

MAY 2026

BENTWORTH, LASHAM, AND SHALDEN PARISH MAGAZINE

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

Dear Friends

“It looked like an angel climbing into the sky” said the reporter describing the ascent of Artemis 2 as it made its journey towards the moon. It was spectacular. The best of human technology and courage, vision and ambition reaching outwards to discover something new. The photographs the crew sent back to us show us views of the earth, glowing and clear, alive and truly beautiful. They ask us, who are we? where are we? and what could we be? Is this where God lives perhaps?

In 16th century Spain, a Carmelite nun called Teresa set out on her own journey inwards. She described our souls as a beautiful, transparent crystal, a bit like a castle. Inside this interior castle are chambers, or rooms, that eventually lead to a room where God resides. This is the main room where God and our souls share a deep intimacy.

Many of us hear God calling us to the first chamber where we feel gratitude and a deep sense of the beauty of God. Then we are called to travel further into the castle, onwards into the second room. Here we begin to humbly recognise who we are in relation to God. We may want to journey further into the castle but our preoccupations (e.g. distractions, entertainments, pursuits and worldly vanities, wealth, honour and circumstances) entangle us and pull us back. God gently calls us to lay them down and continue our journey towards him, just as Jesus invited the rich young man to set aside his wealth and choose to follow him (Luke 18). This is the journey towards God.

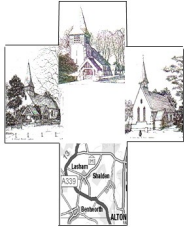
Teresa saw God not ‘out there’ beyond the stars, but right here inside our souls. She tells us within our souls is God’s unwavering presence and riches we can freely enjoy. Our greatest journey is not travelling on a rocket but gently and determinedly walking in prayer, contemplation, actively thinking about God, fixing our gaze on Christ and living out in our daily lives the love that we receive. On this journey, God shows us truly who we are, where we are and what we are meant to be.

“The compassion and mercy of our Lord is so great and he desires so strongly for us to seek Him and enjoy His company, that in one way or another He never stops calling us to himself.”

St Teresa of Avila, The Interior Castle

<https://www.nasa.gov/image-of-the-day/>

Revd Jon Rooke



THE VILLAGER

the editor

Please send copy for the **June** Magazine to the Editor or your Village Correspondent **by noon on Tuesday 12th May** .

With Spring in the air there are lots of events, so apologies that page 3 is a bit squashed! Do look at everything as you go through the magazine.

Donation: Many thanks to Mary Hart, Shalden, for her contribution to our funds – which is much needed, and very much appreciated.

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OUR NEW VICAR and HIS WIFE joining us in the Summer

Revd Tim & Karen Gomm



APRIL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 24 Broadlands RDA Tea at Three GU34 5PX from 3pm
24 Medstead Players: The Art of Murder Medstead Village Hall 7pm
25 Medstead Players: The Art of Murder Medstead Village Hall 7pm
25 Museum: Stepping Stones -Young People's pottery sessions,(ages 10 -16)
25 St Andrew's Medstead Jumble Sale Church Hall 1.30- 3.30pm
25 Spring Concert at Alton Maltings 7.30pm
25 Screen by the Green, Beech National Theatre *Live All My Sons*
29 HMF Concert: A Celebration of Spring St Cross 6.30pm Page 24

MAY

- 2 St Lawrence Monthly Market the Parish Centre 9 - 12noon
2 Broadlands RDA Open Day 10am – 2pm Page 25
5 AOS: Organ recital by Oriania Gassiou St Lawrence Church at 8pm Page 12
5 Bentworth Annual Parish Council Meeting
5 Medstead Gardeners' Club: Alan Horgan Pest and Disease Control 7.30pm
8 Beech Screen by the Green: H is for Hawk Village Hall 7.30pm Pages 14 & 26
9 Bentworth Garden Club Plant Sale Village Green 10am – 3.30pm
10 Alton 10 Road Race 9.30am
11 Lasham Coffee Morning in the church for the first time 10.30am

12 Villager deadline for the June magazine by noon please

- 12 ASA: Lucia Gahlin *Wonderful Things - Tutankhamun's Tombs and Treasures*
13 Roedowns WI: AGM and supper
14 Medstead WI: Annual Meeting
14 Friends of the Museum Talk: Nik Knight *Bats: Superheroes of the Night* 7.30 P11
15 Bentworth Film Night: H is for Hawk Jubilee Hall 7.30pm Pages 6 & 27
16 Spring Garden Fayre, Alton Public Gardens 10am – 3pm Page 28
16 Medstead Gardeners' Club Plant Sale Village Hall 10.30am – 12 noon Page 25
16 Alton Repair Cafe Assembly Rooms 10.30 – 12.30pm
24 NGS Open Gardens at Shalden Park House 2-5pm GU34 4DS Page 13
25 Curtis Museum: Make & Take clay session 11 – 12noon Page 11
28 Talk: *Hormones, Health & Weight, for Over 40s* Medstead Village Hall 7pm Ps 10 & 29
30 Beech: National Theatre Live: *Playboy of the Western World* 7pm Pages 14 & 30

JUNE

- 3 Roedowns WI: Self guided walk around Winchester
6 Upton Grey Fete at The Old Vicarage 2pm Page 31
9 ASA: Talk by Julian Halsby: *What really happened at the Yellow House in Arles in 1888?*
13 Library: start of Expressive Watercolours course 10am – 12.30pm Page 32
13 Library: start of Art for Wellbeing course 2 – 4.30pm Page 33
20 Library: Emergency First Aid Course 9.45am – 4.45pm Page 34
27 Dolls House Day at the Assembly Rooms 10.00am – 4pm Page 14
27 Alton Choral Society Summer Concert Methodist Church 7pm Page 35

Coming to the Benefice of the Resurrection



Karen and I are looking forward to moving to Alton on Thursday 16th July. My licensing will be on **Tuesday 11th August** at St Lawrence church, conducted by the Bishop of Winchester, The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen at 7pm, to which you are all invited.

Now, we would like to share a little something about ourselves as an introduction. Moving to Alton will be like a home coming for us both.

Karen grew up locally and has family here, whilst I grew up in Winchester and where I became a Christian. Karen and I married in Alton in 1990. We met at Moorland Bible college in Sopley.

