

DEDHAM

Parish Magazine



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

12th NOVEMBER 2023

November 2023



Dedham Parish Magazine

First Published in 1876

November 2023

DEDHAM PARISH CHURCH

www.dedham-and-ardleigh-parishes.org.uk

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DEDHAM PARISH MAGAZINE

The deadline for magazine entries is the 10th of the month

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Cover Photo - Royal Square, John Goldsbrough

Can we help?

Sometimes things in life can just get too much to cope with on your own... **Psalm 34:18:** *The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.* If you would like some support or know of any one who would, please contact: Ruth Higginson **Tel: 322 598.**

If you would like a lift to church contact Sharon Sarson Tel: 07876114418

If you have been bereaved or know of anyone who has, please contact Vee Druitt **Tel: 322 000** or Ruth Higginson **Tel: 322 598**

If you need any further support, please contact the Parishes Office Tel: 322 136 and your call will be returned.

Throughout the magazine local telephone numbers omit the 01206 area code unless otherwise stated.

Sunday, 5th November

8.00am Eucharist BCP
 9.30am Café Church
 9.30am Rise N' Shine
 3.30pm Remembering Your Loved Ones

**Ardleigh
 Ardleigh
 Dedham***

Sunday, 12th November

10.45am Remembrance Service, War Memorial
 10.45am Remembrance Service, War Memorial

**Ardleigh
 Dedham***

Sunday, 19th November

9.30am Holy Communion
 9.30am Matins

**Ardleigh
 Dedham***

Sunday, 26th November

9.30am Morning Prayer
 9.30am Holy Communion
 5.00pm ReViVe@5

**Ardleigh
 Dedham*
 Dedham***

* = Services which are live streamed.

**Morning Prayer - Every Tuesday,
 10.30am at Dedham Church.**

**Online Prayer - Monday Morning at
 7am and Friday Evening at 6pm**

**Benefice prayer meeting on Zoom
 each Monday at 5pm. Please
 contact the Parish Office for
 further information.**

**Living Stones Prayer Group: every 2nd
 and 4th Monday of the month: 6.25pm**
 Ardleigh Church

**Ardleigh Friendship Group – every 2nd
 and 4th Tuesday of the month:**
 10am to 12 noon in Ardleigh Church -
 outside when weather allows.

**Little Steps Pre-School Group – every
 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month:**
 11.15-12.45 and 1.30-3.00pm in Ardleigh
 Church (please bring lunch if staying for
 the afternoon).

**Monday Lunch Club – Monday 6th
 November 12.30pm, Essex Tea
 Rooms.** Phone 322192 to reserve a
 place indicating it is for the Lunch Club.

**Men's Breakfast - Saturday 4th
 November, 9am** - venue tbc. For bacon
 butties, tea, coffee and chat.

**Walk and Talk - Thursday 9th
 November 10am** - Meet at Dedham
 Arts Centre at 10am for a walk or 11am
 for a chat

FROM THE REGISTERS.

Funerals. Monday 9th October.
 Celebration of Life Service for Duncan
 Lougee



Our services are on YouTube - search
 Dedham and Ardleigh Parishes.



Follow us on Facebook, search -
 DedhamandArdleigh

Scan this QR code to access the Dedham
 and Ardleigh parishes website



Dear friends,

I hope by now the shorter days and colder weather are not as much of a shock to the system as they were not too long ago! It feels very much like the time of the year when we 'batten down the hatches', ready for the long haul that will see us fast approach long, dark days and much chillier climes than the Indian summer we were enjoying until only recently.

And so, as we spend more time indoors and prepare for the season of Advent, it is timely to remember Cecilia of Rome, a Christian who lived and died in Rome in the third century (A. D.). She is remembered for her faithful Christian witness that resulted in her husband's conversion to Christianity, as well as his brother's. All were subsequently martyred for their faith, which was seen as scandalous to adherents of the Roman gods of the time.

Tradition holds that she 'sang in her heart to the Lord' while musicians played at her wedding and so to posterity she became the patron saint of music and musicians. Some of us will have heard recordings from an orchestra, based in Rome, named after her: the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. This orchestra has existed for over 100 years and play symphonies from many of the finest European composers down through the ages.

