

MONTHLY

Bishopstone, Hinton Parva & Russley Park



www.bishopstoneandhintonparva.org

VILLAGE NEWS

JAN 2026



Photo: Richie Welan,
The Ridgeway



New Year's Eve at
Bishopstone Village Hall

WARM WISHES FOR A BRIGHT NEW YEAR



Russley Downs
Mark Jordan


Bishopstone Amateur Dramatics Society presents

A BUNCH of AMATEURS

By Ian Hislop & Nick Newman

Directed by Belinda Nicholls

14th - 17th January 2026
Doors open 7pm
Curtain up 7.30pm




Bishopstone Village Hall
Registered Charity 271185

All tickets £10
from Helen Browning's Royal Oak
or from the online box office
www.ticketsource.co.uk/badstickets

Pre-Theatre Suppers from 5.30pm at Helen Browning's Royal Oak

2 courses £22.50 per person
To book: Call 01793 790481




Bishopstone Stores

Happy New Year to all of our lovely customers! I hope you enjoyed the festivities, although it seems like it all happened a very long time ago now....

2025 was another successful year for our little village shop. We saw lots of new products: delicious garlicky delights from the Isle of Wight, Bold Beans, Hot Honey, recycled gardening gifts and the ultimate bamboo socks. Our book collection expanded, and we continue to support local talent with Christine's fabulous paintings and cards, and the introduction of Charlotte Manser's beautiful ceramics.

Our relationship with Grove Farm butchers continued to strengthen with a wider range of products and more customer orders being placed each week. They also gained their organic status in 2025 and we are now stocking their organic beef alongside our own pork products.

Much excitement was caused by Prof Richardson building his spectacular veg stand which now proudly sits outside the shop. As ever, he continues to provide the biggest carrots and parsnips in Wiltshire and his 'sprouts on a stalk' were a tremendous hit at Christmas.

As we roll into 2026, please let us know if you think we are missing something from our shelves – we are here to provide you with whatever you need. We have regular orders for meat, bread, dairy produce and doughnuts, so if there is something specific you would like, whether as a one off or on a regular basis, do pop in for a chat and we'll get the orders placed for you.

Wishing you all the best for 2026....our diary is already looking good with Drive It Day, Pig Racing, Live music, Bonfire Night and so much more already planned in.

Hope to see you soon, Lynne x

f @helenbrowningbishopstonestores @bishopstone_stores

Opening Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,

Friday & Saturday: 9am - 6pm

Wednesday: 9am - 1pm

Sunday: 9am - 3pm



RECYCLING MATTERS

by Karen Walker

I've always been fascinated by the 'behind the scenes' activities of how businesses and organisations work – how a restaurant is organised so that it can deliver so many meals to different customers with such a quick turnaround for example - and recently I temporarily joined Marks & Spencer's food department at the Orbital in Swindon for the Christmas period and saw first-hand how one of the UK's biggest retailers helped to deliver the nation's Christmas. I was very impressed. Even though I would be working for less than 4 weeks on a part-time basis, mainly re-stacking shelves, I was still given a day's training, uniform options and a lot of support throughout. One of their stated aims is to 'delight' the customer and, if asked for help, the assistant is expected to stop whatever they are doing (I often seemed to be on the top of a foot stool at the time, re-stocking a high shelf!), assist the customer and if they were looking for an item, accompany them to whatever they were looking for, anywhere in the store. I mainly worked in 'Bread and Cakes' but would regularly be taking shoppers to find perfume or hunt down the 9 bottle bags they had forgotten to pick up!

I already knew about some of Marks & Spencer's sustainability practices but it was good to see it working in practice. Staff rotate the stock as you would expect, shorter dated items at the front, longer dated items at the back, although canny customers often re-jig your pain-staking ordering of items in the search for the freshest stock. 'Yellow sticker'ing largely takes place overnight at M&S ready for the next day's trading (so a good time to look for bargains there is first thing in the morning) and then for some items, again in the afternoon. However, I didn't see any items reduced to less than 50% discount and some items, like fresh bread, cakes and biscuits baked on the

premises weren't reduced at all. Whilst I was there, I didn't see any massive discounts and instead, food that goes out of date that day, is donated to charity. Sometimes 'out of date' flowers and plants were made available to staff but I was told that they also were given to good causes too. On Christmas Eve I saw a big delivery of festive items, that had long sold out on the shop floor, be picked up from the backstage warehouse by a local organisation providing Christmas lunches, which I thought was a very nice and generous touch by the retailer.

