

THE THREE TOWERS

October 2026



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Parish News

THE FUTURE OF THE THREE TOWERS

As the editor of this community magazine, I must announce that the future of The Three Towers is in doubt. Sadly, I am informed that, soon, the magazine may be no longer be financially viable.

As background, the magazine was started by Fr Andy Hawes in 1990 and, over the past 36 years, has been a source of local information for many in our community. Since then, we have managed to provide a free copy to every household in the communities of Manthorpe, Lound, Toft, Witham on the Hill, Edenham and Swinstead. A couple of our readers have suggested that we should consider a subscription model to keep the magazine afloat. If we are to do this, we would not want the magazine to be a subscriber-only model. Rather, such support would help us to continue to deliver to every household in our community free of charge.

So, I am asking you, our readers, if you have any suggestions as to how we might keep our magazine going? **Would you be willing to make an annual donation or do you know of any organisation in our community who may be able to give us some financial assistance?**

Also, if we can continue to publish the magazine, **we are looking for a volunteer to take over the advertising and finances of The Three Towers.** This would entail liaising with our advertisers, issuing the annual invoices, keeping track of advertisers' payments and paying the printer once a month.

Please let me have your thoughts email:

Tom McWilliams: the3towers1@gmail.com

ST ANDREW'S PARISH HALL in Witham on the Hill has now been refurbished. It **is available for hire** by-the-hour at competitive rates for classes, coffee mornings, parties etc. **Contact David 07468 726333**

THANK YOU very much to those brave people who came and supported Edenham church garden fete in July. Attendance was low, possibly due to the weather but those who came really enjoyed sitting in the shady parts of the garden with some lovely homemade teas. Thank you to all the wonderful helpers on the stalls and the teas and for setting up, we cannot do it without you. A fantastic £850.10 was raised for church funds. Please make a note that we have decided to do it all again on 10th July 2027. Ruth Atter

THANK YOU to everyone who supported the surplus produce sale. £120 was raised which was divided between Witham Church and the Parish Hall.



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WELCOME to Emma, Charles, Regan and Harry at West Farm Cottages, Witham on the Hill. We hope you will be very happy here.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE You should find a leaflet in this magazine asking you to fill a shoe box of gifts and supplies for children in countries upset by war and natural disasters. This is a charity organised by a Christian Group. If you can please fill a shoe box or donate some suitable items. The boxes can be taken to various collection points during 9-16 November. For further information or help with collection contact Jane Clark, tel 01778 590232. Thank you for your generous support.

DOG FOULING It appears that there is an increase in dog waste on the Lound road. All dog owners are asked to ensure that they bag their pet's waste and take it home with them. Please remember that it is not just anti-social to leave your pet's waste for someone to step on, it can be a serious health hazard to adults, children and other animals alike.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 3 October 7pm St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill, Race night with fish and chip supper. **POSTPONED** - Date to be arranged

Wednesday 7 & 21 October 10.30am to 12pm, Swinstead Village Hall Social Coffee Mornings. Come and meet some new friends and enjoy some company, accompanied with coffee, tea, scones, cakes and bakes, and a chance to win a prize with one free raffle ticket, all for £3.00.

Saturday 10 October - 12 Hour Charity Darts Marathon – 10am to 10pm. All proceeds raised will be split between two charities this year – **Young lives vs Cancer** and **Magpas Air Ambulance**. Please come along throughout the day or evening to support the dart players and spur them along. A large raffle and refreshments are available throughout the day. For more info, or you wish to kindly donate a prize for the raffle, contact Mark Woodruff on 07810 873394.

Saturday 31 October 7pm St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill, Halloween quiz night with chilli con carne supper. All welcome. To book contact Debs 07716 965856

Friday 6 November – Swinstead Annual Village Fireworks on Bourne Green. A great night of **free** entertainment for the whole family, with fireworks starting at 8pm. Come enjoy some pizza and a drink before the Fireworks - Chapel Street Pizza Van will be onsite from 6pm until sold out. Village Hall Bar will be open from 6pm.

Saturday 21 November Big Breakfast 8.30-10.00, St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill. All welcome. Donations to Christian Aid.



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Steam Action Veg and Produce Show 2026

On Saturday 5 September, Steam Action held its 50th Veg and Produce show at Edenham Village Hall. In classes ranging from flowers to veg and from homemade projects to delicious homemade cakes, we had over 240 entries.

