
Villages' News



Please recycle me

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: Graham Pask: 01635 864 023

Aldermasron/Beenham/Brimpton: Dominic Boeck: 07956 546506

Parish Councils: Clerks' details:

Aldermaston: Des Farndell: parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk

Beenham: Jennie Currie: 07495 123 353

Brimpton: Christine McGarvie: 01189 701576

Midgham: Alice Owens: 07896 321058

Woolhampton: Steve Brady: 0118 971 3608

Village Halls: Aldermaston: aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com

Beenham: 07793116937

Brimpton: 0118 971 3731

Midgham: 0794 109 3853

Woolhampton: bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

Churches:

Aldermaston & Woolhampton Benefice:

Revd Jane Manley: 0118 9712891

Brimpton Baptist Church: 0118 971 2059

St Mary's Woolhampton: 0118 971 5350 (9am- 2pm Tue-Fri)

Douai Abbey: 01189 971 539

Magazine advertising: Brenda Scott: 0118 971 3113

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Thattham RG19 4QB . Tel: 01635 876498

Villages' News

So here we go!

In response to an enormous demand for a hardcopy community magazine to be delivered to every household in the villages of Aldermaston, Beenham, Brimpton, Midgham, Wasing and Woolhampton, a team of volunteers has come together to produce this, the first issue, of the "**Villages' News**".

The **Villages' News** will be published on a monthly basis for 11 months a year (no copy in January) and delivered to you by our hard-working and loyal team of local distributors. Without their invaluable support, this magazine could not exist and so they have the gratitude of the team and, we are sure, all of its recipients.

A very clear message came through that people within our villages valued hearing about local news and events and local businesses from a free magazine that arrived on their doormats and could sit on the kitchen table or somewhere around the house to be browsed at leisure. The members of the team sincerely hope that you will provide feedback on the format, structure and content of this magazine as we strive to develop it in its early stages.

In the **Villages' News** we hope to reflect the spirit of the communities within our areas north and south of the A4 and be able to inform people about local events and services for you to take advantage of. If you are organising a community event, please send the details to the relevant person within your village on page 4. We will endeavour to give your article/event space within the magazine, either with a dedicated notice or within the news relating to your specific village. We are simply a team of volunteers and we sincerely hope you will take ownership of the **Villages' News** going forward and engage with us actively, to unite our village communities.

Of course, production of a magazine that is free to its recipients could not be feasible without the support of those businesses and organisations who have chosen to advertise. We hope that you will find some useful contact information. If you need the service of a local business, please mention this magazine when contacting them. Anyone reading this who wishes to advertise, please contact: mrsbscott@btinternet.com. Many people have said they would like to contribute towards the printing costs of the magazine. Details of how to do this will appear in the next issue.

It is our hope the **Villages' News** will embed itself in the heart of all our villages to provide a focal point and encourage the sense of local community.

So here we go! Enjoy!

ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please send articles for the magazine to:

cathy.jones@ukmessage.uk for the villages of Aldermaston and Wasing

brimptoncommon@aol.co.uk for the village of Brimpton

henderson.sarah.c.@outlook.com for the villages of Midgham and Woolhampton

patowen0@hotmail.com for the village of Beenham

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. Advertising enquiries can be sent to mrsbscott@btinternet.com

We hope you enjoy reading this magazine.



WEST BERKS FOODBANK

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

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

URGENTLY NEEDED ITEMS

Long life fruit juice, razors (male and female), sanitary towels (not pantyliners) cleaning sprays, tinned custard, UHT longlife milk (blue or green)

LOW ON STOCK

Tinned tomatoes, cereal bars, ambient healthy snacks for lunchboxes, baby food (all ages)

PLEASE NO MORE OF

Tea and herbal tea, baked beans, pasta, Fray Bentos pies

Drop off locations:

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

Beenham: Inside the gate at Beenham Primary School

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

St Mary's Woolhampton

Sunday service – 8-30am

Douai Abbey

Sunday service – 11-00am

Church Serices

Brimpton Baptist Church

Sunday services – 11-00am & 6.00pm



Services in April 2023 across the Benefice



Sunday 2nd April: Palm Sunday

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

Sunday 9th April: Easter Sunday

St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Mary's, Beenham	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, Brimpton	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Matthew's, Midgham	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, Woolhampton	10.45am	Holy Communion

Sunday 16th April: Low Sunday

St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Mary's, Beenham	09.15am	Morning Praise
St Peter's, Brimpton	10.45am	Morning Praise

Sunday 23rd April: The Third Sunday of Easter

St Peter's, Brimpton	9.15am	All Age Communion
St Matthew's, Midgham	5pm	Sung Evensong
St Peter's, Woolhampton	10.45am	All Age Communion

Sunday 30th April: The Fourth Sunday of Easter

St Peter's, Woolhampton	10am	Benefice Holy Communion West Berks Foodbank
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For further details contact: The Rev'd Jane Manley 01189 712 891
jmanley.awb@gmail.com

City Boy

Hello fellow citizens of the Shires! I am absolutely over the moon to be one of you and to have a piece in Villages' News! Over the next months I hope to take you along with me in my voyage of discovery as I become "embedded in the system" (as we used to say in our board meetings in The City).

I have finally made the break and sold up my penthouse in Canary Wharf, disposed of most of my hedge fund assets - well, not all, one has to survive after all - and resisted the temptation to buy up half of West Berkshire with my spoils, and am now safely ensconced in my humble 6-bedroomed abode with a few acres of grounds and several paddocks. I am so happy to live the gentle rural life amongst you and partake of its simple pleasures.