So what did I learn from my stint in M&S, other than they seem to be a great employer, there's a lot of team-work going on and when to look for those yellow stickers? If you do get a yellow-stickered bargain, make sure the yellow-stickered bar code covers the whole of the original bar code, otherwise you can inadvertently be charged full-price. They stock a lot more 'loose' fruit, vegetables and bakery items than I thought – although sometimes you had to look for them – and they have paper bags for them at the front of the fresh produce section. The busiest time for food Christmas shopping this year was the 23rd December but Christmas Eve was relatively quiet. If you do manage to book your food slot early enough, go for Christmas Eve and it should be easier for travel and parking but make sure you either order everything you want or do an earlier shop(s) for items that will keep or can be frozen. There were a lot of disappointed people who were surprised they couldn't get a panettone/yule log/prawn picky bits/shallots/fresh herbs etc on Christmas Eve! And yes, I would love to work for M&S again next year – but apparently only 15% of applicants are taken on. If you too are tempted, remember in the role that customer service is key!

Are you interested in becoming a Governor at Bishopstone School?

- Do you care about improving children's education and want to contribute to your local community?
- Can you volunteer, become part of a team and value contributions made by others?
- Are you willing to challenge and ask questions?
- Are you open to new ideas? The time commitment is probably not as much as you fear.

Have you experience in any of the following:



- Education (not connected to the school),
- Finance,
- HR, External Communications,
- H&S

Want to find out more? We need people just like you!

Please contact Lynne Fletcher, Governance Professional by email, clerk1@Bishopstone.Swindon.sch.uk or the school office on 01793 790521

HAPPY GARDENS

by Jane Pearson



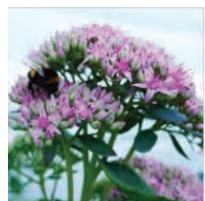
Monthly Musings

In this frosty time of year, many herbaceous garden plants have died back, revealing the structure and skeleton of our gardens.

Some herbaceous plants gently retreat to their crowns to wait out the chilly weather, whilst others refuse to die back gracefully and are best managed by cutting back. Others shine, they stand proud and their seed heads provide welcome interest and food for small birds.

New Year is the perfect time to take a deep look at your outdoor space. I find it helpful to take photos and make notes about what is, and is not, working. Ask yourself if your garden needs more evergreens or trees with beautiful bark to give height, or shrubs with brightly coloured stems? Have all your summer blooms disappeared or are their winter skeletons still interesting? Where would you like to see spring bulbs emerging? If you need some experienced and friendly help with this, please contact me to arrange a consultation.

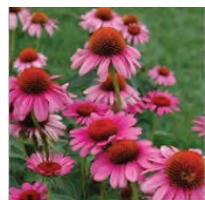
Plant Spotlight:



Hylotelephium
telephium 'Autumn
Joy'
Sedum 'Autumn Joy'



Phlomis
russeliana
Turkish sage



Echinacea
purpurea
'Rubinstern'
Coneflower
'Rubinstern'



Stachys byzantina
'Silver Carpet'
Woolly betony 'Silver
Carpet'

Here are four of my favourite Herbaceous perennials that stand up well to our climate's winter and look beautiful covered in frost.

Betonica: previously known as Stachys, loves a sunny spot to flower and attracts honeybees.

Echinacea has a strong upright winter skeleton and interesting seed heads.

Hylotelephium, previously called Sedum, is a favourite for autumn colour and is a nectar source for butterflies

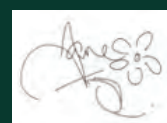
Phlomis: its pompom like seed heads always makes me smile.

The Potting Shed: Jan/Feb



- Enjoy the snow drops!
- Plant orchard and decorative trees, bare root hedging and roses.
- Keep an eye on the weather and weeds, they still grow in mild winters, so save yourself a ton of work in the spring by removing them now.
- Order seed and bulb catalogues and enjoy browsing.
- Be inspired! Visit local gardens and plant centres: Notice scented winter shrubs and trees with interesting bark and add to your wish list.

Happy New Year and Happy Gardening.



07811 367320
janepearsondesign@icloud.com
The Lynchetts, 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

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The Ridgeway Gardening Club

Contact: Marion Peck: 01793 791 001



Well here we are in 2026, with a new name and a new logo! A new start for a new season with excellent speakers on a wide range of topics to inspire and guide us through the coming year.

