

# Villages' News



# Useful Contacts

Non-emergency numbers:

NHS 111

Police 101

Environment Agency hotline (eg for flooding, pollution): 0800 80 70 60

Problems with roads (eg potholes), footpaths etc:

[www.westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem)

Doctors 'surgeries:

Chapel Row Surgery: 0118 971 3252

Holmwood Surgery: 0118 981 4166

Mobile library: 01635 519827

District Councillors:

Woolhampton/Midgham: Chris Read: 07768 793 155

Aldermaston/Beenham/Brimpton: Dominic Boeck: 07956 546 506

Parish Councils: Clerks' details:

Aldermaston: Des Farndell: [parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk)

Beenham: Lauren West : 07919 916 125

Brimpton: Christine McGarvie: 0118 970 1576

Midgham: Alice Owens: 07896 321 058

Woolhampton: Alice Owens: 07896 321 058

Village Halls:

Aldermaston: [aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com](mailto:aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com)

Beenham: 07793 116 937

Brimpton: 0118 971 3731

Midgham: 07941 093 853

Woolhampton: [bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com](mailto:bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com)

Churches:

Aldermaston & Woolhampton Benefice: [www.awb.org.uk](http://www.awb.org.uk)

For local contacts please see church notice boards

Brimpton Baptist Church: 0118 971 2059

Douai Abbey: 0118 971 5300

Magazine advertising:

Brenda Scott: 0118 971 3113    [mrsbscott@btinternet.com](mailto:mrsbscott@btinternet.com)

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## Committee Comments

Welcome to the first issue of Villages' News in 2024. We hope you enjoy reading the articles but ask that you take particular note of the information on defibrillators on page 33. You never know when you might need this useful information in an emergency.

Well Christmas seems a long time ago now. The last remnants of the Christmas cake still to be eaten but everything else packed away for another year. I am a great one for traditions and from my very early childhood can remember making a jigsaw puzzle during the festive season. Something as a family we always enjoyed doing. This year however I feel I made the wrong choice – Santa by the Fire!! It took an age to complete it but it made me slow down and think a little about how busy life can be and how important it is to take time out and relax. I am not one for making New Year resolutions but having had this time and space I feel an inner calmness. Perhaps we all need to slow down a little and be kind to ourselves?

As I sit writing this note to you the sun is shining, the snowdrops are just opening, and the daffodils are shooting up. A sure sign that spring is on its way giving us new hope after the dreadful storms and torrential rain of recent weeks. My sympathy goes to anyone who was affected by the floods or storm damage. Getting from A to B on the flooded roads was sometimes a challenge but was nothing compared to those whose homes were flooded.

Another of my aims this year is to get to use my air fryer more. Having had it for about 2 years and using it only to cook chips, I am beginning to experiment and be more adventurous. The result is I am having great success with a few more dishes. If you have any tips or recipes for air fryers please share them and send them to the editors [brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk](mailto:brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk) and [henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com](mailto:henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com). We look forward to sharing your expertise in future issues of the.

## Aldermaston News



### Aldermaston Coffee Club

In the conservatory area of Hilliers' café.  
**Drop by for a chat, a chance to meet  
old friends and to make new ones.**

**Everyone is welcome - just come along.  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month.  
Any time from 10.00am – 11.30am**

For further details contact: Cynthia Newman 0118 9713525

A colorful poster for a theatrical production. The background is a stylized illustration of a room with a fireplace, a painting, and a window. The title 'THE GHOST TRAIN' is written in large, white, jagged letters across the center. Above the title, it says 'CLASSIC COMEDY-THRILLER'. Below the title, it says '(REVISED)'. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'Aldermaston Parish Hall' and another for 'Aldermaston Players'. The text 'By Arnold Ridley' and 'Adapted by Jocelyn & Nicolas Ridley' is in yellow. Below that, it says 'DINNER THEATRE TICKET : £28' and 'BOX OFFICE :'. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and the website 'aldermastonplayers.co.uk' with the phone number '01189 712530'. On the right, the dates 'FRI 23<sup>th</sup> FEB, SAT 24<sup>th</sup> FEB, FRI 1<sup>st</sup> MAR, Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar' and 'THU 29<sup>th</sup> FEB - SHOW ONLY : £10' are listed. At the very bottom, a small line of text reads: 'This amateur production of "The Ghost Train (Revised)" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk'.

## **ALDERMASTON C E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Happy New Year. We have been making a noise about bullying as part of the national Anti-Bullying week. Our aim behind the focus for the week is to ensure that children know how to recognise bullying and how to get help. It's important to us that the children feel that they are listened to and helped if there is anything at school which is causing them worry. This year, there was a clear focus on children knowing that 'just a joke' or 'banter' is not an excuse for bullying behaviour. We talked a lot about taking pride in our differences and celebrating the fact that we are all unique and individual.

Our Year 4 children have been travelling each week to Tadley swimming pool for swimming lessons and their achievements were marked in an assembly when they were presented with their certificates. Swimming lessons are part of the National Curriculum and an important life skill for everyone, especially as we live in an area with canals and rivers.

Possibly our favourite whole school trip of the year is to the Watermill Theatre to enjoy their Christmas production. We were treated to a performance of 'The Wizard of Oz'. The cast of these productions are incredibly talented. It's hugely inspiring to see them sing, dance, play multiple musical instruments and tell a wonderful story in such a unique setting. The children are always transfixed by what is happening on the stage. Thank you to our volunteers who joined us for the morning and to the PTA for funding the coaches.

The PTA team held a popular disco which was great fun and the children enjoyed showing their dance moves in the school hall.

The carol service at Douai Abbey is a lovely event which allows us to celebrate alongside children, staff and families from other local schools. This year, as well as participating in the service, we also provided a reader and musicians to accompany some of the carols. Starlings Class (Year 6) were great ambassadors for our school. We also held our traditional service at St. Mary's and our annual Christmas Lunch which was much enjoyed by everyone.

Finally, our KS1 children delighted parents and special visitors to their performances of our Nativity play 'Little Angel Finds Her Wings'. Our thanks go to parents for helping with the learning of lines, both spoken and sung, costumes and general preparation and of course the dedicated staff team which pulls it all together behind the scenes.

The new term has brought our annual 'Healthy Living Week' when a varied number of activities were enjoyed including ice-skating, crazy golf, ultimate frisbee and rocket ball plus regular laps of the school field. A busy and fulfilling week for all the pupils and staff.

*Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor*

### **Aldermaston Parish Council– 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

We welcomed Adam Shephard-Price, adam@shephardprice.co.uk to the Parish Council. Adam, who is our numerical replacement for Tasneem Nurbhai, has a young family and has lived in the Village for several years. We agreed not allocate him any specific tasks till our AGM in May.

In Open Forum we were asked to provide an update on Easy Concrete's activities at The Woodyard, Paices Hill. Our chairman explained that we are still expecting a revised Planning Application (promised by the end of last year!) but there has been little progress during the past month. A member of the public stated that he had complained to WBC about the site, and this is something APC encourages regarding any Planning issues, as it would appear that the more complaints the greater the issue becomes visible.

The 2024/25 budget was discussed and our previous decision to keep our precept unaltered at £13.5k was confirmed. This is lower than many other Parish Councils of equivalent size, and we will continue our efforts to ensure you get good value for your money. We reviewed the WBC Report on Libraries and in particular their recommendation that Parish/Town Councils should contribute £1 per resident. Last year their income from such bodies was less than 25p per head. Recognising that many of our Parishioners use Tadley library, we agreed our contribution should remain at £500 (50p per resident).

