

MONTHLY

Bishopstone, Hinton Parva & Russley Park

www.bishopstoneandhintonparva.org



VILLAGE NEWS

DEC 2025



WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Please support local

As the year draws to a close and we all frantically prepare and empty the supermarkets as though they're shutting for a month, we at Village News HQ would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who helps keep our beloved publication afloat. A special thank you goes to our invaluable advertisers. We simply couldn't continue without their support, so if you find yourself in need of their services, please do consider giving them your custom and helping make their advertisements worthwhile.

We'd also like to extend our gratitude to our regular volunteers for their informative contributions, cheerful wit, and fabulous photos. Thanks to you, we think the Village News is (mostly!) an enjoyable read. And of course, an enormous thank you to our delivery elves—without them, you wouldn't receive your copy at all. Come rain or shine, they make sure it reaches your door for your enjoyment.

What's on?

Christmas is upon us, and there is plenty to look forward to.

The pub is offering space for gatherings and parties, so get in touch if you're looking for a venue. Pop in for a pre-party cocktail—or six—on New Year's Eve before heading to the Village Hall party if you've got tickets. They're currently on sale—see page 16 for details.

Christmas Carols around the Tree at the Village Hall is always a lovely way to get into the festive spirit. As you'll have seen, the tree is up and looking beautifully seasonal. Well done to Team VH for their hard work (and impressive erection skills!) in making the village look so Christmassy.

And something to look forward to after the festive season: our sprightly amateur dramatics team is putting on a new play in January 2026 (see page 2). It promises to be a night not to be missed, filled with laughter - usually at the pillars of our community sporting unusual outfits and showcasing their remarkable range of accents. It all unfolds at Bishopstone Village Hall. Tickets are already on sale, so snap them up while you can! All the usual bits are listed on the back page diary.

Bins!

On a slightly less fun note, don't forget to check bin days as SBC have done their annual Christmas shuffle to accommodate the days off. You'll find further details on the collection dates on their website or by scanning the code below. I think they put tags on our bins last year too, which may have already happened by the time this hits your doormat but just in case yours blows into the pond, check here for more info:



https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20015/bins_rubbish_and_recycling/1690/faqs_about_the_changes_to_your_bin_collection_days

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Coming soon to Bishopstone Village Hall...

A Bunch of Amateurs by Ian Hislop & Nick Newman

In celebration of BADS 50th anniversary, get ready for an uproarious evening of theatrical mayhem as Bishopstone's & Hinton Parva's finest thespians take to the stage in this brilliantly witty comedy directed by Bishopstone's own, Belinda Nicholls.

The plot revolves around a fading Hollywood star, Jefferson Steele, who arrives in England believing he is about to star in a prestigious Shakespearean production, only to discover that he has been duped into performing with a small amateur dramatic society in a rural village. The play explores the clash of cultures and egos as Steele tries to adapt to his less-than-glamorous surroundings, while the local actors attempt to rise to the occasion. Through witty dialogue and farcical situations, the play highlights the power of community, the love of theatre, and the sometimes-humbling journey of self-discovery.

Performances run from Wednesday 14th to Saturday 17th January 2026 at Bishopstone Village Hall with doors and bar open at 7pm and curtain up at 7.30pm.

All tickets are £10 and can be purchased from the BADS online box office, or pop into Helen Browning's Royal Oak where you can buy tickets as well as book a pre-theatre supper for £22.50 per person for a 2-course meal.

So, whether you're a seasoned theatre-goer or just fancy a good laugh, this is one not to miss. Support your local amateur dramatics group and enjoy a night of community spirit, comedy, and Shakespearean chaos!

Don't delay, **BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW** by visiting: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/badstickets>

A Bunch of Amateurs was first performed at the Watermill Theatre on Thursday 22nd May 2014 in association with Trademark Films. This amateur production of "A Bunch of Amateurs" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

Bishopstone Stores

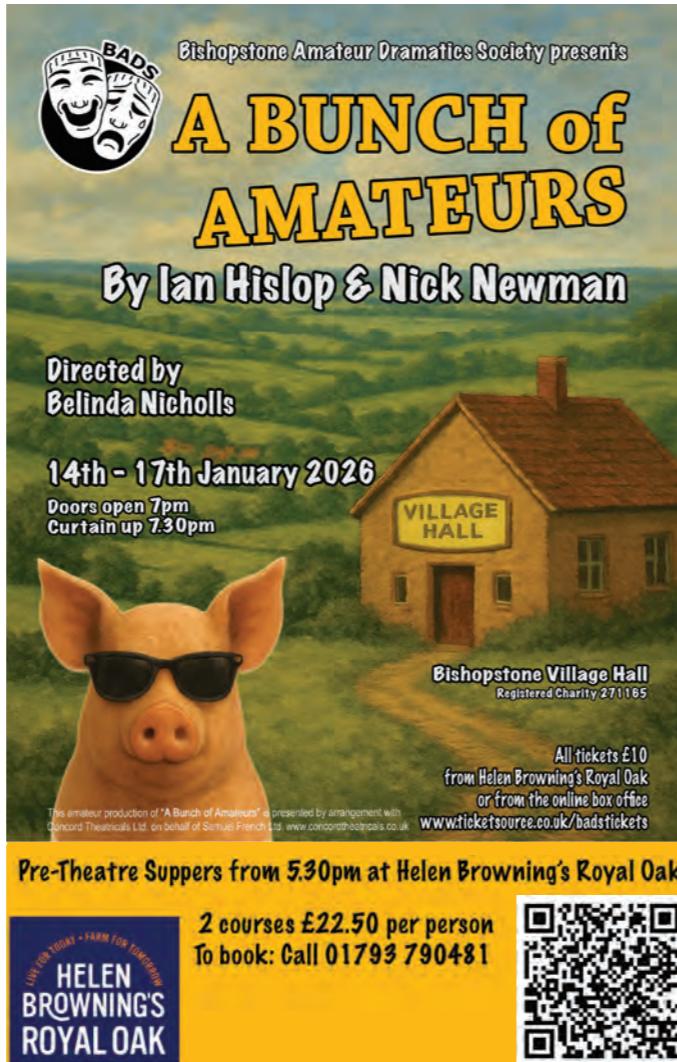
Not long now till we are all hanging up our stockings and leaving out an organic mince pie for Santa and one of Pete's carrots for Rudolph.