However, I am struggling to find anywhere where one can buy a latté - let alone a decent one - and I have to drive to Calcot to keep abreast of which of the new Porsche models I will buy (between you and I, it is far too close to a Sainsbury's in my opinion. What is the world coming to, have we no standards?) Likewise, the local village shop appears not to stock Dom Perignon. Nevertheless, I am bearing up in, what I am sure, is the rural idyll of these local Parishes. Frankly, things can only get better.

I am so looking forward to getting to know you all. I have already been pleasantly surprised to see how many of you have the correct number of fingers and that most of you appear to wash regularly. I so wish to be involved in your rural affairs, uncouth though they may be and.....

Sorry!!! One of my mobiles is going. It is probably a big deal with one of my Caiman Island hedge funds that I have kept on, so I've got to go. I mean it so sincerely that it has been so wonderful to share this time with you, but I have more important things now. More next time.

Ciaou!

In a Garden in West Berkshire

I am no expert gardener and Monty Don has nothing to fear from me. I am, however, an obsessive amateur who has been developing his garden in Brimpton for the past 12 years. When we moved here we found six unkempt shrubs, a handful of daffodils, a solitary white tulip and a pond clogged with bamboo. We also inherited over 100 *Ilex* conifers, originally planted as a green screen between us and the neighbours but which over the years had grown to be taller than the house and in the process the lower branches had died, defeating the original purpose in planting them.

In the first year we took out the conifers, replaced the top soil, filled in the pond, moved two raised beds and demolished the existing shed and greenhouse, both of which had seen better days. We also brought in over 50 tons of topsoil because conifers exhaust the nutrients and if you remove one you need to refresh the soil around it. When that was all done we were able to lay out the garden we wanted, or to put it more correctly, the garden I needed for the plants I had brought with me. If I say we had one removal van for the furniture and a second one just for plants, you'll get an idea of scale of the operation.

I confess I am a plant-aholic. More precisely, I am a hosta-holic. And a poeony-holic. And a Michaelmas daisy-aholic. None of those are correct descriptions, although I am also a galanthophile, which is the correct name for someone who collects snowdrops. It wouldn't be so bad if those were the only plants I collect but over the past ten years I've also built up collections of *hemerocallis*, *agapanthus* and acers. More recently I've started collecting *aeoniums* and *echeveria* which spend most of the time in the conservatory, except in mid summer when they go outside and mid winter when they come into the house. I'm amused when a doctor tells me to make sure I take enough exercise. They're obviously not gardeners.

We tend to think that Spring is the start of the gardening year, but the garden never stops. A large number of garden plants start growing at this time and just in front of the house by April we've already seen shrubs such as camellias, *sarcococca confusa* (the Christmas box) and winter jasmine in flower, and at ground level snowdrops, crocus, daffodils, cyclamen, *Anemone blanda*, *iris unguicularis* and a multitude of hellebores. Hellebores, in my view, can become a nuisance. They spread very easily and are moving across our gravel drive. The same is true of grape hyacinths. They are taking over the area under the beech tree which is also the home of a large number of cyclamen. Plants can be a joy but the battle to keep them under control is never ending.



SAVE THE DATE - Saturday September 9th

NATURE NOTES

The dawn chorus is in full voice in April, as our resident songsters are joined by the summer visitors. I'm hoping that now everyone is becoming more nature-accommodating we will hear voices that have been lost, such as the yellow hammer and skylark.

April is also the time when our frogs, toads and newts lay their eggs, although in kind years a few frogs and toads will have done it earlier. Frogs are happy to lay theirs, in clumps, in any convenient pool. Toads will make long and dangerous journeys to return to the pond of their birth, while newts don't seem to move so far from home. Toads lay their eggs in long strings, wound round water weed. Newt eggs will not be seen unless you are looking, as they are laid singly under a leaf. All are surrounded by a kind of jelly, which feeds them when they first hatch.

Happy pond-hunting!

The Eco-Church group are holding a talk on Looking after God's Acre: Barren Boneyard or Garden of Earthly Delights?

By Dr George McGavin

Saturday, 29th April at Brimpton Village Hall, Crookham Common Road,
Brimpton, RG7 4ST

11am Refreshments

11.30am Talk by Dr George McGavin

12.15am Questions

Tickets are available by using the following link: [https://](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/eco-church-seminar-tickets-592255039767)

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/eco-church-seminar-tickets-592255039767

George McGavin studied Zoology at Edinburgh University, followed by a PhD in entomology at Imperial College and the Natural History Museum in London. After 30 years as an academic, mostly at Oxford University, he became an award-winning television presenter.

George has a wide and varied career in the delivery of public science.

He has lectured at the Cheltenham Science Festival, given the Royal Geographical Society Children's Christmas lecture and contributes to their Schools Programme. He won the Radio 4 Earthwatch

"*Irreplaceable – The World's Most Invaluable Species*" debate as well as being an in-house lecturer on Cunard cruises.

He is perhaps best known for his engaging and idiosyncratic appearances in a wide range of BBC TV productions including "*The Lost Land*" series, "*The Dark*", "*Prehistoric Autopsy*", "*Monkey Planet*", "*Dissected*", "*Oak Tree: Nature's Greatest Survivor*", "*The Secret Life of Landfill*" and "*Ocean Autopsy*" as well as appearing frequently on "*The One Show*" and "*The Richard and Judy Show*". In February 2021 he was the guest on "*Desert Island Discs*" hosted by Lauren Laverne.

Aldermaston News



Aldermaston Coffee Club
In the conservatory area of Hilliers' café.