I began my ministry as a youth worker for various churches and para-church organisations. I then felt called to ordination and trained at St John's College in Nottingham. I have been ordained for 24 years.

Karen is a Licensed Lay Minister and we enjoy walking, exploring in our camper van, playing games and having family over. We have 3 grown children, a daughter-in-law and 2 grandchildren.

We have been 'waiting well', which were the words God spoke to us at the start of our discernment journey. It has been an informative process with God's faithfulness evident in each step. We feel very blessed to be joining you and look forward to an exciting season of change, growth and moving forward together on the path God has set before us. Let us pray for each other as we settle in.

Every Blessing,

Rev Tim Gomm

BENTWORTH

BENTWORTH CARE GROUP

Jackie Crawford

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

Jackie Crawford 01420 561281; Diana Willis 07958 912 260;

Katy Davis 07879 402 116

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

The Care Group are looking for new members

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

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

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

THE MUCK IN COFFEE MORNING

We are in the Bank Holiday season – 2 more in May. So we will meet for coffee or tea on Monday May 11th, and 18th only. Do come and join in at the lovely barn at Parsonage Farm, which Emma and David Wiggin kindly let us use. Just £1 for as much tea or coffee as you can drink and as many biscuits as you like!! 10.30am – 11.30am.



BENTWORTH GARDEN CLUB

Maryanne McEvoy

Our second speaker for this garden season was Marina Christopher from Phoenix Plants in Medstead. It was a great turn out on a grim grey evening, no signs of spring that day.

Marina was great, she held us captivated while she demonstrated and spoke all about seed sowing. Her background is in botany and her methods are based on her knowledge and the science of germination. She brought along examples of pots of young seedlings that she had grown in 4" pots. There were hundreds of little seedlings which she patiently pots on, we were all in awe of this.

Marina also demonstrated taking cuttings. Throughout her talk she inspired us with the message -give it a go! She was fairly unorthodox in her methods but this was inspirational. You don't need to be observing temperatures all the time, or have specific heating equipment but just experiment. If it works for you that is fine.

That was the last speaker, so next month we will be doing our first garden visit.

If you would like to join the club you will be very welcome, it costs only £10 a year.

Please make a note in your diary:

**BENTWORTH GARDEN CLUB PLANT SALE
SATURDAY MAY 9th on the VILLAGE GREEN
10am to 3.30pm**

Hope to see you there, and happy, and busy gardening this month!

BENTWORTH FILM NIGHT

Sue Brooking

We are pleased to announce the screening of "**H Is for Hawk**" on Friday, **15th May**.

Based on the memoir by Helen Macdonald, **H is for Hawk** follows Helen (Foy), who, after the sudden death of her father (Gleeson), loses herself in the memories of their time birding and exploring the natural world together, and navigates her profound loss by training a wild goshawk named Mabel. But as she teaches Mabel to hunt and fly free, Helen discovers how deeply she has neglected her own emotions and life. What begins as an act of endurance transforms into an intimate journey of resilience and healing.

Interestingly, there is also a village connection with this film. Helen's mother, Barbara Macdonald, was a resident of Bentworth for many years.



The film has great reviews, especially for Claire Foy's powerful performance:

"This beautiful and heartbreaking film portrays with exquisite class the disarray that unrelenting grief brings to people's lives." The Sun

"It's a career-best for Foy, who will doubtless win many awards. I hope the unnamed bird gets one too." Spectator

"Championed by a brilliant performance by its lead actress, H Is for Hawk is a moving adaptation." The Upcoming

Please join us to support your local film night, watch an excellent film, and catch up with friends!

Doors open at 7pm with the film showing at 7.30pm.

Tickets £5 on the door (Small Notes and change for entrance fees, drinks, and ice cream, very much appreciated). This is a social event open to all, please feel free to bring friends along too.

Small Notes and change for entrance, drinks, and ice cream, very much appreciated!



Bentworth Cricket Club

Richard Hill

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

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

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

We look forward to meeting you.

* * *

LASHAM

LASHAM COFFEE MORNING

Anthea Del Mar

We received a royal welcome from Tony and Amanda up the wonderful new steps to their front door. For those who totter a bit the new steps were indeed a joy.

And of course the table was also a joy, bearing all sorts of deliciousness from sausage rolls to the signature coffee cake, and quite a lot in between.

The main topic of conversation was the wonderful service of celebration for the life of Charlie Shaylor. Maggie, Becca and Nick did Charlie proud and it was an occasion of great love and thanks.

Which was very appropriate for discussion today as it was Charlie, in his inimitable way of getting things done, who initiated and launched our coffee mornings. And this has been the last one in a private house. What excellent timing.

Our re-ordered church in all its sparkling glory will be the venue for future coffee mornings. With lots of space, lots of light and in the centre of the village - what more could we want?





Because of the bank holiday the next coffee morning will be on **May 11th at 10.30 in the Church.**

This is your moment to see if you would like to be the host in the church for a future coffee morning. Chairs, tables, cups, water all laid on.

* * *

SHALDEN

LITTER PICK **Frances Anderson**

On the Sunday before Easter, a happy band of neighbours from Upper Anstey Lane and Old Odiham Road took a leisurely stroll from Alton Golf course to the Golden Pot and back.

Armed with picking sticks, black rubbish bags and wearing high viz tabards, we collected 8 bags of recyclable cans, a wheelbarrow full of glass bottles, a dozen hub caps and lots of general litter.

The road now looks great, especially with a new surface and no potholes.





SHALDEN FETE
The annual Shalden fete will be held
Sunday 5 July
Usual attractions for all the family!
SAVE THE DATE!



St PETER & St PAUL GUILD OF MARTHA

Kirsty Ennever

May

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

June

- 6 Jane Shirvell / Lin Baxter
- 13 Karen Saponaro / Lynne Hignett
- 20 Michele Rankin / Kirsty Ennever
- 27 Rozanne Wilson / Rosalind Ommanney

* * *

ST MARY'S SCHOOL, BENTWORTH



THE LATEST FROM ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
The Staff and Pupils

What have we been doing in our Spring term? We have been busy!

We are enjoying the better weather and we are pleased to be playing on our field – den-building, football and generally running around! We have started to plant seeds in the polytunnel and the raised beds and we are watching the pond life as it livens up to Spring.