The Apostle Paul encouraged some early Christians to "[s]ing and make music from your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). This was how they were able to remind themselves of the goodness of God as they recounted His wonderful, merciful ways in song. It is a practice many Christians continue today. And so, as we 'batten down the hatches' in this darker, colder season, may we find live-giving truth to sing in our hearts to the Lord and so help us to look forward

to the shining star in Bethlehem that signifies the advent of a much brighter, everlasting Light in this world.

*Best wishes,
Phillip*

Holy Baptism/Thanksgiving

Dedham Church is always reviewing how it can best support families enquiring about baptism for their children. In the Church of England, we generally encourage families to have such conversations with their local parish church, as they are in the best position to provide the support and pastoral care from which young families can benefit the most.

There are currently two options the Church of England provides: Holy Baptism and Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child. The Thanksgiving service is an easy and accessible way for families to celebrate the birth of their child and can be arranged at the next Sunday service with a minister present. As the service of Holy Baptism envisages a child joining and growing up in the midst of the worshipping community of St. Mary's, we ask families first to come to some services, to undertake some preparation (an online course run across the rural parishes with other young families bringing their children for baptism) and to have Godparents who are at least baptised themselves (in line with Canon Law requirements).

Both Holy Baptism and Thanksgiving services take place in the context of a normal service of public worship (and usually on the first Sunday of the month).

If you'd like to have a conversation about your child, please contact Deb in the office and either I or one of my ministry colleagues will be in touch.

*Best wishes,
Phillip*

Rev. Phillip Young
Rural Missioner to the Harwich Deanery
The Vicarage, Dedham

The Bishop of Colchester visits Dedham.

On Thursday 28th September, Dedham Parish church hosted a Confirmation Service at which three candidates from our Deanery were Confirmed by Bishop Roger. The congregation was made up of friends and family of the candidates along with supporters from some of the churches for what was a joyful and special service.



Each of the candidates will have a story to tell of how they felt God had been prompting them, in a whole variety of ways, in their journey of faith; wanting

each of them to affirm it publicly through being confirmed and so becoming a full member of the Church of England.

In a Confirmation service a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptised. If you were baptised (or as some refer to it christened) when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At a confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself after a course of preparation. Your friends and family as well as the local Christian community will be there to promise to support and pray for you. The local Bishop will lay their hands on your head and ask God's Holy Spirit to give you the strength and commitment to live God's way for the rest of your life.

But what, you may wonder, if you've never been baptised? You can be baptised by the Bishop within the confirmation service itself. Confirmation, like baptism, is not an end but a beginning becoming part of the worshipping community and to go on growing in faith and discipleship as a follower of Jesus. Perhaps reading this has made you think about your own journey of faith wondering whether

God might be prompting you to consider a next step in thinking about being Confirmed? If so then do get in touch with Phillip or with me.

Merr McKinney

The Children's Society

The money collected this year on behalf of The Children's Society was £332.66. Thank you to all those who have contributed to this amount.

The Children's Society are a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. They support them through their most serious life challenges and they also campaign tirelessly for the big social changes that will improve the lives of those who need hope most. They have been doing this for 140 years.

I have now retired from the job of Box Coordinator. I have done it for about 9 years and over this time over £3,000 has been raised to help those vulnerable children. Lesley Sant and Bridget Boyd did a wonderful job before me. They also had assisted Gill Christie when she was the main Fundraiser for The Children's Society for this area. I have had a letter from The Children's Society who would like to thank all those who have played a part in raising vital funds to support their work in helping vulnerable children and young people through some of the most difficult times of their lives. Children like Katie:

Katie was just 14 when she was removed from home due to her parent's neglect. She was separated from her brothers and sisters and put into a foster home. Katie was moved from care home to care home and eventually started running away so she could see her sister. Eventually Katie was referred to The Children's Society, where one of our project workers worked with her in one-to-one sessions to help Katie understand the risks she was taking and stop going missing. Katie now wants to go to college to study mechanics.

