

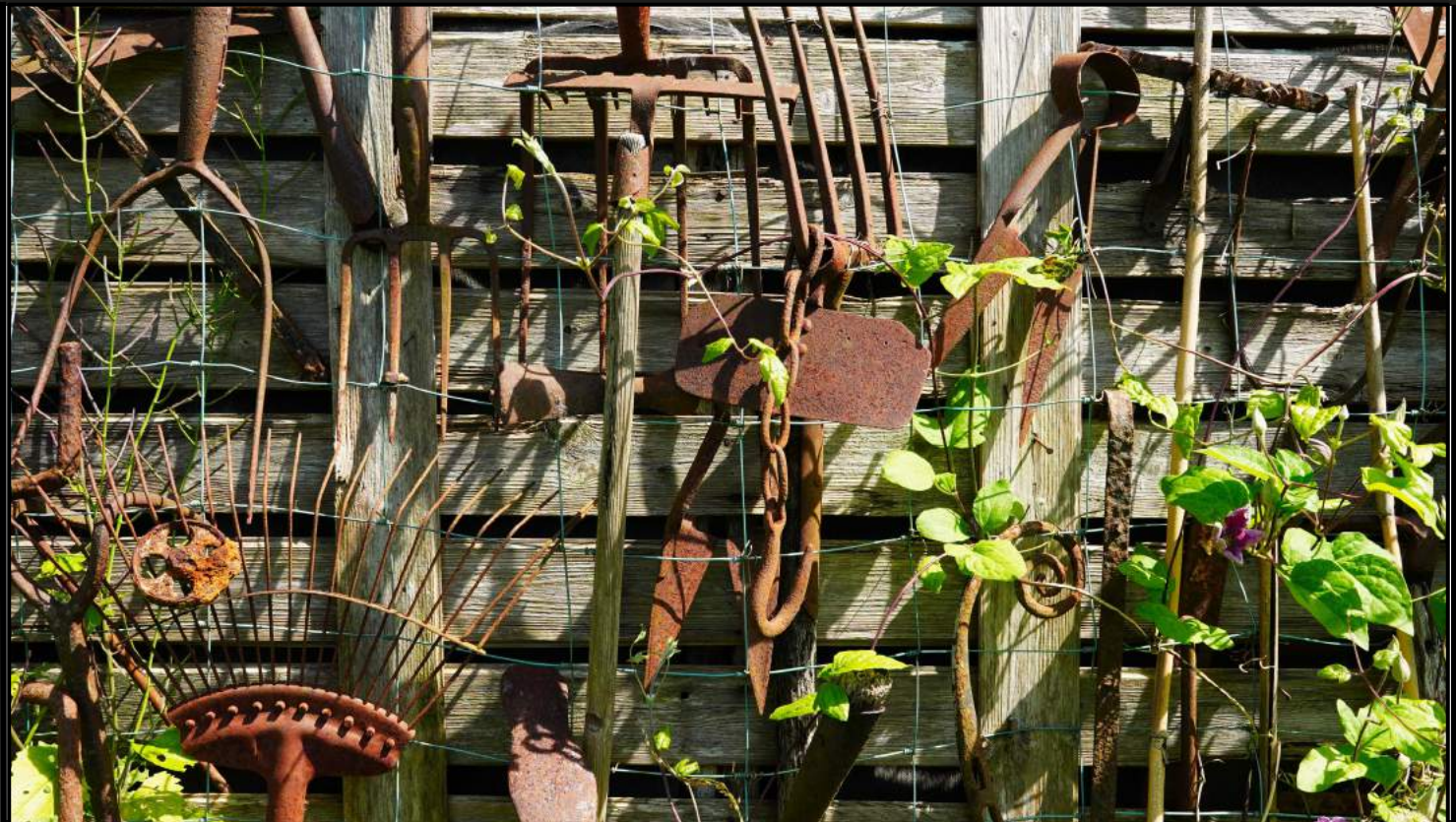


The Parish Magazine for

£1

STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD

August 2024



The Parishes of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford in the Mid-Test Benefice

Rector: currently no incumbent

All Services during the interregnum covered by the Ministry Team

All Enquiries, including enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:

Please contact the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman

Phone No: 07900 927913 or midtestbenefice@gmail.com

This Magazine: 11 issues a year.

Price: £10 paid in advance (delivered), or £1 per copy (available in churches)

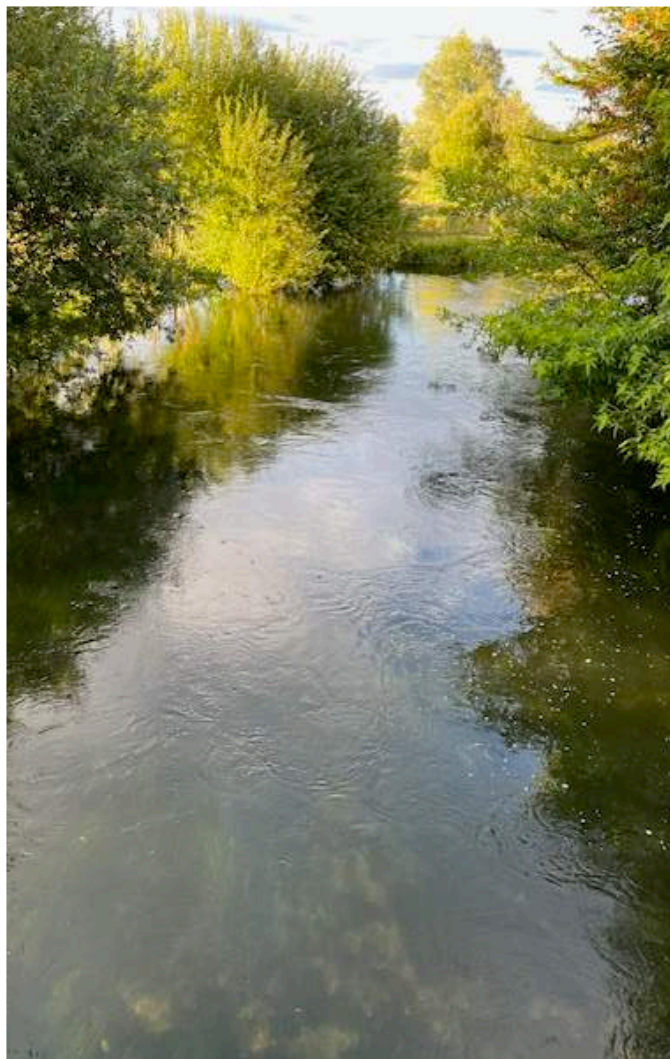
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St Peter's Stockbridge	St Mary's Longstock	St Nicholas' Leckford
<i>Churchwarden</i>	<i>Churchwarden</i>	<i>Churchwarden</i>
David Williams 811072	Madeleine Hedley 810284	Vacancy
<i>Hon Secretary</i>	<i>Hon Secretary</i>	<i>Hon Secretary</i>
Micki Nadal 810567	Richard Robinson 810388	Micki Nadal 810567
<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	<i>Hon Treasurer</i>
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Frances Waghorn 01962 776048	Vacancy	Chair: Derek Halle
Bell ringers (Longstock)	RBL (Houghton branch)	Derek@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk
Chris Reynell 810569	David Williams (Chair) 811072	Clerk: Belinda Baker 07770 406607
Bell ringers (Stockbridge)	New Secretary to be appointed	clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org
Micki Nadal 810567	Angela McMeekin: Poppies 810236	Stockbridge Pharmacy 810624
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Micki Nadal 810567	Andrea Zanchi 07747 720735	Emma Jefferies (Head) 810550
Cub Scouts	Louise Henderson 07436 899054	Stockbridge Rec Ground
Mo Collins 01256 895534	St Thomas More Church	Mike Porter (Chair) 810595
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Cllr David Drew 357024	Stockbridge Church Flowers Sec	Stuart Mawson(Sec) 07766 150055
mob 07738 289902	Angela McMeekin 810236	Stockbridge Surgery 810524
Kent Hill Scout Hall	Stockbridge Community Cinema	Out of hours urgent treatment /advice
Leigh Dance 811074	Paul Kidd 811179	Hants Doctors On Call freephone 111
Leckford Parish Council	Stockbridge Community Market	Stockbridge Town Hall
Vacancy	Carol Preston 07925 287870	Kim Candler (Chair) 811776
Longstock Garden Club	Stockbridge Court Leet	On-line bookings
Peter Moore 07881 573493	Guy Boney (Lord of the Manor) 810614	www.stockbridgetownhall.co.uk
peter.r.moore@gmail.com	Andy Soper (Bailiff) 07776 258398	or phone 513299
Longstock Parish Council	Stockbridge Dramatic Society	Test Valley School
Chair: Selina Musters 810459	Mark Frank 810562	Ms Jo McKeown (Exec. Head) 810555
Clerk: Gill Bulpitt 07763857512	Stockbridge Football Club	Trout 'n About
Longstock Village Hall	Trevor Dance (Chair) 07780 661223	Bob Powell 07802 524433
Selina Musters 810459	Kieran Wilson (Hon Sec) 07883 624808	TVBC Councillor
Longstock & Leckford WI	Email: stockbridgefc@hotmail.co.uk	Cllr Ian Jeffrey 01794 388872
Selina Musters 810459	Stockbridge Music	Unity Transport (Dial-a-Ride shopping bus) 356808
Neighbour Care 0845 0943713	Paul Wing 07764 581601	
<i>Calls cost 7p/min +network charge.</i>		



