

ST MARY & ST PETER NEWSLETTER

July 2026

CoverPicture : *Wild Man of Boxted*. Thanks to Andy Hardie

CHURCH SERVICES

5th July – Fifth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning
Worship

12th July – Sixth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy
Communion

19th July – Seventh Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Peter's – Holy
Communion

25th July Saturday

3.00pm at The Glade, St Peter's new
churchyard Forest Church

26th July – Eighth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy
Communion

2nd August – Ninth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning
Worship



9th August – Tenth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy Communion

16th August – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

10.30am at Mount Bures – United
celebration of Holy Communion

23rd August – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am at St John's Great Horkesley

30th August – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am at St Peter's – United
celebration of Holy Communion

To check for other services and any alterations
please email The Reverend Heather Wilcox –
RevHWilcox@outlook.com

Deadline for submissions for the September edition: 15th August
Contact the editor via email: lwbnewsletter@gmail.com

Welcome to the July Newsletter.

Mobile phones, tablets, iPads, e-readers, laptops and all the other E-technology we use today are in many respects a pain in the proverbial with a constant diet of sensationalist bad news. How lovely it can be to ditch all the technogear for a few days and spend some time unshackled from the interweb.

However, such is the way of life in the UK in the 21st century that any period without access to the phone can be a serious problem when you need to pay a bill, book a doctor's appointment, check the time of the next train—nothing is possible without the interweb these days.

It was something of a disappointment then for many of us to hear that the telecoms mast at Gun Hill was taken down recently. Local resident Paul Edge tells me that on Wednesday 13th May at 8:56am, the signal was lost. EE eventually advised it was planned



maintenance work and had been completed. No warning of the work had been given though. Further calls on Thursday and a visit to the EE store at lunchtime resulted finally in confirmation that the mast had been decommissioned. On Saturday morning, it was dismantled. Despite telecoms companies reassuring us that they can provide lightning-fast megacommunications, it seems that a simple pre-advice is beyond them. There is more on this further in the Newsletter.

In other news, this is the last issue until September as my wife and I will be off to the Midi for a combined sunshine break and firefighting course. See you all in the Autumn.

Steve Pollington,
Editor

BETTY POTTER'S DIP

Between Myland, Chesterwell and Boxted, Straight Road charts a predictably straight course across the ancient heathland. At the western (Myland) end there is a small depression known locally as 'Betty Potter's Dip' or 'Bit' or 'Piece'. There is nothing to see on the ground, the land is covered with scrub vegetation. But this spot has been known for its 'Potter' association since at least 1902 when the fact was recorded in *The East Anglian Miscellany* (22nd March). Betty, it seems was buried in an unmarked roadside grave because she had committed suicide and was thus ineligible for interment in holy ground. This unorthodox burial was not recent though: her story was published in *Ipswich Journal* in May 1771, where she was named as Elizabeth Sheldrake of Boxted. Her background can be inferred—she was the illegitimate child of Nathaniel Potter and Ann Letch, born in 1730. Later that same year Nathaniel married another lady—Hannah Heard—with whom he went on to have four children. Nathaniel died aged 81 in 1768 and his death was regarded as suspicious at the time: Elizabeth (Betty) had

recently bought some rat poison at the request of her mother. Both mother and daughter were charged with murder, but neither was convicted because Ann could not be shown to have taken any action while Betty had procured the means of bringing about her father's death, but there was no evidence that she used it.

Betty married Isaac Sheldrake in 1769. At the age of 28, Betty hanged herself in the woods - which public opinion put down to guilt over her patricide.

Roadside (unconsecrated) burial was then the norm for willing suicides, but tradition says that a stake was driven through her heart because she was believed to be a witch. Her burial spot was on the border of the parish—a location favoured for 'deviant burials' since the 7th century at least.

The notion that Betty had been a 'witch' (a term never defined in the literature) took root and in 1968 *Essex Countryside* magazine ran a piece with a lively and colourful rehearsal of standard motifs —Matthew Hopkins appears, as well as a posthumously active corpse and the witch's ability to immobilise a horse-and-cart -all retold in Carter's book about Boxted. (Carter, D. *Boxted: Portrait of an English Village*).

