



# VILLAGENEWS

MARCH 2026



## HOT CROSS BUNS, HOT CROSS BUNS...

As the days grow longer at last, and the first real warmth of spring returns to the fields and gardens around our village, Easter is now just around the corner. This year, it falls on the first weekend of April but we're already heavy with various chocolate eggs and flavours of hot cross buns that all the local shops seem to have had on display since Christmas.

After the rainy months of winter, our back page diary has filled up nicely for the coming months. There is something special about this time of year. The hedgerows are beginning to show fresh green shoots, daffodils brighten our lanes, looking especially pretty going into Bourton at the moment. The birdsong is filling the morning air and Easter seems to arrive just as the countryside wakes up again, making it a favourite time of year for most of us.

For many in the villages, Easter carries deep Christian meaning. It is the most important festival in the church calendar, celebrating the story of resurrection and the promise of hope after hardship. Our local churches will once again hold their traditional Easter services, welcoming everyone who wishes to gather, reflect, and celebrate together; and are including a nice Good Friday

afternoon walk, from St Mary's (see pg.10)

But Easter is also a time that brings the whole community together in simpler ways. Children look forward to Easter eggs and hunts in gardens and village events. Tim and Helen, of Royal Oak fame, are hiding lots of eggs around their farm again if you fancy an Easter Sunday egg hunt (see pg.18).

Families will be sharing meals, friends calling in on neighbours, and the long weekend gives many of us a chance to slow down and spend time with the people who matter most. All these small traditions help keep our community life strong. Whether it's a walk through the countryside, helping with a church event, or simply exchanging a "Happy Easter" at the local shop, the season reminds us how fortunate we are to live in lovely, friendly villages, where neighbours still know and chat to one another.

From all of us involved in putting together the village news, we wish everyone in the village a peaceful, joyful, and very Happy Easter.



# The State of Our Roads



We know that the condition of local roads is an important concern for residents across Swindon. Our annual resident survey repeatedly highlights a desire for the council to prioritise road repairs and maintenance.

January was officially the wettest on record for the South West, and the ongoing rain is taking a toll on roads across the country, including here in Swindon. Potholes tend to form more often in winter, especially when heavy rainfall mixes with cold temperatures. Water seeps into tiny cracks, weakens the layers underneath and, with traffic passing over it, the surface eventually collapses. The busier the road, the quicker this can happen.

Since the start of 2026, we have received more than 1,500 reports of road damage from members of the public, and our teams have already repaired more than 2,300 potholes across the Borough. Because of the number of potholes appearing in such a short time, we are prioritising quick, safe repairs to keep the network moving. Some locations will benefit from more extensive patching later in the year once conditions improve.

We want to be clear and open about our approach, including the challenges and financial constraints we face. Limited resources mean that in 2025/26 we will spend more than £5m on highways and pathways.

This includes £1.5m for planned maintenance and surface dressing on major carriageways and £1.25m for planned

maintenance on minor roads. Additional funding supports routine maintenance such as pothole repairs, with around £170,000 allocated to reactive repairs, as well as patching work, road markings and traffic light maintenance.

Road repairs can include full resurfacing (where contractors remove the existing surface and lay new tarmac to extend the life of the road), individual pothole repairs, patching larger sections that do not require a full resurface, and retexturing to restore grip to the road surface.

As we do not maintain the A419 or M4, any damage on these roads should be reported to National Highways.

Thank you for your continued patience while our teams work to keep Swindon's roads safe and usable.

If you spot an issue, please report it using the **QR code above**, or visit: [www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20040/road\\_safety\\_maintenance\\_and\\_repairs/339](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20040/road_safety_maintenance_and_repairs/339) so we can get it on the list.



## Bishopstone Stores

March seems to be the month of newness. New blossom on the trees, new flowers in the borders, new calves born on the farm, a new view from my window (have you seen it yet??) and lots of lovely new things in the shop!

As promised, we are starting to see some fantastic products arriving on our shelves. The first of these is 'Treebitz'.

A lovely, family run company from the outskirts of Marlborough. Originally a tree surgery business, they saw an opportunity to create some amazing homeware pieces from the excess wood that would have otherwise been burnt or discarded. Bits that have been pruned off to preserve the life of the tree or older trees that have become windblown are now stunning chopping boards or bowls. We love that not only are they making use of all that they can, they have also planted over double the number trees that they have cut down. This is a sure winner for everyone.

I'd also like to introduce you to Mar Moo. Mar Moo is beautiful, sustainable jewellery, hand crafted on the Isle of Wight. They use fabulous materials such as pineapple leather (made from waste pineapple leaves), birch wood and recycled acrylic to create beautiful, colourful pieces that would be a great addition to any wardrobe or make a perfect gift. All the packaging is fully recyclable and every item has been designed and created by husband and wife team, Amanda and Graham.

These new items, alongside favourite recycled leather bags, garden ornaments made from recycled wire, blankets made from plastic bottles and a whole host more, mean our gifting corner is brimming with beauty.

Don't forget, we also sell chocolate....and gin....and fresh organic meat....and doughnuts on a Friday.

Hope to see you soon  
Lynne x

@helenbrowningsbishopstonestores @bishopstone\_stores

### Opening Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,  
Friday & Saturday: **9am - 6pm**

Wednesday: **9am - 1pm**

Sunday: **9am - 3pm**



# RECYCLING MATTERS

by Karen Walker

I feel I've had a poor customer service week – ghosted by a tradesman, a salesman failing to deliver what and when they say they would and a waitress who delivered water glasses to a table with her fingers inside the vessels in a supposedly premium restaurant! Minuscule, compared to the some of the terrifying problems in the world, but annoying or astounding, just the same. Particularly in an environment when companies are constantly asking 'How did we do?' and hotels and restaurants decide to add a gratuity 'as standard', I'd expect service to be just, well, good – or at least what I've paid for - and with a smile! Sometimes I feel like I'm expected to give a round of applause for people just doing the job they are paid to do!

