

# KERSEY PARISH NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER 2025

### HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Kersey tree Lighting

Monday 1st December

6.00pm



#### Christmas Choral Concert

We welcome Madrigalia to

St Mary's Church

*(Audience Carols included)*

Thursday December 18th

7pm for 7.30pm

£10 includes refreshments

Linda Newbigging 07905731431

[lindanewbigging@btinternet.com](mailto:lindanewbigging@btinternet.com)

#### Christmas Carol Service

Welcome to St Mary's Church

Annual Carol Service

Sunday 21st December at 4pm

Rev Geoffrey Clement

If you wish to read a lesson

Please contact Jenny Partridge

07747778608

[Jenny.partridge19@btinternet.c](mailto:Jenny.partridge19@btinternet.c)

Photo courtesy of Viv Marsh

## CONTACT NUMBERS

### **Parochial Church Council**

Vicar: Rev. Geoffrey Clement .....revgclement@gmail.com or 01473 657316  
Secretary: Linda Newbigging..... 01787 210137  
Church Warden: Rachel Wells ..... 01473 822230  
**Bellringers** – Bell Captain: Neville Whittell..... 01473 822616  
**Forget-me-nots** – Organiser: Veronica Partridge ..... 01473 823188  
**Tuesday Club** – Rachel Wells ..... 01473 822230  
**Table Tennis Club** – Adrian Blyth ..... 01473 827805

### **Parish Council**

Chairman: John Hume ..... 01473 810098  
Clerk to the Council: Sarah Partridge...clerk@kerseyparish.gov.uk ..... 07765916162  
**Footpaths** – Chairman: Kevin Pratt ..... 07854 390658  
**Kersey Community Playground Committee** – Jonathan Marsh..... 01473 822927  
**Newsletter: Production, Editing and Advertising**—Colin Grannell ..... 01473 829074

### **Village Hall**

Chairman: Philippa Harris ..... 01473 827079  
Secretary and Bookings: Natalie Blyth . . . . . nablyth1@gmail.com or 01473 827805

### **VPA (Village Produce Association)**

Chairman: Pete Partridge ..... 07901913932  
Secretary: Rachel Wells ..... 01473 822230

### **Grays Trust**

Chairman: Mary Pearce..... 07947079422  
Secretary: Philippa Harris ..... 01473 827079

**Nightingale Trust/Allotments** – Info: Natalie Blyth ..... 01473 827805

**School** – Joint Headteachers: Jess Damant and Claire Dunnell Paley ..... 01473 823397

**Kersey Playingfield Assoc. (Glebe)** – Mark Pertwee..... 01473 810227

**Kersey Community Website**.....www.kerseyparish.gov.uk

**Hadleigh Health Practice**..... 01473 822961

**West Suffolk Hospital** (Bury St Edmunds)..... 01284 713000

**Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust**..... 01473 712233

**Police** ..... The non-emergency number to call if you want to contact the local police is 101 (when it's less urgent than 999) .

**Defibrillators:** There are THREE cPAD (Community Public Access Defibrillators) accessible 24/7 in the Parish. 1) The Bell Inn, Kersey IP7 6DY. 2) West Sampsons Hall Farm, Uplands, Kersey IP7 6EN. 3) Kersey Mill IP7 6DP. A further one is available at Kersey School IP7 6EG when the school is open.

<p><b>Newsletter Donation:</b> If possible please create a standing order or electronic payment to Kersey St Mary Parochial Church Council: 30-13-52 00694777 quoting KPN and your surname. Next content submission date: 24th January 2026</p>
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## **Village News**

### **CHURCH CLEANING**

Weeks beginning 1st December: Neil and Joan Hutton  
Weeks beginning 15th December: Philippa Harris and Iqbal Alam  
4th January As many as possible to remove decorations and clean.

**FLOWERS:** I would be grateful if the Christmas flowers, greenery could be done ready for the concert on the 18th December

**MOVES:** Peter Moeller has moved from Church Hill to Hadleigh.

**VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION :** A meeting is being held on the 12th of January to arrange the show schedule. If anyone has any fresh ideas especially for the handwork classes I would love to hear from you. Please send them to Rachel Wells.