Subsequently, the legend grew: road-accident deaths at this spot (where

the road crosses a small brook) were attributed to the drivers swerving to avoid a ghostly apparition, a woman standing immobile in the road (with the implication that this is ghost of the witch buried in the adjoining plot of land). Attribution of deviant burials, including suicides, to the charge of 'witchcraft' had become commonplace and the graves thus designated are sometimes thought to have been due to innocent victims of the "kill-the-witch" mentality of the 17th century with staged witch trials and ad hoc executions. However, the persons who ended up in these unrecorded roadside burials were more often Gypsies or itinerant shepherds who had no-one on the spot to vouch for them or take charge of the process of their burial. Halliday concludes: "Elizabeth Potter was buried on the land that bears her name as a suspected murderer who took her own life: firmly rejected as an outcast. As the details of her life were forgotten she was identified as a witch, living on the fringes of society, whose powers only made her more hated. Still viewed with wariness, she has not been re-admitted to the community that excluded her." "

xxx

The legend of Betty Potter has fascinated me for some years and I have trawled websites and folklore journals

in search of references and factual evidence. How excited and gratified I was to find Robert Halliday's paper '*Betty Potter's Dip: The Folklore of an Essex Wayside Grave*' on Annette Whybrow's *Boxted History Digital Archive*—a fantastic resource which I intend to mine for as much information as possible.

My heartfelt thanks to all involved.

Steve Pollington

June 2026

Did you know Langham Community Shop has been here for you for over 20 years!

Welcoming you every day, 364 days a year, that's over 7500 times the doors have been opened every morning!



And the most staggering part of all, every friendly, helpful, kind and caring person welcoming you when you walk through the door is a VOLUNTEER.

We are not just a group of people that turn up every now and again, we are a family, we are friends and we all do it for each other, for the shop and for our amazing community.

Many of our volunteers have been here since the very beginning, some played a huge part in getting the shop started and everyone has helped to keep it what it is today.

**We are proud of what we do,
and we will continue for many more years.**

We regularly see too many small, local businesses closing around us. With your constant and continued support we will continue to work hard and always be here for you.

You can also be part of our family; you can support us and help us to stay here where we belong.

We can not just always rely on the generosity of what we have, we need more volunteers to keep us going and be able to stay open later as we have now managed to do. '



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Queries, contact*

Paul Armstrong
boxlangads@gmail.com

Tel: 07766 747497

Have you spotted the road signs?



Boxted Wildlife

Sadly we get Hedgehog road casualties in our village. As they are nocturnal, this makes them vulnerable. So we have put up signs to remind drivers to take care and look out for them.



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100 CLUB Draw

The winners of the May draw were:

1st Denise Hobday no. 19

2nd Suzanne Dawson no.23

3rd Alan Cadman no.76

4th Tony Ellis no.61



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BOXTED HISTORY GROUP

In the second century Roman Colchester was at its height, The settlement had been rebuilt after the destruction caused by Boudicca, with its streets laid out in a grid pattern. It had originally been built as fortress to house the invading Roman troops and to intimidate the local tribes but had grown rapidly into a colony. The local population soon became Romanised.

When Boudicca and her army attacked they came with a purpose. Boudicca's husband, the king of the Iceni tribe in what is now Norfolk, had made a treaty with the Romans that allowed him on the payment of a fee to continue ruling within certain limits. When the king died, the Romans tore up the treaty, thus disinheriting Boudicca. She attacked in 60 or 61 AD and burned down the settlement, leaving a heavy layer of ash that now acts as a dating line for archaeologists. Anything found above the ash layer is after the revolt; anything below is earlier. When the Romans rebuilt the colony they re-used whatever

materials they could salvage. A section of burnt Roman wall was discovered when archaeologists excavated the site of Fenwicks in 2014.

A preliminary exploration of the site had been made in 2012 and it was realised that anything of significance would be deeply buried, the ground level having risen greatly over the centuries. When the excavation began in earnest three areas were dug deep. The two most readily identifiable now are near the lift and the escalators in Fenwicks. 3-4 metres down a small portion of gold was found and a quantity of other goods.

