

# Villages' News





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## Committee Comments

### Welcome to our first issue of 2026!

I am writing this feeling very grateful that Storm Goretti left us unscathed and praying that other parts of the country manage to return to normal as soon as possible.

I took a wander around the garden this morning in the glorious winter sunshine and was delighted to see some snowdrops out and many other bulb shoots breaking through the surface of the earth. A couple of days ago, in Woolhampton, I saw some early daffodils in full bloom and then a bit later, observed a tiny goldcrest darting amongst the blackthorn on a footpath near Beenham church. We all anticipate that there could still be some harsh weather to come but sightings like these lift the spirit and remind us that the days are growing longer and we can look forward to spring.

We hope you enjoy reading the articles in this February edition. We are truly grateful for these contributions and always welcome more variety for example; quizzes, history articles relevant to our area, interesting observations, poetry, recipes etc. I am sure you can think of other categories.

The Villages' News is **our** magazine for **our** villages, so why not make a belated New Year's resolution to submit something for March's edition?

With best wishes .The magazine team

## ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

**Please note the deadline for receipt of articles is noon on the 17th of each month—next date will be February 17th for the March magazine**

Please send articles for the magazine to:

For the villages of Aldermaston and Wasing: [cathy.jones@ukmessage.com](mailto:cathy.jones@ukmessage.com)

For the village of Brimpton: [brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk](mailto:brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk)

For the village of Beenham: [patowen0@hotmail.com](mailto:patowen0@hotmail.com)

For the villages of Midgham and Woolhampton:

[henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com](mailto:henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com)

Please send articles relevant to the all the villages to:

[brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk](mailto:brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk) and [henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com](mailto:henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com)

**Articles are included and edited/amended at the editors' discretion.**

Advertising enquiries can be sent to [mrsbscott@btinternet.com](mailto:mrsbscott@btinternet.com)

We hope you enjoy reading your magazine.

### ST PETER'S CHURCH SPIRE OPEN MEETING 29<sup>th</sup> January

Thank you to everyone  
who came to the meeting



At the time of going to press, the Open Meeting to discuss the future of the church spire has not yet taken place, but we hope that when you read this that we will have had a productive meeting to explore the way forward.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the churchwardens:  
**Brenda Scott: mrsbscott@btinternet.com; 07584 421985;**  
**or Patricia Brims: pcbrims@hotmail.com; 07849 826136.**

Brimpton PCC

Come along and enjoy 6 games of  
**BINGO**

At Brimpton VH on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February  
1900-2300 eyes down 1930



Will be 6 games of 6 cards at a cost of £5.00 including table snacks

With prizes of drink from the bar for a line and £20.00 for house

An optional game of Play Your Cards Right during interval between games 3 & 4  
Tickets @ £1.00ea with a prize of £20 if you win if not the next ticket will be drawn

There will be a cash or card bar

Please book tickets in advance @

<https://brimpton-village-hall.sumupstore.com/>

Contact John Dolphin on 07737160925 if you don't use online payments

Numbers will be limited so get your tickets now to avoid disappointment



## COFFEE MORNINGS

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month**

**IN BRIMPTON CHURCH**

**10 am - 11.30 am**

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February**

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March**

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April**

***Everyone welcome  
(including dogs)***



## 7Brimpton WI

Our November meeting coincided with our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Our speaker was Sophie Fryer who gave an interesting account of the different styles of hats she had made over many years. We were amazed at the hours of work involved and the cost of materials, especially silk.

This was followed by the Chair of Berkshire WI Federation Chair presenting us with a certificate to mark our 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

Back in early 2023 Brimpton WI won a competition to design a new banner for Berkshire WI Federation. We heard in December 2023 that our design had won the competition. Delight quickly turned to mild panic, however, when we were told that we now had to make the banner ourselves!