**SYMPATHY:** We extend our sympathy to the family of Marie Chaplin who recently passed away at her home in Hadleigh. Marie with her late husband Alan and latterly Frances were regular worshippers at St Mary's until her health deteriorated. Marie was also a regular member of the Forgetmenots. The funeral in St Mary's will be 10th December at 10.00am

Frances and Nicholas are sad to announce the passing of their mother Marie Chaplin, who died on Sunday the 9th November. Frances enjoyed helping her Mum in later years. Marie was loved by all her family.

**RAINFALL:** From the 24th October to the 23rd November 114mm (approx 4 1/2 ins) of rain was recorded in Vale Lane

**INVALIDS:** We send our best wishes to those who have been to hospital recently for operations and to those unwell at home.

**QUIZ:** A quiz with fish and chip supper was held on the 14th November. In first place was Bringing up the rear 127points, 2nd Magpie murderers 122points, 3rd Wet,wet,wet 121points. Other teams taking part were Crazy snails, Le Cloches, Half full, Scraping the barrel, Thin puzzle, Up the corner, Absent minds, Gibara's giants, Jackson five and Hoof hearted. Winners of the wooden spoons and also the Best named team were Hoof hearted. All money raised will go towards the community playground.

## Village News continued

**TUESDAY CLUB:** At the November meeting one of our members Natalie Blyth talked and showed us photos of her family holiday “ Cruising round Iceland “ Leaving Southampton and travelling to Belfast before embarking on a two day journey to Iceland with a rather rough sea. They visited some interesting places and also saw a variety of birds and flowers. Sunset was at 12 o’clock with sunrise at 3am. They then travelled onto Norway before heading back to Southampton. A very enjoyable meeting with some lovely photos. Competition for “Something white” was won by Kate Banks. We meet again on the 2nd December for our Christmas party with eats, drink and maybe a quiz or two. Village Hall 2.30PM.

**DONATIONS:** Thank you to everyone who has donated towards the cost of printing the newsletter, it cannot continue without your support.

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### Church Clergy:

Rev. Geoffrey Clement  
01473 657316

### Church Officials

Rachel Wells: Church Warden 01473822230  
Linda Newbigging: Secretary 01787210137  
Colin Grannell: Treasurer: 01473 829074

## St MARY’S CHURCH SERVICES

Celtic Morning Prayer:

Held every Tuesday at 9.30am with Rev Geoffrey Clement

30th Nov	No service at Kersey, Benefice Service at Aldham 10.00am		
7th Dec	11.00am	HC with baptism	Rev Geoffrey Clement
14th Dec	11.00am	Parish Service	Rev Jackie Sephton
21st Dec	4.00pm	Carol Service	Rev Geoffrey Clement
24th Dec	9.30pm	Christmas Eve HC	Rev Jackie Sephton
28th Dec	10.00am	Benefice Service	Rev Jackie Sephton
4th Jan	11.00am	Holy Communion	
11th Jan	11.00am	Parish Service	
18th Jan	4.00pm	Evensong	
25th Jan	No service at Kersey		Aldham

## **St Mary's Church Parochial Church Council**

The PCC met on the 18th November, illness and family/work commitments restricted attendance to Rachel Wells, Linda Newbigging, Jenny Partridge and Colin Grannell. A summary of the keys issues and decisions follows:

**Safe Guarding:** This is an important issue for the church, the PCC ensure everyone required to undertake the appropriate training course does so in a timely manner.

**Services:** All services for the next six weeks are covered during this busy period. The PCC will seek volunteer readers for the Christmas Carol Service.

**Coffee Morning:** Consideration is being given to hosting a monthly coffee morning in the church.

**Lighting:** The new lights for the Chancel and both aisles have been purchased and will arrive in December. We hope that installation will take place in January. The original installation quotes of over a year ago have lapsed therefore we are seeking several quotes at this stage. We may have to approach Charitable Trusts for a grant.

