

**APRIL 2026**

**BENTWORTH, LASHAM, AND SHALDEN PARISH MAGAZINE**

**St. Mary's Bentworth; St. Mary's Lasham;  
St. Peter and St. Paul Shalden**

Dear Friends,

I am writing this in early March when we are just emerging from the extremely soggy start to 2026 with its incessant rain across much of the country. Dare we hope that it remains dry for a while?

Signs of Spring are emerging: the birds are nesting; the daffodils, crocus and primroses are blooming. At times like these it's easier to feel hopeful. And yet we know the world news is anything but, especially with the renewed escalation of conflict in the Middle East and its global effects. It is very tempting to just turn off the news and live in blissful ignorance. Indeed, in centuries past whatever wars and insurrections were raging in other parts of the world, uninvolved people would have been just that - blissfully unaware. Although there were probably enough local difficulties to keep them worried and stressed.

Whilst it's not healthy to wallow too much in bad news, to not engage at all doesn't feel right either. Even seemingly far away problems can indirectly affect us eventually. Perhaps this means we have a responsibility towards each other.

It has been said that: "our calling as God's people in these difficult days is not to live in denial and despair but to be people of hope". This means more than just wishful thinking and optimism. As we Christians approach the Easter season, we find our hope is based on our faith and confidence in Christ Jesus. There are of course the doubters who think that Jesus' life was a failure because he died on a cross. I think they miss the point. Through Christ's death and resurrection, God has ultimately conquered sin, death and evil, plus all the things that would demean, enslave or destroy us.

Scripture tells us that our hope comes from the Lord and from living out our confidence in Jesus' story. Our faith in Christ's victory on the cross, demands that we don't turn off the news but find ourselves empowered to face up to the sorrows and injustice of this world.

We need to approach life's difficulties and tragedies with a message of hope. A hope in Christ that is not half-hearted, but one that abounds, because it knows that nothing and no one will ever defeat our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The good news is that we are not called to achieve this by ourselves. We offer and live out hope because God is here with us, beside us, enveloping us through his Holy Spirit, a constant source of strength and grace to sustain us.

So, as we come towards the end of our journey through Lent and approach this time of Easter, may it be a time of real hope and quiet confidence for us all. May we come to know and understand the real story of Christ, the Son of God.

May we learn that we can carry a hope that is strong and can be trusted and relied upon.

Let the apostle Paul have the last word in his letter to the first century church in Rome: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15, v13)

Happy Easter.

Yours in Christ

Revd Peter Owen-Jones



## THE VILLAGER

the editor

Please send copy for the **May** Magazine to the Editor or your Village Correspondent **by noon on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April.**

**HAPPY EASTER to all our readers**



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**A Thanksgiving Service for Charlie Shaylor** will be held

at Alton Maltings Centre, GU34 1DT,

on Saturday 11th April at 2pm.

Everyone is welcome.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### APRIL

- 1 Roedowns WI: Tips for mobile phone photography Wiltshire Room 7.30pm
- 2 Library: Easter Storytime & Craft Activity (3-6 yrs) 2 – 3.30pm Page 31
- 3 Alton Choral Society: Music for Good Friday Alton Methodist Church 6pm P 42
- 4 St Lawrence Monthly Market The Parish Centre 9am – 12 noon
- 7 Bentworth Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting
- 7 Medstead Gardeners' Club: Carol Gubler *Fuchsias* Village Hall 7.30pm
- 7 AOS: Organ Recital by Ben Scott ST Lawrence Church 8pm Page 16
- 9 Museum Talk: Mike Dawes *The Commonwealth War Graves Commission* Page 17
- 10 Screen by the Green Beech Film *The Choral* Pages 18 & 30
- 11 Alton Farmers' Market High Street 10am - 2pm
- 11 Thanksgiving Service for the life of Charlie Shaylor Alton Maltings 2pm
- 11 Museum: Stepping Stones -Young People's pottery sessions,(ages 10 -16) Page 17
- 11 Froyle 10K Trail Race Info: [www.blendedtrails.co.uk](http://www.blendedtrails.co.uk) Page 33
- 13** Lasham Coffee Morning with Tony and Sandra Knight at Station House.
- 14 Villager deadline for the May magazine by noon please**
- 14 Bentworth Garden Club meeting Marina Christopher from Phoenix Perennial Plants
- 14 ASA: Richard Whincop *In the National Interest: Art, The Sun King & the Academic Revolution*
- 16 Library: Start of Course *Beginners Origami* 1 – 3pm Page 31
- 16 BLS Annual Parochial Church Meeting Shalden Village Hall 6.30pm
- 17 Broadlands RDA Quiz Night Medstead Village Hall 6.45 for 7.30pm Page 32
- 18 Library: Start of Course *Expressive Watercolours* 10am – 12noon Page 31
- 18 Library: Start of Course *Art for Wellbeing* Page 31
- 18 Concert at St Lawrence *no tickets needed* 7pm Page 37
- 18 Alton Concert Band & The Lynden Singers Alton Maltings 7pm Page 38
- 22 Alton Walking Church for Men The Hawkley Inn 6pm Page 36
- 23 Cardiac Health Social Bridge Afternoon Tea Beech Village Hall Page 15
- 24 Broadlands RDA Tea at Three GU34 5PX from 3pm Page 32
- 24 Medstead Players: The Art of Murder Medstead Village Hall 7pm Pages 15 & 29
- 25 Medstead Players: The Art of Murder Medstead Village Hall 7pm Pages 15 & 29
- 25 Museum: Stepping Stones -Young People's pottery sessions,(ages 10 -16) Page 17
- 25 St Andrew's Medstead Jumble Sale Church Hall 1.30- 3.30pm Page 35
- 25 Spring Concert at Alton Maltings 7.30pm Page 38
- 25 Screen by the Green, Beech National Theatre *Live All My Sons* Pages 18 & 30
- 29 HMF Concert: A Celebration of Spring St Cross 6.30pm Pages 15 & 39

### MAY

- 2 Broadlands RDA Open Day 10am – 2pm Page 33
- 4 Lasham Coffee Morning at Avenue Farm
- 5 Medstead Gardeners' Club: Alan Horgan Pest and Disease Control 7.30pm

# BENTWORTH

## BENTWORTH CARE GROUP

Jackie Crawford

The Care Group members on duty for medical appointments in April are:

**Boyd McCleary 07473 473 731; David Eyre-Brook 07702 492 509;**  
**Sarah Gore-Brown 563122 / 07858297117.**

We are also happy to do shopping or pick up prescriptions for those unable to do so themselves.

### The Care Group are looking for new members

For those who are not aware of what we do, our lovely volunteers take villagers who are unable for any reason to take themselves, to hospital, doctor's and dental appointments. We also do occasional shopping trips and pick up prescriptions.

Our optimum membership is 18 as we have 3 members on call each month and therefore each member only covers 2 months a year (to suit you). We have handover meetings each month and also host a couple of tea parties a year which are great fun!

If you feel that you can spare some time to help this worthy cause please call Jackie Crawford on 01420 561281 for an informal chat...no obligation!

## THE MUCK IN COFFEE MORNING

Please remember we do not meet on Bank Holidays, so no coffee on Easter Monday. Unfortunately we also won't be meeting on April 13<sup>th</sup> as there will be scaffolding up. We will look forward to seeing everyone on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 10.30 – 11.30am in the Barn at Parsonage Farm.



## BENTWORTH GARDEN CLUB

Maryanne McEvoy



It was great to be back at garden club for another season. We had a really good turn out, and great to see some new members signing up.

We gathered at Jubilee Hall firstly for a good catch up over a glass of wine and then a rapid AGM.

Then onto the first speaker this year. We were happy to welcome Gillian Taylor.

Her topic was Roses ~ the old, the new and what to do.

She is a member of the Trials Forum and she grows nearly 300 roses herself.

She was hugely entertaining and on such a popular such a wide spectrum of information. We were told where to buy them and how to use them in various garden settings, their care and companion planting. All illustrated with excellent slides. I think all of the members whether new to roses or experienced gardeners found plenty to learn and inspire them.



topic she covered

If you would like to join our friendly garden club do come along to the next meeting. In Jubilee Hall, Tuesday 14th April 7pm for 7.30. The speaker is our local expert horticulturist Marina Christopher from Phoenix Perennial Plants, Medstead.

Membership is £10 for the season of monthly meetings.

Happy spring gardening everyone



Bentworth Cricket Club welcomes new playing members to join the team for 2026 season. The club plays in Hampshire Cricket League at a competitive but friendly level. Matches are played every Saturday afternoon from the first weekend in May through to end of August. Indoor nets are held at Alton College on Tuesday evenings in the winter and spring months and outdoor nets at our beautiful ground during the summer.

The club also runs a number of fun and fund raising events to ensure we are a full part of village life.

If you are interested please contact Richard Hill (07887821326) or Ken Thomas ( 07769 947033) in the first instance.

We look forward to meeting you.

**BENTWORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

**Neal Day**

**Bentworth Residents Survey January 2026**

Bentworth Parish Council would like to thank those residents that completed the survey.

