

ItchenValleyNews

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

Issue 136 | July 2025



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WELCOME to the Itchen Valley News

'Tis the season...for countless outdoor events throughout the Itchen Valley and the weather has certainly co-operated thus far with most of them. Perhaps the biggest bash was the Valley Day, held on Saturday 14 June at Avington Park, by kind permission of Nic Roach. As you might expect, we have lots of fabulous photographs of this community day out on Pages 22 and 23, as well as a report of the goings on there.

We also look back to May's Easton Flower Festival, because the stunning selection of wedding dresses on show at St. Mary's church was just too good not to bring you. That display featured on our June issue's cover and we omitted to credit the photographer, Helen Ellis-Brown. Our apologies for that.

The coming few weeks are the traditional time for holidays so if you are searching for a good read to take with you, we might have the answer. See Page 19 for suggestions from readers, contributors and the editorial team.

Don't miss the Easton Garden Players' production of 'Murdered to Death', playing throughout the weekend of 4-6 July. Our Valley Volunteer this month is none other than the play's director Anna McGowan who is featured on Page 10, along with a few of the rehearsal pictures. Tickets are on sale. There is important information on how to make your home more energy efficient whilst saving you money! For the details, please see Page 25.

How fortunate we are to have three thriving pubs in the Valley: The Plough

in Itchen Abbas and The Chestnut Jprse and Cricketers Inn in Easton. The latter has lots of news to impart, please see the story on Page 27.

We are still looking for an Advertising Manager to join the team which produces the Itchen Valley News. As the revenue from our advertisers funds the printing of the magazine, this post does need to be filled to ensure the magazine's future. Is there anyone who could help please?

Next month's editors will be Charlotte Appleby and Brigid McManus
Catherine Hahn

Itchen Valley News

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Editors Charlotte Appleby, Verity Coleman,
Catherine Hahn, Brigid McManus

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Copy date for articles and one off advertisements for the **August 2025 edition is Tuesday 15 July 2025**.

All material is published in good faith and the Itchen Valley News cannot be held responsible for any information given or views expressed; neither can it be liable for any loss arising from the use of any information or advertisements contained herein.

The Editorial Team reserves the right to refuse or amend articles or advertisements submitted for publication.

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Cover photo by Angela Wheeler and other photos from various contributors.

What's On

'Murdered to Death'

4, 5 and 6 July

Full details are in the June issue of the Itchen Valley News or take a look at the website

www.eastongardenplayers.co.uk

Alresford Art Society- Annual Exhibition

Friday 4 and Saturday 5 July

**10am-5pm and Sunday 6 July
10am-4pm.**

Admission free. Over 100 original works for sale.

www.artsociety.alresford.org

Hat Fair 2025

Sat 5 July, Winchester City Centre

Winchester's legendary Outdoor Arts Festival returns this summer: street theatre, music and unexpected delights! Hat Fair is free to attend (except for some individual special events that may require tickets).



Candover Valley Choir—Music for a Summer Evening

Sunday 6 July 6.30 pm

St. John's church Northington

www.stjohnsnorthington.org/

Alistair Bruce -Historical Insights

Friday 11 July, 7 for 7.30pm

St. Peter's Church Ovington

Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall Annual General Meeting

Thursday 24 July 7.30pm

If you use the Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall, or if you're just interested to know more about it, then please join us at our 2025 Annual General Meeting. We will review the past year, set out our plans for the future, and elect committee members to represent the local community. The meeting is open to all residents of the two villages, For copies of the Agenda and Annual Report please contact: secretary@iaavillagehall.co.uk.

(Apologies for printing the incorrect date in June's IVN. Ed)

National Garden Scheme

Monday 25 August 1-5pm

Bere Mill, London Road Whitchurch RG28 7NH

Pre-booking available

Admission: £8.00 children free.

Cashless Payments available.

Refreshments: Home-made teas.

The garden was built around an early C18 mill on an idyllic isolated stretch of the River Test, east of Whitchurch and has been built incrementally over 30 years with extensive bulb planting; herbaceous and Mediterranean borders with magnolia, irises, and tree peonies; summer and autumn borders; a traditional orchard and two small arboretums, one specialising in Japanese shrubs and trees.

Pat Beagley



Easton Flower Festival

The three Festival days were warm and sunny creating a very happy atmosphere as several hundred people visited the church and open gardens. The churchyard was full for the Sparkling Preview where people with nibbles and glasses in hand listened to a most attractive young student from the Royal College of Music, Andrea Rodriques-Gomez. She sang excerpts from her forthcoming finals concert quite beautifully. The church was resplendent with wedding flowers and featured a display of very different wedding dresses through the ages



from the early 1900s to the present day, each accompanied by a photo and floral arrangement replicating their bouquets. Most had connections with brides of the Itchen Valley and one in particular had been re-cycled through six generations of the same family. There were fascinating stories about the weddings and among historic photos one showed a post-war wedding cake made mostly out of cardboard. On Sunday the Bishop of Winchester



paid a flying visit to the church chatting to many people before visiting one of the gardens. The five open gardens were all very different, delicious refreshments were served and plants, cards, jams and chutneys were sold. Together with the £1,000 generously donated by the Cricketers Pub, who had won a national quiz competition, the Festival raised well over £5,000 for the St Mary's Restoration Fund. During recent work to make the church roof watertight major structural issues were found and over the years the coping stones above the chancel have worked loose and are in danger of falling. These essential repairs are estimated to cost £150,000 and a JustGiving page is now up and running. It is hoped as many of you as possible will feel able to contribute to preserve this cornerstone of our local heritage. <https://www.justgiving.com/page/eastonchurch>
Judy Bishop, Flower Festival Organiser (see above)



Pauline Lund, church floral decorator, and Andrea Rodrigues-Gomez, music student



Judy Bishop's wedding dress



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“Hold the Line”

All the red phone boxes in the valley are K6 kiosks, designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. The Avington box is listed, the others are not.