Ironically, I routinely seem to get excellent service from those who aren't paid to do a job, but are actually volunteers. The staff at the Arts Centre and Wyvern Theatre in Swindon is a great example. They have teams of volunteers who usher the shows and support the paid front of house staff and I suspect without them, the venues just wouldn't be viable. (They will be recruiting again towards the end of the year should you be interested....) All the team that I've encountered have been knowledgeable, welcoming and happy to help.

Another local example of volunteering excellence in action is The Hub at Shrivenham. As I reported last month, The Hub is planned to open in its newly refurbished premises by the end of March, with The Refillery closing the week before to facilitate the move. Sadly The Refillery was losing around £1,000/month, which a lottery grant was covering for the short-term, but just wasn't viable long-term, particularly as The Hub will have increased costs in its refurbished building. The Hub will

not be selling the food items (other than the Pick & Mix sweets!) that were available in The Refillery due to the costs associated with wastage, but the cleaning and personal care items will still be available. The monthly Repair Café will continue to run in the Shrivenham Methodist Church with tea, coffee and cakes available whilst you wait.

Volunteering is a virtuous circle. Although statistics show that the majority of people who volunteer do so to improve things, help people or because a particular cause is important to them, the NHS has shown there are proven health benefit 'rewards' for volunteering – increased happiness and life satisfaction as well as improvements to your overall mental wellbeing. So it feels a bit chicken and egg – do happy people volunteer or are volunteers happier people? It's worth exploring surely, with plenty of volunteering opportunities on our doorstep. You can make a difference – and it can make a positive difference to you!

Finally, have you seen the information that storing bread in your freezer (and thus potentially reducing waste), can significantly impact your blood sugar management, gut health and digestion as the freezing process increases the amount of resistant starch? Resistant starch is also thought to impact satiety by increasing natural GLP-1 production, similar to the 'fat jabs' that we read about. Toasting the bread after freezing increases the amount of resistant starch still further. And the cooking and cooling hack works on other carbohydrates too, like rice, pasta and potatoes. Storing left-overs appropriately or thinking about how you store your carbs might bring you health gains as well as reducing your waste/waist!

## 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](mailto:clerk1@Bishopstone.Swindon.sch.uk) or the school office on 01793 790521

# HAPPY GARDENS

by Jane Pearson

Image credit: avery-thomas-gfk4ceYx-0c-unsplash



## Monthly Musings

Spring at last! It's great to be outside gardening again but have you ever weeded a border or planted new shrubs that are still young and small and noticed bare patches that weeds love? This has happened to me lately, and I have decided to sow hardy annual seeds as a quick fix. They're cost effective, need no fuss and provide lovely shots of colour and interest through the summer, without disturbing long term planting, they also attract pollinators and, thankfully, they help to crowd out the weeds.

I know my strengths and my weaknesses, and transplanting seedlings that first need to be grown in warmth and then moved is definitely something I prefer to avoid! This is where hardy annual flowering seeds come to the rescue, unlike their cosseted cousins (the half-hardy annuals that need extra care and warmth), these brave little plants will germinate and happily grow in temperatures from 8 degrees Celsius upwards.

March is a great month to sow hardy annuals and it's super easy, just choose a sunny spot, weed and lightly rake the soil, give it a gentle watering and scatter the seeds thinly and evenly and nature will do the rest. If (like me) you're likely to forget where you've sown, and you have a dry empty bottle and some sand or horticultural grit to hand, you might try marking out areas of the prepared soil to sow your seeds on. This tip really helps, because it's a visual reminder of where you have sown and you can keep an eye out for any encroaching weeds. After the seedlings have emerged, simply pull out the weakest (they don't usually like being transplanted) and let the others grow undisturbed into beautiful and very colourful cost-effective flowers.

### Plant Spotlight:

Here's a few Hardy Annuals to try:

Plant images credit: Shot gardening membership.



*Calendula officinalis* (Common marigold)  
Edible blooms! Deadhead regularly, loves well drained soil.



*Centaurea cyanus* Frosty Series (Cornflower Frosty Series)  
Perennial cornflowers are best in full sun.



*Centaurea major* 'Purpureascent' (Honeywort 'Purpureascent')  
Loved by bees and butterflies. Flowers May - August.



*Limnanthes douglasii* (Meadow fiam)  
"Poached egg" plant, loved by hoverflies. Cut back after flowering for repeat blooms.



*Nigella damascena* 'Miss Jekyll' (Love-in-a-mist 'Miss Jekyll')  
Flowers August - September. Gorgeous seed heads.



*Papaver rhoeas* (Common poppy)  
Flowers August - September. May self sow around your garden.

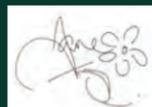
### The Potting Shed: Feb-March

- Plant summer bulbs: Crocosmia, Dahlia, Freesia, Lillies, Zantedeschia, Gladioli and Eucomis etc. can all be planted directly into the soil once it has warmed up, usually the start of April, or give them a head start and plant in pots of compost in a greenhouse or indoors.
- Feed Roses and follow with a generous mulch of well-rotted compost or manure, but give the rose stems some breathing room because manure can scorch in direct contact with the plant.
- Resume mowing if you haven't yet succumbed! Keep the blades on their highest setting for the first handful of mows.
- Weed, mulch and smile

Happy Gardening!



Image credit: J Pearson



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[www.janepearsondesign.com/hints&tips](http://www.janepearsondesign.com/hints&tips)

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

Contact: Marion Peck: 01793 791 001



### Well what a start to the season!



Our Chairman, Keith, warmly welcomed everybody, in particular all those new faces from around the local villages as well as our existing members.

Keith also brought our attention to the proposed club outing to Hidcote Gardens on June 18th. There will be a mini bus for the trip so if you are interested please contact the club secretary via our email: [info@ridgewaygardeners.co.uk](mailto:info@ridgewaygardeners.co.uk) for more information.