Spring, we hope, is just around the corner and as the days begin to lengthen again we will be looking forward to the signs of new growth and many happy days ahead tending our gardens.



Looking back over 2025, our speakers covered numerous subjects. To open the season in February Jane Faulks, a chiropractor, talked us through all the physical benefits of gardening, the walking, bending, stretching, and reaching, all good for flexibility, bone and general health.

Helen Browning came in March with an update on everything soil, climate change and agroforestry on Eastbrook Farm in Bishopstone.

She was followed by Roger Umpelby in April with all sorts of organic ideas and methods for combatting those unwanted pests and diseases.

Richard Rickett, in May, gave a fascinating talk on Bees, the many different species, from the colonies of the familiar honey bees to all sorts of solitary bees, their life cycles and nesting habits and how we can encourage these vital species.

The Annual Plant Sale also in May was once again a great success with a flurry of activity as people rushed to claim their bargains raising much needed funds to enable us to continue to have some great speakers.

Timothy Walker from the Oxford Botanical Gardens gave a very interesting talk with some spectacular photos of amazing colourful arrays of plants taken on his travels around the world which we can consider using to brighten up our gardens in autumn.

In July David Cramp from the RSPB enthralled us all with his talk on those summer visitors to our garden, the Swifts, Swallows and Martins.

August, as usual was holiday time and then in September we welcomed Claire Mitchell who explained all about Climate change and what it means to all of us as gardeners.

The coming year has another impressive selection and we look forward to seeing everyone again and welcoming new members to our friendly informal meetings.

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 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



Ask Fanny

From Love Triangles to Boundary Lines



Write to Fanny at:
BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

Dear Fanny
Waterworks issues
I think your readers ought to know how disappointing my experience was the last time I tried to use the 'public' toilets on the Ridgeway above Bishopstone. On a very cold day. As an older man, I do not yet need to sit down for a pee, as you'll probably understand. I was happy not to have to lower my trousers. As my warm liquid steamed and dribbled from a great height, it bounced (literally) and soaked my trousers around the knee area. I jumped backwards and banged my head on the door, although not badly. My pee had hit a block of ice in the toilet pan, hence my wet trousers. The hand towels were nowhere to be seen, so I was in a right pickle. My main point is that these toilets need someone better to look after them. I know they have been provided out of the goodness of somebody's heart, but please can someone attend them more often.
Yours in hope
Mr B
Bishopstone

Dear Mr B
I have also recently encountered this same block of slightly yellowing ice—in both cubicles! It's chilly in there! So I made a point of going to see the Head of Ridgeway Toilets at his shed in the village. He apologised and said his trusty old tractor had been unable to make it up the hill due to black ice for a few days; and then there'd been a water pipe burst; and the contractors who are paid to empty and clean them had been stuck on various other jobs. He also said that the mechanical 'macerator' in the disabled access cubicle had broken just before Christmas due to people bunging the wrong stuff down the loo (no paper towels please); and promised that it would be repaired and re-opened before too long. He says it's harder work keeping toilets open and working than he'd previously imagined. I think he deserves forgiveness.
Fanny

Dear Fanny
I have heard rumours that there is to be a new bar in Bishopstone, to provide some competition for the grossly overpriced Royal Oak, where all you get is a roaring fire, comfortable seats, a blackboard full of profanities and expensive beer. Do you know anything about this?
Mr SP
Bishy

Dear Mr SP
I do! It's going to be called The Cock Inn, and I had a sneak preview just the other day. It's compact, difficult to park, slightly chilly (although not open yet), and will be run by a landlord who can be equally as frosty as the guy that runs the Oak. A public opening date has not been set, and the pub sign is still under secret development and won't be erected for some time yet. I wish them all the success in the world.
Fanny Hole

Dear Mrs Hole
I just wish to congratulate all those open hearted parishioners who organised public parties on New Year's Eve, in the village halls we are so lucky to have. Both were not without their gremlins, I have heard, but on the whole, the idea of village

parties on this overblown night of celebration is a very good idea and should be developed in more sophisticated ways from year to year.
I wish the organisers all the success in the world.
Thank you
Mr J Hirst
HP

Dear Mr Hirst
I am with you on this. I thought it was a noble effort by all concerned. The difficulty is what to do with younger children on NYE, as far as I can see. (I've never bothered with younger children since they are such a drag and frightfully expensive). I do wonder if someone could arrange for younger children to be locked in a large safe cage somewhere warm for a few hours, and fed orange juice through some long pipes. After all they'd probably have a better time without their parents. And their parents would have a better time without their children!
Yours sincerely
Mrs Hole



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NO JOB TOO SMALL

JANUARY HARD SUDOKU

LAST MONTH'S WINNER IS
John Iles
Grab your voucher from Lynne at the shop!