On the Planning Front, we reviewed just two Applications and agreed to return No Objection to both. These were a change to a condition of an already approved Application at Silver Dene, Reading Road, and a request for further demolition activity at AWE. Since our last meeting, WBC have Approved two requests: demolition work at the Manor House and an extension at 21 Maida's Way. APC has submitted a Planning Application for the proposed Skateboard Ramp at the Recreation Ground. This has led to further questions from WBC. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing the closure of the Lifting Bridge at the Wharf, and the subsequent diversion of cars using the A 340 via Frouds Lane. After the first day, WBC have admitted they got the timing wrong on the temporary traffic lights at the junction of Frouds Lane and the A4. This led to long queues on the A4, and has subsequently been corrected. We will write to WBC requesting they enforce the weight limit that applies to vehicles using the narrow country lane.

Our Lords and Masters (the new Lib Dem administration at WBC) have reluctantly accepted that the Central Government ruling that the Local Plan submitted by the previous Tory Administration should prevail. There will therefore be enormous growth in North-East Thatcham but little impact on our villages.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall. As usual, your presence is welcomed!

For full information on Parish Council matters, please visit our website at [www.aldermaston.co.uk](http://www.aldermaston.co.uk) Dave Shirt tel. 0118 971 2549



Some of you will and some of you will not know that the Aldermaston History Group grew out of decades of exhibitions and, of course, the “Memories Book” in 2005. In 2017 another exhibition, “Celebrating Aldermaston”, had some funds left over and the organising committee agreed that spending it on a digital archive would be a good idea.

Out of this the Aldermaston History Group was formed in 2018. Its initial objective was to build Aldermaston History Online. A successful application in early 2019 to the National Lottery Heritage Fund granted the group £10,000 to build a website and on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 the site went live.

Visit the site at <https://aldermastonhistory.uk> or link via the QR code

The content of the site is growing all the time so please take a look and you are likely to find something you didn't know about Aldermaston.

The History Group has a membership whose subscriptions support the ongoing costs of the website, admin costs and costs of meetings. The Group meets quarterly, usually in the Officers Mess, The Hinds Head. Over the four years we've been holding meeting we've had diverse subjects as:

Historical timeline of Aldermaston; Archaeology of Silchester Town (Calleva); Motoring in the Kennet Valley; Magna Carta; Padworth House; History of Pubs & Brewing; The estates of Berkshire; Shaw House; West Berks Heritage Record; Royal Berkshire Archives; Painter – Christopher Hall; Strange's Brewery and the latest last month— The Mount Family & Wasing Estate.

The group takes part in the national Heritage Open Days each September, when we provide stewards so that St Mary's Church can be open all day to the public. We still put exhibitions together to celebrate national events e.g. Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

If you are interested to learn more look at our Facebook page ([facebook.com/aldermastonhistory](https://facebook.com/aldermastonhistory)) where you can signup to our mailing list, or do so on the group website (<https://group.aldermastonhistory.uk>) and you'll be kept informed of meetings and activities.

If you have any stories or photographs about Aldermaston and would like to share them on **Aldermaston History Online**, please contact [editors@aldermastonhistory.uk](mailto:editors@aldermastonhistory.uk), we would love to hear from you.

## [Aldermaston Parish Hall Wedding Fayre, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 11am-4pm](#)

We are very excited to be holding our local Wedding Fayre this year at Aldermaston Parish Hall. The hall itself is a wonderful venue to host your wedding reception, with two large rooms, a fully fitted kitchen, on-site parking, and glorious views.

Our charming Victorian hall is licenced for a total of 160 guests across all rooms, (80 for a sit-down meal) along with a stage for speeches and even a large curtained balcony that can be used for your band.

Please do come along to meet with some of our excellent local suppliers including photographers, a florist, cake bakers, caterers, a wedding singer, and a hair & makeup artist to help you plan your perfect day.

The event is free and for those that reserve their place and attend the fayre, there is a 10% discount offered on booking the hall for your special day. This can be done by confirming your place on our Facebook event (see QR code below), or emailing us at - [aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com](mailto:aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com)

Light refreshments offered throughout the day.



[www.aldermastonparishhall.co.uk](http://www.aldermastonparishhall.co.uk)



## Beenham News

### Who or What is BVE?

Beenham Village Events is such a mouthful that we abbreviate it to BVE.

As an offshoot of the Parish Council (which supports us with – occasional – grants), we are tasked with putting on a range of events through the year to entertain and brighten up life in Beenham. So, (in no particular order), we are behind: -

Beenham in Bloom

Scarecrows

Advent Windows

Santa's sleigh ride

Christmas Tree Lighting

Bear Trail in Greyfield Wood

Annual Village Calendar

Mulled wine, mince pies & carols after the Christmas tree is lit

Fun Days on the Rec and -prior to those - the Village Fete

Quite a lot as you can see, and we have plans for the future.

We are always looking for people – with ideas and/or commitment to help put on events and to understudy those roles on the Committee that are necessary for the smooth operation of the group. Committee meetings are never too serious – there is usually a lot of laughter accompanied by the odd glass of wine and nibbles. For anyone new to the village it is an ideal way to get involved.

For anyone interested, please contact Pat Owen on 07947 478840 or patowen0@hotmail.com

### BEENHAM WALKERS

**Thursday February 15th:** Walk to Woolhampton via the snowdrop copse and lunch at The Angel for those who wish. Approx: 5 miles

**Thursday February 29th:** Car assisted. Meet at the Victory Hall to car share to Ashford Hill School. Bring a drink and snack. Approx: just under 5 miles

**Thursday 14th March:** Car assisted to Bradfield Village Hall for walk to Stanford Dingley along the Pang river. Bring a drink and a snack. Approx. 5 miles

**Thursday 28th March:** Cars to Aldworth for walk along the Ridgeway. Possibility of a lunch at The Bell or drink and snack. Approx 6-7 miles

**Thursday April 11th:** Cars to Aldermaston wharf, park in cafe car park to walk to Padworth. Circular walk . Approx 5.5 miles

**Thursday April 25th:** Walk to Woolhampton then towards Brimpton. Approx 4-5 miles  
Both Lyn and myself hope we have whetted your appetite to start joining us for a walk. It is not compulsory you can dip in and out for whichever walk takes your fancy, there is no charge just convivial company and beautiful scenery. We have tried to make the walks interesting and of different lengths to try and suit different abilities. Give it a try you might be pleasantly surprised! You don't need to book, just be at the Victory Hall by 9.30am on the day, the rest is easy.

*Linda Clark and Pauline Stares.*

## **Beenham Allotments**

Happy New year from all 27 members of Beenham Allotments. We are currently full but still operate a waiting list; priority given to anyone living within the Parish of Beenham.

It is currently too wet to work on our plots, but Christmas wouldn't have been Christmas without home grown sprouts. Now what to do with those Brussels still growing (and indeed filling the supermarket shelves)?



