

# COMMUNITY BUSINESS FOCUS



## Gary Lockyer – The Gentleman Celebrant.

Hi, my name is Gary Lockyer, I am a qualified Celebrant based in Iwade and I undertake every kind of Life Celebration. I'll be trading as The Gentleman Celebrant, as I've always had a passion for the vintage and retro eras. I've lived in the village for over 18 years with my wife, Karen, and a variety of cats. As a Celebrant, I can write and perform bespoke and personal ceremonies to help you celebrate important milestone in your life, such as Weddings and Naming Ceremonies, Funerals and Memorials.

My career revolved around customer service, helping people to achieve their needs and wants. During this time, I also looked to my more spiritual side and

spent 2 years in partnership with a friend, running a paranormal investigation company with mediums and spiritualists, learning the art of meditation and spiritual healing.

However, after nearly 40 years of office politics while working for others, I decided to return to that spiritual side and take this new path. I want to be there for people whether it is to help them through their grief at the loss of a loved one, or to be an integral part of their day whilst they celebrate a new chapter together. If you think I can be of help, or if you'd just like to chat further, feel free to email me at [garymlockyer@gmail.com](mailto:garymlockyer@gmail.com) or give me a call on 07498 744415.



## ALLOTMENTEERING

### Iwade Allotments Association

Happy New Year! Let us make 2025 a bumper year for growing your own and eating lots of fresh produce that you have grown yourself (how satisfying is that?) Roll on Spring, which will allow us to get stuck in on our plots and make plans for the coming year. You can begin planting your seeds and consider what to plant for the upcoming season.

How about putting your name down on our waiting list? You never know; you may enjoy the process of growing your own. We have included some pics from last Summer to inspire you!

Give me, Christine a call or text on 07971 003424, or Sylvia on 07802 419498 and we will gladly add you to the waiting list.

# The Iwade bserver

FEB 2025

## IWADE TOURS' FESTIVE DEBUT

By Elizabeth & Matthew Richards



**B**ack in November, Iwade Tours went on its first outing to the wonderful Brick Lane Music Hall for an afternoon of good old-fashioned Christmas entertainment and a lovely afternoon tea. We were really pleased that the day went smoothly and we thoroughly enjoyed meeting some new villagers who joined us on this adventure. With all the positive feedback we received, we then began planning more trips for 2025!

We are now fully booked for our trip on the 5th March when we will be heading in to London for an Elvis Tribute act with 2 course lunch on board the Tereza Joanne a unique floating venue situated in London's Royal Docks.

However, we do still have places available for our first theatre trip planned for Thursday 4th September for the Matinee Performance of Mamma Mia with Dress Circle seats. This trip is only £70 per person which includes direct travel from Woodpecker Park on board an executive coach with that special hospitality from the Iwade Tours Team.

We also have 2 further trips planned for 2025 which will be announced in our March Newsletter, if you are interested in joining us to see Mamma Mia or you want to be put onto our mailing list then please contact us at [Iwadetours@gmail.com](mailto:Iwadetours@gmail.com) or 01795 558001. We also have a Facebook page – search “Iwade Tours”

Thank you once again for the wonderful support and feedback we have received, we really hope to continue to grow this throughout 2025 and look forward to organising more days out for villagers and their friends and families.

**Happy New Year Iwade!**



## NEW YEARS' MESSAGE FROM KEVIN MCKENNA MP SITTINGBOURNE AND SHEPPEY

As 2025 begins, I wanted to reflect on what's been achieved together since my election last July, both locally and nationally. It's been a busy six months, with much more to do, but I'm excited to keep working hard for our communities in Iwade and across Sittingbourne and Sheppey.

Since July, I've met with residents, held surgeries, including one at the Woolpack, hosted coffee mornings, and supported hundreds of people with casework. I'm particularly proud to have secured a new banking hub for Sheerness, giving easier access to personal and business banking without the need to travel miles. We've also secured £2.07 million for tackling homelessness in Swale and £2 million for an HGV park in Queenborough, which will boost the local economy and improve conditions for drivers. On top of that, I've raised the issue of anti-social behaviour on our high streets in Parliament, pressing for more funding and support for local policing.

