



The Parish Magazine for

£1

# STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD



December 2024 and January 2025



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

**Rector :** The Reverend Joe Sweetnam  
rector@midtest.org.uk

## 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.**

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| <b>St Peter's Stockbridge</b> |              | <b>St Mary's Longstock</b> |        | <b>St Nicholas' Leckford</b> |        |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------|------------------------------|--------|
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| David Williams                | 811072       | Madeleine Hedley           | 810284 | Vacancy                      |        |
| <i>Hon Secretary</i>          |              | <i>Hon Secretary</i>       |        | <i>Hon Secretary</i>         |        |
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|                                      |              |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---|--|
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| Frances Waghorn                      | 01962 776048 | <i>Calls cost 7p/min +network charge.</i> | Chair: Rob Dewing, 07749 797005                          |
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| <b>Bell ringers (Stockbridge)</b>    |              | <b>RBL (Houghton branch)</b>              | Derek@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk                    |
| Micki Nadal                          | 810567       | David Williams (Chair) 811072             | Clerk: Belinda Baker 07770 406607                        |
| <b>Brownies (meet in Chilbolton)</b> |              | New Secretary to be appointed             | clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org                       |
| Julie Shone                          | 01962 761269 | Angela McMeekin: Poppies 810236           | <b>Stockbridge Pharmacy</b> 810624                       |
| <b>Church Mouse Books</b>            |              | <b>Scouts</b>                             | <b>Stockbridge Police Station</b>                        |
| Micki Nadal                          | 810567       | Mark Lovell 07786 435847                  | (Non emergencies) 101                                    |
| <b>Cub Scouts</b>                    |              | <b>Scout Group Explorers</b>              | <b>Stockbridge Primary /Pre School</b>                   |
| Mo Collins                           | 01256 895534 | Andrea Zanchi 07747 720735                | Emma Jefferies (Head) 810550                             |
| <b>Danebury School</b>               |              | Louise Henderson 07436 899054             | <b>Stockbridge Rec Ground</b>                            |
| Nicky Goodrich (Head)                | 810555       | <b>St Thomas More Church</b>              | Michael Porter (Chair) 810595                            |
| <b>HCC County Councillor</b>         |              | Father Mark Hogan 01962 852804            | Mob 07775 632632   |
| Cllr David Drew                      | 357024       | <b>Stockbridge Church Flowers Sec</b>     | Stuart Mawson(Sec) 07766 150055                          |
| mob 07738 289902                     |              | Angela McMeekin 810236                    | <b>Stockbridge Surgery</b> 810524                        |
| <b>Kent Hill Scout Hall</b>          |              | <b>Stockbridge Community Cinema</b>       | <i>Out of hours urgent treatment /advice</i>             |
| Leigh Dance                          | 811074       | Paul Kidd 07732 580721                    | <i>Hants Doctors On Call freephone 111</i>               |
| <b>Leckford Parish Council</b>       |              | <b>Stockbridge Community Market</b>       | <b>Stockbridge Town Hall</b>                             |
| Vacancy                              |              | Carol Preston 07925 287870                | Kim Candler (Chair) 811776                               |
| <b>Longstock Garden Club</b>         |              | <b>Stockbridge Court Leet</b>             | <i>On-line bookings</i>                                  |
| Peter Moore                          | 07881 573493 | Guy Boney (Lord of the Manor)             | www.stockbridgetownhall.co.uk                            |
| peter.r.moore@gmail.com              |              | 810614                                    | or phone 513299  |
| <b>Longstock Parish Council</b>      |              | Andy Soper (Bailliff) 07776 258398        | <b>Trout 'n About</b>                                    |
| Chair: Alice Foster                  | 07846 173217 | <b>Stockbridge Dramatic Society</b>       | Bob Powell 07802 524433                                  |
| Clerk: Gill Bulpitt                  | 07763857512  | Mark Frank 810562                         | <b>TVBC Councillor</b>                                   |
| <b>Longstock Village Hall</b>        |              | <b>Stockbridge Football Club</b>          | Cllr Ian Jeffrey 01794 388872                            |
| Selina Musters                       | 810459       | Trevor Dance (Chair) 07780 661223         | <b>Unity Transport (Dial-a-Ride shopping bus)</b> 356808 |
| <b>Longstock &amp; Leckford WI</b>   |              | Kieran Wilson (Hon Sec) 07883 624808      |  |
| Selina Musters                       | 810459       | Email: stockbridgefc@hotmail.co.uk        |  |

# **A New Year, New Beginnings**

## **A Message from the New Rector**

As the days grow shorter and the crisp winter air settles in, we find ourselves looking ahead to Christmas and the New Year, both of which are filled with the promise of new beginnings. It is with great joy that I introduce myself to you as your new Rector. I feel truly privileged to join such a welcoming and vibrant community, and I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you in the months to come.



December is, of course, a time of reflection and anticipation. As we journey through Advent, the season of preparation, we are invited to pause and consider the many blessings in our lives. It is a time for us to come together in hope and expectation, particularly as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. This period offers us the chance to reflect on the themes of light and hope, which resonate so deeply in this season of darkness. Christmas is a joyful occasion, but it is also a moment to remember the deeper significance of this time - a time when we are reminded of God's love for us all.

I am excited about the opportunities to spend time with others and to get to know new faces in this place over the festive period. From carol services and lights switch-on, to Christmas Story in a Church and a Barn, there will be many chances for us to gather as a community, both within the church and beyond, to celebrate together. Please keep an eye out for notices. Whether you're a regular to these events or new to the area, there is always space for you to join in the celebrations. You are all very welcome.

Looking to January, we begin the new year with a sense of fresh possibilities. January is traditionally a time for new resolutions, and many of us take the opportunity to reflect on how we can grow in ourselves and in our communities. It is also a time when we remember the Epiphany, the arrival of the wise men, a reminder that Jesus came for all people, regardless of background or status. This serves as a call to us to consider how we, as individuals and together, might offer hospitality, kindness, and understanding to all who enter our lives.

In the weeks ahead, there will be many opportunities for us all to be involved in the life of the community. I hope you will take part in the many activities, and events. There is much to look forward to in the coming months, and I trust that, together, we can continue to build a strong and loving community here.

In the spirit of the season, I wish you all a blessed Advent, a joyful Christmas, and a peaceful New Year. May the months ahead be filled with love, hope, and the warmth of community.

*With every blessing,  
Rev'd Joe Sweetnam*



## From the Editorial Team

*We write this after a couple of busy weeks during which the whole community has embraced and almost engulfed our new Rector, Rev'd Joe Sweetnam. With the Remembrance Services and now the preparations for the Christmas season he will have hardly had a chance to draw breath, but he is still smiling. Welcome, Rev'd Joe; things will quieten down!*

*The magazine team has been busy, too. This month we deliver copies of this bumper issue to all households in the three parishes of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford. This wouldn't be possible without our team of volunteers who write for the magazine, take photos for us, send us information about local events and activities, and very importantly, advertise in it. Our editorial team puts the magazine together, and other volunteers proofread and deliver it. We are very grateful to everyone who keeps the show on the road and thank them wholeheartedly. And of course we would always welcome others to join our team!*

*And we have a treasurer who balances the books. Our printing costs are subsidised by advertising and by the money raised from your subscriptions. If you would like to keep up to date with what is happening locally, please support us by renewing your subscription or by taking out a new one - see below for details.*

*We take this opportunity to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

*Frances Candler, Jennifer Kidd and Thea Taylor*

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## Magazine Subscriptions

If you have enjoyed reading this magazine and would like to receive a copy regularly  
**for only £10 you can receive all next year's copies delivered to your door**

### New Subscribers

If you wish to pay online see the details below but please ensure that you notify David Barnes, our Treasurer, that you are a new subscriber as we need to ensure that you are on our delivery lists. His telephone number is 01264 810516 or email [barnsiesdandj@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barnsiesdandj@yahoo.co.uk)

Alternatively, drop an envelope through David's door at Touchwood, High Street (pink house opposite The Three Cups).

### Existing Subscribers

Thanks to the very many subscribers who are now paying online, which we much prefer.

The bank details are as before. Please pay £10 to:

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Please use the reference section to indicate your address as clearly as possible (IMPORTANT!)

However, your deliverer is still able to collect your £10 subscription if you wish.

Thank you.

**Saturday 14 December at 3pm**  
**The Christmas Story in the Barn**



At the kind invitation of Los, Paul and Arthur Hardy you are welcome to join 'The Christmas Story' in the barn at Charity Farm House, Longstock.

Children are welcome to dress up as angels, shepherds, Joseph and Mary.

The nativity story is told, interspersed with carols.

Please wear warm clothing and stout footwear.

# Winchester City Festival Choir

Christmas Concert  
 Carols spiced with  
 Purcell, Vivaldi, Schubert  
 and Bach

Mince pies and mulled wine  
**Wednesday 18 December**  
**8pm 2024**

**Littleton Memorial Hall,**  
**The Hall Way, Littleton,**  
**Winchester,**  
**SO22 6QL**

**Tickets in advance or on the**  
**door £7.50**  
**[www.wcfchoir.org](http://www.wcfchoir.org)**

**STOCKBRIDGE**  
**Christmas Lights**  
**SWITCH ON**

Join us to switch on the Stockbridge Christmas lights.

