

Issue No. 295

Hill & Valley

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF HURSTBOURNE PRIORS, LONGPARISH, ST MARY BOURNE & WOODCOTT

£1

February 2026



Am I a Pilgrim or a Tourist?

I want to ask you a question - "Do you live life as a pilgrim or as a tourist?", and what's the difference?

First, the tourist.

The tourist travels through life, but wants the journey to be comfortable. The tourist wants to keep experiencing a familiar world, one that presents no threat or challenge. And after a safe and happy trip, the tourist wishes to return with photos, souvenirs, and pleasant memories.

So what about the pilgrim?

The pilgrim also sets out on a journey, but travels in search of something outside the familiar. Rather than seek out what's comfortable, the pilgrim willingly accepts discomfort and even danger. Returning home, the pilgrim also has souvenirs, but these reminders are secondary. The heart of pilgrimage is that the traveller returns home a changed person.

Pilgrimages are a feature that many religions share. The practice of pilgrimage in the literal sense is alive and well. But today, I am offering pilgrimage as a metaphor for how we can live our lives every day. Are we simply tourists or are we pilgrims?

The tourist wants the journey to be comfortable and stays the same, but the pilgrim travels into the unknown and welcomes it. The pilgrim hopes to return home a different person.

The central event of the Old Testament is a pilgrimage. Working through Moses, God calls a bunch of oppressed, dispirited slaves out of their familiar bondage in Egypt. Their exodus changes them, forms them into a people, a people made holy by the Lord.

The central event of the New Testament is also a pilgrimage, and Jesus is the pilgrim. He journeys through life, through suffering and death, and returns home to God with Good Friday scars and Easter glory.

But back to my question - what about us?

Do we try to live our lives risk-free, like tourists, or do we look for chances to grow through unfamiliar experiences?

Whether you are particularly religious or not, the 40 days of Lent (beginning on Ash Wednesday which is 18th February this year), gives us the opportunity to live life more as a pilgrimage.

Maybe we can use this Lent to take us to unexpected places, physically and mentally. That then helps us to become better prepared for times when life stretches and strains us and takes us where we would rather not go.

I have to be honest that I live much of my life as a tourist, revelling in the comfortable and the familiar – and I don't think there is anything wrong with that. But I do think it is important that sometimes we find times to be a pilgrim, to push ourselves into the unfamiliar. In that way we can grow and be ready for all of the unexpected things, good and bad, that will inevitable come our way. And we will be able to embrace them!

So, will you live as a tourist, or as a pilgrim?

Richard

Famous pilgrimages in Hampshire

Hampshire is home to several famous pilgrimages, but one of the most notable ones is the Pilgrim's Way.

The Pilgrim's Way is a historic pilgrimage route from the Shrine of St Swithun in Winchester to Canterbury Cathedral. The Way is about 138 miles, and takes in highlights such as the Hospital of St Cross, Jane Austen's Chawton and views of the North Downs.

There is also a shorter Pilgrim's Trail, connecting Winchester with Portsmouth (which can then link onto historic pilgrimages to Mont St Michel in France and ultimately the famous Camino de Santiago de Compostela).

Pilgrimages like this offer a chance to explore the rich history and culture of Hampshire, but also provide a spiritual journey for those seeking to connect with the past and the Divine.



February 2026

All Zoom details are available from the Church wardens or Dodie Marsden.

Sunday 1st - Presentation of Christ

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Matins</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>

Winchester Cathedral Zoom Service Online

Wednesday 4th

St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	9.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
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Sunday 8th - 2nd before Lent

All Hallows, Whitchurch	10.30am	<i>Benefice Service</i> <i>Farewell to Revd John</i>
St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	6.00pm	<i>Benefice Evensong</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish		<i>No service</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne		<i>No service</i>
St James', Woodcott		<i>No service</i>

Home Zoom Service at 10.30am

Sunday 15th - Transfiguration

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	6.00pm	<i>Taize Service</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Family Service</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>

Home Zoom Service at 10.30am

Wednesday 18th - Ash Wednesday

All Hallows, Whitchurch	9.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
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Sunday 22nd - Lent 1

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Eco Service</i>
	6.00pm	<i>Benefice Evensong</i> <i>Lenten Talk 1</i>
St James', Woodcott		<i>No service</i>



For all enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals in any of the parish churches, please contact the Church Office

Administrator:

☎ 01256 893573

brightwatersbenefice@gmail.com

Revd Russell Smart: ☎ 01962 760508

revrussellsmart@gmail.com

Rev Canon Dodie Marsden:

☎ 01264 738211

dodie.marsden@gmail.com

- For details of **Roman Catholic Services** in Whitchurch or Andover: ☎ 01264 352829

- **Methodist Minister** for our parishes:

The Revd Rachel Borgars, 11 Lapwing Rise, Whitchurch, RG28 7SU ☎ 01256 895878 or **rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk**

From the Church Registers

• **Weddings**

"Marriage is a gift of God in creation ..."

Maria Lynn Wright and Patrick Gerald Carroll
Woodcott - 02/01/2026

• **Funerals**

"Into God's loving care we commit you ..."

Belinda Hicks
01/12/2025 at Charlton Park Crematorium
Peter Teare
09/12/2025 at Charlton Park Crematorium
Nick Twine
10/12/2025 at St Peter's, St Mary Bourne
Mary Snow
16/12/2025 at St Nicholas, Longparish
Lady Rosemary Violet Tennant
19/01/2026 at St James, Woodcott

LET US PRAY - If you would like us to pray for You or someone else, please email stnbrightwaters@icloud.com giving the name (no surname required) and include a reason if you wish, or contact a member of the local ministry team.



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PANCAKE DAY - 17th FEBRUARY

February is here and you “batter” believe it... as **Pancake Day** is back. In case you have ever wondered about the origins of Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day). It dates to Medieval times “Shrove” originates from the Anglo-Saxon practice of “shriving” the confession and absolution of sins before Ash Wednesday. The tradition was to use up all the rich ingredients in your larder like eggs, milk and sugar before Lent begins. For those of us that are more adventurous, here are a few “Good Food” but unusual Pancake fillings you could try this year:



- *Mash a Jam Donut onto the Pancake and then drizzle with Chocolate Sauce....*
- *Rhubarb and custard are a classic pairing, cover your pancake with smooth custard and rhubarb for a vibrant sweet-tart twist that's as eye-catching as it is delicious.*
- *Matcha Tea Leaves, Spinach, Whipped Cream and Caramel Sauce.*
- *Go Savoury – add Brie and Crispy Bacon – or ditch the Taco's and go with a Pancake plus Eggs, Crispy Bacon, Cheese & Chives.*

SAFARI SUPPER – 28th MARCH

Hurstbourne Priors
Safari Supper – 28th March 2026

Invitation

All villagers are invited to join the next Hurstbourne Priors Safari Supper. We would like to welcome anyone who has not been before or is new to the village.

Each couple hosts one course, going to other houses for different courses, meeting different people at each location.

The programme for the evening will be:-

6.45 pm	Drinks/nibbles
7.30 pm	Starter
8.15pm	Mains
9.15pm	Pudding/cheese
10.00pm	Coffee in the Village Hall

Those who do not have a partner can join with someone else to form a 'couple' for the evening.

If you would like to participate, please email by Monday 9th March to:

SafariSupperHBP@gmail.com
to register and for full details.

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL NEWS & MEETINGS

Your Parish Council Needs You!

Our Parish Clerk Richard has announced he is retiring and will be stepping down after over 25 years in the role, and we are looking for a successor. We will be very sad to see him go, but all good things come to an end.

