

Villages' News





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Committee Comments

Dear Readers

As I write this article, I am wondering what clothes to pack for our late summer holiday. I think wet weather gear is a definite but will the Indian Summer we have been promised materialise?

We have some interesting articles for you to enjoy this month. We hope you find the information on the Banking Hub in Thatcham useful. From the 1st September it became possible to deposit cheques as well as cash at the Hub. It is a similar process to the one used by the Post Office. They will give you an envelope relating to your bank. All you need is a paying in slip. I was the first person to pay in a cheque and was greeted with great enthusiasm and cheering. I felt as if I deserved a bottle of bubbles to celebrate with them.

The *Ode to Autumn 2026* on page 26 is a delight to read – even though it mentions the ‘C’ word ‘*Christmas*’!! However, I noticed mince pies in the shops a couple of weeks ago, so I assume the festive season has started for retailers - if not for us just yet.

Thanks to everyone who send in articles for inclusion in the magazine – we have a lot of regulars who send interesting editorial. We are always happy to receive more, so if you have an event coming up or want to share a story with everyone, please feel free to send your words to the editors Sarah and Bill. Happy reading.

ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

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

Please send articles for the magazine to:

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

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

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

Advertising enquiries can be sent to mrsbscott@btinternet.com

Aldermaston Parish Council – 8th September 2026

Aldermaston Parish Council discussed a variety of issues at its September meeting with planning matters once again dominating.

There were three requests for permission to work on trees but only one raised any concerns. This was a request by Aldermaston Recycling. The Council will raise an objection due to the lack of information on the trees concerned and request the information be provided.

The replacement of a fire damaged bungalow at Strawberry Farm with a two bedroom house raised no objections as the number of bedrooms is not increased beyond that in the already approved plans. Also, the creation of hardstanding at Youngs Industrial Estate has already been approved despite the concerns previously raised by APC. As the Council could see no material changes, it raised no objection to this revised application. No comment was made in relation to the out of district application at West View Farm in Tadley.

As usual the planning enforcement cases were discussed. The case of Padworth Saw Mills was discussed at the Eastern Area Planning Committee on 2nd September. Representations were made by residents, APC and our Ward Councillor, Mr Dominic Boeck and had an impact helping the Committee to reject the application. The planning breach at Pinewoods on Soke Road has been reported to WBC and their views are awaited. The growing mound of tyres stored at Jan London Trade Ltd's site on Paices Hill continues to cause concern. As well as adding APC's voice to that of Tadley Town Council on potential planning breaches, the Council decided to make a referral to the Environmental Health Officer at WBC over the safety of so many tyres stored in the open air. The process regarding the site on Reading Road is still ongoing and the Council is awaiting updates in due course.

On other matters, following the replacement of the fencing at the recreation ground, the Council discussed the new entrance and potential access difficulties during wet weather. Therefore, alternative surfacing solutions around the gate will be investigated.

Finally, the meeting with neighbouring parish councils to discuss the potential impact of AWE's site development has been arranged for this month and will be reported on at the next meeting.

Our next meeting will be on 13th October. For details, please visit <https://aldermaston-pc.gov.uk/>

ALDERMASTON COFFEE CLUB



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

Join us in the café at Hilliers.

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

Everyone is welcome – just come along

For further details contact Cynthia Newman

cmnewman2021@outlook.com 01189713525

Music @ Aldermaston



Come and listen to some glorious music in a fabulous setting
At St Mary's, Church Rd, Aldermaston, RG7 4HR

Friday November 13th, 7pm
Basingstoke Hospital Male Voice Choir

Saturday November 14th, 7pm
Live Jazz with Aret Komlosy & band

Box Office & more information: <https://aldermastonconcerts.org>

£8 Adult Ticket, £5 Children in full time education, under £5 free
Both nights: £27 adult, £9 children, under £5 free,
includes an arrival drink (fizz or similar)



Raising funds for St Mary's Church, Aldermaston

Poppy Appeal 2026

This year, the Poppy Appeal will be launched on Thursday 22nd October. Poppies will be available from local shops, schools and businesses. A limited House to House collection will also take place and I will be organising some Poppy Appeal collection days at the M4 Services. If you have an hour or two and would like to select band of collectors, please contact me.

The RBL believes everyone who has served in the British Armed Forces, and their dependants, deserve support for the rest of their lives.

Every year, tens of thousands of veterans, serving personnel, and their families, turn to the RBL for help. It could be with money or housing problems, physical and mental health challenges, help caring for a loved one, loneliness, or a family breakdown. Whatever the need, whenever it's needed, the RBL will be there providing practical support and expert guidance.

The RBL is completely reliant on the generous donations of the public to continue our vital work.

Wearing your poppy shows you care and lets the Armed Forces community know their service is recognised and their unique contribution will never be forgotten.

Remembrance Sunday services will be held at Aldermaston, Beenham, Midgham and Woolhampton at 10.50am on Sunday 8th November.

An **Armistice Day service** will be held at Brimpton War Memorial at 10.45am on Wednesday, 11th November.