### **CREAM OF BRUSSELS SPROUT SOUP RECIPE**

Serves 6

2lb Brussels sprouts, peeled	1/4 pint single cream
1/2lb potatoes thinly sliced.	1 1/2 pints pork or chicken stock
1 onion thinly sliced	1/2 pint milk
2oz unsalted butter	1/2 tsp grated nutmeg
Salt and black pepper.	6oz flaked almonds

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan and allow the onion and potatoes to cook slowly for 10 mins until they have absorbed the butter but haven't gone brown.
2. Add the sprouts and pour over the stock and milk. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 20mins. Add the salt and pepper if desired.
3. Allow the soup to cool lightly and liquidise / blend until at your preferred texture; (sieve for a very smooth soup)
4. Stir in the cream and nutmeg and reheat carefully.
5. place the almonds on a baking tray in a pre-heated oven 180°C. Gas mark 4. Turn the almonds several times until they take on a deep amber hue.
6. Serve in individual bowls and sprinkle generously with the almond flake.

**Challenge your friends to guess the main ingredient!**

## **Need a sandbag – ask the W.I.**

What, you may ask, does the W.I. have to do with sandbags? One of our members arrived at January's Committee meeting when Storm Henk was doing its worst. There was a huge flood on The Green by Awberry Farm and there were a couple of houses in danger of being flooded. Putting our heads together, within half an hour, we had located a sandbag supplier and immediate delivery was organised.

Never assume that the W.I. is only about singing, making cakes or crafting. We do all those things – well, perhaps not the singing – but we are so much more so if you are ever in need of a sandbag – or anything else – you know where to come. Better still, ladies who aren't members, come and join us. You will find a warm welcome. We believe in having a good time as well as being a fount of information.

On April 10<sup>th</sup>, we have a return visit by "The Pearl Lady" who is not only very entertaining but who also brings along a dazzling array of pearl jewellery to sell raising much needed funds for her chosen charity. Save the date and your pennies.



## **BEENHAM CHURCH PANCAKE PARTY**

pancake races, silly games and quizzes  
yummy pancakes to fill and eat

**TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**

**- 3.30 TO 5.00**

**VICTORY HALL, PICKLEPYTHE LANE**

All welcome - children to be accompanied

No charge but donations welcome

To book your place, call Janette 07917 818283



### **MEMORIES OF BEENHAM**

I was born at the end of July 1934 in Canterbury, Kent; I was just 5 as the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War started and as East Kent was 'in the firing line', the majority of children were evacuated to safer places. My older brother went with his school to Wantage and my mother and me, along with just a handful from Canterbury arrived in Beenham, Mrs Price and Peter, and near neighbours of ours George and Joyce Broadbridge.

I can remember waiting in the Village Hall for our turn. We went to Mr and Mrs Lovelace at Oakfield Farm, George went to the school (caretaker's?) house and Joyce to two elderly ladies on Beenham Hill. We followed one of the Morton boys down the road, tracks and across the field to the Farm.

What a shock to find no running water, the toilet in a shed, and bathing in a tub in front of the fire. We lived in an early Council house with a bathroom and toilet. But at five it was an adventure. Walking through the coppiced wood to school was lovely, but I could not be parted from my gas mask! And from that time, I disliked warm milk...our mugs and the milk heated up on top of the room heater. But school lunches in the Village Hall were a treat.

When our room was needed for family, we moved into the Village to a modern bungalow "Thistle-do-me" almost opposite a pub and where the road led on to Bucklebury. The daughter Ida kept goats and chickens. Wonderful.

The war situation seemed to have eased so we returned home in early 1942, only to be caught in the blitz of Canterbury on 1st June, and the daylight "hit and run" raid in the October which demolished part of the barracks right opposite where we lived. We returned to Beenham and were billeted at South Lodge, a gatehouse of Beenham House, not far from the Bath Road.

A reference in the Villages' book to Chapel Row brought back memories of going to the Chapel on a Sunday.

*Pamela Jarman (nee Dunn)*

pamela.jarman34@gmail.com

### **Notes from the Parish Council meeting January 8th**

-The Digital Infrastructure Initiative has been installed at the Six Bells. This is intended to improve the mobile phone coverage for Vodafone by up to a 500 metre radius from the pub. At present, the system is not fully optimised so that coverage has not yet been achieved, but is expected to once optimised.

-WBC have been notified of the Parish Council's concerns over the substantial earthworks that have been carried out at Chowdry Farm. WBC have acknowledged the notification, and have advised that full planning has been granted but they will follow up on enforcement as a priority even though they have a backlog of cases.

-Following the Thames Water works on Stoneyfield, the damage to verges has been reported to WBC for rectification by the contractor. It is not clear whether Thames Water have fully completed their work there as some of their plant is still in place.

-The traffic lights on The Green which have been installed due to the closure of Clay Lane for Thames Water works have caused severe traffic disruption. Due to the location of the lights adjacent to the Six Bells, the single carriageway section becomes blocked between the pub and Orchard Rise. The Parish Council will contact both WBC and Thames Water to clarify and hopefully rectify the problem.

-The WBC Public Rights of Way Officer visited Wickens Corner after flooding issues had been reported, cleared existing grips and dug new ones, which should improve matters.

-The Annual Parish Assembly date was confirmed as Monday 11th March 2024.

-The planning application for 22 flats at the Comfort Inn on Bath Road has been submitted. The Parish Council will liaise with Padworth PC to raise concerns on overdevelopment and traffic issues at the road junction.

-Approval for repairs to the path next to the tables/seats on the Rec and the Telephone Box Library was given.

-There will be a public meeting in the Victory Hall on Friday 2nd February at 7.00pm to explain and discuss this initiative to parishioners. The various village assets, such as The Six Bells, The Victory Hall, Beenham Club, the School PTFA and Pre School, BVE, the WI, the Church etc will have representatives of their organisations available to explain the severe financial situation they are facing, with a view to encouraging increased parishioner attendance to events they organise and the Community cohesion they help provide. The meeting will be asking parishioners their views and suggestions on how to preserve these assets both currently, and for the future. Please try to attend this meeting if possible as loss of these assets would represent a serious setback for the entire Community, and if lost would be unlikely to be recovered.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 4th March in the Community Room at 7.00pm.

### **Beenham Village Market Saturday 10th February 2024**

The Village Market will be opening its doors to the public at 2pm and closing at 3.30pm. Always a fun community event, come along and support the Hall, have a browse round the stalls and finish with a nice cup of tea and a cake.

We will of course be hosting our regular Bric a Brac stall in aid of the Hall's upkeep, run by Frances with the help of Diane, and our wonderful Repair Shop run by Chris Beadmoore and friends. Our refreshment shop, selling tea, coffee, fruit juice and wonderful cakes, so arrange to meet up with your friends to have a chat over a brew. We enjoyed meeting our new stall holder Kate Schaffer last month, who will be selling press on nails and lash clusters. It was lovely to welcome back Sam in January, after a break last year, with her pre-loved jewellery where you can always expect to find a bargain and some excellent gifts. As an example, also attending will be Paula Hubbard and her daughter Kate offering both beauty products and other diverse and interesting buys. Paula always has a good selection of interesting second hand books for both children and adults and generally some nice plants as well. We hope to have Stephen with his beautifully crafted wooden bowls and Maureen and Dave with their beautifully handmade cards. Greener Beenham will be accepting recycling items as usual.

If you would be interested in hiring a stall in the future, please contact Nola tel: 01189714822 or email: [nolesandfrank@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nolesandfrank@hotmail.co.uk) for further details.

The Hall is also available to hire for various events and classes, with disabled facilities, at very reasonable rates. All necessary equipment that may be required is available, including a projector, screen, speakers and WIFI. There is also a fully fitted kitchen with crockery and cutlery, tables, and chairs, which are also available for external hire.