The quantity of goods was not as great as in finds elsewhere but it was noteworthy. A piece of wooden Roman furniture had remarkably survived the blaze together with dates that had been turned into charcoal. The more that was dug the more food was found. All the ingredients for making a broth were there: peas, beans and lentils plus a variety of herbs. All had been imported, showing that the inhabitants of the colony had extensive trade links. In addition there was the skull of a suckling pig, a Roman delicacy.

Nearby there was a small dark patch in the floor. When the soil was scraped away it revealed buried treasure. Charred wood over the top suggests that the people who buried it had pulled a piece of furniture over it to hide it and expected to come back to retrieve it. The box that contained the items yielded two sets of earrings (expensive pearl ones), two finger rings with emeralds and a signet ring. This was probably valued as an heirloom. In addition there was a cluster of coins –silver and gold ones that had been fused together by the heat of Boudicca's fire. Among the military artefacts was a medallion with a panther inscribed on it – a

significant award for valour. When the archaeologists began excavating, they knew that they would find objects of worth, the site being in the city centre. And this is certainly what they found. The items are now in the Castle Museum.

Adam Wightman of the *Colchester Archaeological Trust* talked to the History Group about the Fenwicks hoard.

The next meeting of the group will be in the village hall at 8.00pm on Wednesday, 15th July: *Tudor Costume and Food*.

ALAN LADBROOKE



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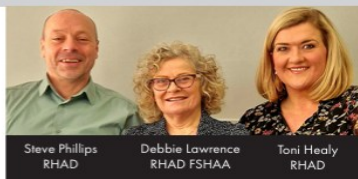
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BOXTED W. I.

The members have been out and about this June.

Embracing the W.I. resolution 'Bystanders can be Lifesavers' and following our own W.I. awareness session on CPR, we are delighted to have presented mini CPR training kits funded by our own members to Little Owls pre-school, Boxted Primary School and Langham Primary School. The kits were very well received by both the staff and children. We hope that they will support the learning and development of local children.

The June meeting supported the charity 'Smalls for All' (Charity No. SC041689) <https://www.smallsforall.org/> ...and what a lot of smalls the members have generously donated!!!

The donations have been collected up and sent to the charity base in Scotland.



This charity collects underwear for people in Africa and the UK who can't afford or can't get any. Because dignity matters. They collect only brand new pants and new or gently worn bras, operating from the UK they support charitable organisations

in Africa and the UK who are able to transport and distribute the underwear collected to those in need. With this in mind and coupled with the find of a May1935 W.I. Programme item "Competition- Pegging Clothes on a Line" we couldn't resist a bit of fun to update and re-enact the challenge. With

much fun, laughter and raucous chaotic activity, we covered the village hall with smalls whilst collecting for the charity. The performances of speedily handling laundry revealed impressive deftness and even more so revealed what a competitive lot we are!! Well done to the Ariel team

BOXTED W.I.



BOXTED HISTORY DIGITAL ARCHIVE

Some years ago, I was handed a large number of boxes of miscellaneous

historical papers relating to the village of Boxted by Anne Newman and Douglas Carter, now sadly both deceased.

Douglas, of course, recorded the history of Boxted in his book "*Boxted: Portrait of an English Village*". Anne was keen on recording contemporary village events such as the Millenium celebrations. Having sorted the boxes into some sort of order, they have remained in storage and occasionally looked at for research purposes if a request for information is received from anyone.

It has been my wish for some time to digitise these archives so that they can be more readily accessed by anyone who may have an interest in them. Not having the necessary skills myself, I have been hugely helped in

accomplishing this task by an enterprising young local man, Alexander Benns, who has not only put everything which we have considered to be of public interest on the www, but has also produced a 5-step guide entitled "How to navigate the Boxted History Digital Archive" with a link to the archive through google.com.

Search headings include –
Boxted Events and Societies, The School, Parish Magazines, Village Photos etc.

A word of caution: This is by no means a comprehensive historical archive and includes very little of what might be termed "modern history" by its very nature, it is a random selection of items, some of which might be of interest to some people.

