ItchenValleyNews

Abbots Worthy, Avington, Easton,
Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy

Issue 132 | March 2025

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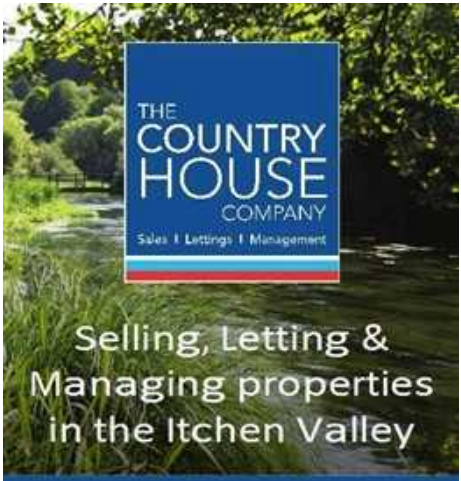

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WELCOME to the Itchen Valley News

I have been editing for ten years now, and feel proud to be part of the team that keeps the Itchen Valley News coming through your letterbox. It always seems slightly precarious, as if a wheel might fall off at any moment! Our favourite articles are from Valley residents who have a thought or a story to share - please keep them coming. For instance, one of my neighbours was puzzled about the winter work on the river, so Simon Ffennell has kindly answered the question (p20); the photographs show how winter strimming leads to summer beauty. Farmers are always busy so we are delighted that Robert Stent found time to write about life at Park Farm (p20). He is offering an excellent prize if you can unravel the alphabet soup of acronyms he is expected to know!

Of course we are all focussed on the big politics outside the Valley, but we need to be wary nearer to home too. This is how one scam operates: the criminals target a car in Waitrose car park and then run a trolley into it to scratch the paintwork. When the driver returns, their attention is drawn to the damage, and while they are out of the car talking to the 'kind bystander' the accomplice empties the victim's handbag. Since the bag is still in the car the victim doesn't immediately realise they have been robbed. Beware! It's not just the loss and all the complications of sorting out bank cards and the phone; it's that awful feeling of being duped. At least sharing the story means we are all forewarned.

In happier news, the inbox is full of invitations to all sorts of upcoming events; there are plenty of choices for everyone, even if you are not yet taking Ben Pope's advice on page 28 about planting up your pots and containers, or off to the seashore to find a Turnstone (p31), though it will no longer be possible to play club tennis at the Worthy Tennis Club (p23). Please turn up to one of the Lent Lunches in various homes (p6)to support the Food Pantry, and there is still time to catch the Has Coper exhibition at the Arc in Winchester featured in last month's IVN: it runs until 24 March. Next month's editor is Catherine Hahn.

Verity Coleman

Itchen Valley News

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Copy date for articles and one off advertisements for the **April 2025 edition is Saturday 15 March 2025.**

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What's On

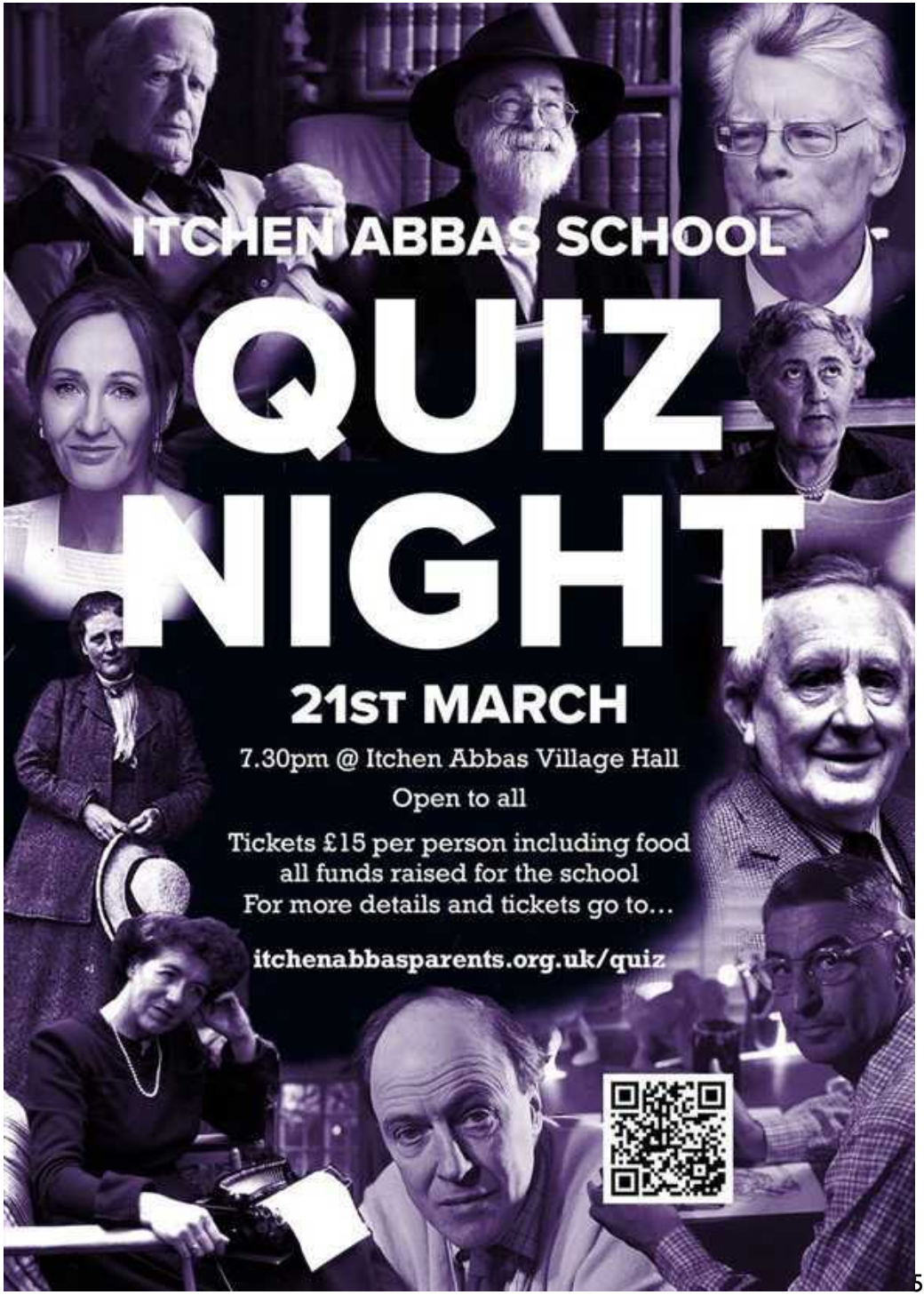
Brew with a View in Easton Village Hall
Coffee and cake!
Planned future dates are Wednesdays 5 and 26 March, 16 and 30 April
Ina Williams 07967 969921