- 15:30 - Christmas bell ringing
- 16:00 - Tractor Parade brings Santa to town
- 16:10 - Santa's grotto opens in Town Hall with festive craft stalls and food trucks along the high street
- 17:40 - Carol singing outside St Peter's on the High St
- 18:00 - Grand light switch on from outside Church

**FRIDAY 6TH DECEMBER**

## Stockbridge Community Market



**Thursday 19 December 9.30-11.45am**

We hope you can join us for our final market this year – we have a wonderful choir leading us in carol singing and mulled wine, mince pies and sausage rolls for all our customers!

Our busy cooks and crafts-people will have a month off until the market opens again on 6 February, but, like last year, Angela McMeekin's team will be serving tea, coffee and biscuits on Thursdays throughout January, from 10 – 11.30am

### And the IT Help Desk Returns

The Community Marketeers are delighted to let you know the free IT help desk is back in action!

If you have questions about, or problems with your laptop or smart phone or most smart machines in your home, pop in and talk to our new go-to techy, Bob Powell. Bob will be at the market every Thursday to talk you through solutions to phone stuff, emails, computer problems and how-do-I questions.

See you there!

## Copy for Magazine

Copy date for the February Magazine:

**15 January 2025**


**Please send emails to:**

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

or phone Frances on 01264 811776

Jennifer on 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481







# Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle

**Andover Choral Society**  
St Mary's Church, Andover  
Saturday 7 December, 7.30pm

Tickets £15, available from choir members, from The Lights box office on 01264 368368 and online from [ticketsource.co.uk](http://ticketsource.co.uk)  
[andoverchoralsociety.org.uk](http://andoverchoralsociety.org.uk)


**ANDOVER CHAMBER CHOIR**

## Star in the east

A concert for Christmas

7:00 pm Saturday, 21 December 2024  
St Mary's Church, Andover

Tickets £15 (incl. refreshments) on the door or £13 in advance from Newbury Building Society, The Lights and choir members  
Under-16s admitted free

In aid of the Boaz Project  
[www.andoverchamberchoir.org.uk](http://www.andoverchamberchoir.org.uk)




## Andover Concert Series

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 - 7:30pm



**Melynthia Trio**  
Flute, Cello and Piano

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 - 7:30pm



**Chroma Harp Duo**

Tickets: £18 from *The Lights* or on the door

Performed at:  
**The Lights**  
[www.andoverconcertseries.uk](http://www.andoverconcertseries.uk)



Presented by:  




**Mayor of Test Valley Charity Appeal**  
**BURNS NIGHT SUPPER & CEILIDH**  
**SATURDAY, 25th JANUARY 2025, 6.30PM**  
**CROSFIELD HALL, ROMSEY.**

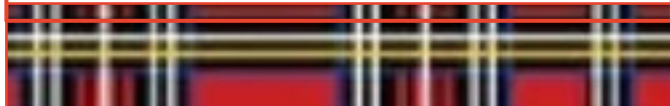
TICKETS £55, but no money required now.

Includes welcome drink and 4-course traditional Burns' Supper with wine.  
Piper from the Wiltshire Caledonian Pipe and Drum Band.

Raffle prizes. Bar open 6.30 - 10.30pm

**FOR TICKET AVAILABILITY** - email [burnsnightsupperandceilidh@yahoo.com](mailto:burnsnightsupperandceilidh@yahoo.com)  
(No payment required at this stage)  
.Black tie, suit or Scottish dress.

**IN AID OF**  
**THE HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT**  
**AIR AMBULANCE AND OTHER CHARITIES**



## Stockbridge Town Hall Events

### Weekly

Please see November magazine for details of regular weekly bookings



### December

|           |                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Dec 1     | Jules At No.43                    |
| Dec 1-4   | Wild Bazaar                       |
| Dec 3     | Tiggy Bradshaw                    |
| Dec 3     | Stockbridge Drama Society         |
| Dec 4     | Stockbridge Community Cinema      |
| Dec 6     | Stockbridge Christmas             |
| Dec 7-8   | Antique Fair                      |
| Dec 7     | Stockbridge Community Cinema      |
| Dec 9-11  | Capital Cashmere                  |
| Dec 12    | Tin Shed Studio                   |
| Dec 12    | Stockbridge Parish Council        |
| Dec 13    | Infinito                          |
| Dec 14-15 | Antiques and Curios               |
| Dec 14-15 | Hawkmoor Books                    |
| Dec 15    | Florence and Opie                 |
| Dec 16-18 | Wild Bazaar                       |
| Dec 19    | Charity Clothing Sale             |
| Dec 19    | Stockbridge Bell Ringers          |
| Dec 19-23 | Jules At No.43                    |
| Dec 20    | Louisa Revolta Swingin' Christmas |
| Dec 24    | Home Baking and Crafts Sale       |
| Dec 27-28 | Posh Bric-a-brac                  |

### January

|           |                              |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| Jan 4     | Antique Fair                 |
| Jan 7     | Stockbridge Drama Society    |
| Jan 11    | Kuoni Personal Travel Expert |
| Jan 12    | Fun Run                      |
| Jan 15    | Stockbridge Surgery          |
| Jan 16    | Stockbridge Parish Council   |
| Jan 17    | Stockbridge Community Cinema |
| Jan 17-20 | Jules At No.43               |
| Jan 22    | Stockbridge Community Cinema |
| Jan 25-26 | Hawkmoor Books               |
| Jan 25-26 | Antiques and Curios          |
| Jan 28    | Longstock and Leckford WI    |



## 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



## Stockbridge Community Cinema



### WILDING (PG)

**Wednesday 4 December**

**7.30pm** (1hr 15min)

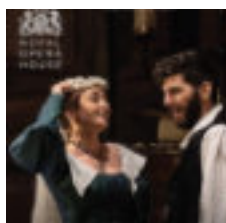


Isabella Tree and her husband strive to breathe new life into the ailing Knepp estate. They reintroduce native ponies, deer, pigs and other wildlife, allowing nature to thrive.

### THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO (U)

**Saturday 7 December (£10.00)**

**3.30pm and 7.30pm** (3hrs 5min)



Music Director of the Royal Opera House Antonio Pappano brings his specialist perspective to Mozart's effervescent score. A young and predominantly Italian cast perform this 2022 recorded live revival of

David McVicar's sumptuous and hugely popular period staging. *[Sung in Italian with subtitles]*

### THE OUTRUN (15)

**Friday 19 January**

**7.30pm** (1hr 58min)



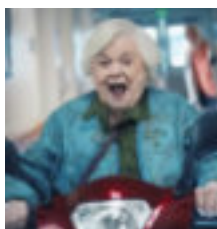
Rona, fresh out of rehab, returns to the Orkney Islands after more than a decade away. As she reconnects with the dramatic landscape where she grew up, memories of her childhood merge with more recent challenging

events that have set her on the path to recovery.

### THELMA (12A)

**Wednesday 24 January**

**5.00pm and 7.30pm** (1hr 38min)



When strong-willed 93-year-old Thelma Post gets conned by a phone scammer pretending to be her grandson, she sets out on a treacherous quest across Los Angeles, accompanied by an ageing friend, to reclaim what was taken from her.

**Tickets £6.00** (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee) unless otherwise shown available online from **stockbridgecinema.org.uk** or via the TicketSource telephone booking service **0333 666 3366** (no additional fee)

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## **Test Villages u3a**

**Thursday 5th December  
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall**

### **Christmas Social**

Enjoy an afternoon of festive fun, food and drink.

Tickets £5, contact Mary Coleman:  
[mescoleman@gmail.com](mailto:mescoleman@gmail.com)

**Thursday 9th January  
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall**

### **'40 Winks'**

#### **A talk on sleep by Christina Rycroft**

Are we slaves to the (biological) rhythm of sleep?  
Discover the what, why, when of sleep and how it  
can all go wrong! Are you an owl or a lark?

**Thursday 6th February  
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall**

### **'Vincent Van Gogh' Doug Skeggs**

art historian, lecturer and author  
explores the life and work of Van Gogh

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

**New members are very welcome.**

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](http://u3a.org.uk)  
or see the latest on our  
Test Villages group at:  
[testvillages.u3asite.uk](http://testvillages.u3asite.uk)



## **Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society's**

### **Curtain Calls . . .**

Come and be entertained by readings and  
performances from plays, poems and novels  
– and often songs

**Tuesday 3rd December &  
Tuesday 7th January**

at 7.30pm

**Stockbridge Town Hall**

You don't have to be a member of SADS to come  
along, (but we'd love it if you'd join). We're also  
looking for new blood to act, direct and be part  
of the backstage team.  
No experience necessary!