In 2018 and 2019, BT was regularly putting notices in the Easton phone box indicating that it was intending to decommission the phone box and offered it for sale for £1. I was in contact with BT, and a decision was taken to maintain it as a working box. I asked them to re-paint the box which they did in 2021. I thought that would be the end of the matter for quite a while.

Much to my surprise, in April I saw that there was a notice in the Easton phone box indicating that BT proposed to take the box away, nothing about purchasing it for £1. It said that all objections should be made via the City Council planning department. I spoke to someone in the department who informed me that planning permission was not required. I enquired about listing with the heritage department, but was informed that the advice to Councils was not to list anymore K6s because there were enough of them listed already. I was then in contact with the various departments I had been in touch with before at BT to indicate that we objected to the removal and that the Parish Council would be prepared to purchase the box for £1. I had alerted the Parish Council to this issue and then Scot Johnston informed me that there was a similar notice in the Couch Green box. I checked the Itchen Abbas and Avington boxes, but there was no

similar note in either box.

I found the criteria online which would apply when BT was making the decision whether to maintain or remove a box. It appeared that the trigger for considering decommissioning or removal was whether 52 calls had been made from the box in a year. Other criteria included whether there was adequate



coverage in the area provided by at least one of the four main mobile companies.

It was on this basis that I sent the email out on the Itchen List and I had over thirty replies showing that mobile coverage in Easton and Martyr Worthy is poor from all four main providers. There was also a consideration of whether this would be the only working phone box within 400 metres, although this seemed less relevant in a country setting where there was likely to be quite a distance between boxes anyway. There was a provision for consideration of relevant local issues. It would seem that Couch Green being next to the recreation field would be relevant,

the fact that that there are many walkers and cyclists visiting the valley would be relevant, and the Parish Council also considered that a working phone would be very relevant in instances where there was an emergency and a person needed to use a phone box.

All these matters were put in a letter to BT. I also prepared a separate letter to the relevant BT department asking to purchase both boxes if there was a decision to decommission. The letter of objection was sent to the Council, but to ensure they had our views, I also sent a copy straight to BT.

BT has made the decision to maintain both phone boxes as working boxes because of “insufficient mobile coverage”. What next? Mark Moffatt heard a very good idea on the Jeremy Vine show, which is that communities should set up rotas of people willing to make a number of calls a year from their phone box. My suggestion is that it is either ten people agreeing to make six calls a year each, or fifteen agreeing to make four. By this means each community should make sixty calls a year which would exceed the minimum. Obviously it is important that we keep a record of the number of calls so we know if we are not meeting the target. It would also be sensible if both communities undertake to keep their box clean and tidy and I propose to contact the relevant BT department to get both boxes painted.

David Swinstead

Valley Volunteer

Anna McGowan has been directing the Easton pantomime since I can

remember. With her upcoming production ‘Murdered to Death’ being



staged in early July, it seemed the right time to ask her about her life in the Valley.

Q: How long have you lived in the Itchen Valley?

A: 43 years – We moved into Easton in April 1982 and discovered a thriving community with a pantomime, fete, Safari Supper, two good pubs, a beautiful Norman church and so much more.

Q: What inspired you to start directing, when did you start and what was your first production?

A: I was in the cast of most of the Easton Pantomimes since 1982 and watched and learned from previous directors. When a new director was needed in 1997 for ‘Robin Hood’ I thought I should give it a go. I found I loved the production side.

Q: What qualities do you need to be a director?

A: Patience. Organisational skills. Getting on really with the cast and production team. Having fun &

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really enjoying myself no matter what!

Q: Do you have a favourite film, book or play and if so, what are they?

A: Film - 'Gone with the Wind'. After all ... "tomorrow is another day" is a wonderful concluding line.

Play - 'The Importance of Being Ernest', which I was lucky enough to direct for the Southwood Players in 2010.

Q: What do you like best and least about living in the Itchen Valley?

A: A safe place to raise your family. Friendship. Belonging to a strong community, who always have your back. Lovely countryside all around yet within four miles of the city of Winchester. Always arriving back in the village and feeling relaxed and safe. But, very bad public transport links. Traffic racing through the village when there are problems on the M3.

Q: Do you have a favourite one-liner or



quote from a book or play?

A: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again". I believe this was first said to the Scottish troops by King Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn in 1314 and included in a poem about King



Bruce and the Spider in the 17th century. It is a helpful reminder during productions. Rehearsals for 'Murdered to Death' are well under way and here are some images from them. Outdoor performances at

Wincroft, Easton on 4 July at 7pm and on 5 and 6 July at 5pm. Tickets £16 & £10

at www.eastongardenplayers.co.uk
Catherine Hahn

Plant of the Month - Ivy Broomrape

At present there's an eye catching display of Ivy Broomrape at the far end of the Long Walk. The broomrapes are parasites extracting nourishment from a variety of host plants including clover, gorse, hazel and in this case, Ivy. They don't require chlorophyll to survive hence their colour. They do produce huge numbers of very small seeds which increases their chances of meeting a vulnerable hostplant..