From 2pm the general public were welcomed in to browse the entries and have refreshments. Entrants could then see how the judges had rated their offerings and collect their prizes. Most people stayed to see the presentation of the trophies, including our special trophies for our younger entrants. Then it was time for everyone's favourite part of the day, the auction. All the entries that people were happy to donate are auctioned off to raise money for Steam Action. A fun afternoon was had by all, lots of laughter and generosity.

The committee put these events on for the community and to see people come and enjoy themselves makes all the effort worthwhile. If you have any suggestions for classes in next years' show please do get in touch.

Steam Action ia a voluntary group of people that puts on events for the community, particularly for the more senior members of the parish. We are always looking for new members to join the committee. So, if you are interested, please contact Nikki Gunn 07908 11690 or Amanda Treacy on 07984 427799.

Keep an eye out for details of this year's pantomime. We are back!



WITHAM HALL SCHOOL

WILD ABOUT LEARNING

Witham Hall is delighted to announce the appointment of a dedicated Outdoor Learning Practitioner, who is now leading regular, timetabled Forest School sessions for pupils from Reception through to Year 3. Set in the school's own Witham Wilderness – a truly unique green space where learning really comes alive – these sessions are fast becoming a highlight of the week for our youngest pupils!

Each session gives children the chance to explore wildlife observation, plant identification, team building and hands-on problem solving, all designed to spark curiosity, build confidence and deepen their

connection with nature.

Crucially, Forest School is child-led. Rather than following a fixed set of instructions, pupils are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning, choosing what to investigate, how to work together and how to tackle the challenges they encounter. It's an approach that builds independence and resilience alongside a genuine love of the outdoors, all within a safe and carefully supervised environment.

The new sessions run alongside the school's popular Monday morning toddler sessions, meaning the Witham Wilderness is now buzzing with young explorers from toddler age right through to Year 3 and beyond!





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The Three Towers Can You Help?

We need your help to continue to provide you with your copy of The Three Towers.

Are you or is your organisation willing to make an annual donation towards our production costs?

Would you be willing to take on the role of advertising manager and look after our finances?

If so, please contact the Editor:

Email: the3towers1@gmail.com



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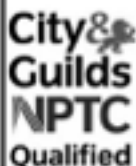


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The Vicar Writes

Ask the average person what happens to the collection at funerals in churches and most people will probably say that it goes to benefit a charity chosen by the family of the deceased. Indeed, you'll often see a varnished box located somewhere by the church door with a note on it detailing the name of the deceased and/or the chosen charity. After the service is over, the funeral directors will remove the box, take it back to the office, bank the contents and forward the money on. So far so good? Well, not exactly.

Under ecclesiastical law, all collections taken in church at a service (including funerals) are the property and responsibility of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) which must record and account for them properly. So, for example, the placing of a separate collection box by funeral directors, which they then take away, is illegal because the PCC could not account for it. It doesn't matter if the collection plate is passed around or left at the back of the church. It doesn't matter if the funeral director's box is left in the porch rather than the main body of the church. It makes no difference if the service takes place before or after a burial or a cremation; all monies

collected in church are the property of the PCC and must be accounted for.

To those who aren't regular churchgoers, this may sound odd or even suggest that something has recently changed but I can assure you that this has always been the case. I must admit that some funeral directors don't like being reminded of it and I've had to ask several of them to remove their collection boxes from the premises (having already reminded them of the relevant ecclesiastical law beforehand). I realise that this may not sit well with everyone wishing to organise a funeral or a memorial service in church and I do appreciate that. I would love for everyone to want to support the local church financially so that we can keep our buildings open and available for everyone but that isn't always the case.

With that in mind, each of the PCCs that oversee the eight church buildings in my care have resolved to offer, on request, that fifty percent of any funeral collection will be given to a family's chosen charity after being banked and accounted for by the PCC. We've found that the best way to do this is to pay the amount over to the funeral directors following the service, as they're better placed to

forward it on as per the family's instructions (it also helps our volunteer treasurers).

All the eight churches I work with are struggling financially. The demands of historic buildings, rising costs and smaller congregations, means that every pound and penny counts. We get no financial assistance from the Diocese of Lincoln or from the Church Commissioners in London. On the contrary, we must now raise £65,500 between us, after running costs, to pay to the Diocese of Lincoln in order to have one resident priest between us. What you see when you pass by is what we're managing to do with what's

left over from fundraising and donations, together with the modest income we derive from wedding and funeral fees which we also share with the Diocese (for the full breakdown visit https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-11/parochial-fees-a4_26.pdf).

