

Issue No. 296

# *Hill & Valley*

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

£1

March 2026



## Senses and memories

Recognising the hand of God in nature and art and in music, especially sacred music in a cathedral setting, has given me much pleasure that had I set out to find this, I would probably still be looking. So I am thankful that through prayer and using my God-given senses of sight, hearing and taste, all this wonder is within my reach.

For some though, the senses are dimmed and it is sad that memories fade along with the joy that they once brought. At December's Chatter Café in Whitchurch, we talked about our memories of Christmas past, and for many of us, being a child was a long time ago.

However, it was while talking about the orange and the red ribbon on a Christingle, it transpired that the need to keep memories alive was crucial for good mental health and the thing that helped the most was having a sense of dependency on what they knew to be true about the birth of our Lord, and what his coming meant for mankind. They needed to rely on their memory and feared losing their own cognitive ability and having to be more dependent on others.

Archbishop Rowan Williams discusses the dependency of us all on God. We need to acknowledge our dependence and respond to it, and as it is a true gift, it enables us to be fruitful.

We are not yielding to a harmful force but allowing the gift of love to embrace us.

So, I try to reassure my café group that losing independence need not be something

to worry about, but to find hope in the fact we are cared for.

Rather wickedly, I remind them that when they do lose their independence and memory, they won't remember it, which thankfully creates laughter.

Blessings,

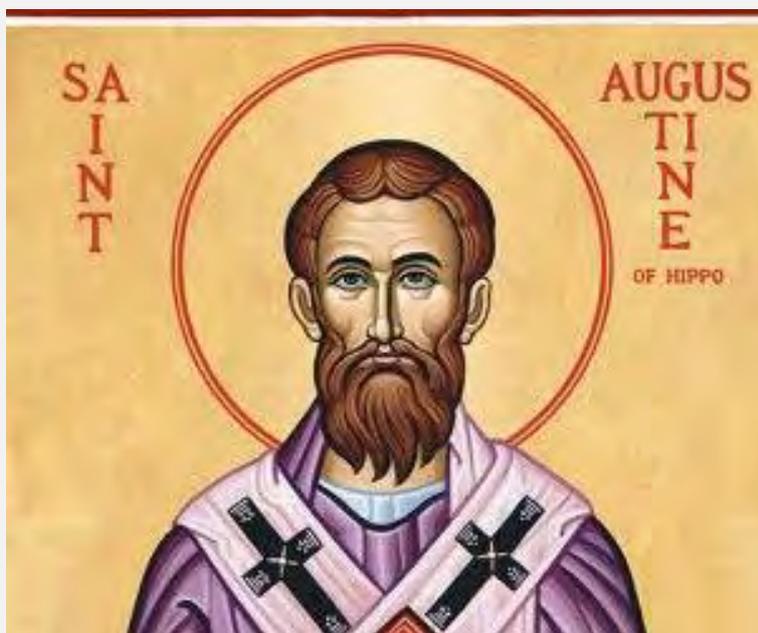
Chris

The Revd Chris Theobald  
Curate

### St Augustine and memory

St Augustine of Hippo wrote a great deal about memory, especially in his "Confessions" written around 400AD. His view was that memory was an important process to help us understand God and the world around us by being able to re-experience things that had happened in the past. He recognised the fragility of memories as we get older. His teachings encourage us to value our memories as a precious gift from God, allowing us to connect with our past, present and future.

RS



## Services in the Parish Churches

### March 2026

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

#### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> - Lent 2

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Benefice Evensong Lenten Talk 2
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	Holy Communion

**Home Zoom Service at 10.30am**

#### Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>

St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	9.30am	Holy Communion
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#### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> - Lent 3

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	6.00pm	Benefice Evensong Lenten Talk 3
St Mary's, Tufton	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Holy Communion
St James', Woodcott		No service

**Home Zoom Service at 10.30am**

#### Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> - Mothering Sunday

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	Family Praise
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Family Service
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Family Service
	6.00pm	Benefice Evensong Lenten Talk 4
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	Matins

**Winchester Cathedral Zoom Service Online**

#### Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>

All Hallows, Whitchurch	9.30am	Holy Communion
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#### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> - Lent 5

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Mary's, Tufton	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Benefice Evensong Lenten Talk 5
St James', Woodcott		No service

**Home Zoom Service at 10.30am**

#### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> - Palm Sunday

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Holy Communion
St James', Woodcott		No service

**Winchester Cathedral Zoom Service Online**

#### Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Maundy Thursday

St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	7.00pm	Benefice Service Holy Communion
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#### Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - Good Friday

St Nicholas', Longparish	2.00pm	Meditation
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	GF Service

#### Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April - Easter Day

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Mary's, Tufton	9.00am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	Holy Communion
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	Holy Communion

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

Office Administrator:

☎ 01256 893573

[brightwatersbenefice@gmail.com](mailto:brightwatersbenefice@gmail.com)

Revd Russell Smart: ☎ 01962 760508

[revrussellsmart@gmail.com](mailto:revrussellsmart@gmail.com)

Rev Canon Dodie Marsden:

☎ 01264 738211

[dodie.marsden@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk)

### From the Church Registers

#### • Baptisms

"Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father."

**Wilfred Andrew John Hewitt**

21/2/26 at Longparish

#### • Funerals

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

**Roy Fryer**

27/1/26 at Woodland Burial Site, St Mary Bourne

**Richard Hyland**

20/2/26 at St Mary Bourne

**Bill Morris**

25/2/26 at Charlton Park Crematorium

**LET US PRAY** - If you would like us to pray for You or someone else, please email [stnbrightwaters@icloud.com](mailto: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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### LONGPARISH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

[www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council](http://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 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

### RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- **26/00229/FULLN Acre Cottage, 135 North Acre**

**Proposal:** Replace fence with secondary gate

**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/](http://view-applications.testvalley.gov.uk/online-applications/)

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISH COUNCILLORS

The Parish Council would like to extend a warm welcome to our three new Parish Councillors: Simon Troughton, Andrea Williams and Cathy Yelf. All three of our new councillors are long-term residents and valued members of the Longparish community, bringing with them a wealth of local knowledge. We look forward to working with them.



**LITTER FREE LONGPARISH for 2026!!**  
A big thankyou to the February Litter pickers who braved the cold and wet. Next Group Litter pick is on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. Meet behind the Village**

**Hall at 9.15 am**, the Parish Council will provide litter picking sticks, hoops and bags. Coffee at the Cricketers afterwards.

For more information Tel Christian Dryden 720 398



Please join us for the next Friday Lunch Club **12-2pm**  
**27<sup>th</sup> March**

£3 for hot soup and freshly baked cake.

A chance for warmth, conversation and meet up with Longparish folk. Open to anyone of any age but please book by Wednesday before for catering purposes.

To book lunch and or transport ring Andrea 720 457 Christian 720398



### Longparish Cricket Club

Preparations for the summer season are underway at LCC with the ground opening up scheduled for 28 March 2026. All members are invited to come down to the ground to help clean the pavilion and prepare the ground ready for the summer season.

Junior training sessions will begin on 13 April 2026, if your child is interested in playing, please contact Justin Jackman, Junior Coordinator at [jackmanjustin@aol.com](mailto:jackmanjustin@aol.com).

