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Editorial Team

Treasurer & Advert Co-ordinator

Ros Partridge 01420 563 816
Harrow Cottage, Upper Wield
ALRESFORD
SO24 9RW
rospartridge1@gmail.com

Technical Producer

Jean Frost 01420 561 136
5 Pound Close, Upper Wield
ALRESFORD
SO24 9SH
jeanterry@uwclub.net

Distribution Manager

Philippa Pellereau 01962 733107
ppellereau@gmail.com

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Owing to pressure of copy space we regret it may be necessary to abridge any article. (E-mail copy much appreciated).

Disclaimer

The Editorial team takes no responsibility for any information given or views expressed in the Oxdrove and will not be held liable for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from the use of information and advertisements in this publication.

THE OXDROVE Church and Community News *Of* The Candover Valley and Wield Rector: Interegnum

Associate Minister, Rev Ian Thacker, MA. 07864 095 435.

Ian will be in **Wield Church from 9-10 on Wednesdays** for anyone to drop in. This will be followed by a brief service of morning prayer and bible study.

Benefice administrator – Tricia Knight email address:
beneficeFCW@hotmail.com Phone 07541 463750

Rota for Services

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship LL = Lay led

The Parishes of Farleigh, The Candover Valley
and Wield

The Benefice of Farleigh, Candover and Wield

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship LL = Lay Led

Key to initials:

IDT = Ian Thaker; PR = Peter Raine; JG = Julian Gibbons LH = Lyn Hardy; AL = Anne Luneburg; DS = Debbie Scholey

February 2nd Presentation of Christ in the Temple

08.00 Ellisfield Holy Communion BCP IDT

09:30 Wield Morning prayer IDT

09.45 Cliddesden Morning Prayer PR

10:00 Preston Candover Morning Prayer

11:00 Northington Morning prayer IDT

11:15 Dummer Sunday special

Readings Malachi 3.1–5, Hebrews 2.14–end, Luke 2.22–40

Psalm 24

_____ ” ” _____

February 9th Fourth Sunday before Lent

08:00 Dummer Holy Communion IDT
 09:45 Ellisfield Morning Prayer BC
 10:00 Preston Candover Family Service JG
 11:15 Cliddesden Family Holy Communion

18:00 Wield Evensong CSIDT

Readings Isaiah 6:1-8, 1 Corinthians 15 1-11, Luke 5:1-11

Psalm 138

February 16th Third Sunday before Lent

9.00 Wield Holy Communion BCP IIDT
 9:45 Dummer Matins
 10:00 Preston Candover Holy Communion IDT
 11.15 Cliddesden Family Service PR

Readings Jeremiah 17.5-10, 1 Corinthians 15.12-20, Luke 6.17-26

Psalm 1

February 23rd Second Sunday before Lent Creation Sunday

8:30 Bradley Holy Communion CW. IDT
 9:45 Dummer Holy Communion CW IDT
 11:00 Brown Candover Family Morning Worship JG
 11:15 Ellisfield Family Holy Communion IDT

Readings Genesis 2: 4b-9 15-end, Revelation 4, Luke 8:22-25

Psalm 65

February 26th Ellisfield Prayers in St Martins. 9.30 (30 minutes)

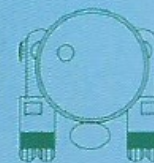
VERGES CLEAR – UP 2025 – Preston Candover/Axford

Annual 'Verges Clear-up' will take place on **27th March 2025** in Preston Candover and Axford. Willing hands always welcome!

Bring black bags and a hook/fork/ tweezers for rubbish in the hedges! Please wear a high viz vest for safety. 'Roads' will be allocated nearer the time.

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Message from Ian

My car is due an MOT this month and I'm dreading it. It's reached the age where things feel OK but when the expert looks at it things go wrong. You end up with a complete litany of things that need fixing and face the choice of scrapping it and buying a new car or sticking with what you've got for another year. However much we dread the cost of the MOT it is still something worth having. The thought of coming down Farleigh Wallop hill to find there is an issue with the brakes is not a thought I want to linger on.



The season of Lent is going to start in March but needs some preparation time. Lent, along with Advent, is a time when those of us who are Christians are supposed to put their faith through a bit of an MOT. When I was a Vicar in North London the Diocese did this very seriously. The Clergy had to ask five people to fill in an appraisal. We were then summoned to meet with what felt like an inquisitor who would go through the reports. We all vaguely dreaded this because we were expected not to ask people who were friends but some, at least, who found our ministry challenging. The inquisitor always turned out to be wise and kind who fed back 5 good things we were going and a couple of things that needed sorting out. One of mine, was always scruffy shoes and untidy hair no idea what happened to that!