Contact Nola as above or Donna Lewis on tel: 01183430548 email: [dllewis11@gmail.com](mailto:dllewis11@gmail.com) ,for further information.



As a new local networking group, the aim is to bring small businesses together to share ideas, gain motivation, inspiration and mutual support. It's flexible, affordable networking with a less formal approach. There are no formal speakers and no membership fees – just buy your own tea or coffee and share your business with others.

Meeting on the last Friday of each month, 10.00 to 12.00 at The Six Bells in Beenham – The Green, Back Lane, Beenham RG7 5NX.

We look forward to meeting you.

Sarah - 07736 298206

Janette - 07917 818283

### THE LEANING LIBRARY OF BEENHAM

Residents of Beenham have probably noticed that the Phone Box Library has been leaning backwards for some time. This may have been caused by the weight of the books shelved on one wall, or it may just be old age (I know the feeling).

The number of books on the shelves was reduced, but at the beginning of last year the Parish Council decided that something had to be done before it became unsafe. Various options were considered, including:

Push the box straight with a JCB

Winch the box straight with a cable fixed to a tractor

Lift the box and base up with crane, pour concrete underneath and replace the box

Finally, we found a company with experience of phone boxes and they advised these schemes could break the cast-iron phone box. The preferred technique is to remove the box from the base, break up the existing base, cast a new (level) base, and finally replace the box on the new base.

The books that were in the library have either found a foster home in Beenham, or a temporary home under the stage in the Victory Hall (thanks to Helen Apsey and Nola Rice-Wood). The refurbishment will be carried out in the next few months, and we will then have a Non-Leaning Library of Beenham again!



### BEENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Happy New Year from all of us at Beenham Primary School! We hope this year brings joy, success, and wonderful experiences to each and every one of you.

Just before Christmas our school showcased an outstanding production of "The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse". A heartfelt thank you goes to our hardworking staff for their dedication in preparing for this production, and of course, to the talented children for their exceptional performances.

Just after our own production, all the children had a school trip to see "The Wizard of Oz" at Newbury theatre. The children really enjoyed the performance, and of course the afternoon out of the classroom!

I would also like to give a special shout-out to our PTFA for organizing the festive Christmas Fayre. The event was a tremendous success and greatly appreciated by visitors from the village and the surrounding areas.

Now that we are in the Spring term, some of the children will be performing at the Junior Music Festival, organised by the Berkshire Maestros, at The Hexagon in Reading on Monday, March 18th. The performance, entitled "Rainforest Rumble", promises to be a captivating experience for our students and the audience.

Looking ahead, we are also thrilled to announce an Easter egg hunt for the children on March 27th, which I'm sure will be enjoyed by all!

On behalf of Beenham Primary School and the School Governors, I would like to extend warm wishes for a joyful February.

*James Tobin, Chair of Governors*

## DIARY OF EVENTS FOR BEENHAM – FEBRUARY 2024

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>where</b>	<b>contact</b>
<b>Mondays</b>	Scottish Country Dancing	Victory Hall	Katrina
<b>Tuesdays</b>	Art Group 10am – 12pm	Victory Hall	Sunny: 9712255
<b>Tuesdays</b>	Badminton club 8pm – 9.30pm	School Hall	Ernie: 07954 127771
<b>Fri 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Community Initiative meeting 7pm Please come along!	Victory Hall	Peter Hamblin: 712959
<b>Sat 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Church Working Party All help is most welcome	St Mary's	Janette: 07917 818283
<b>Sat 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Upraw: Rock and Pop covers 7.30pm music from 9pm	Beenham Club	
<b>Mon 5<sup>th</sup></b>	Parish Council Meeting 7pm	Community Rm	
<b>Sat 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Village Market and repair shop 2-3.30pm	Victory Hall	01183430548
<b>Sun 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Holly's Memorial blind Pairs KO in aid of Epilepsy Action	Beenham Club	Opens 1pm
<b>Tue 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Pancake Party – organised by Beenham church. FREE event with donations welcome	Victory Hall	Janette: 07917 818283
<b>Wed 14<sup>th</sup></b>	WI – 7.30pm £4 non-members	Community Rm	Sally: 07776 251228
<b>Thu 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Walk to Woolhampton via the snowdrop copse. Lunch at The Angel a possibility.	Meet at Victory Hall-	9.30am Pauline Stares 01189713481
<b>Thu 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Charity Quiz Night 8pm Teams up to 6 £3/person	Six Bells	9713368 to book
<b>Fri 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Coffee Morning 10.30am	Six Bells	Janette: 07917 818283
<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Greyfield Woods Volunteer Morning 8.30 – 12pm Meet at wood entrance		John: 9712924
<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Calleva Stick Dressers 9am – 2pm	Victory Hall	David: 07864 180648
<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Live Music and Acoustic Night 7.30pm	Club	9713991
<b>Thu 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	"Operation Mincemeat" starring Colin Firth. £5 a ticket pay on the door. 7.00pm film starts at 7.30pm	Victory Hall	Claire: 9713574
<b>Sun 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Darts Knock Out opens 12pm starts 2pm	Beenham Club	
<b>Tue 27<sup>th</sup></b>	Beenham Tearoom 2pm – 3.30pm	Victory Hall	Dru: 07815 055040 Pat: 07947 478840
<b>Thu 29<sup>th</sup></b>	Beenham Walkers. Car share to Ashford Hill School. Bring a drink and snack. Approx: just under 5 miles Meet at Victory Hall 9.30am		Pauline Stares 01189713481

### **Useful contact numbers:**

Victory Hall Bookings: 01189714822 [nolesandfrank@hotmail.com](mailto:nolesandfrank@hotmail.com)

Community Hall Bookings: Paula Reade: 07793116937 [info@beenhampreschool.org](mailto:info@beenhampreschool.org)

Church Warden: Janette Hammond: 07917818283

If you would like to add anything to the village diary

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

And so another year of activity has begun in Greyfield wood. The winter activities of felling Ash die-back diseased trees, clearing storm damage and coppicing have been going on since early December.



Volunteers are the essential part of the Greyfield Wood Community Interest Company. Be it: scything the fern and bramble in more recently planted areas, clearing paths and streams, clearing storm damage, extracting cordwood (logs) to be sold, clearing the ground where trees have been felled or planting saplings, there is always plenty to do. The woodland never stops growing and evolving. Infact, left to nature, most of the UK would revert to woodland.

Our volunteers meet on the third Saturday morning of each month, February -November, and an active and rewarding social time is enjoyed by all.



If **YOU** would like to join our group of volunteers, we would love to see you and you would be made most welcome! Our volunteers help out when they can. We are not expecting a monthly commitment....

As health and safety is an essential part to working in Greyfield Wood, it is essential for all volunteers to attend an "Introduction to woodland safety" session, prior to getting to work. **To this end we have scheduled two such sessions on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, both starting at**

**7.30pm at The Six Bells pub.**

If you would like to attend one of the above evenings, or have any questions about the work the volunteers do, please contact me, John Hammond on 07818 400440.

We look forward to welcoming you to our band of volunteers.



## Brimpton News

### **Brimpton Parish Council**

Brimpton Parish Council met on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January. The agenda included:

At the end of December an application was received for a change of use in one of the plots in the field, sometimes called the Blacknest Triangle, to create a site for a static caravan and one for a travelling caravan. With office closures over the New Year period, and a fault on the WBC planning website, we were unable to find any further information and so applied for an extension for comments beyond the January date given. But in case the period was not extended we decided to add the application to our agenda as an urgent item.