Allstars cricket for children aged 5-8 years will be returning again to LCC with sessions starting on 11 May 2026. Registration for Allstars is via the ECB website. New adult players are also very welcome to join us. Please use the contact form on the website to get in touch.

The indoor winter league season concludes in early April and there have been mixed fortunes for the LCC teams to date. The Longparish Longhops have only lost one game but the Longparish Lightweights are finding victories harder to come by.

Finally, we invite you to join us on Friday 24 April 2026 for a fundraising Quiz night at the Longparish Village Hall and we would love to see you there supporting the Club. Look out for posters locally as well as updates online and via social media.

**Alison Allen**

### Longparish Village Hall



### Longparish Village Hall Committee

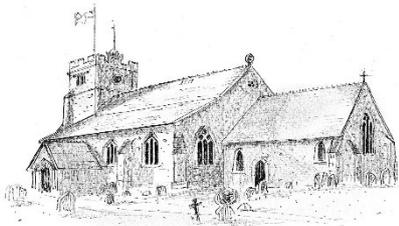
We are looking for volunteers to fill the following roles, caretaker and secretary. If you think you could help or would like to know more about the roles, please do get in touch. Email [vhbooking@longparish.org.uk](mailto:vhbooking@longparish.org.uk) or Tel. 01264 317037



## St Nicholas Easter Lilies

If you would like to contribute towards the Easter Lilies in memory of a loved one please contact

Clare Francis on 720361 or 07801 414906.



### **The Parish Church of St. Nicholas, Longparish**

Our beautiful church exists to be a warm and welcoming place to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to increase our faith, and to support and care for all within our community. We know many value this Christian presence in the village and would wish to support the church for future generations.

We rely solely on the generosity of donations not only to safeguard our beautiful and historic church building, ensuring it remains not just a place of worship, but also available for marriages, christenings or baptisms, funerals and thanksgiving services, serving the needs of the village and the community in these ways.

We are trying hard to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the village, and with the family services held once a month, we are seeing an increasing number of families attending, for which we give thanks to God.

As well as the upkeep of the building itself, the church is an expensive place to run, and with declining church numbers over many years, the income of the church is not keeping up with running costs. As a result, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) has decided to introduce The Parish Giving

Scheme (PGS) to St. Nicholas. The majority of the churches in the Brightwaters Benefice are already operating the PGS in their parishes.

*Introducing the Parish Giving Scheme – We invite everyone supporting the ministry of this church to give through the PGS*

Our aim is to start this scheme on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 by promoting it during March. Please look out for a leaflet\* which will drop through your letterbox during March. In the meantime, please visit the website at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk) to learn all about the PGS, and to look at its benefits to both you, the donor, and the church. Please consider prayerfully what level of giving you might be able help us with. Any amount would be deeply appreciated.

There are 3 secure ways to set up a regular gift by Direct Debit with PGS:

1. Online at [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk) or by scanning the QR code\*
2. By telephone on 0333 002 1271
3. Or by completing a gift form and posting it to PGS

With grateful thanks from

John Young, Stewardship Officer & Churchwarden, Email: [jayoung1322@gmail.com](mailto:jayoung1322@gmail.com) or Mobile: 07860 630489 and Peter Hull, Churchwarden, Email: [peterhull192@btinternet.com](mailto:peterhull192@btinternet.com) or Mobile: 07747 328760

Please do not hesitate to contact either of us, if you want any more information or details about the PGS, or indeed any other aspect of church life at St. Nicholas.

*“Regular giving is an integral part of not only keeping the lights on in our parishes, but in ensuring the church remains an active part of every community. By using the Parish Giving Scheme, you can be assured that the giving is safe, secure, and deeply appreciated.”*

**Grant Forest, Chief Executive of PGS**

N.B. \*QR Code will be on the leaflets, and on posters in church and village shop (to follow).

## LONGPARISH GARDENING CLUB

Tuesday, 24th March  
7 p.m.

Longparish Village Hall, SP116PB  
Nick Gilbert from Gilbert’s Nursery, nr Romsey  
On



“The Gilbert’s Dahlia  
Year”



Members Free. (Guests welcome £5.)  
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Any queries please to  
Rosie Lowry 07771645341 or  
Marion Bell 07973232320

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

It was damp but not raining and not chilly for the February race which made a nice change from recent weather.

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 one. So it was that María-Belén Rivas set off first and led all the way to become our Most Improved Woman finishing an amazing four minutes inside her handicap. Henry Kidd was our Rising Star, improving by over two minutes and Matt Pocock was our Most Improved Man.

Special mention also goes to Megan Brunwin who set a new personal record. Well done!



Afterwards we enjoyed a warm welcome, bacon rolls and coffee at The Plough. Incidentally, The Plough is the main sponsor of the HBT5 a lovely five-mile race in Hurstbourne Tarrant on Saturday 2 May. The Harewood 10K at Wherwell is the following Monday. Both races feature wonderful displays of bluebells and support local good causes so please do enter.

Thank you very much to Maggie Barber for marshalling, Andy Smith and Alice Evans for doing the signs and to David Gould for processing the results. The next race is a week later than usual on Sunday 15 March, 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](mailto:mrjeremybarber@gmail.com)



Thanks to The Cricketers Inn for hosting bingo night!  
First Thursday of the month, so March 5th.  
Ticket sales from 7pm, eyes down at 7-30pm.  
If you have anything suitable for a raffle prize please bring it along.  
All profits go to Andover Food bank.  
If you want anymore information, email me, [finkys@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:finkys@hotmail.co.uk)



**St Nicholas Church**  
**100 Club**  
**Heritage Fund**

Results of the January 2026 Draw

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%.

**January Results:**

First prize:	No. 57	£82.00
Second prize:	No. 38	£50.00
Third Prize:	No. 47	£17.00

Thank you to those who renewed their numbers and also to those who joined St Nicholas Church. 100 Club Heritage Fund in December 2025. Our membership now stands at 66 numbers. The objective of course is to reach a membership of 100, so if you are not a member, please consider joining and supporting your church in 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  
Tel: 01264 720233  
Mob: 07860 630489 or  
Email: [jayoung1322@gmail.com](mailto:jayoung1322@gmail.com)



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I have a new bird for the village: the Russian White-fronted Goose. I have been hoping to see one, checking the geese daily with no luck. Then, on the 2nd of February, a large

flock of Greylag Geese flew over and landed in the field behind the pony paddock. I raced back at 4 mph down the spinal path and found 60 Greylags, and in amongst them were three Russian White-fronted Geese. That made my day.

So, I raced home to get my camera and take a few photos. They arrive here from Siberia between October and March. We usually have them, but this year there has been a big influx. They don't nest in the UK, only in Siberia. They are very similar to our Greylag Geese but have a grey body, a pinkish bill surrounded by white, black bars across their belly, and orange legs.

The Greylags are often out there, but I have not seen the Russian White-fronted Geese again. They were eating the crop in the field, which forms part of their diet along with grass and grain.

I'm writing this in mid-February, and the birds have already started nesting. The swan is on her nest; I don't know if she has eggs or is just tidying up last year's nest. The magpies have nearly finished their nest. If you look in a bird book, it tells you they nest in April, but they nested early last year as well.

I'm looking forward to the spring and to our summer visitors returning.