Our school trips and enrichment activities have included a Swimming Gala at Alton Sports Centre, Residential visit for our Year 3's at the Sustainability Centre East Meon including meeting the newly born spring lambs. Other trips include Stubbington Study and Alice Holt Forest Centres, plus many local school sports and dance events. Another highlight has been our attendance at the London O2 as part of the Young Voices singing event, an amazing experience for 30 pupils.

Our Easter Church Service at St Mary's was led by Revd Jonathon Rooke and was well attended by our parent community.

Last term we welcomed a new member of staff to join our team of Learning Support Assistants in Years R-1 Oak Class and we have 4 senior school children with us this week on work experience placements.

We do have a vacancy for a part-time mini-bus driver for morning pick-ups and afternoon drop-offs in September as our current driver is retiring, so if anyone is interested, please contact the School Office adminoffice@bentworth.hants.sch.uk

We are looking forward to another busy term and will update you later on in the Summer.

* * *

GENERAL INTEREST

CELEBRATING LOCAL ART IN OUR COMMUNITY

Lucy Dean

I'm delighted to share that six of my original artworks are now on display at **Mainly Framing in Alton**. They've kindly featured my pieces on their *Local Artist* wall — a space dedicated to celebrating the creativity within our town. If you're nearby, do pop in and have a look. Both the High Street and Market Street have been quiet lately, and every visit makes a real difference to our local shops, businesses and makers.



Carla seated – charcoal on paper



Freesias

I'm also preparing for another exhibition from 9th July 2026 at **Freedom Through Expression Gallery in Alton**, where I'll be showcasing a new piece of work. It would mean a great deal to see familiar faces there too, supporting both the gallery and the wider creative community.

If you enjoy discovering local art, I warmly invite you to come and see my work at either venue. Your footsteps — and your curiosity — help keep our town vibrant!

* * *

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

MANSFIELD PARK SURGERY PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

are proud to present the following talk: -

A PUBLIC HEALTH TALK ON HORMONES, HEALTH AND WEIGHT: WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW AFTER 40.

This talk is completely free of charge and open to all.

Thursday 28th May in Medstead village hall starting at 7pm.

Dr Colinette Margerison will give this talk in Medstead Village Hall and everyone is welcome. Do come along and learn about this very interesting topic.

Dr Colinette is a GP who is very happy to give this talk as this is her specialist field.

This talk is equally important for men, and does not only address the female population for the following reasons:

Relationships - Many men have partners, friends or relatives going through the menopause. Understanding the symptoms helps support loved ones better and strengthen relationships.

Shared Symptoms - Men also experience hormonal shifts (sometimes called andropause) - lower testosterone, fatigue and weight gain - so information about hormones, metabolism and lifestyle is directly applicable.

Weight and Health Overlap - The same dietary, exercise and lifestyle advice that helps with menopausal symptoms also helps with men's metabolic health, heart health and ageing.

Community Health - Promoting awareness reduces stigma and helps everyone understand that hormone and weight management are community well being issues and not just 'women's problems'.

* * *

EVENTS

THE CURTIS MUSEUM

Jill Line

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

At The Curtis Museum

May events

Object of the Month: - a beautiful punch bowl by studio potter Edgar Campden (1930-1998) of Aldermaston Pottery.

This monthly showcase continues throughout the year until the Allen Gallery reopens in 2027, presenting highlights from the Hampshire Cultural Trust's extensive ceramics collection in storage in Chilcomb, Winchester.

HALF TERM HOLIDAY: For the May half term there will be a range of drop-in crafts and colouring activities, including Thursday Craft Club, (drop in) plus a family museum trail and our seasonal Dodo Natural History trail.

Tuesday 25 May - Make & Take clay session 11 - 12, please pre-book online.

With support from the Museums Association Wellbeing Fund, Hampshire Cultural Trust is delighted to be delivering a programme of **creative workshops** to benefit young people across the county through 2026 and 2027. Sessions will be held during term times over 5 weeks on a Saturday morning; they are free but must be booked in advance, please visit <https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum-events> for more details.

May Talk - Thursday 14th May.

Nik Knight - Hampshire Bats Group - will speak on "**Bats: Superheroes of the Night.**"

The talk will be preceded by the AGM of the Friends of the Museum - this never takes very long!

To be held in Room 7 of the Alton Community Centre, Amery Street, Alton GU34 1HN. Doors open 7pm for 7.30. FREE, donations welcomed.



ALTON ORGAN SOCIETY

Elspeth Mackeggie Gurney

On April 7th, **Ben Scott** played a truly delightful programme of organ works which he told the audience were not well known but should be.

Ben's programme opened with Corrette's "Trio pour les Flutes & Grand Jeu avec le tonnerre". The trio, played across all three manuals was everything one would expect from a Baroque trio, light & playful; the Grand Jeu was a complete contrast, living up to the title and including double pedals in both feet, depicting thunder so vividly.

Domenico Scarlatti's Sonata in D major followed; Domenico was the son of the better-known Alessandro, was a prolific composer for keyboard & this delicate complex work was number 265 out of 555!

Max Reger's "Introduction & Passacaglia in D minor" was a response to Bach's Passacaglia & Fugue (one of many by composers across the years). Ben described the work as being full of dense, crunchy music where the exposure of the sublime themes required a lot of work – the ending was certainly enormous & resounded around the church.

Liszt's "Evocation a la Chapelle Sixtine" is a truly beautiful piece using Allegri's "Miserere" (in a form quite unlike the popular piece we hear today) and "Ave Verum Corpus" by Mozart. The composition arose out of the phase of Liszt's life where his faith took on a contemplative form & the music depicts the service of Tenebrae, commonly celebrated on Maundy Thursday, a solemn rite where candles are gradually extinguished, leaving only one burning, representing the light of Christ. It was a privilege to hear this work played so well.

There followed "Prelude & Trumpetings" by the American composer Myron Roberts, a lively dance like piece & then we were treated to two works inspired by church bells. Marcel Fournier's "Cloches" was a short piece for manuals only, jazzy & arabesque-like; Ben's brilliant registering of the organ brought out a truly bell like sound – the audience was enthralled. Afterwards he let us into the secret that the sound was achieved using 4-foot flute stops.