The shop will be open for all your Christmas needs up until 1pm on Christmas Eve and back open as usual on the 27th. Why not cut out and pin up our opening hours on your calendar so you know exactly when you can do your final bits of shopping and any emergency purchases? (Although, if you ask at the pub nicely someone will open the shop door for you at pretty much anytime you need us!)

Our fresh meat will be delivered on Friday 19th with dairy produce and bread coming Tuesday 23rd. Let us know if there is anything specific you would like, and we can place an order for you. The veg rack will be fully loaded throughout the festive weeks so don't forget that you can stock up here and choose to buy local produce that's grown in the village. Please do call in and have a look at our gifts for your last minute shopping, we are also very happy to make up hampers or wrap in hessian for you and have a lovely range of gift sets, from gin to skincare, to make your life easier.

I do hope you all have a wonderful Christmas, enjoy the important things in life, and celebrate the new year in style. Thank you, as ever, for your custom in 2025 and for supporting your village shop. Merry Christmas – see you all soon, Lynne x

[@bishopstone_stores](https://www.instagram.com/bishopstone_stores) [@helenbrowningsbishopstonestores](https://www.facebook.com/helenbrowningsbishopstonestores)



RECYCLING MATTERS

by Karen Walker

I love a bargain, and one site that I've stumbled upon this month, which might help you with any last minute Christmas shopping or pick up a great deal for yourself, is at the Waterstones clearance website – [Waterstones.com/campaign/clearance](https://www.waterstones.com/campaign/clearance). I was sceptical when I read about it, but decided to investigate and was surprised to find that it had books that I've read great reviews for and some that I had on my reading list. For example, 'brother. do. you. love. me.' by the Coe brothers was shortlisted for The British Book Awards 2023 Non-Fiction Narrative Book of the Year and the hardback version has been reduced from £22 to £3. And the hardback version of a Beth Morrey that I have on my list has been reduced from £14.99 to £3. I'd seen '111 Places in Birmingham That You Shouldn't Miss' at full-price and had considered getting it as a present, but here, it's half price, which now makes it a no-brainer – and cheaper than I can find on my beloved second-hand book sites. I often buy books as stocking-filers, and this site has good filtering functionality if you're not sure what you're after but want to narrow down your search to find the perfect present. I'm happy to buy second-hand books for myself or others I know well but I know some people I get presents for would rather have new and buying them from a clearance site ensures you get a bargain and they don't go to be pulped.

In a similar vein, I've previously recommended [boopbeauty.co.uk](https://www.boopbeauty.co.uk). They 'rescue' often well-known branded beauty products that have been discontinued, reformulated, overstocked or have imperfect packaging and sell them on at up to 70% off of RRP – and keep them from landfill. Current brands available on their website include Charlotte Tilbury, Estee Lauder, Kate Somerville, Philip Kingsley etc – genuine premium brands.

I helped a friend buy a Christmas present for me from eBay – don't forget the sellers there and on other re-sell sites often sell new but unwanted items as well as second-hand items.

I've read great things about [zestyplan](https://www.zestyplan.com) which is an American website and free app which is all about climate-smart eating and includes a weekly newsletter, meal planner, access to a lot of recipes and a recipe keeper. I plan to test it with my vegetarian daughter when she is home from university and will report back.

Finally – wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Greener 2026! I'm working on some green resolutions for 2026 – tricky how to measure them though.



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yogawithnickie@gmail.com
07503 157859



HAPPY GARDENS

by Jane Pearson



Monthly Musings

Preparing for Christmas, I've finally ventured out of the garden and into the shops! It's nice to see that Paperwhite narcissi are back in fashion this winter and are available all potted up and ready to gift along with the usual Amaryllis and Hyacinths. But did you know that you can extend their life by placing them in a cool, bright spot? Add a 'wig-wam' support to prevent blooms flopping (I like to use bendy birch twigs), placed just inside the pot edge and tied at the top with twine or ribbon.

Paperwhites will rebloom if watered and fed with a little seaweed once a week until the leaves dieback, then stop watering until the new shoots appear. Don't throw them out after Christmas but move them to a shed or greenhouse and replant outside in the spring. This also works for Hyacinths and Christmas Roses (Hellebores).

Plant Spotlight: Beautiful Berries!



Shrubs with beautiful berries are a wonderful addition to the winter garden. They add much needed colour and provide a wealth of nutritious food and shelter for birds and wildlife. This is a great time of year to buy cost effective bare root shrubs, usually available November to March, and as long as the ground isn't waterlogged or frozen you will be able to plant them throughout the winter. By next summer they'll have developed a healthy root system and will look great the following winter. Berry shrubs to look out for include *Nandina domestica*, *Callicarpa bodinieri*, *Viburnum tinus*, *Sorbus hupehensis*, *Pyracantha* and *Aucuba japonica*.



Callicarpa Bodinieri

Sorbus Hupehensis 'Pink Pagoda'

Pyracantha 'Saphyr Yellow'

Nandina Domestica

Viburnum Tinus

Aucuba Japonica 'Variegata'

The Potting Shed

Mulch your Dahlias: Where dahlia tubers have been left in the ground, provide a thick mulch of straw, bark chips or well rotted leaf mould.

Wrap Up: Wrap vulnerable outdoor plants with horticultural fleece.

Cover coldframe plants, trays of seedlings and potted cuttings in the greenhouse. Horticultural fleece bags are useful for covering trees such as olives in pots, and other vulnerable plants.

Protect your pots: Some containers can freeze the roots of the plants growing in them. Borderline plants include Hardy cordlaines, olives and some agapanthus varieties. It's a good idea to lag their pots with layers of hessian sacking or bubblewrap.

Check moisture levels of plants in the greenhouse, they can dry out surprisingly quickly, even in cold weather. They're best kept just moist. It's also worth picking off dead leaves from plants and clearing debris in the greenhouse as these are places that can harbour pathogens.

Most of all sit back and enjoy a well-earned rest!

Happy Christmas, Happy New Year and very happy gardening! Jane.