After a lot of blood, sweat and tears the banner was completed and we were very proud to finally hand over the finished banner at such an auspicious occasion as our 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

In true WI tradition the evening was finished off with cake, bubbles and lots of chatting.

Our February meeting is on 17<sup>th</sup> February and is our Annual Meeting when we will review the past WI year and an opportunity to discuss the 5 Resolutions for the forthcoming National WI AGM.

If you would like to find out more about us and our activities please contact our President, Shelley Bassil (0118 971 0563) or our Secretary Annette Dolphin (0118 971 0090) or use our email [brimptonwi@berkshirewi.co.uk](mailto:brimptonwi@berkshirewi.co.uk).



Finished banner with the members who made it. Vanessa Collins, Lesley Hawker, Brenda Scott, Frances Alison, Janice Cross and Gwynedd Roberts



President, Shelley Bassil cutting 50th Anniversary cake



# Brimpton Church of England Primary School

## *Amazing things happen here.....*

It is hard to believe that Christmas and the new year has come and gone already and we are well into 2026!

**Thank You's** - I would like to thank all of you who came along to our Church Nativity at the end of last term.

**Goodbye** - We said goodbye to our Vice-Chair of Governors Rhoda Nikolay which I am sure many in our community know. She has been part of the Brimpton School Governing Body for the past ten years and has been an amazing asset and friend to our Brimpton Family. She is still going to stay in touch and help out when needed, but officially she has hung up her hat. The staff and children presented her with a beautiful vase to say thank you and the children sang to her in assembly (tissues at the ready!)



Again on behalf of myself, the staff, pupils and the governing body we thank you for all your work and time spent with our Brimpton Family.

**Singing Competition** – We came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Brackenwood Window Competition that took place during December. The prize money will be wisely spent by the children. A huge thank you to everyone who voted for us.

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)

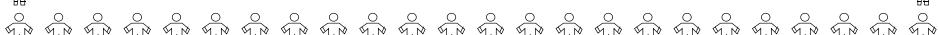
[www.brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk](http://www.brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk)

# Midgham News



## Midgham Village Hall

Holds coffee mornings on alternate Wednesdays from 10 until 12. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a hot drink and cake and to socialise with their neighbours and friends. The dates for the coffee mornings in February are: the 4th and the 18th.



## Midgham Café Church



**First Thursday of the month February 5th March 5th**

Join us for tea and cake and fellowship 2.00pm at

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

Contact Sarah Henderson for more information

Tel: 0118 9713956 [henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com](mailto:henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com)

The well attended carol service at St Matthews



## Woolhampton News

### Woolhampton & Midgham WI December 2025 and January 2026

December started off with a very nice lunch at the Bull, Stanford Dingley then a visit to Longacres Garden Centre for a bit of Christmas shopping. Our Christmas party was a jolly event with everyone turning up in Santa hats and each bringing a dish of food. It was a lovely spread which we tucked into after a couple of quizzes. There was Christmas music playing and everyone enjoyed the Secret Santa presents.



The Committee kicked off the New Year with our committee meeting at the Spring Inn followed by our January meeting with our speaker Andy Kempe talking about the history of Greenham Common which was very interesting. Settlement of the area goes back to the Stone Age, and he mentioned that the Romans, Saxons and Normans were all in the area.

Latterly the Common was a Royal Air Force station in 1942 and used by the US Air Force during World War II and the Cold War. It became notable for the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, which protested against the stationing of nuclear missiles from 1981 until the base's closure in 1992, after which it was transformed into public parkland.

If you would like to know more about our activities please come along as a guest at one of our meetings. You will be very welcome, and you may decide to join us! Guest fee is £4 and includes refreshments. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Woolhampton.

More information from Mrs Beryl Smith, our President – 01635 861374.

## Woolhampton School

Looking back on December, it is hard not to smile at just how magical the final weeks of term were. As always, this special time of year bought with it moments of joy, reflection and togetherness, reminding us of the true meaning of Christmas within our school community.