Nationally, I've been working with Labour to deliver meaningful change. I voted to crack down on polluting companies through the Water (Special Measures) Bill, supported measures to create a publicly owned Great British Energy company, backed the Employment Rights Bill to improve conditions for workers, and supported Labour's budget, which raised the minimum wage for over 5,300 people across Swale and increased funding for schools, family hubs, and policing.

One issue that remains close to home is the poor mobile signal in Iwade. Like many of you, I've found that while my phone claims to have signal, I can't make calls or load webpages. Ofcom's data says coverage is adequate, but it's clear this doesn't reflect reality. I've met with Chris Bryant the Minister responsible for mobile and internet coverage. Who has pushed Ofcom to take a closer look at their data to ensure it matches what's actually happening on the ground.

There's much more to do, but I'm confident that together we can keep making Sittingbourne and Sheppey a better place to live and work.

If there's anything I can do to help, please get in touch ([kevin.mckenna.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:kevin.mckenna.mp@parliament.uk) or [www.kevinmckenna.co.uk](http://www.kevinmckenna.co.uk)). Wishing you and your families a happy, healthy, and successful 2025.

**Kevin McKenna**  
Labour MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey

We'd LOVE to see you at the ...

### ASSEMBLY on SUNDAY

Valentine Special!



Songs, stories, cakes and biscuits, meet new people!  
Children, parents, grandparents, family and friends.

All welcome!

Sunday, 9th February 2025  
in Iwade School Hall at 3.00pm

ASSEMBLY ON SUNDAY is a joint project of  
All Saints Church and the Fournes Alliance Multi Academy Trust.  
Further details from: John Guest 07710 353461

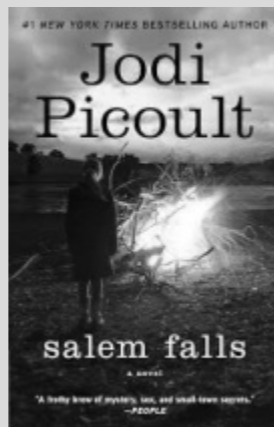
## IWADE READING AND BOOK GROUP

By Sylvia Francis

**O**ur book for February was *The Langoliers* by Stephen King. It was a strange mixed genre somewhere between Horror and Science Fiction, and certainly raised plenty of discussion and some controversy.

Some of our readers found it to be an unpleasant read whilst others enjoyed it. Maybe something of a 'Marmite book,' you either loved or hated it. We enjoyed a cheerful morning chatting about books with coffee and cake.

Our next group meeting is on the 11th February at 10:30 and we will be reviewing *Salem Falls* by Jodie Picoult. Open to all that enjoy a good book, we meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Barn.



## THE JOY OF PURPOSE

### Iwade Inspiration

Last month Elijah and I met Kevin McKenna, the new MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey. I say "new" but he's been in post since last July and it has taken me this long to get round to meeting him. I must say he made a good impression and was brimming with good ideas and visionary plans for making a difference in his new constituency. I invited him to attend some of this year's community activities in Iwade and reminded him that he only had a little over four years to make a good impression on local voters, many of whom are still unsure about how wise it has been to change our national administration.

Reflecting afterwards, it occurred to me how it is this time of year that all our own bright ideas of vision and purpose, so clearly driving the New Year resolutions of January, begin to fade and wither. Have we managed to maintain that diet? Did we keep up the weekly visits to the gym? Have those improvements we committed to, established so sensibly in the first week of 2025, lasted even a month? Kevin is still bright-eyed and bushy-tailed but am I?

Now more than ever we need to commit ourselves to patience and perseverance in striving to improve ourselves and the neighbourhoods we inhabit. Our world is currently quite dark and fires, frosts and floods assault our communities. Iwade is growing but

as the thunder of lorries and diggers on our streets reminds us, developments bring major challenges that require our positive responses.