Thank you for your entries!
The winner, pulled from Lynne's trusty hat by yours truly while I was sausage shopping. John Iles is our winner this month with his Sudoku. Well done John!
Other entries were:
Sudoku: Debbie Clark & Geraldine Pass
Codebreaker: Debbie Clark, Keith Franklin, Yuet Dickinson, Peter Walker, The Phillpotts
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

Courtesy of puzzles.ca

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

JANUARY CODEWORD

Codewords are like crossword puzzles but have no clues!
Instead, every letter of the alphabet has been replaced by a number, the same number representing the same letter throughout the puzzle.
All you have to do is decide which letter is represented by which number!
To start you off, we reveal the codes for two or three letters

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

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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

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

Winning Sudoku from last month

BIRD FEEDING update

RSPB

As part of the Garden Wildlife Health partnership, the RSPB is seeking solutions to the decline in UK populations of Greenfinches and Chaffinches caused by the spread of trichomonosis. The disease, caused by a parasite, affects a number of bird species and is most likely spread through contaminated food and water that has come into contact with an infected bird. Our work includes testing infected sites (pictured).

As the Big Garden Birdwatch (23–25 January 2026) approaches, the RSPB is advising everyone not to use flat feeding stations such as bird tables, window feeders, or other tray-type seed feeders. Research so far suggests that these present the highest risk of disease transmission, as they can retain regurgitated food and faeces, so we have suspended the sale of these items.

The longer bird food remains in feeders, the greater the risk of disease spread. Avoid overfilling your feeders to reduce waste and prevent a build-up of food underneath them.

Cleaning feeders and bird baths at least once a week can also help limit the spread of disease. The water in bird baths should be changed daily and, if your feeders have a lot of visitors, cleaning more than once a week is best.

If you see diseased birds, stop feeding for two to four weeks. Once you stop seeing sick birds, gradually start feeding again. You may need to withdraw feeding for a further two- to four-week period if you see more sick birds, or for three to six

months if the disease persists.

Find the latest advice, and report sick or dead garden birds, at gardenwildlifehealth.org.

Look out for an update in the next issue of *The RSPB Magazine*.



Inside the Peach Pip

by Anna Bareham

Afterthoughts: or Some Pistachios Won't Open, by Richard Ayoade

For fans of Richard Ayoade's comedy, this book of musings is a real treat. In his classic dry comedic style, Ayoade compiles a list of one-liner 'afterthoughts' about everyday life, from the obviously ridiculous ('Which foot is the front one?') to the ironically profound ('the end of racism will come when people dislike each other just for being people'). I dipped in and out of this over a few days, but you could easily read it in one sitting. Would make a good toilet book, I reckon.

A line I particularly enjoyed was this, Ayoade's assessment of himself:

I'm not funny. I'm a serious person whom no one takes seriously.

Flinging love,

Anna

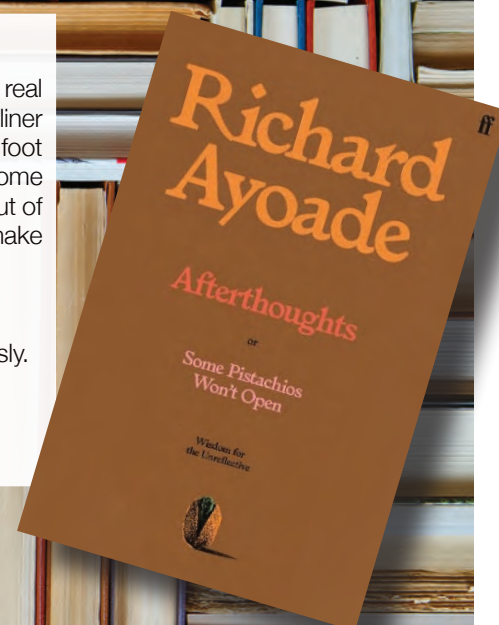


Photo of the month

Become the village paparazzi with a keen eye and a steady hand. Each month, our panel of highly opinionated judges (imaginary monocles firmly in place) will crown a winner. The prize? Full-colour glory and the quiet satisfaction of being talked about in the queue at the shop.