So here are two questions for you to think about in the run up to Lent. Firstly, how much have you been praying and reading your Bible recently. If the answer is "not much" the Church of England has a really good app called daily prayer that, if you don't live in the dead zone around Preston Candover is worth accessing.

Secondly, how frequently are you attending Church? When your Church doesn't have a service could you go along to one of the other Churches in the Benefice in Lent.

Finally, and this applies regardless of the faith we possess, how are we responding to the human need that exists in Basingstoke and Winchester. How much have we given to the foodbanks that provide urgent support to people who are homeless or on benefits?

Taking stock is something you can do on your own, but it is more effective if we find someone who is kind and wise to help us set targets and make a success of this special time of year



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<u>Church</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Sidesmen</u>	<u>Readers</u>
St John's Northington		Rhona & James Hatchley	Rhona & James Hatchley
St Peters Brown Candover		Carel & Allison van Randwyck	Carel & Allison van Randwyck
St Marys Preston Candover	2 Feb 10.00am	Anne Luneburg	Jane Laws
	9 Feb 10.00am	Jane Laws	Anne Luneburg Jane Laws
	16 Feb 10.00am	Marina Avis	To be advised
	2 March 10.00am	Marina Avis	Marina Avis
All Saints Bradley			
St James' Wield	2 Feb 9.30am	Brian Collins	Eileen Collins David Cowley Coffee—Nikki Cowley
	9 Feb 6.00pm	Alwin Hutchinson	Lisa or Keith Stanton Ben Robinson
	16 Feb 9.00am	John Lailey Catherine Simons	Amanda Bromfield Eileen Collins

St John's, Northington is looking for a cleaner for about 2 to 3 hours a month. Mainly consists of sweeping, hoovering and some brass cleaning. The position is paid and can be done at anytime suitable to the person.


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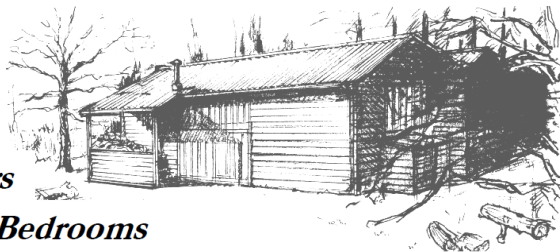
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St Peter's Church Brown Candover	Keyholders		
All Saints Church Bradley			
St. Mary The Virgin Preston Candover	Flowers		
St James' Church Wield	Flowers	February	Nikki Cowley
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MUSIC IN ST JOHN'S NORTHINGTON

HALF TERM FAMILY CONCERT
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NB NOTE CHANGE OF DATE to FRIDAY!
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For details of this and eventbrite booking links see:

www.stjohnsnorthington.org

SO24 9TH

St John's is most grateful for the support of Hampshire County Council

IT MUST BE A WIELD CAROLLING RECORD

The Not Forgotten office has just done the count up of all the money donated at the Wield carol singing. The total is the fantastic sum of £493.03.

This is a wonderful result, and The Not Forgotten team is absolutely delighted.

Thank you.... to those who hosted the singers (The Cowleys, Geddes and Robsons) and huge thanks too to those who did the collecting on the night.

My neighbour on the train has just given me £6.97 so the grand and wonderful total is now £500!!

David Cowley

Special thanks to Amanda, our very talented keyboard player for the evening.



Candover Valley Gardening Club

No Gardening Club meeting was held in December, but we are looking forward to welcoming Steve Gibbs in January who is a passionate chilli grower.

In February our speaker will be Stef Bradfield who is the kitchen gardener at Lainston House. Stef studied at Sparsholt College, and her areas of expertise are fruit and vegetable growing, pest and disease identification and specialist pruning.

Our indoor meetings are held at 7.30pm in Preston Candover Village Hall on the third Thursday of the month from September to April. If you would like to join us at any time, guests are very welcome for a small fee and we always welcome new members. Our annual subscription is currently £12.

Contact blighrosemary@hotmail.com for more information or you can find us on Facebook – Candover Valley Gardening Club.