The survey gives us useful information that helps us to deliver the best service to the residents that we represent.

We received 47 responses both electronically, and on paper, which equates to approximately 20% of households.

We do recognise that the survey was very simple and did not necessarily enable respondents to provide significant input in support of their responses. We will be organising some surgeries throughout the year. If you wish to expand on your response to the survey please attend one of these where we can discuss further.

**Responses were as follows:** with responses from the Parish Council after each section

*Question 1:* Should the parish council organise more events. for the parish.

If so which would most appeal

- (a) Barn dance 7 votes
- (b) May Day Party 19 votes
- (c) Jazz Festival 24 votes

*Question 2:* The parish council have 3 visible deterrents for speeding including a speed indicator device, auto speedwatch cameras and a volunteer speed watch team armed with a speed gun. In your opinion how effective is each deterrent?

- |                            |        |       |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| (a) Speed Indicator Device | Yes-33 | No-12 |
| (b) ASW Cameras            | Yes-19 | No-24 |
| (c) Speed Watch patrol     | Yes 33 | No-15 |

*Question 3 :*The parish council is seeking expert advice to repair and clean up the pond area. In your opinion should improving the village pond be a priority

Yes 26 No 19

*Question 4:* Should measures to address speeding which may include traffic calming be pursued.

Yes 34 No 12

*Question 5* Would the purchase of a swing set be a welcome addition to our village

Yes 27 No 18

## **Comments received and categorised with a response from the Parish Council.**

### *Roads and Footpaths*

Pot holes – demand action from council.

Maintain footpaths (HCC or ramblers) Simon can help to clarify

Speed and volume of traffic a problem. Cameras not effective – rat run

Need for practical and effective steps to stop speeding traffic

Cameras complete waste of money

Apply more pressure to District and HC Council to fix pot holes

Focus on pot holes/roads

### **Parish Council Response**

The roads through Bentworth are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council Highways. There is a website where problems can be reported. Anyone can report a problem using this website and will receive a reference number for the problem.

We are aware of the appalling condition of the roads due to the terrible weather.

The parish council does survey the roads annually and report problems to HCC.

Footpaths are the responsibility of HCC highways. The ramblers association will also help to maintain footpaths when possible. Cllr Simon Lane is our footpath representative on the parish council.

It appears that whilst residents want to reduce speeding in the parish they don't support the speed cameras. We assume this is due to the costs. The cameras were supplied by East Hants District Council and there are 3 of them. One is on Station Rd, one is on Holt End Lane beside the cricket pitch and the third is on Holt End Lane just after Gaston Grange.

The ongoing costs for the cameras equate to £2 per household per year.

Whilst enforcement is not currently in place for those speeding through the village a clear photo is taken of any vehicle exceeding the speed limit and the speed is recorded.

Data is sent to the police and DVLA along with several other East Hampshire villages and towns.

Speeding Sign Written vehicles receive a letter of notification. Several Companies have sent apologies and reassurances that employees have been reprimanded.

There is still hope that the police will start to take action against serious offenders.

### **Community activity**

Quiz night or curry night

more community events

### **Parish Council Response**

The Parish Council would be pleased to organise events. Our most recent were the Queens Jubilee and The Kings Coronation. Such events take a lot of organising and we would require a workgroup of volunteers to manage. Please let us know if you would be happy to help.

### **The village Pond**

Pond best effort at low cost

### **Parish Council Response**

A workgroup has been set up to improve the village pond. The pond and surrounding area is common land and not the direct responsibility of the Parish Council. However, the parish council has taken the initiative to make improvements. its our village so let's do our best to make the pond look nice. The cost to fully repair the pond with a new liner would be significant so we have 6 assigned Christian Browning to lead the

work group and to ask for volunteers that can help with some maintenance and affordable improvements. To date a sum of £600 has been made available (£300 from the Fete Committee and £300 from the Parish Council. This will be used to purchase some plants, soil and other materials to improve the aesthetics of the pond. We are also hopeful that we will secure some grant funding.

### **Concerted campaign to stop development**

#### **Parish Council Response**

Residents are welcome to form a campaign group. There are 3 campaign groups locally.

Medstead has SMASH (stand with Medstead against speculative housing)

Fight 4 Four Marks

A31 Alliance.

There is no reason that Bentworth could not form their own group.

The current government has doubled the housing targets since they were elected and they intend to build 1.5 Million new homes during their term of office. They have changed the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) to make large scale development easier.

“The houses will come”

Four Marks and Medstead have joined forces to develop their neighbourhood plan as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Support Group (NPSG).

The NPSG cannot stop houses being built. They can identify where those houses should be built.

The Local Planning Authority (East Hants District Council) is currently working on the local plan (currently at regulation 18) and hope to move to Regulation 19 this year. This is a long process that must adhere to the governments regulations and is the only mechanism that can define how many houses can be built and where.

There are no concessions for East Hants having a national park covering 57% of the geography.

#### **Other General comments**

Cut back trees near the Sun (*privately owned*)

Restore flint wall near Sycamore House (*privately owned*)

Village shop *Villagers can establish a community shop and some grants may be available to assist. The Parish Council does not own any property that could be used. There are no EHDC property assets that could be adapted and ownership transferred as part of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)*

PC can fund PTA and church maintenance so comment on questionnaire misleading. *Correct. The Parish Council do assist with funding the church yard maintenance and can support the PTA.*

Cut trees next to war memorial in churchyard. *This is not a PC asset. A contribution towards Church Grounds Maintenance is available each year*

Bench on Holt End lane needs attention- *This will be investigated. It was checked during the most recent asset review.*

Water fountain or similar to enhance village green (*The village Green is common land*)

Don't smarten up village to look like surrey village!

Only natural materials if a swing is considered where would it go?

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**The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on April 7<sup>th</sup>**

# LASHAM

## LASHAM COFFEE MORNING

Anthea Del Mar

The subjects ranged from the operas of Wagner to the making of sponge cakes. Simon and Michael had to accept that for most of us five hours appreciating the joys of Siegfried is a big ask. Meanwhile Jean was explaining the mysteries of getting your Victoria sponge to rise, while confessing that her husband is really the better cake maker in their family.

As always, the coffee morning was fun, and made particularly special with the sun shining. Sarah's very well behaved dogs gave us a great welcome, and Sarah, also well behaved, gave us delicious cake and coffee. Thank you very much, Sarah.





The next meeting allows for Easter Monday and will therefore take place on **Monday 13th April**, with Sandra and Tony Knight at Station House.

In May it will be at Avenue Farm on **Monday 4th May**.

\* \* \*

## SHALDEN

### NADIA JOHNSEN

Long time resident of Shalden, Nadia Johnsen passed away peacefully at home on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

#### Julian Johnsen

Nadia was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 1923. Her Father was Captain Frank Moxon, and her Mother was Alexandria Moxon nee Hjhinova, who was known as Shura. She was Russian and had arrived here after the Russian Revolution. Nadia had a brother called Eric and they grew up in Essex.

She spent the Second World War working for the Red Cross, nursing wounded soldiers. It was during the war that she met her first husband who was Czech (her first father-in-law was the head of the free Czech army in London, General Sergei Ingr.)



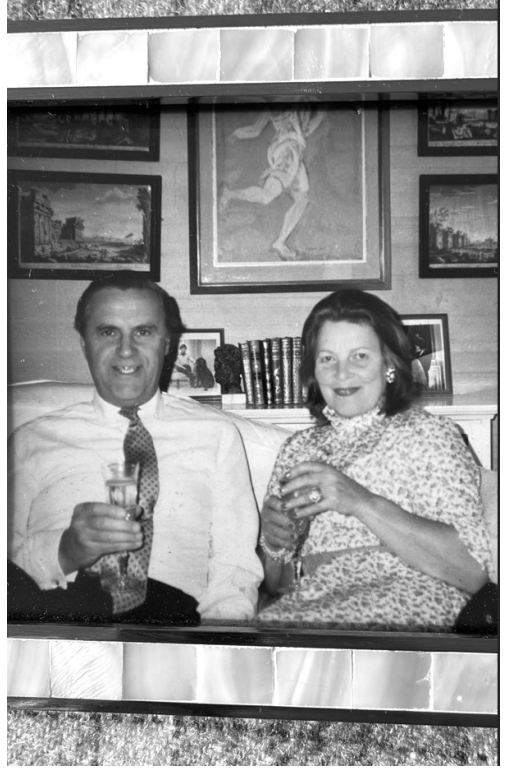
They were married for about five years and had a son, George (who has just turned 80).

Nadia and Dick met in London in the mid-fifties, and were married in 1960. They had their first child, Billy and continued to live in London until Nadia was pregnant with me, at which point they moved to Shalden, in 1962. I was born in 1963 and Arrabella in 1966.

We had a wonderful upbringing at The Manor; Nadia started a little nursery school with a governess – one for Billy and I and later one for Arrabella. Nadia was a wonderful 'old fashioned' Mum, very attentive to us and made sure that we had a wonderful childhood.

