

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5.11

Working together to be the best we can possibly be.

Message from Miss Turner

9th October 2026

We thank Mr Brian Zielinski-Smith for his time as Chair of Governors and welcome Mr Hayden Watson as our new Chair. Please find further details in this newsletter. We have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming our Reception parents and carers into school to join our Stay and Play sessions. Thank you so much for coming along!

Safeguarding:

As technology continues to evolve, one of the key safeguarding concerns for children is online safety.

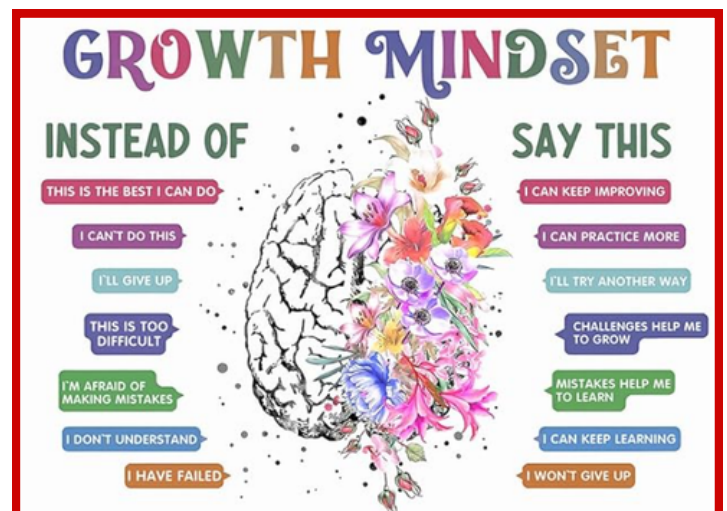
- Talk regularly with children about their online lives.
- Check privacy settings and parental controls on devices and apps.
- Remind children never to share personal information or passwords online.
- Encourage children to speak to a trusted adult if something online makes them feel worried or uncomfortable.

The most effective safeguarding tool is an open conversation. Taking a few minutes each day to talk about what your child is doing online can make a significant difference.

Wellbeing & Mental Health

At school, we encourage children to see mistakes as an important part of learning. When something is tricky or doesn't go to plan, we remind them that every mistake is a chance to learn, improve and grow.

As parents and carers, you can help by celebrating effort, encouraging your child to keep trying, and reminding them that nobody gets everything right the first time. Mistakes aren't failures, they are stepping stones to success.



Attendance

This week's attendance: 95.7 %

The Rackham has a policy on Attendance. Please follow [this link](#) to read the policy on the school website.

NHS guidance on how to determine if your child is too ill for school

[https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?es_c=AC82DB7E96BFD9AC5E67432445C9813A&es_cl=0D3BE8C5CF33C9EC1AA46E767A80DD1E&es_id=ph7%c2%a3o1)

[es_c=AC82DB7E96BFD9AC5E67432445C9813A&es_cl=0D3BE8C5CF33C9EC1AA46E767A80DD1E&es_id=ph7%c2%a3o1](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?es_c=AC82DB7E96BFD9AC5E67432445C9813A&es_cl=0D3BE8C5CF33C9EC1AA46E767A80DD1E&es_id=ph7%c2%a3o1)

SEND Reforms and the White Paper

If you wish to find out more about the SEND reforms, the most update advice from the DFE can be found here for parents and carers:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a831cfe03b4fe14b1e7df28/What_parents_of_children_and_young_people_with_SEND_need_to_know.pdf

A message from the Governing Body

The Governing Body is pleased to announce that Mr Hayden Watson has been appointed Chair of Governors, he replaces Mr Brian Zielinski-Smith who has decided to not put himself forward for re-election after serving diligently in the role for over two years.

Hayden grew up in Witchford, attending The Rackham C of E Primary School in the late 90s before moving away. He moved back to the village a few years ago with his family. Hayden has two children who are both currently experiencing everything The Rackham has to offer.

Hayden is a Fellow Chartered Certified Accountant with over a decade of experience in finance, advisory, reporting and data analysis. His current role has given him additional exposure to HR, policy, staff training and project management and implementation. He has also volunteered with Friends of Witchford Rackham PTA and was a Trustee of the Pre-School prior to it being incorporated with the school.