SEND US
YOUR SNAPS

Email:
BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com



Thank you for this month's lovely winning photo from **Jack Moss**, *Chilly Morning*, 17th December (above).

Our runners-up this month are 'January Wolf Moon from Nell Hill' by **Victoria Jones** (below left) and 'Frosty Morning at The Lynchets, Bishopstone' by **Denis Cooper** (below right).

Some truly great pictures this month — thank you all, and please keep them coming!



CHURCH NEWS

A Letter From The Vicar



Dear Friends,

January can be a wonderful time of year. Cold frosty days, nature sleeping quietly, early darkness driving us into cosy homes for long evenings. Dull light levels can be a bit of a trial but it's a time of year for looking forward, for making plans, for doing a bit of thinking about goals, aspirations and objectives for the coming year. I have never been one for new year's resolutions but it is certainly a great discipline to reflect on our personal lives: where are we going and where do we want to end up? What kind of person we are aspiring to become on our journey through this life? Scripture certainly encourages us in this exercise of self-reflection.

This year in our Parish we have a special opportunity to look at our direction of travel from the perspective of faith in Christ. **On Sunday March 22nd in the afternoon at St. Andrew's, the Bishop of Swindon, Bishop Neil, will be coming to lead a Deanery Confirmation Service for all teenagers and adults who would like to be Baptised and/or Confirmed.** It's one of the truly great services in the Christian calendar. A service where those of us baptised as infants by our parents get the chance to say, publicly and before God, "well I may have been baptised into Christ and His church by my parents' faith, but now it's my faith." "Personally, from my own decision of heart and mind, and with my own lips, I publicly renounce the deceit and corruption of evil and turn from the sins that separate us from God and neighbour, turning to Christ in faith and trust, who is the way, the truth and the life." When we do this God's wonderful promise of new life, free forgiveness and his indwelling presence in the person of the Holy Spirit is received, within, for all time and into the new creation to come. We become the beneficiaries of a wonderful exchange; we give God our sins, failings and brokenness and He gives us his total forgiveness and empowering presence to live within us for ever. We are transformed within from death to life, through His death and resurrection for us, becoming new creations in His love, as Paul says in 2Cor 5:17 **"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!** So, a new birth, a new life, a new identity as a forgiven child of God and the washing and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit to live with us for ever. Wow. Amazing. Truly awesome in fact. The pearl of great price lying at our feet all the time, but missed, entirely, by so many (Matthew 13:44-46). Christian Baptism is a sign and seal of this new birth. It is an effective sign, as we believe it affects what it signifies, the new birth and a new life in Christ.

At the heart of the Baptism Service is the decision to turn to Christ, followed by full immersion, or the sprinkling of the waters of baptism. In a Confirmation Service candidates get to declare publicly their Baptismal decision for themselves and the bishop, representing the whole Church, lays his hand on each candidate and says *"Confirm, O Lord, this your servant N, with your Holy Spirit."* You may also be baptised, prior to confirmation, if you have not been previously baptised.

If you would like to consider whether you would like to be baptised, and/or confirmed, this spring, please do get in touch via the details below. There will be some preparation sessions leading up to the Confirmation and attending these does not commit you to getting confirmed, but are aimed at helping you make an informed decision. There is a lot to think about and reflect upon.

All are welcome to come along and discover more. It would be great to see you.

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

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



Photo: Kate Wright, Hinton Church

Church Services. Full details on
www.achurchnearyou.com

The Parish of the Wellspring Villages

The main morning Church Services always start at 10.30am.

Day	Date	Time	Venue
Sun	18.01.26	10.30am	HC, St Andrew's, Wanborough
Sun	25.01.26	8.30am	BCP, HC, All Saint's, Liddington
Sun	25.01.26	10.30am	MW, St. Swithun's, Hinton P
Sun	01.02.26	10.30am	HC, All Saints, Liddington
Sun	08.02.26	10.30am	HC, St Mary's, Bishopstone
Sun	15.02.26	10.30am	HC, St Andrew's, Wanborough
Sun	22.02.26	8.30am	BCP, HC, St Mary's, Bishopstone
Sun	22.02.26	10.30am	MW, St Swithun's, Hinton Parva

Prayer

God of new beginnings, we thank you for the gift of this new year, a fresh page filled with hope. Forgive our failings and renew us by your Spirit. Help us to learn from the past, to walk in your light, and to discover your purposes of love for our lives this year. Amen.