She became involved in various charities; the Red Cross, and various other charities, and as she became concerned about the youth in and around Alton in the early 1970's and felt that they needed somewhere constructive to use up all their energy, she helped raise money for the Alton Sports centre.

In 1974 they bought a broken down farmhouse for 1200 pounds near Cotignac in Provence and slowly restored it over the years. They loved going there. She had a long and wonderful life and we will miss her.



### **Mary Hart**

The Johnsen family came to Shalden in 1960, and moved into The Manor. A lovely family of five, Richard, Nadia, Billy, Julian and Arrabella.

Naida, a beautiful girl, dashing around in her sports car (I remember one salesman asking me "who's that lovely girl in the sports car")

The family joined in all village activities, especially the church. Richard planted the lovely cherry trees in the churchyard. He also served on many committees. The Shalden Fete took place, almost every year at The Manor and the family were great hosts, the three children were delightful.

Although I hadn't seen Nadia for many years, I always had her in my thoughts and prayers. Nadia, rest in peace.

### **David and Louise Lancaster**

We have fond memories of Nadia as a warm-hearted and most interesting friend who took particular trouble in welcoming us to the village some 20 years ago. She was an amusing and generous hostess well supported by her charming and late husband, Dick. We admired her enthusiastic help with a stall we ran with others at the fete even well into her 80's - she was always so positive.

**Rozanne Wilson**

Nadia Johnsen was a gentlewoman in every sense of the word. She was hospitable, generous and had an aura of grace about her. She was always happy and cheerful with a wonderful smile on her face even in her latter days when she had lost her mobility. She always praised Billy, her devoted son who lived with her at The Manor, wonderful Julie who cared for Dick and stayed on to care for Nadia, and also her team of other carers. She often told me how lucky she was. Nadia and Dick were so very welcoming to Henry and I when we came to Shalden 23 years ago. We saw a lot of them both at our homes and on cinema trips to the Alton Palais and Nadia and I played bridge together well into her 90s.

Henry and I will miss her hugely.

**St PETER & St PAUL GUILD OF MARTHA**

**Kirsty Ennever**

**April**

- 4 Jane Shirvell / Lin Baxter
- 11 Karen Saponaro / Lynne Hignett
- 18 Michele Rankin / Kirsty Ennever
- 25 Rozanne Wilson / Rosalind Ommanney

**May**

- 2 Jane Shirvell / Lin Baxter
- 9 Karen Saponaro / Lynne Hignett
- 16 Michele Rankin / Kirsty Ennever
- 23 Rozanne Wilson / Rosalind Ommanney
- 30 Debbie Todd/Silvia Blake

\* \* \*

**The CHURCH**



Bentworth, Lasham and Shalden Parish

**BLS ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**Cathy Dumelow**

This will take place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April in Shalden Village Hall, at 6,30pm

Do come, hear about what your church is doing, see the financial reports and elect your representatives.

**The Finances of the Parish of Bentworth, Lasham and Shalden (BLS)**

The Combined Parish of Bentworth, Lasham and Shalden has now been in existence for two years. The Combined PCC and the Local Church Groups for each of the three Churches are working really well together. As a single Parish, we have been able to source a few contracts for Utilities (electricity, water and oil etc..) at slightly better rates than we could get as smaller individual units.

However, (and there is always a "However" in any discussion about money) we are very dependent on your contributions for our general running costs. Costs have increased for our Parish in the same way that they have for our homes.

Unfortunately, our income has remained static or worse over the last two years. To survive as a Parish, our income need to increase particularly for our general running costs.

BLS Parish operates a single General Fund from which the cost of running the 3 churches, providing on average 7 services a month, costs almost £50,000 per annum (or just over £4,000 per month). There are no National Government, Church of England or Winchester Diocesan funds available to “bail out” any Parish. Utilities (Water, Oil, Electricity) costs over £6,000pa, Insurance costs £7,000pa, printing, books, items and consumables for services, bibles for our school leavers, organists etc.. cost a further £6,000pa. Despite a lot of voluntary help, we still incur further costs for cleaning, grounds maintenance and regular checks on fire extinguishers, the boilers and electrical systems. We are asked by the Diocese to make a contribution towards the provision of clergy to take the services. Historically, we have endeavoured to pay between 65 and 75% of the request, but to balance the General Fund books, we could only afford to contribute just under 50% this year.

These General Costs need to be covered by Income. In principle, the General fund should break even every year or have a small surplus for “a rainy day”. Regularly running in the red would imperil the viability of the Parish. Looking at individual income items, the cash collections and envelopes have held up well, Fees (for Weddings and Funerals) have also been about average. The area which shows a decline has been Regular Giving (Standing Orders either directly to the Bank or through the Parish Giving scheme). This fell by about 20% in 2025 after a similar fall in 2024. We have lost a couple of givers through death or from moving away, but a significant number of contributors have ceased their ontributions or transferred them to the local church fabric fund. The impact of the loss of contributions means that the first quarter of 2025 was down by 50% against the same period in 2024. We made a small loss in 2024 despite a couple of good events and some contributions from Village Groups.

**Each Church has its own Fabric Fund** which is responsible for the maintenance of that Church and churchyard and have over the years funded more significant repairs to towers, boilers, roofs, organs,etc.. whenever these have been necessary. These funds have completely separate existences and were and are financed and spent separately by each of the churches. Major improvements have generally been funded locally by special appeals.

As part of these improvements, Bentworth now has an area fully equipped for small events and meetings and Villagers are welcome to make use of this. Lasham are well on the way to developing something similar.

**To Sum up**, our General Funds need your support. I understand that costs are rising for all of us and I understand that this makes life difficult, but, if you have stopped or not increased your contribution over the last few years, even a small increase or donation would help sustain and upkeep our lovely Parish Churches and provide the regular Service Pattern, together with family occasions (christenings, blessings, weddings, funerals etc) which we like to have locally. If you would like to make a donation, change your current contribution or start giving, please contact your Churchwarden or Mervyn Dunwoody (Parish Treasurer) – contact numbers on the inside rear cover of this magazine.



## **SINGING WITH DAN**

**Kim Ottridge**

For the first time, Broadlands RDA & Equine Therapy hosted an event at St Mary's Community Hub. It was a singing event, and we initially chose the venue for its excellent acoustics — but it proved to be wonderful in every respect.

At the back of the church there were plenty of comfortable, movable chairs, which worked perfectly for our group of 45. The space was warm, well lit, and had a lovely atmosphere. The kitchen facilities were outstanding — modern, extremely well equipped, and spotlessly clean.

In addition, the team who manage the bookings were incredibly helpful. Cathy couldn't have done more for us, and when we experienced a small hiccup on arrival, Sarah was there immediately to help. What a fantastic team!



We are certain we will be back. Thank you all so very much!

We had a blast!

\* \* \*

## **CHARITY**

### **PATRICK BUSBY RUNNING THE BRIGHTON MARATHON**

On 12th April Patrick will be running in the Brighton marathon to raise money for the Alton Climate Action Network GUMBI Malawi Irrigation Project, especially important work given the recent severe droughts in Malawi.

If you would like to donate, please visit his

JustGiving page:

Patrick Busby is fundraising for Alton Climate Action Network





## COMMUNITY INFORMATION

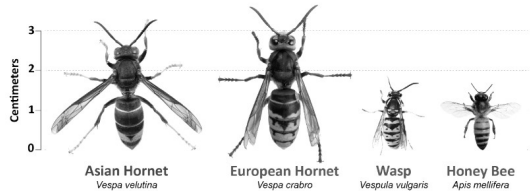
### YELLOW-LEGGED ASIAN HORNET - CAN YOU HELP?

#### Alien Species Alert

On behalf of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) and DEFRA, I am writing to request your assistance in raising awareness of an extremely destructive invasive species. The yellow-legged Asian hornet (YLH) was first detected in the UK in 2016, having migrated from its native territory in Asia to France, and subsequently crossed the Channel into Britain.

Until 2025, the population of this species was largely contained. However, there has been a dramatic increase in sightings, particularly in the south of England. Over 150 nests have been eradicated in Kent and Sussex, with further incidents reported in Hampshire and Dorset. This surge is deeply concerning for both beekeepers and environmental experts. The yellow-legged Asian hornet poses a substantial threat to honeybee colonies and **all other pollinators, including bumblebees, butterflies, and even spiders!**

#### Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or [www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport](http://www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport)



 Animal & Plant Health Agency

#### Can you help?

Members of the British Beekeepers' Association are actively supporting the Government's eradication initiative which is being managed by the Animal Plant Health Agency and National Bee Unit. Their goal is to encourage the public to report any hornet sightings. **Please can you help support us in this endeavour?**

As well as serious threats to pollinators this issue carries potential public health risks. While encountering a single hornet may not be dangerous, these insects aggressively defend their nests, which can contain thousands of individuals. Such nests can be hidden in hedgerows and brambles, posing a real hazard to unsuspecting members of the public who may inadvertently disturb them.