Easton Church Flower Team

Thursday 13 March at 10am
Steeple Cottage, Easton
Coffee morning to organise the rota
Penelope Kellie 779317 or Pauline Lund 791081

Kingsgate Voices

Saturday 15 March at 7pm
St Paul's Church,Winchester SO22 5AB
I sing in this choir which celebrates its fifth anniversary concert. The first one was a few days before the first Covid lockdown and I can remember standing at the front aware that it was the last normal thing I might be doing for a while…..
Some of the pieces we sang at that concert, including the Fauré Requiem and Cantique de Jean Racine are being repeated, alongside other favourites and a beautiful modern piece. This time the Requiem will be performed as it was originally written with a small instrumental group - a string quintet, horn, harp and organ.
There is a modern piece by Jacob Collier. Born in 1994 he is a composer musician who writes for and performs with the likes of Coldplay. 'World O World' comes from his most recent album Djesse vol 4. Even if you can't come to the concert you might like to listen to Djesse 4. It is one of the most eclectic albums I have heard and one I keep on going back to listen to again.
It should be an enjoyable evening, and it's a fantastic venue at St Pauls after its recent renovation, which includes heating!
Lesley Ritchie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Open to all
Tickets £15 per person including food
all funds raised for the school
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itchenabbasparents.org.uk/quiz

Alresford Art Society
Thursday 27 March 7.30

Bishops Sutton Village Hall, Alresford Road (B3047), SO24 0AH

Jonathon Newey will be demonstrating how to paint a Big Cat in acrylic. Non-members welcome, admission £3.

The Alresford Arts Society is looking for a new Treasurer "Basically, if you can count to ten, use Excel without crying, and don't mind paying bills, you're hired," says current Treasurer Colin. "It takes about 2-3 hours a week, except for year-end (31st December) and our exhibition, which is in July."

For more information contact Sue Gentry 01962 773185/07802 354444 sue.gentry@gentrypublicity.co.uk.

Jen Boardman
www.artsociety.alresford.org
01962 732043/07798933027

Charity Dog Walk
Friday 4th April 10.45
Itchen Abbas Village Hall

in aid of Home-Start Winchester
Sponsored by Gay Dog Boarding Kennels

Two guided walks of different lengths leaving at 11am, whatever the weather, and may include some stiles. Walkers participate at their own risk.

Donation £15 per walker (includes home-made soup and a ploughman's lunch)

Non-dog walkers and lunch only welcome too. Book your tickets at www.ticketsource.co.uk/home-start-winchester-districts or send a cheque payable to Home-Start Winchester & Districts to The Carroll Centre,

Lent LUNCHES

The tradition of Lent lunches in the Valley was started by Juliet Burnand in the 1980s. Kind and hospitable neighbours make their houses available for a sociable but very simple lunch of soup with bread and cheese to which **EVERYONE** local is invited.

14 March: The Oak House, Church Lane, Easton. SO21 1EH
21 March: Edgedell, Lower Chilland Lane SO21 1EB
28 March: Lone Barn, Easton Lane SO21 1DG.
4 April: Itchen Lodge Itchen Abbas SO21 1BD
11 April: Beech House, 24 Little Hayes Lane, Itchen Abbas SO21 1XA

The Lent Lunches are also an opportunity to support a charity, and this year we have chosen Unit 12 Food Pantry at Winnall, www.unit12.org/community-food-pantry, which aims to help and encourage families that need a little bit of support to manage and budget through these tough times, as well as distributing excess food from supermarkets which would otherwise be wasted.

Everyone is welcome - for more information re parking etc. or to make offers of soup, please call Judith Mezger 07834 831450 or Verity Coleman (after 20 March) 07977 462034

Calling all little adventurers

Free forest school session
for children aged 18 months - 4 years old

Thursday 13 March 2025
Prince's Mead School, Kings Worthy

Find out more here

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01962 888000 princesmeadschool.org.uk
Worthy Park House, Winchester

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Legacy Action Week

7-13 April

Winchester is home to many charities and this is the time of year when smaller local ones come together to remind people that they are equally as deserving as the larger, more well-known institutions. You may know some and what they do from personal experience. Others you may not have known existed at all.

Together our charities help people from the moment they are born all through their life to the moment of their passing - a whole life cycle. And each charity plays a vital part in helping the people of Winchester and the surrounding communities live better lives.

Once you've taken care of your own loved ones, you may want to consider donating a tiny fraction of the value of your home as a gift. And that gift, even if only a little, can mean such a lot. Small local charities use legacies in a very impactful way.

During Legacy Action Week you'll find access to events where you can get free practical advice on will-making, probate and legal matters. So if you're thinking about leaving a donation in your will to a deserving cause you've reached the right place. Just click on a partner logo and make a gift that makes a real difference, one that will be valued for generations. You can't take it with you but you can do amazing things with it before you go.

Let's be remembered for good.

www.legacyactionweek.com

Iain Steel

Way of the Cross 2025

Good Friday 18 April

Church Lane, Martyr Worthy

Rehearsal at 9am, performance at 10am. Coffee and hot cross buns in Martyr Worthy Village Hall afterwards.

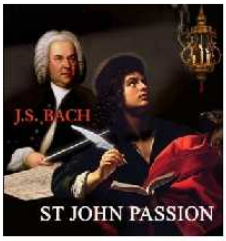
The Way of the Cross is a 40 year old tradition, as local people act out the story of the final days of Jesus' life from the Last Supper to the Crucifixion. Incredibly some of the actors have been involved for the past four decades, but the cast and team are always looking for new faces and we're delighted to say that last year we welcomed around half a dozen young families who took part for the first time - parents and children. They told us afterwards it was a brilliant experience and they'll be back again!