If you have a few hours free a week, working from home and with total flexibility this could be the job for you. We are looking for an efficient and discreet person to take on this role managing the running of the Parish Council. We are hoping to reach our goal for the re-thatching of the Cricket Pavilion, and we have funding for new playground equipment so these projects will be the main focus of this year.

It is a salaried role, depending on experience, and we pay all expenses together with a donation for phone and internet access. There will no longer be a parish office after Richard's retirement, but you will have a dedicated Parish email address. He will be around for a full handover and will happily answer any questions.

The Parish Council meets every other month at 18.30 in the village hall here in Hurstbourne Priors so there are only six 'fixed' events in a year. You would be required to prepare the agenda, record and circulate the minutes of each meeting and then carry out actions raised. In addition, there are bills to be paid for insurance, maintenance of the Recreation Ground and Pavilion as well as instructing the Lengthsman on maintenance required within the village.

If this is something that interests you then please contact the Chairman, Clare Read on clarejread@icloud.com.

The dates for the remaining Parish Council meetings in 2026 are as follows:

Thursday 26th March
Thursday 28th May
Thursday 30th July
Thursday 24th September
Thursday 26th November

Any resident of the Parish can attend and there is no need to alert the Council if you are coming. However, if there is a matter which you might feel the members might want to look into before you attend, please do let me know: 01264 772460 or email: richard.waterman150@btinternet.com.



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COCKER SPANIEL WANDERINGS

Test Way – Hurstbourne Tarrant to St Mary Bourne. If you enjoy a good view, then I have uplifting news - you've hit the jackpot. The vistas over Hurstbourne Tarrant, Stoke, and St Mary Bourne are nothing short of a Hampshire masterclass. Getting up to see them, however, can be another matter entirely, especially if like me, your knees have the structural integrity of a recently dunked Rich Tea biscuit.



The walk starts sensibly enough at the Hurstbourne Tarrant community centre. Park up, stroll casually across the football pitch, nip through a gap in the hedge and you are on your way. The path begins gently enough, teasing you into a false sense of security, before steadily ramping up into something that feels less like a walk and more like a mountaineering adventure



Before I go on. A quick public service announcement: do not attempt this after rain. In wet conditions the climb becomes a mud-slicked assault course, and your afternoon will end with creative swearing and a cameo appearance at A&E. In winter frost or on a dry spring or summer day, though, the suffering is rewarded handsomely. Look back down over Hurstbourne Tarrant and, for a fleeting moment, all of life's worries dissolve. The first time I did this walk in late summer; I was dangerously close to tears of joy.

From the summit, you plunge into woodland, where low branches lie in wait like booby traps. One once half-scalped me, prompting the familiar domestic greeting of: "What the hell have you been doing?" A phrase that seems to become more frequent with age.

Eventually you join the Test Way, mercifully flat and deeply wooded. If it's shooting season and you own a spaniel, put it on a lead unless you fancy waiting four hours for its triumphant return. The birdsong is glorious; your Merlin app will be frantic but occasionally the forest falls eerily silent. One evening, a deer snapping a twig nearly ended me. As self-confessed coward, I emerged older, wiser, and emotionally shaken.

In spring, though, the woods redeem themselves entirely with seas of bluebells and utterly magical experience and worth every earlier complaint.

You'll then emerge above Stoke, greeted by big, rolling views toward the Downs. Cross farmland and prepare yourself for the stiles an endless series of knee-high contraptions seemingly designed to test flexibility, patience, and dignity. Add a dog on a lead and it becomes slapstick.

After that, it's a gentler descent into St Mary Bourne, past meadows, woodland, and eventually the recreation ground by the lake, perfectly placed for the Boundary Café or The George and some replenishments.

Bob Lethaby, Hurstbourne Priors,

ST ANDREWS CHURCH – WORTH A WATCH

St Andrew's Church features in two recent videos published on YouTube. The first is Sir Hubert Parry - Psalm 150 "Praise God" - Unpublished Setting for Organ/Baritone - First Recording (if you search on YouTube for Hubert Parry at St Andrew's Church it should come up.



The story of a singer, a composer, a village organ and a setting of Psalm 150 is revealed in conversation by Professor Michael Wheeler and Rev Canon Martin Coppen. The video features the first recording of Sir Hubert Parry's unpublished setting of Psalm 150 "Praise God in his holiness...", which was sung by his son-in-law Harry Plunket Greene at the dedication of the organ in 1906.

The second video is made by The Salisbury Organist, Ben Maton who visited St Andrew's Church just before Christmas and tells the surprising story of the **The Greatest Christmas Carol Ever Written...**

Banned From Church! – no spoilers, you will have to watch the video to find out which carol! (search on YouTube for The Salisbury Organist - the Greatest Christmas Carol). Both videos are worth watching!

HURSTBOURNE PRIORS MAY FAIR



Hurstbourne Priors May Fair

Bank Holiday Monday May 4th 2026

Spring is in the air, and in Hurstbourne Priors this means we are starting the planning and preparations for our annual May Fair, the main fundraising event for our three village amenities: St Andrew's Church, the Village Hall and the Recreation Ground.

There are many ways in which villagers can contribute to the success of this popular fair: over the coming weeks there will be the planning, publicity and ideas, and then closer to the day of the May Fair, we would welcome help with transporting and setting up tents and tables, baking, donations for stalls, running or helping on a stall ... to name but a few.

We welcome any new members who would like to join our friendly May Fair Committee and would be most grateful for offers of help both beforehand and on the day.

Every little helps!

Ed Beasley, Lulu Beasley, Debs Coombes, Kate Chisnall, Kate Jones, Clare Read, Fenella Williams.

hurstbournepriormayfair@gmail.com



Recently, she said the mill recreated the silk fabric from President George Washington's 1789 inauguration suit, precisely matched to a thread sample from the original garment.



I asked Sue about the skills required for their unique output. She explained that silk weaving is



now a "critically endangered" craft - there are only 20 skilled silk weavers in the UK, with 3 of them employed at the mill. Silk ribbon weaving is even rarer, with just 5 known UK weavers, 2 of whom work at the mill.

Fortunately, the mill has an experienced and competent team of weavers and other staff and volunteers helping to keep these heritage skills alive and to safekeep them for future generations. The weavers have been recruited from throughout the UK, and all believe and share in the important vision to help keep this precious craft alive. For a new weaver joining the team this can typically take up to 3 years before they can call themselves an experienced weaver, but there are always new things to learn.



FEATURE - THE SILK MILL

Hill and Valley Magazine regularly feature events happening at the Whitechurch Silk Mill. In this month's issue, readers are also given a special look behind the scenes to discover more about this treasured piece of local industrial heritage on the River Test.

I asked Sue Tapliss, director of the museum, to share an update on the mill's current status and operations.

The Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust restored the mill in 1985, with further investment from the National Lottery and other donors in 2018.

Now operating as a working museum, skilled weaver tacklers produce artisan fabrics, some of which are used in period TV and film.

The mill's journey to its current state has not always been straightforward. For instance, when the owner John Hide passed away in 1955, all the mill's records were destroyed.

This loss made it a challenge to reconstruct and reverse engineer the techniques and processes required for producing today's silk textiles and for keeping the looms operational.

The mill produces and sells popular items like silk scarves, bookmarks and especially ribbons which are used for decorating other garments. Some silk products are special editions, including those made in collaboration with Jane Austen's house. These exclusive edition ribbons have been designed and woven at the Mill, breathing new life into the critically endangered craft of silk ribbon weaving.