From the Editorial Team

This month our magazine meanders gently from one subject to another, just as the River Test moves from one idyllic scene to another, as captured in this tranquil and enchanting 'impressionistic' photograph taken by Janet Williams.

And the river features again in the magazine - an article about the annual weed cut mixes the practical with the artistic (p21), and a later mention raises the prosaic but important issue of the chemicals in flea treatment for dogs polluting our rivers (p27).

Last month we chose to avoid politics as a theme, but in this year of elections globally, we thought we should take a look at Democracy and how it has been perceived by political thinkers and wits through the ages (in our footers) and more seriously, try to identify the current thinking on its essential principles (p15).

Frances Candler, Jennifer Kidd and Thea Taylor

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Cover Photo: taken at Stockbridge Open Gardens 2024 by Nigel Rugman

In this bumper year of elections across the world, our footers reflect on 'the good, the bad and the ugly' of democracy

Stockbridge Town Hall Events



Weekly

Mon am Pilates with Paula
Thurs am Stockbridge Community Market

This Month

Aug 1-3 Stockbridge Drama Society
Aug 3 Antique Fair
Aug 3 Antique Fair
Aug 4 Trout 'n About
Aug 9-12 Jules At No.43
Aug 14 Test Valley Green Party
Aug 15-21 QuARTet
Aug 24-25 Antiques and Curios
Aug 24-25 Hawkmoor Books
Aug 28 Stockbridge Community Cinema
Aug 30-31 Cocoon Outerwear Limited



**Stockbridge
Community
Cinema**



The Holdovers (15) Wednesday 28 August 4.30 pm and 7.30 pm (2hrs 13min)

A curmudgeonly teacher at a New England prep school is forced to remain on campus during Christmas break to babysit the handful of students with nowhere to go. Eventually He forms an unlikely bond with a damaged, brainy troublemaker and with the school's head cook who has just lost a son in Vietnam.



Tickets £6.00 (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee)
available online via our website
stockbridgecinema.org.uk or via the
TicketSource telephone booking service
0333 666 3366 (no additional fee)



LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

Tuesday 27th August

Stockbridge Town Hall 6.45pm for 7pm start.

**Susan Essex
presents**

'A Housemother in India - nine life-changing months'

Guests always welcome.
Please contact Selina Musters on 810459
for further details



Houghton WI

**There is no meeting in
August.**

We meet again on
**Monday 16th September, 10am
at Houghton Village Hall for
'And now the Good News'**

when **Richard Murphy**
finds some things to cheer us up!

Visitors welcome. Further information from
Jane Anderton 01264 810928

Wherwell History Group

**There is no meeting in
August.**

**We meet again on
Friday September 13th
(See details next month)**



For further information, please check
<https://www.wherwellhistory.com>



The Royal British Legion Houghton and District Branch

Contact David Williams (Chairman)
01264 811072

Social evenings are held on the first Wednesday
of most months in the Greyhound on the Test

Copy for Magazine

Copy date for the September Magazine:

15 August 2024

Please send emails to:

editorsstockmag@gmail.com

or phone Frances on 01264 811776

Jennifer on 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481

TROUT 'N ABOUT!

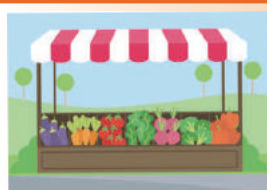


Food & Craft Festival Sunday 4th August 2024

10:00 - 16:00

*Stockbridge High Street will be alive
with local traders showcasing the very
best of local food, produce and crafts*

Raising money for local good causes



Stockbridge Community Market

**Every Thursday morning
9.30 - 11.45am
in Stockbridge Town Hall**

Selling the very best local and home-made produce

Pies, cakes, breads, soups, eggs and vegetables.
Handmade crafts, toys, books, plants & bric-a-brac.

Please come along and browse

Free drop-in IT Help Desk and Wi-Fi access

 **HAMPSHIRE**
open studios
17-26 August 2024

Eight Landscape Artists

Kent Hill Scout Hut

(situated behind the Grosvenor Hotel).

17-26 August

10am-5pm except 20th until 1pm

Eight artists showing a variety of paintings in oil,
watercolour, pastel and charcoal.

Peronel Barnes

Andy Brooks

Veronica Cornes

Robin Coutts

Maggi Denaro

Heather Emley

Sally Milligan

Lucia Owen



Contact:

email: sally@sallymilligan.co.uk

RENATE WEST

Stockbridge Town Hall

**17th-21st August
10am - 5pm**



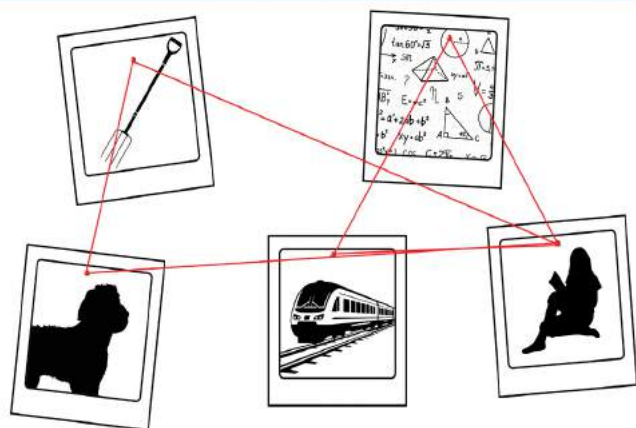
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Contact:

Telephone: 07876 464208

Website: <http://www.renatewest.com>

THE
CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE
DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME
ADAPTED BY **SIMON STEVENS**
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **MARK HADDON**



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THIS AMSTERDAM PRODUCTION OF "THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME" IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH LONGSTOCK THEATRICALS LTD. ON BEHALF OF SAMUEL FRENCH LTD. WWW.SAMUELFRENCH.CO.UK

Andover Concert Series
Truly Madly Baroque
Thursday 26th September 2024 - 7:30pm

Red Priest

Tickets: £18 from The Lights or on the door

Performed at:
the Lights andover

Presented by:
Andover Music

Saturday Sept 7th  **1.00pm - 5.00pm**

LONGSTOCK
Village Fête
takes place on the
Longstock Recreation Ground
on Saturday 7th September.

A **barbeque, bar, teas**, and the usual **stalls and sideshows** including children's **adventure tunnel and bouncy castle** and **football shootout**, will operate all afternoon.

Tickets for the **Grand Draw** will be on sale.