If you have and requirements concerning the Poppy Appeal, or would like to assist in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Contactless options to contribute will be available using contactless terminals or via QR codes at every site. Clive Vare Poppy Appeal Organiser for: Aldermaston, Brimpton, Wasing & Woolhampton 07565776212

ALDERMASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Autumn term is well under way, and our new pupils have settled in very well. The children have returned full of stories and memories from the summer holidays and are full of enthusiasm and curiosity for learning. One of the key priorities for the start of the new year is keeping children safe and ensuring all staff are confident in their safeguarding responsibilities. All governors complete safeguarding training annually too.

Our new phonics, spelling and reading programmes have been introduced across the school. This work has been supported by the Local Authority and an English specialist as part of our work to strengthen the teaching of reading and English across all classes.

The year 6 pupils are being selected for their leadership roles, and the new House Captains will update each Friday in Collective Worship on the house points achieved that week. A reminder that we have four houses – Achard (blue), Congreve (green), Forster (red) and Keyser (yellow).

The key themes of Curiosity, Compassion and Courage will be visible across all areas of school life and have helped the children on the return to school to think about their hopes for the year ahead and how their own choices can help our school community to flourish.

Lastly, we will be holding an Open Morning on Tuesday 10 November 9.15-10.15am for prospective families looking to join us. Whether your child is due to start school in September 2027 or considering joining us in another year group, we would love to welcome you. Come along and discover what makes Aldermaston CE Primary School such a special place to learn, grow and belong. *Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor*

**ALDERMASTON
HISTORY GROUP**

A.G.M. & Talk
Weds 4th November 2026
7:30pm
Officers Mess, The Hinds Head Inn
A brief AGM followed by a talk on
“Reading’s Victorian Industrial Development”
By Dr Richard Marks

**Free to members , non members £5**

proud to have created and maintain
Aldermaston History Online
<https://aldermastonhistory.uk>

For more information on Aldermaston History Group Membership visit: <https://group.aldermastonhistory.uk>

Aldermaston & Wasing Show 2026

Fantastic late-summer sunshine helped draw crowds to the 83rd Aldermaston & Wasing Show at The Old Mill on Sunday, as visitors enjoyed an afternoon packed with entertainment, community spirit and the highest number of competition entries in recent history.

Despite one of the hottest and driest growing seasons in recent memory, more than 400 entries filled the Produce



Tent, surpassing previous records and providing judges with an impressive display of flowers, vegetables, cookery, crafts, photography and children's exhibits. The show's 104 competition classes once again formed the heart of the event.

From early morning, volunteers worked across the showground preparing stalls, attractions and the main arena before the gates opened to a steady stream of visitors.

The atmosphere came alive with performances from Tadley Concert Brass, while the energetic dancers of Breaking Barriers and the Silver Swans delighted spectators throughout the afternoon. Visitors also enjoyed displays and support from local organisations including the Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police, Aldermaston Primary PTA and 1st Aldermaston Scouts.

A special highlight of this year's show was the recognition of four newly appointed Life Members: Chris Newman, Peter Oldridge, Fay Vanstone, and Dave Shirt honoured for their many years of dedication and service to the show's success and continuity. Their presentations, by Di Arlott, in the main arena were warmly received by the crowd.

As always, the popular Duck Derby, children's races and traditional egg-throwing competition drew enthusiastic participation, with spectators lining the stream and arena to cheer on competitors of all ages.

The show once again demonstrated its unique ability to bring generations together, with young families, long-time exhibitors and local residents sharing in a day that celebrated local talent, creativity and the very best of community life.

Organisers hope the event will raise valuable funds for this year's chosen charities, Tadley Elderly Day Care and PALS, while continuing the show's proud tradition of supporting local causes.

"A wonderful afternoon of sunshine, community spirit and record participation made this one of our most successful shows yet," said organisers. Show Chairman, Clive Vare, said "From first-time exhibitors, like myself, to long-standing supporters, it was fantastic to see so many people coming together and helping to keep this special traditional event thriving."

As stalls packed away and the final raffle prizes were collected, the 83rd Aldermaston & Wasing Show closed on another memorable chapter, leaving organisers, exhibitors and visitors already looking forward to next year.

Beenham News

Beenham Village Advent Windows - Christmas 2026!

Yes, it's time to think about the Village Christmas Advent windows again!

As in previous years there will be at least one window revealed each day

If you decide to take part, you will be allocated a date in December from 1-24

BUT Keep your number a secret!

Plan your advent window – go as wild as you want but don't forget to include the number!

Unveil your window to the world on the morning of your allocated day

Keep the decorations up until New Year's Day

The numbers go really quickly, so don't delay!

Contact: Pat Owen patowen0@hotmail.com 07947478840 – giving your preferred date (we'll do our best to give you this)

Organised by Beenham Village Events - BVE

WI

The September meeting of Beenham WI was most enjoyable, as we welcomed Jackie Dimmock, a retired Police Officer, as our speaker for the evening. Jackie regaled us with many stories of her early career in the police force. She was based for a number of years in the Isle of Wight – a position she almost missed out on because the Police Station only had one loo! We are hoping to get Jackie back again for a return visit next year. We also welcomed six guests to the meeting.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 14 October, when the speaker for the evening will be Wildlife Photographer Simon Booker. Guests are again very welcome to attend, donation of £4 each. The meetings start at 7.30pm in the Community Room.

If you are considering joining Beenham WI or would like to know more, feel free to contact beenhamwi@berkshirewi.co.uk.

Greyfield Wood October 2026

Hello to you from Greyfield Wood! At last RAIN!!!!