If you would like to learn more about their work then check out their website which is www.childrenssociety.org.uk. Those who would like to carry on supporting this worthwhile cause can donate through the website. Thank you once again for all your support.

Ruth Higginson



Supporting Church music in the Tendring area

NOVEMBER

November 12th

The Deanery choir will be singing at St. Georges Church, Great Bromley CO7 7HZ at the 10.30am Remembrance service that will start at the roadside War Memorial. The anthem that the Deanery choir will be performing is, 'Be still my soul' arranged by Alan Troy Davis, a beautiful setting that is rarely performed and is to the Finlandia melody, sung unaccompanied and is very evocative and poignant for this service.

December 16th

A date for your diary: The Deanery Choir will be performing 'A living Christmas '23' at St Mary Magdalen Church, Clacton Road, Thorrington. CO7 8HA at 7pm. A concert of music by arrangers and contemporary composers with readings reflecting the Christmas message.

Graham Bell, Deanery Choir

Remembering Your Loved Ones Service, Sunday 5th November, 3.30pm.



The annual special service to remember those in the parishes who have died, will be held at Dedham Church this year.

Please contact the Parishes office if you would like to have the name of your loved one read out: 01206 322136 or stmartyda@gmail.com

Sunday 12th November Remembrance Sunday



**10.45am, Act of Remembrance at
Dedham and Ardleigh War
Memorials**

**Would you like to join our youth
leadership team?**

**Revive@5 is our contemporary monthly
service on 4th Sunday of the month -
straight after the service we run a youth
group, 6.15-7.30pm.**

**We are looking for new leaders to join
our team to grow our youth group**

**Creative, likes to have fun, enjoys
spending time with young people, open-
minded.... If this sounds like you, help us
to grow our youth group.**

**Young leaders from age of 16 welcome
up to any age.... Contact
clairearculus@aol.com for
further details.**



Junior Church is our children's group for
3-10 year olds during the usual Sunday
service in Dedham.

With games, crafts, Bible stories and
snacks, we always have lots of fun!

Please contact Louise Young
youngle@cantab.net for further details.

All are welcome!





Breaking the cycle of homelessness for young people in Colchester

“Korban saved my life... you took me under your wings & guided me to the man I am today” Ali, age 20*

*name changed to protect privacy.

Korban breaks the cycle of homelessness for young people in Colchester by providing them with a home and the support they need to live independently and make the most of their potential.

Over the last 15 years Korban has helped 140 vulnerable young homeless people. We have 2 homes providing



medium term (2 – 3 years) supported accommodation for 8 young people aged 16 – 25 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Over the last 5 years (2017 -2022) about 80% of our residents have moved on positively; into private rented house shares, council accommodation, moving in with partners, and 4 residents going to university. 69% reported their mental/ emotional health had improved, 75% reported an improvement in key relationships and money management, 83% were in paid employment, full time education or regular voluntary work, and of these over ¾ started or increased this while at Korban.

According to the British Association of Social Workers, young people with experiences of homelessness are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. Research consistently shows that “relationship breakdown between young people and their family or primary caregivers is the leading cause of youth homelessness.” (Homeless Link)

Our residents have all experienced the trauma of homelessness and most have experienced additional trauma as well. Two of our aims are giving our residents a healing experience of family and providing holistic support. Each young person at Korban meets regularly with their support worker, participates in a weekly communal meal, has the opportunity to get involved in life-skills projects and social events and we also work in partnership with other services.



One of our residents turned 18 this summer so we celebrated with an ice-skating trip which was a lot of fun – and only left one of our party with significant bruising (yes, I hit the decks twice!) She also got some good A Level results and is now part way through her training for her dream job, demonstrating real resourcefulness and resilience.

For those who need help to make the transition to independent living, we opened Bethel House at the end of 2017 and recently two of our residents took the final step to independent living; one going to university to study business management and the other securing a one bedroom council flat. He has been at Korban for nearly 4 years, primarily due to the impact of the pandemic, but during that time he has passed his driving test (with a local driving instructor who supports Korban), runs his own business as a personal trainer, works in a gym and helps people who need support to gain confidence through sport.

