

# 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

## 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-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@aldermaston-pc.gov.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

Douai Abbey: 0118 971 5300

## Magazine advertising:

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

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Thatcham RG19 4QB . Tel: 01635 876498

## Committee Comments

We are approaching Easter at a great speed. It only seems like yesterday we were celebrating Christmas! It is lovely to see some sunshine and the mother earth springing to life again.

When shopping in Sainsburys (other supermarkets are available?) a while ago, I noticed a plethora of choice of hot cross buns. In fact, I noted nine different varieties including rhubarb & ginger, orange & marmalade, chocolate & cherry, white chocolate & lemon .... the list goes on. We have tried the rhubarb & ginger, but I think we agreed that we prefer the original and traditional extra fruity and spicy buns and will be sticking to them in the future.

When I was growing up hot cross buns were not in the shops until Maundy Thursday and we enjoyed them for breakfast on Good Friday. They are now available in shops all year round but to me, to really appreciate them, they should only be eaten and enjoyed at Easter time. After all the cross is a symbol of the cross on which Jesus was crucified.

Please take a moment to read the statistics on the West Berks Foodbank on page 2

It is alarming and upsetting how that so many people need support. If you are able, please leave a donation of food or toiletries in the collection points in each of our villages – the locations are at the bottom of the Foodbank article. Please ensure that goods have a long used by date. Thank you.

We hope you enjoy the Easter edition of the Villages' News. The committee wish all our readers a very happy Easter.

### ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

**Please note the deadline for receipt of articles is noon  
on the 17th of each month**

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.**



## WEST BERKS FOODBANK

### HELP WESTBERKS FOOD BANK END FOOD INSECURITY

More than 2.6 million emergency food parcels were provided to people across the UK in the past year by food banks in the Trussell community, including over 900,000 to children.

In Reading West and Mid Berkshire, food banks in the Trussell community provided **1,108 food parcels** to people facing hardship in the last year. 466 of these were distributed for children.

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 needed. **Please ensure that there is a long 'Use By' date on any food donated. Thank you.**

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

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

#### Items urgently needed

Deodorant, headlice treatment, mug shots, washing powder/sheets (non-bio), cooked meat with ring pulls, fruit juice, tinned meat, custard/rice pudding pots, sponge puddings, tinned fish, tinned tomatoes.

#### Low on stock

Incontinence products.

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**

## UNLOCK WALK 43

Pat Owen (Beenham) and I are taking part in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Unlock Walk on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> April. This walk is truly one of the highlights of my calendar year. The scenery is usually very varied from very posh to very poor but passing and chatting to the hundreds of people taking part in the walk is so uplifting. If you are a walker I thoroughly recommend you giving it a go this year. ([unlock-urban.org.uk](http://unlock-urban.org.uk)).

This year's event is an approx. 7.2mile walk around the Kilburn and Hampstead areas in London visiting churches of various denominations on the way. It is always interesting to see what innovative ways churches have come up with to fully utilise the space of these wonderful buildings for public use.

As if map reading and making sure we do not get lost is not enough, they throw in a 20-question quiz into the melting pot. The questions are based on local sites and places we pass.

We have taken part in this walk, which is a sponsored event, for the past several years. Unlock works by running local projects in UK cities where a trained Unlock Development Worker, accompanied by a local team is employed to encourage and enable local people and their leaders to grow in faith and confidence.

The aims of the Unlock Walk London are:

To raise money for Unlock's work in deprived urban areas across the UK

To raise awareness of the issues of exclusion that Unlock exists to address

To showcase the ministry of churches in urban areas

To encourage churches in the more affluent parts of the country to support the work of their fellow Christians in the inner city.

You can find out more about our fundraising event and donate by clicking the link to our Give as you Live Donate page below.

Donate now:

[https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/support-this-great-event?utm\\_campaign=sharemypage&utm\\_source=Dsharesocial&utm\\_medium=Dshare\\_email&utm\\_content=fundraisingpage&utm\\_term=20250310](https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/support-this-great-event?utm_campaign=sharemypage&utm_source=Dsharesocial&utm_medium=Dshare_email&utm_content=fundraisingpage&utm_term=20250310)

Thank you.

**Pat Owen and Brenda Scott ([mrsbScott@btinternet.com](mailto:mrsbScott@btinternet.com))**

## From Olivia Bailey MP

I am pleased to be able to confirm that West Berkshire will be receiving funding from the government to support vulnerable households affected by the sharp rise in heating oil costs.

The funding will be distributed by West Berkshire Council via the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), which comes into effect from 1 April.

The government is also planning to introduce new consumer protections for heating oil customers and is rapidly exploring new ways to step in and ensure households are better protected.

If you are struggling with the cost of heating oil, please do contact West Berkshire Council to find out what support may be available. Please also contact my office, and my team will try and support you.