Having recently surveyed the c 1300 saplings planted in the December 2025 – January 2026 period, we were disappointed, but not that surprised to find that c20% of them may have died. So we will see if any are resurrected by the rain! Although we believe we will definitely be replanting in December.

We took the opportunity during the dry, to ensure that all drainage ditches were cut-back and cleared, so that once the water table has normalised the excess water will be able to drain. My guess is that we will need a couple of months of good rainfall to see the water flowing again. Please continue to enjoy YOUR wood.

If you would like to join our volunteers, please give me a call.

Enjoy our wood! John Hammond john@meadvale-bays.com 07818 400440



BEENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

We have had a wonderful start to the new school year at the Primary School, and it has been amazing to have everyone back together and settling into school routines. The classrooms are once again full of enthusiasm, curiosity and plenty of busy learning!

So much learning has already taken place, with children enjoying a fantastic variety of topics across the school. From exploring the fascinating worlds of Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt to developing new skills and knowledge across the curriculum, it has been lovely to see children so engaged and excited about their learning.

On Friday 11th September, we held our very first Story Session, welcoming families into school to find a comfy and cosy place to share stories together. Our focus was 'being brave and trying new things', encouraging children and grown-ups alike to embrace new experiences and the opportunities that come with them. It was a lovely way to bring our school community together and celebrate our shared love of books and stories.

We have also launched our value of the term - CARE. Alongside caring for one another and our school community, we have had an extra-special focus on taking care with our learning, thinking about the effort we put in, taking pride in our work and making choices that help us to learn well.

Although we have only just begun the autumn term, we are already looking ahead to all the exciting things still to come. And yes, we know it feels far too early to mention Christmas! However, lots of plans for some very special festive events are already well underway. There is plenty for our children and families to look forward to over the coming months.

Thinking about September 2027?

We are also beginning to look ahead to next September and thinking about the children who may join our school community.

If you are looking for a school place for September 2027 or are looking for a place in another year group sooner, we would love to welcome you to Beenham Primary School. Please contact the school office to arrange a private tour with our Headteacher and discover what makes our school such a special place to learn and grow.

We will also be holding an Open Morning on Thursday 12th November, from 10:00–11:30am. Please contact the school office to book your place.

We look forward to welcoming prospective families and sharing a little of The Beenham Way with you!

Beenham Primary School 01189 713397

office@beenham.w-berks.sch.uk

AUTUMN CHARITY PARTY

At AWBERRY FARM

on Saturday 14 November 2026

from 7–11pm

Tickets are £15 and include a delicious curry supper and live music
from **Twozcompany**.

All proceeds from ticket sales and the raffle on the night will go
towards local causes.

Come along, enjoy a great evening and support some worthwhile local
charities.

Tickets: Email info@awberryfarm.co.uk with the number of tickets you
require.

Raffle prizes: Donations of raffle prizes would be very gratefully
received.

Beenham Community Harvest Lunch

**Sunday 11th October,
in The Victory Hall, Beenham
12 noon for 12.30pm start**

£12.50 for an adult £5 for children 5-10 years

Under fives: free



Includes a two course meal and a welcome soft drink **(we have just a
few tickets left) Bring your own beer or wine and glasses**

Tickets available from: Janette Hammond: 07917 818 283

janette@janettehammond.co.uk

Pat Owen: 07947 478 840 patowen0@hotmail.com

You are welcome to pay for your tickets online using the reference

HARVEST. Account name: Beenham Parochial Church council

Account Number: 70163503 Sort code: 20-71-03

Everyone in our lovely village and beyond is invited to come along to
a splendid seasonal community event.

Notes from Beenham Parish Council meeting Monday 7th September

Thanks were given for the grant provided to Beenham Church for ground maintenance.

The many issues associated with the Thames Water works in the village were raised. A reminder about the Giant Vegetable Show on Sunday 13th Sept at the Victory Hall was given.

Councillors

The many issues with the TW works though the village was raised. Communications to the PC and Parishioners by TW, WBC and M Group (who are the contractors) has been appalling. Water cut off notifications to properties has been patchy and in some cases absent. Traffic coped with the initial driving difficulties, but the introduction of the 5 way traffic light system caused chaos, especially for those residents between the light locations. It was noted and agreed that the safety issues which had arisen especially in the vicinity of the school, could not be ignored. It was agreed that Dominic Boeck, our District Councillor, should take these up with WBC, and it was also agreed that the PC should continue to urgently seek a meeting with all parties to establish a single point of communication, in order to avoid conflicting information and allow the PC to advise residents. It is noted that the 5way traffic light system has been changed, alleviating some of the traffic issues.

Planning Matters

-26/01439/HOUSE. 4, The Warings, Beenham. Rear conservatory. No objection

-26/01779/HOUSE. Highdown, Webbs Lane. First floor roof extension. No objection.

Councillor Reports

The District Councillor reported that the planned re-organisation and merger of West Berkshire Council with South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse to form a new unitary authority had paused by the Government. A great deal of time and money has been spent on planning this change and we will have to wait and see what the outcome will finally be.

Parish Councillors.

Mallard Way, Aldermaston Wharf parking issues. No further news.

Recreation Ground play area repairs. A meeting with the contractor to establish which repairs to carry out is pending.

A grant request from Bucklebury Community Group which provides services for the elderly and disabled to and from medical appointments was discussed and approved.