Anyone who would like access to this can do so by contacting me on

annettejwhybrow@gmail.com

Annette Whybrow

Mobile Signal Loss in parts of Langham, Boxted and Dedham

Parts of our villages have suffered a total loss of mobile signal since early May, when the Gun Hill telecommunications mast was decommissioned and removed without any notice.

This has now been escalated via our Ward Councillor Tom Rowe and our MP Sir Bernard Jenkin and we thank them for their support, but their efforts will be most effective if all affected residents report their own

problems to the appropriate authorities.

See below for Sir Bernard's update following his meeting with local Councillors and concerned residents on 12th June:

"Today I met with local councillors, residents and members of the Dedham Vale Society to discuss the serious impact caused by the removal of the local telecommunications mast.



The mast was removed without warning, leaving many people across Dedham, Langham and Boxted with little or no mobile signal, and in some cases no landline service either. This is causing significant disruption for residents and is also affecting emergency services, including the police, with concerns that ambulance services may also be impacted.

At present, there is no temporary solution in place and no confirmed long-term fix. It is vital that we continue to highlight the scale of the problem and support neighbours who may be particularly vulnerable without reliable communications.

I will be contacting Cadent to ask why a replacement mast cannot be installed and what options are available to restore reliable coverage to local residents as quickly as possible.”

If you are affected, please email Cllr Thomas Rowe with your

postcode and mobile provider details at:

thomas.rowe83@googlemail.com

Please also report the issue directly to Ofcom using their online complaints form:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

The more reports that are submitted, the stronger the case for urgent action. Thank you to everyone who attended today’s meeting and shared their experiences.

BOXTED RUNNERS

Sunday 14th June saw the 7th running of the Boxted Runners 10km.

We were blessed with a decent day weather wise which after the weather leading up to the day was just what we needed.

This event raises much needed funds for the Boxted Primary School. For many local runners it's the highlight of their running year with a challenging, but but scenic route with a wonderful mix of road and trail.

It's always a family focused event and yet again everyone had a lovely morning. We saw a course record in the 5k race with the winner finishing in 16:59 ,which is over 1 minute quicker than the previous record.

A truly amazing performance on a challenging course.



We are already looking forward to next year.

The 2027 race will be on the 13th June.

Ian Bown



Churches Count on Nature 2026
and Love Your Burial Ground Week

Saturday 6th June 2026



This special week is dedicated to observing and recording plants and animals in burial grounds, and we would love it if you would

Join us. Event details are below:

St Mary's Church Langham CO4 5PS Invite you to join this event on Saturday the 6th June from 11:00am to 4:00pm in The Churchyard.

There will be volunteers to help you bug hunt and do other activities.

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BOXTED EVERGREENS

Our Club meets in the village hall every fourth Thursday of the month from 2.00pm to 3.30pm. The age of our members varies but the club would suit anyone over 60 so please come along and you would be given a warm welcome. Our members are always asked for their suggestions before our yearly entertainment programme is arranged and we do try our best to cater for everyone.

If you would like more information about our club please call Elaine on 01206

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BOXTED HISTORY GROUP

*Meeting every third Wednesday
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Hall. 7.30 for 8pm.*

Guests always welcome.

The Art and Craft Club
meet on the **third**
Wednesday of each month,
2-4pm at Boxted Village
Hall.

All welcome - come and join in!

BOXTED CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Come and join us for a friendly,
enjoyable afternoon playing bowls
at **Boxted Village Hall on Friday 2 - 4**
pm, Sept to April

Further info please contact:

Michael Hubbard 01206 271892

Sue Smith 07465443795

sueronben@gmail.com

2nd Langham Scout Group

Meetings are held each
Wednesday evening at the
Community Centre.

Squirrels 5:00 to 6:00

Beavers 4:45 to 6:00

Cubs 6:00 to 7:30

Scouts 7:30 to 9:00

Contact Group Scout Leader:

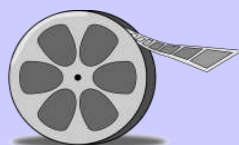
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LANGHAM LADIES

*Any ladies wishing to join the
group or to come along as a guest,
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LANGHAM FILM NIGHTS

For details of films and screening
times and to book tickets, go to
[www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/
next-cinema-screening/](http://www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/next-cinema-screening/)



Crafty Ladies

Meet on first Wednesday of each month throughout the year, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm at the Community Centre. Subscription £26 due March and September. Contact Chrissy Todd tel. 07742 131454.