**Contactless Devices:** The two devices are more than four years old and have become very unstable. They rely upon Mobile WIFI and Bluetooth technology both of which have advanced considerably in the intervening four years. We have decided to upgrade the mobile WIFI in the church from 3G to 5G and purchase a new Collectin Solo device. All of this should be completed by the end of November.

**Quota Update:** Our Parish share of payment to the Diocese has increased to around £17K per annum. We will fall significantly below this amount as we have struggled to pay a whole host of maintenance invoices this calendar year.

**Churchyard:** We hired a new gardener at the beginning of 2025 and he has proven to be a good choice, therefore we are negotiating a new 12 month contract. In the meantime the Wild Flower Meadow will be strimmed on 5th December.

## St Mary's Church Parochial Church Council continued

**Quinquennial Report 2024:** This continues to occupy a significant amount of time and energy. The two areas of most concern are:-

Downpipes and Gutters: Linda and Colin scaled the heights of the porches to clear the downpipes and gutters, which were full of nesting material. However the pipes up to the roof are too high and require professional review. We are obtaining quotes which are looking to be in the £1000 vicinity for a clean up and review of the entire church.

Soakaways: The South side of the church has drainpipes and gutters, the North side facing the village has roof spouts which cascade rainwater onto the grass verges below. We have received permission to dig out these soakaways and back fill with suitable material designed to keep water away from the walls. Probable cost will be circa £4K

**Bell Ringing Chamber:** There are no radiators in the Chamber therefore the PCC have purchased two portable heaters for use by the Bell Ringers and anyone else using the church in this cold weather.

**Fundraising:** Given the cost of every contract we have is increasing and sadly we see our congregation diminishing as elderly parishioners move or pass away then fundraising becomes a key responsibility. We have engaged with Madrigalia a local choir who will perform in the church on the 18th December and we hope this will be well supported.

**Resources:** Any help in delivering services and activities in our church will be very gratefully received.

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**Chris Wright**

07500 046899



enquiries@sfssuffolk.co.uk

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## St Mary's Church: Rev Geoffrey Clement

Dear Friends

Christmas, the big one! We spend ages getting ready – decorating, shopping, cooking – but how much do we actually know about the history of Christmas beyond the nativity plays and Bible stories? So, I thought perhaps we should take a look at **Christmas: The Real Story Behind Our Traditions**

Let's dig into some surprising facts. Many of our favourite UK Christmas traditions actually have roots in pre-Christian celebrations, particularly from Roman Saturnalia and Norse/Germanic Yule festivals.

Here are the main pagan-origin practices that have become part of British Christmas:

**The Christmas Tree** is a 17th-century German invention, but it clearly comes from the pagan practice of bringing greenery indoors to decorate in midwinter. The tradition really took off in Britain when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert popularised the Christmas tree.

**The Yule Log** is a relic of those long-lost days. While today we think of it as a chocolate cake, Yule logs were originally real logs that were traditionally burnt on a fire and left to bring good luck. "Yule" was a mid-winter pagan festival celebrating the winter solstice associated with the Norse god Odin.

**Holly and Mistletoe** – during the Roman festival of Saturnalia, people exchanged wreaths made of holly for good luck, as holly was a holy plant associated with Saturn, the god of agriculture.

**Father Christmas** – our modern Santa Claus has multiple influences. There's Saint Nicholas who saved children from poverty by leaving gifts of money. Then there's Odin, the king of the Norse gods, who was depicted as a bearded old man who rode his eight-legged horse.

**The date** - The decision to celebrate Christmas on December 25th coincided with pagan solstice festivities, making it easier for Christianity to gain acceptance among pagan populations. This timing aligned with Saturnalia, which celebrated the solstice – the day the sun starts coming back and the days start getting longer.

Whether or not you're celebrating Christmas because it's the birth of Jesus Christ, I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I'd also like to extend a warm invitation to join us at our carol services, Christingle, 9:30pm "Mid-night Mass" on Christmas Eve at Elmsett, and the Christmas Day service at St Mary's Aldham at 10am. Service details are listed elsewhere in the magazine.