I am incredibly proud that two of our most important chalk streams, the Rivers Kennet and Pang flow through my constituency of Reading West and Mid Berkshire and last summer I spoke in Parliament calling for increased protection for these precious habitats.

I am therefore really pleased that for the first time our precious chalk streams have been recognised in national planning guidance. Alongside the action the government is taking to get tough on polluting water companies, this recognition of the environmental value of chalk streams is a step towards ensuring that rivers like the Pang and the Kennet can thrive.

However, I know that there have been incidents across the constituency, over the past few months, of sewage being discharged into our waterways, including the Pang. I am continuing to call out Thames Water for their poor performance and have called on them to take action on these incidents as a matter of urgency.

Since I was elected, the issue that I have received most correspondence from constituents is around reform of the SEND system. So I am delighted that the government has set out ambitious plans to transform the SEND system. These reforms will ensure that support comes earlier, is easier to access, and works around children and families rather than forcing them to fight for help. By investing in better-trained teachers and better access to specialist expertise in mainstream settings, we are moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach and towards education that understands and includes every child.

These proposals will mean that children with SEND will get the right support when they need it, closer to home, without parents having to battle to get the better education – and results – their kids deserve.

Finally, I was really pleased that yet again this month we have seen a fall in waiting lists, with a fall of 43,000 in January – which means that more people are getting the health care that they need. And it is really heartening to hear from local residents in Reading West and Mid Berkshire who are finally getting their long-awaited appointments.

If you want to get in touch with me about local or national issues you can email me at [olivia.bailey.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olivia.bailey.mp@parliament.uk) or you can write to me at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. If you want to keep up to date with what I am doing in Parliament and in the constituency, I send out a weekly email newsletter to constituents. If you would like to receive it, you can sign up at <https://shorturl.at/qgoHw>.

# Woolhampton News

## Date for your Diary - Woolhampton Annual Show 2026

Woolhampton Show will be on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August in the Village Hall. There will be classes for each of cookery, flowers, vegetables, photography, handicraft, art and special classes for children to enter. A preview of the Show schedule is available on website [woolhamptonannualshow.uk](http://woolhamptonannualshow.uk) and paper copies available towards late June early July but for the competitions that need advance preparation, please see the following:

### Photographic Competition

The photographic classes decided for 2026 are:

Steps/stairs

Insect(s)

Everyday object from unusual angle

One bloom (any variety of flower)

A pair of photos depicting 'before' and 'after' (any subject)

Please remember that photos should be no bigger than 7"x5" and not mounted.

### Tallest Sunflower Competition

Now is the time to sow your sunflower seeds. Participants may select seeds of their choice, there will be a few free seeds at the monthly market if you don't want to buy a packet. (Please note that plants are not intended to be brought to Village Hall. Details of how they will be judged will be given nearer the Show date.)

### Potato-growing Competition

We should be clear of frosts by now, so it's probably the right time to plant and cultivate your tubers. (I think tubers have been provided to everyone who entered but if not, please contact Terry (email [terry.vallis@outlook.com](mailto:terry.vallis@outlook.com) or 07771933526) as soon as possible as I should still have yours available.) Good luck and don't forget that you must be able to bring your intact container (tops trimmed) to the allotments on Show Day for weighing.

## Short-mat Bowls

During March the Woolhampton Short-mat Bowls Club played both Home and Away matches against an experienced Chieveley Short-mat Bowls Club. Both teams won 2 games in the Home match but we lost 4 games to 2 in the Away match. Nevertheless the fixture proved thoroughly enjoyable and many lessons were learned. At the end of the match it was handshakes all round and we all enjoyed a cup of tea, sandwiches and cakes provided by members of the host team. Buoyed by the success of the event we will have played the Home match against East Woodhay Short-mat Bowls Club by the end of March, Away match to be played in April. We would welcome challenges from new opponents so if anyone knows about other similar teams, please contact me (or get them to contact me) at [terry.vallis@outlook.com](mailto:terry.vallis@outlook.com) and, hopefully, arrangements can be made.

## **Village Market**

The next Market will be on Saturday April 4<sup>th</sup> from 10a.m. to 12 noon in the Woolhampton Village Hall. If you've not been before, do come along to browse and enjoy the ambience and you never know, you may find something you never knew you wanted, or perhaps needed (after all we do have new stall holders!). There is no entry charge and refreshments (including delicious hot bacon rolls) are available.

## **District Councillor's Surgery**

The District Councillor representing Woolhampton, Mr Chris Read, is continuing to hold a surgery on the last Saturday of each month in the Woolhampton Village Hall from 9a.m. to 11a.m. Parishioners are cordially invited to visit Mr Read to raise or discuss any local issues of their concern. We thank Mr Read for his willingness to allot his valuable time to this facility.