Whether you enjoy going to church or you just want to support your local community, this is a great way to get involved and celebrate Easter. No-one needs to learn lines because we read from scripts and there's only one dress rehearsal on the same day as the main performance, so taking part couldn't be easier. If you'd like to be involved in keeping this vibrant

Itchen Valley tradition alive please contact Jude Mezger at judemezger@gmail.com.
Any performance needs an audience, so please come as a spectator. Everyone is welcome.
Judith Mezger and Jenny Crowther

National Gardens Scheme
Terstan Longstock Stockbridge SO20 6DW
Sunday 20 April 2-5pm
Admission £5.00, children free
Home-made teas.
https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/22660/terstan
A garden for all seasons, developed over 55 years into a profusely planted, contemporary cottage garden in peaceful surroundings. There is a constantly changing display in pots, starting with tulips and continuing with many unusual plants. Exuberant and colourful planting surrounded by beautiful countryside. Penny is an artist and writer and she has an eye for design, colour and texture. Visitors will find harmony and contrast, vistas, an unusual gravel garden, a kitchen and cutting garden, and lots of plants they may never have seen before.

Twin Oaks Oakwood Road Chandlers Ford SO53 1LW
Sunday 20 and Monday 21 April 1-5pm
Admission £5.00, children free
Tea/coffee and cake
https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/36124/twin-oaks
An evolving suburban water garden. Enjoy spring colour from azaleas, rhododendrons and bulbs. A lawn meanders between informal beds and ponds, and bridges lead to a tranquil pergola seating area overlooking a



MUSICA POETICA

BACH WINCHESTER VOICES

Director: Andrew Hayman

Evangelist: Sebastian Hill

Jesus: Ben McGee

Pilate: Ben Watkins

University of Southampton

You are invited to Winchester College Chapel

On Monday 14th April 2025

for a performance of

ST JOHN PASSION

J. S. BACH

Performance starts at 7 pm (doors open 6.30 pm)

Winchester College Chapel, Winchester SO23 9NA

Tickets: £40 Nave £30 Side Chantry

In aid of Alresford Friends of Cancer Immunology Research at the University of Southampton

RSVP to reserve seats :- charmiandevas@gmail.com

If you are unable to attend please consider giving a donation.

Alresford Friends of Cancer Immunology
Bank details- Account number 21012962. Sort Code 30-99-71.
Name Charmian Devas

wildlife pond. A rockery is skirted by a stream and a waterfall tumbles into a large lily pond, home to dragonflies. Aviary. Great selection of Sarracenia.
Pat Beagley
pat.beagley@ngs.org.uk

Annual Parish Meeting

24 April at 7.00

Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall

To include presentation of the plans for Couch Green
See report page 17

Winchester Books Festival

25-27 April 2025

Various venues

There are lots of events for adults and children, with authors talking about their novels, Jane Austen, history, tennis, how to get published, architecture, royal photographs, and much more. I
I will be hosting an event with the prize-winning writer Ferdia Lennon, whose debut novel, Glorious Exploits I've chosen for this festival's Big Book Club read. (see Book Review on page 27)

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Buy a ticket, read the book, and come to the event to discuss it and ask Ferdia a question. Perfect for individuals and book clubs (Waterstones is offering a 20% discount if you buy five copies or more of *Glorious Exploits*).

More info and to book tickets: https://winchesterbooksfestival.com

Claire Fuller

Winchester College new tours for 2025

Winchester College is delighted to announce a new public tours programme for 2025, including two new collection-focused tours: Archives tours and Treasures tours.

The College's public programme now encompasses a range of speciality tours, including tours of its Archives, collections, gardens, and War Cloister, in addition to the long-running College tours which run twice-daily and focus on the school's history and mediaeval architecture.

The new monthly Archives tours, led by College Archivist Suzanne Foster, allow a rare opportunity to view two mediaeval rooms which house the school's Archives, as well as displays of documents and artefacts. Uniquely, the Archives are housed in the same rooms built for their storage in the 1390s, and due to the quality of that provision remain remarkably well preserved.

Treasures tours are led by the Museum and Collections Manager and showcase some of the College's works of art and rare books that are not normally on public display. Tours include visits to the College's art gallery as well as parts of the Fellows' Library, which is an extensive library of rare books established by the College at the beginning of the 15th century. Treasures tours will run monthly from 3 March 2025.

As well as joining a tour, visitors to the College can also explore its Treasury museum of art and archaeology, which is free and open daily from 2-4pm.

Dr Richard Foster, Keeper of Collections at Winchester College, says: "We are very excited to welcome more visitors to the College to enjoy our collections and Archives. We welcome thousands of visitors to our Treasury museum each year, but these new tours will allow guests to explore a broader range of our collections alongside those who have spent decades caring for and developing them."

Garden tours will also re-start in April 2025, following the success of last summer's sold-out garden tours.

Tickets for speciality tours are £15 and daily College tours are £12, with concessions available. The College also welcomes private group bookings for all tours, subject to availability.

Find out more about the College's range of tours www.winchestercollege.org/visit-us/guided-tours

For further information and to make a group booking, please contact the Winchester College Tours Coordinator 01962 621209 visitus@wincoll.ac.uk.

Save the Dates

Easton & Martyr Worthy Safari Supper

Saturday 10 May

Full details to follow

Anna McGowan
annamcgowan1@aol.com

Sunday 11 May at 7.00
Verdi Requiem
Hampshire Choral Festival
The Anvil Basingstoke
The choir includes members of the Itchen Valley Choir
Tickets from www.anvilarts.org.uk
Jacquie Squire

Saturday 14 June
Valley Day
in the grounds of Avington House
Further details to follow

5-10 October 2025
Cycle for Winchester Hospice
If you're a keen cyclist looking for your next challenge, Winchester Hospice has announced a trip heading to Italy to cycle from Venice to Rome, all to raise important funds to support their work caring for local people with life-limiting illnesses.
Jo Westerman, Fundraising Officer at Winchester Hospice, said; "This trip promises to be something you'll never forget, with over 600km of beautiful Italian countryside covered between these two famous cities. There will be some tough days with some long rides, but it'll all take place in wonderful surroundings, and you'll be challenging yourself all in the name of supporting our work caring for local people."
The charity has partnered with experienced cycling adventure providers Love Velo which has planned every part of the trip, meaning you're just left to book your place, make sure your bike is in good working order, and enjoy the challenge.
The group will gather in Venice on 5 October and set off on their epic five -day journey, cycling up to 170km a day towards the Italian capital. They'll stay off the beaten track and immerse themselves in local communities, enjoying traditional food and surroundings.
The challenge is tough, and the charity recommends that those taking part are experienced at cycling on roads for long periods. All participants will be asked to cover their own fees for taking part and raise a minimum of £1,000 for Winchester Hospice.
Anyone interested in joining the team can find more information, including a full itinerary of the trip, and book their place at **winchesterhospice.com**
Helen Owen
Communications and marketing officer
helen.owen2@hhft.nhs.uk

Martyr Worthy lecture series
The lectures for winter 2025/26 are being finalised now. First date for your diary is Thursday 25 November - make a note now!

