
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

Doctors' surgeries:

Chapel Row Surgery: 0118 971 3252

Holmwood Surgery: 0118 981 4166

Mobile library: 01635 519827

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

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

Beenham: 07793 116 937

Brimpton: 0118 971 3731

Midgham: 07941 093 853

Woolhampton: bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

Churches:

Aldermaston & Woolhampton Benefice: 0118 971 2891

Brimpton Baptist Church: 0118 971 2059

Douai Abbey: 0118 971 5300

Magazine advertising:

Brenda Scott: 0118 971 3113 mrsboscott@btinternet.com

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Committee Comments

Firstly, wishing you all a Happy New Year [even if rather belatedly].

Well, Christmas has been and gone and I managed to go the whole festive season without having any turkey at all. If you are feeling sad that it is all over, don't worry there are only 328 days to go until next Christmas.

What I used to like just after Christmas in past years were the January sales, a great time to go and do your Christmas shopping as most things were anything up to half price, but as time marches on the excitement of it seems to have faded.

Anyway, with that behind us we have lots to look forward to. The days are starting to draw out, the snowdrops are out and the daffodils are all pushing through [although the house opposite me had daffodils in flower back in December]. This year also sees the 80th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War, so what events that is going to bring will no doubt become clearer over the coming months, and we have summer to come to boot.

That all said we express our grateful thanks to all the advertisers who continue to support us, our printer and distributors without whom you wouldn't get a copy of the magazine, and last but not least our readers, without whom we wouldn't exist.

ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send articles for the magazine to:

For the villages of Aldermaston and Wasing: cathy.jones@ukmessage.com

For the village of Brimpton: brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk

For the village of Beenham: patowen0@hotmail.com

For the villages of Midgham and Woolhampton:

henderson.sarah.c.@outlook.com

Please send articles relevant to the all the villages to:

brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk and henderson.sarah.c.@outlook.com

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

Articles are included at the editor's discretion.

Advertising enquiries can be sent to mrsboscott@btinternet.com

We hope you enjoy reading your magazine.



WEST BERKS FOODBANK

HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

How foodbanks work

Providing emergency food to people in crisis. Every day people in the UK go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. A simple box of food makes a big difference, with foodbanks helping prevent crime, housing loss, family breakdown and mental health problems.

Schools, churches, businesses and individuals donate non-perishable, in-date food to a foodbank. Large collections often take place as part of Harvest Festival celebrations and food is also collected at supermarkets.

Volunteers sort food to check that it's in date and pack it into boxes ready to be given to people in need. Over 40,000 people give up their time to volunteer at foodbanks.

Foodbanks partner with a wide range of care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers and police to identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher.

Foodbank clients bring their voucher to a foodbank centre where it can be redeemed for seven days' emergency food. Volunteers meet clients over a warm drink or free hot meal and are able to signpost people to agencies able to solve the longer-term problem.

Food items urgently needed

Dried powdered milk; cleaning products, razors male and female, baby food age 10 months, long life juice.

Low on stock

Tinned carrots or peas, tinned rice, UHT full fat milk, non-biological washing powder/pods, toothpaste.

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

Defibrillators

In previous issues we have provided information about the location of the defibrillators across our local area. As the equipment is sometimes out of action for maintenance and the list changes as new ones are added to the network, we will not list them here, but you can check out the location of our local ones through this website: <https://www.defibfinder.uk/>

Of course, you may not be close to home when a situation develops. So rather than wasting time wondering if there is a defibrillator nearby, the most important thing to do is to dial 999 if you come across someone who is unresponsive and start CPR. If you are on your own, do not stop performing CPR to go and get a defibrillator. If possible, get someone else to continue with the 999 call while you carry on with CPR. When you call 999, the operator will tell you if there is a public access defibrillator nearby, what the location is and at that point you will be given the access code to the cabinet.

You do not need training to use a defibrillator. Although the machines can vary, they all function in broadly the same way. Once you turn the defibrillator on, it will tell you what to do. The device gives clear, spoken instructions and will not deliver a shock unless it is needed. Early CPR and defibrillation can double a person's chances of surviving an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Every defibrillator has a named 'Guardian' who is responsible for checking the equipment on a regular basis to ensure that it is ready to be used; this person then updates the central system, The Circuit, so that the 999 operators can give out accurate information in the event of an emergency.

NATURE NOTES

I am very thankful that we have had a few sharp frosts and hope we have some more before the real spring weather arrives. Flowers have been blooming out of season and are then shocked by frosts. Most of them will survive as our native plants are pretty hardy. When you think that in some regions, plants survive a daily change of temperature of more than 30 degrees centigrade, ours have quite an easy time.

Our usual local bird population seems to be flourishing, but I have not seen or heard of any winter exotics this year. Wild birds are not immune to diseases though and it seems blackbirds are the latest to suffer, from a mosquito-borne virus. Presumably we have more mosquitos because of a warming climate. We all have to accept the advantages and disadvantages.

Happy New Year!

Aldermaston News

Aldermaston Coffee Club

Drop by for a chat, a chance to meet old friends and to make new ones.
Join us in the conservatory area of Hilliers' café on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday
of each month, any time from 10.00am – 11.30am.