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Swarraton and Northington WI

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2025

There was no official meeting in January as we have the ever-popular Lasagne Lunch with 42 members and guests attending. On a cold winter's day, the hall was warm and welcoming with the tables beautifully laid

with the addition of flowers, candles and table quizzes. The lasagnes and other savoury dishes were supplied by the Committee with a delicious array of desserts made by members of the group. This year the raffle prize was a luxury hamper which was won by a lucky member of our group. There was a table quiz which seemed to be enjoyed and at our next function it has been suggested that we have a token winner's prize.

As always, thanks to the men who helped with the setting up, clearing away afterwards, coffee making and a vote of thanks to all the Committee and people who made it such an enjoyable event.

Our WI Group seems to be flourishing, we have several new members and plans are being made for the speakers for the 2025/2026 meetings including possibly talks on Falconry, Interpretation of Dreams and Silver Clay Jewellery demonstration. The book selection is always popular, and we try to keep the assortment of books up to date. There is also a charity collection for used stamps and pennies. We are a slightly different WI Group with no singing Jerusalem or craft competitions, just a speaker and tea and cake afterwards. We support an ongoing charity called Days For Girls and have separate sewing and packing sessions held at Old Alresford Village Hall, the next date is **Wednesday 12th February at 1pm.**

The next meeting is at 2pm on **Tuesday 4th February** with a talk titled Suffering Suffragettes by Jane Glennie.

Tea hostesses - Jill Parker and Janet Pooley

Flowers - Jennifer Miller

Please could members not able to attend send their apologies to

Gill Graham Maw

Walking with Wildlife, Robert Bryant

In the chill air of a frosty dawn, I glimpsed a large pale bird gliding low along the grassy edge of the back field, before vanishing into the glow of the rising sun. It was a barn owl, an elusive local resident, probably hunting for voles.

On sunset strolls here at Northington Down, we look and listen, alert for chance encounters with winter wildlife. On one walk just before Christmas we met the owl again. It floated out from the dark wooded wall of a hazel coppice. We watched as it swooped and swerved, fluttering like a huge white moth, as head down it scanned the grassland below, before slipping away to hunt elsewhere.

Herds of fallow deer roam the fields and copses leading up to Micheldever Wood. Often, we meet a dozen or so, who stand and stare before racing away. Early in the New Year though, there was a great gathering of fallow deer, a herd of some sixty or more, escorted by four or five bucks with their distinctive antlers. They were all dressed in their winter coats of grey or brown – apart from three of the does who were bright white.

The local roe deer tend to stay in smaller family groups, while the muntjacs follow their own solitary trails – rather like the fox who we spotted crossing a field.

By contrast, a majestic grey heron flying over the Woolpack Inn at Totford, set the scene as we headed off for a wintry morning ramble along the Wayfarer's Walk. Vast flocks of wintering wood pigeons crowded the distant treetops on the far side of the Candover Valley, along with a huge throng of rooks. Both red kites and buzzards floated around the trees in the valley bottom, where the brook ran swift and clear. We were delighted to find some early snowdrops in flower beside the path.

Other highlights of our walk included being surprised by a gingerly brown stoat, bounding swiftly along a hedge bottom with something small and furry in its mouth.

Robert Bryant
10th January '25

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**Winchester
and Districts**

Northington, Swarraton and Totford - Carols by Tractor.

Chris and Carly Ray held their annual Carols by Tractor evening in December around Northington, Swarraton and Totford. They had a bumper year raising over £560 for local family support charity Home-Start Winchester and Districts.

‘We are so grateful to Chris and Carly and their friends for choosing us as their charity this year,’ said Stephanie Durrant, Chair of the charity’s trustees. ‘As we enter our 20th year, we are finding it increasingly difficult to raise funds to continue our much needed support of local families who are struggling with disability, isolation, loneliness and many other problems during the early years of their children’s development. In the past year we have supported 125 families, which is an increase of 21% on the previous twelve months.’

Home-Start Winchester and Districts has been running since 2005. It is a local charity which provides friendship, emotional and practical support to parents with at least one child under five years old. It helps families from all backgrounds through their most challenging times by offering one to one home visiting support by our trained volunteers, as well as supportive groups which are nurturing and accessible.

