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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

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## 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](mailto: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; DC = Debbie Scholey*

### Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January Epiphany

08.00am Ellisfield Holy Communion BCP IDT

09:30am Wield Matins IDT

09.45am Cliddesden Morning Prayer PR

11:00am Northington Holy Communion IDT

11.15am Dummer Sunday Special

*Readings Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3: 1-12 Matthew 2 1-12*

*Psalm 72 10:15*

\_\_\_\_\_ " " \_\_\_\_\_

### Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January

10:00am Wield Morning prayer and bible study

### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January Baptism of Christ

08:00am Dummer Holy Communion IDT  
09:45am Ellisfield Morning Prayer BC  
10:00am Preston Candover Morning prayer JG  
11:15am Cliddesden Holy Communion Register  
(IDT if not available)

6.00pm Wield Evensong IDT  
Readings *Isaiah 43:1-7 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3 15-17 and 21-22 Psalm 29*

### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January (TBC)

10:00am Wield Morning prayer and bible study

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January Epiphany 2

9.00am Wield Holy Communion BCP IIDT  
9:45am Dummer Morning Prayer  
10:00 am Preston Candover Holy Communion JG  
11.15am Cliddesden Family Service PR

Readings *Isaiah 62 1-9 1 Corinthians 12 1-11 John 2:1-11 Psalm 36:5-10*

### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January

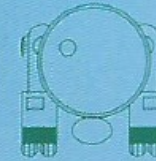
10:00am Wield Morning prayer and bible study

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January Epiphany 3

8:30am Bradley Holy Communion CW. IDT  
9:45am Dummer Holy Communion CW Register  
(IDT if not available)  
11:00 am Brown Candover Family Morning Worship JG  
with IDT if not elsewhere  
11:15am Ellisfield Family Holy Communion  
Register (IDT if not available)

Readings *Nehemiah 8 1-3, 5-6 and 8-10 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a Psalm 19*  
*Luke 4 14-21*

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### Message from Ian

Most of us love Christmas. I appreciate that for those of us who have lost someone or are alone Christmas can be an empty celebration but most of us really enjoy the few days of celebration. But perhaps it's also true that come the end of December and beginning of January we are equally happy Christmas is over.



You can only eat so many turkey curries, drink only so much of the dodgy liquor someone got for you (sorry Alison) or wonder why all the chocolates left in the tin are toffees.

I breathe a sigh of relief at the New Year. It's a time to draw a veil over 2024 and look forward. The days start to get just that little bit longer, snow drops begin to appear and there is hope. No matter how bad 2024 has been for you, New Years Day has promise that 2025 will be better and so we fill that hope with promises. The promise to get a bit fitter, lose a few pounds, go somewhere and do thing the list is endless. The challenge is that while January 1<sup>st</sup> can be full of hope January 2<sup>nd</sup> can be a different issue.

But January 1<sup>st</sup> does give us the permission to start again. So can I suggest four rules of life to help look for the answers that are obvious and don't require a huge amount of effort.

Firstly, set yourself some achievable targets. Don't be ambitious but have a go at something that you can take pride in. My first goal for the year is taking a picture of a squirrel running along a fallen tree trunk in the Vyne.

Secondly, practise saying thanks.

Thirdly look for a place where you can laugh. There are plenty of groups (including the churches) that advertise in this magazine so why not try one out.

Finally find people to talk with. Feeling isolated is one of the great curses of our society and especially so in a place as spread out as the Candovers. A cup of tea and a chat are always good for the soul.

Who knows what is in store for us in 2025. There will be good times and the not so good, but the journey is easier when we don't make it alone

Thank you

Can I say thanks to the congregations of St James Wield and St Mary the Virgin Preston Candover for contributing so generously to the Mayor of Basingstoke Christmas toy appeal. This was a real success, and several large bags of toys have been donated to help children in the Basingstoke area.