07811 367320

janepearsondesign@icloud.com

The Lynchets, Icknield Way, Bishopstone

www.janepearsondesign.com/hints&tips

Please visit my website at janepearsondesign.com/blog for Readers Question Time and much more!
[www.janepearsondesign.com/blog](http://janepearsondesign.com/blog)



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Bishopstone & District Gardening Club

Contact: Marion Peck: 01793 791 001



The last event of 2025 was the Annual General Meeting combined with Supper at the Royal Oak in Bishopstone. There were fourteen present, made up of committee and members, and we quickly covered the essential elements of finance and discussions concerning the speakers and possibly events / outings for 2026.

It was suggested that the club should be rebranded next year with a new name and logo. It was felt that we needed an updated image so as to fully incorporate all the local villages, especially with so many new houses and residents now in the area.



So the decision was taken to become The Ridgeway Gardening Club as of January 2026 using the new logo, as shown to the left, and hope to encourage more residents from our growing community to join us and enjoy our friendly meetings and excellent speakers in the coming season.

It was also decided to increase the annual subscription from £10 to £12.50 to reflect current price increases for speakers and the village hall hire.

Having concluded the formalities of the meeting we moved downstairs to the restaurant to enjoy an excellent meal and lots of chatter for the rest of the evening. A fun time was had by all.

In conclusion, on behalf of the committee, I wish you all a very HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a peaceful, prosperous, and healthy NEW YEAR. See you all in 2026!

Diary Dates

The meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month, except January and August, and as always everyone is welcome. There is a one-off payment for an evening for non-members, or a single payment for a year's membership.

The first meetings of 2026 season will be on:

Wednesday February 11th - Rebecca Brain: Bishopstone Village Hall. 7.00pm

'No-Dig Vegetable Gardening'

Rebecca lives in Bishopstone and has a background in Organic vegetable growing. She has her own Plant Nursery selling locally grown organic plants.

Wednesday March 11th - Paul Green: Bishopstone Village Hall. 7.00pm

'The Best Thing Since Sliced Bread'

Paul is from Green's Leaves specialist plant nursery in Newent. He will be comparing old vs new varieties and the thinking in new plant development. He will be bringing along a selection of plants for sale from his Gloucestershire nursery.

Details of meetings and speakers for the rest of the year will be circulated as soon as the last elements are finalised.

BISHOPSTONE ALLOTMENTS AVAILABLE

On behalf of the Church Commissioners and their land agent Strutt & Parker, several half allotment plots are now available to rent by the local community. A perfect opportunity to grow your own fruit and vegetables.

The price is £8 per half plot per year
(April to March)

No permanent structures such as sheds are allowed
but low level storage is permitted.

Although livestock cannot be kept, bee keeping is encouraged by the owners.

If you are interested in taking an allotment in Bishopstone,

contact Steve Bell on 07598 185 643



Bishopstone Craft Fair: A Heartfelt Thank You

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to the Bishopstone Craft Fair on 27th November at the Village Hall. The event was a wonderful success, and it was all made possible by our fantastic stall holders, dedicated helpers, and the many shoppers who turned out to support the day.

We were delighted to welcome a brilliant variety of stalls this year, showcasing local crafts, handmade gifts, seasonal treats and beautiful produce from around the area. The atmosphere in the hall was warm and festive, helped along by the ever-popular mince pies, mulled wine and the popular bottle tombola. It was lovely to see so many people browsing, chatting, and enjoying the community spirit.

Thanks to everyone's enthusiasm and generosity, we raised around £600, which will be shared between several local charities. We're incredibly grateful for this support, and we know it will be put to very good use in the village and surrounding communities.

We hope to welcome back many of this year's talented stallholders for next year's event. Chris Thomas



Ask Fanny

'Tis the season to be less catty!
Here goes...

Dear Mrs Hole

As newcomers to this parish, I'm wondering if there are any interesting books (you know, biographies, novels, memoirs etc.) that might enlighten us joyfully on the history or otherwise of this remarkable landscape around us, probably one of the most underappreciated landscapes in the whole of England I would suggest. We are so lucky to live here.

Yours in curiosity

Mr and Mrs P

Near the pond

Dear Mr and Mrs P

Interesting you should mention this, and very timely. There is, just down the road from here, nearer Uffington, the rather well known authoress and writer Clover Stroud (from the family that started Gifford's Circus). Her latest book, The Big Giant on the Skyline, is part memoir, part local history, part emotional trail. She talks of The White Horse and its history, and the draw it, and the Ridgeway, has for her; she talks of the vale villages and what they represent, and what they have represented, and how they have risen, declined, and risen again; she finds lost villages, no longer on the map (heard of Snap, anyone?). And wraps it all up in her family's affairs, of the right sort. It's a personal, lyrical tale, one that I thought I was unlikely to enjoy, yet revelled in it. I wholly recommend, for those of you with a passion for this place, and a passion for reading good books.

Yours

FH

Dear Mrs Hole

I just think that occasionally people should bear in mind that an awful lot of work, always unpaid and often unseen, is performed by lots of people in these parishes, and instead of writing slightly bitchy notes about fences and trees and traffic issues, and jokes about colonoscopies, possibly there could be a bit of recognition for this? I do feel that without these people, many of them completely under the radar, life in this parish would be less enjoyable. I do hope that you will be able to give some space to this thought of mine.

Thank you

Ms DD

Up the Hill

You know where

Dear Ms DD

So lovely to have more correspondence from you, possibly my favourite contributor and always so lucid and clear headed. I must pop round one day and see how you manage to keep juggling all those balls.