The next meeting will be held on Monday October 5th at 7.00 pm in the Community Room.

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

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

Brimpton News

Brimpton WI

Our September Speaker was Lesley Johnston on "Guide Dogs for the Blind", the charity now encompasses buddy dogs for children and care dogs for adults. It also acts as a campaigner at local and national level lobbying on issues which effect the blind/poorly sighted, the problems of the silent electric vehicles/ the hazard caused by the increasing number of cycle lanes crossing pavements.)

Lesley explained how she first started as a Volunteer by enrolling and being trained as a "Foster parent/ Boarder". Lesley's husband trained as a Puppy Walker and to them falls the duty of introducing the dog to life in the home and in the in the big world outside it. It needs to have experiences so the its knowledge of life is gradually increasing. Once they reach 14-16 months they start at school, beginning to learn the basic skills on which its life and behaviour will be based and at the end of this period they will be formally assessed and a stringent medical given. At this point only about two thirds of the dogs will pass on to more advanced training. The most usual breeds that are used are Labrador, Retriever, German Shepherd, but Cocker-poo's are now also being used. The dogs remain the property of the Charity throughout and a working life of 8-10 years is usual.

Lesley answered many and varied questions from our members ranging from toilet training/ food/ moving home/communication between handler and dog/ sponsorship of puppies/ who is the boss in this pairing.

It was a most interesting talk not only of the many and varied ways in which you can Volunteer for the charity, but insight into way the training is carried out, and the dedication in both paid Staff and Volunteers in enabling a better quality of life for those who have benefitted.

Brenda and Bill's Norfolk Ride and Stride ***Mission accomplished!***

Brenda writes:

Five churches visited and a kind welcome in each one. The weather was bright and warm but very windy. I nearly lost my cap at one point.

Two of the churches were HUGE and, we felt, a bit austere - I guess it is not what we are used to. After four churches Bill's battery was very low so we headed back to the hotel to put it on charge. We did the last church in the car. Well, it is Ride and Stride after all. Around 20k steps in all.

Thank you to everyone that sponsored us.

And thank you to Bill and Brenda for supporting Brimpton Church and BHCT





Brimpton Harvest Lunch

Saturday 3rd October

12.30pm in Brimpton Village Hall

Adults: £12.50 Children under 10: £5

Includes a soft drink. Bring your own beer or wine

Proceeds to St Peter's Church, Save our Spire Fund

Tickets available from:

Brenda Scott mrsbscott@btinternet.com

Mel Bowring mebowring@outlook.com

Sue Moore susanmoore50@hotmail.com

Janice Cross janice46cross@icloud.com

Patricia Brims pcbrims@hotmail.com

*Bank details for the Spire Account,
if you would like to buy your ticket online:*

PCC of Brimpton (Spire Account)

Sort Code: 30-96-96

Account number: 89162760

*Please mark your payment **Harvest***

Harvest Festival Service

9.15am on Sunday 4th October

***Donations of non-perishable food etc for the Foodbank
will be gratefully received***

Brimpton Church 100 Club

September winner: No. 153 Chris Bushnell

**The Parish Council met on Tuesday 1st September and the agenda included;
Medicine Festival traffic issues.**

Mr Brims raised concerns about traffic using Wasing Road to access the Medicine Festival at Wasing Estate. At a meeting in July, the Operations Manager had assured the Parish Council that there was a traffic management plan in place and traffic would be directed away from Wasing Road.

A few large lorries were witnessed on Wasing Road. It seems that the food vendors at the event were not told that their deliveries should not come via Wasing Road.

Mr Perkins has spoken to the organisers of the Medicine Festival to feed back the complaints. They have said that the traffic management plan was only given to direct suppliers so this will be rectified next time in 2028.

It was agreed that the organisers of the Medicine Festival will be asked to include the Parish Council in reviewing the Traffic Management Plan earlier in the process.

Overweight vehicles

A resident raised concern about an increase in lorries going through the village that are above the weight limit. There has been an increase over the last 18 months in the number of lorries over the weight limit along with a general increase in traffic

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Public Protection Partnership to raise this general concern and ask if they can monitor the situation. Cllr Boeck asked to be copied to any correspondence on this matter.

Planning and Development at Blacknest triangle, Brimpton Common

26/00324/FUL – Land at Brimpton Lane and Brimpton Footpath 20 and Blacknest Lane, Brimpton Common – this new application has been refused by West Berkshire Council. The applicant has indicated that they intend to appeal against the decision, but no appeal has been lodged yet.

District Cllr Boeck gave an update on the similar site on Reading Road which was subject to an enforcement action by West Berkshire Council. West Berkshire Council's position has not changed, and they are currently waiting for the courts judgement on the appeal made by the applicant against the enforcement notice.

Parish Environment

Mr Dolphin has reported 6 cases of fly tipping in Hockford Lane. .August. The waste was quickly removed by Basingstoke & Deane and Hampshire Councils.

Mr. Hicks pointed out that there is a lot of litter along the verges in Brimpton Lane from the School up to Back Lane and particularly at Able Bridge. Clerk to raise a case with West Berkshire Council requesting a litter pick. The Clerk was asked to respond to Citizens Advice and ask them to provide statistics for how many people from the Parish have been helped by their service in the last year before the grant request is considered.