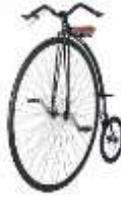
## **Dog Fouling**

Just to reiterate, PLEASE clean up after your dog from wherever they foul, even from the defined paths in fields. This is a plea to all dog owners to clear up after their pets as it is really awful for a child, or indeed anybody else, to step into a mess! There are many waste bins around the village so there is no excuse for not picking up.

## **NATURE NOTES**

Although I have not seen anything more interesting than pigeons on the ivy, watching their efforts to reach berries on long stalks too weak to support a pigeon has been quite entertaining! Pigeons and berries, apart from those few outstanding bunches, have gone now, so it is time to trim. As I write we have just had Mothering Sunday where children in the church present their mothers with posies. This year it was amazingly difficult to find enough small daffodils – normally flowering merrily in mid March. The snowflakes, too, were past their best – normally very reliable. However, we did our best with what we had, and the resulting posies were much appreciated. Of course, milder weather has resulted in earlier bird nesting and earlier insects, especially all sorts of bees on earlier flowers. I hope they are not in for a nasty shock. A patch of dark feathers on the grass reminds us that there is a darker side – a sparrow hawk has been at work. I hope he hasn't left a widow already laying, but we have to accept the darker side of nature and take what comes. It is lovely to see the early butterflies, mostly brimstones and red admirals but also a few tortoiseshells. Next month there will be a burgeoning of migrant birds which we will welcome – even the cuckoo, in spite of her unfortunate habits!

***Stella Nesbitt***



## Cycle Race 1882

At 6.50 pm on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July 1882 six young men of Woolhampton sat on their bicycles in Reading ready for a 'scratch' race over the 10 miles along the Bath Road to make the return journey to Woolhampton. They would be mounted on 'ordinaries' or 'high bicycles' known to us as 'penny farthings' and would sit over the large front wheel ready to pedal to possible victory. The competitors on this summer's day kept together until Johnson and Foulger began to pull away. On approaching the village, Johnson moved into the lead which he maintained to win the race by several yards. His time was 39 minutes. George William Johnson was awarded the first prize and received a Keat's Buglet. This was much valued particularly by members of Cycling Clubs and used by club captains to communicate instructions when travelling as a group on a country 'run'. There were a number of clubs founded at this time that encouraged this 'manly exercise'. The Newbury club was formed in 1876 and in 1882 Thatcham club held its second meeting.

Cyclists were not popular at this time. A letter writer to the NWN lamented "More dangerous than mad dogs or locomotives one of them threw my horse in abject terror". He observed "ridden by men in red socks".

George William Johnson died in 1949 aged 86 years, then Woolhampton's oldest inhabitant. He was an elder of the Woolhampton Congregational Chapel, Superintendent of its popular Sunday School for 50 years, a stalwart supporter of the Temperance movement ( he did however oppose the propose closure of the 'Rose and Crown'). His father was a bricklayer during the building of 'Brookside', Station Road, in 1876 when young Johnson served as 'tea boy'. He was for many years himself the village builder residing at the present 'River View', Station Road, also acting as village undertaker.

The photograph shows the Woolhampton Temperance Band outside Bridge Cottage and among the musicians is a young GW Johnson holding a buglet – 2<sup>nd</sup> from left



## 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

Womens 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)



# Aldermaston News

## ALDERMASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

This term in Collective Worship we are focusing on our school value of Trust. Together we have been learning what Trust means, who are our trusted adults, and reflecting on the story of Peter walking on water and the story of Abraham. In class, adults are giving children plenty of opportunities to learn from our Superhero friend, the Reflector Owl, who checks, corrects and improves, and reflects and responds. The British value we are exploring this term is Democracy.

Since January we have been celebrating our weekly Class Champions – a child in each class nominated by their teacher for showing sustained effort, a positive attitude and excellent conduct. This award celebrates those who demonstrate kindness, strong learning behaviours and who live out our School Rules of being Ready, Respectful and Safe every day. The certificates are presented during Friday Collective Worship, allowing us to celebrate these fantastic role models.

During Children's Mental Health Week 2026, the whole school took part in a range of activities designed to support emotional wellbeing and encourage open conversations about mental health. The activities included daily emotional check-ins, daily mindfulness and age-appropriate sessions about looking after your mental health.

We continue to enjoy a busy programme of sporting activities, both in school and externally, including X Country, Speed Stacking, Archery, FA Skills, Cricket Skills, Dodgeball, QuadKids and Multiskills. Something for everyone to take part in and to learn a new skill.

***Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor***

### **1970s Evening Saturday 13 June, from 7.30pm**

Aldermaston Parish Hall is hosting a fund raising event on 13 June, come and support us and have an evening of fun!