Anyway, this is a great opportunity to recognise lots of folk, without necessarily naming all of them—just this evening I've visited, in disguise, the village craft fair, run so ably by Chris Thomas; Mr Hatch who ensures that Bishopstone village Hall/annual Christmas tree/audio visuals everywhere/health and safety etc. are always sorted; Lynne who quietly runs the village shop at the pub, even though her boss keeps turning the heater off; all the folk who ensure both village halls are functioning, legal, and not flooded; and the folk who run gardening clubs and exercise lessons; whoever empties the poo bags on Nell Hill and the Ridgeway (awful job); the local councillor Mr Sumner who has made a real impact since moving fully into the parish; and all the parish councillors of course, sometimes a thankless task, I am advised, faced with the occasional pompous and



Write to Fanny at:
BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

Dear Mr and Mrs P

arrogant parishioner; and the women (usually) who clean the churches and put out the flowers; and the vicar Steve, who often dresses like a vicar, great fun; the amateur drama group who seem to manage to entertain more than 300 of us every year, led by the remarkably patient Bee Harding, considering the talent she has to work with (and she oversees the village FB page, a great community resource). I like seeing the reasonably frequent visits from the special constables and I particularly love the guys and gals who man the occasional voluntary speed camera, soon to be managed by Mr Patterson, I am told. And, not finally because there will be others I have forgotten—how about the people who keep our village primary school as a tip top performing mini institution?—and those amazing people who've raised almost 20k in a year to refurbish the playground?—the people who put this newsletter together in their spare time, and all their contributors. Have you seen the boring dross in other parishes? Really! It's an astounding place, and we should all appreciate and enjoy it. Yours in an unnatural state of mind! I'll go and lie down until 2026.

Fanny Hole

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NO JOB TOO SMALL

CHRISTMAS HARD SUDOKU

LAST MONTH'S WINNER IS
Geraldine Pass
Grab your voucher
from Lynne
at the shop!

Thank you for your entries!

The winner, pulled from Lynne's the trusty hat, was
Geraldine Pass with her sudoku.

Other entries were:
Julie B – crossword & sudoku, Debbie Clark – crossword
G Philpotts – crossword, Peter Walker – crossword
Gary Pass – crossword

Reminder: All entries to be submitted by the last day of the month. Thank you.

Those who complete both puzzles have their name put into the hat twice.

Win a £10 Voucher!

Please submit your completed Sudoku and/or crossword by the end of each month, either in person or by email to Lynne at Bishopstone Stores.

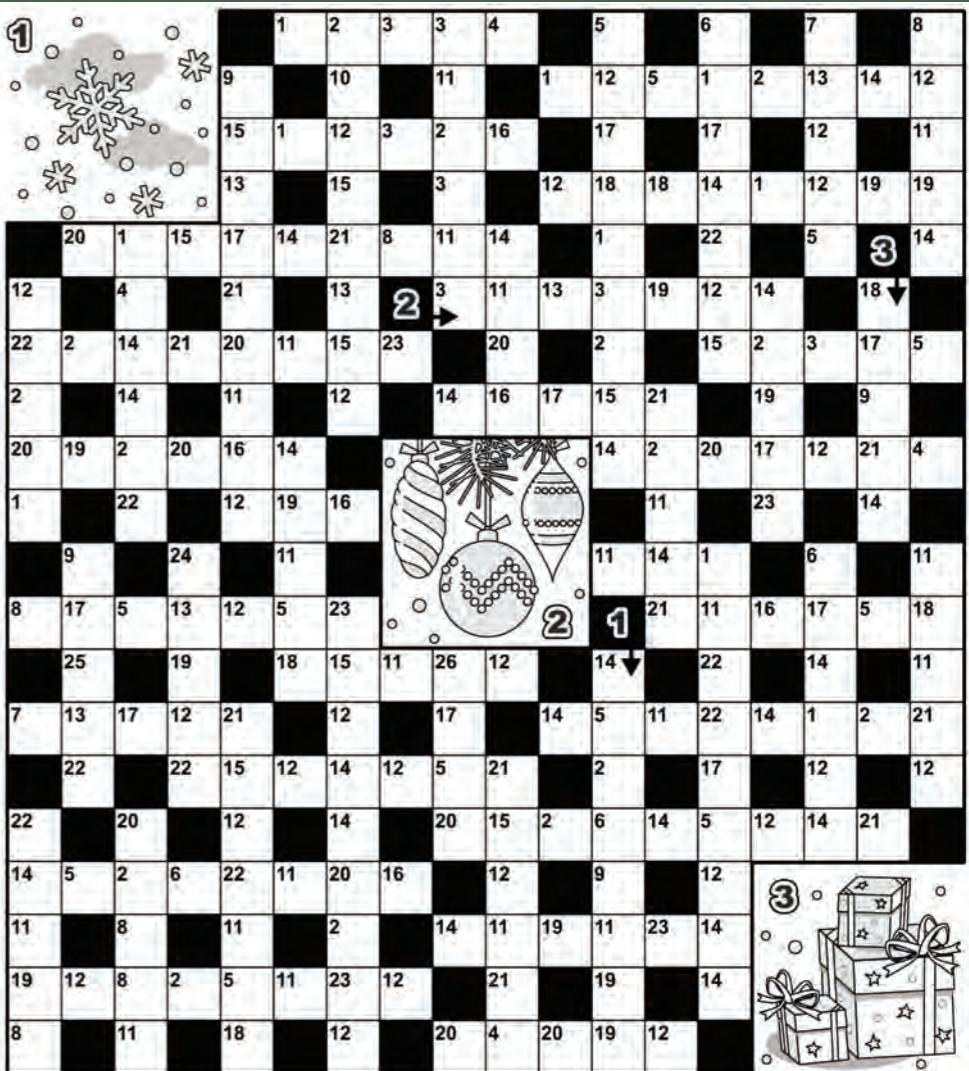
A £10 voucher is awarded each month — one winner will be drawn at random from all correct entries. The draw takes place on the 1st of the month, and the winner will be announced in the following issue. You can collect your voucher from the shop after the announcement. The voucher gives you £10 off your bill at either the pub or the shop. Drop them in, or submit by email to: shop@helenbrowningsorganic.co.uk

CHRISTMAS CODE BREAKER

The same number represents the same letter. Crack the code and fill the grid. To help you get started, some word entries have picture clues.

I must apologise for causing widespread confusion in November's issue by forgetting to change the month on the puzzles — they should have said 'Nov' rather than 'Oct'. If I make the same mistake again, please feel free to scribble it out and write the correct month over the top with your biro before handing it in. Thank you to everyone who noticed and let us know. I'll try to be more vigilant in future, though I do like to keep everyone on their toes.