The mill enjoys a substantial and expanding international audience through its website and social media platforms. However, with visitor numbers currently at 50% of pre-COVID levels, it is essential for the local community to support the mill by visiting the museum and the well-stocked café, participating in the various events and workshops, hiring it as a venue for weddings or special occasions or by contributing through donations and gift aid. The mill operates as a registered charity.

Finally – us locals passing the mill may notice the “**Waterloo Clock**,” installed in 1815. Some say it commemorates the Battle of Waterloo, while others believe its real purpose was to remind their Victorian workers of their shift starting times....

You can visit the Silk Mill on line at www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk (donations can be made on the support us page) and on social media including Facebook and Instagram. You can also support the mill by attending some of their forthcoming events and workshops:

- Weave a Wall Hanging (12 February): Learn traditional weaving techniques and create your own piece. (£60)
- Knitting Workshop (14 February): Beginner-friendly session with expert guidance. (£45)
- Portraits that POP! (17 February): A fun Pop Art-inspired family workshop linked to Jane Sanders' exhibition. (£6 per child)
- Young Makers Weaving (18 February): For ages 11–16, using Louet looms to craft wall hangings. (£60)
- Beginners' Braiding (27 February): Create decorative cords and trims. (£35)
- Warping Workshop (6 March): Make a three-metre warp with expert help. (£60)
- Embroidery Workshop (7 March): Nature-inspired keepsake with Abigail Rose Creative. (£65)

- Crochet Workshop (14 March): Learn granny squares in a friendly setting. (£45)

Special Tours and Exhibitions

On 3 February, an exclusive Silk Production Tour (£25) offers behind-the-scenes access to Britain's oldest working silk mill, showcasing machinery in action and stories of past weavers. Sensible footwear required, pre-booking essential.

Until 22 February, the Mill hosts Visible Threads, an exhibition by textile artist Jane Sanders. Using a 1960s Singer sewing machine and mixed media, Sanders creates vibrant stitched portraits of iconic musicians. Free with Mill admission.

Tickets are available via the Mill shop or website.



LADIES COFFEE MORNING

Our **February Coffee Morning** will be held by Susie Sorby on Thursday, 12th February at Bourne House (no 53) from 10.15 am until 12 noon. All ages welcome.

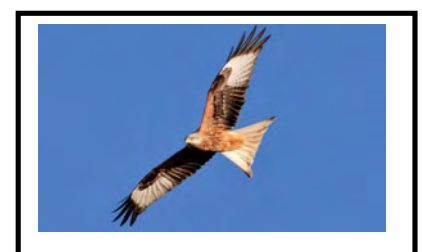


For more information or offers to host a coffee morning, please contact Susie Sorby Tel: 01256 892665



Diary Date
May 4th 2026
Hurstbourne Priors
May Fair – see you there!

THE SKIES ABOVE US



A regular site above us are **Red Kites**. Thanks to reintroduction projects led by the RSPB and other organisations, Red Kites have made an astonishing comeback in the UK, with numbers increasing by 2,464% between 1995 and 2023. The UK is now home to about 17% of the world's population. *Photo Angus Grant. If you capture something in the Skies Above that you think we should feature here, then please contact me.*

Doug Hopkins

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The George Inn St Mary Bourne on
Tuesday 10th February at 10.30am

£2.50 for coffee and biscuits - For more information contact
Win Coventry - ☎ 01264 738 199.

The Lunch

Eighty-five people attended our festive Christmas Lunch in December. With sherry on arrival, all enjoyed a traditional roast turkey meal followed by mince pies and tea or coffee. As usual there was a superb raffle and once again children from St Mary Bourne Primary School sang a lovely selection of Christmas songs and carols so well.

Our thanks go to everyone who supported us last year. In particular: the Vitacress Company, the Village School, Bourne Valley PYO, Ken White Distribution, Bourne Fest, The Flower show, and all who generously donated raffle prizes.

Our next lunch will be on **Wednesday 18th February** at St Mary Bourne Village Centre as usual, serving at 12.30pm. If a lift is needed, please call Chris on ☎ 01264 738110 by Noon on the Tuesday.

St Peter's - Sunday 22nd February

Our ECO Family Service at 10.30am - coffee from 10.15am. We will look at oceans, seas, rivers and streams. It's fun and friendly.

Each Sunday evening at 6pm during Lent there will be Evensong with a reflection on Lent, Holy Week and Easter through the Creative Arts.

Sunday 22nd February in St Peter's

Looking through the lens of Music

Sunday 1st March in St Peter's

Looking through the lens of Sculpture and Ceramics

Sunday 8th March in St Andrews'

Looking through the lens of Works of Art

Sunday 15th March in St Peter's

Looking through the lens of Poetry

Sunday 22nd March in St Peter's

Looking through the lens of Dance



Village Centre News
Our next season of community social evenings kicks off with bingo on 17th February.

We have had requests to repeat the well-received quiz and art evenings that we had in the Autumn and plan to do so when we can. If you have an ideas for these sessions, or an interest or hobby that you would like to share, please let us know by emailing villagecentre@stmarybourne.org.

Annual General Meeting

in the Village Centre at **7.30pm on Monday 9th March.**

Everyone is welcome to attend, particularly if you are interested in joining the committee and helping to run this vital community asset. We welcome feedback from users and suggestions and ideas for future uses of the facilities.

The Village Centre is used for many events and activities ranging from parties, dinners, lunches, music and dancing to sporting and recreational activities, exhibitions, meetings, training and business presentations. It could be the perfect venue for your event or activity and if you would like to enquire please contact us by emailing the above address or calling our bookings secretary **Angie Cook** on ☎ **01264 738158.**

Community Evenings at
St Mary Bourne Village Centre
Tuesday 17th February 2026 - 7.30pm



Back by popular request! We will be having eight games, so plenty of opportunities to win a prize and there will be a licensed bar for refreshments. This event is free to the local community, and everyone is welcome.

You can just turn up on the day, but it will help us with planning if you could let us know that you intend to come by emailing villagecentre@stmarybourne.org

NEW TO THE PARISH? RECENTLY MOVED IN? WELCOME DRINKS FOR NEW VILLAGERS

on 24th March 2026 - 7.30pm

St Mary Bourne Village Centre

PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

All new residents are warmly invited to a drinks reception to welcome them 'officially' to the parish*. The relaxed evening gives newcomers an opportunity to meet other new residents and to find out more about the villages and parish by chatting to representatives of different local organisations and clubs. Anyone who has moved in since November 2024 is very welcome to attend. Personal invitations will be sent out nearer the date but if, by mischance, you don't receive one, please do feel free to come along and introduce yourself on the evening. We'd love to see you!

For acceptances/more information, email:

welcome@stmarybourne.org or see
<https://stmarybourne.org/new-residents/>

* Anyone in Binley, Dunley, Egbury, St Mary Bourne, Stoke, Wadwick, Woodcott and The Wykes



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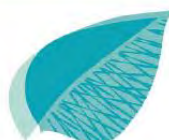
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The Parish Council held its monthly meeting on Tuesday January 13th.

Councillor Tanya Mew gave an update on progress with reviving the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, and there will soon be some advertising on local social media and information available for new residents

attending the annual **Welcome Evening** on **24th March**, as well as at the **Annual Parish Assembly** on **5th May**.

Final works to finish the new Play Area and MUGA will continue over the next few weeks, mostly involving resurfacing of an area currently below standard and completion of the fence dividing the Rec from the parking space. There will be a Ceremonial Opening on March 22nd. (see piece below). Further information will be provided in Hill & Valley next month.