One of the highlights of the month was our Nativity '*It's a Baby!*'. The children retold the Christmas story with confidence and enthusiasm. From carefully spoken lines to beautifully sung songs, every child played their part in making the performance truly memorable. It was wonderful to see their hard work rewarded with such a warm and appreciative audience and the pride they felt was clear for all to see.

Our annual year 6's Carol Service at Douai Abbey provided an equally special experience. Set in such a peaceful and reverent space, the children sang with sincerity and respect, creating a calm and reflective atmosphere. It was a privilege to share this service with families, friends and year 5's as a reminder of how powerful music and worship can be when we come together.

December also brought some festive excitement for our younger children as the infants enjoyed a trip to The Hexagon to watch *Beauty and the Beast*. The pantomime was full of colour, music and laughter, and it was a delight to see the children so engaged and full of excitement as they experienced live theatre together.

December would not be complete without the excitement of Christmas lunch and this year was no exception. The hall was filled with festive cheer as the children enjoyed a wonderfully busy and joyful lunchtime together. Laughter, Christmas jumpers and a real sense of celebration made it a highlight of the school calendar.

We ended the term with our Christingle Service at the church, a moment of quiet reflection before the holidays began. Learning once again about the symbolism of the Christingle - the light of Christ, God's love for the world and the hope we carry forward - helped the children pause and reflect on the season's deeper meaning. Seeing the church filled with candlelight was a truly special way to close the term.

As we look back, December was a beautiful reminder of how fortunate we are to be part of such a caring and supportive school, church and wider community. We are grateful for all those who helped make these moments possible and for the continued partnership we share

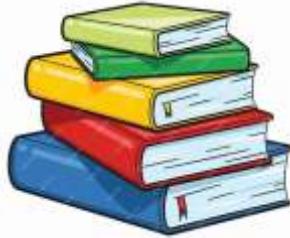


## **Village Market .**

Happy New Year to stallholders, and everyone attending our monthly Village Market. New Year, new resolutions and what else? If you're new to the village, did you know there is a monthly market held in the Village Hall? Why not pop along to find out what it's all about. You're sure to find a friendly welcome and it's an ideal opportunity to perhaps meet your neighbours.

The first Market of 2026 will be on Saturday 7<sup>th</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 (and dry!) welcome.

There is a wide variety of stalls selling cakes, books, knitted articles, jewellery, needlework, jars & vases, wood craft, local history books, honey, bird food and much more. There is no entry charge and refreshments (including hot bacon rolls) are available.



**Recycling Reminder:** if you have **used postage stamps** (e.g. from Christmas cards, etc.), the Air Ambulance charity stall will take them; if you have **used printer ink cartridges** or **unwanted clothes**, shoes, etc., please bring them along to the Market and we will arrange for them to be distributed to our local school; or if you have a collection of unwanted **milk bottle tops**, the pet food stall will be pleased to take them for charity.

## **Candles for Ukraine.**

**Were** you aware of the collection of unwanted new (and part-used) candles for the people of Ukraine? Waitrose (Thatcham) has a collection point but if you can't get them to Thatcham, please bring them along to the Market and we will get them there.

## **District Councillor's Surgery in Woolhampton Village Hall**

After holding successful surgeries on the last Saturday of the month during the past year, our District Councillor, Mr Chris Read, intends to continue with them during 2026, starting on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January from 9 to 11a.m. Thereafter on the last Saturday of each month at the same time (the second one being on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February). He welcomes interaction from local residents about issues of concern for our parish and environment.

## **Woolhampton Annual Show 2026**

This is the 25<sup>th</sup> year of this Village event. The Show is held in the Village Hall and there are classes for cookery, flowers, vegetable, photography, handicraft, etc., with specific classes for children. (Reminder: if you intend entering the Preserves class, now is the time to make marmalade as Seville oranges are readily 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 15<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. Also, in the next *Villages' News*, we should be able to publish the photographic classes, thus giving you plenty of time to get your cameras ready for action.