[stockbridgeamdrams@gmail.com](mailto:stockbridgeamdrams@gmail.com)  
or find us on Facebook





## Houghton WI

**Monday 9th December  
at Houghton Village Hall**

### Christmas Cheer and a Quiz

- an informal get-together with a buffet lunch,  
starting at 11.00am

**10am Monday 20th January 2025  
at Houghton Village Hall**

**Heather Wylde**

assures us that

### 'Anyone Can Paint a Tiger'

Visitors welcome. Further information from  
Jane Anderton 01264 810928

## Do come along to the Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market

The Christmas Market will run for 31 days from  
Friday 22nd November to Sunday 22nd  
December 2024 inclusive.

Trading times will be:

Sunday to Thursday: 10.00am – 6.00pm

Friday and Saturday: 10.00am – 8.00pm

Admission to the Christmas Market is free



## Longstock Garden Club

**Tuesday December 10th**

### Christmas Evening for Members

with a fantastic selection of photos taken by  
our members over the past 18 months - not to  
be missed - and with mince pies.

**And for our first meeting of 2025**

**Derek Taylor  
of Kirton Farm Nursery**

will talk on

**The History of the Hairy Pots  
on Tuesday January 14th**

**We meet at 7.30pm in Longstock Village Hall**  
(Doors open at 7.00pm)

Don't forget the raffle tickets are still only £1  
or bring a prize.

Guests welcome £3 each evening.

<https://longstockgardenclub.com/>

Peter Moore 07881573493

## Wherwell History Group



There is no meeting in  
December but we open our 2025 programme  
with two Zoom presentations:

**8.00pm, Friday 17th January**  
**David Morton - The Necropolis Railway**

**8.00pm, Friday 21st February**  
**David Allen - The Amazing Mr Dickens!**

*You will need to book in advance for these  
presentations. Please visit our website at  
<https://www.wherwellhistory.com> where you  
will also find more information about our Group.*



## LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

**Tuesday 21st January**

**Stockbridge Town Hall**

**6.45pm for 7pm start**

### 'Reading Allowed'

Members bring any reading they would like to  
share; this was such fun last year with extracts  
from a variety of authors and genres, that we  
decided to repeat it.

In December, members will have a Christmas  
lunch at the White Hart – always a good way to  
start the festive season - with Secret Santa.

If anyone would like to consider this relaxed  
group, please come along to a meeting to try us  
out. We do not hold competitions, nor sing  
Jerusalem – although that is quite something  
when sung at The Royal Albert Hall with  
thousands of members from all over the country.

Contact : Selina Musters 810459 or Sue Hill  
811779

## 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](http://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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**Contact: 07368 591040 or  
footcarebylouise@outlook.com**

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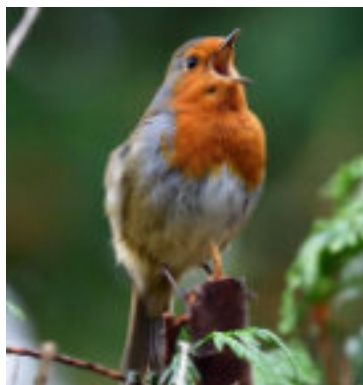
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## Stockbridge Football Club - The Robins About Us

The last article I wrote for the magazine was about our 130th anniversary and the history of the Club, so this time I thought you would be interested to find out about the Club today.

We play in the Hampshire Premier League Senior Division and travel all over Hampshire for our away games including Fareham, Portsmouth and Liss. Our local derby game this season will be against Andover Town which, like most of the clubs, has a much bigger population than Stockbridge.

At the time of writing, we are mid table in the League. We have progressed to the second round of the Hampshire League Trophy competition and we are also in the quarter final of the George Mason Memorial Shield where we will travel to play Overton.

Our nine-man committee consists of eight pensioners (normal for Stockbridge!) and one mere 29 year old - our new manager, Kieran Wilson.

The committee is headed by Chairman, Trevor Dance with Kieran, our Hon. Sec., ably assisted by Mavis Savage as minutes secretary. I run our website with the help of my better half Jill, who is Treasurer and also does the match reports.

We have a small club room run by Stuart Mawson, our local ex-postman John Standfield and his wife Annette. Apart from selling tea, coffee, soup and snacks, we sell beer, lager, cider and wine. This is the main regular money-earner for the Football Club.

If you look through our history and at the photographs in our Clubroom you will find the names Dance, Savage, Mawson and Webb going back for three or more generations.

I am often asked whether the manager and/or the players get paid? Nobody in the club gets paid.

The club maintains the Recreation Ground in lieu of a commercial rent.

Most of this considerable work falls to Peter Savage and Stuart Mawson. Peter has been keeping the pitch in great condition since the ground opened in 1978, an amazing achievement, I think you will all agree.

The cost of running the club for a year is about a daunting £8,500. We get income from the clubroom

and have fund-raising events but we also rely on sponsorship and donations to survive. This year we have had tremendous support with sponsorship and donations from local businesses, organisations and a number of individuals. I won't list them all here, I would hate to miss anyone out but they can all be seen listed on our sponsorship page on our website: <https://stockbridgefc.wordpress.com>. Without this wonderful support we would not survive, thank you all of you.

Our match day spectators are a mixed bunch. We have our own 'barmy army' of ex-Robins who were all born in Stockbridge or Longstock but now live elsewhere. In our small stand, sitting next to Jill doing the match report, can be seen our next door neighbour 94 year-old Doris who loves to see goals scored, she does not care if they are for us or the opposition. At half time our oldest ex-Robin, 94 year-old Len Smith, arrives with his wife Joan. Of course we also have the players' families and we also have families from Stockbridge and visitors whose children head to the play area. Why not give us a visit? You will get a warm welcome.



Doris and Jill in the middle



Barmy Army

Dave Webb  
President

## A first term for Danebury School from Nicky Goodridge, Head of School

As we approach the end of our first term as Danebury School, we'd like to celebrate the achievements of our wonderful pupils and the milestones we've reached on our School Improvement Journey.

Danebury School opened its doors on September 2nd 2024, having moved into the HISP Trust in February 2024. The Department for Education had strongly advised Leaders to change the school name in order to give it a fresh start. Leaders consulted with all stakeholders to ensure everyone was part of the consultation and transition.

Over the summer holidays, the school was given a refresh with new signage, classrooms painted, new tables and chairs in all rooms and a new uniform. Pupils have worn the new uniform with pride; it's practical, smart and comfortable.



*Year 11 Students Leaderships Team modelling our new Danebury Uniform*

We have increased our curriculum provision with new subjects at KS4, new staff in a number of areas and a new project-based curriculum on a Wednesday afternoon called LORIC Projects when pupils have enjoyed improving their Leadership, Organisational, Resilience, Initiative and Communication skills. Our Community group has gone into Stockbridge Primary School to help Year 4 with their reading skills and our pupils on the STEM project have worked with Boeing on engineering projects. Our Young Foresters Award, Sports Leaders Award and Football Refereeing Awards have been popular, not to mention the Fashion, Hospitality, Journalism, Photography, Catering and Enterprise projects. Wednesdays are a hive of activity. We are looking for fresh ideas next term so, if you feel you have a skill you could share and can spare an hour of your time on a Wednesday afternoon, please do contact me at [goodridgen@testvalley.hants.sch.uk](mailto:goodridgen@testvalley.hants.sch.uk).



*We are proud of our 22 Year 10 pupils who trained as Mental Health Ambassadors and help other pupils with their mental health.*

Our Sports teams are going from strength to strength, winning or drawing all matches this term so far. Our Netball and Football teams have performed particularly well.



*Congratulations to the U16 Netball Team winning 16-14 over John Hanson School Andover*



*The thriving Judo Club has won many medals and competes nationally. Congratulations.*

We were privileged to take part in the Remembrance Service with St. Peter's Church on 10th November; the strength within the community was incredibly moving. The following day, we held our own Armistice Day event when every member of the Danebury Community gathered for two minutes' silence. The Last Post was played by a Year 10 pupil, a poignant moment which will stay with us for a very long time.



We are working hard to grow the school with a very well attended Open Evening as well as numerous open mornings and taster sessions; applications for September 2025 are up on last year which is promising. We have been overwhelmed with the positive messages of support from parents, carers and the local community. We are proud to be in the heart of the community and will continue to work hard to strengthen relationships with the communities we serve.

(We are at [www.danebury.hispmat.org/](http://www.danebury.hispmat.org/) and <https://www.facebook.com/daneburyschool/>)





## Stockbridge Parish Council News

### Resilience Plan

At its November meeting, Stockbridge Parish Council agreed to work with members of the community to develop a Resilience Plan. The Plan will be focused on contacting vulnerable members of the community, ensuring they are safe and have everything they need. The recent events in Spain have shown why it is important for the community to be able to do this, although the Plan does need to cover all eventualities not just flooding. TVBC has held a number of workshops to help facilitate these plans and HCC has provided templates and information for residents about what to do in an emergency. These are published on the Parish Council's website *Flooding Issues - Stockbridge*. Please sign up for flood alert warnings on the Parish Council website. Any information from the Houghton Fishing Club staff, who manage Stockbridge's defences, will be posted there. These News alerts will come direct to your inbox.