This year, we feature two performances by a group of **Ukrainian dancers** based in Winchester and we welcome, for the first time, the **Otterbourne Brass band**.

If you would like to enter your dog in the **dog show**, please bring him/her along.
It's a very un-serious show!



Programme

1.00	Fête opens
1.00 to 5.00	BBQ, bar, teas and all sideshows
1.15 to 1.55	Otterbourne Brass
2.00 to 2.20	Ukraine Dancers
2.30 to 3.10	Otterbourne Brass
3.15 to 3.35	Ukraine Dancers
3.40 to 4.20	Dog Show
4.30	Grand Draw
4.50	Tug 'o War
5.00	Fête closes

Bring cards and plenty of cash and we shall see you there! Let's hope for a fine day.

 **Longstock Garden Club**

Our talks in the Hall will resume on 8th Oct 2024 when Rosemary Legrand will give a talk on the Spectacular South African Flora & Fauna.

For information about summer garden visits please see www.longstockgardenclub.com

Members, please don't forget to take photos for our December meeting.

For further information please contact Peter Moore on 07881573493

Test Villages u3a

Thursday 1st August
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall
Tony Harris presents
'Winston Churchill'

This year is the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings overseen by Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Join him - as the alter ego of actor-historian Tony Harris - for a journey from birth to death covering many fascinating aspects of the Great Man's life. Tony is a natural comedian and brings both the drama and the humour of Winston's career in politics to us.

Thursday 5th September
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall
Rosemary Legrand presents
'Exploring the South Island of New Zealand'

In this illustrated talk, Rosemary shares her experience of New Zealand's beautiful scenery and wildlife. She searches for whales, sea lions, royal albatross and yellow-eyed penguins; she flies over Mount Cook, sails in Milford Sound and visits the paradise Cook Islands

Doors open at 1.40pm for the presentation, followed by refreshments.

New members are very welcome to attend our meetings.

u3a is a UK-wide network of groups that provides the opportunity to socialise and learn for fun.

Find out more at u3a.org.uk
or see the latest on
Test Villages group at
<https://testvillages.u3asite.uk/>



Sunday
29th
September
2024

Walk the Test Way is back for another year!

Lace up your walking boots and join us walking the Test Way for your chosen charity. Last year walkers raised just over £90,000 for 115 charities. Just incredible!!

The Test Way is constantly rated one of the top 10 best walks in this area and, each year, this event draws interest from many groups from families to schools, scout packs to charities and businesses, all walking and raising funds to support the vital work that charities do for us. Who will you choose to support?

The walk is suitable and fun for all ages and abilities. **We have 5 distances you can choose from** (5, 8, 11, 16 or 25.5 miles). Walkers are taken by private coach from Romsey to their starting location and end the walk back in Romsey at the Memorial Park.

So how do I sign up?

Visit www.walkthetestway.org.uk/register and check out our blog 'How do I take part in the Walk the Test Way?' which will give you all the information you will need to get started. Once you are all registered, it's time to start raising funds for your chosen charity!

Don't forget to....

- Share your Just Giving page on your social media and tag us in @walkthetestway
 - Share the event with your colleagues and friends
 - Let the charity know that you are fundraising for them, they might send you some goodies!!
- and last but not least, like, share and comment on our social media and we will gladly share what you are up to. Facebook @walkthetestway
Or email registrar@walkthetestway.org.uk

A Defibrillator Near You!

Defibrillators for public use are located at: -

Stockbridge Fire Station (available 24 hrs)
Longstock Village Hall (available 24 hrs)
Leckford Estate Office (restricted hours).
Leckford Farm Shop (restricted hours)

For further details, and for other UK locations, go to www.defibfinder.uk

Instructions for use are given when the device is commandeered but for anyone who would like prior understanding of how to use one, see <https://www.aeddonate.org.uk/events/>

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Andover Concert Series ('ACS') – I liked it so much I offered to be treasurer!

Does anyone remember those Remington shaver adverts from the late 70's? (If not, a quick Google search will set you on the track!). Well I'm no Victor Kiam but I do want to plug the concert series that ACS put on as I think it's an undervalued local gem.

As a bit of a gamble, I bought a season ticket for the '23/'24 season – and managed to get to all 7 concerts. Basically, it's international standard classical (mainly) music but on a small scale – largely soloists to quartets – and a range of music from well-known and loved to new/challenging/fascinating introductions. And, because it's small and friendly, the artists would generally chat to the audience about what they were playing/their instrument/the composer – I felt like I was learning as well as enjoying. In that season, we had everything from saxophone trios to Italian tenors to the most fantastic classical guitar and flute duo (who knew that was a thing?!)

But these concerts (which take place at 'The Lights' in Andover, usually on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:30pm from September) have been struggling to get the audiences they deserve since Covid – and it's such a shame. Unless the club is better supported, these concerts will disappear and our area will lose a real asset.

So please take a look at the ACS website (<http://www.andovermusicclub.co.uk/>) and consider going to a concert from the '24/'25 season (£18 a ticket) – or even buying a season ticket (£80 for 7 concerts or only £20 for under 18's).

I'm particularly looking forward to the 'cello/piano duo in November and the harp duo in February and am annoyed that I booked our September holiday to clash with *Truly Madly Baroque* from Red Priest – that looks a great start to the season (see poster p6). And if Thursday nights don't suit you, there's a family concert on Saturday March 29th 2025 at 3pm – Simon Mayor's *Mandoliquents* – another great fun option.

Hope to see you there.

Lisa Trailor



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Stockbridge Neighbour Care Salisbury Trip

The inaugural run to Salisbury last month was a great success, with excellent reviews and useful comments from our 'guinea pig' passengers.

We have been able to fine tune the arrangements for the future – please make a note of these if you are interested in joining the monthly visit to Salisbury.

1. The bus/taxis will run every 2nd Tuesday in the month. This will avoid a clash with a bus to Andover. **The next run will be Tuesday 13th August.**

2. The pick-up time from Stockbridge will be 10am; pick-up points will be the White Hart Car Park and the Town Hall, depending on numbers and vehicles

3. The departure time from Salisbury, outside Bradbeers in the Market Square, will be 1.15pm

4. If you are unsure whether you are eligible for the service, or are interested in booking a place, please call the Neighbour Care number – 0845 0943713. You must be on the Neighbour Care Salisbury list to be able to use the bus.

The service is available to anyone eligible (i.e. those with no other means of transport) in the Stockbridge Neighbour Care service area – Stockbridge, Longstock, Leckford and Houghton.

Lifts to and from the Stockbridge pick-up and drop-off points are arranged for anyone outside Stockbridge.

The Stockbridge Neighbour Care Team

Forthcoming Concerts in St Peter's Church, Stockbridge

27 September, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

The Tippett Quartet

The Tippett Quartet regularly perform at Wigmore Hall, BBC Proms, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Bridgewater Hall and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. The Quartet has recently been awarded Gramophone Record of the Month for their recording of Gorécki Quartets for Naxos.

8 November, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Nadine Benjamin MBE, soprano
Andrea Kmecova, piano

One of Britain's foremost sopranos Nadine Benjamin visits Stockbridge for a concert accompanied by renowned pianist Andrea Kmecova. <https://andreakmecova.com> <https://www.nadinebenjamin.com>



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Stockbridge
PRACTICE

Patient
News

Home for the holidays?

If you are back from university or boarding school and are unwell, we can see you as a temporary patient.



For all routine matters including repeat medication please contact your permanent surgery.

Blood tests & Online Booking

Just a reminder that all patients can now access blood test results on the NHS App. Blood tests can be booked online through the NHS App. Please be aware that we can only do blood tests which have been requested by a clinical member of the surgery team or a Consultant at a local Hampshire hospital.

If there are no GP appointments available to book on the NHS App, it does not mean that you cannot get a GP appointment. We offer same day appointments for patients with an urgent medical problem. Routine appointments can be booked for around 2 weeks' time. When we are low on routine appointments, we do not release them online because there are sometimes better options for patients e.g. same day appointment, physiotherapy appointment, pharmacist appointment, self-referral etc. More information on these services is available at stockbridgesurgery.co.uk – see the 'Do I need to see a GP?' page.