**Chris Bowman**

Greening Longparish

**Ashburn Rest Well**

A protective coronet fence has been installed to prevent hedgehogs from going swimming in the well! This was fabricated by the talented village engineer, Martin 'Eiffel' Hulme and commissioned by Longparish Parish Council.



**Anti-Hedgehog Palisade fencing**

**The Younger Generation and the Environment**

Thanks, have to be given to several youngsters of the village, who have given their time helping with recent conservation projects.

Disease-resistant Elm Trees

These include those working for their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, Susanna Benedetto, their Bronze, Humphrey Roebuck and Sam Hunt. These together with Tom Biddlecombe and Sam and Henry Kidd were given their own tree to plant and help to nurture.

These are disease resistant elm trees supplied by HCC continuing this project to build on trees planted last year. Keep an eye out for these in their pink tree guards along the Spinal Path, along the edge of the Village Green, Southside Common the Chalk Pit and in the hedgerow at the Northern end of the Christmas tree field.

Other volunteers included the 'aging teenagers' Peter Hull, Brian Robins, David Marklew and Neil Biddlecombe.



**Planted Elms along the Spinal Path with David Marklew and Neil and Tom Biddlecombe**

Translocation of Frog Spawn and the importance of Water Meadows

Approximately 200 eggs, (frogspawn) were translocated from wheel-ruts and released into ponds around the village. This ensured their survival, as the water in the ruts completely dried up by early Summer last year.

This often happens in the traditional water meadows in the valley where the hatches and feeders have not been maintained to perpetuate this traditional management system. This system ameliorates the extreme oscillation of Winter Floods and Summer drought by holding back the floodwater, absorbing it like a sponge and then slowly releasing this water, over the summer months. This management also creates, albeit temporary, habitats such as shallow lakes, providing feeding grounds for overwintering wildfowl and reed and sedge beds, for ever declining numbers of nesting birds, such as warblers.

**Sam Hunt releasing rescued frogspawn**



**Paul Knipe**



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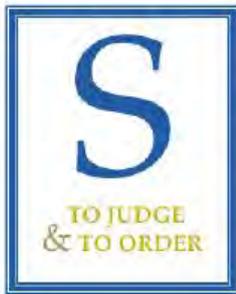
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**Meet at The Cricketers**  
**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March**  
 from 10am - 11:45am  
 Drop in for a chat, everyone welcome.  
 Coffee or Tea and biscuits, all for £1.00



**STOCKBRIDGE TOWN HALL**

**Thursday 26th March**

**6:30 for 7pm.**

**The East India Company:**

**'The Corporation that Changed the World'**

**by Professor John McAleer.**

From modest origins as a small Elizabethan trading venture to a global empire which controlled Britain's trade with Asia for nearly 250 years. This illustrated talk will tell that story of wealth, power, and the pursuit of fortune.



Dr John McAleer is Associate Professor of History at the University of Southampton. He was formerly Curator of Imperial and Maritime History at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

**Admission: £20 to include a glass of wine.**

To register for this event in advance, please pay:  
 St Peter's Stockbridge PCC (ref 'Talk 26 March'),  
 acc no 17804768, Code 30-98-90.

You can also send a cheque, payable to St Peter's Stockbridge PCC and ref Talk 26 March on the back, to John Oldfield, 5 Wheelers Yard, Oxford Road, Sutton Scotney, Winchester SO21 3QZ.

**All proceeds to St Peter's, Stockbridge**

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**Sunday 15th March**

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View our Mother's Day menu on our website.  
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**Greek Night!**

**Wednesday 25th March, 6pm – 9pm**

Get ready to embark on a culinary journey to Greece at our Greek Night. Enjoy a specially curated set-course evening menu inspired by the vibrant flavours and traditions of Greek cuisine.

*Booking required.*

**NEW Games Night**

**Sunday 22nd March, 5.30pm–9pm**

Join us for our very first Games Night! Gather friends and family for a fun and competitive evening, packed with everything from big board games to classic card favourites. Our team will be on hand throughout the evening to explain the games and help you get started, so everyone can join in the fun. Snack Bowls and Confectionery available to buy! Now taking place on the 4th Sunday of every month.

**Plough Quiz Night**

**Next Quiz - Sunday 8th March**

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 the charity, chosen by the winning team

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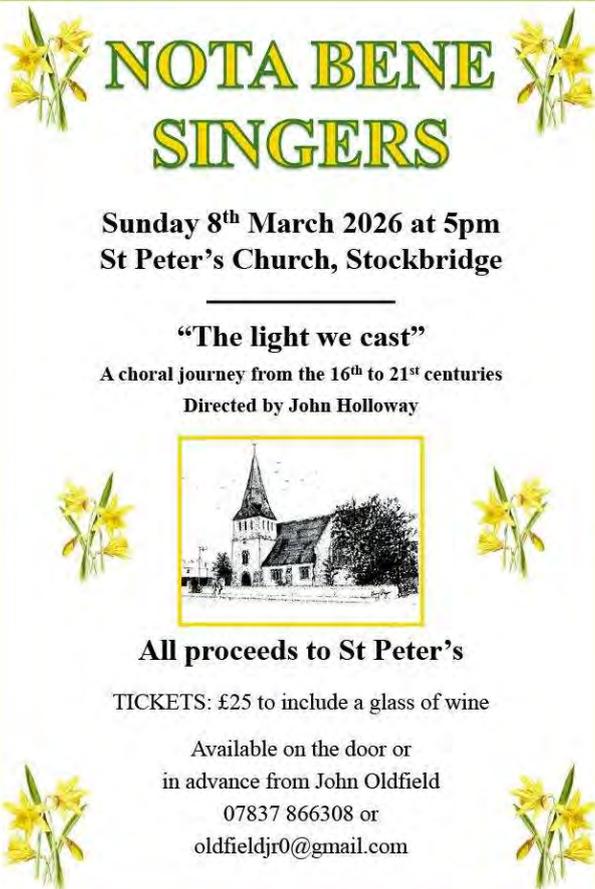


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# NOTA BENE SINGERS

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 5pm**  
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- Each word in the ladder must also be a real word.
- You can only change one letter at a time when creating a new word in the ladder.
- You cannot repeat any words that have already been used in the ladder.

H O P E

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G R O W

### Spring is Coming!!

With spring just around the corner, your garden will soon be waking up. There's plenty you can be getting on with this month.

Ready to Sew:

- ❖ Beetroot
- ❖ Peas
- ❖ Spinach
- ❖ Spring Onions
- ❖ Tomatoes (Indoors)



- Continue preparing beds and improving soil
- Plant early potatoes if conditions are suitable
- Keep on top of weeds before growth speeds up
- Protect young seedlings from frost.

Frosts are still possible, so plan carefully before moving any young starts outside.



Do you have something you would like to contribute to the next edition of Hill and Valley? An amazing recipe? A poem about your pet? Or maybe some awesome accomplishment?

This magazine is only possible because of the input from our communities and we would love to include more of your own personal touches! Submit your content to [hillandvalley@longparish.org.uk](mailto:hillandvalley@longparish.org.uk) Or for any other villages please send the content to your editor.