The Parish Council had received an email from West Berkshire Library services asking if it wanted to purchase additional services or give a grant.

There is no mobile library service in Brimpton and most residents that use a library go to Tadley. The Parish Council agreed not to provide a grant to the West Berkshire Library Service. The next Parish Council Meeting is on Tuesday 6th October at 7.30pm at the Brimpton village hall

Knitted or Crocheted Poppies

You all did a brilliant job last year for the font display in church so, with your help, I would like to try and decorate all around the railings of the war memorial in Brimpton!

I don't need anywhere near as many poppies so no pressure to make loads!

IMPORTANT!

Please leave very long tails on the cast on and off sides so I can tie them to the railings!



Please leave your makes in Brimpton Church no later than **24th October 2026.**

Or you can call me and I will collect from you



Marcia 07946 615745

*Remember, for our tomorrow
they gave their today*



COFFEE MORNINGS

2nd Wednesday of the month
IN BRIMPTON CHURCH

10 am - 11.30 am

14th October

11th November after

Remembrance Service

9th December

13th January

Everyone welcome (including dogs)



NATURE NOTES

What a difference a few showers have made! Other plants besides grass have recovered amazingly. Even trees that looked as though they were dead have recovered in patches, showing an interesting mixture of green and brown. I wonder how many such summers they can recover from, or how many that look dead now will prove to be alive in the spring. It has given a boost to the vegetables too, especially the runner beans.

The ivy is coming into 'flower' and is being visited by many insects, particularly wasps, who seem to love it. It is only in recent years that I have realized that not everything that looks like a wasp is actually a wasp. It is such a good disguise I wonder that more insects haven't adopted it. Several kinds of butterfly flutter round it too, it must be quite tasty.

I can't help wondering how many small – and larger – birds will have fallen victim to the extreme heat and drought. I'm sure the bird lovers will have kept their water topped up, and there seems to have been plenty of insects, so I'm quite hopeful.

Stella Nesbit

Midgham News

Midgham Café Church

First Thursday of the month October 1st November 5th

Join us for tea and cake and fellowship 2.00pm
in the church

Contact Sarah Henderson for more information

Tel: 0118 9713956 henderson.sarah.c@outlook.com



Midgham Village Hall

The coffee mornings, with cake will held on

Wednesday October 14th

Wednesday October 28th

10 until 12noon.

All welcome for a friendly chat

Good things come out of these meetings. All are welcome and will be warmly included in our friendly group



RIDE AND STRIDE

Eight riders started this years Ride and Stride on a lovely September morning with a slight chilly breeze. All but one on electric bikes!

We followed our usual route through the local villages, stopping for drinks and refreshments at various churches on the way. A delicious lunch was waiting for us at Stanford Dingley thanks to Di Hibberd and Julia Roberts.



After lunch we cycled off to Beenham, and Woolhampton where we were warmly welcomed and our last stop Douai Abbey.



Thank you to everyone who took part and all those who sponsored them.

ENTER YOUR BEST
PHOTOS OF MIDGHAM.

WINNERS WILL HAVE
THEIR PHOTOS
PUBLISHED IN OUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD
DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

MIDGHAM PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

DEADLINE

31 OCT

2026

EMAIL ENTRIES TO:
NIGEL@MIDGHAMPARISH.CO.UK

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR EMAIL THE
PHOTOGRAPHER'S NAME AND THE LOCATION FROM
WHICH YOUR PHOTO WAS TAKEN.

SUBJECTS COULD INCLUDE:

VIEWS OF THE PARISH, BUILDINGS, STREET SCENES,
WILDLIFE, GREEN LANES, FOOTPATHS AND THE
CHURCH.

ANYTHING YOU THINK REPRESENTS THE PARISH.



People's Emergency Briefing

On the climate and nature crisis

7: 30 pm 21st October 2026

**Victory Hall,
Beenham**

Picklepythe Lane RG7 5NN

Free tickets but booking essential



Film screening and discussion.

Hosted by the Benefices of Bucklebury
and Aldermaston and Woolhampton;
Beenham Village Events and
Greener Beenham

<https://buytickets.at/beneficeofaldermastonandwoolhampton/2403563>

Woolhampton News

MIDFGHAM AND WOOLHAMPTON WI

Our talk in September was from Simon Booker a Nature Photographer. It was amazing so many photos and videos of wildlife entitled "Wild Connections"

In 2025 he took 30,000 photos of owls, hares, deer, kingfishers, red kites, marsh harriers, bee eater, barn owl and the otters, Simon's favourite.

He camouflages himself completely with just his eyes showing. He explained his £2,000 camera which is silent. It has 20 pieces of glass in it and has 12 x magnification. He also has a thermal night camera and a trail camera.

We are looking forward to our river cruise in October with a cream tea.

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

More information from Mrs Beryl Smith our President on 01635 861374

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 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 email Kate

- bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

District Councillor's 'Surgery'

The District Councillor representing Woolhampton parish, Mr Chris Read, will be holding his monthly 'surgery' at Woolhampton Village hall on Saturday 31st October from 9 to 11a.m. If you have an issue with an area within the parish or with West Berks District services, please come along to discuss it with him.

The following monthly 'surgery' will be on Saturday 29th November, same times. Please take advantage of Mr Read's generous allocation of his time.