From the Parish Council

An important event in the Valley this month is the Annual Spring Litter Pick, which takes on 15 March. Please see the poster on page 19. As advertised the start will be at 10am from five points round the Valley. Bin bags will be provided; litter pick sticks and hi-vis jackets will also be available but if you have your own please use them. Most important bring your own gloves. Also very important before setting out please read the safety cards, listen and keep to the instructions of the leaders at each of the respective start points. This is a great event that can involve all the family and makes a significant difference to the appearance of our beautiful Valley. Don't forget that at the end there will be tea coffee and cakes

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Preparation work south of the Fulling Mill at Easton for the alterations to J9 on the M3

from 11.30am onwards in Martyr Worthy Village Hall.

The Parish Council's new website is now live, using the Government standard format for public authorities and institutions www.itchenvalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk Our hope is that it will become the go-to repository for local information. To that end if you have any sensible suggestions of what to post, or how the presentation could be improved, please let us know via the Contact Us page.

After a long stay on the south side of the road in Itchen Abbas, the SID has been moved back to the verge at Couch Green. This is a polite reminder that as spring approaches and the weather improves there will be more pedestrian and cycle traffic through the Valley. Highway Code rule 206 explicitly states you should **Drive carefully and slowly** when approaching pedestrians on narrow rural roads without a footway or footpath. **Always** slow down and be prepared to stop if necessary, giving them plenty of room as you drive past.

HCC have replied to our letter regarding the poor bus service through the Valley. It was sympathetic but offered little else and did not address the question we raised regarding the frequent 64 bus service along the A31 compared with the infrequent 67 bus service through the Valley.

While still on the subject of transport and letters we have received an acknowledgement to our letter requesting that we are consulted regarding traffic management planning in preparation for when the M3/A34 Junction 9 project is underway. The snarl up of traffic that recently occurred on Chapel Lane Easton demonstrated the essential need for proper and effective planning for this aspect of the project.

Plans for Couch Green are progressing well and it is hoped we will be able to publish them in the April edition of Valley News. The Parish Council has agreed to progress with planning, cost estimates and looking for funding. If there are things that are not clear please ask and remember that we are aiming to have a presentation on the project at the Annual Parish Meeting on 24 April in Itchen Abbas an Avington Village Hall starting at 7pm.

Sadly a third notice board has recently been damaged. The probable cause being that one of the doors was caught by the wind and ripped off its hinges. This board was refurbished only three years ago. It will be repaired as soon as possible with stronger hinges and more catches. When putting notices on the boards please ensure that the doors are properly closed and firmly latched. Please also remove old notices you have posted and that have become out of date. If there is a problem with any of the boards please let us know.

Hope to see you all at the Litter Pick.

Patrick Appleby, Chairman IVPC

Winter work on the river

During the course of the summer vegetation growth by the river is considerable owing to the combination of the wet ground and the heat of the day becoming trapped in the floor of the valley. At the end of the year the vegetation is flattened by

the winter rains and lies on the ground in a dense layer of brown thatch, such that come the following spring only the most vigorous plants can penetrate through it. These tend to be nettles, hogweed, brambles and willow at the expense of more attractive chalkstream plants such as water avens, kingcups, meadowsweet, and loosestrife.

The advised way of removing the copious amounts of vegetation is through some form of grazing, but beside the river in Martyr Worthy the brown thatch is dispersed by strimming during the winter months, allowing the more desirable plants an equal chance to thrive. Come the summer months a further exercise in rogueing

encourages those desirable plants to flower, seed and spread even further.
Simon Ffennell

Park Farm news

Its never a really quiet time at Park Farm or on the golf course. The ground remains incredibly wet although we did manage to get 150 tonnes of lime on arable fields recently (see photo). Some areas of the farm are quite acidic and need the lime to help remedy this. Interestingly, historic chalk pits can be found around the farm which indicates this practice has been carried out for hundreds of years. As soon as conditions improve we will begin working the fields for the spring sown crops. We will be sowing two spring wheat varieties grown on contract for the breeding company. Both varieties have bread making potential. We will also be growing borage again. The oil crushed from the seed is an anti-inflammatory used in various products from hand creams to cradle cap treatment and sold as Starflower oil. We may also have a field of peas for seed.

When the weather permits the golf course has been busy. Joe and Ted have been working hard to ensure play can continue. Winter work has included trimming and maintaining all the trees around the course. Aeration on the greens continues throughout the year and all machines are serviced to ensure they are ready for the growing season.

Two thoughts have been keeping me awake at night: climate change and our government's belief that family farms are unnecessary. I believe in the saying "Live life as though you are going to die tomorrow, but farm as though you are going to live forever". Climate change is here and now and the effects are already being felt. Areas on the farm are becoming unviable due to the increased rainfall. I am looking at

Organised by
Itchen Valley Parish Council

options to increase the woodland areas on those areas affected.

Farming is in the unique position to be able to sequester carbon as well as feed the world. Losing productive farmland will put more pressure on the remaining land to supply the food needed to feed the increasing population. There is little doubt food security will shortly become an issue.

On top of this, to potentially lose a generation of farmers could have a huge impact on both the above.

Writing as current chair of the Winchester Downs cluster, we are working hard to ensure the good stewardship of our land and rivers. We learn from each other about the benefits of regenerative farming. Our open days and participation at shows hopefully enables the public better to understand the beneficial work we do.

On top of all this we have to cope (as many businesses do) with huge amount of bureaucracy. A round of golf for the first correct entry for the following acronyms and codes for agreement options:

BNG, NN, SFI, CSS, OM, CSAM1, CSAM3, SOH1, BFS6, AHW5, CS, ITL, NUTS, TPO, SSSI, EPS, MAGIC, GPS, AHW4,

Please remember to do this while working the land and managing diversification projects and following all HSE regulations for safety at work in necessary PPE so long as you have the correct licences to do so PA1, PA2 and PA4.

Robert Stent

From our MP

Who is Fighting for the Environment in Parliament?

I was honoured to visit Itchen Abbas Primary School recently to speak with the pupils about what it's like to be an MP (see the next article). They had so many thoughtful questions about our government and how democracy works. We held a vote in class on whether school should be five days a week or just four, and shockingly, four days won the vote!

Meanwhile in Parliament, I've been fighting for our health services, raising the issue of child poverty, and championing the environment. On so many important environmental issues the Labour government and Conservatives have teamed up to block Liberal Democrat measures.