### WHITCHURCH RAMBLING CLUB

On Monday evenings between 13 April and 7 September (except bank holidays) the **Whitchurch Rambling Club** will meet at 7pm at the Bell Street car park in Whitchurch and set off for a walk, either within the environs of Whitchurch or further afield with a drive to the starting point. The 2026 walk programme will soon be available at [www.whitchurchramblers.org.uk](http://www.whitchurchramblers.org.uk) and on noticeboards around the town.



We're a friendly bunch of people of all ages and ability and we ramble rather than stride. Membership is £2 for the season. Dogs are welcome as long as they are on a lead. If you're interested in keeping fit while enjoying friendly company and the beautiful Hampshire countryside why not join us?

### LONGPARISH LITTLE LIBRARY:



Just a reminder that the Longparish Little Library is up and stocked in the North Acre Old Phone box. When taking and leaving books please do so with care to make sure nothing is left on the ground. The library currently has boardgames, books, and movies.



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## SPRING IS FINALLY COMING...

Spring is coming... the *Vernal Equinox* our Astronomical Spring occurs on March 20<sup>th</sup> then on March 29<sup>th</sup> (Palm Sunday) clocks go forward, and British Summer time begins...



## SPRING FASHION TRENDS

With Spring coming, we asked Kate Moss Jones of **House of Colour**, a local style consultant with over 20 years' experience, to share her insights on the direction of travel for this year's style and fashion trends...



It's hard to believe spring is just around the corner with all this rain, but the sight of fresh buds appearing everywhere is a sure sign that it's on its way. Before long, the gorgeous colours of spring will be brightening up this very grey corner of Hampshire.

With a new season comes a fresh wave of trend colours for clothing and accessories, and I'm personally delighted that red is making a bold return for SS26. It's set to be a standout shade, adding a much-needed pop of brightness

to our lives - especially as *primary red* is the one colour that truly suits everyone. Also look out for turquoise blues and purples.



Pantone's Colour of the Year is **Cloud Dancer**, so now's the time to embrace whites and creams and work them into your outfits for an effortlessly summery feel. These shades are easy for both men and women to wear - just remember: if you have a warm skin tone, opt for cream, and if you're cool-toned, white will be your best match.

And for all you men (and women), you'll be pleased to know the preppy look is back this season. Dig out your blazers and cricket jumpers and wear them with confidence, knowing you're right on trend!

Instagram: [houseofcolour\\_kate\\_mossjones](https://www.instagram.com/houseofcolour_kate_mossjones)  
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 Web: [www.houseofcolour.co.uk/katejones](http://www.houseofcolour.co.uk/katejones)



## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Hurstbourne Priors **Annual Village Clean Up** will be held on Saturday 21st March this year. Please meet at the Church or Cricket Pavilion from 10am where we will be serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate and homemade brownies to help you keep your strength up.

There are a range of tasks from dusting and cleaning in the church, clearing in the graveyard, recreation ground and play area with a bonfire to get rid of all the debris following the very stormy winter. Hopefully it will stop raining by then so that the fallen branches will burn. There will be the usual litter picking along the lanes within the village now that the hedges have been cut. Please wear suitable clothing and gloves are recommended for outside tasks. We will have pick claws and rubbish bags available in the Pavilion. Cleaning products will be available in the church for those wishing to take part in 'inside' activities.

This year we would like to tackle the overgrown hedge alongside the play area so if anyone has suitable hedge cutting weaponry, please could you let Clare know (07711 917375) so we can try and get a team together as this will definitely be a group activity!

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Everyone is welcome; no one is too small or too old for a useful task! *Many thanks - Your Parish and Parochial Councils*

**Hill and Valley Donation**

The Parish Council was delighted to hear of the generous £250 donation from the Hill & Valley Management Committee as a result of the sales of the 'B3048, Highway to the North' booklet by Rev Canon Martin Coppen. Many residents of Hurstbourne Priors enjoyed his monthly articles in Hill & Valley during 2024 and have subsequently purchased the booklet.

The Recreation Ground Committee are currently refurbishing the children's play area and would like to purchase a bench using this generous donation. Whilst the bench will be installed near the play area, it will be available to anyone who wishes to pause and reflect, and from the bench you will be able to see the Church of St Andrew's where Martin preached for many years.

Hill & Valley donations of £250 were previously made to Longparish CoE Primary School, St Mary Bourne Primary School and Woodcott Church. *Clare Read*

**Parish Council Meeting Dates**

*MAY the 4<sup>th</sup> BE WITH YOU!*



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](mailto:richard.waterman150@btinternet.com).

**LADIES COFFEE MORNING**

Clare Read will be hosting our **Coffee Morning** on Thursday 12th March at 10.15 am until 12 midday at Hurstbourne House (37). All ages welcome!

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



**HURSTBOURNE PRIORS MAY FAIR**



**Hurstbourne Priors May Fair  
Bank Holiday Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> 2026**

Preparations for the May Fair are gathering momentum to raise funds for our village amenities: St Andrew's Church, the Village Hall and the Recreation Ground.

We will have our usual village stalls including Cakes, Books, Plants, Nearly New and Bric a Brac and all offers to help with these would be most welcome. We would also love to find someone willing to take on the Toy Stall and any children who would like to run Hook a Duck or other children's games. Teas and refreshments served in the Village Hall are popular and we need helpers to serve a steady stream of customers.

In the run up to the Fair we would welcome volunteers to help with transporting and setting up the tents and tables.

Please get in touch if you would like to help or find out more. You can talk to anyone on the Committee or email: [hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com](mailto:hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com)

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

**ST ANDREWS CHURCH –  
SPECIAL SERVICES IN MARCH**

Special services at St Andrew's Church in March. **Mothering Sunday** – 15th March. We invite you to join us on Mothering Sunday for a Family Service at St Andrew's Church at 10.30am. There will be pew activities, flowers and cake!

**Palm Sunday – 29th March**

Our service on Palm Sunday is Holy Communion at 10.30am with Revd Georgi Leask. There will be a dramatised reading with parts for children and adults, and Ann will be looking for volunteers to read. We will also have activities for younger children.

*Ann Orr and Fenella Williams*



*Don't forget to put your clocks forward before you go to bed on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March*

## PUSHING THE LIMITS...

**R**ichard Allen, a Hurstbourne Priors resident and lead climber at **Tilia Tree Care Ltd**, competes in tree climbing sports. He has achieved “masters” status multiple times in the UK and is now aiming to compete at a European level. We spoke with him and asked about this unusual sport and his life as a tree surgeon...



Tree climbing as a sport involves much more than just speed and fluid agility he says. Participants are required to simulate various tasks and challenges, such as reaching five designated “Bell” points throughout the tree, walking along limbs, performing tree rescue operations, and engaging in throwing events to facilitate self-installation in the canopy. Additionally, activities such as ascending the tree and free climbing (using only hands and feet for upward movement) are integral components of these competitions.



For me, he adds, these competitions aren't just about winning – they push us to refine our techniques, stay current with the latest equipment and bring that expertise back to our day job.

More women are now also choosing to become tree surgeons, and I've noticed their increased involvement at these tree climbing events. Competitors who play close attention to detail often excel in these competitions.

Our conversation then shifted to life as a local tree surgeon and the degree to which weather and wildlife impact their work. He explained that only high winds and storms, like thunder and lightning, prevent them from climbing trees. Wildlife can occasionally pose challenges, especially during nesting season or when bat roosts are discovered.