Everyone is welcome – just come along.

For further details contact Cynthia Newman 0118 971 3525



SHOWTIME



a 1940s Revue

FRI 21st FEB, SAT 22nd FEB, FRI 28th FEB, Sat 1st Mar

*£1 discount
before Feb 1st*

DINNER/THEATRE TICKET : £28

THU 27th FEB - SHOW ONLY : £10



BOX OFFICE : aldermastonplayers.co.uk



Aldermaston & Wasing Show AGM – Chairman’s Report - Summary

Firstly, our thanks go once again to The Old Mill for allowing us to hold the Show in their grounds and for hosting us so well. We never take this for granted and appreciate the close cooperation between us. We also thank the Show sponsors which have stepped up to provide more support in a very difficult economic environment.

We had a new committee for 2024, but none of the Show would be possible without the years and decades of work done by previous Show Committee members and helpers, several of whom have stepped down this year. I’d like to extend our thanks and appreciation for the continued help and support so willingly given by former committee members in this year of transition.

2024 was the year that the Show was rejuvenated by the introduction of local, committed and enthusiastic people to make up an almost new committee. Think back a year, to last January, from a standing start, they got to grips with the practicalities of putting the 2024 Show on. That was a tremendous achievement. To succeed in this whilst modernising, improving and reinventing our tired, old-fashioned systems which have been in place for perhaps too long, has been amazing. Doing all this, whilst maintaining the many traditional aspects, attractions, and events which people love and come to see every year was wonderful to see.

The traditional Committee roles and responsibilities have been shared to make them easier and more manageable. This has required close co-operation between Committee members and the trust to get things done. For that they should be congratulated. It has been a steep learning curve for all, but it will get easier going forward. New members are always welcome.

Over the past year, with new optimism in the future, the Show also has invested in that future. We have completely rebuilt our website to give it a more modern look and better functionality. New online processes make it easier for competition and marquee crafters to enter, and for us to deal with those entries. The advice and assistance from our Webmaster, Tony Girling, working so well with us has been invaluable, even into his retirement.

In response to an increasingly cashless society, we have introduced more opportunities to make contactless payment. One of the main income generators has been the Duck Derby. After over 30 years with no increase in prizes or ticket prices, our new committee agreed to take a bold step and increase both with much larger cash prizes on offer. Successful sponsorship made this a win-win for the Show and for the charities we support.

One thing out of our control as ever, was the weather. An indifferent forecast for Show Day turned to glorious warm sunshine! One of the best weekends in an otherwise soggy summer! This undoubtedly helped bring more people in and made the Show even more successful. I would like to reiterate that this Show of ours is a community event and it can only thrive with the active support of the local community. Please do get involved, as an entrant in the competitions and produce sections, or as a helper on the stalls we put on. We could do so much more with more willing volunteers or join us on the committee. We still really do need your help as we look forward and to consolidating the undoubted achievements of the last year and continually improving for years to come.

Clive Vare, Committee Chair

Website: awshow.org.uk

This year’s Show will take place on Sunday 7th September at 1.30pm.

Aldermaston Parish Council– 14th January 2025

First of all, some good news! We have been successful in our efforts to find a successor to Revd Jane Manley. Two strong candidates presented themselves at the start of our meeting and we eventually selected Ed Tilsley of Maida's Way, as our new Parish Councillor. Ed, who I am sure many of you know, has lived in the village for several years, and is currently the editor of the Parish Council newsletter, so he knows, to a certain extent, what he is letting himself in for! As I have already said, the other candidate was equally strong, and we are sure his opportunity will occur before too long. In the meantime, we thank all for the interest shown.

In open forum we were faced with a delegation who wanted to know APC's position on the appeal by Easy Concrete at The Woodyard, Paice's Hill. Our chairman explained that it was on the agenda for discussion at tonight's meeting, but she felt that it was not one of the reasons for rejection last year but simply a resubmission of their case. She therefore anticipated that the APC response would be very much as before with the added proviso of normalisation. This turned out to be the case.

On the planning front we reviewed a further three applications. We agreed to return no objection to both the applications for the provision of bifold doors at the Old Mill, Station Road (al listed building) and a retrospective building at Sasron, Paice's Hill, though we will make reference to the flooding issues at the A340 on the latter site. Consistent with our policy of objecting to all developments that will lead to an increase in HGV movements through the village, we will object, however, to the retrospective application to regularise the provision of a scaffold storage facility at Young's Industrial Estate on Paice's Hill.

Since our last meeting, there has been just one planning decision by WBC. Disappointingly they have rejected the plan to merge the two remaining Dixon Cottages into one. (APC didn't object as the street view is unaltered)

The 2025/26 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 now have evidence that the traffic is speeding outside Hilliers Garden Centre and have concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians using the crossing there. We have reflected these concerns to WBC. The Speed Indicator Device (SID) used has developed flat batteries and we are talking to both Brimpton and Beenham PCs regarding sharing the cost of replacing them.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 11th February 2025 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

Dave Shirt
tel. 0118 971 2549

ALDERMASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The new term has started with one of our favourite weeks of the year – our Healthy Living Week. This has involved the whole school taking part in a variety of health-related activities and discussions including cooking, what makes a balanced diet, quality and quantity of sleep, use of screen time and of course lots of physical activity. The whole school (over 100 children aged between 4-11) went climbing and challenged themselves to climb high and have fun which they certainly did.