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## Church sidesmen and readers

| <u>Church</u>                | <u>Date</u>            | <u>Sidesmen</u>  | <u>Readers</u>                     |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| St John's<br>Northington     | 2 Jan<br>11.00am       |                  |                                    |
| St Peters<br>Brown Candover  | 26 Jan<br>11.00am      | Curtis Haywards  | Curtis Haywards                    |
| St Marys<br>Preston Candover | 29 December<br>10.00am | Anne Luneburg    | Marina Avis                        |
|                              | 12 Jan<br>10.00am      | Anne Luneburg    | Gunnel Berry                       |
|                              | 19 Jan<br>10.00am      | Marina Avis      | Marina Avis<br>Anne Luneburg       |
|                              | 2 Feb<br>10.00am       | Anne Luneburg    | Jane Laws                          |
| All Saints<br>Bradley        | 26 Jan<br>8.30am       | Robyn Gibbons    | Robyn Gibbons                      |
| St James'<br>Wield           | 5 Jan<br>9.30am        | Brian Collins    | Eileen Collins<br>Amanda Bromfield |
|                              | 12 Jan<br>6.00pm       | Catherine Simons | Philip Geddes<br>Nicola Robinson   |
|                              | 19 Jan<br>9.00am       | Alwin Hutchinson | Mark Kemp Gee<br>Catherine Simons  |
|                              | 2 Feb<br>9.30am        | Brian Collins    | Eileen Collins<br>David Cowley     |




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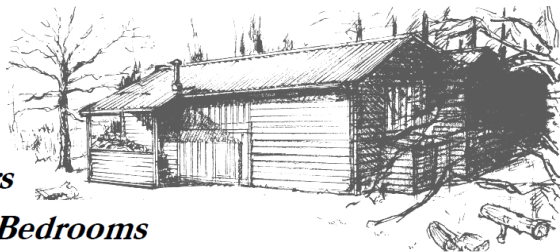
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|  |            |              |                   |
|--|------------|--------------|-------------------|
| St. John's Church<br>Northington           |            |              |                   |
| St Peter's Church<br>Brown Candover        | Keyholders | January 2025 | Curtis Haywards   |
| All Saints Church<br>Bradley               |            |              |                   |
| St. Mary<br>The Virgin<br>Preston Candover | Flowers    |              |                   |
| St James' Church<br>Wield                  |            |              |                   |
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## The Traveller

Fourteenth-century England is a hard place to live. The few inhabitants of Chilton Candover have lived through war and famine. Those who saw the 1320s may even remember the terrible pestilence which laid low their cattle.

But today, a lone traveller is riding down the road. He wears a long robe and a hood, pulled across his face to shield him from the drizzle. In his satchel he carries an important document: instructions for the local clergy, bearing a heavy lead seal that marks the instructions as having come from the papal court to whom kings, bishops and cardinals are all subject. In this deeply religious society, introspective after the ravages of disease and starvation, the pope matters.

The document is delivered, acted on and subsequently spends years on a stone shelf in the church of St Nicholas. Baptisms, weddings and funerals happen around it. The world, and Chilton Candover, moves on. Politics change.

But one day, the papal document is moved. Perhaps it is lost, or maybe the Reformation – which sees thousands such documents furiously thrown from the archives – reaches the village. But on that day, the lead bulla is taken across the very road it arrived on and tossed into a field. Once powerful, it is now worthless.

And it is forgotten – until an autumn day in 2024.



As a metal detectorist and archaeologist finding any historically interesting item is incredibly rewarding, especially if it has local significance.

This bulla, found in a local field, is a seal which would have been attached to a papal document (bulls), giving it papal authenticity. Bullae were thus legally binding. The front of the bulla shows the issuing Pope's name and the reverse shows St Peter and St Paul. This one originated in Avignon, issued by Clement VI. Clement was a Francophile and chose to remain in his country, but most bullae would have started their journey in Rome.

Pope Clement was expected to be not just a clergyman but a diplomat, with kings and cardinals answering to him. He had many challenges throughout his papacy but managed to



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### The Traveller (Cont.)

lead a life filled with what he loved, art and music. His good nature shone through during the plague when he continued to hear the confessions of the sick and dying. Incredibly he didn't become ill himself. From the decrees he issued, two were far-reaching and the bulla is likely to have been attached to one of them.

*Firstly, following his choice of residency away from Rome Clement needed a diplomatic move and so decreed that a jubilee be held every 50 years, starting in 1350. This would effectively take him back to Rome whilst the jubilee (a pilgrimage for the remission of sins) was in progress. Jubilees are still practiced today.*

*Secondly, having witnessed the devastation of the Black Death first-hand he took action to protect the Jews. People couldn't understand the origin of the pandemic, and many blamed the Jewish population. Clement issued a papal bull urging the clergy to protect them.*

It is impossible not to ponder on the circumstances behind its loss, to wonder who was involved (and why), and, to consider the visual aspect of the surroundings as they were compared to now. For me it is a privilege to contribute to the history of the Candover valley.