Simon and Dorothy Bradley.



The Valley Gardeners at Athelhampton House

Athelhampton is a Saxon name, reminiscent of Æthelred the Unready. And in fact, Athelhampton House (or Hall as it was then) and Æthelred (the Saxon King of England) are connected through historical events and a place name. Athelhampton House in Dorset is a Tudor manor with a history dating back to Saxon times. The name "Athelhampton" itself is derived from Saxon words meaning "noble home". Æthelred the Unready, was associated with the Piddle Valley which is near Athelhampton. The Valley Gardeners visited Athelhampton House and gardens in early June to enjoy both the Tudor manor and surrounding grounds.

We split into two groups, the better to hear and enjoy our guides' tours and I started in the gardens. These were designed and installed in the 1890s under the ownership of Alfred de Lafontaine, who engaged Inigo Thomas to create a series of "outdoor rooms," inspired by Thomas' extensive researches into gardens from the Elizabethan era onwards and his travels in Europe. Thomas created vistas from the centre garden "room", the Coruna, intended to draw the eye, as well as the house and garden together. After a delicious ploughman's lunch and lemon tart with clotted cream, we explored the house, starting in the great hall. In over 500 years, Athelhampton has had many owners and the house has gone through periods of renovation and ruin. I was particularly interested in the period



of De Lafontaine's ownership, because Thomas Hardy was a frequent visitor to the house and his description of Bathsheba's farmhouse in *Far From the Madding Crowd* fits Athelhampton to a tee. It was so exciting to think of Hardy there and being inspired to set his famous story in a house like Athelhampton.

Of course, in a house of this age there are bound to be ghosts. There are four which are still in evidence to this day. The first is a pet ape, which was inadvertently locked into a chamber and perished there. This can be heard making mischief around the house and scratching at doors. There is a hooded priest who inhabits the house, just as he did in the reign of Elizabeth 1st. An unhappy Grey Lady can be heard walking the corridors at night and a tapping is often perceived from the cellar, perhaps made by a cooper entombed in one of the barrels smuggled into the house. It all combines to make Athelhampton

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Catherine Hahn

La Traviata at The Grange

On a very damp, cold afternoon Malcolm and I made our way to The Grange Festival to join our host for the evening at a performance of 'La Traviata' by Giuseppe Verdi and starring Samantha Clarke in the lead role. First port of call was the tea tent to get a warming cup of tea and an enormous slice of cake. This definitely helped and we were encouraged to see that the weather was improving. For those who don't know 'La Traviata' the story is about a courtesan, Violetta, who at the start of the opera is throwing a party to mark her return from illness to her friends and acquaintances. She is introduced to a young man, Alfredo, and learns he has visited her every day during her illness. Her current protector is the Baron, but Alfredo convinces her that he truly loves her and wants to

take her from Paris to the country. The story continues with Violetta and Alfredo living together in a country villa, where Alfredo learns she has been selling possessions to fund their life together. He leaves for Paris to rectify the situation and meanwhile his father calls and persuades Violetta that she has to leave Alfredo and return to her old life as her reputation is preventing his daughter, Alfredo's sister, from marrying due to the stain on the family's reputation. Violetta returns to Paris and the Baron but gradually becomes more and more ill until she is near death. She is living in absolute poverty and on her death bed when Alfredo returns having learnt from his father that she sacrificed her love for his family. They are ecstatic to be together but it is too late for Violetta, who after rallying in her joy, collapses and dies.

Samantha Clarke not only has the most wonderful voice, but she is able to convey intense emotion both in her acting and her singing, carrying the performance with superb arias and intense feeling. Alfredo, Nico



Darmanin, is a worthy foil, though he lacked the power of emotion which Samantha managed to provide. The other singers all form a wonderful foil to Samantha with Dario Solari, giving a superb performance in his role as Alfredo's father. The stage setting changes from the glittering rooms of

Violetta's apartment in Paris to the country chateau and back to the poverty Violetta's last hours, all forming a great backdrop to the wonderful music. The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra yet again wowed us with their sympathetic playing, managing not to drown out the singers even at their quietest moments.

This was the first time we had seen 'La Traviata' and we were bowled over, with our companions saying it was the best production they had ever been to – no mean accolade.

Sadly by the time you read this, the Grange Festival will be drawing to a close but there are two more performances of 'La Traviata on' 4 and 6 July for which there may be tickets available. It's well worth seeing even if you are not necessarily an opera fan.

Mary Hogg

The Itchen Valley Quiz. No.37

1. Two castles lay claim to be the largest in England. Which ones?
2. You are looking at a vehicle with a number of wheels and instinctively know they are 4-6-2. What are you looking at?
3. What two cities are connected by the M8?
4. What went up in 1961, came down in 1989 and Charlie lost his job?
5. How can you identify a kestrel hovering?
6. Where in the world is the most northerly inhabited town.
7. What is the name of the novel that starts with the words, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"?
8. Why is the Mall between Buckingham Palace and Admiralty Arch coloured red?