Through activities like these and others on offer during Healthy Living Week, we can help to broaden children's experiences of physical activity and sports and in many cases, to try something new. We hope the children have had a fantastic week and you enjoy hearing about their Healthy Living Week experiences and what they have learnt about looking after their physical and emotional wellbeing.

We continue to offer a range of extra-curricular clubs including Street Dance, Acrobatics and Multiskills plus our weekly Reading Café, where children and parents come along after school on a Tuesday to enjoy listening to a story and to sit and read a book of their choice.

Another one of our popular Family Learning Mornings is planned for later in the month. This is when parents/carers come in for the morning session to work alongside their children on a particular aspect of the curriculum. These sessions provide a great opportunity to see the classrooms in action and how readily the pupils enjoy having visitors who are sharing the learning environment with them. Always a fun and energetic event.

Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor

The Aldermaston Charity

**is looking for a paid part time clerk
approximately 10 hours a month**

Flexible hours, working from home, supporting the Charity Trustees.

High level of confidentiality required.

Own computer and access to own transport would be needed.

Further information from:

Angela Boott: ange@kennetonline.co.uk

Cynthia Newman: cmnewman2021@outlook.com

Beenham News

BVE (Beenham Village Events) Update

Although we are now looking forward to the longer days, warmer weather and seeing the beautiful spring flowers brightening our gardens, I would like to reflect back to the Christmas period. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Tree Lighting event with the mince pies and mulled wine and carol singing led by Da Capo. A very successful start to December although storm "Burt" did take the top off the Village Christmas Tree!

Thank you also to those who made an Advent Window, including the Pre-School, School, Church and Victory Hall. It always astounds me as to how creative everyone is, and how exciting it is 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.

Thank you also to everyone who contributed to the Beenham 2025 calendars, so many of you created two different versions! We have just a handful left if you'd like one at a reduced price. 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 Wood
Advent Windows	Santa's sleigh ride

Christmas Tree Lighting followed by mulled wine, mince pies and carols.
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 a very small group, and we are always looking for more members – 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**

Village market news

The next village market will take place on Saturday 8 February, from 2.00 till 3.30. There has been a lot of demand for stalls, so if you are interested, please contact the market organiser in good time: this is Sally Pellow, on mrssallypellow@gmail.com or on 0777 625 1228.

There is no charge to stallholders on their first market; after that we ask for 10% of sales proceeds.

If you haven't been to the market before, it's well worth dropping in and having a lovely browse - not least for the lovely tea and cakes!

Notes from Beenham Parish Council Meeting: Monday January 6th 2025

Public Forum

Beenham School Headteacher, Amy Donnelly (on sabbatical) has resigned. The recruitment of a replacement has started.

Thanks were expressed for the successful events held over Christmas.

Apologies for absence

In the absence of Graham Bowsher, Peter McEwen acted as Chair for the meeting.

Councillors

Dates for 2025 PC meetings were agreed - mostly first Monday in the month.

Clay Lane flooding. No progress from WBC as yet.

Affordable Housing Project; next steps are to contact WBC for discussions and progression.

Discussion was held regarding the recent sale of two SNG (formerly Sovereign) properties in Beenham. The PC to seek clarification on their policy of property disposal and ask if they could be informed if properties become available in the future.

New Bus service. No update.

Proposed 20mph speed limit. Waiting for update.

Councillors responsibilities. Dieter Hinke has resigned so some responsibilities were reallocated until the vacancy is filled. Peter McEwen - Four Parish SID, Footpaths and Roads, David Hancock - Police liaison and Peter Hamblin - Victory Hall liaison.

Parking on footpaths. A notice will be placed on vehicles parked on footpaths, explaining that this is dangerous for pedestrians and those with disabilities.

Vacancy for Councillor. One applicant so far.

Planning Matters

-24/02477/HOUSE: 7 Back Lane. Single storey rear and side extension. No objection.

24/02655/LBC and 24/02654/HOUSE: The Old Dairy, Webbs Lane. Single storey extension. No objection.

Approvals by WBC.

-24/01478/LBC: Ferrises, Upper Woolhampton. Replacement of tiles.

-24/02352/COND: Beenham Landfill site - permanent use of existing laydown area and new ancillary workshop.

- Proposed Ashamstead Road closure, Bradfield. It is likely that WBC Highways will not approve long term closure, but will consider closure as and when necessary.

Aldermaston Wharf

-defibrillator placement and power supply - progress is being made.

-Mallard Way parking problems were especially severe over Christmas. WBC to be contacted.

Financial Matters

- precept kept at same level for the next financial year.

Next meeting: Monday February 3rd in the Community Room at 7.00pm.