A couple of hours before our meeting started, our Clerk received the background documents from WBC via email and an extension for our comments was granted. As a result we decided to leave the application on our agenda and invite the residents of Brimpton Common to share their views with us before we considered our position. We were not disappointed by the turn out. Over 40 people were in the Village Hall and by the end of the evening the concerns of local residents were very clear.

The Parish Council will now review the background documents and agree a response at our meeting on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February. District Councillor Dominic Boeck urged residents to raise individual objections directly with West Berkshire Council. If more than ten objections are received the application will need to be considered in public by the Planning Committee, rather than by an individual case officer.

We also reviewed three other planning applications:

We will inform West Berkshire Council we have no objections to the proposed replacement porch at Audley House, Brimpton Common.

We agreed we had no grounds on which to object to the proposal for a replacement barn at Oaktree Farm, Brimpton Common.

We also agreed we had no grounds to object to a residential annex at Oaktree Farm, Brimpton Common.

As no response has been received from the company operating the site, we agreed to inform the Wasing Estate that the solar farm operating on their land is not meeting the planning conditions regarding the provision of screening around the site.

West Berkshire Council has scheduled for this month work to improve the drainage between Willow Wands and the Baptist Church in Brimpton Road.

A request from the Brimpton Common Fuel Allotment Charity for £175.84 to cover public liability insurance was approved.

The Parish Council will meet again on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

*John Hicks*Chairman, Brimpton Parish Council

## **BRIMPTON WI**

Our Meetings are usually held on the Third Tuesday of the month, so this report mainly deals with the build up to Christmas. The December Meeting is always our Christmas Party when Members and their guests enjoy a Buffet Supper provided by the Committee and Members. There was something to suit everyone's dietary preferences laid out on the tables. Home cooked meats and a range of home prepared mixed salads were particularly tempting, and as for those "wicked" deserts..... yummy. Forty one of us enjoyed a very happy occasion, which made an excellent start to the Yuletide season.

Over the past few years some members have enjoyed going to see the regular Ballet performances at Arlington Arts, and last year was no exception. Fifteen members and their families enjoyed the Matinee performance of "The Wizard of Oz". Now it January and in a little over a week's time off we are due to go to the Silchester Players Annual Panto (Oh no you're not / Oh yes we are)!!! Good fun will be had by all, and it will be a lighthearted end to the annual extra WI Social activities, which form such an important part of the ethos of our WI.

Our February Meeting will be dedicated to our Annual Meeting when, having looked back over the last 12 months of WI activities, we shall be discussing and planning those for 2024-5. Most importantly will be the opportunity to hear the opinions of our Members' as to how we should celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025.

All our Meetings start at 7.30pm in Brimpton Village Hall. Tea and Coffee will be served along with home-made cake. If you want to find out more about our activities please contact our President Shelley Bassil (0118 9710563) or our Secretary Annette Dolphin (0118 9710090) or use our dedicated e-mail link [brimptonwi@berkshirewi.co.uk](mailto:brimptonwi@berkshirewi.co.uk)

*Gwynedd Roberts* WI correspondent



### **COFFEE MORNING (SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH) IN BRIMPTON CHURCH**

**DROP IN ANY TIME BETWEEN  
10:00 am-11:30 am**

**WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY  
WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH  
WEDNESDAY, 10 APRIL**

**Everyone (including dogs) welcome**



# **Brimpton Church of England Primary School**

*Amazing things happen here.....*



It is hard to believe that Christmas has come and gone already and we are nearing the end of January 2024! We have a busy spring term ahead of us and this year it is really short!

**Thank You's** - I would like to thank all of you who came along to our Church Nativity at the end of last term; it is always nice to see familiar faces from the local community and to see our beautiful church full with family and friends. I hope you all stayed for a cuppa and a mince pie!

We had an amazing fundraising month during December with lots of events and workshops. Our PTA made just over £750 which is such an amazing amount of money for our small school, and enables us to do little extras for the children. A massive thank you to them.

We are busy rehearsing for the annual Junior Music Festival, which is such a highlight in our school calendar. This year it will be held at The Hexagon in Reading, so new songs and a new venue.

This term we have Reading Football Club coming into school every week to do football with our key stage 2 children, which is always a great hit.

We hope you enjoy seeing what our amazing school takes part in over the school year. As the term progresses we shall have lots of wonderful stories to tell the Brimpton Community so watch this space!

If you require any other information regarding Brimpton School

Please contact Mrs Sarah Vockins on 0118-9712311

[office@brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:office@brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk) [www.brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk](http://www.brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk)

## Midgham News

### **William Nicholson MBE**

My sister Jennifer and I have strong memories of a very young William building a road network round the garden at The Garth (on School Hill in Midgham). A few years on, a canal holiday and a family boat meant that he transferred his enthusiasm to canals, and at 17 started doing voluntary restoration work on the Kennet and Avon Canal. Since then he has been deeply involved in voluntary canal restoration and has taken on roles at all levels to achieve this.

When he left university in 1980 and started work as a town planner Bill got involved with the Newbury Branch of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust (KACT), and then formed the Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG) to recruit people to become actively involved in canal restoration. Many members were recruited by word of mouth, or through seeing posters in libraries, but it was a very dangerous thing to be related to, or a colleague of Bill's if you weren't planning to spend your spare time restoring canals! Bill has been the driving force of this group, which has participated in canal restoration projects all over the country through a regular programme of weekend working parties and canal camps. 43 years on the group is still going strong.

In addition to his roles as organiser and leader of working parties and camps Bill has been responsible for specific projects on a number of canals. In the past he has been a trustee of the KACT and the Chair of the Newbury Branch, and since his retirement has been appointed a trustee of the Wey and Arun Canal Trust.

It is for this work that Bill has been awarded the MBE. His role in all these projects has made a huge contribution to the restoration of canals, recognising their legacy and creating amenities which provide recreation, nature conservation, water management and wonderful spaces for everybody to enjoy. If you want to see this for yourself, pop down to your local section of the Kennet and Avon Canal!

*Alison Bourne*



Congratulations to Bill for achieving this award

## Midgham Café Church in the church

First Thursday of the month

February 1st

March 7th



Join us for tea and cake and fellowship 2.00pm

*Please note the February and March café church will be at*

**14 Hatch Close Chapel Row RG7 6NZ**

**Contact Sarah Henderson for more information**

**henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com**

## Ride and Stride

Once again congratulations are in order for all those participating in last year's Ride and Stride we have won the cup again! For collecting the most money and are encouraging the involvement of the whole village. Thank you everyone who took part and who sponsored us and Julia for her magnificent organisation. Hopefully we will see you all in September (14th keep the date free)



## Village hall

Midgham Village Hall

Coffee mornings are held in the hall on alternate  
Wednesdays from 10 to 12.

**The dates for February are: the 14th and 28th.**



## Woolhampton News

### Village Market

Happy New Year to stallholders, and everyone attending our monthly Village Market. The first one Of 2024 will be on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February from 10am to 12noon in the Village Hall. Here's hoping the weather will be kind for this community event but you are always assured of a warm welcome.