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!).

At the Hall, 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 *Villages' News* 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!).



## 1784 John Palmer and the Royal Mail

*'Reading Mercury' 25<sup>th</sup> July 1784*

*"On Monday next the experiment of the more expeditious conveyance of the mail will be made on the road from London to Bristol, the letters to be posted in London office every evening before seven and to arrive in Bristol the next day at twelve".*

The established route was served by a relay of post-boys maintaining a speed of 3-5 mph. Thus mail leaving Bristol at 10pm on Monday did not arrive in London until 3pm on Wednesday - stage coach travelling through the night only took 13 hours.

John Palmer owned theatres in Bath and Bristol and was familiar with travel by road needing to move actors and props between venues. Newspapers were transported swiftly by stage coach at this time, but the apathetic post office persisted with post-boys. Palmer had also noticed that post houses kept the slower horses for the mail. Through the good offices of Lord Camden, William Pitt the Younger (then Chancellor of the Exchequer), agreed to test Palmer's proposal. This was conducted on 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> August on the Great Bath Road, London to Bristol, passing through Woolhampton, a well surfaced and turnpiked highway with inns suitable to provide changes of horses at suitable stages. Ed Fromont of the 'Kings Head', Thatcham, was so chosen and on this critical night in 1784 a stagecoach departed with both mail and passengers. The Bristol bound coach left London and was due to arrive at Thatcham at 2.45 am, change horses to resume journey to be off by 3.05 am. The coach and passenger (fare 28 shillings) plus strong box and guard armed with pistols and blunderbuss, allowed to ignore turnpike gates, completed the journey in 13 hours. *"It has been truly astonishing"* (*'Bath Chronicle'*) Speed and security were paramount thus attracting paying customers. In 1792 16 post coaches left London daily and there were 15 cross-country coaches, e.g. Bristol to Oxford. Daniel Defoe in 1721 remarked on the narrowness of the road at Woolhampton, hence the road widening of 1931 and the demolition of the brewery, the old 'Angel' inn and the post office.



*John Trigg*

## NATURE NOTES

Never before were there so many holly berries left on the trees at Christmas! My warning to cut early was quite unnecessary, as it was such a fruitful year for everything that the holly berries are still there as I write. Blue tits and great tits are coming to the feeders, with the occasional coal tit and a little family of long-tailed tits visited some old seed heads I had left on the flowers, but not even pigeons have eaten any ivy berries. So not a sight of any visitors like fieldfares, redwings or waxwings – if you've seen any you are very lucky!

So what will this year bring? Will it be a shortage of all the fruit that has been abundant this year – with maybe a sharp autumn so all the holly berries are eaten before Christmas? Whatever comes, have a happy and healthy New Year.

*Stella Nesbit*



## WOOLHAMPTON VILLAGE HALL – APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEER TRUSTEES

Following its opening in 2006, Woolhampton Village Hall has become a thriving centre of our community with a variety of regular group activities and one-off events for all ages.

Run by a collection of volunteers, who form the Village Hall Management Committee, additional volunteers are needed to become Village Hall Trustees and protect the longevity of this unique resource for the village.

If you feel you are able to commit to attending 4 evening meetings per year then please contact our Chair of Trustees, Nikki Jordan, for more information at: [npm151924@gmail.com](mailto:npm151924@gmail.com)

### What's on in Woolhampton Village Hall

**Village Hall Market – 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month from 10am until 12 noon.**

**Mondays** Dance Class (Ballroom/Line Dance) – 2pm until 4pm.

Dance Fit with Lorraine – 5.45pm Pilates with Lorraine 6.35pm

**Tuesdays** Stroke Care – 9am until 3pm

Kool Kids Dance – children's combo dance class at 5pm

Dance Studio Reading – adult beginners Ballroom & Latin at 6pm

Women's Institute – 7.30pm until 9.30pm, every second Tuesday of each month

**Wednesdays** Lunch Club - 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 12 noon

**Thursdays** Flexercise – 10am until 12pm

Art Class – 1.30pm until 3.30pm and 7pm until 9pm

**Fridays** Bowls – 2.30pm until 5pm.

For any further information please visit: [www.woolhamptonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.woolhamptonvillagehall.co.uk)

[Bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com](mailto:Bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com)

# THE 39 STEPS

ADAPTED BY PATRICK BARLOW

From the novel by John Buchan

From the play by Alfred Hitchcock

Licensed by 1776 Worldwide Entertainment Limited

And an original concept by Simon Barnes and Hayley Skinner

By Arrangement with Flare Angel Limited



This amateur production of "The 39 Steps" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Damee French Ltd. [www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)



Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Dinner/Theatre: £25

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2026 Dinner/Theatre: £28

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Play Only Night: £12

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Dinner/Theatre: £26

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Dinner/Theatre: £28

Tickets from: [boxoffice.aldermastonplayers.co.uk](http://boxoffice.aldermastonplayers.co.uk)

#### DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE:

Early Booking before end of January 2026 - £1 off.

Opening Night - £25

Book a Table of 8 - 10% off

Start times: Dinner/Theatre - 7:00pm for 7:30pm meal

Play Only Night - Curtain Up at 7:45pm

Pay Bar a Battle - Profits shared between Hall & Players



ALDERMASTON  
PARISH HALL

ALDERMASTON PARISH HALL

## ALDERMASTON COFFEE CLUB



1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of  
every month any time from  
10.00am – 11.30am

Join us in the café at Hilliers.

Drop by for a chat, a chance to meet old friends and  
make new ones

Everyone is welcome – just come along

For further details contact Cynthia Newman

[cmnewman2021@outlook.com](mailto:cmnewman2021@outlook.com) 01189713525

## Beenham News

### Beenham WI

In our January meeting, we had a lively discussion about the proposed national resolutions and voted on the ones we think the WI should campaign on in 2026/27. It is always interesting to talk through how we can work together to improve the lives of others across the whole country.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 11 February, at 7.30pm in the Community Room, when we will be hearing from Jo Fageant, talking about a suitcase of memorabilia, and the stories that are linked to it. Guests are very welcome.

### Beenham Village Market

The Village Market will take place on Saturday 14 February - Valentine's Day - from 2 till 3.30. This is your chance to buy lovely steak for dinner, and some jewellery or some flowers....!! Do come along, there is always a great atmosphere, with relaxed browsing of various stalls. If you are interested in having your own stall, please contact Sally on [mrssallypellow@gmail.com](mailto:mrssallypellow@gmail.com).



### St Mary's Church, Beenham

Thank you to everyone who came to the services in our beautiful village church in December.

We are delighted to let you know that:

The Christingle raised £150.00 for the Children's Society

Everyone is very welcome to join us at 9.15am on most Sundays.

We are very grateful for and always looking for volunteers to help keep our church and church grounds in good order. We meet on the second Saturday in the month mainly for churchyard maintenance, from 10am – 12pm and would love to see you. We always have the kettle on for a cuppa!!

With best wishes for 2026 from St Mary's team.

## **19Notes from Beenham Parish Council meeting 5th January 2026**

### **Public Forum**

-The WI recovered 15 empty 1l bottles of vodka in a small area in their recent litter pick. TVP are to be notified.

-SVG (Sovereign Housing) have sold another potentially affordable house in Beenham. The PC have raised this with West Berks and our local MP.

### **Councillors**

-As a result of the vandalism incident at the school, a CCTV day/night surveillance system was discussed. After a field meeting with the school/PC, the suggestion will be discussed at the next meeting.

-Affordable housing initiative: The PC is still talking to potential landowners.