The Governing Body would like to thank Brian for his hard work as the Chair. His steady leadership and care have made a big difference to the school community. We are extremely grateful for his time and effort and the support he has given to students, staff and Governors. We are pleased that he will be staying on as a Governor to continue helping to support The Rackham.

There are currently vacancies on the Governing Body, if you are interested in becoming a Governor, please see the website for more details or speak to a Governor.

Laura Boyd, Vice Chair of Governors

Ian Clifton, Deralyn Short, Elouise Hunt, Malcom Wood, Hayley Scarrow
Governing Body

Opportunity to become a school Governor

Governor Vacancy | The Rackham C of E (VC) Primary School

Closing date Friday 16th October 2026.

Early Years: Pre-School weekly update

Next week our question is “What treasures can Autumn give us?” At pre-school we will be focusing on Harvest and understanding that autumn provides us with fruits, vegetables, seeds and natural materials. We will take the opportunity to be thankful for the food we have and the people who help grow, pick, transport and prepare it. At home, you can continue this learning by taking an Autumn walk together and noticing what you see, hear and feel. You could explore Harvest through everyday experiences such as shopping or preparing meals together. Talk about the different fruits and vegetables you see and wonder about where they have come from and how they grow. Perhaps choose an autumn fruit or vegetable to cook together and share some pictures with us on Tapestry.

Year 5 Parent meal

We would like to invite Year 5 parents and carers to join us for school dinner on Thursday 22nd October. The meal will be our extremely popular (and very delicious) roast dinner.

Parents and carers are asked to purchase their school dinner through MCAS under the Products and Trips tab. The meal will cost £3.80. Meal choice and payment must be made by Friday 16th October please.

Please complete **this form** to book your meal once payment has been made on MCAS. Unfortunately, we can only offer for one parent or carer to attend on this occasion.

Children in Year 5 who prefer to have a home packed lunch will still have opportunity for their parent or carer to join them. Adults can still order a school dinner or bring a packed lunch from home to sit to eat with their child.

Please can parents and carers of Year 5 children arrive for school dinner at 12.20pm.

Scholastic book fair

Scholastic book fair will be open in the school hall today, Monday and Tuesday from 3.30pm to 4.15pm. Card payments preferred please. All purchases contribute to free books for our school so please do come and support the book fair.

Photographs

If you haven't received the school photo ordering information, please contact the office who will be able to send you the details.

Photos can be ordered for free delivery to school through the Kittle website until Sunday 18th October.

After this date, photos can be ordered to a home address which will incur a postage charge.

FWR Doughnut Day

FWR are excited to be holding a Doughnut Day fundraiser on Friday 16th October. Doughnuts will be on sale to the primary school children after lunch for £1 each. Pre-School parents will be able to purchase doughnuts after school if they wish to do so.

Please note that this is optional.

Due to School Food Standards guidance, if your child does not have £1 we are unable to provide a doughnut during school hours. If children forget their money on the day, FWR will be selling doughnuts after school with payment by cash or card.