The **Pavilion** Rebuild Committee continues to work on possible alternative options on which further information will be provided in due course. See *Community Pavilion Project* page 5.

Dates have been agreed for the annual Spring litter picks in St Mary Bourne and Stoke to be held on **Saturday 7th March** and **Sunday 22nd March** respectively. All volunteers will be welcome on each occasion, and there will be the incentive of bacon rolls provided to encourage attendance! A reminder will be included in next month's magazine.

Planning Applications:

25/02822/ROC	Medhurst SMB	Design amendments
25/02831/FUL	Coldharbour Farm SMB	Pool house & Plant room
T/00616/25/TCA	5 Homefield SMB	Trees
T/00621/25/TCA	Hill House SMB	Trees
25/02901/RET	Jones and Valley Farm Stoke	Retrospective for Barn Extension
25/02915/HSE	Tellstar SMB	Conservatory roof
T/00624/25/TCA	Chapel cottage SMB	Trees
25/02758/HSE	Swampton House SMB	Amendments
25/02759/LBC	Swampton House SMB	Amendments
25/0258/GPDAG 25/00080/RPD 6002716	Barn at Wadwick Bottom	Inspectorate Appeal
T/00636/25/TCA	Gate Cottage School Lane	Trees
T/00002/26/TCA	Gate Cottage School Lane	Trees
25/00035/FUL	Land at Mac's Field	Amendments to Plot 4 layout and design

Date of next Parish Council meeting:

Tuesday 10th February at 7.30pm

Play Space Update

What began in 2020 as an idea to update our St Mary Bourne play area has gradually taken shape into the **Community Play Space** we see today. The project grew from a clear need to improve our shared facilities

and create a safe space that could be enjoyed by children, families, residents and visitors alike.

Over several years of planning and fundraising, which reached just over £139,000, the space has now been restored. We're especially proud of the new natural wooden play area designed for under-12s and delighted to have expanded our visitor parking with 51 spaces to meet increased demand.

Finally, our resurfaced Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), suitable for all ages, will hold us in good stead for future St Mary Bourne tennis and netball tournaments!



This work has only been possible thanks to the continued support of the Parish Council, the generosity of our community, and the commitment

of local and national funders and grantors. In particular, we would like to thank the Greenham Trust for its ongoing support and Southern Water for its significant contribution.

With the project now complete, we look forward to marking the occasion together. Please save the date for the **Grand Opening** on the Recreation Ground this Spring, on **Sunday, 22nd March 2026**.

The Project Team (Volunteers: Laura Davis, Amelda de Segundo, Parish Council Members: Dave Burlison, Ed Makgill and Maxine Owen)



Happy New Year, and here we go...

It seems in the blink of an eye Christmas is over, so a little sale on Christmas food, we all love a SALE, and now we are already thinking of Valentine's Day - Vicky has been sourcing different gifts (candles... chocolates, and Bollinger in both large and small bottles!), and they are starting to

appear in the Shop, so keep 'em peeled!"

We are always willing to gift wrap the above so please just ask!

Also NEW in store are Bourne Valley Eggs from Binley, and because Spring is springing (maybe we are just too optimistic!), we have bunches of daffodils for sale at 99p a bunch; also our lovely local posies (delivered every Thursday). As you know, the Shop is continually changing stock, so pop in and have a look; as you know, we are always happy to see you...

Funny what makes you happy - Vicky and I have been cock-a-hoop these last couple of days, and it's all because we had the floor professionally cleaned on Sunday, it looks amazing, should our families be concerned?

Don't forget we will deliver to you - always happy to especially with the bad weather!

Finally, as we enter the New Year, maybe you might think about volunteering; full training is given and we can guarantee it's a lot of fun. Volunteers are very important in the running of the Shop, so give it a thought; we will always welcome you with open arms.

Thank you all, that's it for now...

Vicky & Sandra

Thank you All who joined the 1☺☺ Club for 2026.

December 2025 draw: £50 (O Cumberlege) - £20 (K Coldicott) - £20 (P France) - £10 (M Maclay) - The lucky winner of £50 in the special 2025 Christmas draw was Caroline Kremer

January 2026 draw: £50 (M Liversedge) - £20 (L Wood) - £20 (J Stephen) - £10 (M Briant-Evans)

The next 1☺☺ Club Draw: Saturday 14th February





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St Mary Bourne School Retirement

At the end of December **Tracey Cook** retired from the school kitchen after nineteen years at St Mary Bourne School. Tracey arrived, and it was noticeably early on that the children loved the food she provided, and soon she was creating and making snacks as well as providing good wholesome lunches.



It wasn't that long ago, seven years I think, Tracey started the Breakfast club, and we are delighted she's staying on a bit longer to continue in this role. However, we will miss her cooking and serving lunches. During the assembly on the last day of term, the children sang Winter Wonderland, and she was presented with a lovely thank you hamper.

As with many school jobs, the hours put in, in preparation time and groundwork are never truly reflected. Tracey has been utterly reliable; she has been well liked and dependable. She will be greatly missed by staff and pupils alike. Thank you, Tracey for all you have done over nineteen years. It is hugely appreciated and we hope you can now enjoy deciding what you will do in the middle of the day and not have to think about 'what's for lunch today'!

Sustainable Bourne Valley Programme of Events for 2026

SBV AGM - 28th April 7 to 9pm - SMB Village Centre

Plant Swop - Saturday 30th May - SMB Recreation Ground

Flower Show - Saturday 25th July - plant stall and SBV relevant projects

Sustainable Day - October

Himalayan Balsam pull - 2 dates in July and August tbc

An unusual Birthday present

Ever thought about installing a nesting box for swifts or house martins? Hampshire Swifts is a charity that will sort it out for you at minimal cost. You pay for the boxes, and a volunteer will come and install them for you, with a minimal charge for travel costs, so the more boxes put up in one place the better it is for all. This is of course provided that the possible sites have been assessed as suitable by the charity.

Swifts and house martins are very loyal to their breeding sites and usually return to the same nest site year after year. Disappearing water ways, drier springs and summers and evaporating puddles that provide vital mud for house martins to build or repair their nests, is a major problem. In addition, lengthy dry summers can also cause house martin nests to break up or even fall from a house, which is a devastating occurrence when eggs or young chicks are inside. We can all help by installing swift and house martin boxes.

Take a look at www.hampshireswifts.co.uk and www.housemartinconservation.com



Winter Treats for Ducks



With the UK in the middle of a cold spell, many people feel an extra urge to head out to parks and ponds to give ducks a helping hand. If you are planning to do the same, then by choosing the right foods, you can help our local wildlife stay healthy through winter.

So, what can you do to help?

- **Choose foods that are nutritious rather than filling**
- **Offer only small amounts so ponds don't become polluted with leftovers**
- **Help ducks keep their natural foraging habits**

Suitable foods are inexpensive and easy to find, often already in your kitchen. Take a look at the list below and remember, a small handful at one time is plenty! Why not make your own duck food by mixing your favourite ingredients from the list?

Sweetcorn Peas Oats (dry porridge oats) Lentils (cooked for easy digestion) Fruits and berries (no citrus) Lettuce Special pre-mixed wild duck food.

What to avoid: Bread (white, brown, even seeded isn't good for them) Biscuits Crackers Anything in large quantities.

Why is this important for chalk streams?

Feeding ducks bread may seem harmless, but especially in rare chalk stream habitats it can cause serious problems. Uneaten bread rots in the water, using up oxygen and encouraging algae and harmful bacteria that make streams cloudy, green and smelly. This can also harm wildlife that depends on clean, clear water like the white-clawed crayfish.