8	5	6	7	3	2	9	1	4
7	1	2	9	6	4	8	3	5
3	4	9	8	5	1	2	6	7
1	2	8	6	7	9	4	5	3
4	7	5	2	8	3	6	9	1
6	9	3	1	4	5	7	8	2
5	6	4	3	9	7	1	2	8
2	8	7	5	1	6	3	4	9
9	3	1	4	2	8	5	7	6



Winning Sudoku from last month

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

DICKIE'S diary

by Richard Green

I am writing this just before Rachel Reeves's budget on Nov 26. The farming community does not expect moderation to her proposed inheritance tax raid aimed at farms and businesses. Her proposals have kept lawyers and accountants busy over the summer trying to find measures that will mitigate the damage. For the elderly who are unlikely to survive seven years the tax will not be found out of income which will force sales. Farming confidences have also been dented by a recent drop in the milk price and lacklustre returns in the arable sector where very smart machinery labours in vain to make a tiny profit or a loss if crops are scorched by drought.

However, one bright sector has been beef prices. Prices to the farmer have risen from £5/kg dead weight to £6.50+ over the past year and from 2023 when prices were nearer £4/kg. To keep sales buoyant some of these rises have not been passed on to the consumer as the trade usually tries to average out the highs and lows. Even so, the restaurant trade is obliged to price the best steak cuts above £30 for 8 ounces. We have beef cattle grazing marginal land and the best sorts can now come to over £2000 compared with half that figure a few years ago.

Increasingly there is an alternative red meat that can be sourced so much cheaper. Venison and game come into this category. We are now in the season of game shooting. By law game may not be shot on a Sunday. Pheasants may be shot Oct 1st - Feb 1st, and partridges Sept 1st - Feb 1st. Deer with no predator bar man have never been so numerous. In the south we see fallow, roe and muntjac. There could be



Photo of the month

Become the neighborhood paparazzi sensation with your camera wizardry! Every month, our crack team of discerning judges will don their imaginary monocles and select a lucky winner. Brace yourself for stardom, as your masterpiece gets the full-colour treatment and becomes the talk of the town. It's not just a photo, it's your ticket to local fame!



Thank you for this lovely winning photo from **Francesca Walker** this month with her beautiful sky (above).

Other lovely pics we received below are: **Yuet Dickinson 'November Moon at 3.30pm'** (right) and **Justin Moss 'Winter Sunset from Foxhill'** (below).

Some great pictures this month, thank you all, keep 'em coming!



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Inside the Peach Pip

by Anna Bareham



A Poem for Every Day of Christmas, edited by Allie Esiri

Chances are, you have come across at least one of Allie Esiri's award winning poetry collections over the last several years, her most famous being *A Poem for Every Day of the Year*. You may also have seen one for *Every Night of the Year*, or for *Every Summer Day*, etc. I see them everywhere. Esiri has resurfaced an excitement for poetry on the literary scene and has succeeded in making poetry accessible to the masses. She is great at compiling a complementary range of poetry styles, and keeping them bitesized so as to be easily consumed on a daily basis.

I, for one, am looking forward to my daily dose of poetry this month, with her most recent Christmas collection. Read along with me? Or buy it as a Christmas present to yourself or someone else to devour in one sitting, or to save until next year!

*'We are nearer to Spring
Than we were in September,'
I heard a bird sing
In the dark of December.*

Oliver Herford

Happy Christmas, one and all. Anna

SEND US
YOUR SNAPS
Email:
BishopstoneEditor
@gmail.com

CHURCH NEWS

A Letter From The Vicar



And so, another year draws to a close and the mid-winter festival of light looms large on our horizons. For those who believe and trust in Jesus Christ, that festival is focused on the coming of the One true light, as John describes Jesus in his Gospel Ch1 vvs 9 ***The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.***

It's been another dark year. Maybe you, like me, have been rationing your intake of news on a day-to-day basis. Everyone seems to be at war with everyone! Strident voices, vested influences and personal agendas proliferate and without an agreed sense of where the foundations of morality are to be found we flounder in a sea of untethered opinions and unscrupulous individuals. Where can we find true light indeed? Truth to live by, values to aspire to and hope to embody and share? Well, happily, gloriously and maybe improbably, in the babe of Bethlehem still. As John says in verse 5 ***"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*** The good news to be celebrated this Christmas season, as each Christmas season, is that there is a source of true light to steer and navigate our course by in this life; the person, saving work and teaching of Jesus Christ. John 1 vvs14 ***"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.... full of grace and truth."*** He doesn't impose himself on us but invites us to believe and follow him. But we must decide. Is he the truth as he claims to be? I am reminded of the Poem One Solitary Life:

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant. He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30. Then, for three years, he was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn't go to college. He never lived in a big city. He never travelled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race. I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned--put together--have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one, solitary life.

Please join us at our Christmas Services outlined below, to welcome and celebrate ***"The true light that gives light to everyone"*** that has come into our world.

It will be great to see you.

Kind regards, Revd Steve Paynter
stevedpaynter@gmail.com 01793 296870

Prayer

Dear God, as we celebrate Your Son's birth, we pray for His light and peace to dwell in our hearts, in our families and in our communities. Heal conflicts, bring comfort to the hurting, and let Your love fill every heart with mercy and grace. Help us be Your hands and feet to those in need.

Amen.

Our churches are: All Saint Liddington, St. Mary's Bishopstone, St. Andrew's Wanborough, and St. Swithun's Hinton Parva.



Church Services. Full details on www.achurchnearyou.com

Photo: Kate Wight, Hinton Church

The Parish of the Wellspring Villages

The main morning Church Services always start at 10.30am.