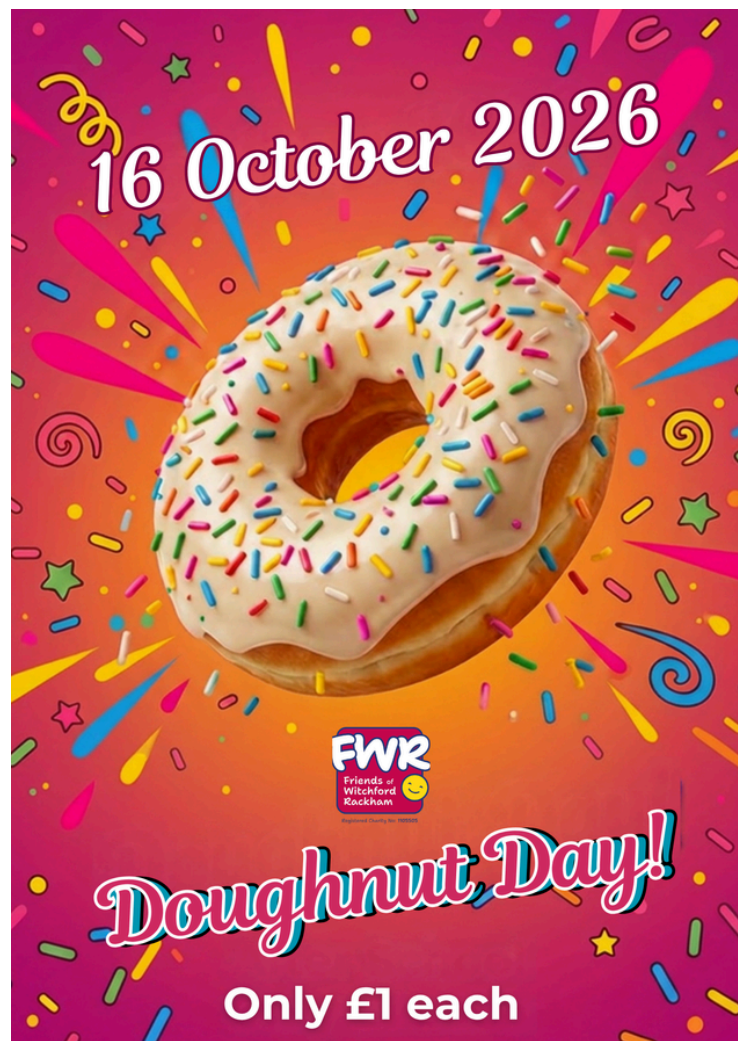
Please complete this form Doughnut Day - 16th October 2026 if either of the following statements apply:

- You DO NOT want your child to have a doughnut or
- Your child cannot have these doughnuts due to special dietary needs.

The form must be completed by 9am on Wednesday 14th October. We hope to be able to provide an alternative if made aware of dietary requirements.

Nutritional and allergy information: Suitable for vegetarian: Yes Suitable for vegans: No Contains: Gluten (Wheat), Soya and Milk. Please use the following link to access full nutritional information: [White Iced Ring Doughnuts](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support.





WELCOME BACK!
SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL
PLAY OUR LOTTERY

- Join the lottery to support our school
- Win weekly cash prizes up to £25,000
- Tickets from just £1 a week
- Free entry into the bonus Super Draw!

BUY TICKETS:
Go to: www.yourschoolottery.co.uk
And search for:
Rackham
Or scan the QR code!

18+ GambleAware



FWR IS NOW ON INSTAGRAM
@friendsofwitchfordrackham

Follow us to stay up to date with events and FWR news!

Scan to follow

FWR Uniform sales

FWR will be running second hand uniform sales before and after school on the following dates:

- Wednesday 14th October
- Friday 20th November
- Wednesday 16th December

School Uniform reminder

We wish to remind parents, carers and pupils about school uniform expectations.

- Hair should be in its natural state without colours from permanent dye or temporary colour.
- Nails should be without nail varnish.
- Stud earrings only.

Children's Commissioner survey

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza would like to hear from children and young people aged between 0 - 18, as part of a national survey called 'The Big Future'. Please help your child(ren) to complete the survey which can be found [**here**](#)

A Christmas card design competition for the local MP

I'm challenging children from across Ely and East Cambridgeshire to design a festive card that reflects the spirit of the season - joy, kindness, and togetherness.

The winning design will be featured on the front of my official Christmas card, which I send to colleagues, community leaders, and constituents. The two runners-up will also feature on the back of the card. All children will receive a participation certificate, and the three winning entries will receive a small prize.

This year, I'd like the children's designs to be inspired by the theme '**Wildlife in Winter**'.

Further information:

Before the deadline, please send the original artwork only to the following address – no photocopies, please. Once judging has taken place, we will ensure all artwork is returned to you.

Charlotte Cane MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Designs should be created on A4 paper, but will be reduced to A6 size for printing. Please avoid 3D elements such as glitter, stickers, or glue, as these do not reproduce well. On the back of each entry, please include the child's full name, age, school and school year – clearly written.

The winner's name, school and age will be included on the final card and announced through my communication channels including on social media and in my newsletter. If a parent or guardian would prefer certain details, such as a surname, to be omitted, please clearly state this on the back of the artwork.