All correspondence to the council should be addressed to the Parish Clerk - Lauren West Tel: 07919 916125; email: clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk

Community Room Bookings: Paula Read Tel: 07793116937; email: info@beenhampreschool.org

Parish Council website: www.beenham-pc.gov.uk

Beenham Community Website: <https://www.beenhamonline.org>

Greyfield Wood Villages' Magazine – February 2025 Edition



Hello and a very happy New Year to you from Greyfield Wood!

As we move into the new year, we are continuing to make safe the public footpaths in the wood, by felling and logging trees infected with Ash dieback disease. Hopefully this work will be completed by the end of February.

The wet weather is still preventing the main contract felling operation originally planned for last Autumn! I will keep you posted on when this will commence, but I suspect it will be well into Spring at the earliest.

It is with some sadness that I report that Ian Johnson has decided to reduce his responsibilities and has resigned as a director. Ian has, for some 25 years, been a major figure in the woodland activities and in more recent years has led the other directors and volunteers in driving the woodland initiatives and weekly work. His teaching, coaching and experience has been essential as he has patiently mentored and guided the newer directors and volunteers. The village owes him a great debt and we thank him for his commitment and dedication. Ian will be missed on the board, but I am pleased to say that he will still be working with us and active in the wood. Thank you Ian!

That is it for this edition, but please let me know if you would like to join one of our monthly Saturday morning volunteer sessions, as we start on another annual cycle in our beautiful wood on the outskirts of Beenham.

John Hammond

john@meadvale-bays.com

07818 400440

Beenham Allotments

Have you made any new year's resolutions? If your resolutions include keeping fit, getting more fresh air and eating more fruit and vegetables, why not put your name on the waiting list for an allotment. We prioritise residents of Beenham Parish but we do occasionally have vacancies for those from just outside the parish.

A half plot measures 4.5 meters by 11 meters. The allotments are in a quiet corner off of Back Lane. It is locked, peaceful and secure.

Having an allotment is very rewarding but does need commitment. The soil is mainly clay which is very fertile which benefits from regular input.

Please do get in touch via email beenhamallotment@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

DECEMBER AT BEENHAM CLUB

December was a busy month at Beenham Club. In addition to the regular Darts Competitions, Bingo Nights and Open Mic Acoustic Evenings there were some extra special gigs:

We hosted a day of music with the Play for Ukraine Fundraiser. Four excellent bands played: The Mochlees, Caz & the Traitors, Contraband and The Skavengers. The event raised £1410.95 for humanitarian aid which was passed to Reading Branch of the Association of Ukrainians.

The fabulous Ma Bessie and Her PigFoot Band entertained us at the beginning of December. This event coincided with a very special 70th Birthday for Pat. I think we were very fortunate that a couple of dance groups attended and showed us all some lovely dance moves.

New Year's Eve was another amazing night with UPRAW. It's always a great time with a band like this as they keep the energy high and deliver a setlist that appeals to everyone. They provided the perfect mix of songs across most eras, which saw everybody come together and created a very lively fun evening. A small presentation was made to Paul Johnson who has retired as our Treasurer after some 25+ years. Paul has worked tirelessly to keep the club going for many years and we are going to miss his input but would like to wish him well and hope that he enjoys his retirement.

After all the excitement of the evening it was hard to call it a night but we think exhaustion took over and we had to give in and get some rest to start 2025!!

This year we have raised over £3500 for Charity – pretty impressive for a small village club that only opens when there are events.

All of the events were made possible by members of the club committee, which is entirely made up of Volunteers, all working full-time as well as dedicating time to the Club and the Community. We are in desperate need of new committee members to ease the strain – the more members the less time consuming it is for individuals. We need to share the load so if you can help no matter how small please get in touch we'd love to have you join us!

St Mary's Church, Beenham

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

We are delighted to let you know that:

The Christingle raised £130.00 for the Children's Society

The Belle Canto Concert raised £400 towards the maintenance of the St Mary's.

The Carol Service meant we could send £158 to the Food Bank

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

We are very grateful for volunteers to help keep our church and church grounds in good order.

We meet on the first 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 2025 from St Mary's team.

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR BEENHAM – FEB 2025

Date	Event	Where	contact
Tuesdays	Art Group 10am-12pm	Victory Hall	Sunny: 9712255
Tuesdays	Badminton Club 8pm – 9.30pm	School Hall	Ernie: 07954 127 771
Sat 1 st	Church Working Party. All help is most welcome	St Mary's Church 10am	Janette:07917818 283
Sat 1 st	Charity Karaoke Night 8pm	Six Bells	0118 971 3368
Mon 3 rd	Parish Council Meeting 7pm	Community Rm	
Thu 6 th	Beenham Walkers: local walk along the canal	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481
Sat 8 th	Village Market and repair shop 2-3.30pm	Victory Hall	01183430548
Wed 12 th	WI: Talk about Silk Road in Uzbekistan. £4 non-members	Community Rm 7.30pm	Sally:07776 251 228
Thu 13 th	Charity Quiz Night 8pm Teams up to 6 £4/person	Six Bells 7.30 for 8pm	9713368 to book
Sat 15 th	Calleva Stick Dressers 9am–2pm	Victory Hall	David:07864 180 648
Sat 15 th	Live Music and Acoustic Night 7.30pm	Beenham Club	9713991
Wed 19 th	Beenham Friendship Club for over 55s - 2pm	Victory Hall	Marion:9713094 Tina:01635826154
Thu 20 th	Local Circular Walk. Avenue Woods at Chapel Row and back via Hatch Lane.	Meet at Victory Hall at 9.30am	Pauline Stares 01189713481
Thu 20 th	Film night: "Thelma"- comedy drama. £5 a ticket (cash only)	Victory Hall 7.00 for 7.30pm	Claire:9713574
Tue 25 th	Beenham Tearoom 2pm-3.30pm	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 or 07947478840