Day	Date	Time	Venue
Sun	14.12.25	10.30	HC, St. Mary's
Sat	20.12.25	5pm	Christingle, St Andrew's
Sun	21.12.25	NO MORNING SERVICE	
Sun	21.12.25	4pm	Carol Service St Andrew's
Wed	24.12.25	5pm	Christingle, St Mary's
Wed	24.12.25	11.30pm	Midnight HC St Andrew's
Thurs	25.12.25	10.30am	Family HC, All Saints
Thurs	25.12.25	10.30am	Carols & Readings St Swithun's
Sun	28.12.25	10.30am	HC, St. Swithun's
Sun	04.01.26	10.30am	HC, All Saints
Sun	11.01.26	10.30am	HC, St. Mary's
Sun	18.01.26	10.30am	HC, St Andrew's

St Mary's Church Cleaning Rota 2026

Dec '25	Fran & Karen S.
Jan '26	Chris & Gill
Feb '26	Jane G. & Maggie
March '26	Sarah & Jenny
April '26	Liz & Gaye
May '26	Rachel Blunt & ?
June '26	Debbie & Rachel P.
July '26	Jill & Karen Mac G.
Aug '26	Fran & Karen S.
Sept '26	Chris & Gill
Oct '26	Jane G. & Maggie
Nov '26	Sarah & Jenny
Dec '26	Liz & Gaye

Thank you to the great team who help clean the church. We would love to hear from new volunteers who'd like to join us. It involves no more than 4hrs cleaning during your month on the rota, so not too onerous! Please contact Sarah Bally 07788715742

HC: Holy Communion, BCP: Book of Common Prayer, MW: Morning Worship
All dates and times are submitted to the Editor.

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The Parish Times

Bishopstone Parish Council, serving Bishopstone, Hinton Parva & Russley Park

December 2025



20MPH LIMIT FOR VILLAGE

New speed limit implemented but other measures dropped

Following extensive consultation with residents over two years, Swindon Borough Council has now made a Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the speed limit in Bishopstone to 20mph.

All the streets on the map above are now 20mph at all times.

The Parish Council has made several representations to the borough council to correct the road signs in the village, which are misleading or absent and causing confusion.

Regrettably, the additional traffic calming measures which Swindon Borough Council insisted we should have, and which were the subject of much heated debate and discussion at public meetings and via the online consultation, are now not going to be implemented.

SBC cites 'engineering difficulties' as the reason for the measures not going ahead but we suspect that may be code for 'budget'.



THE PARISH TIMES FOR BISHOPSTONE, HINTON PARVA AND RUSSLEY PARK

WELCOME TO THE PARISH

The Parish Council always extends a warm welcome to all new and prospective residents of the Parish.

We are very pleased that you've chosen to live in our community. The Parish contains two conservation areas and everything south of the Icknield Way is also in the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Many houses are also listed.

Naturally this brings with it all sorts of challenges when it comes to tree felling, house alterations, etc. There are also other regulations aimed at preserving the character and beauty of the parish.

If in doubt, please check, we are only a phone call away.

The Parish Council is always available to answer any questions you may have on any particular aspect of living in a conservation area, the area of outstanding natural beauty or listed buildings.

Contact the Clerk, the Chair or any member of the council - the councillors email addresses appear below, along with the Clerk's telephone number.

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Ms Jaine Blackman (Clerk)

Phone: 07913 819422

Email: Clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org

Mrs Val Brodin (Chair)

Cllr.valbrodin@gmail.com

Mrs Lucille McGrath (Vice Chair)

Cllr.lucillemcgrath@gmail.com

Mr Ian Thomas

Cllr.ianthomas@gmail.com

Mr Julian Cooke

Cllr.juliancooke@gmail.com

Mrs Gill May

Cllr.gillmay@gmail.com

Mr Steve Bell

Cllr.sbell@gmail.com

Mrs Karen Walker

Cllr.karenwalker@gmail.com

Dr Karen MacGregor

Cllr.karenmacgregor@gmail.com

Mr Dai Wilson

Cllr.daiwilson@gmail.com

The Parish Council's policies and documents can be viewed at bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2025 /26

Meetings begin at 7.30pm. Late changes are shown at bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parish-council/ and on the notice boards. Members of the press and public are welcome to attend.

5th January Hinton Parva 13th April Bishopstone

2nd Feb Bishopstone 11th May Bishopstone to

2nd March Hinton Parva include parish meeting

Useful Information

Swindon Borough Council: Reception Premier House 01793 465055/465056; Civic Offices 01793 463668; Wat Tyler House 01793 463725

For problems with waste collections call Streetsmart on: Monday to Friday 8am-8pm 01793 445501; all other times 01793 466453

Report fly-tipping or pot-holes to SBC: swindon.gov.uk/my_account

Wiltshire Police non-emergency number (less urgent than 999): 101
Borough Councillor Gary Sumner - GSumner2@swindon.gov.uk

PARISH COUNCILLORS' KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Finance Lucille McGrath

Footpaths and Highways Julian Cooke (Hinton Parva)/Ian Thomas (Bishopstone)/Dai Wilson

Pond & Island Steve Bell/Dai Wilson

Hinton Parva Village Hall Karen Walker

Bishopstone Village Hall Steve Bell

Hinton Parva Charities Julian Cooke

Bishopstone United Charities Doug Stevens (PC nominee), Christine Thomas (PC nominee), Laurie Mankelow (PC nominee)

Trees Julian Cooke (Hinton Parva) Ian Thomas (Bishopstone)

Responsible Financial Officer Jaine Blackman (Clerk)

Planning Ian Thomas

Website/IT Gary Pass (community volunteer)

Policies Gill May/Karen MacGregor

School liaison Lucille McGrath

Russley Park Julian Cooke

CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

All planning applications, their history and all supporting documents can be viewed at: www.swindon.gov.uk/planning Planning issues are discussed at the monthly Parish Council meetings. Public representations are heard prior to the start of the meeting.

S/HOU/25/1520 Two storey extension to side and rear elevations. Detached garage at Charlbury House, Hatchet Hill, Hinton Parva.

S/HOU/25/1442 Stable for the keeping of horses & adjacent workshop within the grounds of No. 2 Mount Pleasant Farm Cottages, Horpit.

S/HOU/25/1318 Erection of 60cm wooden, open trellis, above the 1m high closeboard wooden garden fence at The Rails, Oxon Place, Bishopstone.

S/HOU/25/1037 Erection of 6ft fence in replacement of existing hedgerow which has died at 1 West End Cottages, Icknield Way, Bishopstone.

S/HOU/25/1335 Installation of a new external domestic oil tank sited on concrete base at 3 The Mews, Russley Park.

S/HOU/25/1357 Conversion of integral garage to create habitable accommodation and erection of garden shed at 6 Whatleys Orchard, Bishopstone.

S/HOU/25/0046 Erection of gabion retaining wall (retrospective) at The Rails, Oxon Place, Bishopstone.