9. The greatest depth of this river is about 720 ft. What is the river?

10. These two nations share a border extending over 833 miles. One side of the border is marked by pillars painted with blue and white horizontal bands, the other side has similar pillars but the bands are red and Green bands, What is the border.

John Lang (Answers on Page 42)

Easton Places & Faces

The picture below was taken in 1943 by an American G.I. stationed in Winchester. The caption stated that it "was on the road to Easton". Can anyone tell me where it might be? The building in the foreground is a granary set on staddle stones.

Thank you to those of you who have helped thus far with your memories, old



house deeds and photographs of Easton, they are invaluable and appreciated. I have come across many unique and important photographs and information that all help to tell the story of Easton. If you have any memorabilia or photographs I would appreciate seeing them. It is important to ensure that our village heritage is preserved and not lost or destroyed.

Thank you for your help.

George Mann

Tel: 01962 779944

Email: georgemann@gmp.co.uk

A good read?

Are you off on holiday soon and perhaps wondering what reading material to take? We have asked some of our regular contributors what they have enjoyed as a holiday read, so maybe this list will give you inspiration for your packing.

Orbital by Samantha Harvey, chosen by Gordon Ellis-Brown. Gordon writes; “the story follows six astronauts aboard the International Space Station over the course of a single day as they orbit Earth sixteen times, reflecting on humanity, the fragility of the earth, our planet's beauty and their own personal memories and perspectives”.



The Enchanted April by Elizabeth von Arnim. The work was inspired by a month-long holiday to the Italian Riviera. This book was chosen by Charlotte Appleby.

Alex and Steve Percy have chosen **Greengates by R. S. Sherrif**

published in 1936 and reprinted by Perspophone Books, a heart-warming period piece and **A Good Man in Africa by William Boyd**, “his first and probably funniest novel published in 1981”, says Steve.

Michael Smith offers two books: **We Solve Murders by Richard Osman** and **Finding the Edge by Jimmy Anderson.**

Jean White suggests: **I capture the Castle by Dodie Smith**

Patrick Appleby recommends **Trustee From the Toolroom by Nevil Shute**

– Patrick says, “It is a great story about a good man trying to do the right thing.

Written by an engineer about an engineer, it has the right level of detail to appeal to someone with an engineering mind!”.

My recommendations for a good holiday read are **The Towers of Trebizond by Rose Macaulay** and **Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier.**

Happy Reading!

Catherine Hahn



Book Review: “The Silence Factory” by Bridget Collins

“Silence is not only silence, sir, it is attention - it is sanity.”

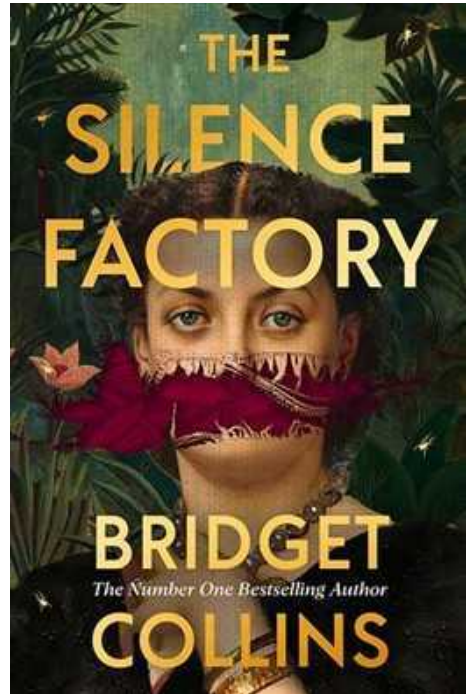
I don’t suppose it will come as much of a surprise to anyone for me to begin this review by making the very general, and probably superfluous, statement that Bridget Collins’ *The Silence Factory*” is a novel about silence. But what might Victorian England have been like if silence could be bought and sold; drawn out as silk from a magic and rather ominous breed of spiders found only on a remote Greek island; woven in factories to make curtains that can smother every unpleasant noise of industry that walls and windows alone cannot?

Henry Latimer, widower and audiologist, is approached in his shop by Sir Edward Ashmore-Percy, industrialist and wealthy silk factory owner, who wishes Henry to treat his young daughter Philomel’s deafness. Drawn in by a sample of this magical silk that Sir Edward has brought into the shop with him, Henry takes the job, and is given a room in the grand and imposing Cathermute House. Through his subsequent proximity to this wealthy family, Henry is pulled gradually into its industry, and he feels certain that this spider-spun silence is the miracle cure for a world plagued by noise. But of course, this being a Gothic novel, there is something not quite right with the silk, or with the spiders that make it. And the diary entries of Sophia

Ashmore-Percy, which lie scattered about the novel, slowly unravel a dark history and the spell under which Henry has fallen.

The Silence Factory is about silence, then, but much more than that; in this imaginative and unsettling take on the Victorian Gothic novel, Collins explores themes of corruption, exploitation, industrialism, complicity, greed, and the lengths someone might go to for a quiet night’s sleep. Collins’ style of prose is just as enthralling and whispering as the silk she has written about. And she has a very clever way of describing even the most sinister things in a lilting, mesmeric prose, which at times feels to border on trancelike.