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On the Farm— Ben Robinson

It is always a joy when we pass the shortest day, and the days begin to lengthen slightly. The countdown to lambing begins and the work rate picks up a bit incrementally as we march towards our start date of the 10th March. Our scanning this year has not been that exciting at 161%. ie. 1.61 lambs to be born per ewe. A good scan for a mule flock would be 180-190%. Scans of 200%+ have been achieved, though these very high rates actually become less profitable due to the number of orphans which have to be raised on milk powder.

This is the second year we have scanned in the low 160% range which is disappointing. The ewes appeared to be in good condition, and we have certainly given them everything we could have done nutritionally. This was backed up by blood testing from the vets. There could be an element of bluetongue or Schmallenburg that affected the scanning rates, or it could simply be the replacement ewes that I sourced have not been from particularly prolific blood lines. It gives us food for thought on the breed we use. Perhaps something like the Romney may suit our system better? The Romney originates from Romney marsh in Kent/East Sussex and is the most numerous breed in the Southern hemisphere. The breed performs remarkably well-off forage, crucially needing far less input than the mules. Food for thought.

We have been approached by the National Sheep Association as one of the farms to enter a project looking at the integration of sheep into arable systems. This will investigate the effect on the sheep, arable crops, cover crops and soil of the symbiosis between sheep and arable. It appears to be an interesting study and hopefully will lead to some evidence about the slightly vague belief that many of us hold in the 'Golden hoof', shorthand for the benefits of sheep for arable land.

One thing I would like to be looked at is frost tolerance for grazed cover crops. Following a few days of hard frost recently the cover crops appear to be disappearing before my eyes!

Bluetongue rumbles on, and frustratingly the government don't appear to be willing to do away with the control zones even though we are told the midges do not circulate the disease below 12c. It has led to me selling lambs to the East of here, as the outlets to the West are unable to take livestock from Hampshire due to our county being in the bluetongue control zone.

The largest market in the Southeast corner of England is Ashford, which is very large and a modern, efficient set up. However, I have also taken some lambs to Hailsham in East Sussex which was a fabulous experience. Hailsham market is in the open air, bang slap in the town centre, a long slow journey from here along small roads and all a bit ramshackle. However, the prices were good, the auction staff friendly, and above all it was a lot of fun. And if we can't have a bit of fun in our working life, we may as well do something else!

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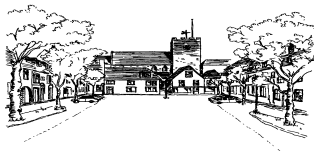
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It's time to talk

Time to Talk Day is a vital initiative focused on encouraging open conversations about mental health. Observed on February 6th this year, this day aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and promote understanding and empathy.

<https://timetotalkday.co.uk/>

Healthier Together:

It can be extremely stressful when your child is unwell. We know that there is a huge amount of information available at your fingertips, but finding something that provides clear and accurate information is not always easy!

The resources on the Healthier Together website have been developed in partnership between parents and healthcare professionals from across Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. You'll find clear information on common childhood illnesses, including advice on what 'red-flag' signs to look out for, where to seek help if required, what you should do to keep your child comfortable and how long your child's symptoms are likely to last.

<https://what0-18.nhs.uk/>

Blood Pressure

Have you taken your blood pressure recently? Why not use our machine in the waiting room, then pass the results to the receptionist. What [is blood pressure? - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/)
(www.nhs.uk)



Pharmacy First

Pharmacy First enables community pharmacists to supply prescription-only medicines, including antibiotics and antivirals where clinically appropriate, to treat seven common health conditions without the need to visit a GP.

The 7 conditions are:

- Sinusitis -Sore throat
- Earache -Infected insect bite



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CHARITY OIL PAINTING WORKSHOP
6TH MARCH 7-9PM

Join us for an oil painting workshop with our very own local artist Ingrid Berry, in aid of Candover Valley Preschool. We will paint from an inspiring arrangement of cut flowers and seasonal produce while seated at tables in small groups. Learn more about using oil paints and watch a live demonstration before beginning your own still-life painting with on-hand guidance and advice. All skill levels welcome, all materials supplied.

Venue to be confirmed.

£45 includes drink on arrival.

07759012913 for tickets.

Limited spaces available please book asap.

All proceeds to the pre-school

Candover Valley Store

community made

Store and post office trading hours

Monday to Friday Store open: 8.00am – 6.00pm
Post office: 8.30am – 5.00pm

Saturday Store open: 8.30am – 5.00pm
Post office: 9.00am – 12.30pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays Store open: 8.30am – 12.30pm
Post office: Closed

We look forward to welcoming you!