The final piece in the recital was "Les Cloches de Hinckley" by Vierne, famous for the carillon in his 5th Symphony and the "Carillon de Westminster". Vierne was inspired to write this piece after being disturbed every few hours by the church clock at Hinckley; Vierne was staying in a pub opposite the church, having given the opening recital on the new organ there. The work was a grand Carillon based on a descending E major scale, starting on the manuals, followed by pedals – a fitting end to a fantastic recital – the audience went away very happy, having enjoyed lesser-known music & learned a huge amount from Ben who is a skilled communicator.

Date for your diaries:

May 5th – the final recital in the 59th season is to be given by **Oriana Gassiou** on a very welcome return visit to St Lawrence's. Oriana will play Mendessohn's 5th Organ Sonata as well as pieces by Bach, Vierne, Bossi & Olivier Latry.

Refreshments are available from 7.30pm & the recital starts at 8.00pm. Tickets cost £12;

We look forward to welcoming you in May.



OPEN GARDENS AT SHALDEN PARK HOUSE

on Sunday 24th May 2 – 5pm with the National Garden Scheme ‘

Come and join us on our open day at Shalden Park House.



Enjoy a walk round the beautiful 4 acre garden where teas and homemade cake will be on sale to raise money for the NGS and the charities they support, including Macmillan cancer support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and The Queens Nursing Institute.

Entry is £5 per adult, children are free and dogs on leads are welcome

Enter through main house gates located on The Avenue,
GU34 4DS.



THE SCREEN BY THE GREEN, BEECH

Joanna Curtis

The Screen by the Green this May: It Begins and ends with a father

H is for Hawk: Grief, a Goshawk and Claire Foy at her Best

Claire Foy delivers a career-best performance on Friday 8th May at 7:30pm.

Based on Helen Macdonald's beloved memoir, this is a beautiful story of sudden loss, falconry and the slow road back. Brendan Gleeson co-stars as her father.

£7 advance | £8 door

Bookings: beechvillage.org.uk/events

NT Live's The Playboy of the Western World: Dark, Irish and Best Enjoyed Slowly

A stranger walks into a bar claiming he's killed his father.

Saturday 30th May. Doors 6:30pm, screening 7pm.

Nicola Coughlan (*Bridgerton*) and Siobhán McSweeney (*Derry Girls*) reunite in Synge's scandalously funny 1907 masterpiece, filmed live at the National Theatre. Still wickedly relevant. Still causing trouble.

£14 advance | £16 door

Bookings: beechvillage.org.uk/events

Intimate 50-seat screening. Cabaret seating. Licensed bar. Free parking.

Community cinema with heart and soul

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

DOLLS HOUSE DAY AT THE ALTON ASSEMBLY ROOMS

SATURDAY 27 JUNE 2026

This year's Dolls House Day will be supporting Dementia-friendly Alton in the Alton Assembly Rooms. There will be dolls houses large and small for children to play with along with various activities for them to enjoy. Dementia-friendly Alton will be offering handmade and pre-loved items for sale. We are pleased to announce Kennet Miniaturists will be joining us. In addition, there will be local exhibitors to support the day's activities. The café will be open for refreshments.

The pre-loved dolls house items range is very popular with collectors of all ages at Dolls House Day. With stock now getting low if you have any pre-loved items relating to dolls houses and would be happy to donate them to Dementia-friendly Alton for this year's Dolls House Day in June please let us know using the contact details below.

All money raised at this event will be used to continue delivering a range of support sessions and services for people living with dementia and their carers. This event will be attractive to all those interested in dolls houses and accessories.

For more information please contact Assembly Rooms 01420 551455 or email dementia_friends@btinternet.com.

Event Details

Date/Time Saturday 27 June 2026, from 10.00am until 4pm

Location Alton Assembly Rooms, High Street, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1BA

Admission Free entry. Donations welcomed.

* * *

CLUBS



ALTON

ALTON CAMERA CLUB MARCH 2026 ROUND UP

Renee Smith

In a busy month for Alton Camera Club, we were excited to see our work on display at the “Freedom Through Expression” Gallery in Alton. The exhibition ran throughout the month of March and gave visitors an opportunity to see the kind of work that the club’s members produce. A selection of images of Alton in bygone days, taken by previous members, was displayed alongside current members images.

At the club we welcomed Julian Elliott, who spoke about and showed images of his travels to Mongolia. Julian camped in a traditional Ger whilst documenting the life of the nomads and exploring the Gobi Desert. His interesting talk and images transported us to this vast, East Asian nation and inspired and entertained us.

Our competition season ended with the final round of the Print League competition. Judged by Chris Dixon, he awarded full marks of 10 to three images, ‘Connecting Rod’ by Nick Brock, ‘Eyes Locked’ and ‘Winged Dispute’ both by Steve Smith.

Chris also judged our final Print Challenge round on the theme of ‘Portrait’. He awarded first place to Nick Brock for ‘The Gardener’, second place to Jo Hawkes for ‘Portrait’ and third place to Kelvin Perry for



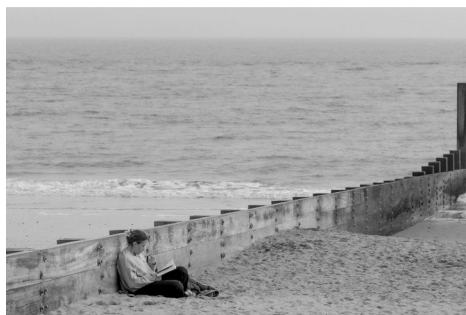
‘Apocalypse Girl’. The winners of our League and Challenge competitions will be announced, and trophies awarded, at our Presentation Evening at Alton Rugby Club at the end of our season, alongside awards for ‘Member of the Year’, ‘Photographer of the Year’ and the Progress trophy.

Club member, Wendy Davies, received the exciting news that her image ‘Where Did You Get That Hat?’ will be displayed at

the upcoming Street Photography Festival in Dublin. Earlier in the year Wendy won the Urban Life category of the International Amateur Photographer of the Year 2025.

Andrew Sorrell *Bournemouth*

The field trips programme took us to Bournemouth at the start of the month and Cliveden House and Gardens at the end. Both occasions provided blue skies and sunshine, with plenty of walking.



We normally aim to get out, as a group, twice a month throughout the year.