I joined my Liberal Democrat colleagues in Parliament to stand up to water company bosses. You should not be expected to pay for their bonuses whilst they fail to meet environmental obligations. We urgently need a fair deal that prioritises people and the environment. The other parties blocked our amendment for now, but I'll not give up fighting for justice when it comes to water and sewage.

We also saw a new set of announcements from the Chancellor pushing through a third runway at Heathrow, which flies in the face of our climate ambitions. It's another desperate attempt to achieve growth with priorities, like climate change and our environment, thrown out the window.

I had the opportunity to challenge the Prime Minister on the state of our health services. Years of underinvestment in maternity have resulted in the NHS paying an astonishing £1.15 billion every year in compensation due to avoidable life-changing injuries, so I pushed the government to make improving our maternity wards in Winchester and across the whole country a priority. My team and I are ready to help, so if there are any issues or concerns you have, please get in touch.
Danny Chambers MP
danny.chambers.mp@parliament.u

Itchen Abbas School News

We have had a very busy half term! During Children's Mental Health Week, Mr Barraclough, our Senior Mental Health Lead, spoke to the children about the importance of looking after our mental health – and what we do in school. An example of this, is 'Stormbreak' which we introduced at the beginning of this academic year. Stormbreak activities support young children's mental health through movement, equipping them with sustainable skills and coping strategies to thrive during the complex demands of growth into adult life. The need to support children's mental and physical health is pressing and needed in these recent challenging and uncertain times and is always forefront in our minds.
This month we welcomed Winchester MP, Dr Danny Chambers to our school. Dr Chambers got to have a tour of the school and discuss some of the national and local issues in education with me, meet and be questioned by the School Council and then he spoke to the Year 5/6 children about his work as an MP and

Parliament. We were very proud to host Dr Chambers and the children enjoyed talking to him and finding out more about his work and his life.
Our Year 5/6 children have been out and about in Itchen Abbas with the instructors from the Bikeability programme. Bikeability is the government's national cycle training scheme. It helps children learn practical skills and understand how to cycle on today's roads. Bikeability gives everyone the confidence to cycle and enjoy this skill for life and we are really pleased that our children got to benefit from this excellent initiative.
Finally a reminder about our quiz night! We do hope you will be able join us to enjoy a fun evening and help us raise money for our school.
www.itchenabbasparents.org.uk/quiz

(see flyer on page 5)
Rob Bogan
Head

Valley Quiz No 33

1. There are 195 national flags in the world. Every basic colour bar one is used in their various designs. What is the unused colour?
2, What is the name of the station where, one hot day in June, the express train drew up, unwantedly?
3,What is the world's tallest, and longest living, tree? And do they grow in Britain?
4. Who studies for "The Knowledge?" and what is involved?
5. Where is England's longest road tunnel and what did it replace?
6. What did my true love give to me on the fourth day of Christmas?
7. One of the 20th Century's greatest books was called "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom." Who wrote it and by what name is the author better known?
8. Two ships are depicted on the reverse of a £20 note. One is a tug. What is the other?
9. Who or what was the Piltdown man?
10. Whereabouts in London would you find pullers, back pitchers, shunters, shopmen, cutters and bummeries?
John Lang
Answers on page 38

Worthy Tennis Club: the final chapter ...

For Part 1 see February IVN page 32
With a healthy membership and the backing of Prince's Mead School, Worthy Park Tennis Club officially started in 2012. The School benefited from Rachel Magory's coaching and she enthusiastically gave her time to offer drills sessions, coaching for all age groups, and support at tennis and social functions. Community tennis thrived with members coming together for many a good knock-about and even some competitive matches.
In 2013 it was agreed to arrange some men's doubles matches against other clubs and in 2014 the School kindly offered one of their transit vans to carry Club members to the Eastbourne Tennis tournament. At the AGM that year, it was stated how pleased the School were with the significant link provided by the Club with the local Community. Early in 2019, the Club helped the School with advice and support to help in obtaining planning permission for court floodlights.
When COVID struck in 2019, tennis had to be halted. The Club were eventually allowed back onto the courts in May 2021. However, access to the courts was significantly reduced at both weekends and over holiday periods due to School events and their holiday clubs. Despite this, Club membership always remained above 100 and members enjoyed

regular tournaments and off-season activities, such as tennis themed quizzes.

In February 2024, the Club received a letter of notice from the School stating the Club's agreement with the School would terminate in one year. This was attributed by the School to conforming with expected changes in legislation on child safety (KCSIE). The Club met with the School shortly afterwards and was reassured that the School was fully committed to continuing to support tennis in the local community.

The Club was keen to work with the School to conform to child safety measures, reaching out to them in autumn 2024 to ascertain what measures may be required to comply with any legislation changes. However, in November 2024, the School notified the club that they would not be willing to extend a new licence agreement. This was due to the agreement not being financially beneficial to the School and safeguarding requirements.

Consequently, Worthy Park Tennis Club held an EGM in January this year and it was unanimously agreed to start the Itchen Valley Tennis Club (IVTC) on 1st March 2025 to continue the legacy of the original Club with the objective of promoting tennis in the Itchen Valley and surrounding areas. All members and funds will transfer to the new Club on foundation.

The Club Committee would like to offer a huge vote of thanks to our coach Rachel for all the time and effort she has put in to running our tennis coaching programme and events so well throughout the years from start to closure. We were delighted when she became Head of Tennis at St Swithun's School in 2024.

A massive thanks must also go to all past and present committee members, all our loyal club members and crucially to Prince's Mead School for supporting tennis in the community for over a decade.

Worthy Park Tennis Club Committee

Letter from the Rectory: creating safe places

Recently the issue of safeguarding vulnerable people from abuse has rightly become a major focus of attention in all walks of life: how can we ensure our schools and workplaces - indeed all places where human beings interact - are safe places where individuals are not taken advantage of? Christian churches are meant to be such safe places; but, as we know, there have been some shocking stories recently of people being abused by clergy and others who were supposed to be acting 'in Christ's name'. The recent Makin Report, which led eventually to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, highlighted one particular example.

In the Itchen Valley, we so much want our church gatherings to be safe places, where trust is not abused, and also where people can be honest about potentially abusive situations they may be experiencing in other spheres of their life. Churches must be a place of sanctuary for all. To this end, Gerry Stacey, our Licensed Lay Minister, has been appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer and has been tasked by the PCC to review all protocols and procedures, as well as to raise awareness within the church family of the many issues involved; but, above all, to ensure that our safeguarding practices are centred on taking care of each other—not just form-filling.