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WEATHERWISE By Simon Bourne

Summary of weather observations taken at Northington Down
in December 2024

Temperatures (degrees centigrade/Fahrenheit)

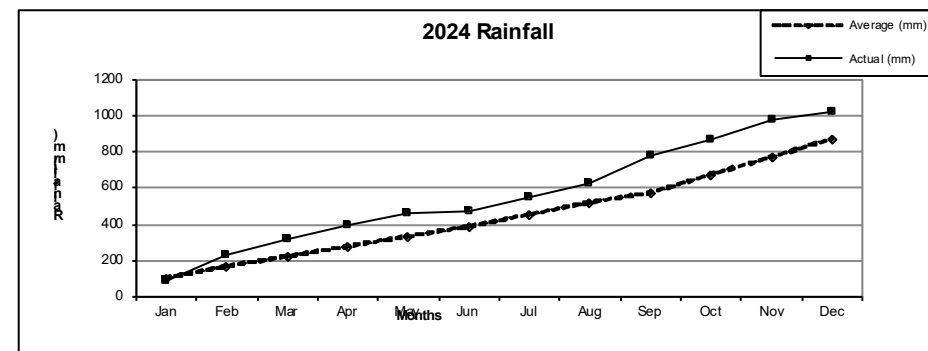
Highest	13.3/56	(1 st)
Lowest	-3.1/26	(4 th)
Warmest Night	9.5/49	(1 st)
Coolest Day	5.0/31	(14 th)
Average maximum temperature	9.0/48	
Average minimum temperature	3.5238	
Number of air frosts	4	

Rainfall (millimetres/inches)

Monthly total	48.5/1.91	(average 94.3/3.71)
Annual total	1022.4/40.25	(average 872.4/34.35)
Maximum 24hr. rainfall	14.9/0.59	(4 th)
Number of days with rain	22	

Summary

There was a mild start to December, with the warmest day and night time temperatures recorded on the 1st. It briefly became much colder as temperatures dropped sharply with the coldest night at 26°F on the 4th. Storm Darragh brought thick cloud and continuous rain with a fresh to strong breeze on the 7th, then further dull weather with light rain or drizzle in the second week. A cold northerly breeze kept daytime temperatures below the seasonal norm with the coldest day at 41°F on the 13th. The unsettled weather continued into the following week, but it was milder with a little more sun. There was low cloud with fog or mist on six consecutive days from the 24th, some slow to clear, and no sun in the last eight days of the month. Overall, December was mild and dry, with approximately half the normal rainfall total.



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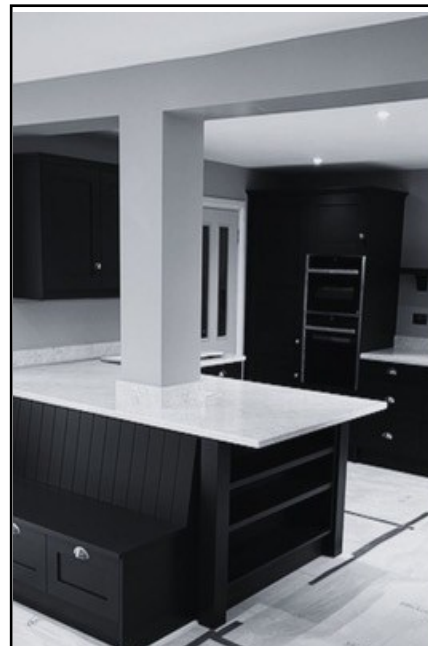
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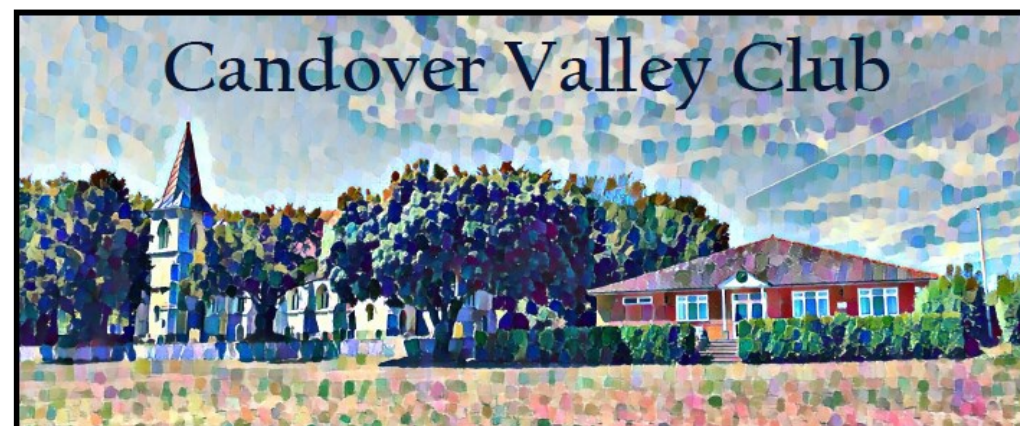