#### How to Help

It is crucial for everyone to know how to correctly identify and report yellow-legged Asian hornets. We urge individuals to download the Asian Hornet Watch App and log any suspected sightings so that authorities can locate and safely remove nests.

Widespread awareness is essential, and your communication channels are key in helping to spread the message.

We have assembled a package of digital resources suitable for publication. If you can share articles through magazines, websites, or social media, it would be greatly beneficial. We can supply you with press releases, posters, and fact sheets to support these efforts. Please let me know if you would like an information pack.

We appreciate any actions you may have already taken to raise awareness about this invasive insect and are happy to provide ongoing support for future initiatives.

Further details are available on the BBKA website ([bbka.org.uk](http://bbka.org.uk)) or by contacting me directly on my email, [asian-hornet@meonvalleybeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:asian-hornet@meonvalleybeekeepers.co.uk)

**Linda Milne** Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet Team, Meon Valley Beekeepers Association,

## EVENTS



**HAMPSHIRE MEDICAL FUND**

The charity buying tomorrow's equipment today

**Caroline Laird**

Local charity **Hampshire Medical**

**Fund** invites you to **Celebration of Spring** at

the beautiful **Hospital of St Cross, Winchester** on Wednesday 29th April 2026.

Set in one of Winchester's most historic and atmospheric venues, this uplifting evening, organised in association with Savills, starts with a drinks and canapés reception followed by an inspiring programme of live music.

The evening features the dynamic **Oscar Ellis Quartet**, a group of outstanding young musicians from two of London's leading conservatoires. Inspired by jazz legends Miles Davis and John Coltrane, their performances promises a combination of classic jazz moments with skilled improvised solos. Also performing are **Cantores Episcopi**, Winchester College's acclaimed close-harmony group, known for their polished a cappella performances, as well as Farleigh School's talented Senior Jazz Bands, 5 ft 6 and Sub Zero, whose lively repertoire ranges from traditional jazz to favourites from the Great American Songbook.

*Tickets include drinks and canapés with proceeds supporting the Hampshire Medical Fund's work funding cutting-edge medical equipment for local NHS hospitals.*

*Tickets available at [www.hampshiremedicalfund.org](http://www.hampshiremedicalfund.org)*

### **MEDSTEAD PLAYERS**

**Tania McCullough**

A murder mystery set on a residential weekend art course where creativity flows and stories unfold. An eclectic group of artists, each with hidden secrets, gather as tensions simmer. But not everyone makes it to the Life Drawing lesson ... Can you solve the mystery before the final brushstroke? Join us for suspense, wit, and artful deception!

Come along for a murder mystery and a meal all in aid of Cardiac Health. There is a licenced bar and a raffle.

Doors open at 6.30 pm.



The **Social Bridge**

**Afternoon Tea** returns to Beech Village Hall on **Thursday 23 April**. This popular event, which combines and afternoon Bridge with a wonderful tea, provided by charity volunteers, costs just £70 for a table of four.

For further details on all Cardiac events and to purchase tickets please visit the website

[www.cardiac-rehab.co.uk/events](http://www.cardiac-rehab.co.uk/events) alternatively,

email [heartly@cardiachealth.org.uk](mailto:heartly@cardiachealth.org.uk) or call 01420 544 794



### **THE WEDNESDAY WELLBEING HUB**

**Sarah**

**Watkin**

This is run under a partnership between Home Instead EHM & Dementia Friendly Alton.

We are offering a variety of activities on the day, including some physical activities too. On a weekly basis we offer Love to Move, twice a month Tai Chi & monthly we will be offering indoor bowls.

Aimed at the older generation, we are looking to offer space to anyone that would like some companionship. They can pop in, have some refreshments, a chat & engage in a variety of activities should they wish.



## ALTON ORGAN SOCIETY

Elsbeth Mackeggie Gurney

A large audience was treated to a delightful & varied programme of organ music composed across 500 years, played to the very highest standard by Dr Carol Williams, who as a student & before her stellar career in America, learned on the St Lawrence instrument.

Carol's programme began with a lively performance of "Toccata in the style of Scarlatti" composed by Gordon Young, which immediately demonstrated the baroque sounds the St Lawrence organ is capable of. Pieces by Susato from the Renaissance period and from the Baroque period, "Fantasia in D major" by Kittel, a young pupil of J S Bach, followed.



We then heard Carol's own arrangement of the Allegretto from Beethoven's 7<sup>th</sup> Symphony, the piece used as the theme in The King's Speech. Back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the light but pleasing "March from A Little Suite" by Trevor Duncan, evoking memories of Dr Finlay's Casebook, it being the opening theme music from that well-loved TV programme.

Pieces with a French theme then featured – the lyrical "Après un Reve" by Gabriel Faure was followed by a short anonymous fanfare based on Te Deum (We Praise thee of God); there followed the firework piece of the whole recital, "Te Deum from Cinq Improvisations" by Charles Tournemire. Tournemire was famous for his improvisations – they were transcribed by his pupil, Maurice Durufle. The piece is an idiosyncratic & loud composition which showed off the brilliant range of the instrument.

Carol then played her own piece "Twilight", inspired by the changing light at dusk in San Diego, where Carol was City Organist for 16 years. "Homage a Vierne", another of Carol's pieces beautifully evoked the music of Louis Vierne in a deep but gentle piece.

"Sabre Dance" by Khachaturian was slipped into the programme before Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers", both pieces being Carol's own transcriptions, which captured the orchestral originals.

The recital then moved into Jazz, a move that was hugely appreciated by the audience – "Midnight Special" by Jimmy Smith and "Take Five", composed by Paul Desmond but made famous in the 1950's by the Dave Brubeck Quartet. Carol registered the organ to get sounds akin a Hammond organ (a huge task) & the results were fantastic.

The recital ended with "Carillon" by Gerald Near, a piece whose theme is better known to us a "Carol of the Bells"; a fabulous end to a fabulous recital – the audience left on a high.

### Date for your diaries:

**On April 7<sup>th</sup>** we welcome Ben Scott, organist & organ tuner for the prestigious firm of Harrison & Harrison who will play pieces by Scarlatti, Max Reger, Liszt & Vierne.

Refreshments are available from 7.30pm & the recital starts at 8.00pm.

Tickets cost £12;

We look forward to welcoming you in April.

## THE CURTIS MUSEUM

Jill Line

OPENING TIMES: Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 4.30pm 01420 82802  
[www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum](http://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum)

### April events

**Object of the Month:** While the Allen Gallery is closed for refurbishment, the Curtis Museum will showcase each month a highlight from the ceramics collection in the Hampshire Cultural Trust stores.

**This month's object** - Remember the **Natwest Piggies?** Drop in to see our set of all five ceramic Natwest piggy-banks, along with some of the advertising from the day. While you're here, have a go at drawing and designing your own piggy-bank.

### Stepping Stones -Young People's pottery sessions, (ages 10 -16).

Saturdays 11 April, 25 April, 02 May, 16 May, 23 May.

The Curtis Museum will be hosting free clay workshops for young people. Delivered thanks to support from the Museums Association Wellbeing Fund, these sessions aim to support young people's wellbeing with creative and engaging art and heritage projects led by an experienced tutor. More details and pre-booking (essential) via the Museum website as above.

### Detective Bunny's Easter Egg Hunt.

Join Detective Bunny on a code breaking adventure and win a chocolate prize!

28th March - 12th April,  
10am – 4pm,  
£2 per Trail.

Can you find the hidden eggs?

Find the eggs scattered around the Museum, discover some Easter facts and crack the code to receive a special Easter prize!



**Thursday Craft Club** (drop-in) and **Tuesday clay workshops** (please pre-book via the website). Look out for family films and other fun activities throughout the school holidays!

**April Talk** - Thursday 9th April.

**Mike Dawes** on **The Commonwealth War Graves Commission**.

This talk, courtesy of the Friends of the Museum, will be held in Room 7 of the Alton Community Centre, Amery Street, Alton GU34 1HN.

Doors open 7pm for 7.30. FREE, donations welcomed.

## THE SCREEN BY THE GREEN, BEECH

Joanna Curtis

From Wartime Harmony to Post-War Reckoning : April Hits All the Right Notes

Two exceptional evenings at the Screen by the Green, Beech Village Hall.

Friday 10th April, 7:30pm: **The Choral** Yorkshire, 1916.

Ralph Fiennes leads a choir of teenagers through Elgar and wartime Britain. Alan Bennett's first original screenplay in 40 years. Wry, warm and quietly profound. Four stars from the Telegraph and Guardian.

Saturday 25th April, 7pm: **National Theatre Live's All My Sons**

Bryan Cranston and Marianne Jean-Baptiste. Arthur Miller at his finest, filmed live from London's West End. Five stars across the board. Unmissable.

*The Choral* £7 advance, £8 door | *All My Sons* £14 advance, £16 door

Small venue. Big screen. Special Atmosphere.