We can't afford to see money given at funerals be whisked away by a funeral director, however noble the intended cause may be. We need people to support us at the point of need, especially at funerals. Even so we're doing our best to try and meet people halfway. Hopefully, you'll be willing to meet us there too. Fr Edward



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Domesday Book

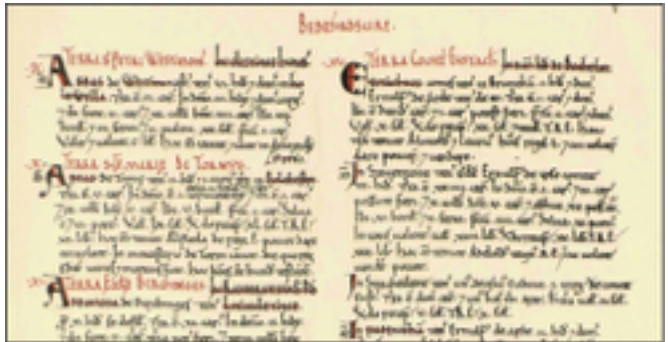
After Magna Carta, Domesday Book is the most famous document in English history and is the oldest government record held in The National Archives. The book contains the results of a survey of England in great depth and detail. Organised by manor, it lists the amount of woodland, pasture, number of animals, number of freemen, number of slaves and much more. Such an investigation would not be conducted again until modern times anywhere in the world. What makes it even more impressive is that when it was made, Domesday was written long before computers, spreadsheets, the internet, telephones or even paper.

In 1086, William the Conqueror, now King William I, wanted to find out about all the land in his new kingdom. Beginning soon after Christmas 1085, he sent commissioners into every shire in the country and the survey itself was accomplished in a little over six months. The principal unit that Domesday was concerned with was the manor. The commissioners questioned juries of local people at the Shire Court. Who held the manor in the time of Edward the Confessor and who holds it now? How many hides of land are there (the amount of land needed to support a single peasant household, about 120 acres). How many ploughs, how many freemen, how many slaves, how much woodland, how much meadow, how much pasture? How much was it worth then and how much now? After further verification by another set of commissioners, the details gleaned from these questions were handwritten onto parchment for binding into Domesday Book.

The original Domesday Book consisted of two volumes: "Little Domesday" covering Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex and "Great Domesday" covering the remainder of England south of the river Ribble and river Tees, the border with Scotland at the time. It is now contained within five volumes, having been re-bound in 1984 to preserve it for another millennium. Each page is filled on both

sides with closely written, abbreviated Latin text (see picture below). It survives as a single set of volumes with a total of 913 pages and two million words describing more than 13,000 named places in England and parts of Wales and around 30,000 manors.

Here is where it gets complicated. Domesday is divided geographically into counties. Then each county



is further divided by named landholder or tenant-in-chief. The manors held by each landholder are then listed, divided by Hundred or Wapentake. The entry for the manor contains the detailed information about the resources within those manors and the ownership and valuation in 1066 and 1086.

A tenant-in-chief held land directly from the King. A Hundred was an ancient administrative division of a county in use from the 11th century until the middle of the 19th century. In eastern England a Hundred is known as a Wapentake which has Danish or Viking origins.

All villages in the Three Towers Benefice get a mention in Domesday Book. All in the ancient Wapentake of Beltisloe. There were 39 named places in Beltisloe in Domesday Book. For instance, Manthorpe appears under 3 landholders. Valuation in 1086 was 4 pounds, 5 shillings and 2 pence (in old money). Edenham has just one owner. Valuation in 1086 is 18 pounds. Figures are quoted for 1066 and 1086 giving the King the changes in the country before and after the conquest.

Domesday is reckoned to be an absolute gift to historians. He or she may be able to draw conclusions from these figures as Domesday Book is a primary source document giving valuable information of the exact state of the country

over 900 years ago. But to most people, it is a bit of a cachet if the town or village where they live is in the Domesday Book. "Mentioned in Domesday" always seems to spark an interest and may even increase house prices.

A very useful translation of Domesday Book is the edition published between 1975 and 1986 by the local-history publishers Phillimore & Co. At one volume for each county, with Lincolnshire and Yorkshire having two volumes each, there are 35 volumes in all. It is organised in the same way as Domesday, with a facsimile of the original page on the left-hand side, and a translation on the right.