### Safety on Icy Roads and Pavements

As the weather gets colder, it is worth making yourself aware of where the nearest salt bins are. The County's blue and yellow community salt bins have been recently refilled to be ready for the coming winter months. The salt and grit is made freely available for anyone to spread on local roads and pavements. A little salt goes a long way and you only need one tablespoon to treat up to a square metre of road or pavement. If you're able to, it will be helpful to salt Stockbridge's pavements and side roads when it's forecast to be icy. This can be a big help to the community, reducing the risk of incident and injury, especially for those who are less mobile. If you would like a salt bin installed you can request one via the HCC website at *Using salt bins/Transport and roads/Hampshire County Council*.

HCC's Highways are geared up to keep you moving through through winter and are ready, 24/7, to deal with emergency incidents including fallen trees, flooded roads and icy surfaces. Earlier this year, HCC accelerated its work to strengthen roads via its two-year additional investment programme that has ploughed an extra £22.5 million into repairs. More resources have now been put into fixing road defects including potholes and HCC carried out almost 181,000 repairs in the 12 months to April 2024 and over 80,000 repairs during April to September. However, HCC can't repair a pothole unless they know it is there. Please report any pothole you see on HCC's *Stronger Roads Today* webpage.

HCC Highways teams has now readied their fleet of gritters to be available day and night, to keep Hampshire's main routes clear of ice and snow. The gritters are fitted with up-to-date technology to ensure they are salting in the right place and at the right time, including full satellite navigation and

even dedicated snow plough equipment. 'Priority one' routes, which carry most of Hampshire's traffic, are always treated first, and include A-roads, some B-roads, access roads to hospitals and other key emergency hubs, large schools and colleges, and major bus routes. When icy or snowy weather is predicted to last, 'priority two' routes - the remaining B roads and single access roads to villages - may also be treated. Every year, HCC's gritter drivers take refresher training, such as test drives and speed awareness, so they can operate safely as they salt Hampshire's priority routes. Gritters are not permitted to drive faster than 30mph, so please be patient if you find yourself travelling behind one this winter.

### Local Cycling and Walking Plan Consultation

The Parish Council has responded to HCC's Local Cycling and Walking plans consultation explaining that the walking route through Stockbridge would benefit some improvement if the footfall was to be increased. The Council brought to HCC's attention: the tendency of cars to park on the Test Bridge with two wheels on the pavement thereby narrowing the pavement and making it difficult for more than one person or wheelchairs and mobility scooters to get through; the uneven surface of the pavement, especially where tree roots have come through the tarmac; the width of the pavement in many areas which makes using a wheelchair impossible; the difficulties with car bumper overhang. Funding for this project comes from Government so we can hope some of these problems may be addressed.

**Stockbridge Parish Council will next meet** on 12th December and again on 16th January at the Town Hall at 7:15pm.

*Belinda Baker, Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council*  
[clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk)

### Poppy Appeal 2024

#### A message from Angela McMeekin



A very big thank you to all of you who helped in so many ways with the Poppy Appeal this year.

My special thanks to the residents of Providence Court who allowed us the use of their covered area and provided refreshments for us. Iain and Ghislaine Bell have sorted out everything for us for many years and it was amazing that they did the same this year even though they were moving during that time. Thank you both for all you have done for the Poppy Appeal and we wish you every happiness in your new home and hope we will still see lots of you in Stockbridge.

My very special thanks to Andrea Zanchi, who has taken over the finances and Jane Lambert who has been my wonderful transport as I am not able to drive anymore. We don't have a final total yet but it is looking good and we hope we will have had another successful year, thanks to all of you.



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## Trout 'n' About Awards

On Saturday 9 November Trout 'n' About held their annual awards evening at the Town Hall. The well-attended event celebrated the success of Trout 'n' About 2024 with the volunteers, sponsors, committee members and local MP Caroline Nokes.

The awards are allocated based on the nominations and votes by the voluntary helpers at Trout 'n' About on the day.

The awards were as follows:-

**Stockbridge Recreation Ground Trust** £1,000 to help with the upkeep.

**Stockbridge Football Club** £500 to help continue the running of the club in this their 130<sup>th</sup> year.

**Stockbridge Primary School** £1,250 to assist in purchasing induction stoves for the children to learn cooking skills.

**Longstock playground** £1,250 towards refurbishment of equipment.

**Longstock allotments** £500 for new machinery.

**Stockbridge Ukraine** £500

**Friends of King Alfred buses** £1,000

**St Peters and St Nicholas Churches** £500 each for upkeep of the premises.



A £3,000 fund is now established to help pay for specific **projects undertaken by the Parish Council** that in the past would be paid from the parish precept.

I would like to thank all the local volunteers who worked so hard to make the day a success, our sponsors, River Dental, Greyhound-on-the-Test, Hildon Water and Stockbridge Community Cinema, the Trout 'n' About committee for their tireless efforts behind the scenes, those wonderful shops on the High Street that support and the wonderful Hampshire stallholders.

Finally, and by no mean least, a thank you to the residents of Stockbridge for your understanding around the road closure and being such wonderful hosts to all our visitors on the day.

*Bob Powell*

*Chair, Trout 'n' About Committee*

*(We feel sure we speak for the whole community when we thank Bob himself for leading such a successful and enjoyable event. Editors)*

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Christmas is almost upon us! Christmas adverts are out and the supermarkets are tempting us with the most amazing treats all ready for eating. However, I have not seen my favourite.

So, I am sending you this recipe and hope you give it a go. It's simply delicious, especially if you get fed up with pastry Mince Pies, or are not so keen on Christmas Pud!

## Festive Frangipane Layer Cake

Serves 8 -10

### Ingredients

150g unsalted butter

3 eggs

30g self-raising flour

150g sugar, caster is best

150g ground almonds

75g flaked almonds

300g mincemeat

Option of redcurrants to decorate

Icing sugar to decorate

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Grease a 36x12cm tin.

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy; then slowly add the eggs one at a time. This can all be done in a food processor.

Add the flour and ground almonds and mix to form a batter.

Spread two thirds of the mixture on the bottom and up the sides of the tin. Place in the fridge for approximately 30 minutes to firm up.

Add a layer of mincemeat, then another layer (the remaining) frangipane and smooth to the edges with a knife.

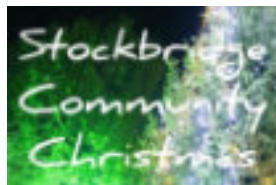
Sprinkle with the flaked almonds and bake for approximately 40 – 45 minutes ensuring the top does not get too brown.

Once baked, leave to cool slightly before taking out of the tin and serve with the redcurrants and a sprinkle of icing sugar.

This is easily made in advance and lightly reheated but is also nice cold.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS and a very  
HAPPY NEW YEAR to all our readers  
and thank you for reading my column**

*Linda Hotchen*



## Christmas Lights Switch On Events

### Christmas officially starts in Stockbridge on 6th December

From 2.30pm there will be a **Christmas Fair** in the upstairs hall of the Town Hall and the entertainment will start at 3.30pm with the Bells of St Peter's chiming to welcome the **Tractor Rally** which will be calling **Santa** to the Town Hall, where he will be in his Forest Grotto from 4pm until 7pm.

**Cinderella** will be welcoming the community, and then every child, and probably a few adults, will have to pass the **Naughty or Nice Machine** before meeting the big man who, this year, is giving out presents and certificates to the children.

Santa will briefly leave to join Rev'd Joe Sweetnam in officially turning on the **Christmas tree lights** at 6pm. Santa will then return to his grotto until 7pm, when he'll leave to return to the North Pole.

From 4pm the High Street will be alive with music with **Brass Bands, Choirs, and Opera Singers**. Look out for the cast of **Beauty and the Beast**

This year's **Treasure Trail** asks children to find the slippers that Cinderella has hidden in the windows of some shops and businesses and they can bring their completed Treasure Trail maps to St Peter's from 5 to 5.50pm to receive a little 'well done' gift.

The community will join together outside St Peter's Church at 5.40pm for some **festive carol singing led by Stockbridge Primary School**. The Church will be open for **hot drinks and traditional mince pies** afterwards until 6.30pm.

Several of the shops are providing **street food** so no one will go hungry or thirsty, there will be plenty of Hot Chocolate, Glühwein and street food to be enjoyed from 4 to 7pm.

This year the Businesses of Stockbridge have been very active, and have helped Santa, ensuring that **every child that attends Stockbridge Primary School receives a wrapped present**. The Church Christmas tree and individual trees on shops and houses of the High Street will be placed from the 23rd November and are supported by the community, local businesses, Hampshire County Council and Stockbridge Parish Council. Look out for red posters in local windows, indicating the supporters of this free community event.