Kim sent me a wonderful quote in January, just as I was grappling with my own notions of resolutions and how I might handle my health, finance and relationship issues in 2025. It comes from George Bernard Shaw but was voiced by Jeff Goldblum on a US talk show: "This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

I promised to send it to Kevin. Perhaps you might like to adopt it too.

God bless you.

John x

### Appendix A - Local Stories

- As winter is in full-fledge the volume of nuisance vehicles speeding through Iwade and underneath the Sheppey Crossing has plummeted, and only one such call was noted at the very beginning of the month. The CCTV underneath the crossing is effective in identifying the vehicles and Section 59 ASB warnings are sent out. Where the cameras do not cover, obtaining registrations is vital in prosecuting the offenders.
- Two instances of poaching are noted to having occurred on the outskirts of Iwade, although no game is said to have been taken. Usually, the offenders are spooked prior to Police arrival but I am pleased to note that in both incidents registrations were taken and passed to the Rural Task Force who are the best team to tackle rural crime. Information about what constitutes as a rural crime can be found at: <https://www.police.uk/pu/services-information/rural-and-wildlife-crime/>
- A vehicle theft was reported along School Lane. Can I please ask that your vehicles are secure, and safety advice is followed on keeping your vehicle safe, available at: <https://www.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/keeping-vehicles-safe/>

## Happy Valentines Iwade!

From the Iwade Observer Team xox

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# IWADE CHURCH TOWER REPAIRS



By *Kim Guest*

**M**any of you will have noticed the scaffolding that was installed before Christmas to allow the wooden shingles to be replaced on the Church Tower roof. By the time this issue is delivered, the work should be completed and the new shingles installed.

The church council and vicar of All Saints want to express our sincerest gratitude to all individuals who have given donations towards the cost of this work. In addition, we are grateful for grants that we have been awarded from Cllr Mike Baldock and Cllr Mike Dendor, The National Churches Trust, Friends of Kent Churches, The Doubleday Trust, Queenborough Fisheries and Iwade Rocks.

The original cost we anticipated did not include the work to replace the lightning conductor which we discovered was detached, but we have raised enough funds

to enable that work to be done also while the scaffolding was still there. Our fundraising efforts continue as we have discovered repairs are needed for the South Aisle roof, which will cost a further £10,000. Donations or other offers of support are very welcome. Do book your table for our next fundraising event of a Quiz Night in the Village Hall on the 8th March at 19:00 – see ad below.

## PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Friends,

A new year is never a matter of indifference, just another day. Another cycle in the life of the world, it heralds ... what? A birthday signifies new beginnings, a chance to assess our own lives – where we have been, what we have reached, and where we might go. A new year is a kind of collective birthday for all of us. Whatever calendar we use, a new year must be much the same – the past is divided from future, and we all move on in anticipation of what is to come.

Anticipation? Mixed with hope or anxious thought? Our lives will always present challenges. The fading months of last year have seen us faced with lots of them, both as nations and as individuals. It looks like there may be more challenges on the way. What about our own lives? Our families, friendships, homes and jobs?

The Future? We have to go there, whatever it brings. And it's good to go there with others to provide the support we need to get along, to get by, and get through. For all of us, there is someone who has promised never to leave us, who promised us his peace and strength. "Put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way." As Jesus said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age".

Blessings,

*Ron Partridge, curate and chaplain (retired)*

Quoted: "The Gate of the Year" by Minnie Haskins and Matthew 28:20

**? ALL SAINTS AWESOME QUIZ NIGHT! ?**

**8th March at 7.00 pm**  
**in THE VILLAGE HALL**

*proceeds in aid of ALL SAINTS church building repairs*

Tables of six. £20 a table. Bring your own refreshments.

Further details from Sue Wall: [suewall1812@gmail.com](mailto:suewall1812@gmail.com)

**ALL WELCOME!** ?

### Disclaimer

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# IWADE PARISH COUNCIL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

**C**ommunity events and gatherings help to bring the village together and play an important role in community engagement. Although it is not the role of the Parish Council to organise and run events, they will support and provide help where appropriate. Council members have been re-thinking how they can engage with the community to deliver safe and welcoming events that residents can enjoy and be proud of.