Ticket price - £25 if you book by 2 May.  
Includes: 1970s music (DJ), 1970s style food, prize for best dressed outfits

Pay bar available, good value drinks including 1970s inspire!

7.30 pm until late

For tickets email:

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

Or contact Karen on 07595 551137

Celebrate the 1970s!!



## **Aldermaston Parish Council – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

We were pleased to welcome AWE that came to talk about its purchase of Aldermaston Park and the temporary use of its carpark for construction workers. From AWE's perspective the parking scheme is a success with 200 vehicles now parking at the site. However, we also heard from a local resident who said the extra traffic on Church Road is noisy and starts from 6am. Noise of the transfer mini-bus accelerating up Paices Hill was also mentioned. Suggestions to combat these problems were made including the use of electric mini-buses and buses driving to/from AWE via Red Lane. AWE said they would consider both and looked forward to further discussion with residents at April's Annual Parish Meeting.

In Planning, APC agreed No Objection to a Discharge of Condition application from Young's Estate and to an application on Chapel Lane. The latter is for new community meeting spaces at the Chapel site; these new amenities may be welcome but may also impact road safety particularly at Chapel Lane's junctions with Reading Road and Welshman's Road. APC will ask WBC to consider lowering speed limits and moving the speed limit transition on Welshman's eastwards. Finally, we agreed to Object to an application from Young's Estate to remove 3 Conditions attached to a previous consent. We consider the Landscaping and External Lighting Conditions necessary to prevent possible harm to nearby open countryside and dwellings.

Under planning it was noted that WBC cancelled its March Eastern Area Planning Committee meeting at short notice following the withdrawal of the Padworth Sawmills application from the agenda. WBC had been recommending approval against our recommendation. APC does not agree that the site automatically benefits from site-wide B8 use and worry about the site's inadequate access. We will continue to make our case.

Councillors agreed to WBC's request to participate in the Government Consultation on Local Government Reorganisations. The Consultation seeks views on three options put forward for the reorganisation of Oxford councils, two of which would incorporate WBC into a new Ridgeway Council. Of these we agree with WBC that the most beneficial to us would be the two unitary authorities proposal. APC will complete the survey to reflect this view.

On a positive note, we were delighted to be able to co-opt Des Farndell to the PC. Des is a village resident, former civil servant and previously acted as our PC Clerk, so brings a lot of useful experience to the role.

We finished by finalising details of the 14<sup>th</sup> April Annual Parish Meeting at the Parish hall. The usual community groups will attend, and we have guest speakers from AWE who will present and take questions. All those in the community are invited. The meeting will start at 7:30pm but the PC will welcome people from 7:00pm with the offer of a drink and opportunity to mingle.

Our own PC meeting will follow the APM. For details visit <https://aldermaston-pc.gov.uk/>

***Sophie Crawford***



**ALDERMASTON  
PARISH HALL**  
Heathle Avenue, Aldermaston

**Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday 28th April**

**7:30pm**

Join in and find out more about  
your local village hall and what goes on there.

**All welcome**



**ALDERMASTON  
HISTORY GROUP**

**Meeting & TALK**

**Weds 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026 ,**

**7:30pm**

Officers Mess, The Hinds Head Inn

a talk on

**“The History of the  
River Kennet”**

By Dr David Peacock

*Free to members, non members £5*

print to help control your printer

Aldermaston History Online  
<https://aldermastonhistory.co.uk>

The Aldermaston Parish Hall is a registered charity. Registered in England No. 1049674. Registered in Wales No. 1049674.



Pop in your diary

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> Sept**

**Aldermaston & Wasing Show**

**Schedule of Classes** coming soon

Re-vamped classes for clarity and today's world.

Get your schedule early so you can plan your veg & flower  
growing and practice your crafts

Watch this space or checkout facebook or our website

<https://awshow.org.uk>

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP ON THE DAY?**

We are always looking for volunteers to help run this traditional village fete, you would be most  
welcome whether you can spare the whole day or just an hour or two.

Come along and be part of the show's history in this its 84<sup>th</sup> year.

Contact: [secretary@awshow.org.uk](mailto:secretary@awshow.org.uk)

## Beenham News

### Greyfield Wood



Hello to you from Greyfield Wood!

I am pleased to report that the c1200 saplings planted in December and January are doing well with many of them starting to bud. We will continue to monitor them and repair any damage caused by the deer.

The area by the Chapel Row gate has now been cleared of fallen trees and debris and is looking much improved.

We are currently coppicing hazel along the upper stream and have several fallen trees to cross-cut. The resulting "Cordwood" will be extracted to the loading area for sale.

By the time you read this we expect to have completed the main chainsaw work for the year and, as we get further into Spring, and the weather warms, our activities will be focused on keeping the paths and saplings clear of growing vegetation. We also eagerly await the return of the bluebells!