**Drop by for a chat, a chance to meet
old friends and to make new ones.
Everyone is welcome.
Just turn up.
1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month.
Any time from 10.00am – 11.30am**

For further details contact: Cynthia Newman 0118 9713525

Aldermaston CE Primary School

We have been very busy in school recently. Our Year 6 class has enjoyed a week of activities at Manor Adventure Outdoor Activity Centre in Abernant, in the heart of Wales. This annual trip is so important for our eldest children as they look forward and prepare for life at secondary school in September. New sports were tried and confidence, resilience, teamwork and problem solving skills were developed as they tackled tasks such as raft building, abseiling, orienteering, climbing and survival skills. There was plenty of snow too which added to the fun of the week.

Our Book Week was a great success and the children and their families enjoyed taking part in the different activities. Over 100 people came to the Storytelling evening and listened to stories whilst wearing their pyjamas and drinking hot chocolate. The dressing up day as a character from your favourite book is always popular and there were some very inventive and original costumes. Anything we can do to develop a child's lifelong love of reading is to be supported and encouraged.

Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor

Aldermaston Parish Council– 14th March 2023

The meeting was attended by Des Farndell, who has recently been appointed our new Clerk, taking over the role from our existing Clerk, Christine McGarvie, who has agreed to extend her hours in a support role at Hurst School. She will be a hard act to follow!

In Open Forum, a member of the general public asked for an update on Easy Concrete's planning application for Paices Hill. The Chairman explained that WBC were claiming that EC had been given no commitment in writing to the role of the site, and no pre-application advice had been sought. Any work undertaken by EC to date was therefore done at their own risk, though we are mindful that considerable money had already been spent by them in acquiring and developing the site. Later in the meeting, in closed session, we agreed financial support for legal advice to support our claim that future use of the site is restricted.

Although there were no new planning applications to review, we agreed to escalate within WBC apparent planning contraventions at:

Rag Hill Cottage, Rag Hill
Corbin, Soke Road
Blacks Lake, Paices Hill.

Since our last meeting, WBC Planning have reached two decisions. They have refused:

New units at Young's Industrial Estate, Paices Hill
Replacement house at Strawberry Farm, Burghfield Road.

We are pleased to note the greater role of WBC's Emergency Planning Team in such decisions.

We have been approached to support the Coronation community event planned for early May. We have already agreed to support the event in principle, but now agreed financial support to the tune of £170 and agreed to release of part of the Rec for a "King's garden", having received assurances with regard future maintenance.

The more observant of you will have noticed we have replaced the bench on The Loosey. We hope it is well used! The refurbishment of the nearby fountain memorial has been delayed by the inclement weather.

In presenting his District Councillor's report, Dominic Boeck was quizzed on WBC's budget setting. The Council Tax will rise by 4.99% in 2023/24 (the maximum permitted) though sadly the capital budget does not contain any provision for the A340 relief oad.

We reviewed the WBC Local Transport Strategy Plan to 2039. There is little mention of the role of the A340, and we suspect it will be followed by a more detailed plan. Nevertheless, some comments were agreed.

In AOB we were reminded of Praxis's rules for dog walking in the grounds of the Manor House. Please ensure your dog is on a leash when walking here.

You are reminded that the local elections are scheduled for 4th May, and you will be required to present photo ID to be able to vote.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 11th April 2023 at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall. Although this will be our Annual Parish Meeting (APM), we have decided to not invite speakers and instead receive annual reports in writing from local organisations. As usual, your presence is welcomed!

Dave Shirt tel. 0118 971 2549



Aldermaston Parish Hall

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 20th April
7:30pm

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

All welcome

The Coronation of King Charles III

Aldermaston's Big Picnic

*Everyone is invited to come and celebrate,
Come and be part of this special day.*

*Venue: the field at Meadow Brook, Frouds Lane
Sunday, 7th May 2023
12 noon - 5.00pm*

*Dress like royalty, bring your picnic, rug, table,
chairs and gazebo
Celebration cake for all to share
Games and activities*



ALDERMASTON HISTORY GROUP

**Weds 19th April 2023 at 7:30pm,
Officer's Mess, The Hinds Head**

Meeting & Talk "Motoring in the Kennet Valley"

by Roger Day & Tim Green

who authored the book *Motoring History of the Kennet Valley*

Meetings are Free to Members, Non-Members £5



Future Meetings:

Weds 19th July 2023 at 7:30pm Meeting & Talk "Not all Beer and Skittles", Officer's Mess, The Hinds Head

Weds 1st November 2023 AGM & Talk "Berkshire Records Office", Officer's Mess, The Hinds Head

For more information: <https://group.aldermastonhistory.uk>





February saw us able to resume our annual Dinner Theatre evenings after three years of being interrupted by the Pandemic. It was good to get back on the boards again accompanied by a hearty meal.

A Song for all Seasons was put together by our Producer and Director. A show of songs and sketches which took us from the Prologue 'Song of the Weather', to a selection depicting Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter and finally Christmas with a beautiful rendition, in harmony, of 'Bethlehem' from Martin Guerre, all accompanied by our talented Musical Director who came all the way from Canada especially for the show.

The kitchen staff worked their magic and delivered a meal to start off the evening and then served the dessert and cheeses during the interval with the bar keeping the beverages flowing.



Keep the dates: 28th, 29th, 30th September. One Act Plays will be performed in The Parish Hall, Aldermaston.

Many people help to make these shows happen. The backstage need help as well as actors and singers. If you would like to be part of our team, please let us know by contacting info@aldermastonplayers.co.uk. You will be made very welcome.