Op Courage

This is a service for ex-military personnel, reservists, and service leavers in Hampshire. It provides help in adjusting to civilian life and wellbeing. For more information visit their website www.opcouragestheseast.nhs.uk or call 0300 365 2000 (option 4) or email gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk. If you live in Wiltshire, you can call 0300 034 9986.

HPV and MMR catch up

If you are aged under 25 years and missed your HPV vaccination at school, we can give it at the surgery. If you have not had your MMR vaccination and would like it, please also contact the surgery.

Ann Spooner
Practice Manager

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Macmillan Cancer Support - 72-Hole Golf Challenge 2024

Summer arrived and it was hard to believe a year had passed since our first attempt at this amazing challenge to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. In 2023, as a 'three ball', we managed to do the 72 holes in fourteen and a half hours and raised £1200. This time, our team was slightly diminished as one of our members has moved from the area.

This year, Martin Green and I teed off at 5.20am on Monday June 24th at Leckford Golf Course. We were blessed with beautiful weather and a quiet day on the course. Our progress was very good as we were just a 'two ball' and we completed the 72 holes in under 12 hours. We covered a total of 32.5 kilometres during the day, with both scoring a best round of 80, the worst being my 87.

We have raised just over £900 this year which will help the charity continue to offer vital support to those affected by cancer. The sad reality is that one in two people will get cancer, not to mention the families and loved ones affected by this.

Our link is still accepting donations so please make a small donation at https://longestdaygolf.macmillan.org.uk/Team/return_of_the_saints
Thank you.

Garth Jacobs



Stockbridge Primary and
Pre-school

BAG2SCHOOL

A brilliant £256.80 was raised by Stockbridge Primary School's recent Bag2School event!

This time the donations are making their way over to Pakistan to the charities that Bag2School have links with, who then reach out to their local communities. So, as well as supporting the school, you have helped worthy causes much further afield - a huge thank you to all.

If you didn't manage to drop off your donations this time, we will be running another Bag2School initiative in the next school year.

We are so grateful for all the support from our local community.

Thank you,
Friends of Stockbridge School





A Taste of Stockbridge 28th June 2024



It seemed an ambitious fund-raising idea, suggested by Caroline Dunlop, to attempt a 'safari supper' through Stockbridge but, when I put the idea to Lucy Townsend at The Greyhound, it was met with instant positivity. The possible venues were visited and they all agreed to be part of the event, every one of them enthusiastic and extremely helpful. So 'A Taste of Stockbridge' was born. The object was to raise money for Stockbridge Ukraine, supporting our friends here in the village.

Ten venues offered us food, outside their premises, as we 'safaried' along the High Street. It was a beautiful evening, the sun shone, and 64 people joined in and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



We met at 6pm in **The White Hart**.



Everyone was given a beautiful yellow and blue wristband made by **The Breakfast Club at Stockbridge Primary School** for us.



These helped identify ticket holders and ensured others didn't muscle in on the occasion!

Hildon Water had kindly donated much-needed water at all venues. We began with a huge of glass of Silent Pool gin and tonic, a great start to the evening.



Our next destination was **The Little Whisky Shop** where we were offered a dram (or two!) of whisky.



A short distance along the High Street we stopped at **Thyme & Tides** and were given a miniature fish and chip cone which was delicious.



Then onwards to the **Clos Du Marquis** where duck rillettes in puff pastry with cornichon and radish were waiting; a delicious taste of Stockbridge indeed.

Next stop was **The Three Cups** where there was a beer-tasting in the beautiful garden at the back; not sure how much of a tasting, certainly a lot of drinking.



A delicious chocolate or lemon cannoli provided by **Prego** awaited us at **The Greyhound**, with a miniature fish pie and a refreshing glass of Rosé supplied by **Stone Vine and Sun**.



There we had a chance to sit down and enjoy the glorious view across the river in the evening sun.



Refuelled and revitalised we swept on to **Meadow** where a warm pastel del nata or a Jude's ice cream were waiting, both of which were quite delicious. They had kindly opened up for us for the occasion.

Our next stop was the **Purbani** where shots of Sambuca or Baileys on trays greeted us. I think some people possibly had both!



Our evening ended at **The Grosvenor** in their delightful garden with excellent cheese canapés and a glass (or two) of Danebury wine.



In the evening sun, we were privileged to hear the guitar playing an acoustic set by Mark Burford who entertained us until at least 10pm.

This was a wonderful finale and we all sat in the evening sunshine, agreeing with new and old friends just how special the food and drink venues were and how incredibly lucky we were to live or be part of Stockbridge.



A toast was raised to George, Lydia, Victoria and Rymma, all of whom were with us, and our fervent hopes that the appalling war in Ukraine should reach a swift conclusion for them and their families. The event raised around a magnificent £4,600.

So, many thanks to all the venues for giving everything at no charge and with such good grace. Most of all, thank you **Lucy Townsend** for your amazing dedication and for championing this fully. It would never have happened without your enthusiasm, your wonderful staff, and Caroline's idea.

Sally Milligan

Stockbridge Ukraine has bought another car!

One of our biggest initiatives at the moment is buying 4x4 pick-ups for use on the front-line in Ukraine. They are hard to get hold of in Ukraine and are used as makeshift ambulances. We bought one in May which is in use at the moment and, thanks to the generosity of donors and fundraising events, we have just bought another. Mark Betteridge expects to drive it to Ukraine early next month. The car will be delivered to Gena of the 25th Airborne Brigade, a long-standing personal friend of one of our team.



Meanwhile, our activities continue. Some readers may have been involved in the very successful **Garden Visit** (organised by Sally Milligan) and **Taste of Stockbridge** in June (see opposite). We recently made the national press with **The Great Store Cupboard Challenge** (organised by Polly Wood) for the oldest food item in your cupboard. The winners were Kate Colquhoun for chocolates dated 1900 and Sally Lort-Phillips for snails dated 1971 with special mention to Michael Nicholson for buying the most tickets.

Our next two events are in October, both in the Town Hall.

On Friday 4th October **A Concert for Ukraine** - will be a celebration of British and Ukrainian singing, dancing and music. It features the Larondina Dance Company, a remarkable group of 11 dancers all of whom have Down's Syndrome, several Ukrainian artists based in Winchester, and our own singing group - The Larks.

On Tuesday 15th October **James Holland** the renowned historian, author and broadcaster will give a talk based on his new book **Cassino '44**.

Tickets for both events are on sale at <https://buytickets.at/stockbridgeukraine>.

If you want to donate you can do so by BACS (BACS: Account name Stockbridge Ukraine, S/C 30-98-97, A/C 79874662) or cheque (Pay Stockbridge Ukraine and post or drop it in to me: Mark Frank, Birch Cottage, High Street, Stockbridge, SO20 6EU).

Also - look out for us at **Trout 'n About**.

Mark Frank



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Padel Tennis - what is it?



Last month the theme of the magazine was sport, and it got us wondering about a game that more and more people are talking about with enormous enthusiasm - Padel. But many of us are not quite sure what exactly it is. So we asked an enthusiast.

Considered to be the fastest-growing sport in the world, it's a fast-paced, social sport, that's 'easy to pick up, but difficult to put down'. It is popular with experienced racquet players and complete beginners alike. You can have fun rallies even from your first session, and for experienced players it's a fast game with desperate retrieving, touch shots, smashes and lobs.

Padel is a mixture of tennis and squash usually played on an open air court that's about two thirds of the size of a tennis court. The court has a net similar in height to a tennis net. However, the court has perspex walls, so your shots can be played off them – like in squash – to find wicked angles and creative shots to beat your opponents. As a bonus, you can even bounce the ball off a wall on your own side of the court – if you can get it to land on the other side of the court.