Many thanks to our volunteers who work so hard to keep our wood such a lovely and peaceful place to enjoy. If you would like to join our band of volunteers, please contact me.

**John Hammond**

**[john@meadvale-bays.com](mailto:john@meadvale-bays.com)**

**07818 400440**

## **BVE 2nd Beenham Giant Vegetable and Flower Show 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026 in the Victory Hall**

It promises to be a fun focused day, very much aimed at adults and children alike. We want to see your **longest runner bean, longest carrot, heaviest tomato, heaviest pumpkin and tallest sunflower** - to name just a few classes.

For full details of all the classes and an entry form please email Jonathan: [jondrury@hotmail.com](mailto:jondrury@hotmail.com)



**Weigh in for potatoes grown in a bag.  
The potatoes will available at the village market on APRIL 11<sup>TH</sup>, so  
THIS IS THE LAST CHANCE TO ENTER!  
please register your interest with Jonathan:  
[jondrury@hotmail.com](mailto:jondrury@hotmail.com)**

Entries welcome from all in the local area – other than the two classes below, which are for Beenham residents only.

**Beenham's Best Baker:** Please contact us for information about this **NEW** class and the vegetable themed recipe for everyone to use. A prize will be given to the best Man and best Woman, and then the overall winner will be crowned!

**The Six Bells' Trophy** will be awarded to the heaviest total weight of potatoes grown in a bucket by a Beenham resident, and brought in on the day by a Beenham resident. (Potatoes and buckets available March / April)

**The Edwin Roe cup** will be awarded to the most unusually shaped vegetable grown by a child in Beenham.

## **Decorate an Easter Gate**

We are looking forward to seeing decorated gates and front doors over the Easter weekend!

## **2026 Scarecrow Festival**

This year we are going back to a theme we used when the festival first began - Nursery Rhyme characters. Start thinking of what you might create for this year. Judging will be in late May / early June and more details will follow next month.

## DIARY OF EVENTS FOR BEENHAM – APRIL 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
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup>	WI-Talk on moths and butterflies by Laurence Harwood. £4 for guests.	Community Rm 7.30pm	Sally: 07776 251 228
<b>Fri 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>BANK HOLIDAY – GOOD FRIDAY</b>		
<b>Mon 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BANK HOLIDAY – EASTER MONDAY</b>		
Thu 9 <sup>th</sup>	Circular walk around Nettlebed, finish at the Cheese Shed.	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481
Thu 9 <sup>th</sup>	Charity Quiz Night 8pm Teams up to 6 £4/person	Six Bells 7.30 for 8pm	9713368 to book
Sat 11 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Church Working Party All help is most welcome	St Mary's Church 10am	Brinelle: 07873548852
Sat 11 <sup>th</sup>	2pm – 3.30pm: Village Market <b>POTATO AND BAG COLLECTION</b>	Victory Hall	Sally: 07776 251 228
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council meeting 7pm	Community Rm	The Clerk - Lauren West: 07919916125
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup>	Beenham Friendship Club for over 55s – Visit to Army Museum, Chelsea - £25 for non-members	Pick up points	Marion:9713094 Tina:01635826154
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup>	Beenham's Parish Assembly at 7pm	Community Rm	
Thu 16 <sup>th</sup>	Film night £5 a ticket (cash only please)	Victory Hall 7.00 for 7.30pm	Claire: 9713574
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup>	Greyfield Woods Volunteer Morning. 8.30 – 12pm	Meet at wood entrance	John:9712924
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup>	Calleva Stick Dressers 9am–2pm	Victory Hall	David:07864 180 648
Thu 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Circular walk around Leckhampstead	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481
Tue 28 <sup>th</sup>	2– 3.30pm: Tearoom and Outreach Library	Victory Hall	Dru:07815 055 040 Pat:07947 478 840

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 – [nolesandfrank@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nolesandfrank@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01189 714 822

## Beenham Primary School

As we reach the end of the spring term, it's hard to believe how quickly the weeks have flown by. School life has been full, lively and wonderfully creative, and we've enjoyed every moment. With the sun finally making a welcome appearance, there's been a real sense of renewed energy across the school. Being able to spend more time outdoors exploring, investigating and getting our hands a little muddy has lifted everyone's spirits.

Across the classes, children have been embracing practical, hands-on learning with enthusiasm. Our budding scientists have been constructing electrical circuits and experimenting with switches, bulbs and buzzers to deepen their understanding of how electricity flows. In computing, pupils have been busy planning, filming and editing their own book trailers, combining storytelling with digital creativity in impressive ways.