On land, leftover food attracts rats and other pests, while mouldy bread can be toxic to birds. Bread also fills ducks up without providing the nutrients they need, discouraging natural foraging and leading to poor health, stress, overcrowding and the spread of disease.

Following these simple tips will help our wildlife and their chalk stream homes to thrive throughout the seasons. Learn more at

www.hiwwt.org.uk/blog/winter-treats-ducks

DID YOU KNOW?



Photo by Robert Booth

- Adult swifts spend about 9 months of the year flying continuously. They sleep, eat and mate on the wing.
- When swift chicks fledge, it will be about 3 years before they land again.
- Swifts return to the same nest site year after year.
- They are the fastest bird in level flight – nearly 70 mph
- They are here for only 3 months of the year, spending the rest of the year in Africa

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The Committee of St Mary Bourne and District Horticultural Society look forward to seeing you at the **2026 Flower Show** on **Saturday 25th July**, starting at **12.00 noon**. Please save the date.

We would also like to see as many of you as possible at the **Annual General Meeting**, to be held on **Friday 6th March** in the **Village Centre** at **7.30pm**.

Finally, but as important, the **potato growing competition** will start with seed potatoes being available on **Saturday 28th February**, outside the Boundary Shop & Café from **09.30**. **Do come along and collect yours**.

The natural world brought into focus

St Mary Bourne Village Centre was packed to the rafters and thoroughly entertained by Cambridge Undergraduate



Grace Burlison's informative, thought-provoking and entertaining presentation on the natural world and its wonderful creatures.

The presentation focused on extraordinary creatures and

imparted informative and weird facts, coupled with the need to conserve our natural world. The audience also participated in a quiz, which started off easy, but quickly escalated into some truly bizarre revelations!

The audience were taken on a journey from the deep ocean, exploring the likes of the Pistol Shrimp, a crustacean famous for their oversized claw that snaps shut to create a powerful cavitation bubble, producing a sound louder than a gunshot, a flash of light, and immense heat (as hot as the sun!), killing small prey.

The final section travelled to the outer edges of space and revealed even greater surprises with the Tardigrade,



a microscopic invertebrate famous for being almost indestructible; surviving extreme temperatures, lack of water and even the vacuum of space - it's no wonder there were a few gasps of surprise from the audience.

The presentation concluded with a Q&A, enquiring about what the future holds for Grace herself. As part of her ongoing learning, Grace will be joining a part self-funded research project in Honduras in Summer 2026 to help protect endangered cloud forest species and fragile coral reefs.

Working alongside local scientists, she will be conducting hands-on research to produce vital scientific papers to aid in the conservation of these areas of outstanding natural beauty. To learn more and contribute click on the QR code below or contact Grace directly on graceburlo@icloud.com.

Thank you to the community for their wholehearted support.
Photos: Dave Burlison

Dave Burlison



ANDOVER ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Thursday 19th February - 7.30pm
at Hurstbourne Tarrant Community Centre

"Mars: Sixty years of space exploration"

Dr Mike Legget. FRAS FBIS. Mike will review Mars missions beginning with the first successful flyby of Mars in 1965 and then bring us right up to date telling us about recent missions such as the Exploration Rovers and the Reconnaissance Orbiter. Finally, he'll look to the possible future human missions to Mars. Mike is a prominent figure in the history of astronomy, well known for his extensive talks and lectures covering astronomical history.

Everyone is welcome to our talks and there is no charge for your first meeting. After the talk, if the skies are clear, we will set up telescopes and look at the stars. For more information search online for "Andover Astronomical Society," or email andoverastrosoc@gmail.com.

What's in a name? *That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.* (Wm Shakespeare, R&J II,ii,43.)

Place-names can tell a story in themselves. Some in our area date back over 1000 years, enduring from Anglo-Saxon times, even if spelled or sounded differently now. Even more quirky, though more recent, field and woodland names deserve our attention, though not many, other than the area's farmers, might know them now. The best listing is in the parish Tithe Apportionments of c.1840s (sadly, not available for Woodcott), the most detailed parochial survey of the ownership, use and size of fields and woods, up to that date.

So, let's start with *Bedlams Croft* (SMB Tithe Plot 166—the wood at Five Ways, top of Bourne Hill), *Bedlams* (SMB 167—the field below it), *Bedlam Bottom Field/Down* (Woodcott 1891 Census—field near Lower Woodcott Farm, north of the road to Dunley). It's *Bedlam*—uproar and confusion—a reference to the Bethlem Royal Hospital in London, an institution for the insane. The Woodcott Census reference helps, listing 39 'Green Gatherers' who happened to be living on the field on the census date. Patients discharged from such hospitals were licensed to beg and could camp in designated 'Bedlam' fields or woods. So, they were an accepted haven for 'travellers' of yesteryear—the homeless. *MC*



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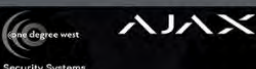
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Community Pavilion Project

In the last issue of H & V, the Parish Council announced approval for a new Community Pavilion to replace the existing facility. The project is being led by the St Mary Bourne Cricket Club (SMBCC), with a

dedicated Pavilion Committee overseeing design, planning, fundraising, and construction. Committee members include Ed Makgill (Parish Council), Mark Lancaster (SMBCC Chairman), Jonny Orange (SMBCC Head of Youth Cricket), Caroline Kremer (SMBCC Secretary), and local residents Caroline Reeves and Sarah Kemp, who bring expertise in project management, planning, fundraising and finance.

The need for a new pavilion is driven by the club's growing success and popularity, especially among adult and youth female players. Key features will include a disabled toilet and separate female changing rooms to ensure privacy and comfort for all members.

This initiative aims to create a shared space that serves the wider community, not just the cricket club. Community involvement in planning and development will help ensure the facility meets the diverse needs of St Mary Bourne Parish residents, fostering a sense of ownership and creating a vibrant hub to complement the Village Centre and Boundary Café.

Residents are encouraged to share ideas for clubs, activities, or other uses - whether for children, teenagers, or adults. Suggestions can be submitted by emailing secretary@smbcc.co.uk, (subject: IDEAS), using the online form;



<https://forms.gle/8FejjAXE7gtqFwwj9>

via forms and a collection box found in the Village Shop, or scan the QR code. All ideas will be passed to the Parish Council. The closing date for submissions is 28th February 2026. If you have a relevant skill and wish to donate your time to any phase of the project, please do let us know by **contacting Caroline at:**

secretary@smbcc.co.uk

Junior Cricket

I think it is safe to say that SMBCC is no longer a start-up youth cricket club. Our most recent proof point is that 23 of our outstanding young players (17 boys and 6 girls) have now qualified for their respective Hampshire age-group squads. Having passed the rigorous county trials in the autumn, they are currently hard at work in intensive winter net sessions. Congratulations to all of them, their committed parents, and — most importantly — our fantastic volunteer coaches. This is a tremendous achievement for the club.

We are also delighted to congratulate Ben Maitland, who was shortlisted for the 2025 *Inspired to Play* Award at the end-of-season Hampshire Cricket Awards held at the Rose Bowl. Ben has been coaching and leading our All-Stars programme (children in Years R and 1) at SMBCC for the past four years and is a hugely valued member of our coaching team.

In addition, Tanya Mew received a *Highly Commended* mention for the 2025 *Unsung Hero* Award.



Anyone who has spent a Friday evening at the Rec during the summer will be familiar with the warm hospitality of the Marsden Arms. Tanya has been running the bar and BBQ for four years and her dedication is greatly appreciated.

Well done to Ben and Tanya —

SMBCC is incredibly lucky to have you, along with all our amazing volunteers.