In 2011 the Open Domesday website made the book available as a database on the internet. It can be searched on names of people, usually landholders, or place names. It very cleverly scans through the book obtaining all the manors in a particular place or held by a named landholder.

Opinions remained divided on the benefits or otherwise of William and the Norman conquest of England. Some see the conquest as imposing a brutal Norman yoke on the native Anglo-Saxons, stealing their lands and casting them into virtual slavery. Others point to the flowering of culture and language, art and architecture and of bringing England into closer contact with the civilisations on the continent. Whatever the view, one must admit that the creation of the Domesday Book was a giant leap forward in science and literature, nothing comes close for at least eight centuries.

Dick Mundy

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www.willoughbygallery.com

Witham on the Hill WI September 2026

President, Vicky Cox, introduced Patty Harris, who stood in at short notice to replace Nicola Hallam who was unable to attend due to illness. Patty is a volunteer at the Spalding Gentlemen's Society Museum. The Society was formed in 1710 by Maurice Johnson, a lawyer for the drainage board. It started as a coffee house where men met together to discuss the newspapers (especially the Tatler) which arrived from London on Thursday evenings. The subscription was a guinea and a book.

Men met to discuss items of interest, so a huge collection of bizarre items grew - including two huge bladder stones and an invitation to a hanging! The museum houses over 8,000 artefacts and 30,000 books. Some items are stored in the strong room because of their value. Famous members included Isaac Newton (who donated a telescope) Sir Joseph Banks, Alfred Lord Tennyson and Gilbert Scott, architect.

Women have been admitted since 2006 – 1/3 of the membership is female. The Grade 2 listed building is currently under major repair with a grant from the National Lottery Fund. The Society has bought the building next door and it is planned to have a café and learning room. The work should be completed March 2027.

A group of our members and their husbands enjoyed an outing to Moulton Windmill – a guided tour by very knowledgeable volunteers, followed by afternoon tea. 8 members supported the Breast Cancer Now charity at a delicious afternoon tea at Waterside Garden Centre restaurant – a wonderful array of sandwiches, scones, cakes and desserts all in a pink theme.

The next WI meeting will be on Tuesday 6 October at 2.30pm in St Andrew's Parish Hall, Witham on the Hill. Jane Elliot will be giving a cookery demonstration. Visitors and new members are always very welcome: entry fee £5. For more information contact Jane Clark, Secretary: Tel 01778 590232.

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Jane's Seasonal Recipe

We have a lot of beetroot this year, and I have been meaning to try this cake for a few years. It is quick and easy to make and is very moist.

Beetroot and Chocolate Cake

225 g cooked beetroot
30 g cocoa powder
180 g plain flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
225 g caster sugar
100 g plain chocolate
200 ml sunflower oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 eggs

Mix flour, cocoa and baking powder in a large bowl. Stir in sugar and chopped chocolate. In a separate bowl, finely grate the beetroot. Beat in the eggs, vanilla and oil, mixing well. Stir into dry ingredients, folding gently but do not overwork. Pour into a greased lined 2 lb loaf tin. Bake at 180°C for 1¼ hours until firm to touch and skewer comes out clean. Cool in tin for 10 mins then turn onto a wire rack to cool. Sprinkle with icing sugar and serve with creme fraiche, cream or ice-cream.

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PARISH SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

	Swinstead	Witham	Edenham	Bythams
2 nd October	6pm Harvest Festival (followed by sandwiches & sausage rolls at Village Hall / George's Bar)			
4 th October <i>Trinity 18</i>		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist 4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)	9.30am Parish Eucharist (Castle Bytham)
11 th October <i>Trinity 19</i>		9.30am Parish Eucharist 6pm Harvest Thanksgiving	11.15am Harvest Festival Eucharist (followed by Lunch at the Vicarage)	9.30am Parish Eucharist (Careby)
18 th October <i>Trinity 20</i>		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist 4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)	9.30am Parish Eucharist (Creeton)
25 th October <i>Dedication Festival</i>		9.30am Parish Eucharist	11.15am Parish Eucharist 4pm Evensong (Stable Chapel)	9.30am Parish Eucharist (Little Bytham)

For Baptisms, Weddings, Banns of Marriage, Confessions or any other pastoral or spiritual need, contact: The Revd Fr Edward Martin SSC 07736 711360
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