This article was written by Cathy Wollweber who has spent much time metal detecting at Chilton Manor Farm.

Cathy comments as follows "I have always loved the hidden stories of our past. Studying archaeology kickstarted my love of metal detecting which is a tool in uncovering stories of our past and where we live today".



### Candover Valley Gardening Club

Our speaker for November was Roger Hirons speaking about 'The Winter Garden'. Roger explained the importance of the winter garden and gave some ideas for colour throughout the winter months.

He included Cornus, Christmas Box, Hellebores, Viburnum, Cotonneaster, Mahonia and, of course, snowdrops. He recommended some early flowering shrubs such as Camelia and Daphne.

The Gardening Club does not meet in December, but we are looking forward to a busy 2025 starting on January 16<sup>th</sup> with a talk by Steve Gibbs on 'Growing Chillies'.

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](mailto:blighrosemary@hotmail.com) for more information and you can find us on Facebook – Candover Valley Gardening Club.



## Walking with Wildlife, Robert Bryant

On a mild foggy morning, we were squelching along the footpath that leads up to Noar Hill, the Wildlife Trust's reserve near Selborne. A notice on the gate revealed the presence of grazing cattle, British Whites, a hardy breed of gentle character. The bridlepath here had also recently reopened, following its closure to safely clear dead and dying ash trees.

The grassy humps and hollows of the reserve were bordered by shaggy clumps of juniper trees, grey green, that hunched among thickets of dogwood stems, now a deep dark red. At first all was quiet, apart from the pinking calls of blackbirds breaking cover and flying up in alarm from the woodland edge close by. These rather twitchy thrushes were probably winter visitors flown in from northern climes. Continental male blackbirds tend to have darker bills and to lack the golden eye ring of our resident birds.

We wondered what had disturbed them when, rounding a hummock, we met a very large white cow with distinctive black ears and muzzle. She stood, head down, placidly munching the grassy crown of an anthill and was not bothered in the slightest as we strolled by. A robin, clearly very attentive, was following her every move, poised to hop over and pick up anything edible. I was reminded that robins, the gardener's friend, were historically shy woodland creatures that followed forest cattle. Looking up we noticed another British White, a companion cow, standing some distance farther back, busily rum-maging through the undergrowth.

Leaving them to their valuable conservation work we strode on, tramping upwards along muddy paths pitted with heavy hoofprints. Since our last visit, there had been a good deal of coppicing of the high hazel, now put to creative use with cut branches woven to form a variety of fences and hurdles.

Taking a break, we sat on the new oak bench at the top of the reserve, sipping coffee and nibbling chocolate brownie bought from the Candover Valley Stores. Glancing up, we saw a magnificent red kite floating leisurely overhead.

Robert Bryant  
6<sup>th</sup> December '24

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**Julian Jones, Choir Chairman, on:**

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## On the Farm— Julian Gibbons

Happy New Year to you all and I hope your New Year hopes and dreams come true. Those of the farming industry are quite extensive at the moment, and that is before we start on politics.

We split between those who are hoping not to live past the end of the next tax year and those who need to keep healthy for a minimum of 7 years all in the name of tax planning.

Fortunately, we have bought all our nitrogen fertilizer for this coming spring, because we are having a £50/tonne tax applied to all imported nitrogen fertiliser. The aim is to apply a carbon tax to imports to reflect their true cost to society. What it will mean is that imported urea which is 46% nitrogen will become even cheaper when compared to ammonium nitrate that is only 34.5% nitrogen but has a much lower carbon footprint. This is because the tax is applied per tonne not based on nitrogen content. Our own UK produced ammonium nitrate will rise in price, even though it isn't taxed because its price is based on the price of imports. We lost half our UK production when one of the two factories closed due to the high energy costs in the UK, so we have to import far more than historically we used to.

If you are fed up with the run of weather we have had for the last 18 months, hope may be at hand. The El Nino effect that we have had causing havoc in global weather is coming to an end so we should get a change in the weather for a bit. We regularly get these El Nino years, but the run of weather we have had since the summer of 2023 has been the most challenging, I can remember. We look back fondly on the summer of 2022 with those lovely dry days.