I would be thrilled to see your creativity and imagination shine through your designs. The deadline for entries is **Monday 2nd November**. Please send the entries with enough time to reach us by then.

Therapy dog Tuesday

We are delighted to welcome Sancho, a trained therapy dog and his handler into school on Tuesday afternoons again this year. We will share with our pupils that they require permission from their parents and carers before they can spend time with Sancho. Sancho is a Shih Tzu which are generally considered to be hypoallergenic or low allergen. Please follow the link here to advise us about your child taking part: **Therapy Dog Tuesday with Sancho**

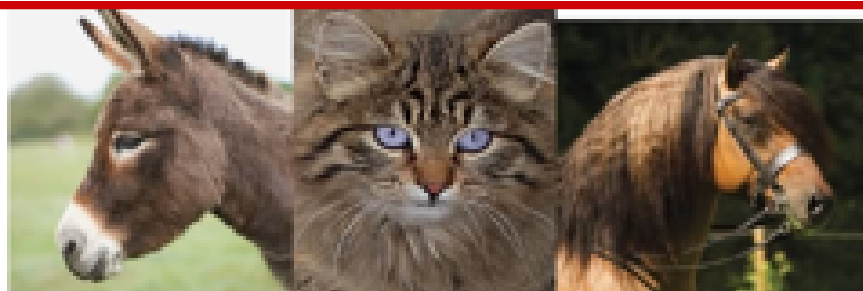
myHappy Mind

All parents and carers have access to the My Happy Mind platform where there are lots of resources and ideas to use at home to support your child free of charge.

Simply go to the My Happy Mind website and log in: <https://myhappymind.org/>

You will be asked for a reference number for The Rackham. The number to type in is:

Please access free of charge all the parent and carer resources. **Huge thanks to our wonderful FWR who pay the subscription.**



PET SERVICE

St Andrew's Church

WITCHFORD

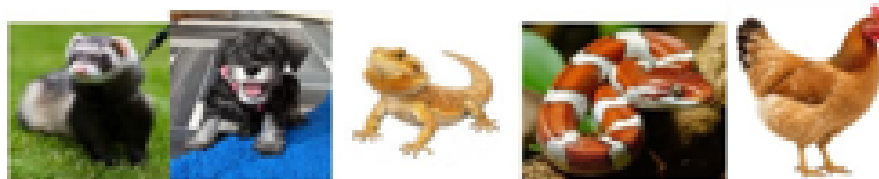
11.00am – 11th October, 2026

Bring along your pets for a blessing.

ALL WELCOME

Please use appropriate carriers and leashes.

A memory board will be available for photos of deceased pets who will also be blessed – Please bring them with you.



Refreshments will be served after the Service.

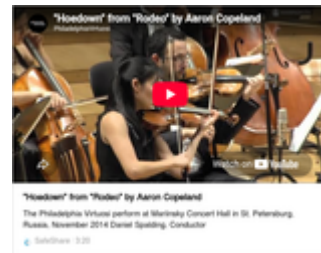
Focus for next week in Collective Worship