M. Lawrence





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The Valley Day June 14, 2025

The Valley Day, held by kind permission of Nic Roach - and with a great deal of help from his team - was a huge success. Some 920 local people and their families had registered but the park at Avington is extensive so there was no sense of overcrowding. The children's games and tug-of-wars for all ages were well supported and the raft race generated great excitement. Two of the winners of the duck race were numbers 17 and 70 - your special correspondent had number 71. So near and yet so far!
Charlotte Appleby



Here are a selection of the photographs sent to the Itchen Valley News from many of you in the valley. Many thanks for them all. Ed.







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My Home Made Better - free, impartial home energy advice from a local charity

A new Hampshire-wide home energy project is providing free, independent advice on how your home can be made more energy efficient and low carbon.

My Home Made Better will offer free and impartial advice relating to home energy, from insulation and heating right through to switching to new technologies, helping householders to:

- Save money - reduce energy bills
- Feel more comfortable: a well-insulated home stays warmer in winter and cooler in summer.
- Do your bit for the planet – lower your carbon footprint

The project is supported by Hampshire County Council and is not connected to installers or any commercial organisations.

With many residents wanting to make their homes warmer and cheaper to run, but not sure where to start, My Home Made Better will help householders understand which options might be best for their unique circumstances. Experienced energy advisers will be on hand to dispel myths and simplify complex information.

Alongside a dedicated project website, My Home Made Better will provide one-to-one advice, case studies, videos, online resources, open homes, events and webinars, all designed to help householders make

more informed decisions about their properties.

To find out more and to book a free advice call visit

myhomemadebetter.org

The My Home Made Better project is run by a partnership of four local charities - Winchester

District is covered by Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis

(WinACC) who also have lots

of useful information about home energy at www.winacc.org.uk.

Stuart Mills



Martyr Worthy Village Hall

The hall is still needing a new Chairperson urgently. It is not a big commitment, with only three meetings a year and a small friendly committee.

Please contact Lucinda on 01962 779701 or email

martyrworthyvillagehall@gmail.com

Lucinda Fennell

Jackie's County Corner



As money gets tighter, the County Council is tending to provide only statutory services. Events and support run by local groups really add to the vitality and resilience of our community. But each of these events needs an army of volunteers.

The Watercress Way Charity travels through several parishes in the Itchen Valley Division. We host a Dawn Chorus walk, take part in the Watercress Festival in May, and are planning more events over the summer.

Like many other organisations, trustees and volunteers are the lifeblood of the charity. If you are a volunteer with any organisation, you will know the rewards of volunteering, either regularly or occasionally. If you'd like to volunteer, there are lots of options if you can only help occasionally and enjoy being outdoors!

Vanessa, the Chair of the **New Alresford Town Trust** (pictured above) is seeking more volunteers to help run the Eel House open days. In a two hour shift, we help others to learn about this unique building and

its surroundings. It's enjoyable, you meet lots of people, and you can help just once or twice a year. If you are interested, please contact Vanessa@towntrust.org.uk for details : volunteers from further afield welcome!

Need something for the children to do over the summer? Activity days are for everyone, but if your child has Free School Meals, you can book your child into an activity day for no charge. Go to <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250609HAFsummer> for details.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250609HAFsummer> for details.

M3 Junction 9 updates. The junction work is progressing well, but there are closures that might affect your journeys, particularly if you are travelling in the evenings or overnight. This page directs you to a link to sign up for updates.

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m3-junction-9-improvements/>

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Plans for Local Nature Recovery strategies in every county are underway. Hampshire County Council will publish their final document in late 2025. Each county LNRS will join like a jigsaw to cover the whole country with interconnecting habitats and protection for our rivers and green spaces. It identifies those rivers and green areas currently protected and those which need improvement. This is the first time that local nature plans will 'join up' across the country, and will include the National Parks too.

The South Downs National Park Authority PMP. The SDNPA is launching a major consultation on the

draft Partnership Management Plan 2026-2031. Whether you live inside or outside the National Park, you are invited to have your say on the draft plan at www.southdowns.gov.uk until 1 August. The draft plan sets out seven collective priorities: nature recovery; climate action; clean water; young people; welcome and access; arts and heritage; and a thriving, greener place.

Landline phones are switching to digital, which could stop telecare services working. If you or someone you know uses a telecare alarm, please don't wait : please call the landline provider for more help.

<https://digitalphoneswitchover.com/telecare/>

You may like to watch the short YouTube film and share with others too.

Cllr Jackie Porter 07973 696085,
Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk

News from The Cricketers Inn Easton



The Winchester Morris Men visited the Cricketers Inn, Easton earlier in June and entertained the pub clients and passers by.

The Pub Pantry has been launched at The Cricketers. This is a new local

service designed to help residents source everyday essentials by piggybacking on the pub's own supplier network.

This isn't a shop, and it's not about selling groceries - it's about helping neighbours out when they're in a pinch. Whether an item hasn't arrived in your supermarket delivery, you've forgotten something vital, or just can't face the Winnall roundabout for a trip to Tesco, The Cricketers can help source it. The system is simple.

1. Place an order via WhatsApp or their online form by 10pm, Sunday to Friday.

2. The pub includes it in their evening supplier orders.

3. Collect the item the following morning, usually between 7-10am, once it arrives. Items available range from milk, eggs, herbs and flour to fresh produce and store cupboard basics. It's flexible, responsive, and run with the aim of making village life a little easier. There's no profit margin - just a small service charge to cover some time and admin.

Andrew from The Cricketers explains:

"It's not about retail. It's about being helpful with what we already have access to. If someone needs something and we can get it in the next day, why wouldn't we?"