St Mary's Church Cleaning Rota 2026

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 January 2026



2026 PLANS FOR THE BOROUGH

Crackdowns on fly-tipping and road improvements promised

Making long-lasting repairs to local roads, cracking down on fly-tipping and bringing growth to Swindon are among Swindon Borough Council's priorities in 2026.

In March, the Council will set out how it will spend up to £6m in 2026/27 to upgrade and repair Swindon's roads, as part of a 45 per cent increase in Government funding for road maintenance totalling £30m over the next four years.

Meanwhile, a dedicated enforcement team will be doubling down on cases of fly-tipping. Wherever possible they will be gathering evidence to issue fines and pursue prosecutions. The team also have the power to seize and crush vehicles used in waste crime.

On Monday, 19 January, the main pool, new gym and changing rooms of the Health Hydro will reopen following completion of the first phase of refurbishment work.

By the end of January, work will have begun on the demolition of the former

bus station with a design code for a high-quality regeneration scheme being developed for the wider Kimmerfields site with a view to securing a new developer. Part of the site is also earmarked for a new regional entertainment venue in the town centre, with work ongoing to explore funding options and the best way to make success over the long-term.

February will see council-run engagement events to get feedback from communities in Penhill and Walcot East on how they would like to spend up to £20 million each over the next decade, through the Government's Pride in Place programme.

The events will build on the Council's work to engage with and listen to residents through recent and future Let's talk Swindon events.

The year will also see the Council create new SEND schools places and the outcome on a planning application to create Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub is also expected.

MATTERS ARISING

LOG FOR ACCIDENTS

The Parish Council has been asking SBC to reduce the speed limit on Body Horse Hill, Hinton Parva, for some years now. We know there are frequent collisions and accidents and we are very concerned for the safety of road users, including children, dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

There is no central record of accidents unless personal injury is involved, so no evidence to support our request. We want to prove there is a problem that requires action.

If you are involved in or witness an accident on Body Horse Hill, please email details to clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org to create a log.

At the Parish Council's request, SBC marked the road as unsuitable for vehicles wider than 6ft, but a huge number of drivers disregard this signage. Please check the width of your vehicle and avoid Body Horse Hill if it is wider than 6ft or 1.8 m, or heavier than 7.5 tons (agricultural vehicles exempted).

COMMUNITY POLICING

The Parish Council welcomed a visit from Community Police Officer Ollie Jeffries, who outlined police activity in the area. We live in a very low crime area, but some known problem spots are regularly monitored by police patrols. There is a dedicated rural police team which responds to countryside crimes such as hare coursing, and residents are urged to call 999 if they spot illegal activities in progress and 101 for non-urgent matters. Information about your local police team and crime statistics can be found at www.wiltshire.police.uk/area/your-area/wiltshire/swindon-north-east-and-rural/ridgeway-villages/about-us/top-reported-crimes-in-this-area

FOLLOW ALL OUR LATEST NEWS ON FACEBOOK @bishopstoneandhintonparvaparcouncil

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)

Clrr.valbrodin@gmail.com

Mrs Lucille McGrath (Vice Chair)

Clrr.lucillemcgrath@gmail.com

Mr Ian Thomas

Clrr.ianthomas@gmail.com

Mr Julian Cooke

Clrr.juliancooke@gmail.com

Mrs Gill May

Clrr.gillmay@gmail.com

Mr Steve Bell

Clrr.sbell@gmail.com

Mrs Karen Walker

Clrr.karenwalker@gmail.com

Dr Karen MacGregor

Clrr.karenmacgregor@gmail.com

Mr Dai Wilson

Clrr.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.

2nd Feb **Bishopstone**

2nd March **Hinton Parva**

13th April **Bishopstone**

11th May **Bishopstone**

Useful Information

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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 Manktelow (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/25/1603 Erection of proposed first floor rear extension and replacement front pitched roof dormers. Work to existing trees in rear garden at Down Hill, Oxon Place, Bishopstone.

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

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

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

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

GRANTED

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 and erection of garden shed at 6 Whatleys Orchard, Bishopstone.

S/HOU/25/1442 Proposed stable for the keeping of horses & adjacent workshop at No. 2 Mount Pleasant Farm Cottages, Horpit.