Sometimes, experience and knowledge help determine if a roost is active; for instance, the presence or absence of

cobwebs at the entrance can be a good indicator. In every situation, it's all about working responsibly.

The same standards apply to health and safety - each tree is surveyed and subjected to a thorough risk assessment prior to commencing any climbing activity. It is essential to proceed methodically, maintaining a calm and measured approach while avoiding unnecessary risks.

A qualified arborist typically completes a minimum two-year apprenticeship combined with on-the-job training. During this period, they acquire comprehensive knowledge about trees, including their structural strengths and weaknesses, as well as gaining experience managing challenging situations such as the initial stages of climbing – “learning how to feel comfortable in an uncomfortable situation” is a familiar theme when you first start doing this job.



What about keeping fit or does the job do that for you? - Yes and no, the role certainly helps maintain good fitness and health due to its active nature, unlike traditional desk jobs. Nonetheless, it remains essential to care for one's well-being through balanced nutrition and supplementary exercise routines, such as yoga and, stretching (both of which work especially well) and weight training.

Any anecdotes or amusing experiences? – Oh my god yes “**Wasps**” with a capital **W**... it's not unusual in this job to be stung as much as 30 or 40 times a year! Once whilst working in the heights of a tree I cut through an entire wasp's nest, in revenge, they attacked me and got inside, and I mean inside and underneath my clothing... I had to make a fast descent to a “bull's eye” landing spot on the ground and strip down to my underpants - and all this in full view of passing traffic!!!

And finally, what's in the name Tilia? – Well Tilia is Latin

for Lime Tree and it is also our daughter's name...

**Web:** [tiliatreecareltd.co.uk](http://tiliatreecareltd.co.uk)

**Email:** [tiliatreecareltd@outlook.com](mailto:tiliatreecareltd@outlook.com)

*If you live in the parish of Hurstbourne Priors and have an unusual or interesting hobby or job that could feature here, then please contact me: [philip.luckett12@gmail.com](mailto:philip.luckett12@gmail.com)*

## WHITCHURCH SILK MILL EVENTS

### National Lottery Open Week – Free Entry

We're delighted to offer free entry to Whitchurch Silk Mill on 7 & 8 March and 10–15 March as part of National Lottery Open Week. Come and explore our heritage: the three-storey Georgian Mill, Victorian machinery, bobbin winder, waterwheel, and our weavers at work. Afterwards, relax in our award-winning cafe or browse the Mill shop. Full details and conditions are on our website.

### Family Easter Trail – 31 March & 2 April

Join us during the Easter holidays for a family-friendly trail through the Mill and its riverside grounds. Children receive a trail sheet and everything needed to make bunny ears and can enjoy themed checkpoints and activities along the way. A chocolate treat awaits at the end (allergen-friendly options available). £7.50 per child; one accompanying adult free.



### 2025 Highlights – A Record Year

We love a good statistic, and 2025 gave us plenty to celebrate:

- Our most-watched Instagram video reached 310,000 views.
- Weaver Shannon's silk twisting video held viewers' attention for almost seven days of accumulated watch time.
- Only 31% of our Facebook audience lives in the UK – we're enjoyed by a global community!
- Warping the Jane Austen House ribbons involved 11 creel changes.
- Our cafe welcomed around 2,300 visitors per month.

- Volunteers donated an incredible 3,016.5 hours. We are enormously grateful, if you'd like to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you.

### Become a Patron in 2026

We're launching a new Patron scheme to help support the Mill's future. For £3 a month or £30 a year, Patrons receive exclusive quarterly behind-the-scenes content and enjoy free entry for 12 months. Your support helps

safeguard specialist heritage weaving skills, there are only five silk ribbon weavers in the UK, and two of them work right here at Whitchurch Silk Mill.

### Why Your Support Matters

We train up to three Heritage Skills students each year, helping preserve rare weaving knowledge. Income from admissions, silk sales, the cafe and shop doesn't fully cover our running costs, so your support makes a genuine difference in protecting this national treasure.

### Upcoming Events & Workshops

- Warping Workshop – 6 March, 10am–1pm  
Create your own 3-metre warp with guidance from our weaving team. £60 per person.
- Embroidery Workshop – 7 March, 10.30am–1pm  
Craft a nature-inspired piece with Abigail Rose Creative. Suitable for all levels. £65 per person.
- Beginners' Crochet Workshop – 14 March, 11am–2pm  
Learn basic stitches and make granny squares in a friendly, supportive session. £45 per person.
- Silk Production Tour – 24 March, 11am–12pm  
A behind-the-scenes guided tour with our weaving team, including active Victorian looms. £25 per person.
- The Story of Levi Strauss & Co. – 24 March, 6.30–8pm  
A special talk by Levi's historian Tracey Panek, exploring the origins of denim and its cultural legacy.

### Booking & Contact

Tickets for all events are available from the Mill Shop or via the Events page on our website.

Stay up to date by following us on social media or subscribing to our newsletter.

[info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk](mailto:info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk)

[www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk](http://www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk) – 01256 892065

*March Issue photographs courtesy of Bob Lethaby, Kate Moss Jones, Richard Allen, Phil Luckett & The Silk Mill.*





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**Coffee at The George Inn**

All ages are welcome, from all the villages, to a social coffee morning at

**The George Inn** St Mary Bourne on **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am**

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

**The Lunch**

Our next village lunch will be held on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March** at St Mary Bourne Village Centre, as usual starting to serve at 12.30pm. All are welcome to come along and enjoy our monthly light social lunch. If a lift is needed, please phone Chris on ☎ 01264 738110 by Noon on the Tuesday.



**Snowdrops** - Now is the time to transplant 'in the green' - £2 for good sized clump in aid of St Peter's Church.

**Elizabeth Maclay** - ☎ 01264 738229



**St George's Day Lecture**

**"England's green and pleasant land"**

Why is St George (a former Roman army officer, born in Anatolia, modern day Turkey) our national Patron Saint?

**Speaker: Father Simon Everson, Headmaster of Farleigh School**

**Friday 24 April 2026 - 7pm**

St Mary Bourne Village Centre  
**£10** per ticket, payable on the door (cash or contactless)

*All profits to be donated to St Peter's Church*

Fr Simon Everson, BA Leeds Collegiate, Cert. Theology (Oxon), was appointed Headmaster of Farleigh School in 2004 having been Farleigh Chaplain since 1999.

Educated at Caterham School, he gained a BA in Theology at Leeds (Collegiate - Ripon & York St John) and the Oxford University Three Year Certificate in Theology at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, a theological college near Oxford.



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**AGM**

**FRIDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026**  
**7.30PM**

ST MARY BOURNE VILLAGE CENTRE

**An Evening of Music**

**St Peter's Church, St Mary Bourne**  
**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 7.00pm**

**The Amberly Ensemble**

**An evening concert to include works by Debussy, Zemlinsky, de Groot and others**  
**All Tickets £10**

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**60 minutes of music to enjoy followed by refreshments**

*Proceeds to St Peter's Church*



**We're busy planning Bournefest 2026, and it's shaping up to be another fantastic celebration for the whole community. This year's event will feature a great line-up of local bands, alongside a fun run, tennis, cycling, open gardens and**

of course - some truly fantastic food.