Brimpton News

Brimpton WI

Following our Annual Meeting in February, we are now at the start of a new WI year. We have a programme of Speakers and Social Activities planned for the next twelve months. So Ladies if you are new to the area or just want to escape from the endless repeats on the TV, why not come along on the 3rd Tuesday in the month to Brimpton Village Hall at 19.30, we would be happy to welcome you. Sorry Gents, but the only way you can come along is when we declare our Monthly Meeting to be an "Open Meeting" which we do about four times a year, but our Social events are open to all.

Our Next Meeting will be on April 18 when James Geering will be returning as our Speaker, this time on "The Adoption process".

Social Event in April. On Thursday April 27th at 7.30 pm we will be holding one of our "must attend" annual events, "THE Beetle Drive with 2 course Supper". Adults taking "Beetle" seriously, which I have over the years reported in the Parishes Magazine, is a sight to behold!!! (But I think everyone really comes for the super Supper and the opportunity to have a good chat, between the frenetic activity of throwing dice, and drawing bits of beetles!!!!!!) Tickets cost £7.00 per person bookable in advance only.

Contacts If you want to find out more about the above activities please contact our President Shelley Bassil (0118 9710563) or our Secretary Annette Dolphin (0118 9710090) or use our dedicated e-mail link brimpton-wi@berkshirewi.co.uk

Gwynedd Roberts, WI Correspondent

Do come and join us at **St Peter's Church, Brimpton** for our **Monthly Coffee Morning**. We gather every second Wednesday of the month. Drop in any time between 10:00-11:30 am for a hot drink, cakes and biscuits. Everyone will be given a warm welcome, including dogs.

Why not bring along your crafts/knitting to work on in a friendly atmosphere and while away an hour chatting and sharing stories.

Brimpton Parish Council

met on **Tuesday 7 March** and discussed the following:

Roads and Transport

We have raised a complaint with Thames Water about the way tankers removing sewage are parking on the bend in Brimpton Road and the damage they are doing to the verge. We have yet to hear back.

West Berkshire Council has agreed to clear the gulleys by Able Bridge annually from now on. Previously the two yearly cycle had led to floods after heavy rain.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have told us a name plate for the Hampshire end of Blacknest Lane should be installed in April.

We hope to organise a litter pick at the end of March or in early April depending on when the safety equipment is available from WBC.

Planning

We considered a planning application to build a side extension to Mill Cottage, Hyde End Lane. We had no objections to the proposal.

Grant Application

The Parochial Church Council submitted a grant application for £2000 towards grass cutting. As the churchyards are an important landmark in the village, we agreed to assist in paying for their maintenance.

Community Events

We decided to investigate installing a memorial to Queen Elizabeth II, such as a memorial stone, at the War Memorial.

There has been a good response to the Beacon Lighting event on the 5th May as well as for the Community Lunch in the Village Hall on 7th May.

The Coronation Mugs have been ordered. Around 25 mugs will be given to local children and the remainder will be sold to residents.

District and Parish Elections

Recent legislation will require voters to provide photo identification in order to vote in the forthcoming local elections. Residents who don't already have an accepted form of photo ID can apply for a free voter ID document from West Berkshire Council, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. Posters with further information will be put up on noticeboards

The notice of parish elections has been published. Residents who wish to stand for the Parish Council should complete their nomination papers and deliver them to the Council offices between the 24th March and 4pm on the 4th April.



Brimpton Church of England Primary School

Amazing things happen here.....

World Book Day

It was wonderful seeing all the amazing book characters that came into school, including all the staff that came dressed as characters from Alice in Wonderland! A huge thank you to children's author Hayley Webster, who came into school today to read and hold workshops with the children.



Blue Beetle Ceramics

Thank you to Lorna from the Blue Beetle Ceramics based in Thatcham and to Kirsty Brown our Chair of FOBS for organising this very creative event and for coming into school for the whole day to paint all the wonderful hearts with the children for Mother's Day.



The Anvil

We are looking forward to taking part in the Junior Music Festival at The Anvil where children have been learning songs to perform as part of a massed choir 'The show must go on' - Good Luck Brimpton choir!



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

Coronation Celebrations in Brimpton

Our celebrations start on the evening ahead of the Coronation weekend. On Friday 5 May we will be lighting the Brimpton beacon behind the Village Hall. There will be a fish or sausage and chip supper. Tickets are £10 each and can be obtained from Wendy Matthews at wendy.matthews6@btinternet.com There will be a licensed bar available – but that's not included in the price of your ticket.

On Sunday 6 May there will be Community Picnic held in the Village Hall, and outside if the weather permits. Although there will be a bar available, please bring your own lunch and join us for a fun afternoon in the company of your neighbours. There is no charge to attend the lunch but we are keeping a list of those interested if only to ensure we have enough seats. Please let John Hicks know on john.russet@sky.com if you want to participate.

As has been the tradition elsewhere for many Coronations, the Parish Council will be giving a commemorative mug to mark King Charles' Coronation to each child and young person under the age of 16 who lives in the parish. Adults can buy mugs at £10. Please let John Hicks know (email address above) if you would like your child or children to receive a mug or if you would like to place an order.

The Parish Council is inviting every resident to decorate the outside of their house to celebrate the Coronation. The only stipulation is the decorations must be visible from the road. There will be a hamper of goodies for the best decorated property and judging will take place on Friday 5 May.

BRIMPTON VILLAGE HALL DATES FOR YOUR DAIRY

April Date TBC **Charity Night and Bar** – see noticeboards for details

19:30, 25th April This meeting will bring the AGM back in line after COVID

19:30 24th June **Watermill Night** Open air performance of Mansfield Park.

This inventive and intelligent outdoor production reveals a fresh perspective on Jane Austen's classic romance. Tickets will be on sale soon via Village Hall website

<https://brimptonvillagehall.com>

£15.00/pp. Licenced bar available before and after the show and during the interval.