Indoor winter nets are already underway on Saturday afternoons in Andover, and summer enrolment is now open. For more information, please contact: youth@smbcc.co.uk





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Postcard from Binley

Over one hundred years ago Lady Kitchener, incumbent at Binley House erected a small building by the entrance to the top drive and designated it a Reading Room for the poor, uneducated labouring classes of Binley. The walls were lined with books and yesterday's newspapers, and it was given in memory of her late husband, Arthur. Working men could be kept updated on current affairs, young lads with chores to do and with their father's harsh words ringing in their ears could scrimp an apple from the park and get lost in the dusty pages of Kipling, Wodehouse and H. G. Wells. Their sisters in faded summer frocks with daisy chain garlands in their hair and blackberry-stained lips could pour over the Bronte's and Thomas Hardy and dream dreams that only young girls can dream. It became a meeting place, evolved into a Methodist offshoot, held Sundays Schools and became part of the fabric of a community. And then it slowly died, nature took over with creeper and vine, the roof caved in and then you could walk past and never know it was there. But some of us did. And now it's gone and part of Binley's sociological history has gone with it. I must confess I find it rather sad.

One of the joys of Christmas is picking over the goose and cracking walnuts. One of the negatives is being forced to visit relatives and as such you will probably find yourself on that road to Purgatory, the M25. However, your one moment of brevity would have been as you approached the black brick Chalfont Viaduct and observed the following graffiti, "GIVE PEAS A CHANCE!"

I've seen it more times than I care to remember, though in recent times it has been painted over, an act of vandalism that is right up there with destroying a Cézanne. I always suspected it was subliminally asking us to give "peace" a chance while at the same time appealing to the British love of the underdog, because the pea is most definitely the underdog of the vegetable world. While other more glamorous, overrated veg like purple sprouting broccoli vie for our attention, it is the humble pea that never fails to deliver. While most graffiti is nothing less than vandalism you will occasionally come across a gem. I remember driving up the M6 during the 2019 election campaign and seeing on a railway bridge by Preston the slogan "Vote Pies!" That tickled me and it sounds so much better if you say it in a Ronnie Barker/ "Open all hours" northern accent.... "V...V...V...Vote Pies!" I have to say some six years later with the state the country is in, with trust in politicians the lowest it's ever been, Vote Pies is suddenly making the almightiest sense! So, if anyone is thinking of standing in next year's local elections (if Starmer lets us have one) on a Vote Pies ticket, then I can guarantee them my vote!

A reader of this magazine has emailed asking if I was aware The Naked Rambler passed through Binley last week. I think that highly unlikely. I did once pass this individual down the A303 but the thought of him passing through Binley unnoticed is preposterous! You may well travel through here and see not a soul but let me assure you, we are a hamlet of curtain twitchers and miss nothing, let alone a 6' geezer in the buffo! Unlike Scandinavia we are not a nation that embraces nudity. It wasn't that long ago we were prudishly covering over the legs of tables for fear of offending, and apart from a period in in the 70's and 80's when 'streaking' was all the rage, we rarely participate. At one point every major sporting or cultural event had a streaker running starkers across it so perhaps it's due a

comeback. I can recall a few years back when the Romsey Naturist Society announced they were attending the Binley Daffodil Open Sunday event. I must say it caused a ripple of excitement; attendances were up and the Widéns were visibly itching to join in. No surprise there. Sadly, Romsey were a no show, and it may just have been a cunning ruse by the organisers. Perhaps I should threaten to streak at this year's Flower Show, though on reflection that's hardly going to boost attendees. And here was me thinking I'd win "Best in Show"? Dream on!

NA



THE GEORGE INN



This Month

Social Coffee & Cake Morning for all ages,
10.30am on 10th February
(2nd Tuesday of the month) - £2.50

Large Screen in the bar where we are able to show major sporting events from Terrestrial and Sky TV
Two of our **Private rooms** now have **large TV's** which can be booked

We are supporting **various committees** as they prepare for the summer events including *The Flower Show, Sustainable Bourne Valley, Ninny's Nursery*
The Repair Café from **10am to 12 noon** on **7th February** - the 1st Saturday of the month

George Inn - Weekly Deals

Moules Monday £15 - Pie Wednesday £15

Pizzas available Fridays and Saturdays

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Film Night at Vernham Dean - Millennium Hall

DOWNTON ABBEY
— THE GRAND FINALE —

Wednesday 18th February - 7.30 to 10pm

The final instalment of Julian Fellowes' very popular TV and film series, filmed up the road at Highclere Castle. Lady Mary finds herself in a public scandal and her family once again faces financial trouble and the threat of social disgrace. Will the Crawley family finally embrace the need to change?



ST MARY BOURNE PARISH COMMUNITY FUND

will support anyone living in the parish of St Mary Bourne (including Stoke, Binley, Egbury, Wadwick, Little London & The Wykes) who is worried about essential living expenses, or unexpected extra costs due to illness, employment changes, family difficulties, medical conditions, or accidents.

For more information about the PCF for yourself or someone else, please contact:

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LONGPARISH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council

Council Chair: Emma Palmer

(emma.palmerpc@longparish.org.uk or 07881 923150)

Parish Clerk: Hayley Thomas (clerk@longparish.org.uk or 01256 396868)

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS: **Monday 9th**

February 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

26/00015/TREEN The Plough Inn

Proposal: T1 - Fraxinus excelsior - Pollard at 5m and install bat boxes

Parish Council comments: No objection.

26/00006/DDCA The Plough Inn

Proposal: Work required to reduce risk of dangerous mature Ash tree at corner of car park, next to football field and footpath. Small amounts of Kretzschmaria at basal cavity.

Parish Council comments: No objection.

25/02965/VARN Testwood Trout Farm

Proposal: Remove condition 2 of 11/02398/FULLN to allow removal of agricultural residency Condition.

Parish Council comments: No objection.

26/00016/FULLN Upper Mill, Mill House

Proposal: Conversion of southwestern bay of the existing watermill to form flexible tourist accommodation consisting of two units of accommodation, installation of windows, installation of package treatment works and parking bays

Parish Council comments: No objection.

Full details of planning applications can be viewed on the Test Valley Borough Council website view-applications.testvalley.gov.uk/online-applications/

COUNCILLORS NEEDED

The Parish Council REALLY needs some new faces to step forward and join. By April we will have only 5 councillors out of 10 seats filled, which means we are running short on numbers which allow the Parish Council to make local decisions - about our amenities (playground, allotments, cemetery etc) and responding to planning applications. The Parish Council has to have four people present in order for a meeting to take place. If we fall lower in numbers, we risk losing local independence. Decisions could end up being taken by Test Valley Borough Council instead, rather than by people who actually live in the village and know what matters. Being a councillor doesn't take over your life - it is just one evening meeting a month (usually a Monday), plus, the occasional planning meeting. There a handful of emails and you can choose to join a sub-committee or not. You don't need political experience or any special qualifications - just a willingness to help and take pride in your village.

If you would like to find out more, contact our Clerk, Hayley, or speak with one of the current Parish Councillors. In an ideal world it would be great if all areas of the village were represented so that the village

is truly covered, but in our current situation we would love anyone to come forward.

Let's keep Longparish's voice!

LCA - L2SOTM - The Longparish Second Sunday of the Month handicap race

It was damp and chilly for the January race, typical January in fact. Maybe it was New Year resolutions which meant we had 30 runners for our January race including six newcomers. Everyone is very welcome and we hope you'll be back next month.