WI News

Beenham WI celebrated Christmas and the New Year with supper in the Community Room, with mince pies and mulled wine at the Six Bells, and with a shared Christmas card and associated collection in aid of Cancer Research. Since Christmas we also hosted a craft morning in the Village Hall where there was great conversation, plenty of tea and cake and some output in making bereavement bags for the Royal Berkshire Hospital, knitted creme egg cosies for the Anthony Devine Hospice and some assembling of overnight emergency packs for hospital visitors who have had no time to stop and pack a bag. We held our first meeting of the year, discussing the proposed resolutions for the annual WI campaign.

Our next meeting on Feb 12th at 7.30pm is a speaker, Helen Hyde, talking about her travels along the Silk Road in Uzbekistan.

All are welcome (visitors pay a contribution of £4)

If you would like to come along and join us, or know more about Beenham WI, please contact our President, Sally Pellow, on mrssallypellow@gmail.com or on 0777 625 1228. We are a friendly group, with plenty of warmth and laughter at our meetings: women of any age are very welcome.

Brimpton News

BRIMPTON WI NEWS

November and December with the build-up for Christmas and the New Year, are busy months for our WI and its members. Add in a visit to the "Nutcracker" Ballet, which was thoroughly enjoyed by a group of our Members at Arlington Arts, plus a Craft Day at the Village Hall, where we not only learnt the basic skills for making acrylic flowers and did some paper craft, but over a lunch break for homemade soup and cake, had an excellent social time too.

November's meeting gave us an interesting talk by Sarah Cox, a retired policewoman, who used her experiences in the force as background, plus her ability to write and became a published novelist of a series of crime novels. December is the month where members and their guests come to our annual buffet supper. This has become so popular over the years with members and is also always greatly looked forward to by our WI husbands as being a time when they too can meet up socially. As usual the food was the star attraction of the evening, and the committee and members had prepared a feast of different tempting dishes which were enjoyed by all those who attended.

Next Meeting: February meeting 18 February is our Annual Meeting at which we retrospectively review the WI year which will have just ended, but this is also an opportunity to have a prolonged social time, and discuss plans for the new WI year.

Contacts 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

Gwynedd Roberts
WI correspondent



COFFEE MORNINGS

2nd Wednesday of the month
IN BRIMPTON CHURCH
10 am - 11.30 am

Wednesday 12th March
Wednesday 9th April
Wednesday 14th May
Wednesday 11th June

*Everyone welcome
(including dogs)*



COFFEE

CAKE

and



T O M B O L A

SATURDAY 22ND MARCH
10am – 12.00
BRIMPTON VILLAGE HALL
*To raise funds for assessment of the spire of
St Peter's Church*



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 2025!

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 and the school worked hard to raise money which enables us to do little extras for the children. A massive thank you to everyone.

We are busy rehearsing for the annual Junior Music Festival at The Hexagon in Reading which is such a highlight in our school calendar. We attended the O2 Young Voices during the middle part of January and as always it was an amazing experience for all the children and staff.

Good Vibes – we now have teachers in school from Good Vibes based in Newbury who teach piano, guitar, ukulele and drums. Our children are very lucky to be able to have this amazing facility.

Chair of Governors message: *Welcome to Brimpton School where visitors will always be greeted by happy, smiling children. This may be a small school but the wealth of education the children receive enables them, when moving on to other schools, to do so with confidence and a wide range of abilities. Brimpton School is such an important and necessary asset to our village and the surrounding community and your support is always appreciated.*

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 www.brimpton.w-berks.sch.uk

Brimpton 100 Club

The 100 Club winner for January was no. 156, Dawn Ebsworth

Brimpton Parish Council

In the Open Forum of our December meeting, the churchwardens of St Peter's spoke about a problem that has been identified with the church spire. Wooden shingles have been dropping off and a recent inspection revealed that many of the shingles on the spire are at the end of their life. In January we granted the Parochial Church Council £6,000 towards a specialist assessment of the problem.

In December we noted that tankers contracted by Thames Water were being used to remove excess water from the sewerage pumping station in Brimpton Road. We were concerned the tankers were parking in a dangerous way on the bend and also breaking up the verge, as happened last winter. In addition, they have started parking in other lay-bys in the parish so we agreed to raise a complaint with Thames Water. Although we recognised in the short term the work has to be done, the tankers need better management and as this happens every year, we wanted to hear the long-term plan to resolve the issue. As we had not had even an acknowledgement from Thames Water, in January we supported the following motion proposed by Charles Brims:

Brimpton Parish Council resolves not to support any proposals for new houses that would use the sewerage plant in Brimpton Road until the current problems are resolved. The current sewerage plant is already unable to cope with existing demand whenever there is heavy rain, as has happened frequently in recent months and years. Thames Water's present solution is to have a fleet of tankers emptying the sewerage plant 24/7 causing much disruption to the village, road safety concerns and damage to the verges. This situation is already unsustainable and must be solved before any additional houses are added to this inadequate sewerage plant

We are also raising the issue with the Environment Portfolio holder at West Berkshire Council and I have also contacted Olivia Bailey. MP for Reading West and Mid Berkshire.