To order, message 07384 697109 on WhatsApp with your request, or use the order form on their website: www.thecricketerseaston.co.uk/pub-pantry

Smartest Pub Title Andrew writes, We're delighted to share that The Cricketers Inn, Easton was recently crowned one of the UK's "Smartest Pubs of the Week" in a

national campaign led by Marston's. The prize for winning this title was a £1,000 donation from the Marston's Charitable Foundation to a charity of our choice - and we were proud to nominate St Mary's Church, Easton to receive the donation in support of their ongoing repair works.

We're honoured to have played a small part in supporting a space that means so much to so many. Our thanks go to Marston's for the award, and to everyone who continues to support The Cricketers and the wider community we're lucky to be part of.



Here Andrew hands over the cheque to Judy Bishop, Sara Janssen and Theo Mezger.

Waynflote Singers' Tour to Normandy

It isn't often that you see more than the backs of the heads of the singers in front of you in a large choir, so the Waynflote Singers tour to Bayeux was an opportunity to mingle and chat and make new friends. It was just an extended weekend but, as well as singing we did plenty of sight seeing, and the area was festooned with Union Flags, Stars and Stripes and French



Tricolours to celebrate the anniversary of the Normandy Landings. It made one feel welcome. Although I had been to Bayeux many years before, I had forgotten what a beautiful town it is and how stunning the cathedral. We sang on the Chancel steps, a mixed programme of English madrigals, anthems and partsongs, to our delight to a full nave. More usually when abroad our audiences are very thin, but this time some of the committee had been round the town with colourful leaflets and the concert was free! What a good way to drum up an audience, and they were most appreciative.

The next day we went by coach to the American Cemetery near one of the beaches. It is beautifully maintained and a perfect place to pop up and sing five or six items in the open air.

Besides the music, we also went to see the Bayeux Tapestry and the beach at Arromanche, saw the remains of the Mulberry Harbour and various other museums of WWII. Plenty of eating and drinking made up the rest of the time. Congratulations must go to

the members of the committee who organised the whole trip, down to the last detail.

Brigid McManus

Itchen Abbas School News

We are now well into our final half term of the academic year! This half term includes lots of exciting events including Sports Day, the Summer Fair, 150th Anniversary celebrations and many more!

First though, before half term, we had a very unusual week at Itchen Abbas! It was so lovely to see the Foxes arrive on Monday morning full of excitement (and maybe some nerves!) for their residential to Minstead. At school, Mr Barraclough held the fort, inviting parents into school for our Class Open Afternoons – a great chance for the children to share all of the fantastic learning that they have been doing this half-term. Squirrels became superheroes, Hedgehogs made their own smoothies and Otters made Stone Age jewellery!

The Year 5/6 residential to Minstead with Mr Bogan, Miss Jones and Mr Robbins. We were all so proud of the



children and the staff at Minstead loved their enthusiasm for nature and their resilience on our walks

around the New Forest. A huge well done to them all!

This half term I began by talking to the children about World Environment day. The theme this year is 'Beat Plastic Pollution', highlighting the urgent need to address the global plastic crisis. This campaign urges individuals, communities, businesses,



and governments to take collective action to reduce plastic waste and promote sustainable alternatives. In the assembly, I explained to the children about some small steps we can all take to make a difference – and we'd love families to continue these conversations at home. Simple actions like planting bee-friendly flowers, reducing plastic use, turning off lights when not needed, or reusing and recycling household items can all make a big impact on our environment. Hopefully a useful assembly for the children to help in our mission to nurture a generation of environmentally responsible citizens! We were also really fortunate to have a fantastic assembly from Hartog Dental, who came to speak to the children about healthy eating habits and how to look after our teeth. We hope your children enjoyed this assembly and are remembering to brush for two minutes, twice a day! Smartphone Free at Itchen Abbas: At Itchen Abbas Primary School, we

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are committed to fostering a safe, focused, and nurturing environment for our children. In line with this commitment, from September 2025, our school will become a smartphone-free environment. Most children in the school do not bring a mobile phone to school and therefore for them, nothing will change. We believe that it is not necessary for any child at Itchen Abbas Primary School to own a mobile phone of any kind. Our aim is to protect our children from potential online risks and to promote their well-being and academic focus by working together with parents. If you haven't already seen it already, we now have a section dedicated on Online Safety on our website - it's worth a look!

A look at learning this half term so far... Year 6 had a visit from BearFace Theatre whom I invited into school as part of an innovative new programme designed by Artswork and funded by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Violence Reduction Unit. They support young people in Years 6 and 7 to explore some of the challenges they might face growing up, empowering them to make healthy decisions. It was an excellent workshop and the children really enjoyed it!

Otters have made a great start back

to school by creating podcasts about places to find peace in London, as part of our English learning journey. Hedgehogs explored a new way of mixing colours! We watered down some primary colours and mixed them in different ways by tilting the trays. We created some amazing patterns and the children decided which colours they thought worked best together.

Squirrels have been sharing and making their "special things".

Rob Bogan

Head Teacher, Itchen Abbas School

Boules 2025

The Valley villages started their 2025 boules local evenings in April or May and the first match in the League competition was duly held on Tuesday 3 June. Each village sends two teams of three players to play against each of the opponents' two teams. Games are played up to 13 points.