Last month's storm Darragh, brought a bit of tree damage. The most significant was a large beech at Burkham snapping off and taking out the 33Kv line to the Preston Candover substation. With unusual foresight SSE networks put in a second line in the early 2000s to take the pressure off the first line. This comes south of Bradley and was probably the reason we weren't out for power for days. An outside team arrived at Burkham with tracked vehicles replaced a series of snapped poles, changed the isolators on the surviving poles and left leaving less damage to the fields than we had feared.

On the farm we are going through maintenance jobs on equipment. We plan to coppice another length of hedge before spring growth starts. We could have applied for a grant towards the cost, but as these have now been cancelled it was just as well. It does give an opportunity to try to thicken up the hedge from the bottom up and we've been pleased with the results from previous years.

Spring crops have been planned and seed ordered and, in some cases, already on the farm. Final areas will depend on how the rape comes through the winter. We suspect we will lose some of it as the plants are very small. The last fields we planted all went in different ways, but none have grown well. I was persuaded to change variety at the last minute, and I think that might be one of the reasons. The seed was very small and often in the past the best established crops come from large seed with plenty of reserves. It was a reminder to stick to ones plans and if you do change, do some research.



Fever.

The period immediately after Christmas can be challenging for some. Men in particular may find it difficult to open up about their feelings. You can find out more about men's mental health and support here.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z/topics/men-and-mental-health>

### Not attending your appointment

**Please remember** if you cannot attend your appointment, please contact us to cancel it ASAP please.

You can reply to your text message appointment reminder with 'CANCEL' or call in. Your appointment could be offered to another patient who urgently needs advice.

### RSV Vaccination

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is an enveloped RNA virus, in the same family as the human parainfluenza viruses and mumps and measles viruses. RSV is one of the common viruses that cause coughs and colds in winter. RSV is transmitted by large droplets and by secretions from contact with an infected person.

All eligible patients will be sent a text invitation or will receive a telephone call to invite them to a clinic for this vaccination in January/February.

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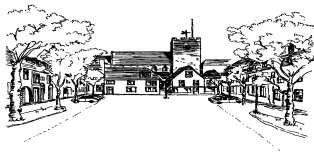
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## SAMARITANS

January can seem like the darkest month of the year. If you're struggling, Samaritans are promoting

**"Brew Monday"** on the 20<sup>th</sup> Jan to raise awareness of the support they offer.

You can also keep track of how you're feeling and get recommendations for things you can do to help yourself cope, feel better and stay safe in a crisis.

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Call 116 123

## Cervical Cancer Prevention Week

It's Cervical Cancer Prevention Week from **21<sup>st</sup> Jan to 28<sup>th</sup> Jan.**

The campaign aims to bring attention to those whose lives have been impacted by cervical cancer, to find solutions, and to remember those we have lost.

In the UK, around 3,200 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year, with over 800 losing their lives.

For some of us, cancer is personal. Whether you have been diagnosed before or know someone who has, it can be comforting to remember that people do care, and campaigns like this one exist to work towards a day when cervical cancer becomes a thing of the past.

The UK has the tools to get there. We have a wide-reaching HPV vaccination programme, and highly effective cervical screening and colposcopy services. Innovations in these programmes mean we are preventing more cases than ever before, and we have the mental health support to match the treatment with charities like Macmillan leading the way.

### 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/> they also have a whole section on Covid, Strep A & Scarlet



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The plots are £40 each for a full year starting 1<sup>st</sup> April.

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## Farleigh Parish Playgroup



## Cliddesden Millennium Village Hall

**Friday Mornings 11am-12noon Term Time**

Happy New Year! See you on 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January

7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> (not 21<sup>st</sup> as it is half term) and 28<sup>th</sup> February