Design and technology has brought its own excitement, with children designing and building model Ferris wheels - an ambitious project that blended imagination with engineering thinking. Meanwhile, in music, the familiar and much-loved ground bass line of *Canon in D* has been echoing through the corridors as pupils mastered it on the glockenspiels. Their pride in achieving such a recognisable piece has been a joy to witness.

One of the highlights of the term was World Book Day, which once again brought our whole community together. Sharing favourite stories, celebrating beloved characters and enjoying the simple pleasure of reading alongside friends, families and neighbours created a warm and memorable day for everyone involved.

As we look ahead to the Easter break, we wish all our families, friends and neighbours a happy, restful and refreshing holiday. We look forward to returning for the summer

### Beenham WI

We start our new programme in April with a talk by Laurence Harwood on Butterflies and Moths. He will be telling us what to watch out for through the summer, and what's rare - and how to encourage butterflies into our gardens. We meet in the Community Room, on Wednesday 8 April at 7.30 - and all are welcome.

We have a fascinating programme this year, with a number of very local speakers. Joining the WI is a lovely way for women to make friends in the village, and as well as our monthly meetings, we go for pub lunches, outings, and have a book club. We also team up with one another to pick litter in the village, which can be a long task!

To find out more, contact Sally on [mrssallypellow@gmail.com](mailto:mrssallypellow@gmail.com) or 0777 625 1228.



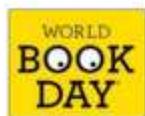
# Brimpton Church of England Primary School

*Amazing things happen here.....*

**School Council** - Our amazing children took a vote in each year group to put forward a class candidate to be their representative on the School Council. This year it is the year of the 'girls'. Our School Council makes such a difference to Brimpton and come up with wonderful ideas which are implemented throughout the school.



**School Clubs** - Our children are very lucky to have great after school clubs run by members of staff. Two of our most attended clubs are Warhammer and Sewing Club. Mrs Baker's Sewing Club have made 'plushies' this term. Well done!



**World Book Day** - Lots of PJ's and lots of book characters this year, everyone looked lovely. Thank you for all those who bought in their favourite books to show all the other children. I love the idea of this; the children can recommend to others which books are great to read. Look out for us in the Newbury Weekly News.

*We hope you enjoy seeing what our amazing school takes part in over the school year.*

**Applications for our Nursery (N2) ages 3-4 years with 15 free government funded hours per week for September 2026/2027 is now open. If anyone is interested in a place or would like to have a look around please email the school office.**

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)

## **Brimpton Parish Council**

The Parish Council met on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. We discussed a planning application for Jakari in Bannister Place. It sought approval for a new single storey front extension to the garage, extension to the rear gable projection to form a larger floor area at ground floor level, an additional bedroom with dormer and roof terrace and an additional dormer to the existing first floor with new Velux roof lights. We had no objections to the application.

The Speed Indicator Device has been damaged and cannot be repaired. We agreed to apply to the Police & Crime Commissioner for funds to purchase a replacement which would be used only within the parish of Brimpton.

A grant application from the Parochial Church Council was withdrawn because following discussions with churches who have had similar problems, the Save Our Spire working group has recommended the PCC should instead seek additional tenders for the work which would then give a range of expected costs.

Following enquiries by the Parish Council and individual residents, we have received a briefing note from West Berkshire Council's Planning Enforcement Team regarding the unauthorised mobile home on the plot known as Twin Paddocks, Blacknest Lane. The note covers the following points:

*The Planning Inspector gave a 12-month compliance period ending on 4th March 2026, requiring the cessation of residential use and the removal of the structures and works identified in the Enforcement Notice.*

*The Council has been awaiting the conclusion of the compliance period for the notice. Now this has expired, the Council will review the situation and determine the appropriate next steps to progress the enforcement investigation. The Council will also consider and determine a new planning application for the site in the normal way, alongside progressing the enforcement investigation.*

*The new application is described as a materially different proposal and is submitted with the stated intention of addressing the breaches identified in the Enforcement Notice. It is currently going through validation. Once valid, it will be published on the Council's online planning portal and the usual public consultation period will begin.*

*The Enforcement Notice remains fully in force. The submission of a new planning application does not remove the landowner's responsibility to comply with it. The Council will continue to pursue compliance with the Enforcement Notice.*

*The Council is reviewing the level of non-compliance with the Enforcement Notice. As part of this, we are gathering information and assessing the most appropriate steps in line with national planning guidance. Where necessary, further action may be taken.*

The Parish Council will meet again in the Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April. The meeting is open to everyone to attend. If you are concerned about something that is not on the agenda, you are welcome to come along and raise it in the Open Forum at the start of the meeting. You will find the agenda and supporting papers on our website three days before the meeting: [www.brimpton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.brimpton-pc.gov.uk)

**John Hicks**  
**Chairman, Brimpton Parish Council**

## ST PETER'S BRIMPTON SOS – SAVE OUR SPIRE

As we reported last month, the PCC has appointed a working group from across the Brimpton community to recommend a way forward and manage the project. The group consists of Philip Turner (chairman), John Hicks, Nick Matthews, Toby du Pré, Brenda Scott and Patricia Brims. Its role is to advise the PCC, which remains ultimately responsible for decisions.