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

REFUSED

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

VIEW THE PARISH WEBSITE AT WWW.BISHOPSTONEANDHINTONPARVA.ORG

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VILLAGE HALL news



Bishopstone



Hinton Parva

BISHOPSTONE

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Hocker Bench

A Wonderful Way to Welcome the New Year

Our New Year's Eve celebration was a fantastic way to round off the year and welcome in the next, and it was heart-warming to see so many villagers coming together to enjoy the evening.

A huge thank to those who helped me make it possible - in particular Emma Walker and Michelle Bishop, whose time, effort and enthusiasm over the last few months, helped make the night such a success. We were also incredibly lucky to have Alex Hirst as our DJ; the music kept the atmosphere lively and ensured there was something for everyone to enjoy throughout the evening.

Food was another real highlight. Richard Walker and Michelle Bishop treated us all to some truly wonderful curries, which went down extremely well and were very much appreciated by everyone who tucked in. Meanwhile, Millie Pocock and Francesca Walker did a brilliant job manning the door and making sure everyone received their all-important 'star' stamp on arrival.

Before the main event, many people also enjoyed stopping by The Royal Oak, where some fantastic cocktails were being prepared by Helen Browning and Rose as part of the pre-party – a lovely way to start the celebrations and support our local pub.

Most of all, I would just like to thank everyone who came along and supported the event. Seeing the hall filled with familiar faces and plenty of excitement, joy and laughter really showed what a strong and welcoming community we have. It's the mix of families, children and adults that creates our community and makes our village as special as it is.

It was a really great night, full of fun, good food, music and togetherness. Thank you again to everyone who played a part, big or small, in making it such an enjoyable way to see in the New Year.

Happy new year, Bishopstone - may it be one filled with happiness and good health!

Sally Pocock

Village Hall Chair: Richard Walker
01793 791 913 | richard@eddingtons.co.uk



HINTON PARVA

Happy New Year!

Many thanks to all who attended our Village Sing-Song on Christmas Eve or who donated goodies for the participants to share. The event made a very respectable £105 for the local Wiltshire Treehouse charity (Registered Charity No 1159719). Special thanks to Hazel and Peter for accompanying and leading the singing!

A reminder that our annual Village Supper is taking place on Saturday 7th February at 7pm. This is our Hall's main fundraiser of the year so we would love to see a full house! All are very welcome - residents from other towns and villages as well as locals, friends and family. And for a mere £15 you will receive a splendiferous home-cooked, 2 course (or more) meal, with entertainment and a raffle. We'd welcome offers of help, donations of puddings and any suitable raffle prizes.

Please contact Ella at ellakusta01@gmail.com or on 07916 599 772 for bookings or for further information. We hope to see you there!

Karen Walker on behalf of Hinton Parva Village Hall Committee



VILLAGE HALL HIRE

Both Bishopstone & Hinton Parva Village Halls have availability if you would like to hire either of them.

BISHOPSTONE INFO/BOOKINGS:

Michelle Bishop: 07769 943 956
Email: miclawre@cisco.com
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HINTON PARVA INFO/BOOKINGS:

Ella: 07916 599 772
Email: ellakusta01@gmail.com
Hourly rate: £10 residents, £12.50 non-residents

HINTON PARVA VILLAGE HALL

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The Royal Woke Diary



It's sometimes hard to believe that millions of us can keep leading relatively normal and comfortable lives, while events in Ukraine, Gaza, Venezuela, Minnesota, and the appalling messes in certain African states continue to unfold, always, currently it seems, without successful or agreeable conclusions in sight. This earth of ours could be such a great place for everyone, especially if the bin men came on the right day, and the potholes in the roads were filled in properly...oh dear, I'm sounding a bit like a pious vicar, but fortunately we don't have one of those round here (not a pious one anyway).

I'm not the only one fascinated and appalled, at the same time, by events all around us, and as we showed when the UK Defence attaché to Ukraine spoke here at the end of 2025, there's massive local interest in hearing some inside info, and explanations and reasoning for what's happening, the sort of stuff you don't get from old fashioned newspapers and especially new fangled social media. Although I do recommend The Economist for serious insight. So we're redoubling our efforts to bring people here who can throw more light on why the world outside us is such a mess, so keep your eyes on our calendar. If you know or come across someone that might fit the bill, please tell me. We will try to tempt them to talk here, and listen, and answer questions. I have a couple of targets in mind for this year, and we'll let you know if anything comes of it. There's a lot going on.