In a handicap race the prizes go to the most improved finishers and one of the joys of that system is that steadier runners have more opportunity to improve than faster ones. So it was that Clive Bugeja set off first and led all the way to become our Most Improved Man finishing an amazing four minutes inside his handicap. Megan Brunwin was our Rising Star and Christina ("I'm only going to do a tempo run") Searle could not resist the temptation to compete and became our Most Improved Woman. Clive, Megan, Lewis Young, Tom Rogers and Jack Dundas all had their best ever times. Well done!



Afterwards we enjoyed a warm welcome, bacon rolls and coffee at The Plough.

Thank you very much to Maggie Barber and Ailsa Wiggins for marshalling, Rory Chichester and Alice Evans for doing the signs and to David Gould for processing the results.

The next race is on **Sunday 8 February**, starting at **9am at The Plough**. New runners are always welcome and you don't have to be fast. It's a handicap race so everyone, whatever their pace, has a chance of winning.

Please do give us a call or send an email if you'd like to join us. For more information, please see

<http://l2sotm.longparish.org.uk/index.php>

Jeremy Barber

01264 720459 mrjeremybarber@gmail.com



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Spaces available from September 2026

We'd love to welcome your child into our Little School family.

For more information or to arrange a visit, please get in touch — we can't wait to meet you!

Phone: 01264 720455

Email:

admin@longparishlittleschool.org.uk

Website: www.longparishlittleschool.org.uk/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/longparishplaygroup>



Longparish Cricket Club

Longparish CC is delighted to announce its support of the **Lightning Bolts women's cricket**

team based in the northern Test Valley. Currently the Lightning Bolts have an adult women's team but are hoping to offer coaching and possibly match play to junior girls this summer. Several local cricket clubs are supporting the Lightning Bolts efforts to expand women's and girls' cricket in the Andover area and surrounding villages.

The indoor winter league season is more than halfway through now and there have been mixed fortunes for the LCC teams to date. The Longparish Longhops remain undefeated after 8 matches but the Longparish Lightweights are finding victories harder to come by.

Finally, we invite you to **put Friday 24 April 2026** in your diary as LCC will be holding a fundraising Quiz night in the evening at the Longparish Village Hall and we would love to see you there!!
Alison Allen

LONGPARISH GARDENING CLUB

TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY 2026

7 pm

Longparish Village Hall

Dan Pulling speaking on

"Easy Planting for Difficult Places"



LGC Members Free. Guests Welcome £5.
Usual Raffle and Refreshment so please bring Cash.

Any queries please to

Rosie Lowry 01264720325 or Marion Bell
01264720205

Make it LITTER FREE LONGPARISH for 2026



Longparish Friday Litter pick Friday 13th February– meet behind **Village Hall 9.15 am** and free coffee at the LCA Coffee Shop this month at the Plough.

The Parish Council can provide litter picking sticks, hoops and bags. For information Tel Christian Dryden 720 398



LONGPARISH WILDLIFE

An Early January Walk

We started from home with Corinne and the dog, heading down the back path. As usual, **Jackdaws** were perched on the chimney, and a couple of **Blue Tits** were feeding on Arthur's nut tree. We walked on to the shop and turned right. There wasn't much along this stretch, apart from a few **House Sparrows** in Gordon's hedge.

At the pony paddock we saw **Woodpigeons** and a **Pied Wagtail**, then turned left into Mill Lane. A couple of **Blackbirds** flew out of the hedge, there are plenty around at the moment, having arrived from Europe for the winter. At the bridge, the regular **Heron** stood downstream, and eleven **Cormorants** were roosting in a tree.

We turned left towards the ford and I stopped in my usual spot in the hedge to check the lake. There were **Swans**, **Canada Geese** and **Greylag Geese**, **Tufted Duck**, **Gadwall**, **Mallard** and **Moorhen**, plus a pair of **Egyptian Geese**, not seen for a while. Also present were **Herring Gulls** and **Black-headed Gulls**.

At the ford, a **Robin** was perched on a fence post and a **Dunnock** flitted in the hedge. Just before the ford, three **Chaffinches** were feeding on the ground. We turned right into Nuns Walk, where three **Lesser Redpolls** were feeding on Silver Birch seeds, our first of the winter. Further along, a small flock of **Long-tailed Tits** and **Great Tits** moved through the trees above us.

Stopping at the gate, we looked into the paddock where the usual **Buzzard** was present. I'm never quite sure what he's feeding on, but he's always there. We turned right into South Side Road and paused on the bridge. Upriver were more ducks, while downriver we spotted two female **Blackcaps**, another winter visitor, along with eleven more **Swans**.

Going straight on instead of turning right, a flock of **Goldfinches** flew over, and I could see a couple of

Greenfinches in a dead ash tree. A large number of **Redwings** burst out of a hawthorn bush, clearly feeding on the berries. A little further on, a pair of **Bullfinches** flew out of the hedge, not a species I see very often these days.

At the first bridge, a **Great White Egret** was upriver, but not for long; he spotted us and flew off. At the second bridge there were more ducks and a **Little Egret**, but nothing new, so we carried on. Turning right at the crossroads, at the crossroads, at Little Beck we found

Siskins feeding on alder seeds — another first winter



sighting. A **Pheasant** stood in the field to my right, but otherwise we saw nothing we hadn't already noted.

We continued past the pony paddock, where a **Collared Dove** sat on the wires and a small flock of **Starlings** flew over. Back at the shop, we turned left and headed up the back path. A **Red Kite** flew overhead, and just before reaching home we were greeted by the ever-growing flock of **Feral Pigeons** circling above. So, we hope you have enjoyed our walk I don't have walks like this very often and seeing so many different birds. In total we saw 39.

Chris Bowman



Friday Lunch Club Happy New Year! Longparish Village Hall 12.00 - 2.00pm

The Lunch Club is open to anyone in the community.

We do ask you to book by Wednesday before so that we have an idea of numbers.

We serve a light lunch of soup and roll followed by cake and tea and coffee for just £3.

After lunch there is a talk or quiz – ideas for speakers always welcome.

Next Dates
27th February
25th March
24th April

**To book a place and transport call Andrea 720457
Christian 720398**



Raphael Wallfisch, Cello and Simon Callaghan, Piano
13 March 2026 7.30pm at St Peter's Church
Stockbridge

In their first concert of their 2026 season, Stockbridge Music will welcome cellist Raphael Wallfisch and pianist Simon Callaghan for a programme which includes several famous cello pieces as well as showcasing less well-known works. The concert includes music by Bach, Beethoven, Bloch and Rachmaninoff.

There is a very moving story behind one of the works being played, Ernest Bloch's Baal Shem. This piece will be played in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Bloch composed Baal Shem in memory of his mother, and Raphael Wallfisch has chosen this piece because his own mother Anita Wallfisch Lasker is a survivor of the Holocaust, having been a prisoner at Auschwitz. She was spared the gas chamber only because she was considered to be of value playing the cello in the Auschwitz Camp Orchestra. Still alive today, her remarkable story was told in the 2024 documentary film The Commandant's Shadow. Raphael Wallfisch is one of the most prolific recorded performers of cello music with over 70 discs to his credit. A BBC survey named Wallfisch's recording of the Dvorak Cello Concerto the best recording of the work in the past 25 years. He regularly tours internationally and plays with

many major orchestras including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony and the Hallé. Simon Callaghan performs internationally as a solo pianist, chamber musician and recording artist. Recital partners have included Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Adrian Brendel, and Raphael Wallfisch. He is Professor of Piano at the Royal Northern College of Music. His playing has been widely acclaimed with BBC Radio 3's Andrew McGregor saying: "I have nothing but praise for the performances... impressive pianism".