After last year's fun-filled Bournefest, we were delighted to donate funds to several local causes, including the Play Area Project, SMB School, the Lunch Club and the Playgroup. Supporting our community is at the heart of Bournefest, and we're proud to give back wherever we can.

If you're involved in a local community project that could benefit from our support, or if you have ideas or suggestions for this year's event, we'd love to hear from you. ✉ Email us at: [bournefest@mail.com](mailto:bournefest@mail.com)  
 We can't wait to see you at Bournefest 2026! *Laura Davis*

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**NEW TO THE PARISH? RECENTLY MOVED IN?**

**WELCOME DRINKS  
FOR NEW VILLAGERS**

**24<sup>th</sup> March 2026 - 7.30pm**  
**St Mary Bourne Village Centre**

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 are being sent out, 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](mailto:welcome@stmarybourne.org) or see  
<https://stmarybourne.org/new-residents/>

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



Strangely, for once I don't have an awful lot to say - you may have noticed, we are trialling different cakes in the Café including fresh doughnuts and a delicious Chocolate Guinness Cake - come in and give them a try!

Valentine's Day is done and we are now preparing for **Mothering Sunday on 15<sup>th</sup> March** and **Easter**. Vicky has ordered some lovely flowers for Mother's Day - and she always makes sure we have a lovely selection of gifts available for every occasion. The Easter Eggs are also starting to appear on our shelves.

Talking of plants and flowers, we will be selling bedding plants like we did last year - very good quality and reasonably priced; the potting compost will be sold here too.

Remember we still do **Dry Cleaning** for those of you who are planning a Spring Clean, and we have a lovely selection of sauces from the Isle of Wight and their tomatoes in stock.

The **Post Office** is always here to send your parcels and is open **Saturday & Sunday until 12 - very handy!**

Always remember, if you ever think of anything you might like to see in either the Shop or Café, just pop in and see us, we are always open to suggestions.

*Vicky & Sandra*

**The Boundary Shop & Café - 1☺☺ Club**

**February 2026 draw:**

**£50** - Jack Wilson    **£20** - Patrick Foote  
**£20** - Lesley Wood    **£10** - Sandra Grunsell

**The next 1☺☺ Club Draw: Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March**



**Young Creator with a Big Heart - Thomas Mew**

At just 13 years old, Thomas Mew has already shown incredible creativity and generosity. Thomas creates stunning 3D-printed crafts and, together with his family, also makes home-made Christmas gifts.

Inspired by the care his grandfather received from the hospice, Thomas wanted to give

something back. Over the festive period, he kindly sold his creations on our sales table and donated a percentage of the proceeds to us, including presenting a very special, entirely handmade 3D-printed cheque.

We are truly grateful for Thomas's thoughtful contribution. It's remarkable to see someone so young combining such skill, imagination, and kindness to support others. His generosity has touched all of us at the hospice, and we hope his story inspires others as much as it inspires us.

*Thank you, Thomas, your heart and talent have made a real difference.*

**TM**



**EASTER LILIES**

The Easter Sunday flower arrangements traditionally contain many lilies donated by relatives and friends in memory of those in their thoughts at the Festival of the Resurrection.

It is a gift symbolizing hope which beautifies the Easter services with sight and scent.

We also make a display of the names of those who are being commemorated.

If you would like to donate in memory of a member of your family, or a friend who has died, please deliver it to Eve Lind-Smith at The Cottage, High Street SMB or give it to her personally by **Palm Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March at the very latest.**

We ask for **£1** for each person remembered, in an envelope marked **Easter Lilies**, with the name(s) **printed** on the outside of the envelope or on a card inside.

NOTE: only list the usual Christian name and surname rather than full names e.g.: Bill Jones, rather than William Edward Jones.

**Film Night at Vernham Dean  
Millennium Hall - SP11 0JY**



2020 - PG 13 - 1h 37m

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March - 7.30**

Anthony (*Academy Award Winner, Anthony Hopkins*) is 80, mischievous, living defiantly alone and rejecting the carers that his daughter, Anne (*Academy Award and Golden Globe Winner, Olivia Colman*), encouragingly introduces. Yet help is also becoming a necessity for Anne; she can't make daily visits anymore and Anthony's grip on reality is unravelling.



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The Parish Council held its monthly meeting on Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup>.

Dates for meetings during March: **Welcome Evening 24<sup>th</sup> March - Spring Litter Picks 7<sup>th</sup> March (SMB) and 22<sup>nd</sup> March (Stoke).**

Please meet at 10am for both litter picks. Bacon butties will be available for willing volunteers.

The **Annual Parish Assembly** is to be held on **5<sup>th</sup> May** in the Village Centre. Please look out for posters and leaflets - this is your meeting, so if you run a local community organisation, please get in touch with the clerk to book a space and a slot in the programme.

**Pavilion rebuild** - plans are progressing and an open meeting is to be arranged to get community feedback.

The **Flood and Emergency Group** (FEG) are liaising with Southern Water (SW) regarding the rise in ground water down the valley and resulting problems faced by some households. **Please ensure you report any issues directly to SW** and then, if possible, give the incident number to the FEG via the Clerk to enable the PC to follow up at their weekly meetings with SW. Detailed discussions continue to take place with Southern water and the Environment Agency to find short and long-term solutions. Any residents interested in joining the FEG are invited to get in touch via the Clerk.

Parish Council and other **elections** will be taking place on **7<sup>th</sup> May**. Information can be obtained from [electoral.services@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@basingstoke.gov.uk)

**Date of next Parish Council meeting**  
**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm**

**Planning permission:**

25/00035/FUL	Land at Mac's Field	Amendments
T/00025/26/TCA	3 Springlease Stoke	Trees
26/00079/AGRM	Jones & Valley Farm	Barn
25/0288/FUL	Win-Fos Stoke Lane SMB	Roof Changes
T/00049/26/TCA	5 Gangbridge Lane	Trees

**ANDOVER ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

**Dark Skies - Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm**

at Hurstbourne Tarrant Community Centre SP11 0AX



Did you know that you can see over 3,000 stars from North Wessex Downs' dark sky locations near us? Val Russell, network coordinator for the Campaign for Dark Skies will tell us about the importance of dark skies, how to get involved, how to minimise light pollution and how to protect our

environment including wildlife. If you want to find out what you can do, as well as what others are doing, come along to the meeting – there's no charge and tea and coffee will be available. If the skies are clear, we will set up telescopes so you can see the wonders of the night sky first hand.

For more information about Andover Astronomical Society go to [www.andoverastronomy.org.uk](http://www.andoverastronomy.org.uk) or email [andoverastro@gmail.com](mailto:andoverastro@gmail.com)



**St Mary Bourne Primary School**

It has been a great half term, and the school has been filled with a range of exciting learning experiences.

We have also taken part in both Internet Safety Day and Children's



Mental Health Week. Both highlighting important messages to help children stay safe, build resilience, and know where to seek support when they need it.

We held a whole school assembly for Safer Internet Day about the safe and responsible use of AI. In class children also explored several different scenarios and thought about what they would do if they encountered anything upsetting or worrying online.