In December we agreed our budget for 2025/26. After four years of not adding anything to your Council Tax, our reserves have been reduced to a point where we felt we had no alternative but to levy a precept. which will add an average of £38.15 to the Council Tax paid by a Band D household. This is about 73.3 pence per week.

After more flooding, West Berkshire Council confirmed that whilst cleaned out in August 2024, the flow in the gullies by Abel Bridge is not adequate as they are silting up very quickly. Further work is expected but we have not been given a date.

WBC previously rejected a request to install cats eyes in Brimpton Lane, from the approach to Able Bridge leading up to the Back Lane junction. A resident has provided us with more information about current highways requirements which we will use to ask WBC to reconsider their decision.

The Parish Council will meet again on Tuesday 4th February, starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. You can receive Parish Council news and more about local events if you receive by email the fortnightly Parish Update. If you would like to do so, please let me know at john.russet@sky.com.

John Hicks,
Chairman, Brimpton Parish Council

Midgham News

Midgham Café Church

First Thursday of the month

February 6th March 6th

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

Midgham Village Hall

February coffee mornings are on Wednesdays the **5th and 19th from 10-12**

Come and join your friends for a warm cuppa and a slice of cake. Everyone welcome, including well behaved dogs.

And in March the coffee mornings will be on Wednesdays from **10 to 12 on the 5th and the 19th.**

Christmas Bazaar

Thanks to all the villagers who defied storm Bert to come and make the day such a success.



Above: The Carol service at Midgham

Left: We now have a machine for any welcome donations to the upkeep of the church

Woolhampton and Midgham WI

What a busy, exciting time we had in the run up to Christmas. So many activities going on. Only four members (due to illness) managed the visit to Longacres Garden Centre at Bagshot at the beginning of the month. They all had a very pleasant time there and enjoyed a very nice lunch. The report back was so favourable that we have already planned a second visit in March when we shall hopefully get some new ideas for our gardens.

We had a lovely Christmas meal at the Yew Tree Garden Centre. First the opportunity to grab a few last minute presents and ideas for the decorations, then on to savour a really first class three course meal. The twelve members who attended had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Our Christmas Party this year was great fun. We enjoyed a very tasty buffet and then went on to play several very amusing games. Father Christmas then came round with his sack and all the members took a very nice gift home. A good time was had by all!

Now into the New Year. It has been freezing cold – as I am sure you've noticed. Today, as I write, it is one of those miserable damp days, still on the cool side. Well, whatever the weather, we have some lovely visits to look forward to. Our first day out is to see the stunning display of snowdrops at Welford Park. Some members have been before but like to have a repeat visit each year as the display of snowdrops is, I believe, just amazing. Hopefully I shall be able to go this year! I am usually struck down with some winter ailment when the Welford Park visit comes round! Fingers crossed. As well as the aforementioned Longacres Garden centre, another visit planned for later in the spring is to Hampstead Norreys to take a walk among the bluebells before sitting down to have lunch together there. We always like to include a lunch opportunity if we can on our visits out.

Our meeting this month was entitled 'Let Me Entertain You' and it certainly lived up to its billing. We were thoroughly entertained for almost an hour by a very lively lady with a lovely voice – Michelle Rees. Michelle entertained us with a variety of songs, many of which we were invited to sing along with her. She also handed out an array of musical instruments to accompany her. Delicious refreshments followed and a good evening was enjoyed by all. We meet at The Village Hall in Woolhampton on the 2nd Tuesday each month at 7.30pm

If you feel inspired to join our happy band of ladies, more information can be had from our president:

Mrs Beryl Smith 01635 861374
email : berylsmith6@btinternet.com.

Woolhampton News

Village Market

Happy New Year to stallholders, and everyone attending our monthly Village Market. The first Market of 2025 will be on Saturday 1st February from 10am to 12noon in the Village Hall. Here is hoping the weather will be kind for this community event but you are always assured of a warm welcome.

If you have not 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. There is no entry charge and refreshments 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.

District Councillor's Surgery in Woolhampton Village Hall

After holding successful surgeries on the last Saturday of the month during the past year (the last one being 30th November), our District Councillor, Mr Chris Read, intends to continue with them during 2025, starting on Saturday 25th January from 9 to 11a.m. Thereafter on the last Saturday of each month at the same time (the second one being on Saturday 22nd February). He welcomes interaction from local residents

Parish Council

Remember, should you wish to attend a Parish Council meeting, they are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month commencing at 7.30p.m. in the Village Hall. All parish residents are invited to attend; it is an ideal opportunity to get to know your parish councillors.