### **Planning Matters**

-25/02742/HOUSE. Woodside, Clay Lane, Beenham, RG7 5PG. side extension and loft extension. The PC had no objection and left it to neighbours for comment.

-25/02784/HOUSE. Highdown, Webbs Lane, Beenham, RG7 5LH. 1st floor roof extension. The PC had no objection and left it to neighbours for comment if necessary.

### **Planning decisions**

- Granted. 25/02231/FULMAJ. Land to the East along Pips Way.

### **Parish Councillors**

-Litter bins/grass cutting tender. Tenders for these services are to be sought to ensure we are getting competitive rates. (post meeting note...this may also be for the maintenance of the salt bins).

-20 mph speed limit through Beenham. WBC has a programme of introducing a 20mph speed limit where appropriate in all villages (after local consultation). This will take several years, and Beenham is in the plan for 2027-2028. The PC is going to continue to determine what restrictions parishioners would like, and to liaise with WBC.

### **Financial Matters.**

- Two Grant requests have been received.

- WI: £400 for litter picking. Approved

- St Marys Church: £800 for churchyard maintenance. Approved.

-2026/27 PC precept. It was agreed to increase the proposed precept to £21320 which is an approximately 10% increase since the last review in 2023.

The next meeting will be held on

**Monday February 2nd at 7.00pm in the Community Room.**

All correspondence to the council should be addressed to the Parish Clerk.

Parish Clerk: Lauren West Tel: 07919 916125 Email: [clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk)

CR Bookings: Paula Read Tel: 07793116937 Email: [info@beenhampreschool.org](mailto:info@beenhampreschool.org)

Full details of the Councillors (including email addresses) are on the website at [beenham-pc.gov.uk/councillors/](http://beenham-pc.gov.uk/councillors/).

All correspondence to the council should be addressed to the Parish Clerk: Lauren West Tel: 07919 916125 Email: [clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk)

Community Room Bookings: Paula Read Tel: 07793116937 Email: [info@beenhampreschool.org](mailto:info@beenhampreschool.org)



Hello and Happy New Year to you from Greyfield Wood!

So, we are now well into 2026 and another year of work lies ahead in the wood.

We have achieved our 2025 goal of replanting where we felled the Ash and Norwegian Spruce. Many thanks to our volunteers who gave of their time. I am pleased to say that we planted over 1000 saplings, which is more than we originally felled!

One of our main activities going forward will be to ensure that the new saplings are monitored for damage caused by deer. Although each sapling has a protector, deer can still disturb the saplings, so damage remediation is a constant requirement to ensure they can mature in the coming years.

We will also be replenishing our cordwood stock from remaining felled wood. This needs to be done prior to the bird nesting season. There will also be paths and drainage ditches to be cleared, so another busy year is in store.

In December John Newton stepped down from the Board after many years being part of the management team. He will still be around working in the wood, but the Board will miss his attention to detail in many areas and his work on managing the Volunteer groups and sorting out insurances.....Thank you John!

A date for your diary. Our Open day in the wood this year will be held on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June from 2pm.

If you would like to join our group of volunteers please contact me. You are not expected to be there every week, just come when you are able. Every small activity in the wood helps.

John Hammond [john@meadvale-bays.com](mailto:john@meadvale-bays.com) 07818 400440

## Beenham allotments

We are pleased to announce that we have two half plots available for rent.

It's an ideal way to keep fit as well as eating healthily. Rent is only £25 per year.

Please contact us on [beenhamallotment@gmail.com](mailto:beenhamallotment@gmail.com) or [helenapsey@hotmail.com](mailto:helenapsey@hotmail.com) for more information.

## BVE (Beenham Village Events) Update

The days are getting longer, and our thoughts turn to warmer weather, the garden and those beautiful spring flowers brightening our gardens.