If you haven't been before, do come along to see what is on offer. There is a wide variety of stalls selling cakes, books, knitted articles, jewellery, needlework, local history books, honey bird food



and much more. Free entry and refreshments including bacon rolls are available.

Reminder: if you have used postage stamps (e.g. from Christmas cards, etc.), used printer ink cartridges, or milk bottle tops, please bring them along to the Market and we will arrange for them to be distributed to our local school and other charities.



### Parish Councillor vacancies

The Parish Council which is non-political, currently has 5 serving councillors and two vacancies. Our meetings are held once a month, at present on the evening of third Tuesday of the month at 7.30p.m. in the Woolhampton Village Hall.

Are you interested in the Village and would like to help maintain and improve Woolhampton as a place you want to live? Perhaps you feel strongly about a particular aspect, e.g. drainage, planning, parking, etc.?

If you feel you have the commitment and are interested in joining the Council, please come along to a Parish Council meeting.

The Council is again in a position to make substantial improvements to village infrastructure as a result of recent CIL (£106) contributions from recent housing developments.

## **Woolhampton School**

The end of last term was, of course, full of Christmas cheer for the children. Highlights included the Christmas Dinner Day – attended by children, staff and governors - where the school hall was transformed to match the festive spirit, sparkle and excitement of the school community! The children took great joy in dressing up in their wonderful Christmas outfits and not only was there a visit from Father Christmas but a real-life ‘reindeer’ (aka horse!) came to surprise the children too – much to their delight! The school’s new cook, Donna, did an amazing job of cooking a wonderfully tasty Christmas lunch for over 100 hungry tummies and the celebrations continued in to the early evening with the children attending a festive disco, arranged by the Friends of Woolhampton (FOWS). What a day!

The children also enjoyed rounding off the year with the much-loved Crib Service and Christingle Service at St Peter’s Church and the children of Beech class were even invited to decorate the church’s Christmas Tree – they did such a wonderful job!

With festivities behind them, the children then returned to school in the second week of January, eager to embrace a fun-packed 2024!

Many of the children in years 4, 5 and 6 have begun rehearsing for the annual Berkshire Maestros Junior Music Festival which, this year, is to be held at the Hexagon in Reading in March, and has the theme of ‘Rainforest Rumble’. The children will delight in singing much loved songs from The Lion King and The Jungle Book – it’s sure to be an amazing evening and we are always so proud of the children for taking part.

Continuing on the musical theme, the children in Oak Class (year 6) have been enjoying learning to play the Ukulele and the children in Chestnut Class (years 4/5) have been learning the cornet. Having shown such responsibility and enthusiasm, the children were even allowed to take the instruments home with them to practice – much to the delight, no doubt, of their lucky parents and carers!!

Oak class are looking forward to attending a Poetry Event at Elstree School at the end of January and, as always, are really grateful to have been invited to attend.

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, there is so much to look forward to for the children. There are residential trips planned in the summer for the older children – always a great source of anticipation and excitement! – and the whole school will enjoy learning new topics, nurturing their friendships, taking part in sporting events and, of course, participating in the much-loved Forest School days, which always prove to be a great mixture of learning and fun in the beautiful woodlands surrounding our school.

If we’re not too late to say it, everyone from Woolhampton Primary School would like to wish the wider community a very happy, healthy and fun-packed new year!

## **Woolhampton, Midgham and Mauritius**

In 1801 a son, James, was born to Thomas and Isabella Blyth of Stepney and in 1810 during the Napoleonic Wars British soldiers captured the French island colony of Mauritius. In 1830 James Blyth sailed to the island on behalf of the family's London based business and during the next nine years he established the family's prosperity as owners of sugar plantations, shippers and traders in a wide variety of goods.

This wealth enabled James in 1856 to purchase the 2,000 acres Woolhampton estate (which included Brimpton) for £73,500 from the Falmouth family and establish himself as a country squire residing at Woolhampton House (from 1939 Elstree School) bequeathing restored churches at Woolhampton and Brimpton and refurbished schools in both villages. The distinctive coloured Blyth family vault stands in St. Peter's churchyard and holds the body of only son Henry who died in Australia in 1862 and subsequently was brought the long voyage home in a lead coffin filled with rum. James's commercial partner and brother-in-law Benjamin Buck Green purchased the Midgham estate in 1857 and financed the building of the village school (1867) and St. Matthews Church (1869).

In the mid-nineteenth century Mauritius became an area of missionary activity for the monks of Douai (France), who were expelled from France in 1903 finding sanctuary in Woolhampton. In 1847 Dom Collier was the first of a line of monks to be bishops of the island. He was consecrated Bishop of Port Louis when it was the centre of Blyth's commercial activity.

In March 1960 the folk of Midgham donated £138 in response to a tape-recorded appeal for funds by the Bishop of Mauritius to assist the island in the wake of the devastation caused by a recent cyclone. Michael Blyth-Currie a grandson of the former Woolhampton squire, then residing at 'Angel's Copse', Midgham Green, had spent some years on the island tending the family's business interests.

**\*\*John Trigg's local history books can be purchased at the Woolhampton monthly market or contact him on 01189 712341.**

*John Trigg*



### **Woolhampton Parish Council**

On behalf of the parishioners of Woolhampton Village, a very big THANKYOU to Tony Renouf who has decided to retire from the Council. Tony has been a member of the council since 1998 and for 20 of the years since then he has served as Chairman. Over this time, and after securing S106 funding from the Abbey Gardens development, with the support of fellow councillors, the village has accrued a number of benefits, specifically:

- The new village hall, opened by Richard Benyon MP in 2006, plus the associated children's play area, recreation ground; and the new allotments (often termed 'Green Gym') have provided facilities for many individuals, couples and families.

- The installation of an automatic pedestrian crossing has enabled villagers to cross the road without the trepidation experienced in previous years of suffering, including fatalities, as a consequence of the speed and volume of traffic on the Bath Road.

- The improvement of Bath Road parking and resulting pedestrian safety.

- The erection of two bus shelters has allowed those wishing to avail themselves of public transport to wait, sometimes in frustration, in reasonable comfort.

- The restoration of the War Memorial in St Peter's churchyard recognised those years in our history when many villagers served, and a number gave their lives in the service of our country.

Such projects require time-consuming attention to detail and behind-the-scenes negotiations with outside organisations such as West Berks Council, Thames Water, Highways Dept. *et al.* - our grateful thanks to you, Tony. Your in-depth knowledge of local issues and who to contact in extreme circumstances will be very hard to replace and will be sorely missed

### **Play Area near Village Hall**

Unfortunately, due to the recent adverse weather conditions, the Parish Council have been unable to progress with reinstating the area for public use.



## Woolhampton Annual Show 2024

As last year demonstrated, the Annual Show was back in all its glory, despite the difficult and exceptional growing conditions. The Show is held in the Village Hall and there are classes for cookery, flower and vegetable growers, photography, handicraft classes, etc. (Reminder: if you intend



entering the Preserves class, now is the time to make marmalade as Seville oranges are now available.) With the demographic of the village changing and younger families moving in to the area, it is an ideal opportunity to get involved and, just as importantly, get children involved in village life. This year's Show is scheduled for Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August (please make a note in your diaries now) so there is plenty of time to consider what flowers, fruit and vegetables you will grow to make sure that your entries are winning ones!

### Photography Class

Although not all categories have been decided, given the wintry conditions about to occur, one that may give you a chance to get out with your cameras is : Your favourite photo of a tree – any species – any season

Other categories will be given in the next issue of this magazine.