This is a wonderful free-to-attend Christmas Event that brings together the Community, Businesses, Charitable Organisations and the Council with one simple aim, to wish everyone a **Merry Christmas**. **We look forward to seeing you all on the day!**

*Dave and Mandy Buck*

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# Stockbridge Primary and Pre-School News

## Autumn days . . .

The very long 8-week first half term of the school year is behind us and we are well into autumn term 2, hurtling towards Christmas at an alarming rate! Much as I (and the children!) love Christmas, I don't wish away this half term and we really do try to withhold festive preparations until December actually arrives; this year is brilliant timing for us as we try to combine our start to the festive season with the switching on of the High Street lights event which this year is on 6th December. On that day, we devote some of the afternoon to decorating our classrooms and the tree outside the school entrance. We wear festive jumpers and this year, festive hats – more on that later – turn the Christmas hits on loud and enjoy carols around the tree both at school and later on that evening, at St Peter's Church. What is always lovely about all of these events is the way that we come together as a community; both in school and on the High Street with the wider community.

Whilst so many are getting themselves ready for the break, it's always a time of year when we are so grateful to others who go out of their way to support people outside of their families, often in their own spare time. For us in school, we are indebted to the Stockbridge community who donate prizes and display things in their windows for our Christmas trail and to those organising events that our children can enjoy. In school, we have our own great example of this magnanimous spirit in Miss Hatt.

Miss Hatt (Jess) is our very beloved Learning Support Assistant working with the 4 and 5 year olds in their first year of school. In her early 20's, she really is remarkable. Her brother George, was, out of the blue, diagnosed with a grade 4 brain tumour and, although devastated, Jess turned her worries and fears into determined fundraising and established a charity ('Hatt's off to George') to help raise money to give George great experiences he'd love and something to look forward to through the long days of chemo- and radio-therapy. George and Jess recently switched on Winchester's Christmas lights, voted to do this by 80% of all voters for the event, and the scale of their ambitions and fundraising has resulted in over £20k being raised, half of which will support George and half goes to the Brain Tumour Charity. Jess proves that ordinary people can do remarkable things and she's a great example of the grit and determination we try to instil in our children.

Our curriculum is rooted in the support of ordinary people doing remarkable things and each topic is linked to a specialist; someone who brings their unique knowledge and skills to enrich what our children know about the world around them and the possibilities of jobs and hobbies that might also spark their interest. We have worked with engineers, architects, artists, designers and authors

so support our children's learning. They visit us (or we visit them) and learn about their jobs. They usually set the children a challenge to create or learn something and then revisit us to offer feedback about the children's work and plans. This results in really rich learning opportunities which are valued by the children and mean significantly more to them than feedback from their teachers! We're lining up Miss Hatt for our entrepreneur challenge in the summer term but, if you have specialist knowledge or skills in the following areas and wouldn't mind working with us for a forthcoming project before the end of the school year, we'd love to hear from you please:

- River keeper
- Outside cooking/foraging
- Archaeology
- Gaming – we are learning how to programme computer games
- Explorers and adventurers (we're learning about Antarctica and explorations)
- Allotments
- RNLI links or anything linked to water safety

Thanks once again to all who support us throughout the year. We wish you all a very happy festive season and a great start to 2025!

*Emma Jefferies, Headteacher*

### RSPB Garden Birdwatch - Save the dates: 24-26 January 2025



Register with the RSPB in mid December ([www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch)) to become involved in the world's largest garden wildlife survey. In 2024, over 600,000 people took part and the results of the survey are shown below. Once you have registered, you will be sent updates with top tips on how to get ready for your best Birdwatch ever.

Taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch couldn't be simpler! You just spend an hour watching the birds in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park, and record what you've seen. If you see very few birds or none at all, that's also really useful information, so please include it in your recording.





## **The Mid-Test Benefice**

**The Installation as Rector**

**The Revd Joe Sweetnam**

**by The Right Revd Philip Mounstephen  
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**& Induction**

**by The Ven Jean Burgess  
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**In St Peter's Church, Stockbridge  
Wednesday 6 November 2024**



The choir and the congregation wait in anticipation.



The Rev'd Vanessa Lawrence, Assistant Rural Dean gives out the notices and invitation to the reception.



Mrs Sue Clutterbuck presents Joe to the Bishop.



The Rt Rev'd Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Winchester adds words of welcome.



Joe swears the Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty the King before The Ven Jean Burgess, Archdeacon of Bournemouth.





Joe signs the Oaths of Canonical Obedience and the Declarations in the Deed of Institution, witnessed by the Archdeacon.



The Bishop presents Joe to the people of the Benefice as their new rector.



Joe brings a brief message of introduction to the congregation.



The Bishop thanks the ministry team for their work during the interregnum.

The congregation join Joe and his family at the reception in Stockbridge Town Hall.



Joe meets and greets well-wishers at the reception.





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## From the Potting Shed - The Horticultural Zoo Alphabet

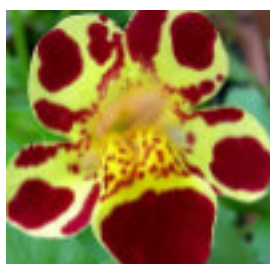
Take a break from the garden over the holidays and test your brains with these horticultural anagrams. They are all common names of plants but one thing they have in common is that **they all start with, or contain, the name of an animal or bird.**



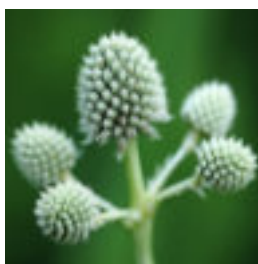
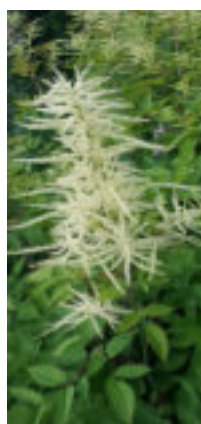
To help you out a bit, the anagram answers are in alphabetical order and the letters next to them will tell you the first letter/s of each answer.

For example: Pin Act ( C ) would be CATNIP

1. She Braces Beer BB
2. Lame Ebb BB
3. Prefab Rod I Said BOP
4. Buy Nil Ants BT
5. HeGy Bulb Rust BB
6. Fancied War Rol CF
7. Mac Tint C
8. Tact Ails C
9. Or By Lilac CL
10. Sow Clips C
11. Bell in Cars C
12. Outsider Near DT
13. Rags God DG
14. Wood God D
15. No Gold Boards DB
16. Hearten Peals EE
17. Feel A Ban F
18. Sort A Badge G
19. Her Label H
20. Hand Nick Chess HAC
21. Edge Who H
22. Hour Honed HH
23. Risen Moth H
24. Loath Rise H
25. Or A Pagan Wok KP
26. Amber Lass LE
27. Bedpans Or Ale LB



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year  
from Micki**



28. Is A Loner LE
29. Fry No Meek Owl MF
30. Muzzle Keeper Tony MPT
31. Relish Mop Cut OP
32. Only A Pit PT
33. Wily Owls Sup PW
34. Frostbite For Ban RFF
35. Starkest Mental Era RM
36. Nth Palm Rips SP
37. A Rook Nest S
38. Pangs Adorn S
39. Acknowledged Spurs SG
40. Drily Plies SL
41. Lard Snippet SP
42. Weird Sport S
43. Rip Lacquers SC
44. Unwisest Son SS
45. Deck Ties T
46. Fold A Tax T
47. Daily Lot TL
48. Truly Toil TL
- 49 The Rat Duel T
50. Not Runic Plan UP
51. Pig Versus Slob VB
52. No Weak Rib WR
53. Grazes Bars ZG

(Answers on Page 27)

## Eco Tips from Lisa Traylor

In November, we had a really interesting service for creation care at St Mary's Longstock. Thanks in particular to Rev'd Sam Scott, the Diocesan Environment Officer, who helped us put that service together and preached for us.

You couldn't make it? Don't worry. We'll aim to do something similar next year. But in the meantime here are a few key thoughts:

Sam took us back to the early chapters of Genesis and reminded us that, not only had God made us uniquely in His image, but at the same time He gave us a mission – to look after everything that He had made. And Sam left us with a small challenge – what one thing could each of us do differently to help with the environment?

I'm still pondering my choice but, having been given the opportunity to meet with my local MP to discuss rewilding, it may be around what lobbying I can do.

Are you also pondering? If so, the advent calendar that Chelmsford Diocese have put together might give you a few ideas. So when you unwrap your daily chocolate (fairly-traded?) advent calendar, how about checking out their inspirational ideas too at [https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/files/EnviroAdventCalendar2024\\_final.pdf](https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/files/EnviroAdventCalendar2024_final.pdf) and when you come to make your New Year resolution, how about making it one that will help creation?

Before we get to New Year, there's Christmas to look forward to so I thought I'd share A Rocha's tips for a more eco-friendly Christmas:

- 1) Fairtrade advent calendars (see above)
- 2) Make sure your Christmas tree is organic, FSC-certified and locally grown. There is a new concept of renting trees but unfortunately I couldn't find anyone in our area who does it. Maybe next year?
- 3) Go for a natural wreath and decorations.
- 4) Re-use cards and wrapping.
- 5) Create homemade gifts or buy second-hand.
- 6) Make sure any beauty products or food gifts are palm oil free
- 7) Make a 'gift of time (eg for a monthly cook/coffee outing/baby sitting...) gift voucher'. So many unwanted gifts end up in landfill but this won't!
- 8) LED Christmas lights help to save energy and money.
- 9) Invite someone who'd otherwise be on their own to join you on Christmas Day. It's also a way of reducing energy consumption as they'll share your heating and cooking!
- 10) And I know this one is a challenge (or it is for us!) but try a meat-free Christmas meal. If you do eat meat and this is affordable, make sure it's free-

range or organic, and buy it from a local farmer.