At this time of year, the BVE team likes to reflect back to the Christmas period. We'd like to thank everyone who helped with the Tree Lighting event; with the mince pies and mulled wine and carol singing led by Beenham Wind Orchestra. It was a very successful start to December and the new star on top of the Christmas tree remained steadfastly firm and bright for the whole of the festive season. Thank you Peter!

Our thanks also go to everyone who made an Advent Window, including the Pre-School, School, Church, Six Bells and Victory Hall. It always delights us to see all the wonderful unique creations. It is so exciting to count down to Christmas in this way. If you didn't get a chance to stroll around the village with the "Advent Window Walk", you can still have a peek at them online by putting "Beenham online" in any search engine, clicking on Beenham Village Events and in the third paragraph "FLICKR" and they are there in all their wonder to view.

We had our first Carol singing around the village this year and this was great fun and we were amazed at the number of wonderful people who joined us and it is one to repeat in 2026.

Finally, thank you to everyone who contributed to the Beenham 2026 calendars. We have just a handful left if you'd like one at a reduced price. It's worth having one for the photos!

Please get photographing ready for the 2026 calendar. Please email them to me at any time.

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

As an offshoot of the Parish Council (which supports us with the occasional grants), we organise and stage 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

Annual Village Calendar      Bear Trail in Greyfield Woods

Christmas Tree Lighting followed by mulled wine, mince pies and carols

## Carol singing around the village

## The Giant Veg Show

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

We are a very small group, and we are always looking for people – with ideas and/or commitment to help put on events and to understudy those roles on the Committee which 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](mailto:patowen0@hotmail.com)



#### DIARY OF EVENTS FOR BEENHAM – FEBRUARY 2026

Date	Event	where	contact
Tuesdays	Art Group 10am-12pm	Victory Hall	Georgia: 07970 646713
Tuesdays	Badminton Club 8pm – 9.30pm	School Hall	Ernie: 07954 127 771
Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Parish Council meeting 7pm	Community Rm	
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup>	WI: Speaker "A suitcase of memorabilia" Guests welcome.	Community Rm 7.30pm	Sally: 07776 251 228
Thu 12 <sup>th</sup>	Beenham Walkers: circular walk to Bradfield	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481
Thu 12 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Quiz Night 8pm Teams up to 6 £4/person	Six Bells 7.30 for 8pm	9713368 to book
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Church Working Party All help is most welcome	St Mary's Church 10am	Brinelle: 07873548852
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup>	2pm – 3.30pm: Village Market	Victory Hall	Sally: 07776 251 228
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup>	Beenham Friendship Club for over 55s.	Victory Hall 2pm	Marion: 9713094 Tina: 01635826154
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	Greyfield Woods Volunteer Morning. 8.30 – 12pm	Meet at wood entrance	John: 9712924
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	Calleva Stick Dressers 9am–2pm	Victory Hall	David: 07864 180 648
Tue 24 <sup>th</sup>	2– 3.30pm: Tearoom and Outreach Library	Victory Hall	Dru: 07815 055 040 Pat: 07947 478 840
Thu 26 <sup>th</sup>	Beenham Walkers: circular walk to Midgham.	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481

If you would like to add anything to the village diary, please contact [patowen0@hotmail.com](mailto:patowen0@hotmail.com) or 07947478840

Victory Hall Bookings contact Nola – [nolestandfrank@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nolestandfrank@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01189 714 822

## **Second Bradfield Brownies**

What a busy term we had! We completed the Guiding Glow badge which involved looking at the history of Guiding and our unit. It is always exciting for the Brownies to hear that HRH The Princess of Wales was a member of our unit! We also looked at some wonderful mementos from years gone by. The Brownies all had a go at climbing and bouldering – they absolutely loved this activity and they were all very good at it, reaching the top of the wall. We also attended the Remembrance Parade in Bradfield and made paper poppies. The term ended with Christmas craft and a collection for the West Berkshire Foodbank.