As a starting point the group is looking for ways of reducing the cost without compromising on quality. We have contacted other churches with similar projects, and we are following up the information they have shared with us. In particular, they have told us about the materials and contractors they have used, and have given advice about applying for grants, all of which is helpful.

A number of Brimpton people have already started fundraising for the project, which is fantastic. Thank you very much! We have been asked to confirm that the money raised will be ring fenced for the spire, and the PCC can confirm this. The Spire Fund is accounted for separately from all other church funds. The Spire Fund means what it says.

Another question that has been asked by Brimpton residents is whether it might be possible to save money by using a cherry picker rather than scaffolding. We took further professional advice about this, and unfortunately it really would be impossible because of the “limited access into the churchyard, the height/reach requirement and the ground conditions”.

Scaffolding is the only option, but we are determined to make sure we get the best value.

Thank you again for your support and interest, and we will keep in touch. We plan to hold another open meeting when we have something definite to report, and in the meantime please watch this space in the Villages' News, on John Hicks's Brimpton Update, on Brimpton News and Views, and on the AWB Benefice website.

### *SOS working group*

### Diary Dates

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April:** Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall. Starts at 7.30pm.

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April:** Coffee morning in St Peter's Church, 10am to 11.30am. Everyone (including dogs) welcome.

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May:** Parish Council Annual Meeting, including election of Chairman for 2026/27.

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May:** Coffee morning in St Peter's Church, 10am to 11.30am. Everyone (including dogs) welcome.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May:** Annual Plant Sale in St Peter's Church, 10am to 12.00pm.

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June:** Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall. Starts at 7.30pm.

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June:** Coffee morning in St Peter's Church, 10am to 11.30am. Everyone (including dogs) welcome.

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August:** Summer BBQ at the Village Hall. Live music. Details to follow.

## **Brimpton Church 100 Club**

The 100 Club winner in March was no. 109, Nigel Jones.

A reminder: if you have not already done so, please renew your numbers **in** Brimpton's 100 Club. There is no limit to how many numbers you can hold, and the cost is £12 per number for the year. There is a cash prize of £30 for one number each month.

Payment can be made online to:

Brimpton PCC 100 Club, Sort Code 30-96-96, Account no. 04419615. Please give your name as the BACS reference.

or

Cash or cheque payable to Brimpton PCC 100 Club. Please send to Patricia Brims, Brimpton Lodge, Wasing Road, Brimpton, RG7 4TG (Tel. 0118 9714085).

Many thanks for your support.

## **BRIMPTON WI**

Our February Meeting was our Annual Meeting. Following an update of our financial position we reviewed our activities of the past 12 months. Our speakers over the period covered a variety of topics ranging from genetically modified food, historic knitting and millinery. Our outings included pottery painting in Thatcham and a guided tour and afternoon tea at Shaw House. In November we celebrated our 50th Birthday with prosecco and cake and, having won a competition to design and make a new Banner for Berkshire Federation, we handed over the completed banner to the Federation Chair, Trish Kilgour. This was a very proud moment for Brimpton WI.

At the Annual Meeting we also elected the Committee for the coming year and re-appointed Shelley Bassil as our President for a further 12 months. Once the business of the evening was complete we enjoyed refreshments of nibbles and prosecco.

The programme for the coming year has been finalised and as well as our monthly meetings we have social events and outings planned. Our April Meeting (Tuesday 21st) is a talk by Kathy McDonald, a BA Pilot. This is an open meeting and visitors are welcome. We do not charge for visitors.

On April 28th we will be holding our annual Beetle Drive, the cost for the evening is £8 which includes supper. This is a fun evening and is open to all, if you would like to attend please contact Shelley Bassil (0118 971 0563).

# BRIMPTON PLANT SALE

COFFEE & RAFFLE

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 10.00 am – 12.00**

in St Peter's Church, Brimpton RG7 4TJ



## COFFEE MORNINGS

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month  
IN BRIMPTON CHURCH  
10 am - 11.30 am**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May  
Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

*Everyone welcome  
(including dogs)*



**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April  
10am - 1pm**

## **Brimpton Church SPRING CLEAN**

and small maintenance jobs

**Hot water, polish and dusters provided  
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and good company!**

*We will be very grateful to anyone who can  
spare an hour or two.*

## Dear God

So far today I've done Ok. I haven't gossiped or lost my temper. I haven't been grumpy, nasty or selfish.