Easton were at home against Martyr Worthy. It was a bright and sunny evening. The scores rose steadily in the first two games and were relatively balanced, and each village won one of them. After a break for refreshments, one of the Easton teams went strongly ahead in their game, winning 13-1. However in the other game the Martyr Worthy team ensured that they were victorious, even if by a smaller margin.

So the overall result was a 2-2 draw.

For the other match Itchen Abbas were scheduled to play at home against Avington but had to switch venues. At first it looked as though playing on the less familiar piste was conspiring against them as one

Avington team quickly finished off the first game.

However Itchen Abbas won the other game and, after the refreshment break, they played firmly and more accurately and ended up the evening winning 3-1. So after the first round, Itchen Abbas have 3 points, Easton and Martyr Worthy 2 each and Avington 1.



Before round 2 of the League there is the Triples competition where all four villages compete in a knock-out. This will be held at Avington on Tuesday 24 June.

Ralph Matthews

From our M.P.

This month I've been standing shoulder to shoulder with campaigners fighting to protect vital care services. The Conservative-run county council has closed too many facilities and now they're threatening to close Chesil Lodge Day Centre in Winchester. That would be a blow for unpaid carers who rely on Chesil Lodge to give them a much-needed break from caring duties. If we don't support unpaid carers, more people will be forced into full-time residential

care - which ends up costing us even more.

We cannot let it go without a fight. I urge you to join the campaign to save it by signing the petition at dannychambers.org.uk/chesil-lodge.

In Parliament, I've been putting pressure on the government over our growing dental crisis - especially in rural areas. I've called for an urgent rescue plan to fix the broken NHS dental contract, to ensure everyone can get the dental care they need before it becomes an emergency requiring a trip to A&E. I am delighted to have been appointed to the Mental Health Bill Committee. I have met with local organisations like Winchester Youth Counselling and visited schools across the area to understand the mental health challenges young people are facing. I'll be taking what I've learned to parliament and making sure this mental health bill delivers real change. Finally, it's been great to spend more time in the constituency during recess - from taking part in the Watercress Way sponsored walk (raising £2.5k for Street Reach's Friday Night Football) to dusting off my stethoscope for a visit to the Penguin Cove at Marwell Zoo. Helping with the health check ups for the penguins was a perfect way to end the recess!

If there are any issues I can help with, get in touch at

danny.chambers.mp@parliament.uk

Danny Chambers M.P.



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From the Parish Council

Although not as much as in the past, and not as much as we would like, there are some funds available from Boomtown for



distribution to charitable causes. An application form can be found on the Parish Council website. Please note that the closing date for applications is 30 September and the decision on how the funds are distributed will be made at our Full Council Meeting in October.

Following the report in last month's Valley News that BT had given warning of their intention to remove the Public Telephone boxes from Easton and Couch Green it is pleasing to report that, thanks to the efforts of David Swinstead, both boxes will be retained in full working order. To see that they continue to be retained it is proposed for volunteers to make a small number of calls each year to demonstrate that they are being used. (*Read the full story on Pages 9 and 10. Ed.*) Please volunteer for this small task by letting David Swinstead know via his Councillor email address. At the June meeting of the Parish Council there was a discussion regarding the use of the Parish Notice Boards which have become cluttered with too many notices. Their two main purposes are for Parish Council statutory notices and to inform residents of local events that may be of interest. It has therefore been decided that they cannot be used for business advertising and

notices of this nature will be removed.

There have also been a growing number of posters going up in the bus shelters. Although there may be a need in exceptional circumstances (eg as in Covid) for this to happen, as a normal rule it is to be avoided and unauthorised notices in the bus shelters will be removed.

Remaining on the subject of bus shelters, following the question regarding the shelter opposite the war memorial in last month's Valley News no one has requested it to be kept. It has therefore been decided not to keep it but it is understood that there is a need for a shelter at the bus stop opposite and also possibly one on the south side of Main Road at Chilland. Further investigation is underway.

The walnut tree near the Plough has died. This tree was a replacement for the original tree that blew over in a gale and had been planted to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The aim is to excavate the area properly and replace the soil which was the probable cause of the tree dying. A new tree will then be planted in the autumn.

It is the time of year when there is a lot of growth. Chris Jeffes is to be congratulated and thanked for keeping open over 10 kilometres of footpaths with the ride on brush cutter. Owners of land adjacent to Rights of Way and to highways are reminded that they are responsible for cutting back any growth that causes an obstruction. With the dry spring weather over, the path across the Valley from Chilland Lane to Avington Park Lane (Footpath 48) is

again wet and muddy. The Parish Council is trying to address this problem but as there are SSSIs involved it is not a simple task. Please do not put pallets or loose boards on this path as they are potential trip or slipping hazards.

Christopher Langford and your Chairman attended another meeting on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation. As to what will happen at parish level there is still very little known. There are likely to be four Unitary Authorities on the mainland with The Isle of Wight as a fifth separate authority. Exactly which districts will be in which authority has not yet been decided but in our own case it is fairly clear that we will be in an authority covering most of central rural Hampshire.