Two competitions that will definitely feature again are:

#### a) Potato-growing-in-a-container

For new residents in the village, or indeed anyone who fancies having a go, this involves buying 3 seed potatoes from a member of Show Committee, planting them in a large (ish) container, tub, pot, etc., then bringing that container, intact, to the Village Hall on date of the Show in August Please note that only potatoes purchased this way are eligible, and also please remember that you have to get the container to Village Hall (planting them in a skip won't work!).

There, your container is tipped out, the potatoes weighed, and the highest yield wins and everyone keeps their potatoes.

Potatoes will be ready in March so if you are interested, please contact Terry (email [terry.vallis@outlook.com](mailto:terry.vallis@outlook.com)) soon. In light of last year's high number of entries, early response is required in order that you will not be disappointed.

## b) Tallest sunflower



This year you can again select your own species to grow.

There will be monthly bulletins on Woolhampton facebook pages and in the Parish magazine. If you have any queries, please contact Cathy on 01189713637. The tallest sunflower, anticipated to be between 9 and 15 feet (approx. 3-5 metres), will be adjudged the winner. Plants will be judged in situ by invitation to the Show Committee in early-August (plants are not intended to be brought to Village Hall!).

### **Litter Picking 2024**

During last year, the Woolhampton Litter Pick Group had several successful ventures to free our roads of the blight of litter. And looking at the state of some of the verges in our area, it looks as though another blitz is necessary, probably in advance of the annual National Spring Clean Campaign, the timing of which will be announced soon. (Wouldn't it be great if we didn't have to keep doing this!? Please encourage family, friends, neighbours and acquaintances to always dispose of rubbish in proper receptacles.)

I have noticed other members of the public tackling this issue individually. Many thanks to all of you. If you wish to become a Group member, I would be pleased to hear from you. Please email me at [terry.vallis@outlook.com](mailto:terry.vallis@outlook.com).

### **NATURE NOTES**

Well, I needn't have worried about the holly, need I? I have never in my (long) life seen so many berries! The birds can't keep up with them. Now that the hazels have lost most of their leaves we can once again see that they are preparing for next year. The catkins are already very evident, already lengthening. The little red female flowers are not nearly as noticeable, but will be there ready. What a pity the squirrels leave us so few nuts.

Even though, as I write the weather is mild, the blue tits and great tits are always glad of the peanuts. However, if you watch you will see that they also spend time on the leafless soft fruit bushes, keeping them free of any insect pests that might have designs on them. The starlings soon demolish the fat balls, until the nuthatch torpedoes in and scatters them and the tits. He reigns until the greater spotted woodpecker arrives. Such is the hierarchy.

*Stella Nesbit*



## **Woolhampton & Midgham WI**

A Happy New Year to you all.

What a busy time we have had since I last wrote in November.

I should have kept quiet about not having any floods! Since the end of December the county has been in a sorry state. Here in Woolhampton we have had our share! Only one dog walk passable and swans have taken up residence on the Rowbarge (temporary, I hope!) lake.

As I write this the weather is glorious! Cold – just about freezing, but not a cloud in a clear blue sky. It really tempts one to go outside and start tidying up the garden! The river Kennet is still running high and fast though.

We really enjoyed our Christmas meal out at the Yew Tree Garden Centre. And some of us had a trip to the pantomime in Newbury. That was very amusing and has us laughing from beginning to end. Our Christmas Party on the 12<sup>th</sup> was great fun. Lots of lovely food brought by all the members, Games and Quizzes, and lots of laughter filled the evening.

The Christmas Market was very busy and Father Christmas was there too! Our bakers excelled themselves and the stall looked very tempting and festive. All the stallholders seemed to have made a big effort to make their stalls fit for the season.

The Christmas lunch held on the first Wednesday in December for the elderly residents was lovely. The food was the best yet – a full Christmas lunch with all the trimmings – crackers, wine, mince pies and a stunning selection of turkey and pork. I'm sure everyone enjoyed it- we certainly did! It concluded with carols sung by the children's choir from Woolhampton Primary School. They were amazing!

Our New Year has started well. We had an excellent speaker for our meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Mike Brook, together with his assistant Olivia, entertained us with his reflections and anecdotes from The Amateur Stage. He soon had us laughing with the memories he shared and the pieces he performed with his able side-kick! They were very amusing. The competition for the evening was Pictures and Programmes from the Stage. We were surprised and amazed by the pictures of our own members in performances they had been in. They were very professional looking! One member brought pictures of a school production she had been in from 1945 together with an Old Time Music Hall production by the Group members of our local WI's in West Berkshire in the 1970's. Another member brought beautiful pictures of a production of The Mikado which she had been in on the London Stage. Altogether a very interesting array of items on display.

We are now looking forward to our annual January Dinner. This year we are going to The Rowbarge at the end of the month. Our next meeting on February 13<sup>th</sup> will hopefully get all the members moving! We are having an evening of Line Dancing led by Julie. Sounds fun!

If you would like to know more about our friendly group, please just come along on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. I'm sure you won't be disappointed. For more information contact Beryl on 01635 861374

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024**

**FRIDAY 1 MARCH**

**A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!**

**I beg you, bear with  
one another in love**

**2:00PM**

**ST MARY'S CHURCH**

**BEENHAM**

**RG7 5NN**

You are warmly invited to stay for  
Light refreshments after the service

The 2024 World Day of Prayer service has been prepared by an ecumenical group of Christian women from Palestine, the land where Jesus was born, ministered and died, where the Christian faith began.

This service is part of a great wave of prayer held in native languages encircling the globe. Beginning as the sun rises over Samoa, continuing its way around the Earth and ending back in the Pacific as the sun sets over American Samoa. 146 countries and islands around the world join together to pray with and for the people of Palestine.

The service shares stories of the experiences of three Palestinian Christian women from three different generations.

**INFORMED PRAYER, PRAYERFUL ACTION**

24-7 • 365 DAYS A YEAR • PRAYER MOVEMENT • ECUMENICAL INTERNATIONAL • WOMEN-LED

**[wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk)**

Registered Charity Number 251247

## WEST BERKS FOODBANK



### ***WHEN PEOPLE ARE GOING WITHOUT.... IT IS TIME TO GUARANTEE THEIR ESSENTIALS***

West Berks Foodbank relies on your goodwill and support.

Over 90% of the food distributed by the foodbanks in the Trussel Trust network is donated by the public – that's food donations are absolutely vital to their ability to give everyone who is referred a balanced and nutritious three day supply of food.

The shopping list below shows the food items that are needed right now.

#### **URGENTLY NEEDED ITEMS**

Chilli con carne mix (packet), washing up liquid, toilet rolls, non-bio washing powder

#### **LOW ON STOCK**

Fruit juice (long life), stock cubes (beef, chicken, vegetable), instant coffee, tinned meat – curry, chilli, spag bol, tinned fruit.

#### **WELL STOCKED**

Please, no more pasta, anti-bacterial spray.