But in a few minutes I'm going to get out of bed, and that is when I'm going to need all the help I can get!

# Midgham News

## The Bells

In February our local bell engineer Mark Backhouse and I drove to Whites of Appleton to pick up 10 new pulleys to replace old and worn ones. In early March we put a large protecting sheet on the church floor with an old decorating table. Mark went up the bell tower and removed the old pulleys.



Next on the table we dismantled the bearings and the spaces and then put them into the new pulleys. Mark then replaced the new pulleys.



Old Bearings

The old pulleys are mixture of different colours and age. The pulleys help guide the ropes into the correct places. These may be at least twenty years old. When they are made they are turned from large nylon material. So they are costly to manufacture. In the next three weeks I have arranged a quarter peal to celebrate the new pulleys. This will be on a Saturday morning.



**Roy Pratley**

## Midgham Village Hall

The coffee mornings in April will be on 1st, 15th, and 29th. Please save the date for Midgham Village Hall plant sale on Saturday 23rd May 10am to 3pm.



## Midgham Café Church

*Fist Thursday of the month* April 2nd, May 7th  
Join us for tea, cake and fellowship 2.00pm  
in the church  
Contact Sarah Henderson for more information  
Tel: 0118 9713956 [henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com](mailto:henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com)



## **“Bonsai Cats” The New Fashion Arriving in the UK from the Far-East**

I thought I would write a short article on a phenomenon that is now sweeping through Europe having originated in Japan and then taken the Far-East by storm – the fashion status of owning a “bonsai cat”. The driving force for this craze was the Japanese’ love of cats coupled with the extremely cramped nature of the apartments for much of the population.

It was demonstrated many years ago by the celebrated Japanese veterinary surgeon, Minoru Isobe, that constraining weaned kittens in a square box and feeding them a protein-rich diet meant that, as they grew, their bodies would assume the shape of the box and, over the course of several months, the cat would adopt a cubic shape as the bones hardened. It could then be removed, retaining a semi-cubic shape. This makes the cat far easier to store at night – e.g. on a shelf or work surface and so a much more amenable pet for a small apartment. Furthermore, the cat can be taken on public transport and conveniently stored on the luggage rack for the duration of the journey. Another advantage is that the cat is far less likely to want to roam as the legs are shorter than normal.

Before people start to react in horror, you can be assured that cats are naturally somnolent and are attracted to confined spaces. Thus, the kittens adapt rapidly to their training environment. I can testify to this as I have treated my kitten in this manner over 6 months and now have a very happy “bonsai cat” of my own. As you can see from the photographs, she is totally content in her training box and will even play with toys whilst in it. The third photograph shows how convenient it is to store her on a flat surface. Rest assured, she is always completely at ease and relaxed - to the point of being catatonic.



In fact, the “English short hair” breed, like my little cat, is one of the more challenging subjects for this treatment. Persian breeds are far easier for the beginner as the flattened face lends itself far more readily to such formative treatment and the thick fur means that it can be trimmed to enhance the vertices of the cubic shape, leading to an extremely refined end result.

If anybody would like more information on this fascinating and highly rewarding hobby, please feel free to contact me via my email. I am looking into setting up a local bonsai cat appreciation group and do have a range of training boxes for free loan. I also have details of a private emergency medical call-out team in case of any mishaps.

***Frances Ursula Rachel Ball (FURBall@cat<sup>3</sup>.com)***



## Holy Week

### **Maundy Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

St Peter's, Woolhampton      7.30pm  
Holy Communion

### **Good Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

St Matthew's, Midgham  
Children's Service and Craft      11am

St Mary's, Aldermaston      2pm  
The Hour at the Cross



### **Easter Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> April**

St Mary, Beenham	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Peter, Brimpton	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Matthew, Midgham	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas, Wasing	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Peter, Woolhampton	10.45am	Holy Communion

Any queries, please contact the Revd Jane Manley 0118 9712 891 [jmanley.awb@gmail.com](mailto:jmanley.awb@gmail.com)

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

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

5 April	10:45	Holy Communion, Wasing
12 April	10:45	Holy Communion
19 April	10:45	Holy Communion

**St Marys, Beenham**

5 April	09:15	Holy Communion
12 April	09:15	Holy Communion
19 April	09:15	Holy Communion

**St Peters, Brimpton**

5 April	10:45	Holy Communion
12 April	09:15	Morning Praise
19 April	10:45	Holy Communion

**St Matthews, Midgham**

5 April	09:15	Holy Communion
19 April	09:15	Holy Communion
26 April	17:00	Evensong

**St Peters, Woolhampton**

5 April	10:45	Holy Communion
19 April	10:45	Holy Communion
26 April	10:45	Holy Communion

Details correct at time of going to print.

## 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

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