It was a record turnout to hear Rebecca Brain and her talk on how to establish and maintain a 'No Dig' Vegetable Garden

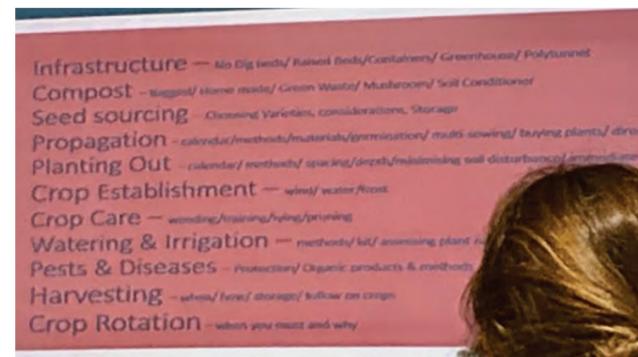
Rebecca, who lives in Bishopstone, is a keen organic based gardener specialising in propagation of plants which she then sells in her nursery. She is also very much involved with her husband in growing organic vegetables in their "No Dig" allotment.

So why 'No Dig' ? Apart from the advantage of not having to break your back digging there are numerous benefits for the soil and plants. The infrastructure of the soil is not disturbed so the natural ecosystem can thrive. It is Biologically active, the Mycelium Network remains intact, the worms multiply distributing the compost and organic matter as well as maintaining drainage and aerating the soil.



In a 'No Dig' garden it is possible to grow crops much closer together, increasing the yield, there are fewer weeds, better water retention and drainage as well as helping with carbon 'capture' rather than carbon 'release'. All good for the environment.

Rebecca explained the process of setting up a 'no dig' bed firstly involves digging to rid the patch of those perennial weeds, bindweed, dandelions, docks and nettles etc.. Then a layer of cardboard (from a large roll is best so there aren't any gaps for the weed to regrow through) a 5-10cm layer of organic compost and left for a season. Surround the beds with wood chip paths to deter the ingress of grass and you are all set.!



However for more in-depth guidance Rebecca recommended a book called No-Dig by Charles Dowding, a pioneer in no-dig gardening, which she refers to as her 'Bible', for anyone wanting to create such a plot.

She then went on to advise about growing vegetables, sowing the seeds, the best containers, the right conditions, timing and compost, planting out, crop care as well as watering regime and crop rotation where necessary to avoid diseases.

Rebecca had brought along numerous handouts with more information and guidance for us to peruse.



Thank you Rebecca for such an informative and enlightening evening.

Don't forget the ANNUAL PLANT SALE coming up in May, (see Diary Dates). All contributions are welcome so when you are out and about in your gardens as the weather improves, and find any seedling or plants to be divided, pot them up, label them and bring them along. They may be just what another gardener wants to fill a space, start a new border or fill their greenhouse or veg plot.

We look forward to seeing you all again at the next meeting in April (details below in 'Diary Dates') Everyone is welcome whether you are a first time gardener or an 'old hand' or simply looking for new ideas.

### Diary Dates

**Wednesday April 8th : Hannah Mycroft : Bishopstone Village Hall : 7.00pm**

**"Pots for Hot Spots and Shady Characters"**

Harriet Rycroft spent 14 years as head gardener at Whichford Pottery and is author of 'Pots' a comprehensive handbook covering everything you need to know about growing plants in pots all year round. Harriet will be delivering an informative talk accompanied with a practical demonstration. Copies of her book will be available on the night at a discount price of £10 cash.

**Saturday 9th May - ANNUAL PLANT SALE : 10.00 to 11.30 : Bishopstone Village Hall**

**Wednesday 13th May : Jane Pearson : Bishopstone Village Hall : 7.00pm**

**"A New bed from Scratch"**

Jane, a qualified horticulturist and garden designer, will share her extensive experience in creating beautiful borders from scratch. This session promises practical, adaptable ideas you can confidently apply to your own space. Her book will be available on the night at a discount price of £10 cash.

# JOEY JODPHUR (JJ)

## FROM DEEP IN THE VALLEY OF THE RACEHORSE



To jump or not to jump - that was the question surrounding Constitution Hill as Cheltenham Festival fever drew ever closer. The Seven Barrows star had fallen in three of his last four starts, and the industry was divided as to whether or not the former Champion Hurdler should ever race over obstacles again. The level of media coverage and opinion was unprecedented - win at Cheltenham on 10th March and he'd have cemented himself in the pantheon of hurdling greats; fall or even worse, and Nicky Henderson may inadvertently have thrown the sport into never-seen-before turmoil such is the public affection for the horse. It's not often racing transcends the sporting back pages, but Constitution Hill does just that. The challenge was that the horse was clearly in very good form at home and his 'work' on the level continued to impress the 75-year-old handler, but his propensity to make catastrophic mistakes at his hurdles was alarming. Enter Southwell racecourse and its owner's CEO Martin Cruddace who laid on a novice flat race over 1m4f on their synthetic surface with a generous £40k prize pot where CH could test his flat racing credentials against a supposedly average field. However, we didn't bank on the race attracting quite so many entries and some quality ones at that, to the point that CH's own participation was only confirmed by random ballot 48 hours before the race. Adding further intrigue was a 4,000 strong crowd fuelled by Invades students, the brainchild of entrepreneur Dom Matcham whose exciting venture is designed to attract new and younger audiences to British racecourses.

What followed was simply one of the most incredible moments many in the sport have ever seen. Ridden by champion flat jockey Oisin Murphy, Lambourn's nine-year-old gelding moved stylishly through the race, and quickened off the final bend, clearing away from his rivals to win by double-digit lengths. The horse was so far ahead he could have stopped to tie his shoelaces on the run-in; he made some fairly decent flat horses look bang average, like they were running in treacle. Cue pandemonium in the winner's enclosure with the sleepy Nottinghamshire track witnessing scenes that were more akin to a March afternoon at the foot of Cleeve Hill. The race was supposed to highlight the horse's well-being and bring clarity to his Cheltenham participation, but the manner of his victory caught everyone by surprise and now pointed to a very credible career on the flat. As the media interest continued to grow, and the 'will he, won't he' saga reached fever pitch, all eyes were on one final schooling session in Lambourn where Nicky and devoted owner Michael Buckley finally decided to draw stumps on the horse's jumping career and embark on an exciting flat career, one which may begin at Newbury in April in the Group 3 John Porter Stakes over the same 1m4f trip. Whilst he's been racing over 2m over jumps, the horse is not short of speed and ground depending (he wouldn't want it too quick) there is a range of options for him, including the all-age Irish St Leger and even the Melbourne Cup! Ironically, the world's highest rated flat horse Calandagan also has two key organs missing (!), which precludes both him and CH from running in the world's greatest race the Prix de 'L'Arc de Triomphe at Longchamp in October. If we get a wet July, a King George VI clash between CH and Calandagan may even lie in wait! Who'd have thunk it.