The bats are thick and of a solid composite construction with holes in the playing surface and the ball is very like a tennis ball, but has slightly less pressure. This means it will rebound off the walls slower, which helps give you more time to hit your shots. Scoring in padel is the same as tennis and is most commonly played as sets and games. To win one set, you have to win six games and be leading by two clear games.

Padel is a much more relaxed experience than other racquet sports. It is usually played as doubles, and its lack of formality is contributing to the sport's growing popularity. Its attraction lies not only in its accessibility but also in its ability to provide a fun and lively experience for players and spectators alike.

The sport was invented in Mexico in the 1960s - the first-ever padel court was set up by Mexican businessman Enrique Corcuera at his holiday home in Acapulco. Now with about 15 million players worldwide, it is particularly strong in the Spanish speaking world, with Spain and Argentina now dominating the padel world.

It is said that the sport's popularity along the Costa del Sol and in the Algarve has exposed it to a large number of British visitors, leading to the increasing popularity of the sport in the UK and the launch of the UK Padel Federation in 2011.

If you want to know more, you can watch the premier padel league online and find lots of lessons and explanations of tactics, positioning and the techniques for the different shots.

Most padel venues will have everything you need to get started and will have padel bats and balls available for you to hire, so you don't need to worry if you've never played before. Locally there are courts and clubs in King's Somborne and in Winchester, where there is a waiting list. Six new courts are coming soon to Trojan's Hockey Club, Stoneham Lane, Eastleigh.

Philip Harrington

Democracy: a complicated business

As our footers this month demonstrate, people in different times and places have a very different take on what it means to be democratic. Recently we have become aware of the range of forms democracy takes, supported by widely different institutions of government. Just look at the UK, France and the USA. And it is not just about voting.

So to get a perspective on what democracy means today, we looked to the United Nations for some guidelines, but though democracy is cited as a core value, it is, probably wisely, left undefined.

However we thought '*The 14 Principles of Democracy*' identified by *Liberties* (The Civil Liberties Union for Europe) did set out the core values. You may disagree with some of them, and they need further explanation*, but it is very interesting to measure the political systems we know against these general principles.

- Participation of citizens
- Equality
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Political tolerance
- Multi-party system
- Control over the abuse of power
- Freedom of economy
- Bill of rights
- Human rights
- Free and fair elections
- Free courts (meaning independent courts)
- Accepting election results
- Rule of law

*For further clarification, please see <https://www.liberties.eu/en/stories/principles-of-democracy/44151>

Editors

St Peter's and Old St Peter's Church Flower Festival and Open Gardens

These are the two major fund-raising events for our two churches.

Angela McMeekin's beautiful Flower Festival was in early May and the Open Gardens event at the end of June was this year at the west end of the village. Both have tea and cake as part of the event. This year, the two events have raised over £4,500 which is a wonderful sum to help keep our two churches as we would all wish to see them. Many of us do not go to church regularly but we all like to know that they are there, in the heart of the village, for weddings, funerals and a quiet place for thought as well as the regular services.

I take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with making our Open Gardens village event such a happy and successful weekend. The eight gardens open were all glorious and I sincerely thank all the gardeners for allowing so many visitors to stroll through and ask all their questions.

I also wish to thank the many villagers who volunteered to help during both events with creating the ticket/map, selling tickets, waitressing, cake making, car parking, photography and all the other extra happenings.

All being well, we will have both Flower Festival and Open Gardens in 2025. Open Gardens will be at the east end of the village on the weekend of 28th/29th June 2025. Please keep the date!

Many many thanks to you all.

Alison Vialou-Clark





Our thanks to the gardeners at Cossacks, Fishmore House, Highbanks, Little Wyck, Medlar Cottage, The Old Rectory, Touchwood and Trout Cottage for generously opening their gardens, and to our photographer, Nigel Rugman.



Thursday 11th July saw the Grand Opening of this remarkable garden at Leckford Park Nursery, the vision of Libby Hilling, who is passionate about the positive effect gardens and nature have for our mental health and wellbeing.

While working for the Leckford Estate, Libby applied through the John Lewis Partnership's 'Golden Jubilee Trust' for a secondment to Andover Mind, a charity supporting people with mental ill health as well as adult carers, and people living with dementia and mild cognitive impairment.



Libby's dream was to develop a beautiful garden in an unused piece of land at the Longstock Park Nursery, to provide a relaxing and inspiring outdoor space to benefit not only the volunteers and service users of Andover Mind, but also the wider community.

The project was launched last year, and with much of the garden completed, an audience of those involved in its creation gathered for its opening by the Mayor of Test Valley, Cllr Ian Jeffrey. There were speeches from Libby herself, and from representatives of the many organisations who have been involved, including major donors SimplyHealth, Triagg Construction who was the principal contractor for the project, and Sparsholt College, whose staff and students worked on the project, and from Nish Kankiwala, the CEO of the John Lewis Partnership, who was obviously enjoying seeing such a positive outcome from the Golden Jubilee Trust initiative.

Andover Mind is continuing to raise money to carry the project forward, and you can help by buying a Squiggle - a handmade metal garden stake in the shape of the Mind logo. See the Andover Mind website for details.



There is still work to be done in the garden, so if you are a keen gardener or just enjoy being outside, please contact Libby on 01264 332297.

And please visit the garden - just walk quickly though the the irresistible plants for sale area at Longstock Park Nursery, and there it is!

Frances Candler





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Blame the Vicar

When things go wrong it's rather tame
To find we are ourselves to blame,
It gets the trouble over quicker
To go and blame things on the Vicar.

The Vicar, after all, is paid
To keep us bright and undismayed.
The Vicar is more virtuous too
Than lay folks such as me and you.
He never swears, he never drinks,
He never should say what he thinks.
His collar is the wrong way round,
And that is why he's simply bound
To be the sort of person who
Has nothing very much to do
But take the blame for what goes wrong
And sing in tune at Evensong.

For what's a Vicar really for
Except to cheer us up? What's more,
He shouldn't ever, ever tell
If there is such a place as Hell,
For if there is it's certain he
Will go to it as well as we.
The Vicar should be all pretence
And never, never give offence.
To preach on Sunday is his task
And lend his mower when we ask
And organise our village fetes
And sing at Christmas with the waits
And in his car to give us lifts
And when we quarrel, heal the rifts.

To keep his family alive
He should industriously strive
In that enormous house he gets,
And he should always pay his debts,
For he has quite six pounds a week,
And when we're rude he should be meek
And always turn the other cheek.
He should be neat and nicely dressed
With polished shoes and trousers pressed,
For we look up to him as higher
Than anyone, except the Squire.

Dear People, who have read so far,
I know how really kind you are,
I hope that you are always seeing
Your Vicar as a human being,
Making allowances when he
Does things with which you don't agree.
But there are lots of people who
Are not so kind to him as you.
So in conclusion you shall hear
About a parish somewhat near,
Perhaps your own or maybe not,
And of the Vicars that it got.

One parson came and people said,
Alas! Our former Vicar's dead!
And this new man is far more 'Low'
Than dear old Reverend so-and-so,
And far too earnest in his preaching,
We do not really like his teaching,
He seems to think we're simply fools
Who've never been to Sunday Schools."
That Vicar left, and by and by

A new one came, "He's much too 'High',"
The people said, "too like a saint,
His incense makes our Maddie faint."
So now he's left and they're alone
Without a Vicar of their own.
The living's been amalgamated
With one next door they've always hated.

Dear readers, from this rhyme take
warning,
And if you heard the bell this morning
Your Vicar went to pray for you,
A task the Prayer Book bids him do.
"Highness" or "Lowness" do not matter,
You are the Church and must not scatter,
Cling to the Sacraments and pray
And God be with you every day.

From Church Poems, by John Betjeman, ISBN/ISSN: 9780719537844

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(with a mischievous substitution for the original 'Mavis' in the seventh verse, made by erstwhile Rector Phill)*

S.L.G.M

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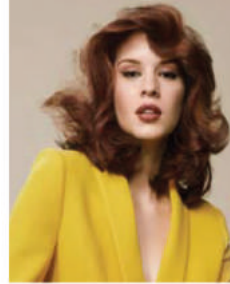
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The Weed Cut

To keep our river – The Test – flowing well and healthily requires constant care and attention so I thought it a good idea to say a bit on the weed cut which goes on every year throughout the warmer months. I will add something about what is involved in maintaining a prime trout fishing river. It is a big subject!