## The night before.....

Santa's coming, that's for sure,  
Rudolph's carrot on the floor;  
Mince-pie and sherry on the shelf,  
Ready for the man himself.



Excitement in the children's eyes,  
But tiredness they can't disguise.  
In the corner there's the shining tree  
With presents there for all to see.



A doll for her, a sledge for him.  
He hopes for snow - the chance is slim.  
But children must go to their beds,  
Where dreams of Santa fill their heads.



Some folk go off to Midnight Mass  
And then come home and have a glass,  
Before they too must wend their way  
"To Bedfordshire!" or "Hit the hay!"



Tomorrow there's the bird to stuff  
And cook until it's done enough.  
The pud must boil for four hours more,  
Ere hungry guests come to the door.

There's spuds to peel and roast 'til done  
And pigs in blankets for everyone.  
Sprouts (some love 'em; others not)  
And bread sauce must not be forgot.

Carrots, parsnips, maybe some peas,  
(Quite easy from the old deep-freeze),  
Then leeks, I guess, in cheesy sauce  
And gravy to be made of course.





Out comes the favourite cloth once more,  
The first time since the year before.  
The table laid all neat and clean,  
Candles and crackers complete the scene.

We'll eat this year just after three.  
(That way they won't need any tea!)  
The King, of course, must have his say  
Before the feast gets underway.



The red must breathe; the white must chill.  
Shall we have bubbly? Of course we will!  
"To absent friends!" we'll drink a toast,  
Then get on with the turkey roast.



But that's all for another day.  
For now I've just got this to say,  
"Happy Christmas to one and all,  
I really hope you have a ball!"

With Best Wishes  
Pete Partridge

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**A Flight of Folklore:** The robin's enduring relationship with humankind is timeless and tales abound of how this little charmer won its scarlet breast. Interestingly, it was always known as the "redbreast" before the addition of the name robin was added as a prefix, thanks to a European custom of attributing names to birds.

Christian folklore attests that it was an act of kindness that caused the robin's colour change. The bird decided to fan the flames of the fire to keep baby Jesus warm in his manger but flew too close. In other tales, it was the Robin who gently teased the thorns from Christ's brow while he was on the cross and a speck of blood tainted

the bird's breast and face. The Victorians really fell for the robin's merits but it became synonymous with Christmas, thanks to posties sporting a bright red uniform while delivering festive cards and gifts. They were affectionately called "robins", and the bird was forever tied to the season of goodwill featuring on cards and decorations.



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## **Kersey Parish Council news**

### **Local Government Reorganisation**

The Government has just launched their consultation on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has received two proposals from councils in Suffolk and three from Norfolk councils.

The government would like to hear views from residents of the proposals to help inform the assessment of the proposals. The consultation closes on 11 January 2026. All the information about the consultation can be found online at:

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/norfolk-suffolk/>

Suffolk County Council has proposed one single unitary council for the whole of Suffolk to deliver all services currently provided by the county and district councils.

The district councils and Ipswich Borough Council have put forward a proposal for three unitary councils to provide all services across Suffolk. The areas are:

- Western Suffolk
- Central & Eastern Suffolk
- Ipswich & Southern Suffolk.

Kersey would fall into Western Suffolk.

It is vital that the government hears directly from you – so please do engage with the consultation and have your say in this momentous decision for Suffolk which will change how services are delivered across Suffolk.

There is also another change coming. On 7 May 2026 there will be an election for a Mayor for the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk. The new unitary councils will be the constituent members of Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) working with the mayor to decide on strategic, region-wide issues such as transport, economic development, and housing. The new structure is intended to create a simpler, more efficient system that supports the wider devolution agenda. The mayor will also take on the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

SP Clerk

## **Kersey Parish Council**

A Parish Council meeting was held on the 17th November

Present were J Hume (chair) four councillors, Suffolk and District councillors, clerk and six members of the public for part of the meeting.

Apologies received from two councillors.