I will always look back on his Champion Hurdle victory in 2023 as an 'I was there moment', like Usain Bolt winning the London 100m, Rory's Masters or Andy Murray winning Wimbledon in 2013; and who can forget him trouncing stablemate Jonbon in the previous year's Supreme by 20 lengths. There will always be a palpable sense of 'what if' or unfulfilled destiny - he was the chosen one, supposed to eclipse Istabraç's record of three Champion wins - but the right decision has been made to campaign him on the flat, as the repercussions of a fall were unthinkable for the sport.

## Ask Fanny

Back by popular demand.  
Apparently everyone loves Fanny.



Dear Fanny  
I'm rather hoping you can assist. It's just so hard to get hold of illegal stimulants these days in this village. Ever since those rather dull policemen popped round to that house by the pond 18 months ago, supplies of the you know 'interesting stuff' have been hard to come by. We're pretty desperate over here in the Wild West End. To add to the melancholy, our son is currently unemployed (but very employable...) and we just need stuff to help him fill his days. Thanks in anticipation.  
Mrs Newton-le-Willows, Bishopstone

*Dear Mrs Newton-le-Willows  
Indeed, such a heartfelt plea! As Bill Nighy said in Love Actually, don't buy drugs! Become a pop star and they give them to you!  
I cannot help on this occasion, although I am flattered that you, and probably 50 others over the past 18 months, have just assumed that I would know about alternative supply lines. Our golden (and very hazy) days were a couple of decades ago, at least, and the less said the better. But there was some fun to be had, and most of us are still standing.  
I am sorry I can be of no service, at least for now.  
Aunt Fanny*

Dear Fanny  
As the majority of motorist totally ignore the 20MPH signs in our village, they do provide some decoration, as do the modern art signs on the road outside the village school. However I believe traffic calming was voted against by the village, so the outcome was only to be expected.  
F1 Bishy

*Dear F1 Bishy  
I think you are being unduly cynical in your little pop at the 20mph signs and limits within these villages. If you'll allow me to be sensible for a moment, I hold to the view that if the speed limit/signage was 40mph, lots of people would drive at 45; if the limit was 30 they'd drive at 35; and so if it says 20 as a max, some of us will keep to 25. (If, like me and one or two others, you're on the prowl early in the morning, you'll still find people careering through at 60, regardless of any signs or not, anyway.) It's all relative, and on the whole I think the actual average speed through the village is now lower than it was.  
I have heard that the village busybody has been researching the cost of all this signage, and he's been telling people it's as high as £17k. I can hear the grinding of his axe and the warping of his mind as I write this.  
F Hole*

Write to Fanny: BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com

# MARCH HARD SUDOKU

LAST MONTH'S WINNER IS **Julie B**  
Grab your voucher from Lynne at the shop!

This month's was pulled from the builders hat by David who is building the construction opposite the shop! Well done **Julie B** for winning this month with your codeword entry!

Other this month entries were:  
**Codeword:** G & G Phillpotts, Susy, Paula Bartlett, Keith Franklin

**Sudoku:** G & G Phillpotts, Susy, Julie B, Yuet Dickinson, Geraldine Pass, John Iles, Keith Franklin

**ENTRY DEADLINE: last day of the month. Thank you.**

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

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

## 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](mailto:shop@helenbrowningsorganic.co.uk)

# MARCH 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

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

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

Winning Sudoku from last month



# DICKIE'S diary

Richard Green



Reading a later 1953 printing of Tom Brown's School Days, first published 1897, I noticed this edition has a foreword by the first Baron, Geoffrey Elton, himself an Old Rugbeian. His son Rodney was a Government minister for many years and from his country cottage at Compton Beauchamp was a much respected part of our church community both at Compton and Ashbury. The book by Thomas Hughes, late of Kingston Lisle whose father was vicar of Uffington dealt with life at Rugby under the reforming head, Thomas Arnold (1795-1842). The book illuminates life at Rugby in the 1840's featuring the fictitious young Tom Brown's time there dealing with the birth of the game of rugby, bullying by Flashman and underlining the school's ethos in preparing young gentlemen for life ready to display a strong moral code, even it involved the need for personal risk, which he called "a muscular Christianity". The old Brown squires of Uffington "go on believing and fighting into green old age" and the Tom Brown's museum in Uffington recalls memories of this era.

An early chapter describes the Vale of this time and White Horse Hill's dominance, overseeing eleven counties in exceptional light. "It is a land of rich pastures, bounded by ox-fences and covered with fine hedgerow timber, with here and there a nice little gorse or spinney. There is little ploughland and but few woods. The villages are straggling, queer, old-fashioned places, the houses being dropped down without regularity. They are built of good grey stone and thatched, though I see within the last year or two the red brick cottages are multiplying".

Now the elms are gone, such a feature, until the early 1970's. Besides aesthetics, their timber was important for coffins, floor planks and chair seats. Ministry grants at up to 60% saw an explosion of underdrainage schemes with tile pipes and later plastic piping installed from the 1960's to turn grasslands into wheatlands. With this, the cows have gone, but the challenge remains over how to keep the vale's heavy soils fertile without a grass break. Even now more dairy herds are going in the vale, driven by recent heavy milk price cuts, to exacerbate the challenge of what rotation is best for these heavy vale soils. Eastbrook Farm at Bishopstone bucks this trend with their two low cost organic dairies.

There are also two ticking time bombs facing farmers in the vale: how to maintain these drainage systems installed 40-70 years back, and secondly dealing with asbestos roofing on grant aided barns of the same era. The asbestos is becoming more brittle with age. Years ago, high pheasants that were shot on shooting days behind Rectory Farm used to bounce off barns without damage. Later they cracked the asbestos. Now, we no longer allow birds to be driven there.