We are really proud of our residents and believe that our family feel and faith in Jesus is what leads to such wonderful changes and growth. The dedication of our team and volunteers is second to none and we look forward to the next few years as we plan to expand our work to help more young people.

Please get in touch if you would like to hear more about what God is doing at Korban and our plans for the future, or you want to support us in any way.

You can contact admin@korban.org, <https://www.korban.org.uk/support-us> or phone the office on 01206 869533.

Mark Wood, Chief Executive

Memories of yesteryear but relevant for today

Millennium Cry

Seared into my mind,
against a cloudless sky
a once proud monument
to Western wealth
crumbling.
With horror viewed
a plane,
circling like a shark,
closing on its prey,
banking in the air,
and
then the kill,
ripping into gleaming metal,
flames leaping from the gash

lurid red
annihilating innocents.
I wept with millions.
No tears could wash away
that horror of an hour
suspended in the new millennium
which had held such gleaming promise

for the West.
And now I pray
for anguished leaders
needing wisdom
far beyond the mortal mind.

Fear grips
and can distort our judgement
as we grapple with Christ's words
"Father forgive them,
for they know not what they do."
What can we do
to break this chain of hate,
links forged by seething thoughts '
distorted by pure evil.

Geraldine Watson

We are incredibly fortunate to be situated in such beautiful surroundings and with 'appreciation' being one of our school values, we seek to get outdoors to enjoy our local area as much as possible. This term, classes R, 2 and 5 have been enjoying Forest School sessions and we are extremely grateful to Munnings Museum who allow us to use their wonderful site.



All of the activities support the holistic development of our children, and they support them to become resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. The sessions are child-led and follow the interests of the children, but examples of the activities which the children may choose to take part in include the following: making a fire and cooking; learning to use tools safely; making and building dens and shelters; creating structures from natural resources; and identifying and caring for plants and animals.

Earlier on this term, our class 6 children travelled to Mersea Outdoor Centre and spent an action-packed three days and two nights developing resilience, cooperation, communication and teamwork skills as they challenged themselves to step outside of their comfort zones to try new activities. Particular highlights of the trip were

caving, aerial adventure, archery, climbing and the assault course.



Of course, the children had a brilliant time... as the expressions in the photographs confirm!



Laura Valentine

Water Quality of the Stour

The release of sewage into rivers is of great concern. There have been some releases of untreated sewage into the River Stour near Dedham. The Environment Agency (EA) has records of these releases but has insufficient manpower to undertake regular samples.

This is why 9 volunteers from PACE (Practical Actions for Climate and the Environment) based in Manningtree, were trained by the EA to take samples from the Stour at Dedham and Langham, and the River Brett at Higham. A similar group of volunteers from Hadleigh, the Hadleigh Environmental Action Team (HEAT), take samples from the upper reaches of the Brett. Indeed over 150 groups across the UK have been trained to help sample our rivers.

PACE has been sampling for over a year – so what have we found? Firstly, let me explain the sampling. We visit four sites on the rivers once each month. We take water chemistry readings of pH (a measure of acidity), conductivity (a measure of dissolved material in the water) and oxygen (sewage entering the river would quickly reduce oxygen which is crucial to all freshwater life).

Also we take samples of the animals living in the water using a standard net and kick sample. This produces a wide range of freshwater animals some of which are known to be very sensitive to pollution. They are like the “canary in the coal-mine”. The volunteers look for 8 different animals in the river samples - 8 different “canaries” and each tells us about the water quality.

This is a well-researched method called *Riverfly* which give us more information than the spot readings of water chemistry. If there is pollution, some or all of the “canaries” will die. This gives us a score between 0 for nothing surviving, to a max score of 16 for good water quality.

All our scores are entered on a national website so that the EA can check and investigate.

So, to the results.

The River Brett at Higham had the best water quality with typical scores of 7 to 10 throughout the year, although HEAT had one very low score on the Brett which was linked to a farm slurry spill.

The River Stour at Langham was next best with scores of between 5 and 9, although we recently had one very low score there which has been investigated by the EA.