Declarations of interest. One councillor declared an interest in a planning application.

Minutes of previous meeting were signed as correct.

Reports from SCC and DC can be viewed on line.

Parish time. A concern was raised about the speed of cars travelling through the village particularly The Street and Church Hill some of whom are residents which is disappointing.

Planning progress. Brook cottage. Babergh have granted permission for replacement front door and fitting of flood defences.

Cherrywood. Babergh refused permission for application for erection of garden room and single storey side and rear extensions.

Applications received. The Haven. Construction of a single storey annex to provide supplementary residential accommodation. This will be a low impact timber cabin. It is proposed to remove some existing outbuildings but with no changes to access requirements. Councillors considered these proposals and resolved to fully support.

Leys House. Retention of rear retaining wall and air source heat pump. The applicant explained they had been advised no planning consent was necessary. Councillors agreed to fully support the retention. The parish council highlighted the importance for owners of listed buildings and in conservation areas to consult with Babergh before commencing any works. Unit F The Brick barn, Kersey Maltings. Councillors approved plans for internal renovation of the ground and first floor. The structure of the building would be unchanged.

Application received after publishing the agenda. Barn South of Water Lane. Erection of one self build dwelling. Re consultation of amended plans. These will be discussed at a later meeting.

Clerks report. The timber village sign had been renovated. Screen Suffolk co ordinated a day of filming in Kersey. A date for repairs to the footbridge over the Splash are still awaited. The clerk has attended several Local Government Reorganisation briefings and webinars. The district councillor was thanked for his time investigating options for a booster for mobile signals these are very expensive and not a viable option to pursue. It is suggested that anyone with problems makes direct contact with their network provider.

## Kersey Parish Council continued

All correspondence was noted.

Finance. All financial statements had been circulated and these were discussed.

Report from internal audit. Everything was found to be in order.

Footpath working group. All paths have had a second cut some may need doing again. One of the mowers has gone to be serviced.

KCPC. The grass cutting rota has worked well this year. A maintenance day was carried out. A well attended quiz night was held.

Repair of assets. A quote had been received to repair some of the wooden assets and treat with preservative.

Consider progress of People and Place Plan. The steering group were thanked for putting on the excellent consultation events. Community organisations were also thanked for the displays publicising their work. There was some good feedback.

Approve Good Neighbours risk assessment, welcome pack and draft leaflet.

All these were approved, volunteers will be contacted to complete a volunteer agreement.

Consider the concern raised regarding the ever increasing bureaucratic burden of many environmental, bio diversity and other studies Babergh now require to support planning applications. Letter to be sent to Babergh.

Review report from Clerks job appraisal. The clerk was an outstanding asset to the community providing excellent advice to the council.

Budget and Precept. This was discussed in detail.

AOB. A concern was raised about the number of potholes in The Street and Church Hill. These have already been reported.

A full report will be found on the website at a later date.

**Rachel Wells**

## DIARY DATES

1st December	6.00pm	Christmas Tree lights	The Splash
2nd December	2.30pm	Tuesday Club Xmas party	Village Hall
9th December	2,30pm	School Nativity	Church
18th December	7.00pm for 7.30pm	Christmas Concert	Church
12th Jan	7.30pm	VPA meeting	Village Hall
26th January	7.30p	Parish Council	Village Hall