Community cinema with heart and soul

Book: [beechvillage.org.uk/events](http://beechvillage.org.uk/events)

Beech Village Hall, 1 Wellhouse Road, Beech, Alton GU34 4AQ

\* \* \*

## CLUBS



### ALTON

#### ALTON CAMERA CLUB

Renee Smith

Alton Camera Club have run a full programme of talks, competitions and outings in the past month. We held a practical evening in portraiture and welcomed models from the local area who sat for us under studio conditions. This enabled members to gain valuable practice and resulted in some delightful images.

The Club held the final round of the PDI (Projected Digital Image) and the third round of the Print League competitions. In the PDI competition Wendy Davies received top scores of 10 for her image 'Infinite Shelter' as did Steve Smith for 'Final Approach'. In the Print League, 10's were awarded to Kelvin Perry for 'River Thames at Silvertown', Steve Smith for 'Provision in Flight' and 'Poised to



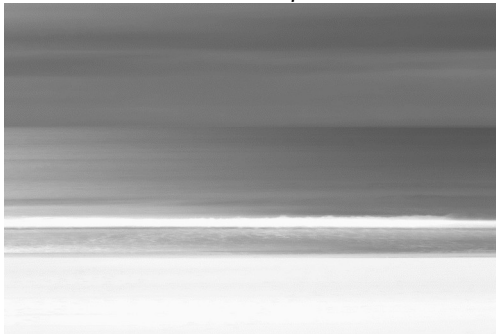
Strike' and Andrew Sorrell for 'First Cigarette of the Day'.

We also recently held Round 3 of our PDI Challenge Competition on the theme of 'Water'.

Andrew Sorrell 'First Cigarette of the Day'.



Jason Bunce 'A Tranquil Bondi'.



Judged by Paul Herbert, he awarded first place to Wendy Davies for 'Plaza de España Agua' and in Round 3 of our Print Challenge competition on the theme of 'Minimalism' judge, Brian Burden, awarded first place to Jason Bunce for 'A Tranquil Bondi'.

February was an exciting month for member Wendy Davies who won the Urban Life Category of Amateur Photographer magazine's 'International Amateur Photographer of the Year' for her image "*Where Did You Get That Hat?*".



Despite the inclement weather, we managed to get out on a field trip to Bognor Regis. We look forward to trips to Portobello Road Market, Cliveden House and a walk along the Thames, and a day out in Marlborough. An exhibition of our members images was held at the Freedom Through Expression Gallery in Alton throughout the month of March.

Alton Camera Club meet every Wednesday at 7.30pm at Holybourne Village Hall. New members always welcome. Please see our website [www.altoncameraclub.org.uk](http://www.altoncameraclub.org.uk) for more details.



## THE ROTARY CLUB OF ALTON

**Roy Roberts**

### Challenges for Alton

The challenges facing Alton at a time of local government change were outlined recently to Alton Rotary members by the town clerk, Tom Horwood. He explained that the proposals to replace Hampshire County Council and East Hampshire District Council with a single tier of local government might create new opportunities for existing town and parish councils like Alton Town Council.

Tom is in his first year as the 'chief executive' of the town council – his background is in the charity sector and local government. He sees the council's role as providing leadership for a range of community initiatives.

*Alton Town Clerk Tom Horwood (centre) with Alton Rotary officers Lisa Hillan and Mike Sanders*

He said that among the challenges would be the scale of proposed housing development in Alton and neighbouring parishes. In the past twenty years, the area's population had grown by 17%, but he said current proposals were for 40% growth in the next 17 years, with plans for 3,900 new houses in Alton and neighbouring parishes. This would put pressure on schools, health centres, leisure facilities, open spaces, and the environment. At the same time local government reorganisation would mean more distant councils providing fewer services, with the prospect of a growth of public distrust.

He believes that these changes provided opportunities for Alton and its town council, which would probably be one of the major urban areas in a new unitary authority such as North East Hampshire. There could be opportunities for local control of some district assets, and local provision of improved sports and leisure facilities in partnership with community and business groups.



### **Len Smith**



Alton Rotary paid tribute recently in memory of one of its most distinguished members, Len Smith, who died last month. Club President Mike Sanders outlined Len's remarkable record of Rotary service over a period of 67 years and led the tributes.

Len had originally joined Rotary's Twickenham club in 1958. At the time he was the owner of a local outfitters which supplied school uniforms and sports kit to a wide area. As well as his activities as a leader of his local club, Len became a District Governor in 1977 and had a national role as a member of Rotary's Council on Legislation. He served for three terms on the Council and was also national vice-president of Rotary International for Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI). In 1989 Len was elected to the most senior position in Rotary in this country as President of RIBI.

After half a century of Rotary membership at Twickenham, Len retired from business and he and his wife Joy moved to their home in Four Marks. But Len's involvement with Rotary did not end with this move. In 2010, Len was involved in establishing a new Rotary club for Four Marks and Medstead and he became its first President. Ten years later the club merged with Alton Rotary and Len was still active, specialising in vocational issues.

Away from Rotary, Len held a pilot's licence and was frequently flying over North Hampshire in a small plane and enjoyed air racing. He leaves a wife, Joy, who has played lacrosse for England, and three sons, Jon, an airline captain, Christopher, a former teacher and cricket coach, and Peter Henley, who was BBC South political editor.

Mike Sanders said Len had given great service to Rotary for almost 68 years. He said, "We will remember his geniality, warmth and wisdom – his contribution to Rotary here and in Twickenham was huge, and he will be much missed."



**ASA**

**Vanessa MacMahon**

**Forthcoming Lectures:**

Tuesday 14th April 2026: Richard Whincop *In the National Interest: Art, The Sun King and the Academic Revolution*  
The Academie Royale de peinture et de Sculpture was founded in 1648 under Louis XIV of France, the 'Sun King', and placed the visual arts under direct royal control.

Tuesday 12th May: Lucia Gahlin *Wonderful Things - Tutankhamun's Tombs and Treasurers*

The unearthing of Tutankhamun's tomb by Howard Carter in 1922 was arguably the greatest of all archaeological discoveries. The name of this boy-king...

Both lectures will be held at Martin Read Hall at Alton College commencing at 7:30pm (doors open 6:45pm)

**MEDSTEAD**

**HAMPSHIRE FEDERATION OF WI - MEDSTEAD**

**Gill Siddall**

**March Meeting**

On a cold, wet and windy afternoon members gathered for the March meeting. It was lovely to welcome 7 members of Bishop's Bells, the hand bell ringing group from Bishop's Waltham. The group has an interesting history which we were told about between listening to the different tunes executed perfectly by the group. Their timing is exceptional and not a single note was rung out of place. Timing is everything and they were spot on. The group was formed in 1984 when a set of bells was discovered and it is still going strong with Tuesday night being bell ringing practice night in Bishop's Waltham. A wonderful selection of tunes was rung for us including 'An English Country Garden' and 'Danny Boy'. We learnt about the design of the handbells, the various competitions and the different types of bells. The bells the group currently own exceed £1,000 in value.

The bell ringing produced a gentle harmonious tune and we could only admire the skill of the group who were absolutely perfect.

One of our members June Dodd will be celebrating her Platinum Wedding Anniversary with husband Fred at the end of March and June was presented with a bouquet of flowers to mark the occasion. A Platinum Wedding Anniversary celebrates 70 years of marriage, representing an extraordinary rare milestone of love, strength and endurance. Apparently only 1% of the population celebrate this very special anniversary.

*June was presented with a bouquet of flowers*

On April 9th we will welcome Jackie Dimmock to tell us more about her career in the police force which she illustrates with mini quilts.

As always new members and guests are very welcome to the meetings held in Medstead Village Hall at 2pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month.



## HAMPSHIRE FEDERATION OF WI – ROEDOWNS

Diana Constantine

We started getting into the Spring spirit at our March meeting with our guest Sally Lynton who gave us tuition with making Easter bunny bunting. Sally provided us all with a kit,



demonstrated what we had to do and had an example of what our finished bunting should resemble! We busily made our bunting with great success and enjoyed some chocolate and a chat while crafting.

Our monthly book club meetings continue along with some social meet ups, and hopefully some walks soon to see the bluebells.



### Forthcoming meetings

1st April	Tips for mobile phone photography
13th May	AGM and supper
3rd June	Self guided walk around Winchester
1st July	Dogs for Autism

Roedowns WI meet in the Wiltshire Room, Medstead Village Hall on the first Wednesday of each month at 19.30hrs. Guest speakers, outings and good company.

Tea/coffee, biscuits, raffle and gift voucher prize at each meeting. Visitors and new members are very welcome. Contact Secretary on [roedownssec@hampshire.org.uk](mailto:roedownssec@hampshire.org.uk) Or President Jill Kerr 01420 564116.

## MEDSTEAD GARDENERS CLUB

Caroline Daniels

*'Sweet April showers, Do spring May flowers'* Thomas Tusser



Our March meeting had a focus on trees, with Pamela Holt. She has a history of working with trees and did her training at Kew Gardens. We learned about the best way to plant trees and maintain them. It is best to plant trees when dormant, especially if they are bare root. Put compost on the top around tree once planted rather than in with the roots. Mulch trees at their base and keep weeds and grass away to allow good healthy growth. We saw slides of some interesting trees that can be planted in gardens and how to best stake trees.