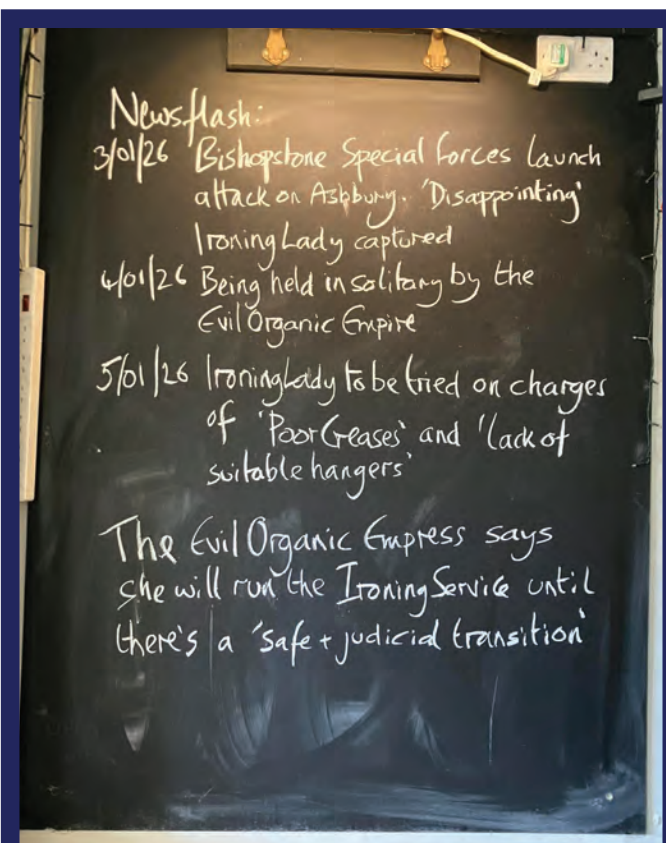
And we will maintain our interest in sport, notably cricket and rugby. Mike Gatting might be amused when he remembers that he told us the Ashes would be 3-2, one way or the other. It never looked like that, from day 2 of the whole series. Shall we ask him to come back? He might have some withering thoughts on the way it all went.

At a more humdrum level, the day to day stuff, the pub continues to be the warmest place in the village, we think—in terms of the open fire, and the welcome, at any time of day, for anyone. We continue to enjoy dogs, wet clothes,

dirty boots, most children, and customers asking for stuff that we don't normally offer. I've always thought that that best answer in any hospitality business is 'yes', even if when you reply that way you then have to go and work out how to achieve it.

We hope you have an enjoyable and healthy 2026

Tim and crew



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10am: Register and Coffee

10.30am: Choral Session 1

12.30pm: Lunch

1.15pm: Choral Session 2

2.45pm: Comfort Break

3.00pm: Choral Session 3

4.00pm: Tea and Cake

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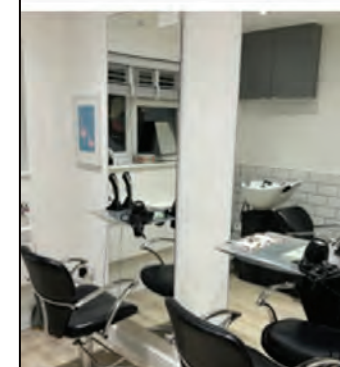
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DISTRIBUTION:

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.

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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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January 2026

2026		Time	Event	Place	Contact
	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
Sun	18.01.26	5pm-8pm	Gurt Wings: Mobile Food Van	Great Moorleaze Farm, The Marsh, Wanborough SN4 0SW	info@gurtwings.co.uk facebook.com/gurtwings
Sun	25.01.25	11am - 3pm	Wedding Showcase	Lydiard Park Hotel	lydiardpark.org.uk
	27.01.26		Wine Tasting (pg. 18)	The Royal Oak	01793 790 481
	29.01.26 - 01.02.26		Swinterfest: 4 day music festival	Various Venues	See: swinterfest.org.uk
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
Fri	13.02.26	5pm-8pm	Food for Thought , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW	grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
	11.03.26	7pm	Gardening Club: Paul Green (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall	Marion Peck 01793 791001
Sun	27.09.26		Swindon Half Marathon		swindonhalf.co.uk
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: Mark Jordan Nell Hill, Bishopstone

Church Services - pg 10 Parish Council Meetings - pg 13

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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'LETTERS TO THE EDITOR'
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