### Kersey Newsletter Christmas Quiz



1. How many different flavours are there in a standard tub of Quality Street?
2. 'Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents' is the opening line to which classic novel?
3. The Post Office stopped delivering letters in England and Wales on Christmas Day at the start of which decade?
4. What does the acronym LED mean on fairy lights?
5. Popular in Christmas floral displays, the poinsettia is an indigenous flower to which large country?
6. In which country was Boxing Day renamed Day of Goodwill in 1994?
7. Which female singer sang first on Band Aid II's "Do They Know It's Christmas?" in 1989?
8. Leonard Bernstein conducted a historic performance on 25 December 1989 to celebrate what?
9. Which Scottish singer-songwriter was born on Christmas Day, 1954?
10. The biggest Christmas Day UK TV audience ever recorded was in 1989 when nearly 22 million watched the UK premiere of which film?
11. Early versions of which tradition was started in Germany in 1903 by publisher Gerhard Land?
12. At the beginning of the first ever episode of *The Simpsons*, which song is sung by the children of Springfield Elementary school at their annual Christmas pageant?
13. What was the first song played in space?
14. Clara, the eldest child of Mr and Mrs Stahlbaum, is given what sort of wooden doll by her godfather on Christmas Eve?
15. Which scientist started the first Royal Institution Christmas Lecture in 1825?
16. The Christmas card was invented in the same year Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carole* - in which decade of the 1800s?
17. Which EU country with a modern-day population of about 10 million was founded on Christmas Day 1000 by King Stephen I?
18. What old Christmas tradition signals to people passing by that the residents of a house are Christian?

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## FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S 500 CLUB LOTTERY

Latest 500 Club draw results:

### November

1st Prize	Richard Freeman
2nd Prize	Jackie Rigby
3rd Prize	Suzie Rudkin

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to everyone in the Club.

For details of the 500 Club monthly lottery and FoSM membership information please contact Mark Pertwee on 07919166782 or email [fosmkersey@gmail.com](mailto:fosmkersey@gmail.com)

### Christmas Quiz Answers!

1. Little Women	2. 1960s (1960)	3. Light Emitting Diode	4. Mexico	5. South Africa	6. Kylie Minogue	7. Fall of Berlin Wall	8. Annie Lennox	9.
10. Crocodile Dundee	11. Advent Calendars	12. O Little Town of Bethlehem	13. Jingle Bells	14. Nutcracker Doll	15. Michael Faraday	16. 1840s (1843)	17. Hungary	18. Candles in the Window



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## **Winter Gardening: Thriving Outdoors and Under Glass**

Winter may seem like a time when gardens sleep, but with the right strategies, you can keep your outdoor space productive and even enjoy fresh harvests. Winter gardening is about protecting plants, maintaining soil health, and using greenhouses to extend the growing season.

**Pruning and Planting** January and February are ideal months to prune roses, apple trees, and other fruiting plants. Bare-root trees and shrubs can be planted between November and March, giving them time to establish strong roots before spring.

**Protecting Plants Outdoors** Frost, wind, and waterlogging are the biggest threats in winter. Use fleece, cloches, or cold frames to shield tender crops. Raise containers off the ground to prevent water damage, and apply a thick layer of mulch or compost to insulate soil and enrich it for future planting.

**Adding Colour and Wildlife Value** Evergreens, winter-flowering shrubs like witch hazel or viburnum, and colourful stems such as dogwood brighten the garden during dull months. Leaving seed heads intact provides food for birds and shelter for insects, supporting biodiversity through the cold season.

**Edibles in Winter** Hardy greens such as kale, spinach, and chard withstand frost, while root crops like leeks, parsnips, and carrots can be harvested throughout winter. For fresh salads, lamb's lettuce and rocket thrive under protection.

**Greenhouse Tips** A greenhouse is invaluable in winter. It creates a sheltered microclimate where you can grow crops that would otherwise struggle outdoors. Use it to cultivate winter salads, herbs, and even early sowings of spring vegetables. Ventilation is crucial—open vents on mild days to prevent mould and mildew. Insulate with bubble wrap to retain heat, and consider using heating mats for seedlings. Regularly clean glass panels to maximise light, which is limited in winter.

**Planning Ahead** Winter is also the perfect time to plan. Sketch layouts, order seeds, and repair tools or structures. By combining outdoor care with greenhouse management, you'll ensure your garden remains resilient, productive, and ready to burst into life when spring arrives.

## Kersey - October Crime Overview

There were no reported crimes in Kersey throughout October.

We are now in a time of year when, due to the cover of darkness, burglaries and vehicle thefts/break-ins are more likely. At this time of year house burglaries tend to occur in the evenings, while shed and outbuilding break-ins often happen late at night or in the early hours of the morning. Vehicle crime also increases, with car break-ins typically occurring during the evening or early morning. Offenders sometimes go from car to car trying door handles.