Carpet Bowls Club

Meet every Tuesday afternoon from 2.00 to 4.00 pm at the Community Centre.

Contact Cliff Jones on 07922 156545 or Mervyn Bushe on 01206 230209.



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LANGHAM LADIES

June's Langham Ladies meeting was held in Langham Community Centre. This was an open meeting as the subject for this talk could affect anyone so it was very important to get as many people to attend as possible. As we are all aware there are scams and fraud cases every day made on our telephones, debit and credit cards. The speaker was Tammy Blest who is a Fraud Prevention Officer in the Essex Police. Her job is to visit groups and make them aware of the scams and fraud cases taking place every day in the UK. There were 4.2 million cases in the UK last year. Fraud and Scams can be easily done by phone calls, mobile phone messages, WhatsApp and on bank account cards. When speaking on a phone your voice can be cloned so never keep speaking to someone that you do not recognise or suspect maybe a fraudster and never answer a questionnaire by phone. If a fraud is suspected on a bank account phone 159 which puts you through to any bank. Face book and WhatsApp settings should be set to

contacts and friends never set to everyone or anyone one. To check and change your WhatsApp privacy go onto your WhatsApp list of contacts, go into settings on this page and it should tell you whether you send to contacts or everyone you can then change it to contacts and friends. Not sure if it works on all phones but a good idea to check. All cases of fraud are dealt with in London not in Essex.

It was a very worthwhile talk as it highlighted so many situations of fraud that we were not aware of. After the talk Tammy gave out, security bells to clip onto our purses, card defender cases, car key safety pouches and a booklet on scams fraud and cyber crime.

There is not a meeting in July in the Community Centre but a Garden Luncheon in a members garden on Sunday July 5th at 1.30pm. For all members it is free and each member can bring one guest for £5. *We look forward to seeing you there and are hoping for lovely weather.*

WHEELCHAIR LOAN

The Short Term Wheelchair Loan Charity (Reg. No.112657, www.wheelchairloancharity.com), based at Clacton Hospital, helps people needing the short-term use of a wheelchair. The chairs are for all ages and reasons. The service is a perfect interim solution if you require a wheelchair for an occasion such as a holiday, a wedding or to help accommodate a visiting relative. The service is funded by donations and is free to users, although a deposit of £40 from borrowers is asked for.

Enquiries may be phoned to 01255 201763 or emailed to wheelchairloan@gmail.com

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10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

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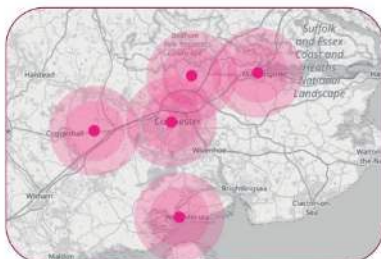
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BOXTED VILLAGE FESTIVAL

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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GOOD NEIGHBOURS CAR SCHEME AND MORE ...

- * We operate throughout the Parishes of Langham and Boxted**
- * Our team of volunteers uses their own cars to provide door-to-door journeys to medical appointments or to pick up prescriptions**
- * We also visit folk who are housebound for friendly chats**
- * Registration is very simple—just phone the number for the day shown on the posters or in the Parish Magazine a few days before your appointment**
- * There is no charge for the service, although donations are very welcome**
- * All our volunteers are DBS checked and are friendly and experienced**

Interested in volunteering? Please get in contact with Annette Whybrow:

annettejwhybrow@gmail.com

01206 272773

07983519825

Langham with Boxted PCC Registered Charity: 1131211

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Are you elderly, vulnerable or otherwise in need of help, and live in the Parish of Langham with Boxted? We are a group of local Volunteers who can assist:

- with transport to an important appointment, including Hospital, Dentist or Flu/Covid Booster**
- with collection of items such as prescriptions**
- or make a friendly visit just for a bit of company.**