# Photo of the month

SEND US YOUR SNAPS

Email: BishopstoneEditor@gmail.com



Thank you for this month's lovely winning photo, 'Fabulous Fungi' from **Christine Thomas** (left). Our runners-up this month are, **Francesca Walker** (bottom left) and **Dennis Cooper** (bottom right)

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

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.

# Inside the Peach Pip

by Anna Bareham

*The Song from Somewhere Else*, by A. F. Harrold

'The music washed around her feet, whispered in her heart, quieted the continual grumbling of her stomach. It felt like the opposite of the shadows, sort of.'

I picked up this book purely based on Levi Pinfold's ethereal cover art, framing muted watercolour with a metallic green foreground, as well as his black and white pencil drawings throughout, seeming soft and mysterious. The depth of Pinfold's illustrations set it apart from the aesthetic of many other children's books, and I was intrigued.

The narrative follows Frank, a young girl whose experience with bullies leads her to make an unlikely friendship with social outcast Nick. Finding a strange sense of calm upon entering his home, and hearing a music that 'pour[s] into her like fresh orange juice',

unlike anything she has heard before, she uncovers Nick's otherworldly secret. A. F. Harrold uses the concept of liminal spaces between worlds to marry the ordinary with the extraordinary, the light with the shade. Frank's battle is to walk in the light - to find the music.

If you are over the age of 9 (most of you, I would think) and looking for your next book, this one is beautiful and profound.

Flinging love,  
Anna



# CHURCH NEWS



## A Letter From The Vicar

The Parish of the Wellspring Villages has the joyful event this month of a Confirmation Service at St. Andrew's, Wanborough, at 4pm on Sunday 22nd March conducted by the Bishop of Swindon. All are welcome to join us for this tremendous service of personal commitment and renewal.

One of the very attractive aspects of Christianity is that God's love can be and is received into each human heart personally. We are not born into the Christian faith because of our national or family heritage. Each one of us needs to personally respond to Christ's invitation to believe and trust in him, and thus to receive His personal presence into our heart and life. God respects our individuality and freedom of will and doesn't simply barge his way in against our will. God loves us and gave himself for us but we do need to respond to that love, to open the door of our hearts and invite him to come in. For Christian people faith is a personal walk with God each day. Isaiah says God calls us by name "I have called you by name, you are mine" and Jesus talks about the hairs of our head being numbered, the love sick Father running to welcome his returning prodigal son and the shepherd leaving the 99 sheep alone on the hillside while he goes off looking for the one lost sheep that had gone astray. And of course, when he finds it, great is His rejoicing, as it is in heaven, says Jesus, over each returning soul. Hence a Confirmation Service is a very personal moment with God for each candidate. In it we can make our individual response of faith to Jesus' invitation to come to him to have life in all its fullness. If we were baptised as an infant others made that decision for us but in Confirmation, we make it our own personal response.

It is not too late to be Confirmed at the end of the month if that is something you would like to consider for yourself? Do contact me and we can explore this further. Or do just come along to the service and see what it is all about.

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

### Prayer

O God,  
You created me to enjoy a relationship with you. At the beginning of Lent, I admit that I'm sinful, and often fall away.  
You're the God of holiness, love, and justice. In your mercy, you draw near to me. Thank you that you planned a way that I might return to you through Jesus.  
Draw me into a deeper understanding of your plan for salvation this Lenten Season, so that I would grow my trust in you. Amen.

Our churches are: All Saints': Liddington SN4 0HB,  
St. Mary's: Bishopstone SN6 8PY,  
St. Andrews: Wanborough SN4 0BZ,  
and St. Swithun's: Hinton Parva SN4 0DW.



Church Services. Full details on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

Photo: Kate Wright, St Swithun's, Hinton Parva

### The Parish of the Wellspring Villages

The main morning Church Services always start at 10.30am.

Day	2026	Time	Venue
Sun	15.03	10.30am	HC, St Andrews
Sun	22.02	4pm	Confirmation Service, St Andrews
Sun	29.03	10.30am	HC, St Swithun's
Thurs	02.04	7pm	Maundy Thurs Seder, St Andrews
Fri	03.04	2-3pm	Good Friday Walk, St Mary's
Sun	05.04	10.30am	Easter Day Family HC, All Saints'
Sun	12.04	10.30am	HC, St Mary's
Sun	19.04	10.30am	HC, St Andrews
Sun	26.04	8.30am	BCP (1662) HC, All Saints'
Sun	26.04	10.30am	Morning Worship St Swithun's

### St Mary's Church Cleaning Rota 2026

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**

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



Photo: Andrea W. St Mary's, Bishopstone

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SATURDAY 8 - 3PM

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33 HIGH STREET, SHRIVENHAM T: 783999

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[www.holidaycottages.co.uk/cottage/64657-bryn-llinos](http://www.holidaycottages.co.uk/cottage/64657-bryn-llinos)

## Watchfield Opticians

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**9am - 5:30pm Monday to Friday**  
**9am - 1pm on Saturday**

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# The Parish Times

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

March 2026

## DO YOU WANT TO BE A COUNCILLOR?

**Local Elections will be held throughout Swindon Borough on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

There are nine seats on Bishopstone Parish Council, and all are up for election this year.

There is a formal electoral process to be followed – full details and all necessary forms can be obtained from the Parish Clerk, Jaine Blackman, by emailing [clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org](mailto:clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org)

Parish Councillors serve for a term of four years, representing residents of Bishopstone, Hinton Parva and Russley Park and working in the best interests of our whole community.

Nominations commence Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and forms must be submitted to the Electoral team at Swindon Borough Council by 4pm on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Do you want to vote in the May local elections?**

You must be on the electoral roll. Deadline for registration to vote is Midnight on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April and postal vote applications are accepted until 5pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April.

Remember you now need to show photo ID to vote.