The Stour at Dedham was the worst with scores of 1 to 3 for most of the year – only improving to 7 in early spring. We cannot say yet what the cause of this poor water quality is at Dedham – not yet. Low scores are typically due to sewage, or road run-off, or agricultural run-off, or drought or a combination of these – that is what we will investigate next year.

We are also extending the work to include samples for *E. coli*, a bacterium associated with human sewage and cattle faeces.

This work takes effort, so huge thanks to the volunteers, to Riverfly, to the Environment Agency and to Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their Sustainable Development Fund for part funding the equipment. For the Full Report please go to <https://www.pacemanningtree.org.uk/water-quality>

John Hall

The author, John Hall, retired CEO of Essex Wildlife Trust, is a founding member of PACE Manningtree (Practical Actions for Climate and the Environment) Registered Charity 1204980.

Thirty years ago, Stanley Booth, the owner of Southfields produced a booklet about the restoration of Southfields. Chris Booth has given his permission for it to be reprinted in the Dedham Parish Magazine. Most of the original photos were monochrome, however using the latest Artificial Intelligence techniques provided by My Heritage, we have coloured them.

John Goldsbrough

I am frequently asked whether I have had any financial assistance by way of grants in the conservation of Southfields since it is generally known that grants are available for the restoration of Grade I listed buildings.

I have not received a penny by way of grants for the simple reason that I never asked for one although there was to be an unexpected and somewhat ironic twist to this. From a purely financial point

of view it would have paid to have sold off the cottages individually after restoration and there was nothing to prevent me doing that it I had so wished. Pride of possession, after all the work and care put into the property, the thought of what might happen under divided ownership and the important consideration that I have not needed to realise the capital have fortunately dictated otherwise.



North side before restoration - 1952

Southfields - The Story of its Restoration

The National Trust, the County and other bodies concerned with the preservation of Inheritance Property such as Southfields were and are equally concerned about keeping undivided ownership but as things stood my heirs could have been forced to sell part to pay capital transfer taxes.

Aware of what is called Conditional Exemption from such taxes for stately homes and the like I pursued the matter with the Inland Revenue to find that had I had a grant or if the property had qualified for a grant it would have been prima facie exempt from capital transfer tax.

So now I had to apply to the Historic Buildings Council for a grant that I did not want and was unlikely to get.

Fortunately my dilemma was appreciated by the Commission and in due course I received a letter from the Department of the Environment as follows:-

Southfields, Dedham

The New Cases Committee of the Historic Buildings Council considered your application at their last meeting and have agreed that "Southfields" is a building of outstanding interest for the purpose of Section 4 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.

This and the voluminous file to which it belongs will be needed in due course of time by my executors.



North side after restoration.

Southfields - The Story of its Restoration

As to the reasons for my not applying for grants they were many and varied. In the first place I had no idea of what I was likely to encounter in the way of structural problems when I took away the brick and slated appendages of 1800 and none of my several architect contacts had any real knowledge of timber frame buildings.

It would have been impossible to submit the kind of plans and estimated necessary to obtain a grant and it was extremely unlikely that I would have been accepted as the 'builder'. However, by the time I got round to rerooting the property nine years later (the seven year 'gamble' of my architect friend and Building Society Director) I was able to finance it myself which well satisfied by streak of Yorkshire independence. Incidentally, no large Building Society, then or today, would have lent money on

the property as it then was although the monies involved were miniscule relative to its value today.

With regard to the future, maintenance and upkeep of the property is no greater than that of modern property. My early judgment of the basic soundness of the structure has been fully justified with any lingering doubts completely dispelled by the hurricane of October 1987. With the many mature trees felled in the grounds and all around, Southfields lost but a few tiles broken by a television aerial, whilst throughout the property internally there was not a sign of hair cracks in the plaster, the best 'tell-tale' of any movement of the structure. With proper maintenance there would seem no reason why Southfields should not survive for hundreds of years to come.



South Front - 1963

Along with the restoration of the building went the reclamation of the gardens and grounds around Southfields for, if the property was in a dilapidated state when purchased the grounds were even worse. There had been eight allotments and an old orchard of which four allotments and the orchard were used to some degree or other by sitting tenants. There was an abundance of rusting bed ends, chicken wire and household debris, and much was overgrown and derelict. The task in fact was as daunting as was the restoration of the building.