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The Candover Valley Club is located in the beautiful village of Brown Candover next to St. Peter's Church, and is fronted by the village cricket field. The Club has a fully licenced bar with kitchen, skittle alley, dart boards, pool table, TV, wifi and a separate function room suitable for large parties. A marquee, tables, chairs, crockery and cutlery are also available to hire.

Please contact cvchires@gmail.com for more information about using these wonderful facilities, or come for a drink on Saturday from 6.30pm.

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Race Night

Organised by WCC

Saturday 1 March 2025



*An evening of thrills, spills &
laughter in Upper Wield*

Village Hall

*Commentated viewing of eight races on Wield's
Big Screen*

- * Punters to gather @ 7.00pm; first Race @ 7.30pm
- * Book your space as an individual, couple or table of 8
- * £10.00 per person in advance/£12.00 on the door
- * Cash bar
- * Bring your own picnic, crockery & cutlery
- * Raffle
- * Tote betting in £1.00 denominations
- * Prizes for winning owners - £10.00 buys a horse
- * To sponsor a race & get publicised in the race card,
contact PJ by 21 February: paul.johnson@ha-limited.co.uk

To reserve your space in advance or for more details
contact Nicola: ndes@cruckhall.com 07767 238874

Advance payments contact: ed.reid@rocketmail.com



Ever thought of fostering?

We are looking to expand our network of puppy fosterers. Come along to our open evening and find out more about how you could help us in our work.

Join Us

**February
18th, 2025**

From 7pm to 8pm



The Tweseldown Pub
Beacon Hill Rd, GU52 8DY

On the evening:

- ☒ Hear more about our work
- ☒ Talks from current fosterers
- ☒ Informal Q&A for any questions
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For more information, email: volunteering@dogshomes.org.uk



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Jackie's County Corner

After a gloomy winter, this old saying may lift your mood!
"No winter lasts forever and no Spring skips its turn".
 Many of you know that we open our garden under the NGS scheme for the spring bulbs. Wet weather can make it difficult to accommodate everyone, so we're limiting visitors, asking you to book in advance. You can see more about the NGS and book for The Down House on www.ngs.org.uk. This year, our booking days are mid-week, so you can catch the bus if you wish!

Climate resilience will be an increasing part of Local Councils' agenda, and I believe it should be on Parish and Town Council's agendas to encourage residents and property owners to take this into consideration as they make choices for their own properties, gardens and transport options. Currently, ground water levels are high; rivers are in full flow too, so heavy rain could tip into flooding. Boggy gardens are a problem, but household flooding is much more serious,

especially if polluted.

We hear a lot about polluted water spilling out into rivers, but in heavy rain, SW report that up to 96% of the water through the sewage pipes can be clean rainwater, which shouldn't be there! Please check that your rainwater pipes are not connected to your sewage system: this may have happened before you moved in. And please check the ditch and drain outside your home is clear so the water flows away. Use the 'report it' tab on hants.gov.uk to report blocked drains and pipes. Leaflets with further information available online on hants.gov.uk, or contact me for a paper copy.

2025 started with significant changes proposed to the organisation of Local Government.

The start of the process is the decision for creation of a Mayor for the Strategic authority. On the 10th January, All four HIPS Councils (Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Councils) submitted a proposal to Government for the 'fast track' creation of a Strategic Mayorality, called the Devolution Priority Programme. **This new mayorality will have strategic powers** (transport, skills, public health, nature recovery etc) rather than ceremonial ones. The Cabinet decision following the Council debate online can be seen at hants.gov.uk -search Cabinet (January 10th). This process *may* delay County Council elections, although I disagree with this.

If the proposal is accepted, **all of the district councils and smaller unitary authorities within the HIPS area will then have to decide how they will be organised into Unitary Authorities.** The 'final' new government system is unlikely to be in place before 2027. So-my County Corner will continue!