The Government is represented by The Environment Agency which applies the laws and keeps an eye on what is going on. The riparian owners and fishermen are represented by the Test and Itchen Association and similar public or private organisations.

So, on to the weed cut itself which must be undertaken with sensitivity to the needs of the river habitat. Overzealous or indiscriminate cutting of river weed or marginal vegetation can have a negative impact on a habitat for healthy fly life, fish and other wildlife.

At the beginning of the year, weed cutting dates are set - there are usually 4 official cuts a year, starting in May. The Test is split into 5 sectors - A, B, C, D and E - Sector A being at the source of the river and E the last sector before the sea. Each cutting session lasts for 6 days with a 7th day reserved for 'clearing off' when clumps of jammed floating weed are raked off and removed. Moving downstream, each sector starts a day later than the one above. The idea is not to let an upstream sector send its cuttings downstream unless this is pre-planned.

River weed has several characteristics. As it grows, it increases in volume and displaces water. When cut, the reverse occurs and therefore careful planning is required as water levels are affected. Weed is also a provider of a suitable environment for freshwater shrimps and other invertebrates to thrive and feed the trout - so even more planning is required. This ensures that the supply of food is reasonably constant to hold the fish rather than have them dash off to another marine pasture.

Further consideration has to be given to the condition of the river bed. This is a repository for more fish food. Both fish and river life need clean oxygenated water so there is balance between clean gravel for the invertebrates and silt for fly larvae and the like. Again, it involves weed to be used to control water speed, firstly to scour gravel and, secondly, to slow water to maintain silt levels.

So now to some of the actual weeds:- There is *Ranunculus aquatilis* (water crowfoot) which is usually obvious and vigorous in growth and is a strong contributor to the life of the river. Then there are starwort, mare's tail, lesser parsnip. Towards and on the bankside, are reeds, bullrushes and watercress.

I will digress for a moment since I have mentioned the word *Ranunculus* and I suspect many of our readers will have heard of Sir John Everett Millais, he of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. You probably know his wonderful painting of Shakespeare's

Ophelia supposedly drowning in what seems to be a bit of the Test.



Looking at the picture, the water is crystal clear, the sun is peeping out whilst the *Ranunculus*, in which Ophelia lies, is lush, verdant and providing a comfortable place of repose. She, on the other hand, is shamming death and seeking publicity. She floats lightly with upheld hands and closed eyes, hoping... Hoping for what? Hoping for the rain to stop, like us? (I could develop this story...)

On a more serious matter, we in Stockbridge have a small army of Fishing Club keepers looking after the river and some of the carriers crossing the High Street and ensuring they are clear of obstruction. There are further waterways in the Town belonging to riparian owners - even though the owners may not be aware of the fact! These carriers are not the responsibility of the Fishing Club.

One carrier, in particular, always demands my interest - Lillies Stream flowing from the High Street past Nelson Close to the wooden bridge on to what I like to call Beryl's field. Following our wet spring and summer, the stream's banks are spectacularly overgrown like elsewhere on the River. In a short while, this bankside growth will need cutting before it starts to collapse and become a nuisance. In the meantime, the lush growth is a haven for birds and insect life. You will also notice that the Lillies Stream river weed has been very well cut by Hattie, the daughter of Daniel The Head Keeper.



Our readers may like to know that any bankside vegetation must not be allowed to fall or be put into the river. Any cuttings must be collected and disposed of in a responsible way. On this subject The Test and Itchen Association states:

'Above all else, be considerate and use your common sense. Do NOT send downstream what you would not want to receive from upstream.'

Peter Hughes

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Stockbridge Parish Council News

Christmas Lights

The Parish Council has agreed to provide £1,000 funding for the Christmas lights this year. The Christmas lights have become an integral part of Christmas in Stockbridge and the imaginative displays using the High Street trees, the railings round the ponds and even lighting up the water make Stockbridge feel special at Christmas. The Parish Council has limited budget to support this endeavour, however, and it will be important this year for donations to be provided from other organisations and businesses because TVBC, which has provided support for the last two years, has confirmed that they will be unable to do so again.

Hampshire Police - Talk on Cyber-related Fraud Tuesday 29 October at 6.30pm in Stockbridge Town Hall

The PC has arranged for an officer from Hampshire Police's South East Anti Cyber Crime unit to make a presentation on cyber-related fraud (otherwise known as scams). These make up a significant number of reported crimes each month and cost the public and UK economy substantial sums of money each day, week and year. South East Police Cyber Crime Team have prepared a session which will cover a number of different aspects of both online and offline scams, methods to keep yourself safe and opportunities to spot behaviour which may be the start of someone trying to 'scam' you. Basic digital security need not cost anything and, with a few simple tips, can help keep you safer online and enable you to spot these offences before they develop. Please make a note to attend this useful session. There will be more information on the Parish Council's website and the newsletter.

Wildlife Habitats

TVBC is encouraging you to create a habitat for wildlife in your garden. With over 20 million gardens in the UK, even the smallest grassy patches add up to a significant proportion of our land which, if managed properly, can deliver enormous gains for nature, communities and the climate. So, find an area in your own garden, no matter how small, to create a haven for wildlife. In fact, TVBC has decided to relax grass-cutting schedules this summer to create urban meadows, which are more wildlife-friendly and provide a longer season of nectar for pollinators. TVBC has been increasing the amount of urban meadow it creates each year since 2021. This year, it will be letting a total of 44 hectares in Andover, Romsey and Valley Park grow wilder – that's more than 82 football fields of grass that will be left unmown until September, when it will be cut and collected. This approach will reduce the number of visits for mowing and allow grasses and plants to develop, providing valuable habitat for insects and birds.

Rights of Way

Stockbridge PC is working with neighbouring Parishes and their volunteers to ensure that the Rights of Way around Stockbridge and other Parishes are maintained. HCC has announced that it can no longer undertake the cutting-back work but is providing funding for equipment and training courses for the volunteers. Stockbridge PC is intending to ask HCC for funding for a brushcutter and a hedge trimmer along with the training for these items. If anyone is interested in taking part in the training and the cutting-back work, please contact the Clerk.

Health Walk Volunteers

TVBC is looking for new health walk volunteers to spare a few hours and enjoy walking and chatting to other people. The volunteers will be guiding health walks in different parts of the borough. Each of the walks is led by a qualified leader who will ensure a safe, fun and enjoyable walk. Some walks are a gentle stroll, others more brisk and they all last around 60 minutes and cover 2-3 miles, although, if you need a shorter walk, this can usually be accommodated. Most end with a chance to stay for a drink and a chat and they're great for boosting mental as well as physical health. If you interested in volunteering as a leader, please contact Fen Holland on healthwalks@testvalley.gov.uk or 01264 368000.

Stockbridge Parish Council will next meet on 19th September at the Town Hall. Don't forget the earlier start time for Council meetings which is now 7:15pm.

Belinda Baker

*Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council
clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk*



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Potting Shed Cuttings for August

New gardening books to try:

The Fascinating World of Fungi - Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh;

Becoming Earth: How our Planet Came to Life - Ferris Jabr;

Gardener's World: The Complete Beginner's Guide;

A New Cottage Garden: A practical guide to creating a picture-perfect cottage garden - Mark Bolton



Pruning

By pruning lavender bushes into neat mounds, your plants will produce a sizeable number of flower stems next year. Avoid cutting down into the old woody shoots, as the plant generally will not regenerate from woody stems. Trim back pyracantha shrubs as well; the stems will have grown and hidden the attractive berries. Canes from summer-fruiting raspberries which have finished fruiting can be cut down to ground level; new shoots, which will produce next year's crop, should be tied in. Climbing and rambling roses which are not repeat flowering varieties, but which have finished flowering, can be pruned back to a suitable framework.