Not every trip results in photographic masterpieces, but getting out into the fresh air, chatting and laughing, is priceless. Steve Emmerson Cliveden



We take a break for the summer in May and resume for the new season in September. We welcome new members, beginners or experts. We meet at Holybourne Village Hall. Please see our website www.altoncameraclub.org.uk and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @altoncameraclub



ASA
Forthcoming Lectures:

Vanessa MacMahon

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

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

Tuesday 9th June: Julian Halsby: *What really happened at the Yellow House in Arles in 1888?*

In October 1888 Paul Gauguin arrived in Arles to stay at the Yellow House with Vincent van Gogh. At first the friendship worked well...

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

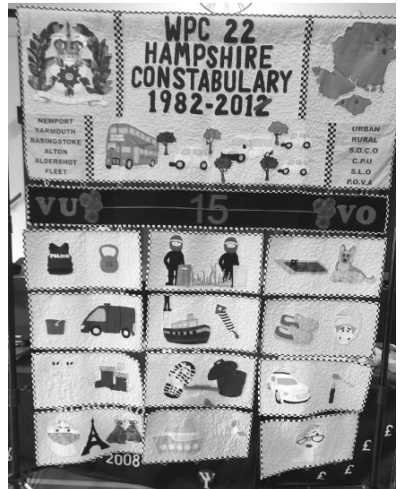
MEDSTEAD
HAMPSHIRE FEDERATION OF WI - MEDSTEAD

Gill Siddall

A lovely warm spring afternoon saw members gathering for the April meeting and two new members were welcomed. Business was swiftly dealt with and then it was time to welcome Jackie Dimmock as our speaker for the afternoon.

Jackie has spoken to Medstead WI before and this time it was episode three of her talk detailing her 30 years in the police force. Jackie first served on the Isle of Wight but later moved to Basingstoke where police life was rather busier. Initially items of equipment were carried in a handbag for female officers but the modern police officer has to carry items weighing an astonishing 28lbs and many need weight training to help carry the equipment!

As Jackie speaks, she illustrates her talks with mini quilts she has made, and an impressive array of quilts was soon being assembled.



This was an interesting talk telling of any manner of happenings from encounters with police dogs and riot training down to dealing with forensics and everything in between.

The next meeting on May 14th will be the Annual Meeting when it is time to look back over the past year, look forward to the coming year for which an interesting programme has been put together, elect the committee for the coming year and just enjoy the companionship of fellow members.

HAMPSHIRE FEDERATION OF WI – ROEDOWNS

Diana Constantine

At our March meeting the guest speaker was Sue, who joined us to talk about taking good

photos using the camera on a mobile phone. She discussed the structure of a planned photo, to gain more interest for the viewer. She had an excellent example of a photo taken at Salisbury Cathedral, which she had planned around the weather, best light and the ideal place to



stand. She then discussed spontaneous photos, being in the right place at the right time and making the most of opportunities.

Finally the capturing of informal personal photos without any posing but catching those special moments. A couple of tips were to delete unwanted photos so that the library storage did not become overloaded. Also to be aware that when a photo is sent or posted on social media it could be claimed by a third party, so to always be aware of this, and mindful of what you share.

After Sue's talk the members gathered into small groups to share favourite photos and explain why each photo meant so much, whether it was family, scenery, wildlife or special memories.

Forthcoming meetings

13th May	AGM and supper
3rd June	Self guided walk around Winchester
1st July	Dogs for Autism
5th August	Portsmouth Harbour tour

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

Tea/coffee, biscuits, raffle and gift voucher prize at each meeting.

Visitors and new members are very welcome. Contact Secretary on roedownssec@hampshire.org.uk Or President Jill Kerr 01420 564116.



Our April meeting had a focus on fuchsias, with Carol Gubler. She has a Nursery of fuchsias in Ash, Surrey. The gardens were opened in March 1986. She has been the President of the Fuchsia Society. She has written books on fuchsias and contributed to The Gardeners World magazine. There are a huge range of fuchsias ranging from tiny flowers to huge specimen ones. We found out that fuchsia fruit can be eaten and turned into jam! Carol takes about 20,000 cuttings a year and she said they are an easy plant to grow cuttings from. Pop the cutting in water and when root bumps start to show pot them up in compost. Fuchsias don't like full sun and heat and will not flower as much in hot sunny positions. They like a more shady position. They can also be cut back hard and will grow back again. It was an entertaining and informative evening.

Programme 2026

www.medsteadgardenersclub.org

Meetings at Medstead Village Hall. Doors open at 7pm with meetings starting at 7.30pm

Month	Date	Event
May	Tuesday 5th	Pests and Disease control Alan Horgan
May	Saturday 16th	Plant Sale 10.30am – 12 Noon Medstead Village Hall
June	Tuesday 2nd	Sustainable and Wildlife Gardening in our Changing Climate Beverley Exall
July	Saturday 11th	Medstead Fete-Medstead Village Green
July	Saturday 18 th	Summer Show-Medstead Village Hall
August		No Meeting

Membership £12 per person Guests £3 per visit (Max 2 visits)

Some of the gardening jobs for May - Look out for late frosts! Many seeds can be planted out into the ground e.g. beetroot, sweetcorn and carrots. Plant out summer bedding plants. Water early or late to preserve water. Hoe weeds. Open greenhouses for ventilation. Lift and divide daffodils and other spring bulbs as needed. Water newly planted trees and shrubs regularly to promote root growth. Water and feed camellias for good flowering next year. Do the Chelsea Chop on some herbaceous plants to promote more flowers. Be careful not to cut back hedges and shrubs due to nesting birds.

Enjoy the warm days in the garden!

Spring Lunch and talk**“Confessions of an AmDram Tart” by Jonathan Jones**

In mid-March, nearly seventy members of the NHNTC enjoyed their annual Spring Lunch, expertly prepared as usual by Nicola Kimber. This was followed by another treat – the presentation by Jonathan Jones of his experiences as an amateur actor over the past 30 years.

Jonathan opened with the famous monologue from Shakespeare’s play “As You Like It”:

“All the world’s a stage....” recounting the seven ages of man, leading to our inevitable fate of being “...sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything”. He followed with the story of his experiences as an actor moving from one to another of numerous local(ish) amateur dramatic societies – the very definition of an AmDram Tart. Beginning with describing his valuable role as a drawer-back of curtains for which he was applauded loudly he went on to tell us about his increasing involvement, moving from being an extra, then a supporting actor to reaching the dizzying heights of the principal performer.