Village Market

The next Market will be on Saturday 3rd October from 10a.m. to 12noon in the Village Hall. It's difficult to believe that this year is passing so quickly and thoughts are turning to searching for that special, possibly unusual, Christmas present – you might just find it on one of our stalls with their variety of merchandise. We have stunning glassware and jewellery, evocative paintings, beautifully decorated containers, delicious home-made cakes and savouries, crafted homeware items, and interesting books about our local history. Some stallholders will even take commissions if you want something extra special. All visitors, and particularly new residents within the village, are welcome to this monthly community event – no entrance fee, refreshments (including hot bacon rolls) are available. Come along and see what else is going on in your village. We look forward to seeing you there.



Planters at Midgham Station

Users of Midgham Station will have noticed and, we hope, appreciated the planters at the station, one by the ticket machine on the north side and its equivalent on the platform on the south side. They were installed about three years ago in a joint enterprise by Network Rail, GWR, Bee Friendly and authorised nominees of the Woolhampton Parish Council. During this time, the planters have been quite colourful and prolific; until this summer when it has been too challenging to keep the flowers watered. A new planting plan is about to be confirmed with Bee Friendly. However, it appears that someone (unknown to the local representatives) has decided to remove some plants from the planters prior to this new plan. If that person reads this, please get in touch as it would be good to recruit you to our 'team', both to perhaps contribute to the new plan and/or help with maintaining the planters in future. We can be contacted by email on terry.vallis@outlook.com at any time and this invitation applies to anyone wishing to help with weeding, watering, etc. In the meantime, the new plan will be finalised, new compost and plants acquired and the planters will be refreshed as soon as possible.

Coronation Crisis !

On 26th June 1902 Woolhampton and the nation prepared to mark the Coronation of King Edward VII. The last such royal event was the crowning of Queen Victoria on 28th June 1838. Plans were now made for the crowning of her son in a manner befitting a grand imperial power and the inauguration of the Edwardian era. These were carefully planned celebrations in contrast to the



somewhat casual arrangements made for the coronation of Victoria. The Woolhampton festivities were planned to be held in Woolhampton Park with a parade led by the Temperance Band formed by GW Johnson master builder with a yard in Station Road. The day was to include a church service, sports, refreshments, provided by local caterer Mr Phillips, with the events of the day to conclude with a bonfire and a fireworks display.

Crisis! The rumour that the Coronation service was to be postponed was confirmed by a Press Association message confirming the King was ill and was to undergo a major operation. It was later revealed that the King had acute appendicitis and was advised by his surgeon Sir Edward Treves that if he insisted on attending the service at the Abbey he would leave not as a King but as a corpse!

What to do? Aldermaston decided to enjoy the meal but to have no sports, Beenham cancelled the catering arrangements with Mr Phillips and Woolhampton cancelled all planned events, including the proposed one week school holiday and children were expected to attend school as usual! Much to the chagrin of the disappointed children Henry Ackerman schoolmaster and choir master chose to play 'God Moves in a Mysterious Way' and 'Incline Thy Ear' at the service held for the King's recovery. The operation was a success and the offending infection removed. Many, some from overseas, had rented houses in London for the day that would have given a view of the grand procession!

The postponed Coronation was held on 9th August of the same year – during the school holidays! At Woolhampton the planned events were held including the sports when villagers ran, skipped, jumped, raced in sacks and ran a Siamese race (three legged). A shadow over this happy first afternoon of the 'Edwardian Summer' was the fate of young men who ran and jumped. Four of these, W Hawkins, T Brook and the Stagg brothers lost their lives in the 1914-18 war and their sacrifice is recorded on the war memorial in St Peter's churchyard.

John Trigg

Woolhampton School

A positive start to the new school year

It has been wonderful to see Woolhampton School so full of energy and enthusiasm as the children return after the summer break. We warmly welcome those children and families joining the school for the first time, and it is especially encouraging to hear how well everyone has settled back into the routines of learning and school life.

We know that the first few weeks of term can be tiring, particularly for our youngest pupils, but there is already much to celebrate. The classrooms have been refreshed over the summer to provide calm, purposeful and sensory-friendly learning environments. Children have access to the equipment and quiet spaces they need to support their learning, independence and wellbeing.

Growing and learning outdoors

Outdoor learning continues to be an important part of life at Woolhampton. Beech, Sycamore and Chestnut classes have enjoyed Forest School, with pupils exploring, learning new skills and having plenty of fun together. Oak Class also has its eagerly anticipated day at Ferrises to look forward to later this half term.

The school gardens are beginning another exciting chapter too. Children have been helping to plant herbs and rhubarb in the new raised beds, while Gardening Club has been enjoying the tomatoes planted last year. It was also lovely to hear of the school's success with its produce at the Aldermaston Show.

New spaces and new opportunities

A great deal of work has taken place around the school site. Thanks to the generosity of Morgan Sindall, the front and rear outdoor areas have been transformed through landscaping, planting, raised beds, sensory borders and new turf. Children have played their part by planting borders and installing bird and bat boxes made by volunteers.

The new sensory garden will offer a quieter outdoor space for children at break times, while the raised beds will support practical learning as classes grow fruit and vegetables with Mrs Howe's expert guidance. We are very grateful to everyone involved and look forward to the official opening later this term.