For more info on above email brimptonvh@btinternet.com

or ring John on 07737 160925



Brimpton Church 100 Club

*Thank you to everyone who supports St Peter's Church through the 100 Club.
The last draw for this round will take place in April, and we will start again in May.*

*Each number costs £12 for the year, and a number is drawn every month.
The winner gets a cash prize of £30.*

How to join

**Please contact Sue Rudling (0118 9713312), suerud@btinternet.com
before the end of April to join the 100 Club.**

Your number(s) will be put into the draw every month for a year.

**BACS Transfer: Brimpton PCC 100 Club, Sort Code 30-96-96,
A/c no. 04419615. Please give your name as the BACS reference
or**

**Cash or cheque for £12 per number, payable to Brimpton PCC 100 Club
Please give to Sue Rudling, 3 Church Lane, Brimpton, RG7 4TJ**

BEENHAM VILLAGE EVENTS

DECORATED EASTER GATES

Beenham Village Events invite you to take part in our new project: Decorate an Easter Gate. All you need to do is add some colour to your gate in time for Easter. It could be as simple as some ribbons or bows, or you might like to cut out and decorate some cardboard Easter eggs or an Easter bunny and attach them to your gate, or your front door if you don't have a gate. It should be a nice way to celebrate the season!

TEDDY BEAR TRAIL

We are planning another "Teddy Bear Trial" in Greyfield Wood. It'll be in place from the Greyfield Wood Open Day on Saturday 23rd April until after King Charles III Coronation. Entry forms will be available at the Open Day.

CROWNS FOR THE CORONATION

To decorate the village for the Coronation, the Beenham Village Events team have come up with the idea of putting a colourful and decorated crown on each lamp post and telegraph pole in Beenham. Both the school and Pre-School are involved but we need more volunteers to colour - or decorate - one or more crowns.

We have 2 templates which we have copied on to stiff white card - just waiting for a bright design or picture. They will be available at the Village Market on March 11th and again at the Market in April.

No artistic skills are needed - just enthusiasm.

BVE hope to have all the crowns up and in place by the end of April.

Contact Pat Owen (07947 478840) or John Clark (07881 816301) for any further information

Beenham News

BEENHAM PRE-SCHOOL

Spring is in the air at Beenham Pre-School as we plan our Easter and Coronation events! We continue to host Pop Up Play Village and Outdoor Explorers as well as fortnightly visits from Robot Phonics (at no additional charge to our families so that everyone can join in without worrying about budgets in these challenging times!). We keep our children and staff very busy.

We continue to use Makaton sign language daily and we are constantly amazed at how quickly even our youngest children start to sign (and teach their parents too!). If anyone has any questions about how Makaton works in our Early Years setting, we would be very happy help.

Emotional literacy is at the heart of what we do, and we are so proud of our pre-school children every day as we see them supporting each other! We have so many books, role plays, games and resources based around our emotions and now having our own qualified ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) on site brings new expertise and ideas.

We are proud of our warm and productive relationships with our families, supported by our online journals which families can access.

If you would like to join our waiting list for spaces starting in September 2023, or would like to join the growing number of families booked in for 2024-5 then please do contact us to arrange a tour and we can tell you so much more about what we can offer you and your child.

Paula Read (Beenham Pre-School Manager):

07793 11693: info@beenhampreschool.org



MANAGED BY THE COMMUNITY
FOR THE COMMUNITY

Greyfield Wood Open Day

Our family Open Day is planned for Sunday 23rd April from 2:00 pm when we invite you to enjoy a Sunday afternoon in Greyfield Wood. With the broadleaf trees showing the first signs of leaf flush and the ground carpeted with Bluebells, the wood will still be light and airy. Ideal for a walk through the wood on our guided tour, or follow the children's teddy bear trail organised by Beenham Village Events. There will be refreshments for sale along with a chance to try splitting trunk wood to form garden posts. The Open Day area will be signposted from the Substation and a limited amount of disabled car parking will be available by prior arrangement.

Contact Mike on 9712622 for more information.



NOTES FROM THE BEENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6th MARCH 2023

PLANNING

The following planning applications were discussed:

23/00431/HOUSE . Copperwood, Back Lane. Side and rear extensions. No objection.

23/00376/FULMAJ. Awberry Farm. Change of use to a flexible events venue. Site to be used for no more than 28 weddings/major events per annum, on Saturdays only.

This application is similar to a previous application, but the timings have been adjusted and additional mitigation is proposed to reduce the noise impact.

Dominic Boeck emphasised that this is a new application, and any comments submitted for the previous application would not be carried over to this application.

The PC decided to defer consideration of the application to the next meeting.

POTHoles ON BEENHAM HILL

A parishioner congratulated WBC on the steps that are being taken to improve the road near to the A4. Dominic Boeck said that the potholes would be patched in April, followed by surface dressing of the road for 950m from the A4 in June.

PARKING IN MALLARD WAY

Parking in Mallard Way is still causing problems, leading to vandalism on parked vehicles. WBC Highways have been asked to propose a better location for parking, but they have not yet visited the site. Dominic Boeck said that WBC highways is understaffed.

BEENHAM NEWSLETTER

A new Community Newsletter will be starting in April, covering the villages that were covered by the Parishes Magazine The costs should be covered by advertising.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The toilets for the Community Room have been decorated, and the hole in the School Hall ceiling (caused by a water leak) has been repaired.

The revised charges for the Community Facilities come into effect on 1st April.