Drop off locations:

**Aldermaston and Wasing:** The Rectory, Wasing Lane **and** 19 Swan Drive, The Wharf.

**Beenham:** Under community noticeboard.

**Brimpton:** Inside the porch at St Peter's Church **and** Georgina Hairdressers.

**Midgham:** St Matthew's Church. Open daily between 09:00-15:00.

**Woolhampton:** Inside the porch at St Peter's Church.

**If you are in need, the foodbank is running 7 day food parcels  
delivered to you. Call 01635 760560**

## **MOBILE LIBRARY**

*Aldermaston*

**Wednesday**

Foresters

*Beenham:*

**Wednesday**

Stoneyfields

**February 7th**

9.30-9.50

**February 7th**

3.15-4.00

*Midgham*

**Thursday**

Goddard's Drive

*Woolhampton*

**Thursday**

Watermill Ct

**February 8th**

10.10--10.20

**February 8th**

10.25-11.10



## WORSHIP ON WEEKDAYS FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Wednesday 14th February 2024  
10 a.m. to midday  
St. Peter's Woolhampton, RG7 5TB

Join us as we come together for **WOW!**

This relaxed, informal and friendly session starts with **tea, toast and toys** and a chance for parents, grandparents and carers to get together for a chat.

A short, informal worship starts at 11 am  
and we finish it all off with cake!

What better way to spend a  
Wednesday morning?  
**FUN, FRIENDLY, FREE**

## **Sport at Douai Park**

With Covid-19 almost a distant memory, Douai Park has once again reverberated to the sound of leather on willow and the noisy excitement of children playing football. The enjoyment and camaraderie gained from playing team sports, in beautiful surroundings on ever-improving pitches, has been much in evidence.

Three cricket clubs use the square; league cricket is played on Saturdays during the summer by Theale & Tilehurst. The standard is high and improving year on year. The club raised a considerable amount of money and were able to completely relay the square. Careful tending by a group of people, mainly volunteers, has improved the playing surface and Douai Park is quickly becoming the place to bat! Woolhampton, who play friendlies on Sundays and Bucklebury Badgers who play in the Mid-week League have also benefitted from the extensive work that has been done on the square. The addition, again by Theale & Tilehurst of covers, sight-screens and an electronic scoreboard has really set Douai Park up as a terrific cricket venue – one of the best in West Berkshire.

The beautiful surroundings, the welcoming pavilion and the 'square' have made Douai Park the 'go to' venue for the Lord's Taverners charity cricket matches. Their celebrity XI has done battle with a Select Bucklebury XI for the past three years and have raised funds for chosen charities. Chris Tarrant has hosted the matches and regaled the crowd from the 'commentary box'.

The winter months see Thatcham Tornadoes playing on the fields. There are two 7-a-side pitches, one 9-a-side pitch and two 11-a-side pitches all of which are used by boys and girls of various age groups who enjoy their football played competitively and in the right spirit. Tornadoes are one of the biggest, in terms of participants, grass-roots clubs in the country and it is great to see them at Douai Park. The growth in girls' football is reflected by the ever increasing number of teams that enter the Tornadoes Girls Football Tournament which is held annually at Douai Park. 86 teams entered last June – an amazing day of football! Berkshire County FA Under 14 Girls team has also trained and played County matches at Douai Park making good use of the pitches and the Pavilion.

A great deal of time and effort is spent keeping the grounds fit for purpose and we owe a huge debt of thanks to all the volunteers that not only maintain the grounds but also coach the teams, arrange the teas and coffees and generally keep things going.

All the details of the clubs and organisations that use Douai Park can be found on our website [www.douaipark.org.uk](http://www.douaipark.org.uk) Do take a look



## Defibrillators

When someone has a cardiac arrest, it is vital that they receive CPR and defibrillation as quickly as possible. The quicker they receive this care, the greater their chances of survival. You can learn how to give CPR and more about using a defibrillator from the British Heart Foundation, St John's Ambulance, and the Resuscitation Council UK websites.

Each set of equipment has a nominated person (known as a guardian) who checks it regularly to ensure that it is ready to be used. Additionally, each defibrillator is registered with 'The Circuit' which means that it becomes visible to the Ambulance Service and it's more likely to be used in an emergency and save lives. After use, the guardian is notified so that the pads can be replaced.

If you come across someone who is unconscious, unresponsive, not breathing or not breathing normally, they're in cardiac arrest. The most important thing is to call 999 and start CPR to keep the blood flowing to the brain and around the body. After a cardiac arrest, every minute without CPR and defibrillation reduces someone's chance of survival by 10 per cent.

If you're on your own, don't stop performing CPR to go and get a defibrillator. If it's possible, send someone else to find one. When you call 999, the operator can tell you if there's a public access defibrillator nearby. You should wait to be given the access code to the defibrillator by the 999 operator before setting off.

There are a number of defibrillators across our area, and it is good practice to know where your nearest one is. Please do find out as there are more situated locally than you may realise, and this knowledge could help to save a life.

This website is very useful <https://www.defibfinder.uk/>

## PANGBOURNE CHORAL SOCIETY MARKS CV STANFORD CENTENARY

PCS's Spring Concert will be on Saturday 9th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

The concert will be dedicated to the works and seminal influence of Charles Villiers Stanford, marking the centenary of his death. It will also be PCS Music Director Sara Benbow's debut with the Society.

Composers include Brahms (German Requiem, 2nd movement), Arthur Sullivan, Bainton, Howells, Charles Wood, Samuel Coleridge Taylor (Hiawatha's Wedding Feast), Dyson, MacMillan, Finzi, and of course several of CVS's most celebrated works including the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C).

The Choir will be joined by the celebrated Tenor soloist, James Gilchrist and the Southern Sinfonia Orchestra.

This performance will take place in the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at 7.30 pm on Saturday 9 March 2024 at 7.30pm. Tickets available at £15.00 (£8 for under-18s) from Garlands Organic Shop in Pangbourne or PCS members, or on the door or via [www.pangbournechoral.org.uk](http://www.pangbournechoral.org.uk)

*Tony Maynard – Publicity Officer – Pangbourne Choral Society: 0118 984 5079*

## Church Services across the Villages

**Douai Abbey** Contact number 0118 971 5300

### ***Weekdays***

6.20 am	Matins & Lauds
7.45 am	Mass
12.50 pm	Midday Office
6.00 pm	Vespers
8.00 pm	Compline

### ***Sundays***

As to the left, plus  
10:30 am Mass  
But no Compline

**Brimpton Baptist Church** – Contact number 0118 971 2059

Sunday: 11.00 am and 6.00 pm

Wednesday: 7.00 pm

## **Church of England February Services**

### **Sunday 4th February**

St Mary's Aldermaston	Holy Communion	10.45am
St Mary's Beenham	Holy Communion	9.15am
St Peter's Brimpton	Holy Communion	10.45am
St Matthew's Midgham	Holy Communion BCP	9.15am

### **Sunday 11th February**

St Mary's Aldermaston	Holy Communion	10.45am
St Mary's Beenham	Holy Communion	9.15am
St Peter's Brimpton	Holy Communion	9.15am
St Peter's Woolhampton	Holy Communion	10.45am

### **Ash Wednesday 14th February**

St Mary's Beenham	Holy Communion	7.00pm
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### **Sunday 18th February**

St Mary's Aldermaston	Morning Prayer	10.45am
St Mary's Beenham	Holy Communion	9.15am
St Peter's Brimpton	Morning Prayer	10.45am
St Matthew's Midgham	Holy Communion	9.15am
St Peter's Woolhampton	Informal Holy Communion	10.45am

### **Sunday 25th February**

St Matthew's Midgham	Evensong	4pm
St Peter's Woolhampton	Benefice Service	10.00am

**Please also check benefice website [awb.org.uk](http://awb.org.uk)**

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