S/HOU/24/1148 Erection of two storey rear extension and front porch at 2 Mount Pleasant Farm Cottages, Mount Pleasant Farm Lane, Horpit.

S/25/0666/REPPER Land At Mount Pleasant Farm, Mount Pleasant Farm Lane, Horpit. Construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a ground-mounted solar farm.

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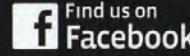


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VILLAGE HALL news



BISHOPSTONE BVH Reg Charity 271165 Hocker Bench

From the Village Hall ...

.....Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our regular customers, valued hirers, and generous benefactors.

Our fantastic community facility is supported by so many volunteers keeping the place ticking over. Well done to our wonderful Committee who are often called upon to multi task, make it up as they go along, adapt, improvise and plan for every eventuality. Thanks Russell for everything, Jill for her weekly sprinkling of magic fairy dust that keeps the hall wonderfully sparkling. Michelle for juggling the bookings and social media. Steve Bar Master Extraordinaire and coconut checker, Andrew – Bean counting and level headedness!! Mark for taking up the Advertising mantle.

Newsletter

A BIG THANK YOU once again for providing another year of this most awesome publication. A special thanks to our terrific Editor, Andrea for making time to simply fit it all in! We wouldn't be in print without you. Val for her sense of reason and objectiveness and sub editing, Mark for coordinating our advertising, Yuett for organising the distribution, along with all the much-appreciated delivery helpers who hot foot it round the nooks and crannies of our environs. Talking of boundaries, a thanks to Aunt Fanny who often pushes these writing from her tax exile, private island, often in 6's and 7's about who to upset next.

Skittles Round Up

Another fiercely contested raffle at the Village Skittles evening!!! Thanks to everyone for coming and taking part. "Graham The Scores" was on great form adjudicating the spares and meticulously checking the math. There was a little chaos in the kitchens as our Chief of Staff Catering (Roz) was unable to attend. Some gargantuan & delicious puddings from Debbie and a hair straightening Chilli was washed down well with usual victuals from the bar. Competition was fierce. The Mighty Ducks were a couple of their usual star players down and were pipped at the post by Cheese 'n' Toast who were more toast than cheese on the night. The Three Balls (Rampant) Trophy has disappeared. Pickles has been dispatched. Proceeds after costs will go towards a spring redecoration outside.



Christmas Festivities

Christmas Tree Set and sparkly; many thanks to our Elves – Rachel H, Callum (Mighty Duck) Russell, Andy P.

Carols Around the Tree

– Scheduled for 17:30
22nd December FREE. NO
PARKING FROM 4PM

NYE Party: Details opposite.

Richard Walker, Chair

01793 791 913 | richard@eddingtons.co.uk



HINTON PARVA

We've been very quiet recently but have lots to share this month! First, our Village Sing Song & Get Together will be taking place at the Village Hall on Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December, at 5pm. This now annual event is a chance to take a breather for an hour from the Christmas preparations, meet and mingle with your friends and neighbours and join in with a sing-song. This is a free event with mulled wine, mince pies and light refreshments. Any donations will be gratefully received for this year's chosen charity, The Wiltshire Treehouse (Registered Charity No 1159719), which supports local bereaved children and young people. All are welcome!

We will be holding our AGM at the Village Hall on Wednesday 7th January at 7.30pm. If you have any interest in our beautiful Village Hall in whatever capacity, do consider coming along. Two of our very long-serving committee members have already advised that they wish to step down at the AGM so we're very keen to recruit more committee members or occasional helpers in general to help to ensure the future for this amazing community asset. If you're interested in finding out more or can't make the meeting, please discuss with Ella, contact details on our poster, or any committee member to find out more.

Our annual Village Supper will be taking place at the Village Hall on Saturday 7th February. Please see our poster for details (pg 18). We'd welcome offers of help, donations of puddings and any suitable raffle prizes.

Finally – some 'Wanted Ads'. Does anyone have a smart television, as large as possible, that is surplus to requirements? We're keen to try and upgrade our facilities to make our hall



suitable for presentations. And is there anyone out there who would be interested in helping with cleaning the hall? Again, we'd love to hear from you!

We hope to see you at the Village Sing Song & Get Together! Karen Walker on behalf of Hinton Parva Village Hall Committee.





The Royal Woke Diary



The annual tongue in cheek curmudgeonly seasonal greeting from the worst pub in the village—although the staff here seem to enjoy it, and send best wishes to everyone, surprisingly enough. I was only slightly irritated when after a few days p and q in early December I came back to find the place festooned like a (tasteful) Santa's grotto, and I can also say at this stage that rumours of my demise have been slightly exaggerated.

Good job too, because we've got some self-generated fun to get through over the next month. We always open on Christmas Day lunch for drinks, the first one's free from the landlord as a thank you for your support over the past 12 months. To add a frisson of interest (even though we're always surprisingly busy), my dairy cow milking assistant—Jack—and I will be doing our bar jobs wearing our least tasteful dressing gowns, and we'd really enjoy ourselves if our customers and friends arrive in their own dressing gowns. To the extent that we're planning on offering a surprise Xmas prize to the best and worst attire. Jack and I will also raid our vast wardrobes (can anyone else help with this?) to see if we have any really horrible items for you to wear if you don't follow the rules. We will also have a whip round for our two favoured charities, the Bishopstone Primary school playground refurb appeal, and Prospect Hospice, since I might need one day to make a reservation.

And then we say goodbye until...the next day. Usually a large Boxing Day lunch crowd, and generally a busy week up to New Year's Day.

Don't forget the party in Bishopstone Village Hall on New Year's Eve, organised by other good folk in the parish, from 8pm. £12 gets you in for music, dancing, curry and good chat, and we'd love to see you on your way there, for a cocktail or something lovely. I am thrilled that there's a proper village event being organised.

Other fun—**January 2, come and lay back to our talented jazzmen, ThreeBop, 6.30pm.** And a **wine tasting here at the pub in January 27.** And the annual **village play**, led by the indefatigable Bee Harding/Nicholls, which threatens to be quite funny again. Not enough hanky panky for my taste, but we do live in a different age...that's on **Jan 14-17**, tickets from the pub or www.ticketsource.co.uk/badsticks.