We also had an entry in the Bucklebury Christmas Tree competition – the Brownies had a great time decorating baubles for our Australian themed tree. As part of the preparation, we made contact with the Region Commissioner for Melbourne who gave some ideas and also a little bit of an insight into her life, including the kangaroo's who visit her garden!

We are looking forward to the next term and will be starting our Skills for my Future Theme Award and completing our Games Master badge. We are also attending the South West Region Thinking Day event at Milestones in Basingstoke and also holding our own event a week later.

Girlguiding has lots of benefits for both girls and women. It helps build self-belief, independence and leadership skills through fun, hands-on activities and teamwork. We are a welcoming community where girls meet new friends, feel supported, and belong to a safe space where they can be themselves.

Girls are encouraged to speak up, share opinions, and take part in decisions that matter to them—building confidence to use their voice in the wider world. Girlguiding inspires girls to help their communities, support causes they care about, and develop a strong sense of social responsibility. It's about enjoyment, laughter, and memories that last a lifetime.

At Second Bradfield Brownies, we have spaces for new Brownies and would love to see some new members aged 7 to 10 years old. We would also love to see some adult volunteers! Remember one evening a week can change a girl's life – and yours! By volunteering with Girlguiding you can grow your skills, and have fun!

Whatever your age, there's a place for you in Girlguiding – join us, volunteer with us, grow with us!

Visit our website for more information about enrolling your daughter or becoming a volunteer - [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk) Vicki Beesley



## WEST BERKS FOODBANK

### HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

The foodbank relies on the goodwill and support of the public.

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

The shopping list below shows the food items that are needed right now. Please ensure that there is a long '**Use By**' date on the food provided. Thank you.

If you prefer a financial donation can be made using the following link:

<https://westberks.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

Please see the table below for food drop off points in the local areas.

#### **Items urgently needed**

Cup-a-soup, Fruit juice (long life), Oil, Tinned fruit, tinned meat

#### **NO PASTA OR RICE PLEASE**

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**

**Church of England Services** Contact number: 0118 971 2891  
(awb.org.uk)

**1<sup>st</sup> February Presentation of Christ**

**St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston and St Nicholas, Wasing**

1st February	10:45	Holy Communion WASING
8th February	10:45	Holy Communion WASING
15th February	10:45	Holy Communion

**St Marys, Beenham**

1st February	9.15	Holy Communion
8th February	9.15	Holy Communion
15th February	9:15	Morning Prayer

**St Peters, Brimpton**

1st February	10.45	Holy Communion
8th February	9.15	Holy Communion
15th February	9:15	Morning Prayer

**St Matthews, Midgham**

1st February	9.15	Holy Communion BCP
15th February	9:15	Holy Communion
22nd February	16:00	Evensong

**St Peters, Woolhampton**

8th February	10.45	Holy Communion
15th February	10.45	Holy Communion
22nd February	10:45	Holy Communion

## Church Services in 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 above, plus

10:30 am Mass

But no Compline

## Brimpton Baptist Church

Contact number : 07944 956242

Sunday service: 11.00 am

Wednesday night Bible study

7.00 pm

## Human Race

Anxious, nervous, esteem low.

Welcome, to the Human race,

Secret is let feelings show,

Welcome, to the Human race,

Tough times will come,

Tough times will go,

You will overcome, stay strong,

Because, you are you.

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# 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

District Councillors:

Woolhampton/Midgham: Chris Read: 07714 081565

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

Parish Councils: Clerks' details:

Aldermaston: Abi Lewis : [parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk)

Beenham: Lauren West : 07919 916 125

Brimpton: Christine McGarvie: 0118 970 1576

Midgham: Ellie Brewer 07877 122127

Woolhampton: Ellie Brewer 07877 122127

Village Halls:

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

Beenham: 01189 714 822

Brimpton: 0118 971 3731

Midgham: 07941 093 853

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

Churches:

Aldermaston & Woolhampton Benefice: 0118 971 2891

Brimpton Baptist Church: 07944 956242

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