Here are the most important tips to help prevent becoming a victim of these offences:

**MAKE IT APPEAR SOMEONE IS HOME** : If you are going out in the evening, leave some lights on. Consider using a television LED simulator that mimics the glow of a TV. If you will be out during the day and not home until after dark, have timers on a couple of lights so they turn on automatically

**CCTV** : Even a basic video doorbell can deter criminals. Police recommend the Defender Video Doorbell because it is secure, works without a subscription, it just needs Wi-Fi to work. Better still, invest in a CCTV system—wireless options are available. Burglars do not want to be seen and will usually flee if they suspect they are being monitored. Even a fake CCTV system is better than none.

**HIDE YOUR VALUABLES** : Hide valuables such as cash or jewellery well, so they cannot be easily found even if drawers are emptied. Do not leave anything of value in your vehicle, or items that look like they might contain valuables (such as bags).

**LOCK HOUSE/CAR DOORS AND WINDOWS** : Ensure all doors and windows are closed and locked, **including back doors, even if you are at home**. Last year, there was a spate of burglaries where the offender entered through an unlocked back door mid evening, whilst the occupant was home, and stole items from accessible rooms (e.g., handbags from kitchens). Consider a chain or secondary lock on your front door—if a burglar cannot enter silently, they may give up or make noise, alerting you. Keep your vehicle locked.

**KEEP YOUR CAR KEYS SECURE** : Do not leave car keys near the front door. Hide them. If you have keyless entry, store keys in a Faraday pouch or box to prevent signal cloning.

**HOUSE ALARM** : Consider installing a burglar alarm, especially if your home is secluded or rural. Even a fake alarm box mounted high on the front of your home can deter most burglars.

Continued.....

## Kersey Crime Review continued

**FORENSIC MARKING** : Mark up your property with UV pen or for some items special embossing. Keep note of serial numbers. If you have power tools or other items you are never going to sell, make them as unattractive to criminals as possible, paint them or mark them in ways that make them less attractive to steal in the first place and sell on.

As you may have seen, Suffolk remains a low crime county and a very safe place to live, so being a victim of these offences is quite rare. But offences can and do happen in your area, with a spike in burglaries typically seen in the darker months, so please take as many of these precautions as you can to make it harder for criminals. I feel it is human nature for some people to think it will never happen to them, but it is obviously happening to some people, so protect yourself against it as best you can. If you follow those tips above, you are dramatically reducing the chances of being targeted in the first place and if you were still unlucky enough to be a victim, the offender would not get away with much and anything they do take is potentially identifiable to which helps when police recover property.

I hope everyone has a good Christmas and New Year,

Kind regards, PC 1293 Johnson – Community Police Officer.

## Making Your Will

Retired solicitor Trevor Dodwell is local and through his business he writes Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney.

He offers a home visit service, thoughtful and friendly client care, with career-long advisory experience.

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## Classic Mulled Wine Recipe

Well you could buy mulled wine at the supermarket...or you could make your own using this simple classic recipe. Promise you will taste the difference!

### Ingredients (serves 6–8):

- 1 bottle (750 ml) fruity red wine (Merlot, Grenache, or Zinfandel work well)
- 2 cups apple cider (or apple juice)
- 1 orange, sliced into rounds (plus extra for garnish)
- 1 lemon, sliced into rounds (optional, for brightness)
- 3–4 tablespoons honey or sugar (adjust to taste)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 4 whole cloves
- 2 star anise
- 3–4 cardamom pods (optional, for depth)
- 1 small piece of fresh ginger (about 1 inch), sliced
- ¼ cup brandy (optional, for extra warmth)

### Instructions:

Pour the wine and apple cider into a large saucepan or pot.

Add the orange and lemon slices, honey (or sugar), and all the spices.

Warm gently over medium heat until steaming, but **do not boil** (boiling will burn off the alcohol and alter the flavour).