For Children's Mental Health week, the theme this year was **'This is my place'**, with the aim to support children and young people to feel that they belong. Oak class made a big art to decorate the classroom door, using their handprints! Other Mental Health projects around



school have included Kindness Matters posters and positive affirmation worksheets. We also welcomed Dr Randall into school to take some Mental Health sessions with each class.

In **Eco News**, we have set up a children's gardening club; they have been busy planting Lavender, Daffodils and bulbs and painting rocks to brighten the outdoor areas. The Eco council have been thinking about how to help the birds

during the cold weather at school. They decided they would like to make some bird feeders that they can put in different places around the playground. They used a range of natural materials including pieces of orange and filled them with special wild bird seed. Oak class looked for different birds in the school grounds and posted what they found out onto the Big Schools' Birdwatch website.



Next term we have **World Book Day** celebrations, **Science week** and a school trip to the **Living Rainforest**.

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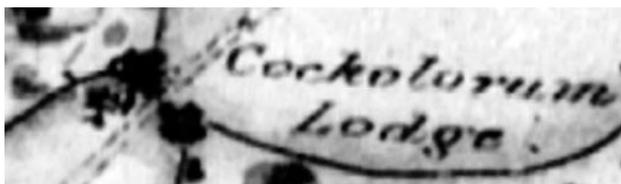
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## What's in a name?

*Some forgotten names of the area*



Apsley Lane is the diagonal on the Hurstbourne Priors Tithe map above, not far from its junction with the B3400. *Cockolorum Lodge* was the 1842 name of this south-west entrance to Hurstbourne Park. A name to raise a chuckle. Originally, *cockalorum* was a conjurer's call, the equivalent of 'hey presto'. Then it came to describe a person likened to a young cockerel, a pompous or self-important person, the boss or chief. So, in naming this lodge, someone was having a laugh. It had been known as *Portsmouth Lodge* in 1791, *Arch Lodge* in 1818 (OS). It was described in 1974 as a 'tower, of grey brick with red brick dressings and tall arches round the windows of two storeys and circular windows under the castellated parapet'. Admittedly, the Tithe survey was done during the time when the great landowner was the eccentric, mentally unstable, John Charles Wallop, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Portsmouth. It might have been his joke.

Such humour should not be encouraged. So, by the 1860s, and until its demolition in the 1970s, it was called *Andover Lodge*, because it was, er, the lodge near the main road from Andover.

MC

## Community Evenings St Mary Bourne Village Centre Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm



### Parish history evening

This event is free to the local community, and everyone is welcome.

Come and join us to have a look through the

old village scrapbooks, share memories and learn something about local history with Julie Muirhead who hosts our history page on Facebook. The annual scrapbooks record notable and interesting events in the day-to-day life of the parish and include photographs, editorial and copy from newspapers and magazines and memorabilia such as programmes, tickets and orders of service. Please bring any photos or other memorabilia you would like to share.

**There will be a licensed bar for refreshments.**

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](mailto:villagecentre@stmarybourne.org)

## The Homeowner's Notebook

### This Month's Topic: How to Get Meaningful Quotes (Not Just Prices)

If you're planning a home project this spring, getting clear, comparable quotes is the most important first step. Here's a simple method to ensure you're comparing apples to apples, not just looking at the cheapest price.

#### 1. Write a Simple, Shared Brief

Before you invite anyone round, write down exactly what you want. Include dimensions, materials, and specific tasks. Send this *same* brief to every tradesperson you contact. This ensures everyone is pricing for the same job.

#### 2. The "Three-Quote Rule" is About Quality, Not Just Quantity

Aim for at least three quotes. The goal isn't just to find the middle price, but to find the person who asks the most questions, shows genuine interest in your brief, and suggests thoughtful solutions.

#### 3. Look Beyond the Bottom Line

When quotes arrive, check what's included. A proper quote should detail:

- Labour costs per stage.
  - A clear list of materials.
  - A projected timeline.
  - The terms of their guarantee or warranty.
- A surprisingly low quote often means something important has been omitted.

#### 4. Trust Your Instincts

Finally, the quote is only part of the picture. Do they communicate clearly and on time? Did they show respect for your home when they visited? A good working relationship is as valuable as the price.

Taking this structured approach removes much of the stress from planning and helps you choose a tradesperson you can trust for the long term.

*This advice is provided by [www.qwote.uk](http://www.qwote.uk), a free service for Surrey & Hampshire homeowners.*

**Next month in *The Homeowner's Notebook*: Hiring the Right Tradesperson – The 5 Essential Checks.** We'll guide you through the final vetting steps, from references to insurance, so you can appoint with confidence.



## 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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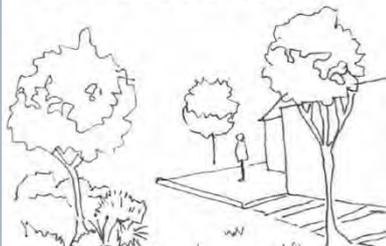
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## St Mary Bourne Cricket Club: Looking Back on a Remarkable 2025 Season

As we look ahead to the start of a new season, it feels only right to reflect on what an outstanding year 2025 was for St

Mary Bourne Cricket Club.

One of the biggest milestones was the introduction of our 2<sup>nd</sup> XI Saturday league team, something that, had you asked us just a few years ago, seemed a distant dream. The new side, built around our enthusiastic U15s and supported brilliantly by a group of adults, enjoyed a fantastic debut season. Results weren't always the headline, but enjoyment, development, and representing St Mary Bourne with pride certainly were.

Meanwhile, for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, 2025 was a year defined by records, drama, and success. The team topped the league table, earning promotion for the second consecutive season. An achievement that reflects the hard work, commitment, and talent across the squad. Although the year was filled with memorable team and individual performances, a few standout moments deserve a special mention:

### Season Highlights -

- **A Last-Ball Thriller vs East Anton**

Early in the season, SMB chased down 213 to win by two wickets, sealed by the emergence of Erik Ahl's new-found batting power. With four needed off the final ball, Erik coolly stroked a boundary to complete one of the most exciting finishes of the year.

- **The Defence of 149 vs Thruxton**

After posting an under-par 149, the game looked all but gone as Thruxton cruised to 51-1. But a fierce spell from James Johnson and Olly Maxwell turned the match on its head, taking five wickets between them for just 18 runs. SMB eventually bowled Thruxton out for 103 - a truly spirited comeback.

- **Final-Day Drama - Another Classic vs Thruxton**

With the league title on the line in the final match, Thruxton were chasing 199 and needed just 50 more with five wickets in hand. Once again, SMB rallied together, producing one last surge of determination to bowl them out for 193 with nine balls remaining. A championship-winning effort to remember.

### Outstanding Individual Performances -

The season's team achievements were underpinned by some extraordinary individual displays:

- **Erik Ahl's Record-Breaking 191 vs Herriard\***

A club record and the second-highest score in the entire HCL Division 5 for 2025. Erik finished the season with 472 runs at an average of 52.44

which is a remarkable leap from the previous year's tally of just 50 runs.

- **Marc Von Guionneau's Explosive Century**

Marc delivered one of the most entertaining knocks of the season with a blistering 100 from only 54 balls. A classic, fast-scoring cricket from our resident Kiwi.

- **Captain Mark Lancaster's Historic Season**

The skipper led from the front, breaking the club record for the most runs scored in a single season by an SMB player, finishing with 542. His consistency and leadership were the backbone of the team's success.