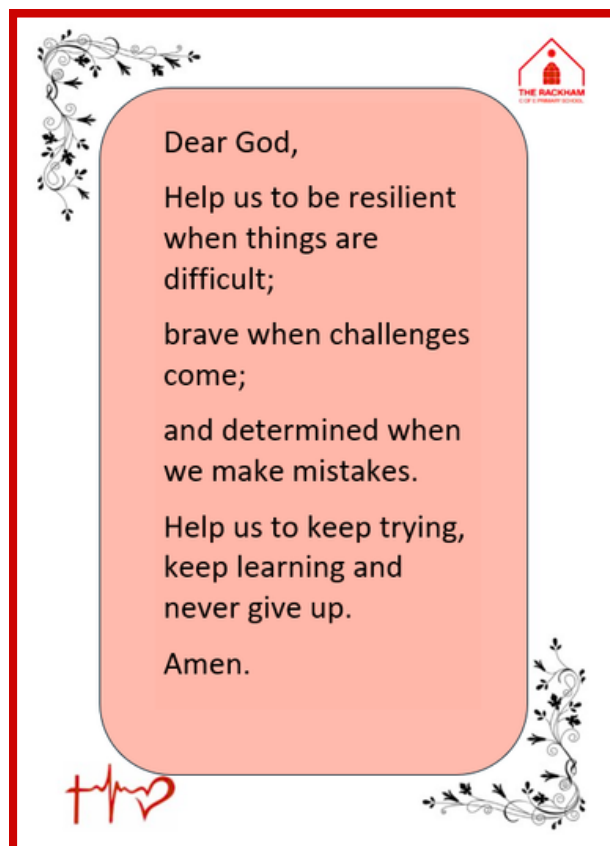
Composer for this half term

Aaron Copland

Click these links to listen to the music we are sharing in Collective Worship.



Prayer For This Week



Looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday.

Best wishes,

Miss Turner

Activities and Events



Launching soon: Best Start Family Hub Ely

From Monday 28 September, Cambridgeshire County Council is launching five new Best Start Family Hubs, which will build on the current Child and Family Centre offer.

We would like to invite you to be part of the launch! Come along to the opening of the new Best Start Family Hub in Ely.

On booking required. Drop in to meet the team, learn about all the support available and enjoy fun activities with your children. You'll find refreshments, information stands and free resources.

Also, we'd love to hear from you about our services and the support you need.

Everyone welcome.

We look forward to seeing you soon at a new Family Hub!

Where and when

- Tuesday 29 September
- 9.30am - 12.00pm and 2.30pm - 4.30pm
- Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School site, High Barns, Ely, CB7 4RB

Taster activities

- 9.45am Baby sing and rhyme
- 10.30am Storycraft with "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"
- 11.15am Bookstart corner
- 2.30pm Baby sing and rhyme
- 3.15pm Storycraft with "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"

BEST START FAMILY

Cambridgeshire County Council

Healthy Relationship Courses

Autumn 2026

Supporting positive relationships for parents, families and communities.

- 1 Healthy Relationships Course**
 Looking to improve your relationship with a family member, friend, neighbour or colleague? Join our 6-week course.
 - Virtual Course - Starting Tuesday 6 October
 - Face to Face Course - Starting Wednesday 7 October, 10am - 12pm, Best Start Family Hub Huntingdon
- 2 Supporting Co-parenting**
 Improve communication with your partner to support your children.
 - Online via Teams: Monday 12 October and Monday 19 October, Midday - 1pm
 - Improve communication with your ex-partner to support your children.
 - Online via Teams: Wednesday 14 October and Wednesday 21 October, Midday - 1pm
- 3 RISE Programme**
 A programme for victims/survivors of domestic abuse whether in or out of the relationship.
 - Face to Face Course, Thursday 5 November, 9.30am - 11.30am, Fenland
 - Face to Face Course, Tuesday 3 November, 12.30pm - 2.30pm, Cambs City
- 4 Parenting with an Abusive Ex-Partner**
 If you have experienced an abusive relationship, communicating with an abusive ex-partner about parenting matters can be difficult. We encourage you to read our guidance on parenting with an abusive ex-partner and contact us for support.

Email RPCLead@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to book onto a course or to find out more information.

Let's reclaim childhood

Join the growing movement of parents choosing to wait to give their children smartphones & social media

Sign THE PARENT PACT

- Delay smartphones & social media
- Over 135,000 sign ups
- Takes 30 seconds to sign
- Reduces peer pressure
- View live local leaderboards

SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

SMARTPHONEFREECHILDHOOD.ORG

HADDENHAM ARTS CENTRE

TWO DAY young artists' workshops

Autumn Half Term

Suitable for Ages 9+

Full and fun days of educational and creative activities run by an experienced and qualified art teacher.

27-28 October
3-4 November

For more information & to book:
www.haddenhamartscentre.org.uk
 Phone 01353 749188
office@haddenhamartscentre.org.uk

Education Inclusion Family Advisor Team
Countywide Online Workshop Offer

The EIFA team would like to invite parents/carers to our workshops on a variety of parenting and family issues for **September - October 2026**.

Please ensure you book onto each workshop individually by clicking on the link or scanning the QR code and completing the registration form.