If you have gas, many of you may be experiencing Southern Gas Network disruption as they work to repair old pipes. This work is disruptive but necessary, but I have found the SGN teams happy accommodate any particular problem that you have with a closure in your area. Please make contact with them using the number on their notification letter or on the yellow signs as soon as you can.

Kings Barton works continue: the Andover Road closure is still not resolved. The 'trigger' of 650 homes is nigh, but neither Cala nor HCC are ready to sign off road and junction designs. I'll keep you posted on updates. Acorn Energy and Instavolt EV charging are poised to open at Three Maids Hill.



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I'm making progress on a number of pedestrian and cycle improvements. Lack of evidence from the public means that I am struggling to stop drivers misusing bridleways. So far, just one person reports this! If you are concerned by this too, please report to the Police and let me know too.

I'm pleased that despite budget restrictions, I have confirmation that a number of Rights of Way works across the division are continuing: preparation for Nuns Walk improvements have started (by 2027 earliest), the cycle path from Harestock Water Treatment to Wellhouse Lane will be done this Spring, Bishops Sutton to Long Barn path improvements due in June 2025, and a tarmac cycle link on the Barton path under the mainline railway this year. We have a date of summer 2026 for long awaited West Street improvements (first requested 2009!) and there is now a costed solution for the Andover Road path in Micheldever Station. By the way- **watch out for exciting 'Railway 200' Events this year!**

Meanwhile the Government has announced a new fund to provide 100% fast broadband: I will be renewing efforts to link all of you into this funding along with our MP, Danny Chambers. I know from your comments that this affects not just rural areas, but pockets of the towns and villages too.

Cllr Jackie Porter
ie.porter@hants.gov.uk

Tel/text: 07973 696 085, email: Jack-

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM



HAVE A
CHAT
WITH US!

On Saturday the 22nd of March 2025 between 12pm & 2pm your local Police Beat time will be at the Candover Village store in Preston Candover, Alresford Rd.

This is an opportunity for local residents to come and ask us questions and raise any concerns that you may have.

PCSO 13301 Andy Jones & PC 21091 Ross Holdsworth look forward to meeting you!

Report crimes online, visit www.hampshire.police.uk
For crime and community information www.hampshirealert.co.uk
Deaf? Non-emergency text **07781 480999**



CANDOVER VALLEY CHOIR

IS LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL SINGERS!

THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO JOIN THE CHOIR!

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Singing is good for you – it is creative, has great health benefits, is rewarding, and is hugely enjoyable!

The Choir performs a wide repertoire including classical, contemporary, and popular music

If you would like to know more about the Candover Valley Choir or would like to come and try us out (there are no auditions), do contact:

Julian Jones, Choir Chairman, on:

juliang.jones@btinternet.com

or

Jane Bryant, Music Director

bryantjane50@gmail.com

07740 871341

REHEARSALS TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAYS AT 7.45 pm

Candover Valley Store *community made*

Winner of the Christmas hamper

Sam Robson was the lucky lady whose name was on the winning ticket when the hamper draw was made in the store a few days before Christmas. Sam, who lives in Wield, is a regular CVS customer and was delighted with her haul of goodies which included gin, chocolates and mince pies as well as local coffee, cheese, chutney and honey.

Foodbank support continues

Thank you to everyone who bought tickets for the Christmas hamper raffle or made a donation during December. All the money raised was allocated to support the Basingstoke Foodbank. With these funds, plus a £250 boost from our reserves, the store donated goods worth £713. The store committee has decided to carry on supporting this organisation which helps local people in crisis whatever the time of year. We continue to welcome donations by cash or card as well as actual products. If you would like to donate the most appropriate products it is a great idea to log on to the website, basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk, scroll down to the end of the "Give help/donate food" page and see the list of items that are most urgently needed at that time. We will make sure your contributions get to the foodbank regularly.

Valentine's day is approaching!

Since St Valentine was also the patron saint of beekeepers, perhaps the most appropriate gift to offer your loved one would be a jar of Tim's honey, made by busy bees in Bradley! Alternatively, Hannah's gift table always has pretty items to offer. The chiller cabinets contain many items of a luscious and indulgent nature (smoked trout, Cartmel sticky puddings and Lyburn cheeses to name but three). Lovely flower bouquets and bubbly bottles will be on hand too. Please support your friendly community store and shop local!