Sowing

Sowing has eased up this month, although salad leaves can still be sown, along with Chinese leaves, parsley and a final few spring cabbages. Onions and shallots can be planted for early crops next year. Hardy annuals for next year can be sown directly into their flowering position towards the end of the month.

Planting/Potting Up

Autumn bulbs such as colchicums can be planted early this month. Check borders for seedlings from perennials which have germinated since the spring; these can be potted up and will be ready to go into borders next year. Some varieties of daffodils can also be planted this month.

Miscellaneous Jobs

Lawn care will depend on the weather; if it is hot and dry, raise mower blades a little and leave cuttings on the lawn to retain moisture. Even in drought conditions, only newly-sown or laid lawns should be watered. Ponds should be topped up where necessary and blanket weed removed. Remember to allow tap water to stand for 24 hours at room temperature before adding it to the pond. Bulbs for indoor decoration at Christmas, such as *Paperwhite* narcissi, can be started off now. Make sure shade is provided for greenhouses; ventilation is essential this month and temperatures and humidity levels can be controlled by spraying the floor with water. Pests such as whitefly, red spider mites and mealy bugs are all active in greenhouses this month; check plants carefully and treat affected plants with your preferred method of control. Ensure all leaves and other plant debris are removed. Continue dead-heading flowering plants and check containers regularly for ants and vine weevils. The latter can be treated with a

proprietary pest control. For ants, stand the containers in deep saucers of water and, in general, water containers regularly to discourage them from making their home there. Ants are an important part of the ecosystem, so try to live with them, rather than destroy them.

In the vegetable garden, take the tips out of runner and French beans, remove tomato side shoots, water regularly and feed with a high potash feed. Don't forget to feed and water potato plants to encourage large, healthy tubers. Runners from strawberry plants can be pinned down into individual pots to encourage root development. These new plants can be used next year. Keep picking crops to encourage plants to produce more fruits.

Micki Nadal



It looks as though summer might be coming finally but only maybe for a day or two as I write this. So I felt I had to get out my old but favourite recipe that to me says 'Summer...'
So simple and absolutely delicious.

Eton Mess

Serves 4-6 people

Ingredients for the Purée:

5oz Caster Sugar

7oz Strawberries

Ingredients for the Mess:

3.5oz caster sugar

15fl oz double cream

4 meringue nests, broken into rough pieces

8 oz strawberries roughly chopped

1 teaspoon vanilla essence

Method

Purée the sugar and strawberries. Put to one side.

Beat the caster sugar, double cream and vanilla essence together to form soft peaks.

Stir in the meringue and the chopped strawberries.

In a serving dish, starting with the purée made earlier, layer alternatively with the cream mixture.

Garnish with a handful of mint and even some raspberries, the garnish is your choice.

I guarantee there will be none left!

Linda Hotchen

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Are you an eco-activist?

This was a question that Megan McCubbin asked at a talk at The Lights recently. Most of her audience (including me) kept our hands down, thinking she meant that we had to be storming oil platforms or lying down on runways. However, she challenged our thinking, saying that any action you take for nature – from feeding the birds to buying at zero waste shops (and we've now got two of those locally) makes you an activist!



Encouraged, Michael and I joined the 'Restore Nature Now' march in London at the end of June – us and over 60,000 people from charities as diverse as our own Hawk Conservancy to Greenpeace, from A Rocha (who run Eco Church) to the Woodland Trust. Whatever the differences between the charities, everyone could combine behind a request that, in one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world (the UK!), we manage 30% of our land and marine areas prioritising nature. (Hopefully a request that can be met and I'm encouraged that my MP has offered to meet me to discuss this.)

It was an amazing event; from the time we met complete strangers on the train and ended up making friendship bracelets with them, to the mass gathering in Parliament Square, it was friendly, relaxed and interesting.

And, while there, we had a fascinating conversation with a friend from the Test and Itchen Association, whose members include river owners, river keepers, and others interested in conserving and protecting the Hampshire chalkstreams. As a river owner, I had assumed that our friend's main concern would be around the recent sewage spills we've had locally. Not so (although don't misunderstand – he wasn't saying that was a good thing!). An even bigger concern for our rivers is the spot on flea treatment many of us now put on our pets. As well as killing fleas, it kills all insect life it comes into contact with, making our rivers barren when it enters them – and our water treatment plants have no way to remove it currently. So what can you do?

Firstly – please don't let your dogs into rivers and streams, especially after recent treatment. But secondly – and I know this is a challenge – but the treatment gets into the water supply when you wash your pet blankets – so if you can, please wash them in a tub outside in the garden and put the water on your garden, provided you're not close enough to a river for it to run off into that.

Good luck with your eco-activism, in whatever form works for you.

Lisa Traylor

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Music in St Peter's Church

A Garden of Delights: Music for earthly and heavenly gardens



On Friday 5th July, our church was once again packed with music lovers to hear another concert organised by Stockbridge Music. This time we had the privilege of welcoming the internationally-renowned *Stile Antico*, a group of twelve singers working together as chamber musicians with no conductor. They specialise in polyphonic early music composed prior to the eighteenth century.

The clarity and purity of the sound that emerged from this talented group throughout the evening was extraordinary. The theme throughout was 'love' as epitomised in extracts from the heady poetry of the biblical 'Song of Songs' and also in beautiful madrigals, some dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I. You could follow the comprehensive programme and words (translated where appropriate) of the many early Renaissance songs by composers such as Byrd, Monteverdi, Palestrina and others or you could just sit back and absorb the harmony and the beauty of the sound and perfect balance of the whole performance. Truly magical.

Following very positive feedback on the concert given by *Stile Antico*, reviewed above, Stockbridge Music has announced the group would love to return to St Peter's in the future, testament to how much the church as a venue is appreciated. In Old St Peter's, 'The Salisbury Organist' brings its history to life whilst enchanting us with his music (see above). These are just two examples of how our churches host and provide focus for all manner of activities outside the religious curriculum, many of which this magazine highlights throughout the year.

In his August message, the Rural Dean recommends visiting churches for tranquility and respite. We can enjoy their aesthetic beauty, historic interest and community connection irrespective of any religious attachment.

YES! Music in Old St Peter's!

Last month, I wrote a paragraph titled 'Church Organs', in which I recommended the unique YouTube channel of one Ben Maton ('The Salisbury Organist') in which he explores rural churches, their environment, history and their organs. I sent him a copy and he got in touch with me about doing an episode in Old St Peter's. What a joy for our beautiful Saxon church, I thought.



But . . . hold on . . . it has no organ. But that did not faze Ben at all. Within a few hours, he arrived to do his filming, accompanied by his very own harmonium which had travelled in the back of his car nestled in a duvet. And what a lovely programme he made, particularly as one of the pieces he played in the church was his own very special composition called 'Dreaming'. His videos are extremely popular in North America where they delight in these depictions of rural England and its church and organ history. From the comments online, it appears that they loved Old St Peter's filled with his music. And so did we. Find **No Pipe Organ? NO PROBLEM** at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RQCfqKK148> Thank you, Ben.

Janet Williams

From the Rural Dean

August is, for many, a month for holidays. For me, with a family wedding planned for August, plans have not been made. Whatever happens though, I am hoping for a holiday rest!

If you go away, why not pop into a church? And if you don't go away, pop into a local church. They are usually places of coolness and calm, definitely needed in our busy lives. Living in the Test Valley means that there are plenty of different and interesting churches to explore; most of them are open during the day.

Your Rural Dean, James

Rev'd James Pitkin
romseyareadean@gmail.com

Church News

St Mary's Longstock



On **Sunday 7th July**, we had our annual Pet Service in the Churchyard – well, it would have been the churchyard except for the rain. So we had the service at the back of the Church.

The roll call of dogs was:

Crumble – black Labrador
Frank – Beagle
Freddie – Terrier
Twiglet – fancy Terrier
Strudel – yellow Labrador
Tiffin – black Cocker Spaniel



All were very well behaved and quite enjoyed showing their talents. We praised creation, gave thanks for pets and for the land, domesticated animals and wild animals. We sang wholeheartedly, accompanied by Helen on the keyboard.