Woolhampton CE Primary School

Enabling all to Flourish

As the new year begins at our school, it very much feels like a fresh start again for us. Many of you will have heard that Headteacher Kath Burns has taken ill-health retirement due to her on-going journey through cancer. She has left the school with many happy memories and the children, staff and families joined to sing her favourite songs in a beautiful assembly before the Christmas break to say goodbye.



There are too many 'best bits' to mention about Kath's time at Woolhampton but her enthusiasm for every child succeeding and the sound of happy learning will never be forgotten. She arrived with us and very quickly faced the challenges the pandemic brought through leading a school through home learning, bubbles and remote lessons. Kath became an advocate for our forest school and embraced becoming a qualified leader, recognising the benefits and impact for so many children. She will be missed but not forgotten. I am sure our community will join us in wishing her the very best retirement with her family.

And so, it is now time to welcome our new Headteacher, Mrs Rebecca Cox, to the position of Headteacher. Rebecca has been part of the Woolhampton school family since starting her career in teaching and has successfully developed her knowledge, skills and understanding of what makes a school have a strong heartbeat. She also comes with a little shadow, namely Dougal, her dog! We are all excited to see how Rebecca can lead the school on to its next chapter with her new ideas. She embraces our ROCK values of respect, optimism, compassion and koinonia and is keen to ensure every child leaves our school confident for the next stage of their learning, whatever their talents and interests. Congratulations Mrs Cox and we wish you the very best with your new role!



Happy New Year,

Nikki Jordan, Chair of Governors

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

What's on in Woolhampton Village Hall

Village Hall Market – 1st 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 - 1st and 4th 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

Bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

Book keeper/ Treasurer for Woolhampton Village Hall – Paid Position

Our small team of committed trustees is looking for a bookkeeper/ treasurer to help us manage the bank accounts of our wonderful village hall.

This is a paid role, requiring :

Typically, 2-3 hours work each week.

Basic bookkeeping using Sage accounting system online.

Preparing invoices - bookings clerk advises on regular bookings, plus checking reservations on computer package Hallmaster (booking system).

Checking bank statements to ensure payments are received, and in a few instances, banking some cash and cheques.

Making payments to suppliers.

Reconciling monthly bank statements.

Preparing annual accounts for checking.

Liaising with the Chairperson & Bookings Clerk.

If you think you could help, or for further information on the role, please email: bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

The Angel, George Frankum, Arthur Bason and a 'Dug- out' Supper



George Frankum and Arthur Bason were both former landlords of the 'Angel' inn, although separated by 150 years. George, born 1763, spent his childhood at the 'Rising Sun', Woolhampton, where his mother, Sarah, was the inn keeper. He became landlord of the 'Lower Angel' in 1794 (the 'Upper Angel' was later the 'Falmouth Arms'). At this time the Bath Road, having been turnpiked in 1728, became the very busy stagecoach route from London to the West Country and the two 'Angels' and the 'Rising Sun' became busy staging inns. When Mr Stevens of the Aldermaston brewery raised the rent, George left the inn and busied himself with farming and other matters. During these years he bought land and built property, including a family home, now the 'Old Bakery' adjacent to this 'Bow Cottage' as a bakery. He also built the 'Mill', present 'Bottle Cottage' in Brimpton Road, 'Crescent' row of 6 cottages (demolished 1936) close to present 'Water Mill Court' and in 1815, the year of Waterloo, a cottage, later becoming the 'William IV' beer house and now housing the 'Rowbarge' inn.

Arthur Bason became landlord of the 'Angel' in 1925 and was in post in 1931 when the inn was demolished. The village was at this time experiencing the great increase in motor traffic including unskilled drivers (no driving test until 1935), motor cyclists without helmets, charabancs (day trip to Southsea 5s 6d), steam wagons, numerous cyclists and many accidents. Arthur operated a charabanc service from the 'Angel' known locally as the 'Scarlet Runner'. He was a carrier for the GWR with much end of term traffic for Douai school and was a member of the parish council. He was chairman and founder of the local branch of the British Legion. A feature of which was the celebration of a 'Dug-Out Supper'. For this occasion the club room of the 'Angel' was transformed to give the appearance of a 1914-18 'dug-out' with dirt and mud splashed on the walls and roof. Members were issued with rations of bread and 'bully' before entering the dug- out via a dark passage lined with duckboards. Just two candles were issued and they ate in semi-darkness while singing war songs. The end of the meal was marked by the throwing of a stink bomb.

The increase in traffic demanded change. Berkshire County Council began a programme of road widening and in 1931 the transformation of the village began. In 1936 Old Etonian Gerald Pixley became the landlord of the 'new' Angel.

John Trigg

Woolhampton Annual Show 2025

This is the 24th year of the Show which 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 9th 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 largeish 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) 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!).

WASING

1759

An Update from Wasing Estate - A Focus on Wellbeing and New Beginnings

The past month at Wasing has been filled with excitement, and a focus on wellbeing.