It was to be eight years before the transformation off the courtyard, the most interesting feature of Southfields, was completed. The paths, steps and retaining walls which were put down over thirty years ago have stood the test of time and are exactly as they were laid from my stock of old red bricks from my earlier demolition work. With many tons of topsoil for lawns the restoration from cinder and ash paths and flourishing nettle beds was completed to give a finishing touch to the restoration of the courtyard.

Planning the gardens on the south side as they are seen now was quite a different matter, but the piecemeal acquisition of the allotments proved to be advantageous in that each allotment as it became available could be planned into the whole. The different levels and low retaining walls have worked in so well that it is difficult now to visualise the separate allotments.

The garden in fact evolved to its present form and everything that can be seen, other than the Scotch pines on the periphery, has been planted in the past thirty years. The hurricane of 1987 seemed disastrous at the time with 20 mature trees down. However, with replanting and the increased light and air the garden took on another lease of life.

Stanley Booth 1917-1997

I remember vividly the state of the Flemish Cottages in the 1950s, but cannot add more to my father's story of their restoration, save to say he was unfailingly supported by my mother, whose considerable skills with furniture and décor played no small part in the restoration of the village's most important medieval building.

However, there is another restoration story of equal importance – Castle House, home of the Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum. During clearance of personal effects from Castle House after Lady Munnings' death in 1971, a tiny green notebook was found, empty except for a single pencilled note written by Lady M: "Stanley Booth, looks like the right stuff". It was obviously written before she recruited him as an original Trustee to set up the Trust to preserve Sir Alfred's collection. Years later she subsequently rewarded his efforts with the gift of a Munnings landscape.

After Lady Munnings' death and under my father's chairmanship, Castle House was completely renovated to work as the gallery you see today and the substantial collection of paintings in the house professionally valued by Sothebys.

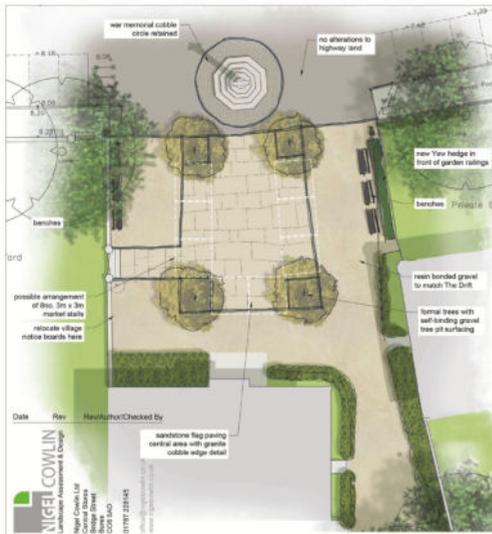
My father then archived Munnings' considerable output, now worldwide, and then wrote a beautifully illustrated book focusing on 100 paintings that highlighted Munnings' productivity and remarkable versatility.

The Flemish Cottages and Castle House stand today as my father's legacy to the village.

Chris Booth
Master Weaver's House
October 2023

Plan Drawing 3

Non-parking sketch 3 - bonded gravel with sandstone flag central area and formal trees



COFFEE WITH COPS

PCSO Gary Woolford 42072690 is based in Colchester.

Every month Gary holds a one hour coffee with cops session by the Dedham War Memorial in Royal Square. The next Coffee with Cops is on Monday 6th November at 13:00hrs.



My name is Arin Andrews, and this year, I have taken over as the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal Organiser for Dedham.

This year the Poppy Appeal runs from Thursday 26th of October to Remembrance Sunday 12th of November.

We will have a stall on the Royal Square during this time and there will also be volunteers carrying out house to house collections.

Also, if anyone requires Poppies or other Remembrance items, and you are not able to attend the stall, please feel free to make contact. I am more than happy to deliver items around the village. I can be contacted on 07941 952125.