Jonathan’s journey was not without difficulties and plenty of amusing anecdotes – pratfalls and the like. He described the problems of learning his lines for increasingly lengthy parts, of responding to cues, of dealing with stage fright, of coping with drunken fellow actors, of changing his age where required, of dragging large recumbent actors across the stage, of needing prompting, of improvising, of being drowned out by low flying helicopters and, perhaps most challenging, singing and dancing - at the same time!

Jonathan demonstrated his actorly skills with a fluent presentation showing his obvious ability to learn his lines and speak them with conviction and credibility. He ended with a plea for us all to take the Amateur Theatre seriously and support it whenever possible. We will have the opportunity to do so when he performs as Dylan Thomas, reciting the complete “Under Milkwood” at the Farnham Literary Festival next year - likely to be Saturday 6th March 2027.... Be sure to be there!

Jonathan also presents to a number of groups, some of which are available to the public – see his Diary page see <https://sites.google.com/view/justsotalks/talks-diary>

The NHNTC lays on monthly talks through the winter, monthly visits through the summer and a number of social events. Visits planned for this summer include Kenwood House, Goodwood House, the Chichester Flower Festival, Longford Castle and a few days tour of North Wales. To join go to the website – <https://NHNTC.com>

CLUB CONTACTS

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

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

Medstead Tennis: www.medsteadtennisclub.org.uk

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

* * *

REGULAR FEATURES



Tim Gordon-Jones

I inspected the three colonies on the 6th April as it was really sunny and bees were flying, even though it wasn't very warm - 12°C.

It looks as though one colony has lost their queen as there was no brood (eggs, larvae, or even capped brood). This happened to the same colony last year. I took the same action as last year and swapped a frame with one from the best colony, with the hope the bees will make an emergency queen from one of the eggs. It's crucial to get eggs at the early stage but I find it very difficult to spot eggs at all. It will take about 16 days to develop into a queen bee to rescue the colony. That day has come but it is too cold and wet and windy to open the hive to see how it is getting on. Last year the queen suddenly re-appeared, before the 16 days were up, as though she'd been out for a while. Let's hope things work out for them.

The other colonies are doing well, and I've added the first honey super for them to fill. There are plenty of visits to the pond for water which is a good indication that the brood is expanding as the larvae need plenty of water. There is one slight problem I can see though. The field next to the hives is covered with Oil Seed Rape (the bright yellow flower). The nectar from this makes a sour tasting honey which is not very runny and therefore difficult to extract. So, it might be a disappointing harvest this year.

As it is getting warmer I have put a hornet trap in the Apiary. I hope all I get is European hornets not the invasive Yellow Legged Hornet. Please do keep an eye out for bee swarms. As I said in a previous article, there is a good chance of swarms this year due to the mild winter. My phone number is on the honey jars and I'm a member of the Basingstoke Bee Club Swarm collection team. You can look them up on the internet.

COUNTRY MATTERS

Julian Lewis

Castrating Randy Teenage Rams

The rainfall figures confirm that the winter was wet with lots of rain. The combined rainfall total for January and February in 2025 was 246 mm (9.68 ins) but in 2026 it was 380 mm (15.5 ins) which is a 54% increase. March was also wetter with 2025 having just 8.5 mm and 2026 31.5 mm (1.24 ins). However the rolling 12 month rainfall total at the end of March 2025 was 1226 mm (48.26 ins) but the 2026 number had dropped to 954 mm (37.56 ins) so the last 12 months, especially last summer, have been drier.

I have been inspecting crops for a business in Wiltshire today and the ground there and in Bentworth is beginning to crack although currently there is adequate moisture for the plant needs at depth. The crops look good but are slightly behind their normal growth stage. A guide is that the leaf known as 3 – leaf 1 is the final leaf to develop and appear which is counter to logic – is usually fully emerged around St Georges day which is 23rd April. Today when dissecting plants to assess their stage of development most wheats had leaf 3 still rolled in the shoot rather than emerging so full emergence of leaf 3 is unlikely to be until the end of the month. The rainfall earlier in the year encouraged the development of septoria but that has not spread to the new leaves which are emerging. The later emerging leaves are the ones that contribute most through photosynthesis to the final yield so the longer they stay green the better.

Crops are bred to be resistant to disease but like all species of plants and animals do become infected at times. Fungicides are applied to the crop to prevent the disease

damaging the plant's leaves and thus reducing photosynthesis and as a consequence yield. The plant medicines are often derived from plant or fungal strains themselves eg strobilurins or medicines that most of the human population will have used at some time in their lives eg azoles which are prescribed for skin infections. A fungicide will keep a plant healthy so that it yields well and produces wholesome grains for us to eat – would you want to eat grains that have been infected and are not nutritious? One of the reasons that organic grains, which are not treated with fungicides, are so expensive is that they produce low yields and the grains are often damaged and therefore unsuitable for human consumption. As a result, the relatively few tonnes of organic grains that meet the human consumption standard are in great demand and therefore expensive.

I have trimmed the sheep's feet to get rid of excessive growth which tends to trap mud which can become infected and cause lameness. There is only 1 ewe with a slight limp and the others are running around like lambs. I have also "rounded tailed" the ewes which is using the electric shears to shave the fleece from around the tail area where they poop. If this becomes matted, messy and wet flies will lay eggs in the wool when the day temperatures increase. The eggs hatch and the maggots burrow into the flesh which soon causes huge discomfort to the animal and, if not promptly treated, death. The other advantage of shearing the back end of the ewes is that when fully shorn in May the wool is cleaner and the task is much easier. Shearing is hard work that requires the shearer to bend, hold the animal still and use the electrically powered shears whilst reaching around the sheep to remove all of the fleece without cutting the animal's skin (or removing the shearers fingers). It is not easy and is very physical. The shearer becomes weary as the day progresses but each ewe is fresh and full of energy and sometimes very wriggly. If the animal is held by the shearer's knees in the correct position they usually sit quietly. The very best shearer will remove about 350 fleeces in a day's work so about 1 animal every minute and a half which will include catching from a nearby pen and cleaning, adjusting and lubricating the shears. UK shearing rates are about £1.50 per animal. A more normal number of sheep shorn per day would be 200 – 225 and the breed makes quite a difference. Sheep breeds that have a lot of wool around the head or belly take longer to shear.