11) Recycle right. Most wrapping paper is not recyclable. You can test it by doing the 'scrunch' test. If it springs back, it isn't recyclable. And always remove the sellotape before recycling.

12) Carry on caring for God's earth throughout the year. How about making a regular donation to an environmental charity as your Christmas gift?

When we get there,

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

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A short film about the service is at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_wY0yZasIo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_wY0yZasIo)



## Stockbridge Music Concert Paul Turner - 8 November

To misquote Oscar Wilde 'To lose one performer is unfortunate; to lose two is doubly unfortunate'. Two days before the concert, a heavy cold conspired to prevent the singer Claire Rutter from replacing Nadine Benjamin who herself had recently withdrawn due to illness. Fortunately for Stockbridge Music (and us), Paul Turner, who was due to accompany Claire on the piano, stepped in to fill the gap. Although the baby grand in St Peter's was fine for the originally planned concert, it was necessary to hire in a grand piano more fitting a recital. Full credit to Music Director Paul Wing for locating a suitable instrument on the day before the concert and managing to have it delivered to St Peter's Church at 1.30am on Friday morning, after being in use the night before at a concert in Hackney!



The concert itself was warmly appreciated by the audience who, as well as enjoying Paul's virtuoso playing, were entertained with background stories about the composers and the pieces being performed. The programme began with 3 pieces by Edvard Grieg, the first being *The Wedding Day at Troldhaugen* - Grieg's house and now a museum and concert hall (well worth a detour if you are visiting Norway). This was followed by Grieg's *Nocturne and Lyric Pieces Op 43*. The first half of the concert concluded with two pieces by Chopin - the familiar *Fantasia-Impromptu in C# minor*, which allowed Paul to display his keyboard mastery to the full, and the beautiful *Nocturne in C# minor*.

The second half of the programme was entirely taken up by Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* suite which, Paul explained in his introduction, is a musical depiction of 10 paintings by painter Viktor Hartmann. Each movement is based on an individual work, many of which are now lost, and there is a familiar recurring and varied Promenade theme, as the viewer walks from painting to painting at the exhibition. An excellent rendering of this great work.

The performance left the audience wanting more and Paul did not disappoint with a wonderful rendering of Debussy's *Clair de Lune* as an encore.

Well done to the team at Stockbridge Music for keeping calm and carrying on and thanks are also due to the concert's sponsors, Guy and Jean Boney  
*Paul Kidd*

## Songs of Solace The Amici Singers



The Amici Singers are a group of 20 or so experienced singers who came together, on Saturday 16 November at St Peter's Church, to perform a short programme of beautiful, reflective choral music in loving memory of three friends. The concert was conducted by Mark Williams and covered a wide variety of pieces from 16th to the 20th Century - starting with *O Nata Lux* by Thomas Tallis and ending with a version of a song made famous by Elvis Presley (*Can't Help Falling in Love*). In between the songs, two poems, *Consolation* and *The Peace of Wild Things* were read by James McConnachie.

The event was very well attended and a retiring collection for the Marie Curie Charity has raised £1,180 so far. Emma Montgomery, who organised the concert, has asked us, on her behalf, to thank everyone who made the evening go so well. *Editors*





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# Reflections . . . from a (Retired) Bookseller

First the good news:

I'm writing this from a gorgeous spot overlooking St Austell Bay in Cornwall. For the first time ever, I can travel with my husband as he goes on a work visit, and we can even bring our dogs to a 'pet friendly' hotel and take an extra day or two before heading back home.

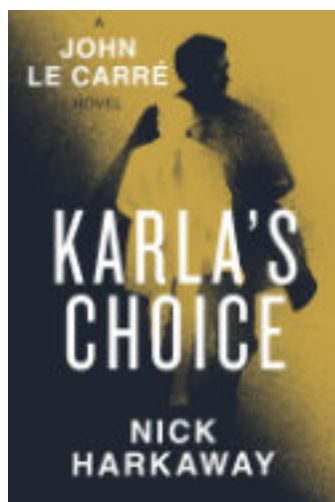
It's a strange feeling not to have to BE anywhere or DO anything in particular. After sixty years of working, it's the first time I've experienced this freedom but, as I'm sure any of my contemporaries could tell you, it's a mixed blessing. How many times, on a dull and uninspiring morning, has the wish to stay in bed and pull up the duvet kicked in? Quickly followed by that internal nagging alarm clock which says 'Get up and get going!' Sometimes it's hard not to ask 'Why?'

Yes, there are loads of things to be doing, but finding a way to structure one's days to make all those new-found hours feel gratifying can be challenging. Why is it that things which used to be simple and obvious now seem complicated and exhausting? Wrestling with computer-based activity, for example. When did it all get so complex? Spending more time on exercise seems to take a lot more energy than I had imagined. Even personal interactions with friends can be wearying!

I'm sure the world still needs the enthusiasm and skills we retirees have to offer – but finding the right combination of how and where to apply them is, for me, proving to be quite a new world.

In the meantime, falling back on something I love doing, which is reading, still feels like a wonderful luxury on a quiet morning or afternoon. Being in Cornwall for a few days reminded me that one of Britain's best and most successful novelists, the late John Le Carré, made it his home base for many years before his death.

In the last few weeks, *KARLA'S CHOICE* a 'John Le Carré novel', which was in fact written by his son Nick Harkaway, has come out, and it's really very good. Perhaps not quite as brilliant as his father's other spy novels – but, as Mr Harkaway is himself an accomplished novelist, quite good indeed. It's got the same wonderfully sharp observation about the state of the world's great powers, sharp dialogue, wonderful description, and best of all, it brings back George Smiley, perhaps Le Carré's greatest character.



The story bridges the gap between Smiley's first appearance in *THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD*, and both *TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY* and *SMILEY'S PEOPLE*, which followed. It also introduces the mysterious Russian spy master Karla, although there is clearly more than enough left unexplained – so that being teased about this character's early days just leaves us hoping for more.

I managed to whip through *KARLA'S CHOICE* in about two days. And I couldn't put it down, which says a lot. It's one of those books which pulls you completely into another world, and keeps you deeply engrossed there.

So engrossed that as soon as I finished, I searched the house madly for an old copy of *TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY* which I finally unearthed and gobbled up in the following two days. The dogs were lucky to get fed and walked!

Just before going to Cornwall, I tried to get a copy of *SMILEY'S PEOPLE* to take with me, but no luck. So now that we're back I'll be heading out to track one down so I can revisit those wonderful characters again as soon as possible.

Definitely worth getting out of bed for!

*Elaine Sperber*



## Editors' Note

*We are always trying to come up with new ways to engage our readers and avoid getting stuck in an editorial rut.*

*2024 saw the introduction of 'Reflections . . .' which offers us the opportunity to share the personal thoughts, pleasures, anecdotes and preoccupations of our contributors. We all enjoy reading about other people's experiences and their reflections on life - the ups and the downs - so keep sending them in. We will always check you're happy with what we print.*

*As for our regular content, we are extremely grateful for the loyal diligence of our contributors who deliver interest, information, amusement and news, month in, month out. They are our life blood and we salute them.*

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## Bell Ringers ring out for Reverend Joe at his induction and installation service

A Quarter Peal (QP) (official record below) was rung to celebrate and welcome Rev'd Joe's arrival as our new Rector for the Mid Test Benefice. For one of our band, Clare Thomson, this was her first tower QP, so this made the occasion doubly special (and very nerve racking for her!).