FINANCE

The following grants have been agreed:

PTFA – for exercise track in school playing field - £1000

Friendship Club - £500

Badminton Group - £100 (to be paid in April)

RESIGNATION OF PARISH CLERK

Jennie Currie will finish at the end of March. No applications have been received to take up the post.

In the meantime we are looking for anyone who could help either with the financial administration or with correspondence.

Beenham Primary School

It's been a busy year since our return in September. We have 62 children on roll from the village and surrounding area. We continue to have quite a high mobility of children. They leave for a variety of reasons, with the main one being the lack of affordable housing.

We had our OFSTED visit in October. We were pleased to maintain the good judgment with a well written report which reflected the great work the staff are doing.

The school now provides a wide range of curriculum opportunities for the children, including swimming lessons, specialist PE teaching, specialist music tuition, Bushcraft sessions and our latest personal development initiative - Junior Duke. Junior Duke happens every Friday afternoon and children work in their year groups with a leader to complete a range of challenges. These range from washing cars to going on hikes.

You may have heard our quacking ducks. We were fortunate enough to hatch 5 ducks from eggs and have had the pond area cleared for them to live in. The ducks were famous and appeared in the national news and on national radio. Presently, they are being kept inside due to avian flu!

We have started to have reading volunteers back into school, if you wish to volunteer with us, please pop into the office to collect a volunteer application pack.

We also would like to thank the Parish Council for their contribution of funding towards the installation of our Daily Mile track which is being installed after the

W.I. - Save the Date

Beenham W.I. are a very friendly bunch – more Calendar Girls than Jam and Jerusalem. Come and check us out on April 12th when our speaker is going to be Andy Kempe, retired Professor of Drama from Reading University, who is going to talk about the Curious History of Greenham Common, involving such characters as No Bones Billy and how Noah's Ark ended up on Greenham Common. Andy comes to us highly recommended.

All are welcome. We start at 7.30 pm in the Community Room of the school. Non-members are asked to pay £3 each towards our funds.

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR BEENHAM – APRIL 2023

Event/Activity	Date	where	contact
Scottish Country Dancing	Mon 7.30 – 10pm	Victory Hall	Katrina:9713331
Art Group	Tue 10am – 12pm	Victory Hall	Sunny: 9712255
Badminton Club	Tue 8 – 9.30pm	School Hall	Ernie: 07954 127 771
Yoga with Ben	Tue 6.30pm Thurs 10.15am	Victory Hall	unstoppablyrhythms@gmail.com
Church Annual Spring Clean	Sat 1 st April 10am	St Mary's	All help is most welcome Janette:07917 818 283
Doggy Brunch	Sat 1 st April 10.00am	The Six Bells	Six Bells: 9713368
Easter Prize Bingo – 14+	Sat 1 st April	Beenham Club	
Holy Communion led by Rev Derek Spears	Palm Sun 2 nd April 9.15am followed by refreshments	St Mary's Church	Janette:07917 818 283
Beenham Walking Group	Thurs 6 th April Route to be announced	Meet 9.30am at Victory Hall	johnnewitt27@gmail.com
Alec Waters Memorial Darts KO	Fri 7 th April	Beenham Club	
Village Market/repair shop	Sat 8 th April 2.00 – 3.30pm	Victory Hall	Claire: 9713574
Race Night	Sat 8 th April	Beenham Club	in aid of "Dreams come True" Children's Charity
Holy Communion led by Rev Jane Manley	Easter Sun 9 th April 9.15am - refreshments	St Mary's Church	Janette:07917 818 283
Bottomless Hog Roast lunch	Mon 10 th April Easter egg and treasure hunt	Six Bells	9713368
WI	Wed 12 th April 7.30pm	Community Hall	Sally Pellow:07776251228
Quiz night for local charities	Thurs 13 th April 8pm Teams up to 6 £3/person	Six Bells	9713368 to book
Coffee morning	Fri 14 th April 10.30am	Six Bells	Janette:07917 818 283
Greyfield Wood volunteers' morning	Sat 15 th April 8.30 – 12.00	Meet at wood entrance	John Newton 9712924
Calleva Stick Dressers	Sat 15 th April 9am – 2pm	Victory Hall	David Taylor: 07864 180 648
Live music and Acoustic night	Sat 15 th April 7.30pm	Beenham club	Hosted by Sheila
Morning Praise led by Janette	Sun 16 th April 9.15am - refreshments	St Mary's church	Janette:07917 818 283
Beenham Friendship Club for over 55s	Wed 19 th April 2pm – 4pm	Victory Hall talk by Hilliers and tea	Tina 01635 826154 or Marion 0118 9713094
Beenham Walking Group	Thurs 20 th April Aldermaston Wharf to Aldermaston Church	Meet at 9.30am at Victory Hall	johnnewitt27@gmail.com
Film night	Thurs 20 th April 7.30pm £5 adults, under 18s £3	Victory Hall A Man called Otto	Claire: 9713574
Late Night Boogie Band	Sat 22 nd April	Beenham Club	
Greyfield Wood Annual Open Day	Sunday 23 rd April from 2.00pm	follow the signs from Substation	Mike Weston 9712622
Beenham Tearoom	Tues 25 th April 2 – 3.30pm	Victory Hall	Dru: 07815 055 040 Pat: 07947 478 840
Twoz Company	Sat 29 th April	The Six Bells	Six Bells: 9713368

Useful contact numbers:

Victory Hall bookings: nolesandfrank@hotmail.co.uk;

Community Hall Bookings: Paula Reade; paula_and_chris@hotmail.com

St Mary's Church: Rev Jane Manley 9712891, jmanley.awb@gmail.com

Church warden: Janette Hammond 07917 818 283

If you would like to add anything to the village diary, please let me know by email patowen0@hotmail.com or give me a call on 07947 478 840