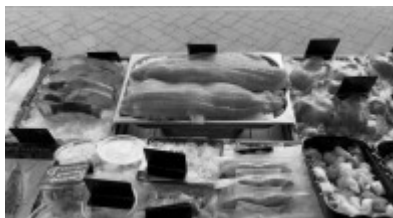
Politicians have been influenced by animal welfare groups that say shearing sheep is cruel. This is bonkers in that in the middle of summer the last thing a sheep wants is to wear a thick well insulated woolly jacket. It is a welfare issue if the sheep are not shorn and suffer from heat stress. Another proposal is the effective banning of castrating lambs – obviously the males! The method I have always used is to apply a rubber ring within 24 hours of birth to the tail and testicles. The ring does not fall off but is not tight – it just gently restricts the blood supply so that the tail and testicles shrivel and eventually fall to the ground. If a castrating ring is placed on a human finger, it does not hurt – it is just an awareness of its presence. If the ram lambs are not castrated, they develop within a few months into randy teenagers and will try to tup any of the ewe lambs. Ram meat has a much stronger flavour because of the male hormones which many consumers do not like. The tails need to be removed so that dung does not collect around the back end and cause maggot problems. Castration of ram lambs is therefore necessary for welfare reasons.

There are various proposals ref shearing and the castration of lambs which have been strongly rejected by farming groups – I just hope the politicians listen to those who look after the animals and not the activists. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing when it comes to animal welfare (and many other things!).

Thought for the month – those who support the precautionary principle – don't in case - never ask the question "what are the dangers of not doing this?"

HAMPSHIRE FARMERS MARKETS

Alton Saturday May 9th



Saturday, May 2	Hamble Spring Food Festival •	10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Sunday, May 3	Romsey Farmers' Market •	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Sunday, May 3	Petersfield Farmers' Market •	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Sunday, May 10	Winchester Farmers' Market •	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Sunday, May 10	Whiteley Farmers' Market •	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Saturday, May 16	Emsworth Farmers' Market •	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Sunday, May 17	Alresford Watercress Festival •	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Saturday, May 30	Ringwood Farmers' Market •	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Sunday, May 31	Winchester Farmers' Market •	9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ALTON LIBRARY

**The National Year
of Reading 2026**

In partnership with

THE
READING
AGENCY

**GO
ALL
IN.**

Mon 9.30am to 1.30pm	Tue 9.30am to 5pm	Wed Closed	Thu 9.30am to 5pm	Fri 9.30am to 5pm	Sat 9.30am to 5pm
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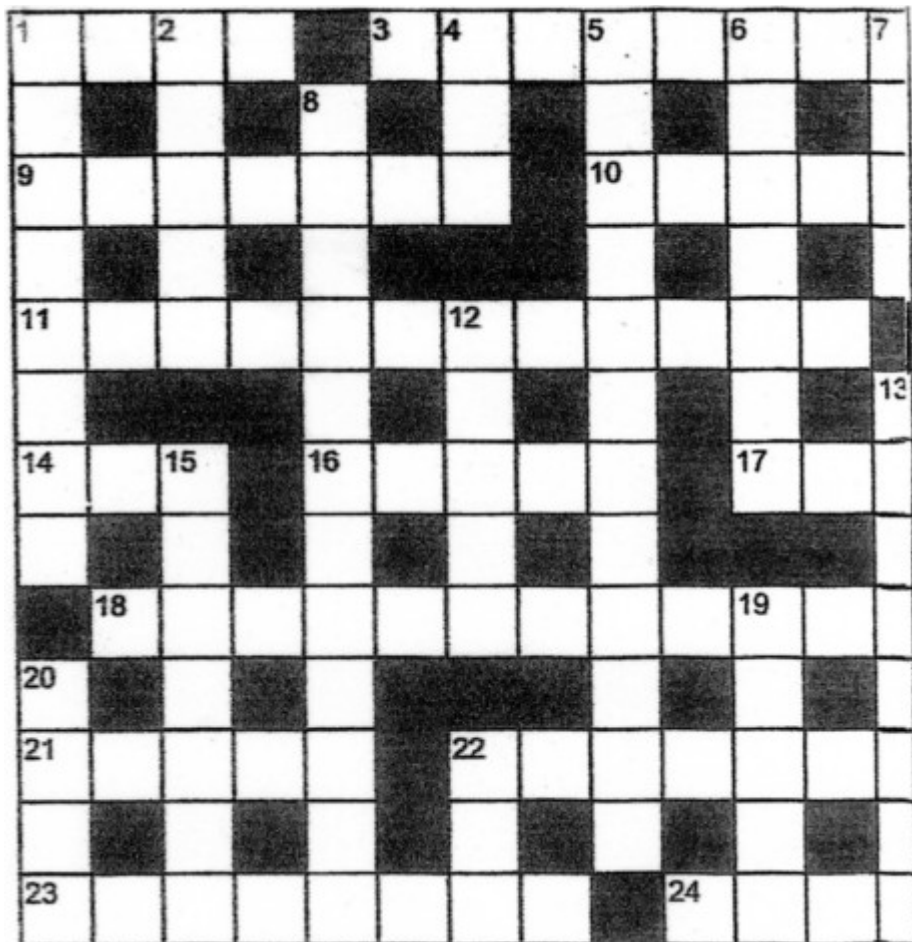
The Library isn't just about books! For those who missed the previous Art courses, there are more in June, and also a First Aid course.

Do look at pages 32, 33 and 34.