Call so that we can help you, Monday to Friday, 8am to 7pm

Monday.....230525 or 273324

Tuesday.....271813 or 273195

Wednesday....272755 or 272013

Thursday..... 07765 037892 or 323007

Friday..... 272773

Please telephone either number shown for the **DAY ON WHICH YOU MAKE YOUR CALL (not the day of your appointment). If there is no reply, please do not leave a message but **RING ANY OTHER NUMBER.****

This scheme is associated with the Churches of St Mary's Langham and St Peter's Boxted

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all jobs considered

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For more information, or to book a space, please either email enquiries@2ndlanghamscouts.org or contact us via our website.

www.2ndlanghamscouts.org

Scouts
2nd Langham

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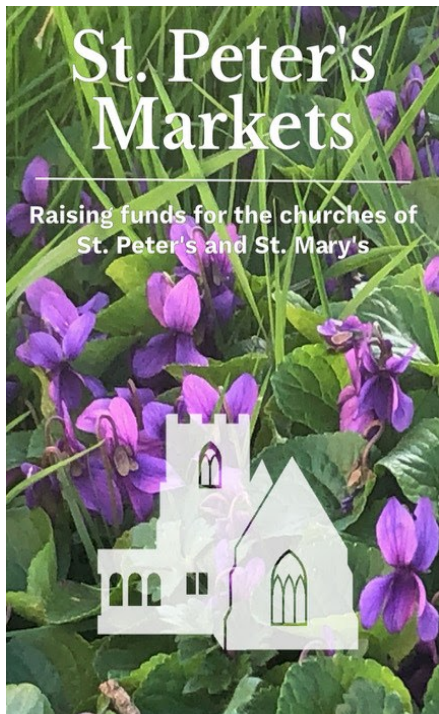
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Home to a number of local clubs and regular activities, it is also available for hire for parties and functions, with a capacity of 120 seated in rows or 100 seated at tables.

***If you have any new
clubs or events planned
in the future, please
consider using the village
hall as your venue.***

**THE PARISH OF LANGHAM
WITH BOXTED**

Contact Details

Rector Heather Wilcox

01206 240906/07503151715

RevHWilcox@outlook.com

*Please contact the Rector with any
enquiries*

Church Office available by appointment

Mon-Fri: 10am - 12pm

**Priest with PtO (Permission to
Officiate) Revd Anne Mason**

07895 970834

revdannemason@gmail.com

Curate Revd Emma Barr

07801659345

Lay Minister Denise Hobday
230918

**Church Administrator (for the parishes
of Langham with Boxted, West
Bergholt and Great Horkesley**

Donna Luxton (Mon - Wed) & Jo

Russell (Thur- Fri)

Email:

6parishescolchester@gmail.com

Churchwardens

St Mary's Langham

Stephen Garner 272599

Sgarner.22@btinternet.com

Denise Hobday 230918

hobdaylangham@hotmail.com

St Peter's Boxted

Emma Fowler 272202

Jacky Budenberg 272254

Zone Youth Group

Linda Shiel 273324

The Edge Youth Group

Linda Shiel 273324

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Boxted – www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6458

Langham – www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6459



Deadline for submissions for the

September edition:

15th August

Contact the editor via email:

lwbnewsletter@gmail.com



SUMMER 2026

WHAT'S ON

12TH JULY - **THE BIG BAD WOLF** - *THE PLANDITS*

23RD JULY - 25TH JULY - **THE 39 STEPS** - *SHAKESPEARE CIRCUS*

26TH JULY - **THE JUNGLE BOOK** - *CHAMELEONS WEB*

30TH JULY - 1ST AUGUST - **COMEDY OF ERRORS** -
SHAKESPEARE CIRCUS

7TH AUGUST - 9TH AUGUST - **KITTY** - *NICKY MATTHEWS AND
BLACK BROOK COLLABORATION*

12TH AUGUST - **MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM** - *FOLKSY THEATRE*

14TH AUGUST - **OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD** - *STAGECRAFT*

22ND AUGUST - **TWELFTH NIGHT** - *THE PANTALOONS*

28TH AUGUST - **THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE HISTORY OF BRITAIN** -
THE PANTALOONS

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