The members have agreed that for future events the Parish Council will reach out to residents and offer the opportunity for volunteers to help contribute ideas, organise and run each event. The volunteers will form an advisory committee assisted by a council member. The advisory committee will report into the Parish Council who will help with getting any necessary permits, approvals and risk assessments in place, and provide funding and equipment where they are able to.

### VE Day 8th May, 2025 – Your community needs you!

The Parish Council are planning an event to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on Thursday 8th May 2025 and would like to offer the opportunity for residents to volunteer to help contribute ideas, organise and run the event, and future events.

The volunteers will form an advisory committee assisted by a council member. The advisory committee will report into the Parish Council who will help with getting any necessary permits, approvals and risk assessments in place, and provide funding and equipment where they are able to. **If you would like to help make this event a success by volunteering to be on the advisory committee then please email [clerk@iwade-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@iwade-pc.gov.uk)**

**IWADE PARISH COUNCIL REMEMBRANCE PLAQUES**

**KEY**

- PLANTER
- 01 PLANTER NUMBER
- REMEMBRANCE WALK

**REMEMBRANCE PLAQUES** Plaque Size: 115mmx50mm

The Parish Council operates a scheme for donating a plaque to a Planter or Tree in memory of a loved one or to commemorate an event or anniversary. There is limited availability, plaque donations are accepted on a first come first served basis but each application will also be reviewed by the Parish Council.

APPLY: <https://www.iwade-pc.gov.uk/community/iwade-parish-council-18357/memorial-plaque-scheme/>



# COUNCIL MINUTES ROUNDUP

## IWADE PARISH COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY 11TH DECEMBER

### PRESENT:

- Cllr. S Tolhurst - Chair
- County Cllr. M. Baldock
- Cllr. P. Hyde
- Samantha Gray, Clerk
- Cllr. P. Holowczycki
- Three Residents

• **KCC permits for carrying out work** – The damaged lamp posts on the junction of Ferry Road/Sheppey Way and in Cormorant Road have been replaced. Council members would like to request Chevrons are installed on the junction of Ferry Road/Sheppey Way to help prevent further accidents in this location. The Clerk will add this to the Highway Improvement Plan. **Action: Clerk**

### • Anti-social behaviour Mansfield Drive

a) Correspondence update with Plaxtol Investments Ltd – The Clerk has written to Plaxtol Investments Ltd to advise them of the anti-social behaviour issues happening on their land. Members agreed to wait for a response before making any further decisions.

b) To consider grass maintenance options – as above.

c) To consider moving a CCTV camera – as above.

6) **Planning:** applications are viewable on Swale: <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications>; KCC: <https://cloud2.atriumsoft.com/KCCePlanningOPS/searchPageLoad.do>

### 7) Correspondence

• **KALC Community Awards 2025** – email 20.11 – Members agreed to ask the community for nominations by 2nd January 2025. The Clerk will put a message on the notice board, parish council website, Facebook, and will contact the Barn to advertise on their website. **Action: Clerk**

• **Raspberry Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund** – email 21.11 – Members agreed to support a request from The Barn for Solar panels. The Barn trustees will advise how much square footage is available and supply a quote for the work required. Cllr. Hyde will look into the cost for tree's to be planted in the village. Costs for work required for the pond in Woodpecker park needs to be looked into further. **Action: Clerk/Cllr. Hyde**

• **Traffic Calming, Ferry Road outside Heaven/Iwade Garage** – email 02.12 – Council members held a meeting with KCC Highways earlier in the year and requested priority signage at build-outs. The Clerk has followed this up with KCC who are looking into it.

• **Request for “turn engines off” sign in car park, School Lane** – email 04.12 – The Clerk will contact Omnicroft to request signage. **Action: Clerk**

### 1) Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Fuszard, S. Waters and D. Waters.

### 2) Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr. Hyde noted a personal interest in item 6.5.

### 3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Hyde and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, the minutes of the monthly Parish Council Meeting held on 13 November 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

### 4) Visitors/Public Time

**Visitors:** Nothing to report.

**County and Borough Councillors:** Cllr. Baldock advised the following:

- Kent County Council have a gap in their budget. They are proposing to withdraw grants from councillors.
- It's possible that in the future the County will be split into three unitary councils.
- Look into land that can be purchased from Swale Borough Council (SBC).
- The Parish Council can contact SBC any time to discuss green spaces that are available. Green space can be used as a nature park with minimum maintenance.
- A community governance boundary review will be held next year.