A busy term ahead

There is much to look forward to, including the whole-school Welly Walk in aid of Jeans for Genes, the Macmillan Coffee Afternoon, Harvest Festival, sharing assemblies, Christmas events and the school pantomime trip. And, of course, not forgetting the annual Woolhampton School Fireworks display. This popular event is back on the 7th of November at Padworth Village Hall. These occasions are a valuable reminder that school is not only about academic learning, but also about friendship, confidence, community and making lasting memories.

The governors would like to thank the staff, FoWS, volunteers, parents and wider community for their continued support. We look forward to another exciting year at Woolhampton School.

Parish Governor opportunity

We have a vacancy for a Foundation Governor to join the governing body of the school. This is a wonderful opportunity to help influence the strategic direction and values of the school. If you also have a finance or business background that would be welcomed. For more information and to register interest please contact our Chair of Governors on

nikki.jordan@woolhamptonschool.org

Butterfly Conservation Upper Thames Branch Churchyard Survey 2026

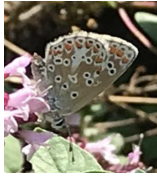
Once again, it's that time of year to report on the butterfly surveys of the six churchyards within the Benefice. carried out once a month from May to August on behalf of the Upper Thames Branch of Butterfly Conservation. After the awful years for butterflies in 2023 and 2024, things picked up in 2025. Spoiler alert! This year has seen butterflies' numbers start to come back to normal, improving once again on last year. Five of the Parish Churches continue to designate areas for wildlife that are left uncut to encourage butterflies, invertebrates, and small mammals. Yet again, Beenham churchyard was the best performer, both in numbers and different species of butterflies recorded, and we had three "survey firsts" - small heath at Aldermaston, brown argus at Beenham and - the prize winner - a purple hairstreak at Wasing. Of these, brown arguses may have been overlooked previously as it is very difficult to distinguish them from female common blues. The most reliable distinction being a "figure of eight" pair of spots in the middle at the top of the underside hindwings of the brown argus that is absent in the female common blue. The first two photographs demonstrate this subtle difference and the second two show how hard it is to distinguish them from on top.

Of further note, purple emperors have been spotted at Wasing and it is very possible that the mature oaks on Wasing Estate are homes for both adult purple hairstreaks and purple emperors who congregate around their tops.

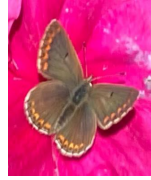
As with previous years the first survey on 23rd of May was slow, but we spotted one of the last of the orange tips (in days gone by known as the "April Fly") at Brimpton, a small white, red admiral and two small heaths at Aldermaston and a painted lady, speckled woods and holly blues at Beenham. These low numbers may have been due to it being school half term, but a more scientific explanation is that the overwintering adults of brimstone, peacock and comma and the emerged orange tips had passed over very quickly due to the warm dry spring. The next survey, on the 26th of June resulted in countless large, small and green-veined whites and meadow browns everywhere. On top of this, there were large and small skippers as well as ringlets at Beenham; while Brimpton scored a marbled white and a red admiral and, once again, Aldermaston came up with a couple of small heaths. The heat of 19th July led to uncountable numbers of gatekeepers, meadow browns and whites; with ringlets, common blues and brown argus making an appearance at Beenham. However, the star of the show was the purple hairstreak at Wasing. "Tiger's tail" cinnabar moth caterpillars were spotted on ragwort in an uncut part of Woolhampton. They are brightly coloured in a warning to birds as they absorb alkaloids from the ragwort that are toxic to birds and grazing animals. Furthermore, painted lady caterpillars were spotted on thistles in the Beenham graveyard and protected with a notice. By now, everywhere was looking very parched and, at the final survey on 22nd August, the churchyards were tinder dry and few butterflies were seen in any churchyard - a large white at Brimpton and a meadow brown at Woolhampton being the total score.



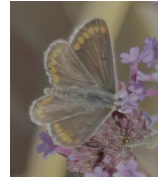
Female common blue



Brown argus



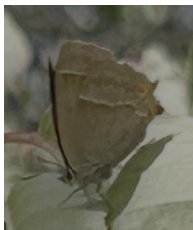
Female common blue



Brown argus

Despite this, butterflies of all sorts were plentiful in gardens where a limited amount of watering was enabling flowers to be present and this year was great for humming-bird hawkmoths. During July and August, the large and small whites were often noticeably smaller than normal, likely due to the larvae feeding off desiccated food plants. In both July and August, second brood holly blues were spotted and so they have not yet succumbed to increased numbers of parasitic wasps that prey on them. Let's see what happens to them next year.

This year a total of 18 different species was recorded in the four surveys, easily beating last year's previous best of 13 species, and those were all in far greater numbers than in the last three years. However, peacocks, commas and brimstones were notably absent on the recording days, despite being seen in large numbers during the year, otherwise we would have been at 21 churchyard species. Once again, no small tortoiseshells were seen in the churchyard surveys, and they were notably absent everywhere, as evidence of the further decline of this butterfly. This year was a "painted lady year" with large numbers arriving on warm southerly air streams in May, leading to huge numbers everywhere in July and August. It was likewise a good year for clouded yellows, although none were seen in the churchyard surveys. So, our butterflies continue to recover; although it remains to be seen how their numbers will be next year with many of their food plants having been dried out in the latter months of the year due to the relentless heat and lack of rain.



