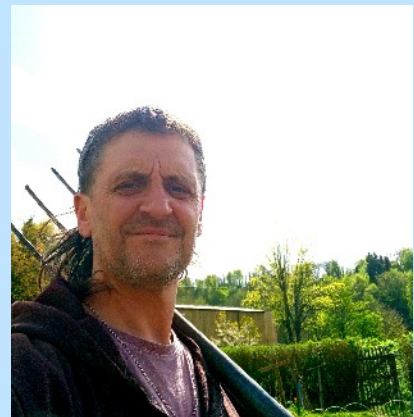


### Volunteer Andy writes:

Volunteering at Hilfield has been such a blessing and great support for me with regards to my well being and health at a time when I needed it most. It was suggested by our parish vicar for me and my partner to visit here for a break, and I had the opportunity to support in the garden. Not only was it an honour for me to be accepted, I felt something I've never experienced before.



The gentle rhythm and routine incorporating prayer and authentic community life has helped me, providing a sanctuary where I can truly be myself. It's wonderful to be included in all aspects of day-to-day activities and share in the great work of the Friary, caring for the land and maintaining a space for our guests and one another. Here it feels effortless living the values of St Francis surrounded by people wealthy in compassion, selflessness, kindness, humility, and a love of all Gods creation.

### Community Member Ben writes:

Spring is a beautiful time for the garden. We are growing potatoes this year and they are shooting up faster than they can be buried. We have enjoyed the radishes which are the first thing we planted this year that have come to our table and are cautiously optimistic for our old vine which was full of mould last season but, after serious intervention, has sprung back in good form and is now budding. We are always happy to have new garden volunteers and would welcome more. If you are local feel free to contact: [hilfieldgardener@franciscans.org.uk](mailto:hilfieldgardener@franciscans.org.uk) or pop by the garden if you're staying with us. The photo is of Ben at his Baptism at Hilfield in April.



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and our Facebook pages: [facebook.com/HilfieldFriary](https://facebook.com/HilfieldFriary)  
[facebook.com/groups/709029506134847](https://facebook.com/groups/709029506134847) (our Conservation Group)

**Pax et Bonum**



### Br. John writes:

One thing about living at Hilfield Friary is that you are very close to nature. That sounds romantic, and it can be, but it also means that when it rains every day for weeks and the skies seem interminably grey as they did last January, it can feel oppressive. So I for one am rejoicing at the burgeoning of new life and colour all around us in the explosion of Spring in our gardens and grounds, and the return of migrating birds swooping around the courtyard.

Our community life also feels very spring-like right now, mirroring the season, as new and very gifted members arrive to add their contributions to the vibrant mix that is Hilfield, as you can read in this edition. I am deeply grateful for their presence, the joy, skills and creativity that they bring. It's a bit of a mystery and a wonder how we each find our way here.

Thanks be to God!



### Community Member Douglas writes:

As I am writing this, I have been at Hilfield for two and a half months. Time flies by so fast, and shortly it will be July, and then I have been here for six months, and I'll go back to Sweden. There, hopefully, I will start my training for ordination in Uppsala.

My time at Hilfield has and will continue being fruitful for me and for my faith before I go back and continue my training. The daily life gives so much. Here I have seen the weather shifting from rainy to more sunny days, I have swum in the (cold) sea, I have worked on the lands and in the garden. I have been cooking food and baked. I am getting to know another country and culture, gone through Lent to the joy and celebration of the resurrection. All this in the rhythm of prayer.

To summarise my months here so far I would like to give thanks for all the hospitality that has been shown towards me. It is surely a blessing which I will keep in my heart for a long time. I would like to end with a prayer by the Swedish Saint Bridget: Lord, show me the way and make me willing to walk it. Amen.

All good, Douglas.



### Community Member Alice writes:

My family and I arrived at Hilfield last November, two weeks after the birth of our third son. I had been coming here on retreats since 2013, after my then Tutor, a Tertiary, introduced me and a group of students to the Friary. When my husband and I met, we both felt called to live life in community and, after visiting Hilfield several times as a growing family, agreed that we'd love to live within and learn from this community.

Since arriving, I have taken on the role of Kitchen Manager, which has wonderfully brought me back to my roots as a chef and catering business-woman. I have enjoyed incorporating some of my favourite recipes into the menu, and exploring how we can uphold our kitchen values: to bring local, organic, animal friendly and fair-trade food to our table.



### Spirit of St Francis - 800 years

In October 2026 the Franciscan family around the globe marks 800 years since the death of St Francis and celebrating by hitting the road! This summer, pilgrims will walk for 70 days across the European Province, moving from Franciscan house to house. As we walk, we'll pray for peace, reconciliation, and hope – sharing stories, worshipping, and stopping for local mission events along the way.

This journey is for everyone. You don't have to be a Franciscan, you don't have to walk the whole way, join us for a day, a weekend, or more, offer hospitality, drive a support car, or simply ask a friend to walk and pray for peace in your place. Every step matters, every song matters, every act of peace matters and on 4 October 2026 we'll celebrate together, wherever we are - with music, Eucharist, storytelling and joy.

Will you travel with us? Find out more at [www.spiritoffrancis.com](http://www.spiritoffrancis.com)