**0 - 4 year olds and their grown-ups.**

**A warm welcome awaits you - we look forward to you joining us for a fun and happy time.**

**Cost: £3 donation per family**

**Contact:**

**Melanie (07833-528040) Claire (07757 498653)**



## 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 November 2024

### Temperatures (degrees centigrade/Fahrenheit)

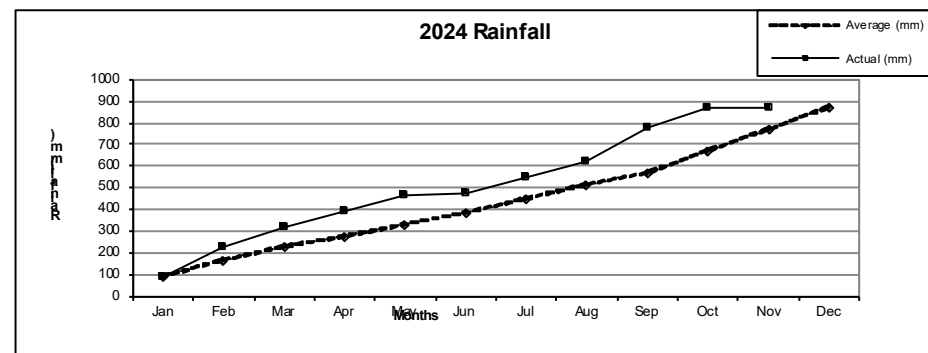
|                             |         |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Highest                     | 15.8/60 | (24 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Lowest                      | -4.6/24 | (28 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Warmest Night               | 9.5/49  | (3 <sup>rd</sup> )  |
| Coolest Day                 | 3.3/38  | (21 <sup>st</sup> ) |
| Average maximum temperature | 10.5/51 |                     |
| Average minimum temperature | 3.5/38  |                     |
| Number of air frosts        | 8       |                     |

### Rainfall (millimetres/inches)

|                          |             |                       |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Monthly total            | 103.5/4.707 | (average 99.8/3.93)   |
| Annual total             | 973.9/38.34 | (average 778.1/30.63) |
| Maximum 24hr. rainfall   | 30.5/1.20   | (23 <sup>rd</sup> )   |
| Number of days with rain | 15          |                       |

### Summary

Thick cloud trapped under high pressure brought mild, settled conditions with occasional drizzle at the start of November but the cloud eventually lifted, with the first sun on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The brighter weather lasted for a few days and temperatures remained about average with more rain before temperatures dropped on the 19<sup>th</sup> and remained low for a few days with snow flurries on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The mild weather returned with the arrival of Storm Bert on the 23<sup>rd</sup> bringing a fresh to strong breeze and 1.84 inches of rain over two days. The next storm, Storm Conall provided a further 0.90 inches overnight on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The month ended with some sunny but cooler weather and the coldest night at 24°F on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Overall, the month and season were colder and wetter than average.



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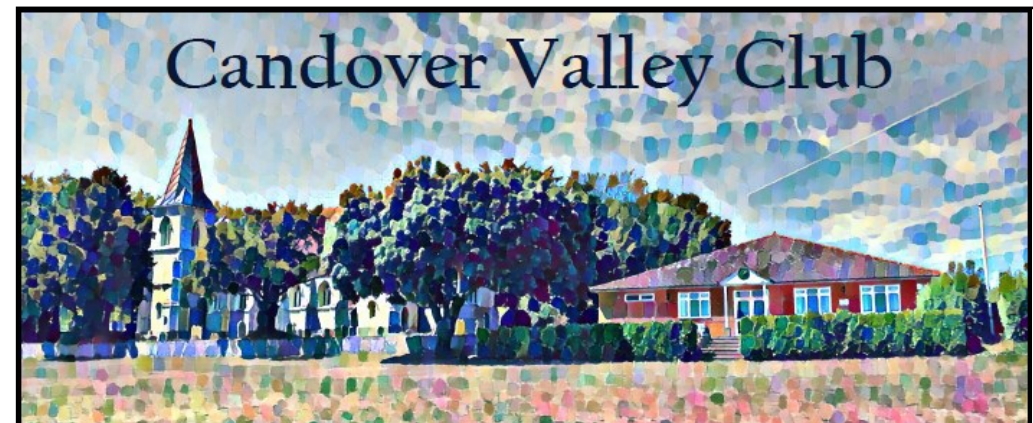
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Please contact [cvchires@gmail.com](mailto:cvchires@gmail.com) for more information about using these wonderful facilities, or come for a drink on Saturday from 6.30pm.

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### RBL Poppy Appeal



I would like to thank all of the team of collectors, hosts of static boxes and everyone who came to the church and memorial for your support and generosity this year.

As an organisation we distributed over 30 million poppies and 125000 wreaths, enabling people across the nation to take part in remembrance.

Over 2100 PAOs used their QR code, which resulted in over double the amount of donations during the appeal through QR last year- that's DOUBLE!!! Just amazing.