If you don't have appropriate photo ID you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. More information can be found on Swindon Borough Council's website: [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20073/elections\\_and\\_voting/](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20073/elections_and_voting/)

### THANKS TO THE LITTER PICKERS!





**Many thanks to the doughty volunteers who turned out on a grey and drizzly Sunday morning to help clear the mess thrown into our verges and hedgerows, largely from passing vehicles.**

**A huge amount of rubbish was collected in and around Bishopstone and Hinton Parva and we are grateful to SBC for picking it up for disposal so promptly the following day.**

### JOB VACANCY

**Bishopstone Parish Council seeks a new Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer as our current Clerk is retiring after six years' service to this community.**

The role is part-time, approximately 35 hours a month, and involves organising meetings, managing income and expenditure, keeping the accounts and organising the annual audit, and producing this monthly Parish Times section of the village newsletter. The Clerk supports Councillors in their work and is the main point of contact for residents, the Borough Council and our Ward Councillor.

For further information please contact [clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org](mailto:clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org) or the Chair, [cllr.valbrodin@gmail.com](mailto:cllr.valbrodin@gmail.com)

#### BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

**Ms Jaine Blackman (Clerk)**

Phone: 07913 819422

Email: [Clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org](mailto:Clerk@bishopstoneandhintonparva.org)

**Mrs Val Brodin (Chair)**

[Cllr.valbrodin@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.valbrodin@gmail.com)

**Mr Ian Thomas**

[Cllr.ianthomas@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.ianthomas@gmail.com)

**Mr Julian Cooke**

[Cllr.juliancooke@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.juliancooke@gmail.com)

**Mrs Gill May**

[Cllr.gillmay@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.gillmay@gmail.com)

**Mr Steve Bell**

[Cllr.sbell@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.sbell@gmail.com)

**Mrs Karen Walker**

[Cllr.karenwalker@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.karenwalker@gmail.com)

**Dr Karen MacGregor**

[Cllr.karenmacgregor@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.karenmacgregor@gmail.com)

**Mr Dai Wilson**

[Cllr.daiwilson@gmail.com](mailto:Cllr.daiwilson@gmail.com)

**The Parish Council's policies and documents can be viewed at [bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/](http://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/)**

#### PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2025 /26

Meetings begin at 7.30pm. Late changes are shown at [bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parish\\_council/](http://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parish_council/) and on the notice boards. Members of the press and public are welcome to attend.

13<sup>th</sup> April **Bishopstone**

11<sup>th</sup> May **Bishopstone** to include parish meeting which starts at 7pm

### 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](http://swindon.gov.uk/my_account)  
**Wiltshire Police non-emergency number (less urgent than 999):** 101  
**Borough Councillor Gary Sumner -** [GSumner2@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:GSumner2@swindon.gov.uk)

#### PARISH COUNCILLORS' KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Finance** TBC

**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** Dai Wilson

**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](http://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/26/0121** Change of use of agricultural building to form a single dwelling (Class C3) and associated works at Barn Adjoining Church Farm, Little Hinton Lane, Hinton Parva.

**S/HOU/26/0227** Erection of single storey and two storey side and rear extensions to dwelling. Formation of single storey glazed link to existing detached store to rear of dwelling. Erection of estate fencing to front boundary within site, gates and piers. Replacement terrace to side of dwelling. Conversion of outbuilding to ancillary annexe accommodation at Prebendal Farmhouse, Icknield Way, Bishopstone.

**S/HOU/26/0252** Replacement of conservatory with side extension; replacement roof tiles; replacement of existing porch with side extension; replacement cladding; alterations to windows & doors; and replacement of dormers at Pinford, The Forty, Bishopstone.

**GRANTED S/HOU/25/1603** Erection of proposed first floor rear extension and replacement front pitched roof dormers. Partial demolition of the existing roof to facilitate the extension and dormers. Work to existing trees in rear garden as outlined in the tree works plan at Down Hill, Oxon Place, Bishopstone.

**S/HOU/25/0046** Erection of retaining walls in the rear garden, the installation of balustrade safety fencing across the rear garden's middle terrace area, and engineering operations at The Rails, Bishopstone.

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

FOLLOW ALL OUR LATEST NEWS ON FACEBOOK [@bishopstoneandhintonparvaparcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/bishopstoneandhintonparvaparcouncil)

VIEW THE PARISH WEBSITE AT [WWW.BISHOPSTONEANDHINTONPARVA.ORG](http://WWW.BISHOPSTONEANDHINTONPARVA.ORG)

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# VILLAGE HALL news



Bishopstone

Hinton Parva

## BISHOPSTONE BVH Reg Charity 271165 Hocker Bench

### Roz Boot a short Eulogy from the Village Hall Committee

On behalf of the Bishopstone Village Hall Committee members of the Committee past and present I wanted to write a few words to celebrate the life of Roz. As a relative newcomer to the village, I have known Roz for around eleven years. I was soon introduced to Roz after my arrival. Roz was very clear when we first met that she had the true measure of new folk arriving in the village, those wearing "wellies with badges" held a particular disdain. I was sure on future meetings to leave my "Hunters" at home, but we soon hit it off, sharing stories of cobb and thatch cottages of which she was an expert having lived in Spring Cottage and Cheney Thatch, probably others before my arrival. Roz garnered strong support from Jenny and Carol to bring some new blood to the Hall Committee and Roz soon signed me up.

Roz was a staunch supporter of the Village Hall – one of the founding Committee members serving the local community for over 50 years. Roz will be remembered for unwavering attendance at all our fund-raising events. She was our "OC" – Officer Commanding, all matters catering – whether that was bacon rolls for 25 as part of a Saturday spring clean or a chilli Skittles night. Simply incredible and at scale. The attention to detail was what mattered to her "don't forget the croutons" I hear, and here's "more coulis for the meringues", "whipped cream anyone?"

I won't forget Roz's formidable presence at one of the Spring clean mornings – full flying suit and gold sparkly converse trainers – ready for action – bacon rolls, with the best quality bacon washed down with mugs of tea which was perfect sustenance for the volunteers.

Roz was certainly one of the early champions of "City Lights" Cinema Nights. Roz led a "recce" party to Ramsbury (under cover of darkness) to in order to check out the competition, we learned a lot from that visit – and Roz was determined to make us a success too, she was always first to volunteer to run the door, issue tickets and meet and greet guests.