Midgham News

Midgham's untold Folklore and Superstitions

For those of you who have bought my book "A Reflective History of Midgham", you will have seen the chapter about ghosts. What I didn't mention in the book were superstitions or anything to do with folklore. Apart from the ghost stories there don't appear to be any record of superstitious or folklore stories involving Midgham; well not until now. We all probably know about horseshoes being placed over a door to keep witches out, and cats being buried under the threshold of a door, and even bottles or caldrons of urine being placed behind a fireplace. However, how about the blacksmith who made the horseshoe or caldron in the first place. The Cripps and Wallins families were our blacksmith's from the 17th until the 19th centuries, (*Wallins living in what is now Keepers Cottage*) so what would they have believed in. The strangest belief goes back hundreds of years and is that urine collected from virgin or pre-pubescent ginger haired boys was the best water to temper and harden horseshoes or anything made of iron. It also meant gingers were more likely to be apprenticed to a blacksmith or at least employed as very young boys to pump the bellows for the fire. At the time live-in apprentices would not only have been given a bed to sleep on but fed and watered too. After working in a hot sweaty workshop the water or more likely the beer they drank was not going to be wasted either. Just imagine at the end of the working day the boy being told by his employer that he had drunk two gallons of beer at so much per pint, but only peed four or five pints in his designated ginger pee bucket in return. I dread to imagine the uproar from the blacksmith if a none ginger accidentally urinated in the bucket as well, it would have meant the lot being a contaminated product.

Getting back to horseshoe's and witches, there are other methods of keeping witches out of your house. One was the use of a Hag stone or Adder stone. These are stones with a natural hole passing through them, and just like horseshoe's would have been hung up by a door.

It's at this point I can definitely connect Midgham with a folklore and superstition concerning Dobbie's. Over twenty years ago I dug up two large flints with holes passing through them. This was in the corner of the meadow next to the path that runs from School Hill to the Barn on what was Webbs Lane. These ancient stones known as Dobbie stones were often placed near bridges as the two I found were next to the footbridge that crosses the stream there. Dobbies are said to be spirits who are attached to people rather than to a building and could help you or not, depending how they felt.

At a bridge if a traveller was on a horse a Dobbie could come up behind you grab you and take your breath away, that's unless the Dobbie stone had stopped them in the first place. With my find and the fact that I kept them, it just goes to prove that however small or unlikely an item you dig up is, it could be of historical significance dating way back in time as far as the Druids in the case of Midgham's Dobbie stones, so always keep your eye open for the unexpected. Now the question is do I believe in the power of Dobbie stones? All I can say is that after I removed the stones, my mother fell and broke her ankle on the path just above the place they had been, and also if I remember correctly Robin Nicholson of the Garth in School Hill slipped and broke his foot on the bridge. A bit late now, but to be on the safe side; sorry to both of you.

Derek Collier

Lily Hopwood

Hello, I'm Lily Hopwood, a 15-year-old Kennet student. In 2024, I'm going on a volunteering trip to Borneo, run by an organisation called Camps International. The camps run projects for communities in under-privileged areas, such as laying clean water pipes, and protecting wildlife. All attendees must fundraise for the cost, which also goes to employing locals and upkeep of the camps. It would mean a lot to me, and people impacted by this trip, if you could help me towards this - there are many ways to like: coming to my Plant Sale on the 9th April on Birds Lane Play Area in Midgham, with fruit + veg seedlings available; you could sign up to a website 'easyfundraising' which donates a percentage of online shopping money to a cause at no cost to the consumer (select cause 'Camps International Borneo 2024 – Lily Hopwood'); if you have any odd jobs you need doing around the house (or questions), please call my dad at 07802819199.

A BIG HEARTFELT THANKYOU to Sharon McKellar, who, along with the wonderful support of her husband Bob, has worked tirelessly over the last 18 months or so, to have the village hall repaired and updated, in order for it to be, a warm and friendly meeting place for Coffee mornings and Events days that have been well attended and enjoyed by the local people of Midgham. Sharon has been most generous with her time and commitment in restoring the hall and her efforts are very much appreciated by the villagers as it is an important hub for the community, where everyone is welcome including well behaved dogs!

Thank you Sharon and Bob, we can all now look forward to many more happy social events at the hall in the future.

Woolhampton News

Woolhampton & Midgham WI 2022

The Woolhampton & Midgham WI continues to thrive and grow although it is some time since we posted news of our activities. Here is a resume of the last half year at our Institute.

Many of our members have lovely gardens and we visited two of these before returning to the Hall for a lovely homemade cream tea. Some of us enjoyed wandering around the antique shops in Hungerford then lunch at Cobbs. Due to the unusual hot weather we cancelled our owl visit, but had a pleasant social evening instead. During this hot spell some of us enjoyed a summer meal at the Bull. In September we had an open evening when we invited local residents to join us to see the barn owl, kestrel, peregrine falcon and Indian eagle fly around the hall from hand to hand.

October came late, but some of us managed to visit Englefield for autumn colours then we had tea at Cobbs. Our meeting in October had a visit from an amusing poetry writer in the style of Pam Ayres. At the end of our meetings we have refreshments either supplied by the members or committee, a raffle and the judging of the competition. We supply bags of toiletries for people in Royal Berkshire hospital and food for the food bank to help people in need. May was our Resolutions meeting and after discussion on the various ones put forward we voted for the WI Federation to support women and girls with ASD and ADHD. A few of our members know family members who are affected by this.