## MEDSTEAD GARDENERS CLUB

### PROGRAMME 2026

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

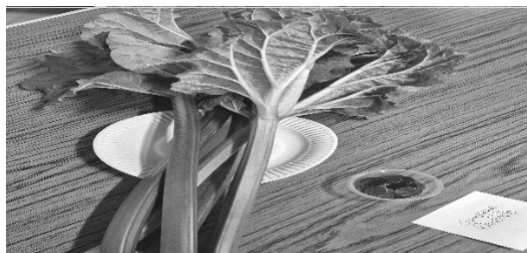
Meeting at Medstead Village Hall. Doors open 7.00pm ready for 7.30pm start

Membership February to December 2026 - £12pp

Guest £3pp (max 2 visits)

MONTH	DATE	EVENT
APR	Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Fuchsias Carol Gubler
MAY	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Pests and disease control Alan Horgan
MAY	Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Plant sale – Opens 1030am until 12noon Medstead Village Hall
JUN	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sustainable and wildlife gardening in our changing climate Beverly Exall
JUL	Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Medstead Fete – Medstead Green
JUL	Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Summer Show – Medstead Village Hall
AUG		No meeting
SEP	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Planting for Autumn colour Antony Powell
OCT	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Ferns and grasses Chris Bird
NOV	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Getting the most from your garden Speaker to be confirmed
DEC	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup>	AGM and Christmas Social ( <b>Members only</b> )

Correct at time of printing and maybe subject to change without prior notice



Champagne Rhubarb -  
Club Competition Winner!

*Some of the gardening jobs for April* -This month is fast paced for gardening. Protect plants from late frosts. Plant new perennials and summer bulbs. Divide overgrown herbaceous perennials and deadhead spring bulbs. Weeds are growing fast so hoe them on dry days to suppress growth. Plant garlic. Early potatoes and onions. Start to mow grass and sow grass seed on bare patches. Mulch and feed borders and clean greenhouses ready for the new season of plants to grow.

Enjoy gardening as the evenings get longer and the garden bursts into life.



Our local branch of the National Trust – the NHNTC – had a treat on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. Instead of our usual talk, the speakers gave us a dramatized presentation of Jane Austen's last and uncompleted novel, *Sanditon*.

Mike and Louise Biddiss have long been members of The Alton Fringe Theatre, and their acting ability was crucial in introducing us to Jane Austen's prose, readings of her dialogue and the development of the novel's plot.

Written in the final months of her life in 1817, Jane Austen's unfinished manuscript, *Sanditon*, serves as a sharp departure from her previous works, blending her signature wit with a focus on commercialism and modern health obsessions. The narrative serves three primary satirical purposes: lampooning the Regency era's fixation on seaside resorts,

mocking the performative nature of hypochondria, and deriding the misuse of literature as a clumsy tool for seduction.

The story commences with a symbolic carriage accident involving Mr Parker, whose injuries force a stay with the Haywood family. Unlike typical Austen protagonists, Parker is a man driven by business rather than leisure; his relentless "puffing" or marketing of *Sanditon* as a premier destination highlights the period's emerging commercial spirit. As a gesture of thanks, he invites the sensible Charlotte Haywood to join him at the resort.

Through Charlotte's discerning eyes, we encounter the residents of *Sanditon*, most notably the wealthy and "thoroughly mean" Lady Denholm. A ruthless businesswoman, she views the influx of health-seekers purely through a lens of profit, even suggesting her own asses' milk as a cure-all. She further entertains herself by manipulating her impoverished relatives, including the "downright silly" Sir Edward Denholm. Sir Edward embodies Austen's critique of the pseudo-intellectual, using verbose, ignorant interpretations of Scott and Burns in his failed attempts to appear seductive.

The theme of hypochondria is masterfully explored through the Parker siblings—Diana, Susan, and Arthur—whose self-diagnosed ailments are attributed to vanity and sloth. The manuscript concludes with the arrival of the West Indian heiress, Miss Lambe, and a small party from a girls' boarding school. These final chapters introduce Sydney Parker, hinting at a potential romantic development for Charlotte that remained unwritten upon Austen's death.

Mike and Louise presented these characters with great skill. They entertained us with their interpretation of the linked themes of commercial marketing, alternative approaches to health, the value of health bringing seaside holidays, hefty dollops of hypochondria, scepticism of the medical profession, and the power of greed. When asked whether any attempts to finish the novel by subsequent writers had been successful the answer was no! However on this showing most of us agreed that we would definitely be happy to read Jane's own incomplete version.

## CLUB CONTACTS

**Medstead Bowls:** Dennis Church 01420 564475 dennis@windhamhill.plus.com

**Medstead Players:** Tania McCullough chairman@medsteadplayers.co.uk  
or Secretary Julia Halls 07747 665 968 ; or publicity@medsteadplayers.co.uk

**Medstead Tennis:** www.medsteadtennisclub.org.uk

**Alton Rotary:** Roy Roberts 07768 070 572 Mike 07808 093 953

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## REGULAR FEATURES

**Tim Gordon-Jones**



Welcome to Bee News 2026

Good news, all three of my colonies have survived the winter. Even though it was quite a mild winter the damp is challenging as it can lead to disease. Good ventilation is key.

One sunny day last month I saw they were all flying so took the opportunity to clean the bottom boards, which also helps to reduce the risk of disease. I noticed the bees were queuing at the entrance so I also turned the mouse guards, to improve access and ventilation. Mouse guards are plastic blocks that fit in the entrance to the hive and have three different positions, depending on their rotation. One is to completely block the entrance (when moving a hive), another is to provide a handful of small, bee size, holes. And the other is an opening 'slot' that goes across about half of the entrance. This is the position they are in at the moment. Once the temperature rises sufficiently I will remove the guards altogether to allow maximum access and ventilation.

Even though the temperature was only about 10 degrees, two of the colonies were flying. It was a sunny day and I think that makes all the difference. Who doesn't love a sunny day. I opened up the hives and inspected the honey stores and was pleased to see most of the stores hadn't been used. The populations were quite large for this time of year so I determined that the queens were alive and producing well. I didn't want to inspect the brood chambers as it was rather cold and didn't want to risk affecting the brood. I will not need to provide early feeding. I will have to examine the spare honey Supers before next weekend as they may be required, weather permitting. This is a great start to the year.

It's still a bit too early and cold for bee swarms but who knows, by the time you read this you might hear a certain 'buzz' in the air. If you spot a swarm, please give me a call on 07771-862-890. This number is on the honey jars too. However, as I have plenty of my own (at the moment) I will come and remove them only if they are a nuisance. I still have honey for sale, the 1<sup>st</sup> time I've had surplus. The best way to handle empty jars is to put in your own recycling. The labels are the problem for me and I'm not permitted to re-use the lids anyway. The jars I buy are 80% recycled anyway.

You may see the article in this month magazine about the Asian Hornet, often referred to as the Yellow Legged Hornet. This is an invasive species and a particular threat to bees and other pollinating insects. Unlike the European Hornet the Asian Hornet will kill and eat bees rather than rob the honey. They will attack a bee colony and can decimate it in a day. Please be alert to this pest and follow the advice in the article.



Signs of Spring!



Pony News



As we write this at the beginning of March the ponies are still coming in happy but caked in mud! A big job for the everyone trying to get them cleaned up before the first ride! However, the crocuses are out, the daffodils are starting to brighten up the hedgerows so a promise of warmer days are in the air.

4 Star Riding School Licence

We are pleased to share the fantastic news that the team has been awarded a 4-Star Riding School Licence, following our inspection on 30th January.

It is not possible to achieve a 5-Star rating in the first year, making this a very strong result and a real credit to the hard work, professionalism, and commitment of everyone involved.

Congratulations to the whole team on this excellent achievement.

Singing with Dan

What fun we had at our singing event on 25<sup>th</sup> March. 42 guests arrived to a glass of bubbles at St. Mary's Church, Bentworth before singing their hearts out with Dan. (dancoopermusic.co.uk).

He brought huge energy, a great sense of humour and such positivity. Even our most reluctant singers were in full voice to an Abba and a Fleetwood Mac song! We hope to be able to offer another workshop in the Autumn!



Upcoming Events –

We hope you can join us for our Annual Quiz Night and/or our first Tea at Three of the year! You will be made very welcome and our events are always fun! See posters We Hope to See You There!