Roz always was always on the front foot towards Christmas – her Cheney Thatch Christmas card will be missed, always featuring the roaring fire and a lifetime of baubles and twinkly lights. The fireside was often the backdrop to special Committee nights where Roz would invite us all around for a sumptuous buffet; pigs in blankets, devilled eggs, cheese and pineapple sticks and her legendary homemade boozy chocolate truffles supplied with a "do not eat and drive" warning. She'd even make up a bed upstairs for our young daughter so we could chat the night away. During Covid, dear Roz turned up at our steps with food parcels for the family!

On a personal note, I'll remember Roz most for her stories of military life, crewing on the Comet aircraft, her proud tales of close family achievement and anecdotes of friends and characters from the village. The preparations for visitors from around the world and for brass bands took up a lot

of her time but she always found the room for village fetes, more fundraising and shaking buckets, selling programs and raffle tickets. Despite the many tales, she would always judge people as she found them, made her own opinions and wouldn't be swayed to the contrary.

Roz thanks for everything you gave you will be missed by us all.

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

### We Are Survivors

(For those born Before 1940)

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, videos and the pill. We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens, before dish-washers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes ... and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can you be?). We thought 'fast food' was what you ate in Lent, a 'Big Mac' was an oversized raincoat and 'crumpet' we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating and 'sheltered accommodation' was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, artificial hearts, word processors, or young men wearing earrings. For us 'time sharing' meant togetherness, a 'chip' was a piece of wood or fried potato 'hardware' meant nuts and bolts and 'software' wasn't a word.

Before 1940 'Made in Japan' meant junk, the term 'making out' referred to how you did in your exams, 'stud' was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and 'going all the way' meant staying on a double-decker bus to the terminus. In our day, cigarette smoking was 'fashionable', 'grass' was mown, 'coke' was kept in the coalhouse, a 'joint' was a piece of meat you ate on Sundays and 'pot' was something you cooked in. 'Rock Music' was a fond mother's lullaby, 'Eldorado' was an ice-cream, a 'gay person' was the life and soul of the party, while 'aids' just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder there is a generation gap today ... BUT

By the grace of God ... we have survived!

**- A piece loved by Roz.**

## Village Hall Committee HINTON PARVA



A huge thank you to all who came along to our recent annual Village Supper which raised a magnificent £577 for the hall. 34 people were pleasantly stuffed after the delicious main courses, assorted desserts, cheese and biscuits and homemade chocolates. I think we should consider renaming it a 'Feast' next year as a 'Supper' hardly does it justice! Many thanks to all who made it happen, to those who donated the marvellous dishes and raffle prizes, particularly the Royal Oak who very kindly donated the star prize. Special thanks to Rod and Marion Peck who were respectively a brilliant MC and produced and ran the entertaining and very challenging quiz.



Look out for details of our 'Pop Up Pop In Café' which we hope to run for our next event.

If you have any ideas for future events or would like to be involved in any capacity to help our beautiful

village hall thrive, please get in touch at our email address

[hpvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:hpvillagehall@gmail.com).

**Karen Walker on behalf of Hinton Parva**



## 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**

**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](mailto:miclawre@cisco.com)  
Hourly rate: £11 residents, £15 non-residents

**HINTON PARVA INFO/BOOKINGS:**

Janet: 01793 791391  
Hourly rate: £10 residents, £12.50 non-residents

Beautiful But Impoverished Village Hall Seeks Kind-hearted Cleaner For a Low-commitment Relationship!

Would suit a professional cleaner.

Or could suit a community-minded volunteer(s) with an option to work with an enthusiastic committee member to share the fun!

(We're very flexible around time, but need to work around occasional bookings. Likely to be in the region of 2 hours/fortnight in total or proportioned, if shared.)

Talk to any Hinton Parva Village Hall committee member, email us at [HPvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:HPvillagehall@gmail.com) or phone **07866 837247** to find out more.



# The Royal Oak Diary



Well thank goodness President Trump seems to like the people who run our parish council, or heaven knows what he'd do to us all. Since people know (or think they know) our political leanings here at the worst pub in the village, we don't tend to get that many folk in here who could be classed as 'from the other side', so a straw poll as to whether people around here are supportive of the Trump doctrine is probably misleading—but I can say that whenever the subject of the current US administration is mentioned, you see wrinkled noses, sharp intakes of breath, dark looks, furled eyebrows. There is a huge amount of pessimism doing the rounds, regarding global affairs; so now's the time to have fun on your own doorstep, in your own parish, with your own neighbours! As soon as possible, ideally. I hope you're listening, over there in Hinton Parva.

So let's start with Helen's latest book, *The Boys' Team*, which she is launching (again) to a different audience - March 26, The White Horse Bookshop, Marlborough, 6.30pm, contact them via their website, Helen's talking, they're providing wine and nibbles, £10pp. It's a great shop, in this sea of electronic impersonal chat, for those of you that don't know it. It just smells right— books have that unmistakable air about them.

**Easter Egg Hunt on the farm—Easter Sunday, April 5, 10.30, £10 per car/family.** I hope that the weather allows us to invade Eastbrook Valley, and look for the 200 or so eggs that Helen and I will hide there. Please book—we'd love to know how many of you plan to attend. It usually takes an hour or so to exhaust everyone.

And the **3Bop sleazy/laid back cafe jazz on Good Friday, April 3**, and the extraordinary quiz nights on the first Monday of each month, next one April 6. People are now having to book for a quiz table!

Get your interesting cars and bikes etc out for **Drive it Day, April 26, fun and beer and coffee in the garden.**





Find us online



Books available now ...

- 📍 BISHOPSTONE STORES
- 📍 AMAZON UK
- 🌐 HELENBROWNINGSORGANIC.CO.UK

We have **two pigs available for sponsorship, for the May 31 racing party.** The other 8 have all sold.

Our pig walking plans are taking shape—an interesting present for someone you're not that keen on!