At our November meeting we all exercised on chairs with lively music to keep us fit. It was fun trying to move hands one way and legs another. In the mood for Christmas six members went to the Pantomime at the Corn Exchange, then in December had a very good Christmas lunch at Yew Tree Garden Centre. We finished off the year with our Christmas party in the Village Hall. With tasty food supplied by all members, a good glass of wine, music and secret Santa we had a lovely social evening.

We started off the new year with a talk from a local resident on her life as a TV Correspondent and in particular the July 2005 London bombings which she had reported on. Our New Year meal in January was at the Bull, Stanford Dingley. Jane Stubb came in February with her dummy dressed as a Victorian Housekeeper. She told us all about the life of Victorian women. Also in February a group of us, with two dogs, went for a walk around the large lake at Dinton Pastures ending up with lunch at the café.

A small group of us are now running the village lunch club for single, elderly people in the two villages. It is held at Woolhampton Village Hall on the first Wednesday of every month. We provide a two course meal and it is rewarding seeing our old friends, many of them past members of our WI, enjoying their meal and socialising with their friends. On this note – we are currently very short of volunteers to assist us with this important activity in our village life. If anyone reading this has a couple of hours to spare once a month we would really welcome your help – contact Madeleine Barrow, 07735884703.

If you wish to join in our group we would love to see you. We have our meetings on the second Tuesday of each month in Woolhampton Village Hall at 7.30pm.

WOOLHAMPTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

'And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church'

Matthew 16.18

Built on the rock of Christian faith, we work as a community to create an environment which enables all to flourish. Jesus welcomed all and we embrace diversity, celebrating our different gifts and successes. Like St Peter, we are motivated by our values, learn from our mistakes and strive for the best outcome for everyone.

Woolhampton is a happy, thriving school and we are very proud of our pupils, staff, parents, governors and whole school community. We work together providing a rich and varied curriculum, helping the children to build firm foundations for the rest of their lives. The curriculum strives for children to flourish socially, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

One of the joys of being a Headteacher is conducting learning walks around the school, observing the pupils and teachers engrossed in their lessons and enjoying teaching and learning. This term has been a testament to the dedication of all with our curriculum enriched with educational visits and experiences. These have included a trip to the fire station for our Sycamore Class to complete their topic on The Great Fire of London, swimming lessons for Chestnut class as part of their PE curriculum and a trip to The Natural History Museum for Oak class for their topic on Extreme Earth. The choir have attended the Junior Music Festival, performing at the Anvil in Basingstoke.

We like to ensure our children get to see life outside our culture and we recently had an inspirational assembly from Cricket Without Boundaries, a charity that we support. This charity funds cricket clubs and lessons for children from deprived areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and Jordan. Our Year 6 pupils did a toy and book sale last year to raise funds to support this amazing cause, and we designed T-Shirts to send over with the organisers. It was incredible to see the fruits of the children's labour and get an update on the cricket programme. The children have lots more ideas planned to help raise further funds for this worthy cause.

The signs of spring are very much around us now and Forest School enables us to appreciate all the seasons with the children. We are very much looking forward to Infant Gardening Club starting back up after Easter, this is run by our Forest School Lead Mrs Howe and one of our learning support assistants Mrs Collins. They tend and plant a small raised-bed vegetable patch, at the front of the school. Last summer, we created an outdoor learning space with funding from the Parish Council. This has meant we can expand our gardening club to realise part of our school aims, for each child to plant, grow and eat their own produce. Each classroom now has a very large planter where each class has planned to plant flowers, fruits and vegetables. Roll on Summer.

Kath Burns, Headteacher, Woolhampton CE Primary School

Woolhampton Community Group (Litter pick)

In conjunction with the national campaign Keep Britain Tidy, we had a litter pick in late-March when the snow had cleared and before the grass gets too long.

Woolhampton Annual Show 2023

Woolhampton Show will be on Saturday 12th August in the Village Hall. There will be classes for each of cookery, flowers, vegetables, photography, handicraft and special classes for children to enter. More precise details nearer Show time but for the competitions that need advance preparation, please see the following:

Annual Show Photographic Competition

the categories decided so far for 2023 are:

A pair of photos depicting winter/summer sun with common theme

Architecture – building or monument

Macro – close up of any subject

Landscape featuring flowers

Happiness

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. This year, participants may select and purchase seeds of their choice. However, there are still a few seeds from last year so if you would rather use these, please either pick them up at the April or May market or contact Cathy (tel. 9713637, or email cathy.vallis@outlook.com). (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 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 me 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.

Dog Fouling

There appears to be a significant increase in the number dogs now in the village which is resulting in a similar increase in the instances of dog fouling in publicly accessed areas, specifically pavements, public footpaths, well-worn pathways through grassed areas (e.g. fields) and grassed play areas (e.g. at the village hall). This is a plea to all dog owners to clear up after their pets as it is really awful for a child, or anybody else, to step into a mess! There are many waste bins around the village so there is no excuse for not picking up.

Village Market

The next Market will be on Saturday April 1st from 10am to 12 noon in the Woolhampton Village Hall. If you've not been before, do come along to browse and enjoy the ambience. No entry charge and refreshments (including delicious hot bacon rolls) available.

Occasionally there is spare capacity so if you are entrepreneurial and have preferably home-made items for sale, please contact Cathy (email cathy.vallis@outlook.com) to check viability.

Woolhampton Parish Council

There is currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor and also elections will be held on May 4th. If you have an interest in the village and have thought of becoming a councillor, why not attend a Parish Council meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Village Hall, 7.30pm start.

CHAPEL ROW COMMUNITY SERVICE GROUP

Beenham-Midgham-Woolhampton

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