Purple hairstreak



Small heath



Cinnabar moth caterpillar



Don't cut the thistles!

Laurence Harwood, Board Trustee of Butterfly Conservation, <https://butterfly-conservation.org/>

Did you know that the UK's major high street banks have worked together to bring shared cash and everyday banking services to local communities?



Thatcham banking hub is situated at 44 The Broadway, RG19 3HP (opposite the Co-op supermarket) and is open 9am to 5pm Monday-Friday. The hub has a counter service operat-

ed by the Post Office where customers of all major banks and building societies can carry out regular cash transactions.

There is also a private space where you can speak to a community banker from your own bank about more complicated issues.

The community bankers work on rotation, with a different bank available on each day of the week:

Monday: No community banker

Tuesday: Lloyds, Halifax, Bank of Scotland

Wednesday: NatWest

Thursday: Barclays

Friday: HSBC

Facilities available: Withdraw cash Deposit cash and cheques Pay utility bills

Access other cash services ie: floats and coinage (for registered businesses)

Talk to a community banker from your own bank about managing your account, payments and transfers, getting on-line – and many other things.

NB The bank is not a Post Office, so it is not possible to send parcels or buy stamps.

The banking hub has been set up by Cash Access UK.

They are a not-for-profit company funded by major high street banks. They are here to provide access to cash and basic banking services in communities across the UK.

Ode to Autumn 2026

This is the Season of mellow fruitfulness and mists?

As the sun sinks lower in the sky

And swallows and house-martins gather and prepare to fly,

There is still time for a final flirty summer twist

Before, the autumn fairies, cooler temperatures insist.

Soon autumn colours will abound

And leaves will fall upon the ground

And everyone will begin to write their Christmas lists.

Autumn, will in all its splendour, have arrived

And the long hot summer we will have all survived.

Some may wonder what the winter winds might bring

And whether dancing on the ice, and snow, will be the thing.

Or alternately, as our planet warms

Whether it will be rain and flood and winter storms.

C.N.



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The foodbank relies on the generosity of others. Could you help to make a real difference?

The support of local communities and businesses is vital to the running of the foodbank. They would love more help to tackle food poverty on your doorstep.

There are lots of ways to get involved: If you share their belief that no-one should go hungry in our local area, they would love to hear from you. Email:

info@westberks.foodbank.org.uk or telephone: [01635 49923](tel:01635 49923)

**The Foodbank accept fresh fruit and vegetables directly to their warehouse
weekday mornings 9am-12pm**

The shopping list below shows the food items urgently needed. **Please ensure that there is a long 'Use By' date on any food donated. Thank you.**

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

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

Items urgently needed

Anti bacterial spray, deodorant, instant noodles, mug shots, non-bio washing powder, sugar, toilet rolls, cereal bars, cereal, cuppa soup, tinned fruit, tinned meat.

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**

What to wear when going out

Two ladies in their sixties are discussing an upcoming dance at their country club. 'I've been told that the dress code is to wear something that matches our husband's hair, so I'll be wearing my black, silky dress with the silvery flecks!' says Mrs Smith with a chortle. 'Oh my goodness,' says Mrs Jones, thinking of her husband's bare noggin, 'I'd better not go in that case; I don't want to reveal that much!'

Church Services in the Villages

Douai Abbey

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Weekdays

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

Sundays

As above, plus

10:30 am Mass

But no Compline

Brimpton Baptist Church

Contact number : 07944 956242

Sunday service: 11.00 am

Wednesday night Bible study : 7.00 pm

Church of England Services

4th October: The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

St Mary's, Beenham	9.15am	Morning Praise
St Peter's Brimpton	9.15am	Harvest Communion
St Matthew's, Midgham	9.15am	BCP Communion
St Nicholas, Wasing	10.45am	Holy Communion

11th October: The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

St Mary's, Beenham	10.45am	Harvest Communion
St Peter's, Brimpton	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Nicholas, Wasing	10.45am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, Woolhampton	10.45am	Holy Communion

18th October: Luke the Evangelist

St Mary's, Aldermaston	10.45am	Harvest Communion
St Peter's, Brimpton	9.15am	Morning Praise
St Matthew's, Midgham	9.15am	Holy Communion
St Peter's, Woolhampton	10.45am	Holy Communion

25th October: The Last Sunday after Trinity

St Matthew's, Midgham	4pm	Sung Evensong
St Peter's, Woolhampton	10.45am	Holy Communion

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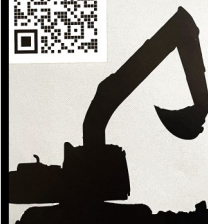
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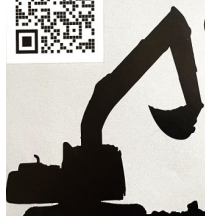
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Useful Contacts

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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

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: Ellie Brewer 07877 122127

Woolhampton: Ellie Brewer 07877 122127

Village Halls:

Aldermaston: aldermastonparishhall@gmail.com

Beenham: 01189 714 822

Brimpton: 0118 971 3731

Midgham: 07941 093 853

Woolhampton: bookings.woolhamptonvillagehall@hotmail.com

Churches:

Aldermaston & Woolhampton Benefice: 0118 971 2891

Brimpton Baptist Church: 07944 956242

Douai Abbey: 0118 971 5300

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