Gift Aid this year has had a **record** number of donations with over 80% of people who used QR code gifting their donation.

The money you raise is so vital to the lives of the Armed Forces community. The need for our case workers increased beyond belief last year due to the cost-of-living crisis. Last year, our welfare teams managed more than 40,000 cases, an increase of 43% compared with the year before. Your support means we are always there for our Armed Forces community to provide personalised and complete support.

It really was an incredible appeal, our total for the Preston Candover area was £5420.66 plus Gift Aid & QR code money which I am informed about in the new year.

Once again on behalf of the Royal British Legion and the Armed Forces community, thank you for supporting the Poppy Appeal 2024.

Yours gratefully  
Joanna Gibbons Poppy Appeal Organiser  
SBA13 Preston Candover

### Cleaner required

or St. Peters Church, Brown Candover. The job would entail dusting the pews and furniture and hoovering the whole church once a month.

If you are interested, please contact Sue Marriott at [s.marriott9@cloud.com](mailto:s.marriott9@cloud.com).

## Incredible Umbellifers

As we move through the colder months of the year, a hidden world of nature is revealed to us. Leaves and flowers fall away, exposing the structures beneath. Along the banks of our chalk streams, we can see strange shapes that were once cloaked in clouds of small white flowers: the dry remains of plants known as umbellifers.

The umbellifer family is very large and contains many poisonous species, but also edible ones like carrot, celery, parsnip, fennel, cumin, dill, and coriander. If you're thinking that its name sounds rather like "umbrella", then you're spot on: the two words share a common root in the Latin word for "shade" or "shadow". The family name itself comes from umbels – flower clusters that radiate out from the main stem.

In most umbellifer species, these flowers are white and bloom through the spring and summer. They usually decline as the weather grows colder, leaving dried out stems behind. But even in wintertime, umbellifers are of great value to wildlife: they provide cover when vegetation is sparse, and some insects take shelter inside their hollow stems. Let's look at some of the river-loving members of this floral family!

If you're familiar with Hampshire's history, you'll no doubt know that watercress grows in our chalk streams. But if you find some in the wild, it could be growing alongside our first umbellifer. Fool's watercress is a creeping perennial that loves stream margins and wet ditches, although it can also be found in wetlands. Unlike watercress – which is actually in the cabbage family – it smells like carrot when crushed.

Another similar-looking plant is lesser water-parsnip, which grows on damp ground or in the shallow edges of clear, flowing water. Because it spreads through stems that run over the ground, called "stolons", it can play a key role in reducing riverbank erosion. One way to identify it is by looking for a pale ring at the points where leaves branch off from the stem. True to its name, crushing it releases the scent of parsnip.

Our riverbanks are also home to hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*) – not to be confused with the more famous hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), which also grows near water. Its close relative, river water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fluviatilis*), is more specialised; it likes clean, lowland rivers with plenty of calcium. This makes our chalk streams fantastic habitats for this species, if they're in a healthy condition.

Since many of the umbellifers look alike, some caution is needed around them. Several species are highly toxic if eaten, and some have sap that can cause skin irritation. Giant hogweed in particular can cause painful photosensitive blisters after only brief contact; this invasive species can reach a towering 5m when fully grown, but is harder to differentiate in its younger stages. If in doubt, it's best to admire from a distance.



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To learn more about chalk streams, explore the Watercress and Winterbournes scheme at [hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes](http://hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes). Our work is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

## Online Talks

Creating Sustainable Drainage Systems – 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January, Online

As our climate changes and urbanisation increases, some communities are experiencing more water around their roads and homes. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) can help to manage this issue and protect our chalk streams from damaging runoff. Book your free ticket at [hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes](http://hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes).

Do you own or manage land for horses? Join us for a programme of free online talks by Elizabeth Ranelagh (author of 'Managing Grass for Horses'). Learn how to reduce your environmental impact through methods such as pasture reseeding, hedgerow cultivation, and manure storage. The talks will take place in early 2024 – email [winterbournes@hiwwt.org.uk](mailto:winterbournes@hiwwt.org.uk) for details.



Photo Courtesy Thomas Eastwood





### Jackie's County Corner

Happy New Year!  
Thank you to everyone who helped provide so much joy at every Christmas event in December: there was so much going on in every village! This is Lin and Mandy who are two of our sterling volunteers. Thank you!