David Wolfe, Christopher Langford, Jackie Porter and your Chairman attended a meeting on the M3 Junction 9 Improvement Project with National Highways and their Contractors to make clear our concerns regarding the diversions that are necessarily being put in place. We have asked for the diversion routes to have better signage, speed restrictions, a one way system on some of the narrowest roads and a designated cycle path on the B3404. We got a sympathetic hearing and an agreement to have a fortnightly meeting by Teams. Unfortunately the measures requested would need the agreement of Hampshire County Council Highways. Jackie Porter has taken this up on our behalf and further discussions will be needed. By going to the home page on our website, and a short scroll down, the latest news on the project can be found.

David Wolfe also headed a Teams meeting to see what can be done to improve the 67 Bus service. Other parishes were invited but attendance was disappointing. Since then a number of parishes have expressed an interest in joining with us to further this cause. It has been said more than once that 'Itchen Valley is a very active parish'. From reading all the above I hope you agree.

Patrick Appleby

Easton and Martyr Worthy Cricket Club

The Club's team managers, captains and officials are very busy with the huge workload of organising 15 Juniors' teams, two Ladies and three Men's league teams; we have also introduced the Easton Raiders this year, a team of mixed Seniors and Juniors that we have entered into Hampshire Cricket's new T20 League and playing their games on a Thursday evening. The three Saturday seniors' sides are sitting in comfortable places in their leagues: the Firsts have played 5 won 4; the Seconds have played 5 won 4; and the Thirds have played 5 won 3.

League games are played every Saturday afternoon with a 1pm start; there is always a home game to watch (played by one of the above three teams) at the David Roth Cricket Ground in Easton.

Congratulations to the Club's Junior section which received 1st prize in Hampshire Cricket Board's 'Fair-Play Award' scheme. Clubs are nominated to HCB by opposition clubs for demonstrating matches played in a good spirit, with the

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July Services

Sunday 6 July

10am Morning Worship - Martyr Worthy
4pm Café Church - Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Sunday 13 July

10am Parish Communion - Itchen Abbas
6pm Patronal Evensong - Martyr Worthy

Sunday 20 July

10am Parish Communion - Easton

Sunday 27 July

8.30am Holy Communion - Itchen Abbas
10am All Age Worship - Itchen Abbas

Please check our website in case of
any unexpected changes:

www.itchenvalleychurches.org

July 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

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coaches and players going above and beyond what is required.

Also congratulations from EMWCC to our Juniors' Organiser Laura Skilton. She is the founder of Baby Squids UK, which provides baby and preschool swimming lessons in Winchester and around the county. At the recent Maven Awards Ceremony 2025, held in the Winchester Theatre Royal and celebrating female entrepreneurial talent, Laura received the New Business Award!

Joint Club Captain Seb Stannard ran the London Marathon in April this year and completed the course in under four hours; his efforts raised an impressive £3,325 for the Winchester's Street Reach charity. EMWCC's annual fundraising Sixes tournament will take place from 10am on Friday 25 July. The all-day bar will be provided by The Plough and the hog roast by Paul Moffatt. The eight teams – all sponsored by local businesses – will play in two leagues, followed by a semi-final and final match. On Thursday 24 July the annual Tug of War, BBQ and celebration Juniors' game will be played from 6pm. All are welcome from the valley to support and attend both events.

Lynda Gray



Little Hayes Lane wild flower meadow



A mid June visit to the meadow at Little Hayes was a sunny treat. The carpet of sun seeking ox-eye daisies interrupted by vibrant pink pyramidal orchids and greater knapweed. The 'meadow maker' yellow rattle, abundant and doing its job of reducing the grasses to make way for wild flowers. Grasshoppers and beetles were buzzing and 'beetling' whilst a cast of butterflies visited the flowers, amongst them the increasingly rare small tortoiseshell, migrant painted lady, common blue and my favourite, the marbled white. The areas of the meadow that are richest in floral diversity have definitely expanded and there is now a large core area where the cutting and raking has held the vigorous grasses and nettles at bay. Further summers of hay making will continue to pay dividends and see the wildlife increase. The neat paths and bench also mean that this is a stunning oasis of tranquillity for people too.

Nick Martin. Allthingswildlife.co.uk

Valley Quiz Answers

1. Dover and Windsor.
2. A steam railway engine's wheel arrangement. In this example the first figure ,4, denotes the number of leading wheels, the 6 denotes the number of large driving wheels and the 2 denotes the following wheels. It is known as the Whyte Notation,
3. Glasgow and Edinburgh
4. The Berlin Wall. Erected in 1961, knocked down in 1989 And Check Point Charlie no longer had a function as a crossing point.
5. The kestrel hovers by keeping its head and eyes still whilst facing the wind and maintaining its position by constant small adjustment to wings and tail.
6. Longyearbyen is situated on the island of Spitsbergen, an island in the Norwegian Svalbard archipelago. It has a permanent population of about 2500,
7. *A tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.
8. It is red to give the impression of a giant red carpet.
9. The River Congo in central Africa. It is the world's deepest river.
10. It is the north south Finnish/Russian border.

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:

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Saturday 08:23 11:23 14:23 17:23

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Mon- Fri 10.20 13.20 15.00 16.55 17.50

Saturday 9.00 12.00 15.00 17.50

To Alresford:

Monday to Friday

10:39 13:39 15:19 17:14 18:09

Saturday: 09:19 12:19 15:19 18:09

From Alresford Perrins school

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
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- ✦ Deeply exfoliating acids
- ✦ Topical skin boosters
- ✦ Dermaplaning
- ✦ An exquisite facial massage
- ✦ LED light therapy

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