Supporting your child with angry feelings	Tuesday 29/09/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with angry feelings - EIFA core offer workshop or
Managing behaviours that challenge	Thursday 01/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Managing Behaviours that Challenge - EIFA core offer workshop or
Supporting your child with sleep	Monday 05/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with sleep - EIFA core offer workshop or
Managing sibling rivalry	Wednesday 07/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Managing sibling rivalry - EIFA core offer workshop or
Digital safety/Internet safety	Tuesday 13/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Digital safety/Internet safety - EIFA core offer workshop or
Supporting your child with feelings of worry	Thursday 15/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with feelings of worry - EIFA core offer workshop or
Supporting your child with angry feelings	Tuesday 20/10/2026 12:00-13:30	Book onto this workshop at: Supporting your child with angry feelings - EIFA core offer workshop or

If you have any questions about our workshops, or the EIFA service in general, please contact educationinclusion@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

October Holiday Club

School's Out, Fun's In.
The Ultimate half term adventure awaits!

£ 8:00 AM - 5:45PM £35
9:00AM - 4:00PM £27

Book Now, to secure your child's place

Dates: Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October

play

We are proud to announce that we are a myHappyMind Bronze Accredited School!

This means we have demonstrated our commitment to building a wellbeing culture for our entire school community.

KINGS ELY OCTOBER HOLIDAY CAMP

OCTOBER 26-29

Now available to book ▼

Our holiday camps are open for children from 5 - 14.

Please find the booking link here - <https://www.abler.io/shop/ncfcfd/holidaycamps>

OCTOBER HALF-TERM SWIM INTENSIVE

Build confidence. Improve technique. Make real progress in just 5 days.

5 CONSECUTIVE DAYS 30-MINUTE LESSON EACH DAY

1:1 or 2:1 lessons

DATES: Monday 26th - Friday 30th October 2026

VENUE: Indoor pool Hereward House, Witchford

PRICING: 2:1 class £150 & 1:1 classes £240

BOOK YOUR PLACE

www.seehorsewimely.co.uk

St. Andrew's Church



NEWS from the Parish church of St. Andrew Witchford for the community

Church wardens:

**Dr Rosemary Westwell, (01353) 663918 rjwestwell@hotmail.com; mobile: 07432342845
email@ rjwestwell@hotmail.com**

**2nd church warden: Mr Freddie Lawes, tel (01353) 665369 mob: 07799596697 email:
hemlocks42@btinternet.com**

Rector: Rev. Chris Hollingshurst 07534970127

SERVICES: Unless stated otherwise, services take place in the church at 10.00 on Sunday mornings every week. Occasionally, there may be changes to services. These will be on our Facebook page ('St. Andrew's Church Witchford') and on the church notice board. Coffee/tea and biscuits are served at the end of services. All welcome.

If you wish to arrange a baptism, wedding, funeral or home communion please contact the church warden.

VACANCIES:

The Friends of St Andrew's Church Witchford are seeking new members, Why not join them for fun activities while helping our church stay open and upright? They are also seeking a secretary. Contact Rosemary Westwell

COFFEE MORNINGS

are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 1000 -1130 in St Andrew's Hall Witchford. Cost: minimum £5 for coffee, cake and a raffle strip.

CRAFT MORNINGS:

on the second Thursday of the month.

10.30 -12. a.m. in St Andrew's Hall. contact: susanmaud.sm@gmail.com 07954 178560

VILLAGE LUNCH CLUB

takes place on the first Friday of the month at 12.30 p.m. in the Village Inn. Contact Rosemary Westwell (see above) or Gill Brand (01353) 662073 mobile: 07770932 to pay in advance.

FREE FOOD

is available at the FOODSWAP on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 11.30 a.m. overnight in St Andrew's Hall porch in Witchford. Please feel welcome to bring or take in-date and sealed food. Rosemary Westwell and Susan Maud can be approached for applying to use using Ely Foodbank too.

ST. ANDREW'S HALL

may be hired at £12 per hour for locals, £15 per hour for others. Please contact the Church Hall caretaker, Jan King (01353) 658621 M:07761341325 rule.king.uk@gmail.com