We have had several good conversations on all this with Jackie Rowlands and Michelle Pride in the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. They emphasise they are always there to help if there is any issue and are open to talking to anyone who feels a need to contact them.

All this is so important. Jesus himself, in one of his most pointed remarks, warned that those who took advantage of 'one of these little ones' would have done better to have had a millstone tied around their neck and thrown into the sea (Luke 17:2). Although Jesus himself would in due course be the victim of the most appalling abuse when he was strung up on a Roman cross, he stood opposed to all those who used their power to belittle or harm others who were equally made in God's image. All this gives us pause for thought. In what ways are we in danger of using our power that are inappropriate? After all, we human beings don't have the best 'track record' in treating other humans humanely.

So, as the season of Lent approaches, the time has come for a bit of soul-searching. Ash Wednesday (this year falling on 5 March) provides an opportunity, if we wish to take it, when we can reflect on these things: in what ways might we have been harming other people or taking advantage of others? And Lent is also a time when the Christian Church remembers Jesus' own journey to the Cross and tunes into the reality that we have 'all gone astray' but that Jesus came to carry away all our wrongdoing, to suffer abuse at our hands, and then to overcome our evil with his goodness. Lent can be a time not just for self-reflection, but also a time for experiencing healing and forgiveness.

Rev Peter Walker and Gerry Stacey

ITCHEN VALLEY CHURCHES

March Services

Sunday 2 March
10am Parish Communion - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy
4pm Café Church - Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Wednesday 5 March
7pm Ash Wednesday - St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 9 March
8.30am Holy Communion - St Mary's, Easton
10am Valley Worship (and Ark) - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

Sunday 16 March
10am Parish Communion - St Mary's, Easton
6pm Evening Worship - St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 23 March
8.30am Holy Communion - St John's, Itchen Abbas
10am All Age Worship - St John's, Itchen Abbas
6pm Evensong - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

Sunday 30 March
8.30am Holy Communion - St Mary's, Avington
10am Mothering Sunday - St Mary's, Easton

March Activities

Little Rainbows

For parents and carers with their babies and toddlers:
9.30-11.00am on Mondays (during term-times) at St John's, Itchen Abbas

Cameo

A short lunch time service followed by a light two-course lunch:
12 noon on 3rd Tuesday of each month at St John's, Itchen Abbas

UTX

Our youth group, known as UTX - a time for fun activities, to meet new friends and to ask the leaders questions about the Christian faith:
5.00-7.00pm on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month

Please check our website in case of any unexpected changes:
www.itchenvalleychurches.org

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West Window Appeal, St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

We are delighted to announce that the appeal to raise funds for a new West Window engraved by Tracey Sheppard has been successful. The target sum plus a small surplus has been achieved and we are no longer seeking pledges. All the money has been received and the project will start as soon as possible. It will probably take about five months for it to be completed.

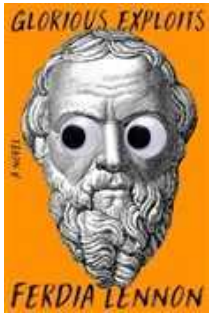
We are confident that this wonderful work of art will enhance the already special atmosphere of St Swithun's, and are most grateful to the many members of our community who responded to the appeal for their support.

Martyr Worthy DCC

Book Review: *Glorious Exploits* by Ferdia Lennon

Set in Syracuse, Sicily during the Peloponnesian War (412 BC) *Glorious Exploits* is dark and funny. It's the kind of novel that has you laughing out loud and then cleverly pivots so that your laughter is still echoing just as something awful happens. This is Lennon's first novel, and it justifiably won the Waterstones Debut Fiction Prize last year, and I have chosen it as Winchester Books Festival's Big Book Club read.

Lampo and Gelon are unemployed potters and drinking buddies, and as the book opens, they decide to go and 'feed the Athenians'. 'The weather's perfect for feeding



Athenians.' Thousands of defeated soldiers are imprisoned in an abandoned quarry just outside the city, and in exchange for olives and some smelly cheese, the friends get the prisoners to quote Greek poetry. This inspires the two to stage a couple of Euripides' plays using the captives as the actors. However, this is no Greek retelling, instead, it's mad, horrific, and hilarious. But it's Lampo's voice that comes sparkling off the page in a contemporary Irish accent which brings the novel and these two young men alive.

I'd love local book clubs and individuals to read *Glorious Exploits* before the end of April, buy tickets to the Big Book Club Read, and come along to put their questions to Ferdia, who will be attending. The event will be held at The Arc in Winchester on Sunday 27 April at 4.30pm. And the festival, with lots of book events, runs from Friday 25 to Sunday 27 April. (see page 11)

www.winchesterbooksfestival.com

Claire Fuller

Digital access to the Itchen Valley News

Did you know that you can download a digital copy of the IVN, including back issues?

https://itchenvalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/news

Thanks to David Wolfe who loads the new edition each month,

Ed

Flower of the month: Stinking hellebore

Imagine trying to make your way in the world with that name! Well the stinking hellebore doesn't worry about that as its smelly flowers attract early bees and other insects to its nectar. And its seeds are dispersed by snails which are attracted to them by an oily substance. You should be able to see this plant in woodlands on chalk downs and it can bring straggly early interest to the wildflower garden or border. Like so many wildflowers it is poisonous and killed as many patients as it cured when used as a herbal remedy in the past. Look or smell, but don't touch, is always the best advice.
Dorothy and Simon Broadley

The Valley Gardeners: 'Containing the unconventional' a talk by Ben Pope

February is a really challenging month, isn't it? Grey skies, cold winds and often Biblical style rain. All the while, we are longing from Spring to show its face. But our February Valley Gardeners' meeting was cheered up royally by Benjamin Pope, who inspired us to make a start creating wonderful combinations of plants for our garden containers.
Ben Pope is Head Gardener at a private garden in West Sussex but has worked with many leading garden designers and in some of the best-known gardens in the UK during his 25-year career. He lectures at West Dean College and at the English Gardening School, amongst others.
Some Valley Gardeners have

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downsized their gardens and others have just a small area to display and enjoy flowers and shrubs, so this talk appealed to a great many of our members, about 80 of whom attended the talk. Ben's helpful tips were welcomed widely and will be put into practice over the coming weeks, I am sure.

Ben looked at 2 scenarios: seasonal displays and long-term planting. For the first category, the plants are in situ for a short period of time, perhaps just one or two seasons. Typically, we would use bulbs, annuals and biennials, along with tender perennials to create displays. Potting and maintenance include organic based peat-free multipurpose compost, deadheading and liquid feeding throughout the season to keep the plants fresh and flowering.