Arin Andrews

The next meeting of Dedham Parish Council will take place on **Monday 6th November at 6:30pm** in the Duchy Barn.

The Agenda for the Parish Council meeting always includes an open session - Have Your Say and visitors reports (CCC and County Councillors).

Questions may not be answered at the meeting but may go on to the next agenda. A maximum of 3 minutes per person/group to make representations to the Parish Council, a total of 15 minutes. The agenda, other documents and a link to the Royal Square proposals can be viewed on the homepage of the Parish Council website.



(www.dedhamparishcouncil.co.uk)

Squat, lift and (p)lunge

Okay this month's title is stretching the limits of punnery but, as temperatures continue to drop putting tender plants at risk and bedraggled chrysanthemums offer the last of the colour, we can enjoy (yes, enjoy!) fresh air and exercise while packing away the borders for winter and laying the groundwork for spring.

Squats first as I move from border to border lifting the (way too many) dahlias I've planted this year. As well as a few new ones bought online (I'm loving flowers of the single red Bishop of Llandaff and the glowing cerise-purple,



semi-double Bishop of Canterbury, planted in large groups among Mexican Star – actually a cross with *Cosmos atrosanguineus*), I've also grown a range from seed. This has thrown up a lot of ordinary colours, as well as some really beautiful ones that I'll be labelling and sorting for next year.

We will have had the first frost by now, which has blackened the tips of the foliage but shouldn't have descended too deeply into the soil so the tubers will still be protected. I don't lift all my tubers – the soil in the raised beds on the allotment is very free draining so they're usually safe from the combination of cold and wet that will rot them.

The ones I lift will get hosed off to remove as much soil as possible and left

to dry before I store them wrapped in newspaper in a frost-free place over winter. To protect those in my garden borders, I'll chuck a bucket of compost in a molehill over them and hope for the best – it's surprising what they can stand up to.

Once lifted, it's time to **(p)lunge** – alright, I'll stop – new tulip bulbs into the borders to fill the gaps I've made. November is a great time to do it: most of the other bulbs should be in by now, but tulips are better added when the



weather is colder to protect them from the fungal disease tulipfire, which produces brown spots and withered, distorted leaves. Although the choice might be more limited, you can get some great bargains in December and January and even when planted that late, they'll still flower well and in time for spring.

There are many types of tulip (almost as many as there are of dahlias) and the best type to come back year after year are Darwin Hybrids with their

traditional goblet shape on strong stems. Over time though their flowers will get smaller and make less of an impact, so I keep them topped up every year.



Although it's very weather-dependent, Single Early and Double Early tulips tend to flower first as early as March, they're followed by the Darwins, Parrots, Triumphs and others, before the late-flowering singles and doubles in May. I plant a mix of the different types in large groupings so as one type fades it is followed by another.

In one of my borders, double and single blooms in pink, peach and apricot complement the blue Camassia Leichtlinii 'Caerulea' in May. I plant them deep – at least three times the bulbs' size – which can encourage stronger stems and make them more likely to flower in subsequent years (I'll let you know in March what this year's display is like).

I had some of my grass paths replaced with brick this year and have taken the opportunity to widen some borders for more plants. The wetter, frostier weather can make them slippery, so I'll follow Monty's idea to brush some sharp sand onto them to try and stop me breaking my clumsy neck when moving about the garden.

What lawn remains is now a small, brick-edged semicircle that I think I might be able to maintain and possibly

bring to a beautiful green swathe by summer. Possibly. The road to getting there starts now, trying to squeeze in a last mow with the blades raised high if the weather is still mild, which will help to deal with any annual weeds. I'll try to dig out dandelions and other perennials and aerate by stabbing a garden fork around and levering it back and forth a little.



With the cold, dark and shorter nights drawing in, if you can't get in the garden then get your horticultural fix at one of our monthly Speaker Events. On 1st November, Robert Brett, Curator at RHS Garden Hyde Hall will speak to us about biodiversity and this will be followed by our Christmas supper on 6th December. Discover more about our events on our website and please join us if you can.

Elliott Frisby

Scan this QR code to access our website, www.dedhamgardening.wordpress.com





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