**Police Constable:** Report received – see appendix A (Page 7)

### 5) Village Matters

#### • Advertisement board in Iwade

**Pharmacy** – The council have received a complaint; the flashing light from the advertisement board is affecting neighbouring properties at night. A council member has spoken with the pharmacy and suggested the board is changed to a still image at night. Councillor to continue communicating with the pharmacy.

• **Statement from Southern Water** – email 04.12 – Following a meeting held by the Parish Council with Southern Water and KCC, Southern Water issued a statement which covers the facts already known to the parish council and residents; the investigation carried out showed no leaks on their assets. Members note that water is starting to pool outside of Plantation Court again, and the Clerk has reported this to Southern Water and KCC. Members agreed that KCC need to investigate this issue. **Action: Clerk**

### 8) Parish Council Matters

• **Parish Councillor applications** – Members agreed to co-opt Jordan Hartley and Chad Gomez. The Chair welcomed them to the Parish Council and they duly signed the acceptance of office form.

• **Parish Councillor Resignation** – Ray Langham has resigned from the Parish Council and the vacancy has been advertised.

### 9) Finance

• **To consider a quotation from ADM Computing to ensure files are backed up correctly** – Proposed by Cllr. Hyde and seconded by Cllr. Tolhurst, members agreed to the quotation of £100.00p. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

• **Quote from IT Manager Services** – Members agreed to look at this quote again when the current Office 365 and mailbox contract is due for renewal.

• **Hugofox Mailboxes and Domain Names** – Members agreed to look at this quote again when the current Office 365 and mailbox contract is due for renewal.

• **Quote to install tree guards** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Hyde, members agreed to the cost of £58.80p to purchase tree guards.

• **Quotation to repair lamp column no.06 in Sheerstone** - Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Hyde, members agreed to the cost of £815.00p + VAT to repair the damaged lamp column.

• **Bank signatories** – Cllrs. Tolhurst and Holowczycki signed the account management form to authorise changes to bank signatories on the account. A new signatory is needed and members asked the Clerk to add this to the next agenda. **Action: Clerk**

• **Insurance cover for Beacon Lighting** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Holowczycki, members agreed to the quotation from Unity insurance for the cost of £461.76p. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

• **Parish Council contact with McCabe Ford Williams** – Members deferred this to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

• **CPRE membership renewal** – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Hyde, members agreed to renew the yearly membership at a cost of £36.00p. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

• **Accounts and Cheques raised at this meeting** - Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Hartley, members noted the budget figures and the accounts to 30 November 2024. Cllrs. Holowczycki and Tolhurst will log in and authorise the following payments:

**Action: Cllrs. Holowczycki/ Tolhurst**

### 10) Projects - Updates on Current and New

• **VE Day 8th May 2025** – Members agreed not to advertise the event to the public outside of the village. Cllr. Hyde will try to organise a Buglar to play at the event. **Action: Clerk/Cllr. Hyde**

• **Future public events** – Members agreed to send out a write up to the community, inviting volunteers to join an advisory committee.

### 11) Reports from Representatives

• **Village Hall Committee** – Members agreed the council would like to collaborate with the village hall committee.

• **KALC Area Representative** – Cllr. Holowczycki advised he attended a meeting at Lower Halstow and encourages members to read the minutes of the meeting which have been circulated. Subjects covered were the homeless and rough sleepers, and speed watch. The next meeting is 18th February at Iwade Village Hall.

### 12) Items for Next Agenda

- Storage
- Tracker
- Village Centre litter collections - Omnicroft
- Flood Action Group **Action: Clerk**

**The meeting closed at 09.06 p.m**

**13) The next Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday 12th February at 19:30 in Iwade Village Hall.**