sculpture Workshop Papworth Library
Mon 13 Willow Sculpture Workshop Littleport Library
Thurs 16 Club Origami (Dance) Clay Farm Centre
Thurs 16 100 Years of Magic Workshop Ely Library
Fri 17 Magicomedy Magic Show Huntingdon Library
Sat 18 Ceramics Workshop St Neots Library
Sat 18 Comic Making Workshop Whittlesey Library
Sat 18 Decorative Stars Workshop Wisbech Library
Sat 18 100 Years of Magic Workshop Yaxley Library
Sat 18 WOW! Said the Owl (Puppetry Show) Chatteris Library
Mon 20 Willow Sculpture Workshop Littleport Library
Thurs 23 'Home & Refuge' Poetry Workshop Ely Library
Sat 25 Comic Making Workshop Clay Farm Centre
Sat 25 Screen Printing Workshop Arbury Court Library
Sat 25 Dance Like an Astronaut St Neots Library
Sat 25 Dance Like an Astronaut Cambourne Library
Sat 25 Silly Squirrel (Puppetry Show) Sawston Library
Tues 28 100 Years of Magic Workshop Papworth Library
Tues 28 History of Silent Cinema Workshop Wisbech Library

December

Fri 1 Mazaika (Music) Barnwell Baptist Church
Fri 1 Murder in the Library (Interactive Theatre) Histon Library
Sat 2 Decorative Stars Workshop Ramsey Library
Sat 2 Fused Glass Workshop Burwell Library
Sat 2 Murder in the Library (Interactive Theatre) Wisbech Library
Sun 3 Magical Honey (Dance) Arbury Court Library
Sat 9 Decorative Stars Workshop March Library
Sat 9 Fused Glass Workshop Soham Library
Sat 9 The Christmas Spirits (Theatre) Wisbech Library
Sat 9 Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (Theatre) Whittlesey Library

Tickets can be purchased in the following ways:

- Online through links on www.library.live/the-library-presents
- By calling the Babylon ARTS Box Office 01353 616991
- In person from participating libraries (cash only)
- On the door at all activities (subject to availability / cash only)
- By exchanging Digital Time Credits

DIARY DATES

November

Wed 1st	Friendship Club AGM followed by Bingo	10:00
Sun 5th	St Mary's Patronal Eucharist	11:30
Wed 8th	Friendship Club Talk about the Fens by Elizabeth Stazicker	10:00
Thur 9th	Mepal Youth Club at Village Hall	
Sun 12th	St Mary's Remembrance Sunday at the NZ Memorial	10:40
Sun 12th	St Mary's Remembrance Sunday Service	11:15
Mon 13th	Full Parish Council Meeting at Mepal Pavilion	18:30
Wed 15th	Friendship Club Fish and chips at the hall	12:00 - 14:00
Sun 19th	St Mary's Holy Communion	11:30
Wed 22nd	Friendship Club Trip to Springfields	10:00
Thur 23rd	Mepal Youth Club at Village Hall	
Sat 25th	Christmas Market at the Village Hall	12:30 - 15:00
Sun 26th	St Mary's Holy Communion	09:30
Sun 26th	St Mary's Morning Praise	11:30
Wed 29th	Friendship Club Card making	10:00

December

Sun 3rd	St Mary's Parish Eucharist	11:30
Wed 6th	Friendship Club Christmas meal at the hall, secret santa	12:00 - 14:00
Sun 10th	St Mary's Holy Communion	11:30
Mon 11th	Full Parish Council Meeting at Mepal Pavilion	18:30
Wed 13th	Friendship Club Christmas meal at the Three Tons Doddington	10:00
Thur 14th	Mepal Youth Club at Village Hall	
Sun 17th	St Mary's Parish Eucharist	11:30
Wed 20th	Friendship Club Christmas Bingo, wine, mince pies	11:00 - 13:00
Sun 24th	St Mary's Holy Communion	09:30
Sun 24th	St Mary's Christingle service	10:30
Mon 25th	St Mary's Christmas Eucharist	11:30
Sun 31st	St Mary's joint Christmas service at Sutton Church	10:30

Dates/times were correct at time of print - please check with clubs directly for any changes.

If you want to provide any diary dates for the January/February 2024 issue then please ensure these are provided before the copy deadline.

Send articles & dates to:
mepalmatters@mepalparish.org

Next copy deadline:
11th December 2023

Thank you to the volunteers who help deliver the Mepal Matters issues!