We had another exciting service on **Sunday 14th July** as Bishop Geoff, the interim Bishop of Southampton took our service – he even delayed his short break to do so and we are most grateful to him for joining us. His sermon on the beheading of John the Baptist was extremely good. He showed how this story was connected to the decisions taken by Pilate to give Jesus to the crowds to crucify. Really helpful. Bishop Geoff stayed for refreshments and chatted to those attending.



August will be a quiet month with all the usual services.

Volunteer Singers needed:

With Sarah Seymour's help, we are hoping to arrange a small concert in St Mary's, Longstock in the early Autumn. This will include the performance of a short pop cantata by Michael Hurd called 'Swingin' Samson'. You can hear an extract from this on YouTube: *Swingin' Samson: When Miss Delilah goes a-walkin'* ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com))

We need between 12-15 singers for this – hopefully a mixture of young and older people. If you are interested, please let me know: 01264 810284. Email mjh723@btinternet.com

It's quite a jazzy piece and great fun to sing. Please come and join us.

On **Saturday 7th September**, we have the village fête at the Recreation Ground, starting at 1pm and ending at 5.00pm. There will be all the usual attractions plus a dancing display from Ukrainian Dancers.

Sunday 8th September is our Patronal Service and we are fortunate to have our Archdeacon, the Ven. Jean Burgess coming to take the service. Our theme will be 'Celebrations'

Church Services at St Mary, Longstock for August 2024

4 August	9.30am	All Age Worship
11 August	9.30am	Parish Eucharist
18 August	9.30am	Morning Worship
25 August	No Service	

If you have any queries during the interregnum please contact Maddie Hedley Churchwarden, 810284; email mjh723@btinternet.com, or the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman at midtestbenefice@gmail.com

Maddie Hedley

Progress Report on the Vacancy for the Post of Rector

The process is proceeding – we had one applicant for the post with the interview taking place on 25 July. The candidate had the opportunity on 24 July to visit all the churches and meet some of the PCC members. We will let everyone know the results of the interview as and when we can.

Meanwhile, we are supported by the clerical registry who are able to help with most services. It is more difficult during the holiday season, but even when we can't find an ordained priest, we can usually find one of the Lay Worship leaders. All other activities still take place, weddings, funerals and lots of fund-raising. We are doing well.

Church News

St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge



During the last weekend in June, we were blessed with lovely weather. The hardy and talented gardeners who opened their gardens were able to show us just how beautiful and varied the English country garden can be. Meandering down the long, winding and verdant paths to the far end of the Barnes' natural garden was a treat. Sitting to rest and chat in Sally Milligan's small but perfect cottage garden was soothing and restorative. Every garden on show had its own character and beauty. We are extremely grateful to all those who took the trouble to put their gardens on show, some of them doing it year after year. And thank you to Alison Vialou-Clark who organised this major event.

Walking from the furthest garden open on the Houghton Road (inspired planting by Julie Harding) all the way to Chrissie and Robin's magnificent Rectory garden was tiring work, particularly on the hot Saturday.

But there to welcome all the weary walkers for restorative tea and cake on the church lawn were Catherine Williams and her large team of waitresses and servers (including those in the photo).



The Avebury Brass Band played throughout the afternoon on Saturday and were replaced by Paul Barker playing nostalgic music on the guitar on Sunday. What a weekend! All these many volunteers, together with those who worked for the Flower Festival in May, organised as usual by Angela McMeekin (and deemed by many to be the most creative ever) raised £4,700 (gross) for our church funds. The PCC express their huge gratitude for this welcome contribution.

During July, we have been collecting nominations from the congregation at St Peter's for their favourite hymns which will form the basis of our hymns for August services. Sarah Seymour, who is

talented in so many ways, also had this bright idea. We are hoping to include as many as possible of your choices.

An ancient Christian festival on August 15th is the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, that is her death and ascension to heaven. In the Greek Orthodox tradition it is a National Holiday (and Name Day of all the Marias) and is a huge celebration in their culture. The Catholic Church celebrates this day as the Feast of the Assumption. The Anglican Church also honours the Virgin Mary on that day.

Looking ahead

Sunday 4th August: Teas in the church for those who live alone

Saturday, 14th September: RIDE+STRIDE!!

Important date for your diaries and an opportunity to raise sponsorship money for our heritage church buildings (including, of course, Old St Peter's). This day of walking or cycling between some (or all) of our lovely Benefice Churches is a great way of getting exercise with family or friends. Get the bikes out or your walking shoes on with children and grandchildren and help us raise much-needed funds for the maintenance of these beautiful old churches. Details in next month's magazine.

Weekend of 4th/5th October: A date for the diary with a Harvest Supper on Saturday evening and Harvest Festival on Sunday. More details next month.

Janet Williams

The Column for July

Baptisms

There were no baptisms.

Weddings

There were no weddings.

Funerals

Monday 15 July; the Thanksgiving Service for Janet Marsden was held in St Peter's Church, Stockbridge



Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am

Church News

From the Ministry Team

The Olympics in Paris – this is really exciting – so many varied sports. I understand from someone who is going that it is 'pot luck' for which category you receive tickets. My friend told me their tickets were for the wrestling, although they were also travelling down to Marseilles for the sailing.

So much has to go into the planning – all the sports bodies, the venues, the security. Then the competitors themselves, training, preparing both physically and mentally, ensuring the right diet. There is personal discipline, practice and preparation.

The aim for all, personal satisfaction and the ultimate goal of a Gold Medal. A good film to watch would be 'Chariots of Fire' with the refusal of one athlete to run on a Sunday...

There are not many things nowadays that you can't do on a Sunday – a far cry from how it used to be when all shops were closed and it was a day for Church, a gentle walk and reflection.

During the month of August, the Gospel set for the readings is from John chapter 6. It is worth reading this chapter from start to finish. It covers a very interesting aspect of Jesus' Ministry, starting with the feeding of the five thousand, walking on water and one of the 'I am' sayings: 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

The crowds had sought out Jesus and followed him across Lake Galilee. Jesus told them they were following because they wanted him to continue to feed them. They did not understand what he was telling them – that He was sent from heaven to bring a new Kingdom. They wanted more 'signs'.

He wanted their faith and their belief in Him. They challenged and referred back to his background and life in Nazareth, 'Who does he think he is?'

'Those who believe in me will have eternal life.' That promise is as good today as it was in the first century. The requirement is that we believe in Jesus, follow his ways, engage with Him in prayer. That we practice our religion – put the same effort into our faith as the athletes put into their training.

The promises made in the first century - Jesus' promises - are for us, now. In his time, many disciples turned away as finding faith was too hard. Let us pray we can find the right path and keep going, through good times and bad.

Maddie Hedley

August Services for Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford 4th August

08.00 **Leckford** Holy Communion BCP
09.30 **Longstock** All Age Worship
11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

11th August

08.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion
09.30 **Longstock** Parish Eucharist
11.00 **Stockbridge** All Age Service

18th August

09.30 **Longstock** Morning Worship
11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist
18.00 **Leckford** Evensong

25th August

11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship

Prayer for August

Lord, there are times when we feel really lost and alone, when troubles seem to surround us and we can't find the right path.

At times like these, we need you Lord, as our Shepherd, to come and find us, to comfort and console and to lead us on.

There are other times when, in just looking around, we can see joy in all things, in the countryside around us and in the faces of those we meet. Happy times to treasure, times of celebration and times of peace.

We pray that all people can find happy times, peaceful time, although we know this can be difficult if you live in troubled lands, where war and strife are the constant companions.

Lord, we pray for peace, for positive negotiations to stop the wars and pain in Ukraine and the Middle East.

We pray for peaceful campaigning in the USA, for democracy to work, people need to accept the results of the ballot box. We pray for less gun crime in that land.

We are thankful for the words of Psalm 23.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Amen



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