After the QP the remaining members of our band were able to celebrate this important event with some lovely general ringing just before the service. We are always conscious that it's thanks to all of you who helped raise funds to renovate the bells that we have such a wonderful peal of bells to ring – as our many visitors tell us! *Micki Nadal*



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First Quarter Pealon Tower bells - 1

Quarter Peal rung to celebrate the institution, induction and installation of the Revd Joe Sweetnam to the Mid Test Benefice

## What exactly IS a Quarter Peal?

*A peal is defined by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers which was founded in 1891 to represent ringing in the English tradition with rope and wheel.*

*A quarter peal is a performance of numerical sequences ('changes') of specified composition, set length and with the same person ringing the same bell throughout. It takes around 45 minutes to complete (a full peal is about 3 hours) depending on several factors including the number of changes and the weight of the bells which affects the speed of ringing. A full peal on up to seven bells features at least 5,040 different changes, while a quarter peal has at least 1,260. For a performance to be officially recognised, details must be published in The Ringing World, as seen above.*

*Editors*

## Answers to Horticultural Zoo (page 21)

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bear's Breeches  | 30. Monkey Puzzle Tree  |
| 2. Bee Balm         | 31. Ostrich Plume       |
| 3. Bird of Paradise | 32. Pony Tail           |
| 4. Bunny Tails      | 33. Pussy Willow        |
| 5. Butterfly Bush   | 34. Rabbit's Foot Fern  |
| 6. Cardinal Flower  | 35. Rattlesnake Master  |
| 7. Catmint          | 36. Shrimp Plant        |
| 8. Cattails         | 37. Snakeroot           |
| 9. Cobra Lily       | 38. Snapdragon          |
| 10. Cowslips        | 39. Speckled Swan Gourd |
| 11. Cranesbill      | 40. Spider Lily         |
| 12. Dinosaur Tree   | 41. Spider Plant        |
| 13. Dog Grass       | 42. Spiderwort          |
| 14. Dogwood         | 43. Squirrel Cap        |
| 15. Dragon's Blood  | 44. Swine's Snout       |
| 16. Elephant Ears   | 45. Tickseed            |
| 17. Fleabane        | 46. Toadflax            |
| 18. Goatsbeard      | 47. Toad Lily           |
| 19. Harebell        | 48. Trout Lily          |
| 20. Hens and Chicks | 49. Turtlehead          |
| 21. Hogweed         | 50. Unicorn Plant       |
| 22. Horehound       | 51. Viper's Bugloss     |
| 23. Horsemint       | 52. Wake Robin          |
| 24. Horsetail       | 53. Zebra Grass         |
| 25. Kangaroo Paw    |                         |
| 26. Lamb's Ears     |                         |
| 27. Leopard's Bane  |                         |
| 28. Lion's Ear      |                         |
| 29. Monkey Flower   | How did you do?         |



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## Stockbridge Cub and Scout Winter Camp



**The 14th Andover (Stockbridge) Cub Pack and Scout Troop** enjoyed a joint winter camp at Oxenwood Education Centre from 15th to 17th November. The weather was cold but kind to us.

The Cubs and Scouts enjoyed a variety of activities, many of which they had never tried before, including night hiking, fencing, air-rifle shooting, climbing, stand-up paddle boarding and mountain biking.



Huge amounts of cake and hot chocolate were consumed throughout the weekend but especially around the campfire. We enjoyed a good roast dinner on Saturday night with lashings of ice-cream for pudding.

The camp was very generously supported with a grant from Stockbridge Community Cinema. This enabled us to keep costs down and make the camp accessible to more children.

We would like to thank our team of regular leaders, our camp team (who came from as far as Wales and Kent to help), parent helpers and the Stockbridge Community Cinema. It was wonderful to watch each child push themselves out of their comfort zone and develop both their physical and mental skills. For some of the cubs and scouts it was their first time away from home. We are very proud of them all.

We are already looking forward to our next joint camp which will be going to Basingstoke Gang Show in February 2025.

*Morwenna Collins*



*. . . whether they like it or not.*

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## Remembrance in Stockbridge

This year at St Peter's we were lucky enough to have the Bishop of Winchester, the Rt Rev'd Philip Mounstephen leading our worship and his wisdom shone through as he reminded us that wars were occasionally necessary if it meant stepping up and doing the right thing by opposing evil.



During the first hymn, the Royal British Legion standard and other banners were received at the altar. In attendance were service men and women from the 2nd Regiment Army Air Corps and a large contingent of all ages from our local Scout Group. Children from Year 6 of the Primary School had composed, and movingly read out, their own thoughts when considering what 'one minute's silence' means. Then two pupils from Danebury School read the haunting poem 'The Crosses' by Bill Minton. Later in the service the prayers were read by the Scout Group and Explorers.



When the service was over, the Crucifer led the Bishop from the church followed by the RBL Standard held by Rory Christopherson, Youth Organisation banners and wreath layers. The Army Air Corps contingent led them and the congregation in

procession down the High Street to the War Memorial where a further Act of Remembrance was led by the Bishop. The Rolls of Honour were read out by Robin Colenso, the Exhortation read by Brigadier David Williams and, after the two minute silence, the Kohima Epitaph was read by Bob Powell of Stockbridge Parish Council:

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,  
"For your tomorrow, we gave our today".*

This was followed by the laying of wreaths by representatives of relevant organisations (including the police and firemen) and the past Mayor of the Test Valley.



The following day, Armistice Day, the Rev'd Joe Sweetnam led the short Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial which was very well attended and included children from the Primary School who laid their wreath.



*Janet Williams*



### Royal British Legion

No-one walking along Stockbridge High Street during early November can fail to be aware of the approach of Remembrance Sunday. Angela McMeekin, glad that it wasn't raining this year, patrols the poppy-selling volunteers up and down the street, giving them encouragement, training (how to use the card machines and the QR Codes ) and topping up the poppies where necessary. She is tireless and an exemplification of service to the community. Angela is a legend. The money has not been added up yet but people gave generously.

On Remembrance Sunday, Angela had organised the Poppy Lunch, this year a delicious roast at the White Hart. Sixty people, all of whom had helped in the selling of poppies, were invited as



well as Joe and his wife Kelly. David Williams, as President of the RBL, thanked everybody warmly at the end of the meal.

*Janet Williams*

## Church News

### St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge



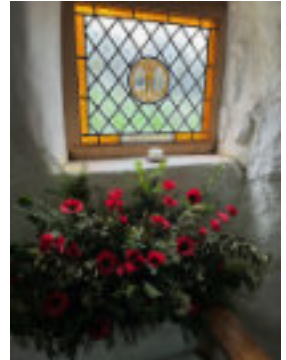
November has been a busy but brilliant month in St Peter's, and the mainly dry weather with orange, red and yellow leaves provided a fitting background to all the activities. We started with All Souls' Day on November 2nd, a commemoration of the faithful departed. Matthew Grayshon led the simple but moving service with his usual compassion and empathy. As the names of those we have lost were read out at the lectern, the congregation quietly came to the front to light candles for those they had lost. Sarah played suitable sacred music on the organ. This annual service is a valuable opportunity to step away from busy lives and sit quietly with our memories, be they distant or very recent.

And then on the 6th November, the event we have all been waiting for (and for which a lot of people had worked tirelessly to make the church sparkling clean) - the Institution and Induction of The Rev'd Joe Sweetnam as our new rector. The magnificent service, which included hymns chosen by Joe himself, was led by the Rt Rev'd Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Winchester supported by The Ven Jean Burgess, Archdeacon of Bournemouth. In attendance were all the Team Ministry, the Benefice Church Wardens, the clergy who have supported us during the interregnum, and some others with whom Joe has been working, the PCC's and a full choir. Before the service, the bellringers gave us a Quarter Peal (45 minutes) followed by 15 minutes of ringing. St Peter's was completely full of friends and family of the new incumbent together with members of congregations from across the Benefice. There are formalities to be observed, such as the the archdeacon leading Joe to the church door where she laid his hand on the door to symbolise his ownership of the churches now, followed by the church wardens handing over to Joe all the relevant keys to the benefice churches. The Bishop's sermon was strong and uplifting and reminded us that we should accept that Joe will have his own stamp to put on the rôle he is undertaking, and we should support him in his choices and his ways of leading us on our Christian journey. The service ended with the choir singing the beautiful version of The Lord's Prayer by Joseph Lees. On behalf of

everyone who worships in St Peter's and Old St Peter's, we welcome Joe and his family to Stockbridge.

The Remembrance Sunday Service took place on 10th November, led by the Bishop of Winchester. You will find a full report of the service and ceremony on page 31 together with the Armistice Day ceremony on the following day.

Earlier in the day, in a beautifully poppy-decorated Old St Peter's, Joe had led the first communion service of his incumbency here. Everything augurs well for a new era in our parish and we are here to support Joe and his ministry in whatever ways we can.



For those of you, like myself, who from time to time like to sit and find peace on one of the benches outside Old St Peter's, you



would have noticed last year that the old cross which stood proudly on the nearby grass had rotted and finally split. It had been placed there after being used in the Millennium Passion Play. It has now been replaced, thanks to the generosity of those who participated in the Passion Play and has taken up its guardian role again over those who rest on the benches below in that sacred garden.

Now we are approaching the beginning of the Liturgical Year. Advent, which falls this year on December 1st will be celebrated with a Eucharist Service in St Peter's Church, led by Joe, during which the choir will start singing hymns foreseeing the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Carol Service this year, which we share with the Roman Catholic community, is very close to Christmas on the evening of December 22nd. In the meantime we can look forward to Joe turning on the Christmas lights on Friday, December 6th accompanied by Primary School children singing carols on the church lawn. Afterwards, there will be mince pies and mulled wine in the church.

To finish on a personal note: I have been writing this column of our church news for well over two years now and I think it is time for me to pass it on to someone else, before I start repeating myself! I have enormously enjoyed being involved in this way and it has also taught me quite a lot that I didn't know before. You may find me occasionally



## Church News

writing elsewhere in the magazine, but for the moment I am very grateful to Chrissie Quayle, who has kindly agreed to take on the rôle from the February 2025 issue. I just end by thanking all of you who've been reading the column and wishing you a very happy and blessed Christmas.