### Looking Ahead to 2026

With so much achieved last year, there's little we would change but as always, SMB is focused on growth. The club has already welcomed a strong group of new members from

surrounding teams who have recognised the strength, spirit, and camaraderie that make this club special.

We would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our club sponsors: **The George Inn, Vitacress, SC Engineering, Ninny's House, Bourne Valley PYO, HAS Property Maintenance Services**, and all the volunteers. Their support has been essential in enabling us to develop so rapidly and ambitiously.

If you'd like to get involved in any capacity (playing, volunteering, sponsoring or supporting) we'd love to hear from you. You can find St Mary Bourne Cricket Club on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

**Here's to an exciting 2026 season!**

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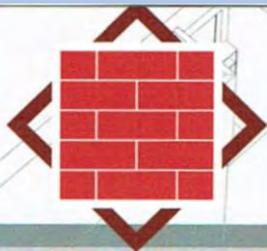
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## Hampshire Medieval Graffiti Project: St Peter's Church, St Mary Bourne

By Karen Wardley, Co-ordinator

It is still rare to find that historical graffiti has been recognised in our medieval parish churches, let alone is deserving of a mention in the church guidebook or website. However, both the guidebook and website ([stmarybourne.org/church](http://stmarybourne.org/church)) for St Peter's church at St Mary Bourne draw attention to the large number of crosses scratched into the fabric, question their significance, and then suggest an explanation for their presence. The crosses are said to have been made by medieval pilgrims, whose presence is attested by the discovery of ampullae and pilgrim badges along the nearby Portway, a Roman road which later became a pilgrimage route. These archaeological finds are displayed in a case within the church. The guidebook goes on to explain that the abundance of marks around the pillars of the north aisle is evidence of an earlier entrance here.

When we contacted the churchwarden to ask permission to carry out a graffiti survey at St Peter's, we were not therefore met with the usual incomprehension or puzzlement, but eagerness to show us these marks. Our first visit in December 2023 quickly revealed that there is much more graffiti hiding in plain sight than had previously been recognised. The crosses are certainly there, but are not confined to the north aisle, and are also around the south entrance doorway and in the Lady Chapel, in the south aisle. There are many more devotional symbols, including so-called Marian marks - scratched in the shape of the letter M to signify worship of the Virgin Mary - as well as pentagrams, compass-drawn circles and elaborate six-petalled rosettes, aka daisy wheels. Again, these are on pillars in the north aisle and in the Lady Chapel and give weight to the theory that there was indeed a popular shrine here, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, where pilgrims left their marks.

One pillar in the north aisle bears a large geometric shape known as a merel. This shape resembles a gaming board but being on a vertical surface could not have been used as such and is more likely to have had an apotropaic function.

As is usual in our churches, there are names and many pairs of initials from the 17th and 18th century, including RB and WB, framed together on the east side of the south chancel doorway. It is very tempting to speculate that these are the initials of Richard Berkeley and William Bond, the church wardens of 1687 whose initials occur together on a silk altar frontal which is on display in the church. Although these graffiti initials are not dated, an incomplete 17th century date occurs close by, with other initials of the same period.

St Peter's is well worth a visit, and besides the graffiti there is a splendid Tournai marble font, slightly incongruous in this small church and thought to have been a gift from Henri de Blois, Bishop of Winchester 1129-71. The picturesque village also boasts an excellent community café which welcomes visitors and which we can recommend.

Another exciting example of graffiti from this church is still being studied and this will be the subject of our next update. Watch this space.



## March Matters for Hedgehogs

As the weather begins to warm, hedgehogs will soon be emerging from hibernation - hungry and in need of a little help. Spring is also the start of the breeding season, with hoglets arriving from late spring onwards.

You can make a real difference in our Hill and Valley community by:

- Leaving out a shallow dish of fresh water (never milk)
- Offering meaty cat or dog food if needed
- Checking carefully before strimming, mowing long grass or lighting bonfires
- Creating a small 13cm x 13cm gap in fences so hedgehogs can move between gardens

If you discover a nest, please don't disturb it. Avoid moving compost heaps during nesting season and keep dogs away from dense undergrowth.

Hedgehogs are in serious decline in the UK, but together we can help create a safer environment for them.



**SBV are supporters of Hedgehog Street, and we would love you to join us and record your hedgehog sightings on their website.**



Scan the QR code to visit SBV for more information.

[www.sustainablebournevalley.org.uk](http://www.sustainablebournevalley.org.uk)



## Dates from Stoke



## Hill & Valley - 20 years ago...



The lake - 10<sup>th</sup> December 2005

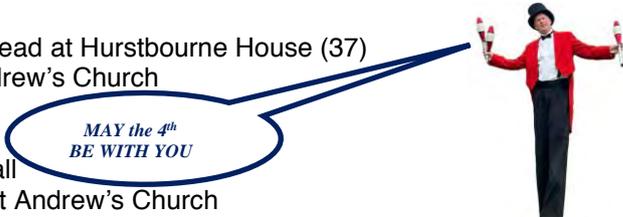
## LONGPARISH

- 9 7pm - **Parish Council meeting** - Village Hall
- 13 9.15am - **Litter Pick** - Village Hall
- 13 10am - LCA Coffee Morning - The Cricketers
- 15 9am - L2SOTM Race - The Plough
- 24 7pm - Longparish Gardening Club - Village Hall
- 27 12 noon to 2pm - **LCA Lunch Club** - Village Hall

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

## HURSTBOURNE PRIORS

- 1 *St David's Day*
- 12 10.15am to 12 noon - Coffee Morning hosted by Clare Read at Hurstbourne House (37)
- 15 10.30am - *Mothing Sunday* - Special Service at St Andrew's Church
- 17 *St Patrick's Day*
- 20 *Vernal Equinox - Astronomical Spring begins*
- 26 **Parish Council Meeting** - Hurstbourne Priors Village Hall
- 29 10.30am - *Palm Sunday* - Holy Communion Service at St Andrew's Church
- 29 *Clocks go forward - British Summer Time begins*



## ST MARY BOURNE & WOODCOTT

- 4 10 to 11.30am - Stoke Coffee Morning - Honeysuckle Cottage
- 6 7.30pm - Flower Show & Fête AGM - Village Centre
- 7 10am - **SMB Litter Pick** - Summerhaugh
- 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* - **Parish History** - Village Centre
- 19 7.30pm - Andover Astronomical Soc - HBT Community Centre
- 21 7pm - SMB Cricket Club **QUIZ NIGHT** - Village Centre
- 22 10am - **Stoke Litter Pick** - Bridge Cottage
- 24 7.30pm - **Welcome Drinks for New Villagers** - Village Centre
- Saturday mornings** - 10.30am to 12.30pm - **The Community Library** - Village Centre Club Room



Front cover photograph: Alexandra McWalter

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**Longparish Community Hall:** During school open hours, Mrs Christine Leach ☎ 01264 720317  
**St Mary Bourne Village Centre:** Miss Angela Cook, ☎ 01264 738158, e: [villagecentre@stmarybourne.org](mailto:villagecentre@stmarybourne.org)

Copy date for the **April 2026 edition** of Hill & Valley is **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 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.

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