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Broadlands Equine Therapy & RDA.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

office@broadlandsgroupprda.org.uk

## HAMPSHIRE FARMERS MARKETS

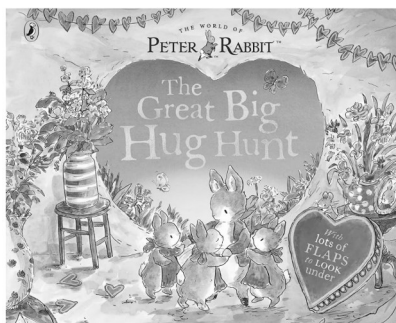
Alton Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April

Sunday, April 5 • Romsey Farmers' Market 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
 Sunday, April 5 • Petersfield Farmers' Market 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
 Sunday, April 12 • Winchester Farmers' Market 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
 Sunday, April 12 • Whiteley Farmers' Market 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
 Saturday, April 18 • Emsworth Farmers' Market 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
 Sunday, April 19 • Alresford Farmers' Market 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
 Saturday, April 25 • Ringwood Farmers' Market 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
 Sunday, April 26 • Winchester Farmers' Market 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ALTON LIBRARY



Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9.30am to 1.30pm	9.30am to 5pm	Closed	9.30am to 5pm	9.30am to 5pm	9.30am to 5pm



### Easter Storytime and Craft Activity

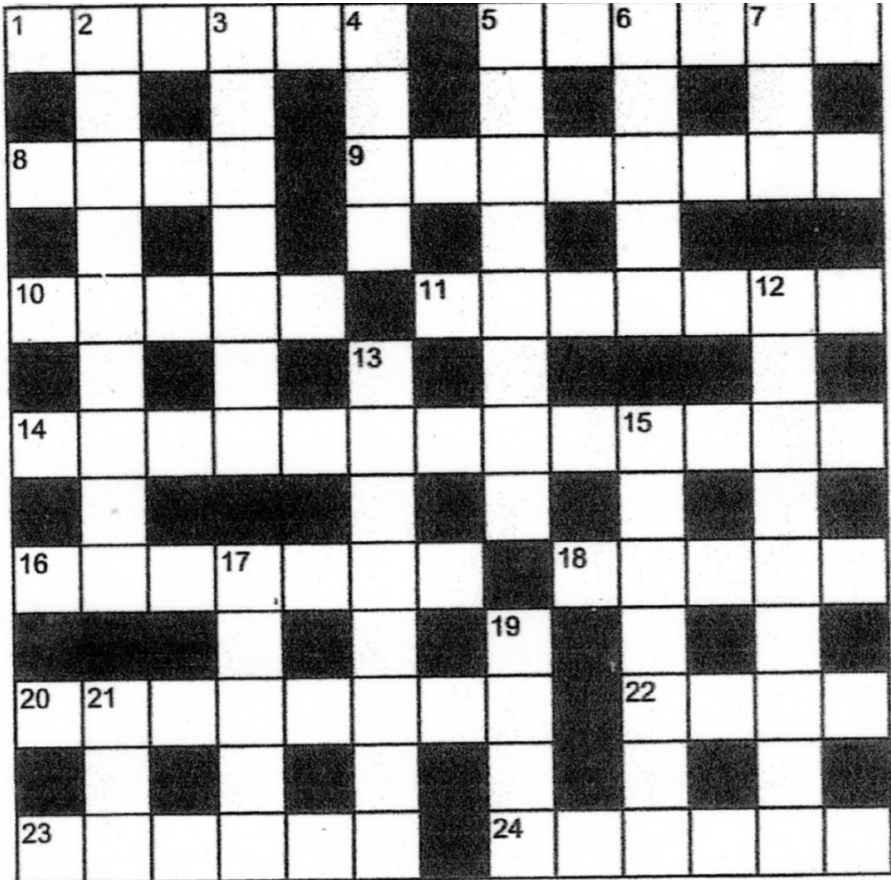
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2 -3.30pm  
 Suitable for 3 – 6 years

There are also 3 courses for adults, so do look at the posters on page 31

### BUS TIMETABLE run by Cresta Coaches of Alresford (01962 773236) only on Tuesdays and Fridays (NOT Saturdays) - **SERVICE 208**

Alton High Street	9.35	11.35	13.35
Beech Well House Road	9.43	11.43	13.43
Medstead War Memorial	9.49	11.49	13.49
Bentworth The Star	9.55	11.55	13.55
Alton High Street	10.09	12.09	

# CROSSWORD



**Clues Across**

- 1. Coerce
- 5. Anew
- 8. Spotted
- 10. Wedged
- 11. Claims
- 14. Disloyalty
- 16. Separate
- 18. Indian Dish
- 20. Velvety Fabric
- 22. Inns
- 23. Tension
- 24. Verily

**Clues Down**

- 2. Approaches
- 3. Cure-all
- 4. Folk Wisdom
- 5. Creative Skill
- 6. German River
- 7. Take to Court
- 12. Bearable
- 13. Ferries
- 15. Ousted from Office
- 17. Leap Forward
- 19. Abominable Snowman
- 21. Cabin



## EVENTS

THE MEDSTEAD PLAYERS

PRESENT

# THE ART OF MURDER

by Grace McClurg

at MEDSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

Join us for

a Murder Mystery and a Meal  
in aid of



**Cardiac Health**

*Fitness for Life*

Friday 24 April  
at 7.00 pm

Saturday 25 April  
at 7.00 pm

Tickets £20 including supper  
[boxoffice@medsteadplayers.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@medsteadplayers.co.uk)  
text **07709 553 804**  
or book online at  
[www.medsteadplayers.co.uk](http://www.medsteadplayers.co.uk)



LICENSED BAR AND RAFFLE

R A L P H F I E N N E S

**Fri  
10  
Apr**

**7:30pm**

THE  
**CHORAL**

**Screen by the Green** 

Beech Village Hall

**National  
Theatre  
Live**

**ALL MY SONS**

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR MILLER DIRECTED BY IVO VAN HOVE

**Sat  
25  
Apr**

**7:pm**

**Screen by the Green** 

[beechvillage.org.uk](http://beechvillage.org.uk)

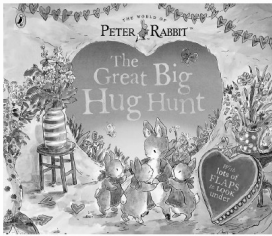
# Easter Storytime and Craft Activity

Alton Library

Thursday 2 April  
2pm – 3.30pm

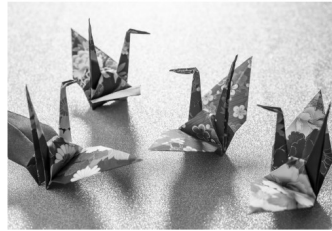
Join us for the story of Peter Rabbit and the Great Big Hug Hunt, followed by Hearts and Easter Egg Crafts.

Suitable for ages 3 – 6 years. Parents/carers to stay.  
£1 per child – collect craft pack from the downstairs help desk.



@hantcillibraries

hants.gov.uk/library



## Beginners Origami: Fold Your Way to Wellness at Alton Library

Thursdays 16 April – 21 May 1pm – 3pm

FREE

Booking is essential, please visit  
[shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/learning-in-libraries](https://shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/learning-in-libraries) to book your place. If you have issues booking online please contact branch staff or call **02392 232957**



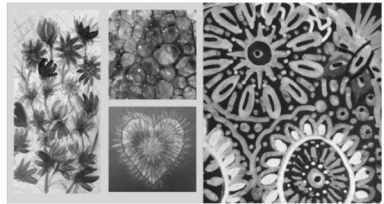
## Expressive Watercolours Alton Library

Saturdays 18 April – 16 May 10am – 12pm

Free tuition, £10 materials payable to tutor

Booking is essential, please visit

<https://shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/library-courses> to book your place. If you have issues booking online please contact branch staff or call **02392 232957**



## Art for Wellbeing Alton Library

Saturdays 18 April – 16 May 2pm – 4pm

Free tuition, £10 materials fee

Booking is essential, please visit

[shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/library-courses](https://shop.hants.gov.uk/collections/library-courses) to book your place. If you have issues booking online please contact branch staff or call **02392 232957**



RAISING FUNDS FOR:



## Tea at Three

Friday 24th April

Join us for an afternoon meeting our wonderful kind ponies, sample a delicious assortment of sweet and savoury treats and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee in our peaceful surroundings.

Interactive activities for children of ALL ages including colouring and Hobby Horse Agility Course

no booking required

**ADMISSION FREE**

Small charge for refreshments

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**



FRIDAY 24TH APRIL, FROM 3PM

BROADLANDS GROUP RDA,  
MEDSTEAD GU34 5PX

[www.broadlandsgroupprda.org.uk](http://www.broadlandsgroupprda.org.uk)

BROADLANDS EQUINE THERAPY AND RIDING FOR THE  
DISABLED



Get ready for an evening of laughs, friendly competition, and brain-teasing questions at our annual Quiz Night.

All proceeds go towards Broadlands Riding for the Disabled, so every question answered helps support us. No quiz expertise required – just enthusiasm and a sense of fun!