January marked Wellbeing Month where we offered a range of classes, workshops, and day retreats designed to refresh both mind and body. We hosted our first Full Moon Sauna and Fireside supper evening at the lake, found inner peace and resilience at our Seasonal Self Care workshop, brought strength and empowerment to those braving an ice bath on our Reconnect ice and breathwork retreat, and found time to stretch with our popular yoga course. If you'd like to learn more about our Wellbeing offering at Wasing please visit wasing.co.uk/wellbeing

One of the standout experiences with the colder weather were the wild swims at our frozen lake, where brave participants broke through the ice to immerse themselves in the chilly waters before rewarming in the comforting heat of our wood-fired sauna. It was a true test of resilience and a unique way for our members to connect with nature.

In addition to the focus on wellbeing, we've been delighted to welcome a number of newly engaged couples who are exploring Wasing Park as a potential venue for their weddings. The excitement and joy in the air have been contagious, and we're looking forward to helping many of these couples turn their special day into an unforgettable celebration with us.

Lastly, we've been fortunate to have three talented sixth-formers from a local school join us for the entire month of January. Their enthusiasm, creativity, and hard work have added a wonderful energy to the estate, and we're proud to offer them the opportunity to learn and grow as part of our team.

It's been a month of new beginnings, community spirit, and natural connection here at Wasing Estate, and we look forward to more exciting activities and milestones in the year ahead!



WASING

1759

Solstice At Wasing

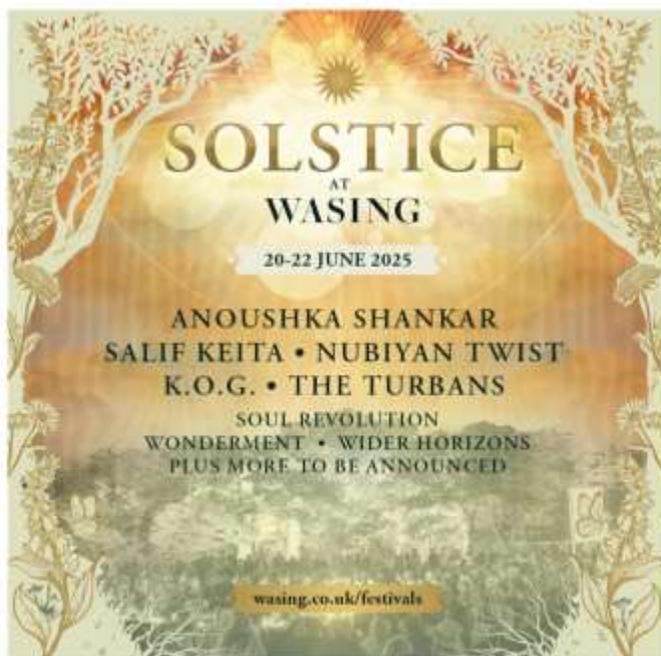
The Solstice Festival is set to return this summer, offering an exciting mix of music, and community spirit right here at Wasing. Taking place from 20th-22nd June, this vibrant festival is an opportunity for those with a passion for world music, wellness, and nature to immerse in a weekend of creativity, culture, and natural beauty.

This year, held in the stunning Wasing Woodlands, the festival promises a blend of immersive music performances from Anoushka Shankar, Salif Keita, K.O.G, Nubiyah Twist and The Turbans to name a few. The event also includes delicious food stalls and wellness experiences designed to connect visitors to the environment around us.

A highlight of the festival will be the sunrise ceremony, where the Summer Solstice will be celebrated with a special gathering high on the estate's picturesque grounds and also the Fireside Sessions in our Sacred Glade. As always, the festival is committed to creating an inclusive and eco-conscious atmosphere, with initiatives to reduce waste and encourage sustainable practices.

Whether you're a music lover, or simply someone looking to enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings of Wasing, Solstice is sure to be a memorable event for our visitors.

Discover more via our website at wasing.co.uk/solstice



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 0118 971 2059

Sunday: 11.00 am and 6.00 pm

Wednesday: 7.00 pm

MOBILE LIBRARY

Friday	March 7th
Midgham, Goddard's Drive	10.00-10.20
Woolhampton, Watermill Ct	10.35-11.15

Wednesday	Mazrch 12th
Aldermaston, Forsters	9.30-9.50
Beenham, Stoneyfields	3.15-4.00

No mobile library in February

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Beenham-Midgham-Woolhampton

For details of services provided, requests and offers to help ring:

0118 9713334 (Mrs Cardy)

Church of England Services

Contact number: 0118 971 2891

(awb.org.uk)

St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston and St Nicholas, Wasing

2 nd February	10:45	Holy Communion
9 th February	10:45	Holy Communion
16 th February	10:45	Morning Praise

St Marys, Beenham

2 nd February	09:15	Holy Communion
9 th February	09:15	Morning Praise
16 th February	09:15	Holy Communion

St Peters, Brimpton

2 nd February	10:45	Holy Communion
9 th February	09:15	Holy Communion
16 th February	09:15	Morning Praise

St Matthews, Midgham

2 nd February	09:15	BCP Communion
16 th February	09:15	Holy Communion
23 rd February	16:00	Evensong

St Peters, Woolhampton

9 th February	10:45	Holy Communion
16 th February	10:45	Holy Communion
23 rd February	10:45	Holy Communion



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