### Hampshire County

Council's Leaders are putting a brave face on life, but in truth, the County's finances are in real trouble. HCC's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was agreed at the County Council at the end of November. It was not a decision about the Council Tax levy, but a factual financial statement to inform council tax decision making by February 2025.

During the period of austerity, central Government funding to local authorities fell by nearly 50%. The challenge now is for the HCC Cabinet to decide how to balance the books before it sets council tax for 25/26 in mid-February. You can more about the County's budget on <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/budgetspendingandperformance/budgetandcounciltax> and watch the council meeting live (or recorded) on [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

The financial picture is complicated, but dire. 1% on council tax raises approx. £8m. The County needs to raise an annual revenue of around £120m more than it does at present, ie: 15% council tax rise. To do this, they'd have to call a referendum as it is over 5%. The cost of a referendum is approx. £650K, adding to the burden. This financial difficulty, built up over the last decade, puts our services that we trust and expect at risk.

Drivers complain about potholes, but many of us especially worry for the provision of education and support for children and adults with special needs. Families get into difficulties for all sorts of reasons, and if the services aren't available, it's too easy to fall between the cracks, and sink rather than swim to safety. For me, this must be a priority.



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between the cracks, and sink rather than swim to safety. For me, this must be a priority.

As your Councillor, I feel very frustrated that the Council embarks on so many consultations including the Cart and Horses junction, and the cycling and walking strategy, when consultations cost so much, money is very short, but nothing changes.

I have asked our MP to pursue the matter of M3 Junction 9 and the C&H junction in parliament.

### Flooding

Ditches are the best way to direct water away from homes. Please don't forget that if there is a ditch between your property and the road, you are responsible for keeping it clear. You can see more detail on [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) 'search riparian responsibilities'.

Following the storms in December, please keep this Flood warning number handy, and sign up for alerts: [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) or Phone: 0345 988 1188.

Many of you have applied for a County Councillor grant in 24/25. As I hoped, the main beneficiaries this year have provided for green initiatives and young people in our communities. Grants have included 'new experience inclusive trips' for schoolchildren, young musicians and Guides, improved lighting for a theatre group, support for Home Start and Mencap projects, and an all-day free music festival.

Other projects include a solar shade for a village store and an innovative Prom Dress lending scheme hosted by Unit 12.

There is an ongoing County review of this Grant offer for 25/26. In view of the financial state of HCC, it is likely to be stopped or reduced. As I still have some money left in the pot- requests from groups not in this list are welcome! Deadline 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb- contact me first to check criteria to avoid disappointment.

Cllr Jackie Porter. tel/text : 07973 696085 email:  
[jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk)





ST JOHN  
THE EVANGELIST  
NORTHINGTON

# HALF-TERM FAMILY CONCERT



**Music in St John's  
(SO24 9TH)**

## **FAMILY CONCERT**

**Thursday 20th February  
11am**

**with  
Virtuosi Strings!**

**Half-term concert for everyone!  
Discover the amazing music  
made by string instruments!  
All ages welcome!  
FREE FOR CHILDREN (Adults £10)**

**Juice and biscuits provided.  
Followed by meet the string  
instruments!**



Find out more & book tickets  
[www.stjohnsnorthington.org](http://www.stjohnsnorthington.org)



Find us on social media: @stjohnsnorthington

# Candover Valley Store

*community made*

## **A happy New Year to all our customers!**

We would like to thank you for your loyal support throughout 2024 and wish you a happy and healthy 2025. Garry, Emma and all the team of staff and volunteers are looking forward to seeing you again soon.

## **Don't delay! Community Fund applications welcomed now**

The CVS Community Projects Fund exists to help support local organisations and improve the places and spaces that matter to members of the community. So if a local scout group, gardening club, church or community organisation in the defined catchment area (largely that of the combined benefices) requires funding for equipment or a specific project, they can apply to the fund.

Applications are considered by the CV store committee twice a year in February and August. To request an application form and further information, please contact Jocelyn Rogerson on 01256 389611 or download details from the website [www.cvcs.org.uk](http://www.cvcs.org.uk)

## **January brings the snow (possibly) and the Seville oranges (definitely)!**

Only in season at this time of year, the special oranges and all the other ingredients needed for making deliciously tangy marmalade will be available in the store very soon. We can even provide you with a recipe if you need one and small quantities of used jars for refilling can usually be conjured up from local kitchens if you don't have quite enough for your batch.