**DATE: FRIDAY 17 APRIL, 2026**

**TIME: 6.45 FOR 7.30 START**

**VENUE: MEDSTEAD VILLAGE HALL**

**REGISTER YOUR TEAM OF 6 TODAY!**

**£20 PER PERSON TO INCLUDE A HOT MEAL**

BEER, WINE AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE. RAFFLE TICKETS WILL ALSO BE ON SALE

Visit Our Website

[www.broadlandsgroupprda.org.uk](http://www.broadlandsgroupprda.org.uk)

**CHARITY NUMBER:**

**1170398**

Broadlands  
Equine Therapy & RDA





EST. 1955

**Broadlands**  
Equine Therapy & RDA

**Everyone Welcome!**  
**FREE ENTRY**



# OPEN DAY

Saturday 2nd May  
10am-2.00pm

- Horse Riding Displays
- Fun Dog Show
- Interactive Stalls
- BBQ
- Shetland Meet and Greet
- Hobby Horse Obstacle Course
- Bouncy Castle

**Cash preferred, Cards welcome!**

**Broadlands Equine Therapy and Riding for the Disabled**  
**Lower Paice Lane,**  
**Medstead GU34 5XP**

BLENDED TRAILS

# Froyle 10k TRAIL RACE

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2026

All information and entries

[www.blendedtrails.co.uk](http://www.blendedtrails.co.uk)



FROYLE  
VILLAGE HALL

# Wednesday Wellbeing Hub

Alton Assembly Rooms GU34 1BA  
Telephone 01420 551455



Every Wednesday 10.00am to 1.00pm  
Free Refreshments & Free Activities, there's plenty to  
get involved with each week!

Arts & Crafts  
Quizzes, Puzzles, Games & Bingo  
Love to Move, Tai Chi, Indoor  
Bowls  
Guest Speakers  
Taster Reflexology sessions

## No need to book!

Run by:  
Home Instead East Hampshire and Midhurst  
Dementia Friendly Alton



**St Andrew's Church, Medstead**



**JUMBLE  
SALE!**

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**Donations: 10:00 – 12:00**

**Sale: 1:30 – 3:30 pm**

**For further details contact  
07709 553804**

**Find a Bargain!  
All Welcome!**

**Donations of Good Quality Items Wanted!**



# ALTON WALKING CHURCH FOR MEN

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April  
6.00pm meeting at The  
Hawkley Inn**

**A gentle 90 minute walk with time  
to pause and reflect. Refreshments  
after at the pub. First walk of 2026**

**ROBIN KEMP**

familykemp@tiscali.co.uk  
07957 653403



**MEDSTEAD GARDENERS' CLUB  
ANNUAL PLANT SALE  
SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2026  
10.30 A.M. to 12 NOON**



**MEDSTEAD VILLAGE HALL**

**Shrubs, perennials, fruit bushes, vegetable plants, herbs and much more**

**Admission pp: 50p in cash only please  
Purchases can be cash or card – thank you**

For more information visit our website: [www.medsteadgardenersclub.org](http://www.medsteadgardenersclub.org)

Maybe subject to change without prior notice

# The Cartref Chamber Collective

no ticket  
needed!

and friends!

featuring Alton's own,

***Mungo Everett-Jordan and Rosalie Meers***



## ***FOR THE FIRST TIME***

The Cartref Chamber Collective  
are joined by fellow musicians for  
an exciting new collaborative  
performance.



Ellie Kershaw | clarinet | Lizzie Bonsell | piano  
Mungo Everett Jordan | viola | Rosalie Meers | viola  
Rosa Stemp | violin | Hannah Berry | cello

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April | St Lawrence Church | 7pm

varied concert with music from:

Mozart | Howells | Ravel | Vaughan Williams



**Alton Concert Band  
and  
The Lydian Singers**

Musical Director for both  
Jeremy Hilton Morrish

**“Thank You For  
The Music”**

**Saturday 18th April 2026**

**Alton Maltings: 7:00pm**

Tickets : Adult - £12.00  
12-18 - £6.00 (Under 12 free)

Available from Ticketsource  
or at the door



For more information please contact :  
[altonconcertband@outlook.com](mailto:altonconcertband@outlook.com) or [www.altonconcertband.co.uk](http://www.altonconcertband.co.uk)  
[lydiansinfo@gmail.com](mailto:lydiansinfo@gmail.com) or [www.lydiansingersfarnborough.co.uk](http://www.lydiansingersfarnborough.co.uk)

**Alton  
Concert  
Orchestra**



**Spring  
Concert**

SCHUBERT ALFONSO UND ESTRELLA OVERTURE D 732  
SAINT-SAËNS THE SWAN  
FAURÉ MASQUES ET BERGAMASQUES  
BIZET FARANDOLE FROM L'ARLÉSIENNE SUITE NO.2  
SCHUBERT SYMPHONY NO. 8 'THE UNFINISHED'

**SATURDAY 25TH APRIL 2026**

**7.30PM ALTON MALTINGS CENTRE**



BOX OFFICE ON WEBSITE OR TICKETS ON THE DOOR  
ADULTS £12.50, CONCESSIONS £10, STUDENTS £5

[WWW.ALTONCONCERTORCHESTRA.ORG.UK](http://WWW.ALTONCONCERTORCHESTRA.ORG.UK)





HAMPSHIRE  
MEDICAL FUND

A Celebration of  
**SPRING**

An uplifting evening of music

In association with



savills

The Hospital of St Cross, Winchester

**Wednesday 29th April**

6.30pm - 9.45pm

Book tickets at: [hampshiremedicalfund.org/events](http://hampshiremedicalfund.org/events)



Bentworth, Lasham and Shalden Parish

# Have your say...

Join us for our  
**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

This is your chance to hear about the life of your parish, find out what's new, look at the financial reports and elect new representatives.

**Thursday 16 April at 6.30pm  
in Shalden Village Hall.**

www.altonchoral.org.uk

Charity no.900258

*Alton Choral Society Presents*

# **Music for Good Friday**

*Featuring Fauré's Requiem*

**3rd April, 6pm**

**Alton Methodist Church**

Admission free

Retiring collection for





**GOOD FRIDAY**

**3RD APRIL**

**OUTDOOR EASTER  
SERVICE 10AM**

**Retelling of the Easter Story  
with live animals (from Mill  
Cottage Farm)  
Followed by hot cross buns and  
refreshments.  
Outside St Lawrence Church**

**THE LAST HOUR**

**Music and Meditation service  
2pm at St Lawrence Church**

**WWW.POTR-ALTON.CO.UK**





### **Palm Sunday 29th March**

8am BCP Communion Service

10.30am GAP Service at St Lawrence Church

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Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March Compline 8pm St Lawrence Church

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March Compline 8pm St Lawrence Church

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April Compline 8pm St Lawrence Church

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### **Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

7pm Maundy Thursday service at All Saints Church

7.15pm Lent Course communion with Bishop Philip

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### **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

10am Outdoor Retelling of the Easter service at St Lawrence Church  
with Mill Cottage Farm Animals

2pm Last Hour reflective service at St Lawrence Church

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### **Easter Sunday 5th April**

6.15am Sunrise Service at Old Park Farm, Beech, GU34 4AP

8am BCP Communion Service at St Lawrence Church

9.15am Easter Communion Service at St Peter's Church, Beech

9.30am Easter Communion at Holybourne Church

9.30am Easter family service at St Lawrence Church

10.30am Easter Communion at St Lawrence Church

11am Traditional Easter Communion at All Saints

## SERVICES FOR APRIL 2026

### BENTWORTH LASHAM MEDSTEAD SHALDEN

#### 29th March - PALM SUNDAY

**Purple**

BLS Together Communion		11.00a.m.	10.00a.m
Holy Communion (CW)			

#### MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Compline **7pm** St Andrew's Medstead      **8pm** St Lawrence Church  
**2nd April MAUNDY THURSDAY** Communion **7pm** All Saints Church  
**7pm** St Andrew's Medstead  
**3rd April GOOD FRIDAY** The Last Hour **2pm** St Lawrence Church  
Service of Reflection **2pm** St Andrew's Medstead

#### 5th April – EASTER SUNDAY

**White**

Easter Communion	10.00a.m		
Easter Communion		11.00a.m.	10.00a.m
Easter Communion			
Easter Communion		11.00a.m.	

#### 12th April – THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

**White**

Holy Communion (CW)		8.00a.m.	
Holy Communion (CW)	10.00a.m.		

#### 19th April – THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

**White**

Holy Communion (CW)	11.00a.m.		
Parish Communion (CW)		11.00a.m.	
Evensong			6.00p.m.

#### 26th April - THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**White**

Holy Communion (CW)	10.00a.m.		
Cafe Church (in the hall)		11.00 a.m.	

### POTR Services for April 2026 See Page 43 for ALL EASTER services

#### 12th April

9.15am Communion Service St Peter's  
9.30am Morning Worship Holy Rood  
10.30am Communion St Lawrence  
3pm Afternoon Worship All Saints  
4pm Church @ 4 Parish Centre  
6pm Evening Prayer St Lawrence

#### 19th April

9.30am Communion Service Holy Rood  
10.30am Communion Service All Saints  
10.30am Family M'g Worship St Lawrence  
3.30pm Choral Evensong St Lawrence

#### 26th April

10.30am Communion Service St Lawrence  
11am Communion Service with Baptism

#### Every Wednesday 10am

**Holy Communion All Saints**

St Peter's  
4pm Lego Church Holy Rood  
6pm Evening Worship St Lawrence