### Editors' Note

We will miss Janet's columns from St Peter's enormously. She has been the perfect contributor - her columns are always entertaining, beautifully written, and, very important for us, an appropriate length and always on time! She has been a constant source of wise advice and a great support to our team. While we know Janet deserves a proper break, we hope she won't be able to resist picking up her pen for us from time to time in the future.

And we are very pleased to welcome Chrissie Quayle as Janet's successor. Chrissie, who is known to many readers, will put her own stamp on the delivery of news from Stockbridge churches and we look forward to working together. We thank both Chrissie and Janet for organising a seamless handover.

### Looking Ahead

**Sunday, December 1st:** Advent Sunday at 3pm - teas at Angela McMeekin's (2 Nelson Close) for those who live alone, and again on Sunday 5th January.

**Friday, December 6th:** Christmas lights will be turned on at 6pm and Primary School children will sing carols on the church lawn. There will be mulled wine and mince pies in the church afterwards.

**Sunday, December 22nd:** Carol Service in St Peter's at 6pm. We will be joined by the congregation from St Thomas More, our Roman Catholic Church.

**Tuesday, December 24th:** The Christmas Story for children at 6pm in St Peter's Church, followed by Midnight Mass at 11.30pm

**Sunday, December 29th:** Benefice Service in All Saints Church, Houghton at 10am

Services for January will be found in the Pew Sheets.

*Janet Williams*

## The Column for November

### Baptisms and Weddings

There were no baptisms or weddings

### Funerals

18 November 2024 at 11am. The funeral service for the late Margaret Humber took place at St Peter's Church, Stockbridge, followed by burial at Stockbridge Cemetery.

## Prayer for December

Lord now is the time we look forward to your coming again;

Maranatha Lord Jesus.

Lord, as we prepare for the Christmas, as we bustle in the shops and admire the lovely lights, help us to remember that it is the gift of your son, Emanuel, that we are celebrating

Maranatha Lord Jesus

Advent, a time of preparation and sober reflection

Forgive us Lord, for the wars, bombs and sorrow brought about

by man's inhumanity to man.

We celebrate Jesus, who wanted peace for the world.

Come Lord Jesus

The New Year brings the opportunity for a fresh start,

if we make resolutions, let them be worthwhile.

Help us build our faith and strengthen our love for you

and show this in the quality of our worship.

Lord, send your spirit to guide us this Christmas and

take us into the New Year open to your presence and love

Maranatha, come Lord Jesus

## Margaret Humber

Although Margaret had been in a nursing home for many years, those of us who had known her attended her funeral in St. Peter's Church on Monday 18th November. Margaret, who always looked immaculate, was a lovely, very quiet lady. She loved our church and she donated the beautiful choir candles in memory of her husband Peter. She helped with flowers, sang in the choir and played the music for services in Leckford Church and Old St. Peter's. Peter and Margaret for many years lived next door to the Rectory and, when Peter died, Margaret moved to a smaller house in New Street. When the Town Hall was restored, Margaret very generously paid for some of the new windows. I think we will all have very fond memories of Margaret and her little dog.

*Angela McMeekin*

## Church News

### St Mary's Longstock



October seems a long way off now – Harvest was celebrated in Church, followed by a Hog Roast in the Village Hall. It was great fun and reminds us of our rural roots. Everyone was really generous with donations for the Andover Food Bank and I had a full car to deliver on Monday 7 October. The food bank was surprised at the volume given for a small village. We have received a certificate saying we delivered 44.52 kgs of donations (just over 7stone). Thank you.

Rev'd Joe Sweetnam moved into the Rectory in Stockbridge on 18 October – the parishes have worked hard to provide a good welcome. I delivered a small 'goody' bag from Longstock PCC with other parishes doing something similar – Stockbridge providing a fish and chip supper in the evening at Thyme and Tides.



The induction service for Rev'd Joe went really well. Bp Philip, Bishop of Winchester presided and gave Joe his letters of authority and Archdeacon Jean inducted him, with the Churchwardens giving Joe the keys to the churches. It was a moving and enjoyable

service with Joe supported by many friends and colleagues from his former parish and his family. And of course, with many from his new congregations. Over 200 were in church.

In addition, we were joined by the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire, Tim Weald Esq and by the Mayor and Mayoress of Test Valley - Mr Mayor, Councillor Ian Jeffrey, and Mayoress, Mrs Maura Jeffrey. The buffet at the Town Hall was full of really good things to eat – all provided by contributions from the six parishes..

Joe formally started work the following Sunday – taking the Remembrance Service at Houghton. He took his first service at Longstock on 17 November, a Parish Eucharist with a good size congregation to welcome him.



Rev'd Joe at the reception.  
(Photos by Paul Kidd and Nigel Rugman)

There will be an opportunity to come and meet Joe more informally at a coffee morning to be arranged in the New Year.

10 November; Remembrance Sunday. There was a moving Remembrance service at St Mary's at 9.30am, with Anthony Burns Cox joining us to play the organ. The Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial was well attended by families all wanting to pay their respects. We had an excellent piper, resplendent in full dress uniform and a fly-past by helicopters. The Peat Spade, provided cakes and coffee after the service, enjoyed by many.

#### **Saturday 30 November. 10am – 12noon**

Autumn clean and tidy for the Church and Churchyard. Please come and help if you can. Cleaning away ivy, weeding tombs and clearing leaves. Inside cleaning windows, dusting and polishing and brass cleaning. Please bring your own gardening tools.

Looking forward, we have a full Christmas Programme. Over the whole benefice there will be nine carol services in the various churches and Rev'd Joe is taking seven of them. You have the opportunity, should you wish, to sing many carols and in different settings.

At Longstock, we start with the Christmas Story in the Barn – a very popular event, hosted by Paul, Loz and Arthur Hardy at Charity Farm House – **3pm on Saturday 14 December.**

This photo was taken last year and shows the atmosphere well. All are welcome and, if you can, please bring a plate of festive nibbles. Thank you.



The Crib Service will take place on **Sunday 22 December** starting at 10.00am. During each carol, children are invited to take down to the crib, either people, or animals to build up the scene. Chris Reynell will be with us with the hand bell ringers. It's not Christmas without them.

On **Christmas Day**, the service at Longstock starts at 10.00am – this is a family service with a short communion available for those who like to take communion on Christmas Day.

In January we have our usual three services – Epiphany is on 5 January at 9.30am when we celebrate the visit of the magi, bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The website is now up and running:  
[Midtestbenefice.2day.uk](http://Midtestbenefice.2day.uk)

Maddie Hedley



# Church News

## From the Rural Dean

December can feel like chaos – lots of social events, services, Christmas presents to buy, never-ending to-do lists and the pressure to create the perfect Christmas. But, in the midst of this chaos, our churches can offer an opportunity to find peace during this busy time.

The Church of England's theme for Advent and Christmas 2024, 'Follow the Star: Calm and Bright', draws on the world-famous carol, *Silent Night*: "Silent Night! Holy Night! All is calm, all is bright..."

One of the reasons that this carol is so universally loved is the way it invites us into the still centre of the Christmas story, to contemplate Mary holding the new-born Jesus, the Light of the World.

The angelic messages we encounter in the biblical story of Jesus' birth typically hold together the need for calm in the present ('Do not be afraid' ... 'Fear not') with the hope of a bright future ('for you have found favour with God' ... 'for behold I bring you tidings of great joy').

Throughout Advent (starting on 1st December) try to: focus on how to find Calm during this busy period; pause during the busy season; and, prepare for a calm Christmas.

*Your Rural Dean, James*

Rev'd James Pitkin - romseyareadean@gmail.com

## St Nicholas' Leckford

### CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT



We hope you'll be able to join us in our beloved St Nick's for our annual 'Carols by Candlelight' Service on Sunday



### 15th December from 6-7pm

It's a traditional Nine Lessons and Carols service, followed by a glass of mulled wine, a mince pie and a chat before braving the cold to go home!

## Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am

## December and January Services for Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford

### December

#### 1st December (Advent Sunday)

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

#### 8th December (Advent 2)

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

#### 14th December (Saturday)

15.00 **Longstock** Christmas Story in the Barn  
Charity Farm House

#### 15th December (Advent 3)

11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist  
18.00 **Leckford** Candlelit Carol Service

#### 22nd December (Advent 4)

10.00 **Longstock** Crib Service  
18.00 **Stockbridge** Carol Service jointly with  
St Thomas More RC

#### 24th December Christmas Eve

18.00 **Stockbridge** Christmas Story  
23.30 **Stockbridge** Midnight Mass

#### 25th December Christmas Day

09.00 **Leckford** BCP Communion  
10.00 **Longstock** All Age and short Family  
Communion

#### 29th December (Christmas 1)

10.00 **All Saints Houghton** United Benefice  
Service

### January

#### 5th January (Epiphany)

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

#### 12th January (Baptism of Christ)

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

#### 19th January (Epiphany 2)

09.30 **Longstock** Morning Worship  
11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist  
18.00 **Leckford** Plough Service


#### 26th January (Epiphany 3)

11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship



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