Reduce heat to low and let the mixture simmer gently for 20–30 minutes to allow the spices to infuse.

Taste and adjust sweetness if needed.

Stir in brandy just before serving, if using.

Ladle into heatproof mugs or glasses. Garnish with an orange slice, cinnamon stick, or star anise for a festive touch.

### Tips:

Keep the pot covered on very low heat if serving over several hours.

For a non-alcoholic version, replace wine with grape juice and skip the brandy.

Leftovers can be cooled, strained, and stored in the fridge for up to 2 days; reheat gently before serving



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## **Farming Notes**

### **Arable**

So, the drought of 2025 is finally over! On 14/15th of November we had between 47 and 54 mm of rain (around 2 inches) depending on which part of Kersey it was measured in. The first 25 mm was needed to moisten the parched ground before the second 25 mm was able to soak in. We have had further spells of wet weather since then, but I would say that the ground water is still far from capacity, and you will see that various ponds are still only half full and the stream is still fairly low. As I said in last month's news, the river I fished in the North of Scotland, on and off all summer, had suffered severe low levels, but I am pleased to have heard today that it is currently running at 9 feet above summer normal (N). At last it is getting a well needed clean-out, without being high enough to damage the all-important spawnings that will be under way right now.

Some of you may have noticed that both we and neighbouring farms have had tree trunks waiting by the roadside for collection by lorries. These are willows that will be transported to a company near Chelmsford who turn them into cricket bats. This firm is said to produce enough 'clefts' to supply 75% of the world's production of bats, and although willows can be grown in other countries it is said that East Anglia grows the finest worldwide.

### **Livestock**

All of the cattle are now settled into their winter housing. As I write these notes we are at the end of a very busy day of health testing: the vet takes blood samples from all of the cattle which are over one year of age. The quickest and most efficient place to take a bovine blood sample is from under the base of the tail. This is not an easy process and requires the cattle to be restrained either in the cattle crush or by catching their heads in special locking yolk devices. At the best of times you cannot expect the cattle to cooperate with this and we are grateful to Adam for his hard work and patience in helping with the cattle handling. Once in the crush and restrained the vet lifts the tail and inserts a needle into where she hopes to find a ready blood supply.

## **Farming Notes continued**

The other end of the needle is inserted into a small sterile vacuum tube and sooner or later (depending on the skill of the vet) the tube fills with about 10 millilitres of deep red blood. Once collected the tubes are passed on to Sarah who adds a pre-printed label which identifies the donor, Sarah also checks the cow off against her list. We can mark on the list which of 5 different diseases we want the animal to be screened for. The vet costs about £150 per hour and there is a lab charge for each disease of between £5 and £10 per sample so the cost of the whole process is considerable.

However, without a proven high herd health status we would be unable to supply valuable breeding bulls to Cogent. The fact that the herd is clear of most of the worst high risk diseases also saves money in terms of preventing losses in herd performance. We should get our test results in about a week, so fingers crossed for another all clear. You might wonder during all this what I have been doing – truth is I'm not entirely sure but I am still worn out by the end of a day of testing!

## **All our Yesterdays!**

We were very pleased to receive correspondence from 88 year old Michael Stiff.

"As a resident of Kersey from birth to 15...1936 - 1951 I still retain an affection for the village, attending both the village school and its recent anniversary , along with the Village Hall celebrations, it was my father who was the driving force behind its creation.

I was about to discard the February 2025 Newsletter issue which came to me via sister Lavender (85) who lives in Kesgrave and brother Robert (93) who lives in Banstead when the winter scene produced by Meleah Reardon jumped out at me. In January 1947 the village was cut off as everywhere was impassable with snow big drifts everywhere. With little traffic, the road from the church gate (not restricted in those days) to The Reading Room was an all day Cresta Run!. With not a crash helmet in sight and all ages coming down head first there were accidents but only pride was hurt! My sledge, brought back from a holiday in Switzerland by my mum was "king of the slopes". Next day the flood came with water pouring out of the lane next to Carlton House. It was a wonder the bridge wasn't washed away!"

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