Bon Appetit  
TF and crew

## HELEN BROWNING'S ROYAL OAK



**FRIDAY 6 MARCH**  
Three Bop Jazz, 6-8pm  
6 Nations Ireland v Wales 8.10pm

**SATURDAY 7 MARCH**  
6 Nations, Scotland v Italy 2.10pm,  
Italy v England 4.40pm

**SUNDAY 8 MARCH**  
A simple one-course supper (£10pp),  
5-8pm, with a talk by Helen  
to introduce her latest book.  
A few places remaining. Booking essential.

**SATURDAY 14 MARCH**  
6 Nations, Ireland v Scotland 2.10pm,  
Wales v Italy 4.40pm  
France v England 8.10pm

**FRIDAY 3 APRIL**  
Three Bop Jazz, 6-8pm

**MONDAY 6 APRIL**  
Pub Quiz – please book! 7pm

**SUNDAY 26 APRIL**  
Drive it Day; Classic cars & bikes all day  
Free entry, prizes for best presented.

**FRIDAY 1 MAY**  
Three Bop Jazz, 6-8pm

**MONDAY 6 MAY**  
Pub Quiz – please book! 7pm

**SUNDAY 31 MAY**  
International Pig Racing  
Sponsorships up for grabs.  
Free entry. Food & drink all day.



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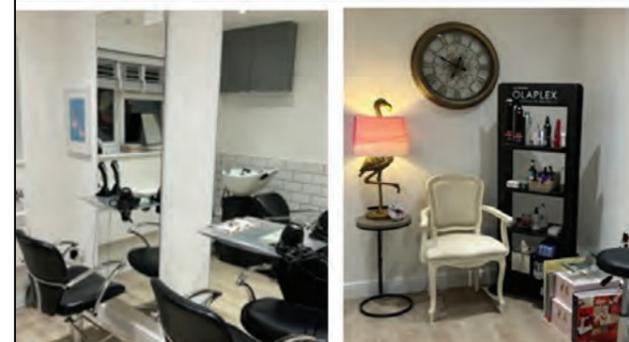
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ian@heritage-treecare.co.uk

**MOWERFIXER**  
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**WILSON CONSTRUCTION**  
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lee@wilsonconstruction.org.uk

### Hospitality & Accomodation

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

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## 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](mailto: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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# March 2026

2026	Time	Event	Place	Contact
06.02.25 - End March (pg. 18)		<b>6 Nations Rugby:</b> Televised in the pub	The Royal Oak	01793 790 481
Fri	13.03.26	5pm-8pm	<b>Food for Thought</b> , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Thurs	26.03.26	6.30pm	<b>The Boys' Team</b> Helen Browning Book Launch (pg. 18)	White Horse Book Shop, Marlborough whitehorsebooks.co.uk
Fri	03.04.26	<b>Good Friday - Bank Holiday</b>		
Fri	03.04.26		<b>3BOP- sleazy/laid back cafe jazz</b>	The Royal Oak 01793 790 481
Mon	06.04.26		<b>Quiz Night</b> (1st Monday each month)	The Royal Oak <b>Book a table:</b> 01793 790 481
03.04: 10.30am - 06.04: 4.30pm		<b>Easter Trail</b>	Didcot Railway Ctr	didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk
Sat	04.04.26	10am-12pm	<b>Easter Indoor/Outdoor Car Boot Sale</b>	Supermarine RFC SN3 4BZ 01793 824828
Sun	05.04.26	<b>Easter Sunday</b>		
Sun	05.04.26	10.30am	<b>Easter Egg Hunt on the Farm</b>	Eastbrook Farm 01793 790 481
Sun	05.04.26	11am-3pm	<b>Easter Trail</b>	Lydiard Park lydiardpark.org.uk
Mon	06.04.26	<b>Easter Monday - Bank Holiday</b>		
Wed	08.04.26	7pm	<b>Gardening Club: Hannah Mycroft</b> (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall Marion Peck 01793 791 001
Fri	10.04.26	5pm-8pm	<b>Food for Thought</b> , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Sun	26.04.26		<b>Drive It Day</b>	The Royal Oak 01793 790 481
Fri	08.05.26	5pm-8pm	<b>Food for Thought</b> , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Sat	09.05.26	10am - 11.30am	<b>Gardening Club: Annual Plant Sale</b> (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall Marion Peck 01793 791 001
Wed	13.05.26	7pm	<b>Gardening Club: Jane Pearson</b> (pg. 5)	Bishopstone Village Hall Marion Peck 01793 791 001
Sun	31.05.26		<b>Pig Racing</b>	The Royal Oak 01793 790 481
Fri	12.06.26	5pm-8pm	<b>Food for Thought</b> , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Fri	10.07.26	5pm-8pm	<b>Food for Thought</b> , Hinton Parva: Fish and Chip van (pg.19)	Charlbury Stables SN4 0DW grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com
Sat	12.09.26		<b>Village Fete: Save the Date!</b>	Winding Wood Field Bishopstone littlecot2010@hotmail.co.uk 07789 414147
Sun	27.09.26		<b>Swindon Half Marathon</b>	swindonhalf.co.uk
1st Monday of each month			<b>Pub Quiz</b>	The Royal Oak <b>Book a table:</b> 01793 790 481
Every 3rd Sat from 18.01.25		9am - 12pm	<b>Wanborough Farmers Market</b>	Wanborough Village Hall, SN4 0AD Lorna Naseem 07903 210 505
Every Tuesday		9.30am	<b>Fitness Classes.</b> All abilities	Bishy Village Hall lorna.sams@outlook.com
Every Thursday		10.30 - noon	<b>Coffee, Cake and Chat, Wanborough.</b> £5.00, all welcome	The Brewers Arms SN4 OAE If you need a lift, call Lorna: 07903 210 505
2nd Mon of month		7pm	<b>The Burj Fundraising Supper:</b> for <b>The Prospect Hospice</b> (charity number 280093)	The Burj, Foxhill WrightK@warnefordschool.org.uk
2nd Thurs of month		7pm Start 7.30pm	<b>WI:</b> Bishopstone & Hinton Parva WI	Either Village Hall Jan Chapple: janatwan@icloud.com

Photo: Mark Jordan (April '25)



**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.

Tell us your thoughts!  
**'LETTERS TO THE EDITOR'**  
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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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