The second category dealt with long term planting, using containers that are planted with a longer view in mind, having more permanence. Typically using hardy herbaceous perennials, ornamental grasses and shrubs, perhaps with the addition of bulbs for extending the season. Potting and maintenance include the use of a more stable loam based potting mix, deadheading and pruning as required along with splitting, repotting and feeding (granules or liquid) as required.

In both categories, Ben had brought along a wonderful variety of containers to show us. Some were not the sort of thing one would easily imagine as a good receptacle for plants and flowers but, even the empty food tins did make an interesting and quirky place to display beautiful blooms. He also had an "antique" metal umbrella stand and a wire shopping basket to show us and both featured in his presentation, planted up and looking fabulous. So, the message must be: be bold, unconventional and imaginative in your choice of planting container and then think outside the box with regards to plant choice, pairing the unusual and unlikely with other perhaps more predictable plants for a really stunning and eye-catching display. I am looking forward to "going wild" with my container planting this year. Watch this space!

Catherine Hahn

Turning over stones, one turnstone at a time

Turnstones are fascinating shorebirds which are easily recognisable due to their distinctive behaviour and striking plumage. The scientific name of the bird, *Arenaria interpres,* refers to its unique habit of 'turning' over stones and debris in search of food, so is of course, where the name 'turnstone' originates.

During the winter these medium-sized waders are a common sight

along the shores of Hampshire, particularly in places like Langstone Harbour, the Solent, and along the Isle of Wight's coast.

Despite weighing only around 100g the turnstone is a remarkable migrant, traveling incredible distances during its seasonal migration. Originating from breeding grounds in northern regions such as Lapland, Greenland, and even as far as Canada, these waders make long, arduous journeys , sometimes covering up to 1,700 miles to reach their wintering sites.

The UK serves as a crucial stopover on their migratory route, a pit stop to rest and refuel before continuing their journey further south to Africa. These passage migrants rely on the UK's coastal habitats to sustain them during this critical phase of their migration. Although a migrant to the UK, it can also be seen all year-round as different populations arrive throughout the seasons.

The birds seek out the rocky shorelines, tidal mudflats, and sandy beaches where they feed primarily on small invertebrates, crustaceans, and molluscs, often flipping over small rocks and shells with their strong bills to uncover hidden prey.

The turnstones' striking plumage changes with the seasons. In summer, their feathers are rich with orange, black, and white tones, making them particularly noticeable against the backdrop of coastal scenery. In winter, their plumage becomes more muted, offering them better camouflage among the pebbles and rocks they scavenge.

They are widely recognised by different names across countries due to their unique habits and widespread distribution. In addition to turnstone, it is also sometimes called the 'sea quail' in coastal communities, referencing its stout build and patterned plumage. In North America, there is also a second species, the 'black turnstone', which lives on the Pacific coast.

Their long-distance migration is a testament to the turnstone's resilience and adaptability. The birds offer a powerful reminder of the interconnectedness of global ecosystems and the importance of preserving coastal habitats for migratory species. Conservation efforts are essential to protecting their habitats and ensuring that future generations will continue to enjoy the sight of these fascinating birds in the wild.

Helen.Skelton-Smith@hiwwt.org.uk
07880 888577
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Photo Credit Tom Marshall

Alternatives to the Itchen List

Baby Necessities

A baby bank in Romsey providing new and pre-loved items to families in need. Their aim is to alleviate child poverty and promote the reuse of items through the simple act of redistribution. Go to their website https://babynecessities.co.uk/ for an up to date list of donations needed; drop off every Tuesday and Friday between 10.00 and 1.00.

Unit C1 The Premier Centre, Premier Way, Romsey, SO51 9DG.
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Judith Mezger

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I look forward to meeting you, until then,

Take care.
Dr Eve

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https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk

Margot Power

Jackie's County Corner

The South Downs National Park Local Plan Review is out for consultation. To read and respond, visit www.southdowns.gov.uk/local-plan-review. Deadline Monday 17 March 2025. You can also respond via: planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk. For more details, telephone 01730 814810.

In February, I spoke at the new **Minerals and Waste Plan hearing**, arguing for the County Council only to allocate new sites alongside the strategic road network, and to remove the expectation of 'once a waste site, always a waste site'. I want us to achieve higher recycling rates but reduce the impact of increasingly heavy lorries transporting waste on unsuitable roads. I've written more about this on my website, search 'minerals and waste'.

All change in Local Government!

Government has agreed to Hampshire becoming a Strategic Mayoralty Authority with a working Mayor. This delays County elections until 2026.Strategic Mayors will have a national role bridging the gap between national and local Government.

Then it's the turn of local government to re-organise. The districts, including the Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth councils must submit their initial proposals for reorganisation into unitary authorities big enough to absorb all functions of the current district and county councils by the 21st March. All parties at the County Council broadly agree that this change must provide a form of Government fit for fifty years, so there's a lot to absorb, understand and be finalised. I'll keep you posted!

Speed Limits and Casualty Reduction

We all say, "Something must be done: it's an accident waiting to happen"'. The reality is that the number of 'slight injury' accidents reported on Hampshire's roads is rising again post Covid, and the impact of 26 deaths in Hampshire in 2023 (most recent data available) cannot be underestimated for those involved**.** You can view this information on the www.hants.gov.uk website or contact me for the details.

If you have a safety concern about a site, start with your Parish Council. HCC will investigate the fatal or serious injury collision (there were over 500 in 2023) and the 5 year collision record. Of course, the serious and fatal accident sites take

precedence so a decision must be made to focus on those sites where the introduction of an engineering measure will enhance safety. I know this is frustrating for Parishes, but with limited budgets, HCC priorities are clear, but I'd like to see more projects for pedestrian safety: currently the emphasis seems to be on bike safety (also important).

See below for Abbots Worthy's experience - Ed

Complaints about road closure schemes are common, especially when nothing seems to be happening there. On 28 Jan, HCC made a decision to look at a Highways Disruption Scheme (Lane Rental) scheme to require utilities 'opening the roads' to rent space. This is in the hope that if there is a rental charge for utilities, road opening requests - which result in a road closure for normal traffic to pass through - will be more tightly controlled, resulting in less wasted days, and an income stream too.

Cllr. Jackie Porter www.jackieporter.co.uk
07973 696085
jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk

Upper Itchen Valley Society

Those of you who were present at the AGM last November will have heard that I am stepping down as Chairman of the Upper Itchen Valley Society. We are looking for a replacement from one of our members.