Tickets are available at www.stockbridgemusic.uk



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STOCKBRIDGE MUSIC

Friday, 13th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Doors open at 6.45pm

St Peter's Church, Stockbridge



Raphael Wallfisch, Cello Simon Callaghan, Piano

Music by Bach, Bloch, Beethoven and Rachmaninoff

Tickets £25 (U18s £5) from stockbridgemusic.uk
 or on the door, if still available

Photograph by Bill Knight

New Year – New Garden

Friendly reminder if you are planning a garden this year, it is a good time to get started sowing those early plants indoors.

- ❖ **Broad beans**
- ❖ **Carrots**
- ❖ **Early Lettuce**
- ❖ **Early potatoes**
- ❖ **And tomatoes**

Now is also the time to prune winter flowering shrubs and remove yellowing leaves from brassicas.

- No matter how tempting it is, don't think about planting those young plants outdoors until the threat of frost has passed.

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We had a fantastic festive season at the Plough and want to say a BIG thank you to all our customers, staff and volunteers for supporting us through Christmas and the New year!

Plough Maintenance Week

In early January we closed our doors for 5 days to spruce up the pub, install new kitchen equipment, and improve the plumbing. With a terrific team of dedicated volunteers from the area, we cleared a long list of tasks. Thank you to everyone for your time and skills, we couldn't have done it without you!

Plough Quiz Night

Next Quiz - Sunday 8th February

Get your teams ready and join us for a fun-packed evening. Start time 6pm, teams of up to 6, £2 per person entry fee – all fees go to charity, chosen by the winning team
Pre-booking required.



Bring your friends and spread the love!
Our chefs will be creating delicious specials to add to our Winter Menu for Valentines Weekend.

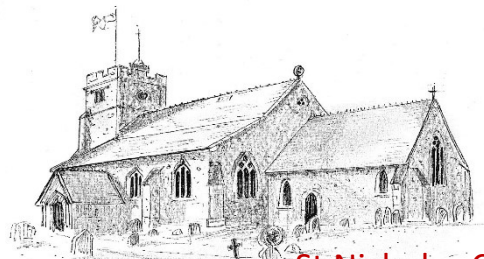
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St Nicholas Church

100 Club

Results of the November and December 2025 Draws

Prizes are allocated on a percentage basis. First prize is 25% of the total income for the month, second prize 15% and third prize 5%.

November Results

First prize:	No. 56	£76.00
Second prize:	No. 03	£46.00
Third Prize:	No. 45	£15.00

December Results

First prize:	No. 03	£82.00
Second prize:	No. 45	£50.00
Third Prize:	No. 56	£17.00

You will notice a most remarkable co-incidence above in that the exact same numbers were drawn for December as in November, albeit in a different order. The odds on this happening must be extraordinary. Each draw was made by a different person (not members of the fund, as is always the case) and in between months the numbers had been taken out of the bag and checked before being drawn in December. This was because December is renewal month and several new members joined the 100 Club. Two have left as a result of moving from the area. So, we are now up to 66 members, hence the slightly increased prizes for December.

Our objective of course is to reach membership of 100, so if you are not a member, please consider joining and supporting your church this way. You can join at any time during the year. It works like this - Membership is set at £5.00 per number per month. There is no limit to the numbers you can purchase. If you would like to join, please let me know, and I will let you have the relevant forms. Or, if you have any other queries about church finances, or how the church is administered, for example, please feel free to contact me: -

John Young, Churchwarden & PCC Stewardship Officer, St. Nicholas 100 Club

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Gertrude



Gertrude is a sheep of a certain old age,
Still quietly neat in her woolly-fronted stage.
She wears a hard scowl, looks grumpy and mean,
But she's secretly lovely
and oddly quite keen
To lean herself in, nice and slow,
For a deep, proper scritch from head down to toe.
She's round as a cushion, a loaf on the ground,
Like fluffy white bread that somehow learned sound.
You'd swear she was fat, but that's not really true
It's just her warm coat doing what warm coats do.
Taking a sheep to a barber's a comical sight,
So Gertrude gets trimmed only once a fortnight.
She wanders back home, slightly lighter, still proud,
A loaf once again
just less floof in the cloud.



Angie Curtis

Hidden Flamingo Alert

In every issue there is a sneaky hidden illustration of a flamingo.



Can you find it?

< - not that one, that's the example

Nothing is cosier than a warm soup on a crisp cold day. I have always loved garlic, but some are going to think this is too much Garlic.

Garlic Soup

3 Whole Garlic bulbs

2 Tbsp Olive Oil

1 medium onion, diced

5 cups vegetable broth

1 cup double cream

1 cup grated parmesan

Bay leaf

- At 200°C Roast your garlic, first chop the tops off the bulbs, drizzle with olive oil and wrap snugly with foil. Roast for about 30 minutes until soft.
- In a large pot, on medium heat, sauté the diced onions in olive oil until clear, add in your bay leaf.
- Squeeze the roasted garlic into the pot, be sure to not include any of the garlic peels, and add in the broth. Simmer for about 15 minutes.
- Enjoy the wonderful garlic smell of your kitchen, and stir in the cream and cheese until it is melted and smooth.
 - Season to taste.
 - Blend until silky smooth
- Serve (I think it is best with some crusty bread.)

St. Nicholas Church Christmas Fayre

The grand total raised at the Christmas Fayre was £1010.82. This was split equally between our beautiful St. Nicholas Church and the Andover Foodbank.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the fayre and all those who came along and helped us raise such an incredible amount.

Laura Harding

HURSTBOURNE PRIORS

- 12 10.15 to 12 noon - *Ladies' Coffee Morning*
hosted by Susie Sorby - Bourne House (no 53)
- 14 **Valentines Day** ♥♥
- 17 Shrove Tuesday - *Pancake Day* 
- 18 Ash Wednesday

ST MARY BOURNE & WOODCOTT

- 4 10 to 11.30am - *Stoke Coffee Morning* - Sarum Cottage
- 7 10am to 12 Noon - Repair Café - The George Inn
- 10 10.30am - *Coffee at The George Inn*
- 10 7.30pm - Parish Council meeting - Village Centre
- 18 12.30pm - *'The Lunch'* - Village Centre 
- 17 7.30pm - *Community Evening* - **BINGO** - Village Centre
- 19 7.30pm - Andover Astronomical Soc -
HBT Community Centre
- 28 from 9.30am - Competition Seed Potatoes available -
Boundary Shop

Saturday mornings - 10.30am to 12.30pm -

The Community Library - Village Centre Club Room

LONGPARISH

- 8 9am - L2SOTM Race - The Plough
- 9 7.30pm - Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall
- 13 9.15am - Litter Pick - Village Hall
- 13 10 to 11.45am - *LCA Coffee Morning* - The Cricketers Pub
- 24 7pm - Longparish Garden Club - *"Easy Planting in Difficult Places"* - Village Hall
- 27 12 noon to 2.30pm - *LCC Friday Lunch Club* - Village Hall



If you have a seasonal photograph that could be used for the front cover of Hill & Valley, please send it to one of the editors listed below. Please send any contributions in portrait and jpg format if possible.

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Copy date for the March 2026 edition of Hill & Valley is Wednesday 18th February 2026.

Your contributions - letters, pictures, comments or articles are always welcome. Contact your parish editor by the copy date. Please provide editorial copy electronically as a text in Word and any images in JPEG format if possible.

Printed by The Andover Printing Company Ltd ☎ 01264 334220 www.andoverprinting.co.uk © Hill & Valley Parish Magazine 2026

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