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

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

CROSSWORD

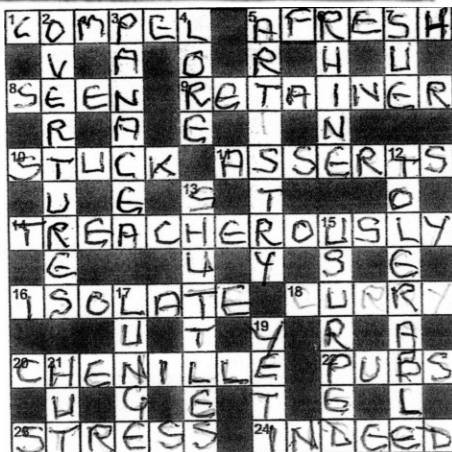


Clues Across

1. Track
3. Gists
9. Bested
10. NW Italian City
11. American State
14. Decay
16. Town Square
17. Hawaiian Garland
18. Citation
21. Drive
22. Perplexes
23. Unassumingly
24. Utilised

Clues Down

1. Thrives
2. Giant
4. Take to Court
5. Spectacular Event
6. Friendly
7. Dispatch
8. Skin response to cold weather
12. Ascertain
13. Treated as a Celebrity
15. Marched
19. Islands
20. Is now Thailand
22. Chum



EVENTS



HAMPSHIRE
MEDICAL FUND

A Celebration of
SPRING

An uplifting evening of music

In association with



savills

The Hospital of St Cross, Winchester

Wednesday 29th April

6.30pm - 9.45pm

Book tickets at: hampshiremedicalfund.org/events



EST. 1955
Broadlands
Equine Therapy & RDA

Everyone Welcome!
FREE ENTRY



OPEN DAY

Saturday 2nd May
10am-2.00pm

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

Cash preferred, Cards welcome!

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



MEDSTEAD GARDENERS' CLUB

ANNUAL PLANT SALE



SATURDAY 16th MAY 2026

10.30 A.M. to 12 NOON

MEDSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

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

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

For more information visit our website: www.medsteadgardenersclub.org

Maybe subject to change without prior notice

CLAIRE FOY

BRENDAN GLEESON

H IS FOR HAWK



Screen by the Green

Friday 8 May, 7:30pm

Beech Village Hall

community cinema with heart and soul



Friday 8th May

H is for Hawk (12A)

7:30pm (Doors 7pm)

Bookings: beechvillage.org.uk/events

BENTWORTH FILM NIGHT

will be screening

H is for Hawk

on Friday 15th May

at the Jubilee Hall, Bentworth.



Doors open at 7pm for drinks, with film showing at 7.30pm. Tickets £5 on the door.

Ice Creams in the Interval

This is a social event open to all local villagers,
please feel free to bring friends along too.

Small Notes and change for entrance, drinks and ice cream, very much appreciated!

Future Dates and Films to be announced

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your way
The lovely way to grow



ALTON
TOWN COUNCIL

SPRING GARDEN FAYRE

SATURDAY 16TH MAY
10 AM TO 3 PM
PUBLIC GARDENS, ALTON

featuring

**ALFI SEEDLING SWAP,
LOCALLY GROWN CHARITY PLANT SALE,
CRAFT STALLS, YO-CHI AND
MAYPOLE DANCING WORKSHOP,
PLANT A SUNFLOWER,
AND MORE**

For more information

ALTON.GOV.UK

01420 83986

EVENTS@ALTON.GOV.UK



Hormones, Health, and Weight: What Everyone Needs to Know After 40

Join us for an informative evening exploring how your body changes after 40 - for both men and women - on how hormonal changes can affect your health and weight as you age.

Featured Speaker:

Dr Colinette Margerison



Thursday, 28th May
7:00 PM

Medstead Village Hall

Admission:
FREE

All welcome



National
Theatre
Live

THE **PLAYBOY** OF THE
WESTERN WORLD

Saturday 30 May | 7pm

Screen by the Green

beechvillage.org.uk



Saturday 30th May

National Theatre Live: Playboy of the Western World

7:pm (Doors 6:30pm)

Bookings: beechvillage.org.uk/events



St Mary's Church
Upton Grey

more+

North Hampshire Downs Churches



Church Fete
2.00pm Saturday
6th June
The Old Vicarage
Church Street
Upton Grey RG25 2RB

Tombola/Raffle
White Elephant/Garden plants/Books
Cakes/Cream teas/Ice creams
Pimms/Toys/Mobile Bell Ringing
Brass band/Punch & Judy
Classic Cars/Children's games
Admittance £2/ Under 14 free

Parking on Church Meadow Church Street

Church Street, Upton Grey, Hampshire, RG25 2RB

www.uptongreychurch.co.uk



Hampshire
County Council

Library Service



Expressive Watercolours

Alton Library

Saturdays 13 June - 4 July 10am - 12:30pm

Free tuition, £10 materials payable to tutor

Booking is essential, please visit

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





Hampshire
County Council

Library Service



Art for Wellbeing Alton Library

Saturdays 13 June - 4 July 2pm - 4:30pm

Free tuition, £10 materials fee

Booking is essential, please visit

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





Hampshire
County Council

Library Service



ADULT
Learning

IN LIBRARIES



Emergency First Aid at Alton Library


Saturday 20 June 9:45am - 4:45pm

FREE tuition, optional £25 certification fee

Booking is essential, please visit

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





Alton Choral Society
Summer Concert

Saturday 27th June, 7pm

Alton Methodist Church

Featuring:-

Famous Opera Choruses and Arias

Tickets £12 adults, children under 16 free

Available through www.altonchoral.org.uk

or on the door

In aid of Alton Foodbank

SERVICES FOR MAY 2026

BENTWORTH LASHAM MEDSTEAD SHALDEN

3rd May – THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

White

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

10th MAY – THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

White

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

14th MAY Ascension Day St Lawrence Church 7.30pm

17th MAY –THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

White

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

24th MAY - DAY OF PENTECOST WHIT SUNDAY

Red

Holy Communion (CW)	10.00a.m.		
Whit Sunday Communion			11.00 a.m.
Family Church (in the hall)			4.00p.m.

31st MAY – TRINITY SUNDAY 10.30a.m. St Lawrence, with Bishop Philip

POTR Services for May 2026

3rd May

8am BPC Communion	St Lawrence
9.30am Family Service	St Lawrence
10.30am POTR Altogether	St Lawrence

10th May

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

14th Ascension Day 7.30pm St Lawrence

Every Wednesday 10am
Holy Communion All Saints

17th May

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

24th May

9.15am Communion Service	St Peter's
10.30am Communion Service	St Lawrence
4pm Lego Church	Holy Rood
6pm Confirmation Service	St Lawrence

31st May

8am BPC Communion	St Lawrence
10.30am GAP/POTR/BLS Communion	
with Bishop Philip	St Lawrence