The present Committee, most of whom have served for a number of years, are happy to continue. We are very fortunate that the Committee members bring a range of experience and skills to support the Society's objectives. However, we do need a Chair under our constitution and we would like to find someone to carry out this role.

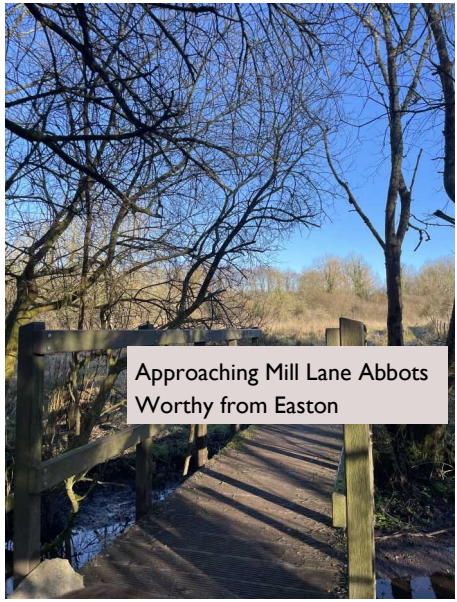
It is not an onerous job but with the redevelopment of M3 Junction 9, amongst other issues, it is very important the Society remains active and engaged.

If you would consider offering to become Chair, please do email me.

Elaine Labram
upperitchenvalleysoc@gmail.com

Abbots Worthy

On Thursday 13 February Abbots



Approaching Mill Lane Abbots Worthy from Easton

Worthy residents, with the support of local politicians, had the opportunity to make representations in person to the Council to reduce the speed limit through the village from 40 to 30. Residents made a powerful case for a reduction, particularly in view of the dangerously short sight lines coming out of Mill Lane. The village awaits further action.

Verity Coleman

NHS
Hampshire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

VOLUNTEER BEFRIENDING SERVICE

We are looking for Volunteers in your Community

Could you be a 'Befriender'?

What will I be doing?

As a Volunteer Befriender your role will be to provide social companionship to patients who have a chronic or life limiting illness and who are isolated or lonely. Visiting patients in their own homes, you will help them to feel more supported and help to improve their emotional well-being and confidence.

How much time do I need to commit?

Just 2-hours a week, or less, can make a real difference to a patient living in your local community.

What support will I be given?

All relevant training will be given, as well as regular and on-going support and supervision.

Interested?

For further information contact Caroline Nash, Befriending Manager on:
01264 835293
Email: Caroline.Nash@hhft.nhs.uk

Interested volunteers will be invited to an informal interview and the role is subject to references, simple health checks and DBS clearance.

Andover War Memorial Hospital
Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital
Royal Hampshire County Hospital

Valley Quiz Answers

1. Purple

2. Adlestrop in Gloucestershire. It is also the name of the poem by Edward Thomas.

3. The Californian Redwood tree. Native to California, some are over 2000 years old and can grow to over 100m high with a base diameter of 10m. It can be found in several places in the UK including Wakehurst Park in Sussex.

4, It is the formidable test, introduced in 1865, that London cabbies have to take to show they know by heart the quickest route from one place to another.

5. It is the road tunnel that links Liverpool with Birkenhead and runs beneath the River Mersey. It replaced the Mersey Ferry.

6. Calling or Colly birds. In the original version of "The Five Days of Christmas" colly birds featured. It was the name given to blackbirds.

7. T E Lawrence, a Fellow of All Souls College Oxford, best known as Lawrence of Arabia

8. It is J M W Turner's painting "The Fighting Temeraire" being towed to its final berth by a steam tug.

9. The Piltdown man was a massive fraud when an archaeologist "found" a skull in a gravel pit outside the small East Sussex village of Piltdown in 1912. He claimed it was the link between man and ape but, on forensic examination, it turned out to be a human cranium paired with an orangutan's jaw and teeth.

10. Smithfield Meat Market. They are the nicknames given to the various trades working there.

Local monthly information

Collections: Usually Tuesdays for Easton and, Avington, and Wednesdays for Abbots Worthy, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy.
Please check your calendar for actual dates.

Hampshire Market in Winchester Second and last Sundays of every month, 9am - 2pm.

Full Parish Council Meeting:
13 March 2025

Bus information

67 Bus operated by Stagecoach.

<u>To Winchester:</u>
Monday to Friday
Sch 8:20 NSch 8:23
9:23 12:43 15:43 17:23
Saturday 08:23 11:23 14:23 17:23

<u>From Winchester bus station</u>
Mon- Fri 10.20 13.20 15.00 16.55 17.50
Saturday 9.00 12.00 15.00 17.50

<u>To Alresford:</u>
Monday to Friday
10:39 13:39 15:19 17:14 18:09
Saturday: 09:19 12:19 15:19 18:09

<u>From Alresford Perrins school</u>
Mon- Fri 8.11/14 9.14 12.34 15.34 17.14
Saturday 8.14 11.14 14.14 17.14
No Sunday or bank holiday service.
Key: Sch School days only
NSch School holidays only. All times shown are at Itchen Abbas. Times are 5 minutes later (or earlier) at Easton

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VILLAGE HALL INFORMATION

Easton Village Hall
www.eastonvillagehall.co.uk
07482 938894 or
evh.booking@googlemail.com

Martyr Worthy Village Hall
Lucinda Ffennell 779701 or
martyrworthyvillagehall@gmail.com

Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall
www.iaavillagehall.co.uk
Hall Manager: Izabela Young 07947 191229 or
manager@iaavillagehall.co.uk
Village hall callbox 01962 791021

The Secret Garden
BOUTIQUE SKIN CLINIC
WINCHESTER

A specialist medical skin and weight management clinic delivering exceptional results in the South Downs National Park

Meet Sharron & Mica

Sharron is an award-winning prescribing consultant pharmacist with over 30 years of NHS expertise, 10 years in aesthetics, and a passion for delivering natural, flawless results. Mica, an advanced skin practitioner with over 15 years of experience, honed her exceptional massage techniques during a decade at a 5-star luxury hotel, combining them with cutting-edge skin treatments to create a uniquely relaxing and effective experience.

The Secret Garden Clinic delivers personalised treatments that transform skin health and body confidence. From cutting-edge skin tightening technologies like NeoGen to prescription skincare and bespoke weight management plans, we achieve glowing, natural results. Nestled in serene countryside, our clinic blends science with beauty to help you look and feel your absolute best.
Book your consultation today!

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