Enjoy yourselves
TF and crew

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SAMARITANS SWINDON & DISTRICT SWINDON & DISTRICT SAMARITANS TURNING THE BLUES INTO BREWS IN 2026

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On this day, and every day, you can remind everyone how good human connection feels. How easy is it and what a difference it can make.

At Samaritans we know there's no such things as 'Blue Monday' and that feeling low isn't something that happens on Mondays or any random day of the year. So, we're saying out with the blue and in with the brew as there's always time for a catch up over a cuppa, reaching out to let someone know they're valued and that someone cares.

As well as reaching out to family and friends for a cuppa and a chat it's also possible to raise vital funds for Swindon & District Samaritans to help ensure there's always someone there for anyone who's going through a tough time.

People can donate whatever feels right to them. If they want to, they can bring their own cuppa & cake whilst donating what it usually costs. A donation of £5 is all it takes to cover the costs of Samaritans answering a call for help.

If you need to know more – please reach out to: swindon@samaritans.org – and if you brew up to chase those blues away and can support Swindon & District Samaritans at the same time, please donate via our website:

<https://samaritanscommunity.enthuse.com/swindonanddistrictsamaritans/profile>

Samaritans – here every hour, of every day, for every life: T: 116 123 – calls are free E: jo@samaritans.org

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Team

ADVERTISING:

Mark Jordan: markjordan3@icloud.com

PUBLISHING EDITOR & PHOTOGRAPHY:

Andrea Wadsworth: andrea@luli.uk

SUB-EDITOR:

Val Brodin: valbrodin@gmail.com

CREATIVE COPY:

Roving Reporter Bob

Guest Contributors: BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

Fanny Hole: BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

TREASURER:

Andy Pocock: andrewpocock@yahoo.co.uk

DISTRIBUTION:

Yuet Dickinson: 07757 998 698

Contributions

If you'd like to write an article or submit any photography please email Andrea or Val for consideration in the next issue. We aim to distribute the newsletter on or around 15th of each month.

Please note that the DEADLINE for any submissions will be the last day of the previous month. We welcome submissions earlier, if possible. As we are volunteers and manage the village news alongside our other jobs, late submissions run the risk of not being included. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

If you would like an advert designing for placement in the village news, please contact andrea@luli.uk who offers a discounted rate for Village News adverts.

Submitted images

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We are non-profit!

The Village News is created and run by a small group of volunteers and is a non-profit organisation affiliated to Bishopstone Village Hall. Reg Charity no 271165.

Donations

If you would like to make a donation to help with the upkeep please contact Treasurer Andy P, or there are additional copies available and a donation box on the counter in Bishopstone Stores.



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December 2025

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BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

Stick me on your fridge

2025		Time	Event	Place	Contact
Fri	12.12.25	5pm - 8pm	Food for Thought , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW	grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Mon	22.12.25	5.30pm	Bishopstone Christmas Carols Around The Tree (pg.16)	Bishopstone Village Hall	
Wed	24.12.25	5pm	Hinton Parva Christmas Christmas Sing Along (pg. 17)	Hinton Parva Village Hall	ellakusta01@gmail.com
Wed	24.12.25		Christmas Eve		
Thurs	25.12.25		Christmas Day		
Thurs	25.12.25		First drink FREE at the pub Christmas Day (pg. 18)	The Royal Oak	01793 790 481
Fri	26.12.25		Boxing Day		
Wed	31.12.25	8pm - late	New Year's Eve Party	Bishopstone Village Hall	See pg.16 for ticket details

2026		Time	Event	Place	Contact
Fri	02.01.26	6.30pm	3 Bop - Jazz at the pub (pg. 18)	The Royal Oak	01793 790 481
Wed	07.01.26	7.30	HP Village Hall AGM (pg. 17)	Hinton Parva Village Hall	ellakusta01@gmail.com
Fri	09.01.26	5pm - 8pm	Food for Thought , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW	grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
	14th 17th Jan 26	7pm	BADS: Bishopstone Am Dram: A Bunch of Amateurs (pg. 2)	Bishopstone Village Hall	All tickets £10 from The Royal Oak or: ticketsource.co.uk/badstickets
	27.01.26		Wine Tasting (pg. 18)	The Royal Oak	01793 790 481
Sat	07.02.26	7pm	Hinton Parva Village Supper	Hinton Parva Village Hall	ellakusta01@gmail.com
Wed	11.02.26	7pm	Gardening Club: Rebecca Brain (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall	Marion Peck 01793 791001
	11.03.26	7pm	Gardening Club: Paul Green (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall	Marion Peck 01793 791001
Every 3rd Sat from 18.01.25	9am - 12pm		Wanborough Farmers Market	Wanborough Village Hall, SN4 0AD	Lorna Naseem 07903 210 505
Every Tuesday	9.30am		Fitness Classes . All abilities	Bishy Village Hall	lorna.sams@outlook.com
Every Thursday	10.30 - noon		Coffee, Cake and Chat, Wanborough. £5.00, all welcome	The Brewers Arms SN4 0AE	If you need a lift, call Lorna: 07903 210505
Every Thursday	9.15am - 10.30am		Yoga with Nickie Heap (p.17)	Hinton Parva Village Hall	yogawithnickie@gmail.com
2nd Mon of month	7pm		The Burj Fundraising Supper: for The Prospect Hospice (charity number 280093)	The Burj, Foxhill	WrightK@warnefordschool.org.uk
2nd Thurs of month	7pm Start 7.30pm		WI: Bishopstone & Hinton Parva WI	Either Village Hall	Jan Chapple: janatwan@icloud.com

Photo: Ceredig Jones, The Coombes, Neil Hill, Bishopstone

Dates are correct to the best of our knowledge at time of going to print. Please see Facebook for any interim updates.



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The views of individual writers expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, the parish council or the church. If you have any feedback or questions, please contact one of the editorial team listed on page 23. Apologies for any stray typos. We try hard to catch them all but occasionally some escape. You may also deliver items by hand to Bishopstone Stores and Lynne will kindly pass anything on to us. Please make sure that you include any names and contact details so that we may get in touch with you. None of these personal details will be published unless we are specifically asked to do so.

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