



The Parish Magazine for

£1

STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD

April 2025



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

Rector : The Reverend Joe Sweetnam

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This Magazine: 11 issues a year.

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

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May copy deadline: April 15th email: editorsstockmag@gmail.com

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Selina Musters 810459	Email: stockbridgefc@hotmail.co.uk	



From the Rectory

Dear Friends,

As we move into April, the promise of new beginnings is all around us. The evenings are becoming brighter for longer, the earth is waking up from its winter slumber and colourful plants and flowers of spring are beginning to emerge. It's a time of renewal, both in nature and in our hearts.

For Christians, this season has a profound significance. As we approach Easter during Lent, we are reminded of the time Jesus spent in the desert when He fasted and prepared to share the good news of God's Kingdom. As we draw closer to Easter we also remember the torture and execution of Jesus followed by His resurrection, which is the very foundation of our faith. Easter is then a time when we reflect on the themes of sacrifice, redemption, and new life. The resurrection reminds us that, no matter how dark things may seem, there is always hope for transformation and the green shoots of renewal. In the midst of life's challenges, Easter offers us the gift of joy and the promise of God walking alongside us, if we let Him.

This April, I invite you to consider the ways in which spring is mirrored in our own spiritual journeys. Just as flowers bloom and trees bud, there are moments in our lives where we can experience growth and renewal. It might come through prayer, through acts of kindness, or through time spent in nature, reflecting on God's creation. Spring is a reminder that God is constantly at work, bringing life where there was once darkness.

The Easter season also calls us to examine the ways in which we live in relationship with others. As we gather to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, we are reminded of his commandment to love one another. This love is not always easy – it calls us to reach out beyond our comfort zones and to offer grace, even when it's hard. We have so many opportunities to show kindness and compassion, whether it's by helping a neighbour, volunteering in our community, or simply being present to those in need.

Whether you are a regular member of our congregation or have not attended church in a while, you are always welcome to join us. Let this be a time for all of us to reflect on the love of Jesus and the ways it can transform our lives.

May this Easter season fill us all with peace, joy, and renewed faith. And may we continue to support one another in love, compassion, and hope.

Wishing you all a blessed Lent and a joyful Easter ahead.

With every blessing,

Revd Joe Sweetnam

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Cover Photo: Daffodil Run, Paul Kidd (this year's event on Sunday 6th April)

From the Editorial Team

After a long wait spring has finally arrived and we join Revd Joe in welcoming a season of hope and new beginnings. We have come out of hibernation - the magazine is looking forward positively with lots of details about upcoming events and activities which will fill your diaries and keep you busy for the next few months.

And in case your spirits need a further lift we have picked up on April Fools' Day with our footers. One of the earliest examples in the UK took place on 1 April 1698, when several people were tricked into going to the Tower of London which housed a menagerie at that time, to 'see the Lions washed'. We include some more examples of particularly imaginative April Fools hoaxes.

Many Stockbridge residents will be aware that Stockbridge Parish Council has been asked to respond to a 2023 survey conducted by Hampshire County Council on parking in Stockbridge. The report of the survey records the time, location and number of cars parked, but no recommendations for action are made. SPC is canvassing residents and businesses for their views on paid parking through a questionnaire which requires a straightforward yes/no answer and needs to be returned by 30 April, from the results of which they will make their response. This will no doubt lead to further dialogue.

Local resident, Mr Roger Tym in his article on p15 draws our attention to the many factors that should be taken into account during the ongoing discussions. For further information, including how to respond to the questionnaire, please see pages 14 and 15.

Frances Candler, Jennifer Kidd and Thea Taylor
Editors



LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

Tuesday 22nd April

Stockbridge Town Hall 6.45pm for 7pm start.

Sarah Delves

presents

**'Fashion versus the planet'
- the impact of the fashion industry
on the planet.**

Guests always welcome.

Further details from Selina Musters on 810459



**Stockbridge
Community
Cinema**



THE ROOM NEXT DOOR (12A)

Friday 25 April

7.30 pm (1hr 47min)



Ingrid (Julianne Moore) and Martha (Tilda Swinton) were close friends in their youth, when they worked together at the same magazine.

Ingrid went on to become an autofiction novelist while Martha became a war reporter, and they were separated by the circumstances of life. After years of being out of touch, they meet again in an extreme but strangely sweet situation.

PADDINGTON IN PERU (12A)

Saturday 26 April

2.30 pm (1hr 46min)

Paddington returns to Peru to visit his beloved Aunt Lucy, who now resides at the Home for Retired Bears. With the Brown Family in tow, a thrilling adventure ensues when a mystery plunges them into an unexpected journey through the Amazon rainforest and up to the mountain peaks of Peru.



This is a fund-raising film for the Friends of Stockbridge School (Under 18s £5.00)

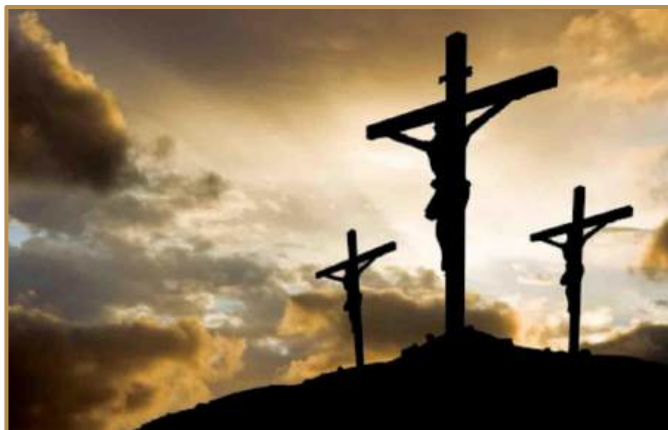
Tickets £6.00 (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee)
available online via our website
stockbridgecinema.org.uk or via the
TicketSource telephone booking service
0333 666 3366 (no additional fee)



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



A choral performance of **The Crucifixion** by John Stainer

on
Good Friday,
April 18th, 1.45-3pm
St Peter's Church, Stockbridge

This dramatic cantata tells the story of Christ's journey to the cross with soloists singing the parts of Jesus and a narrator, the choir singing reflective anthems and the congregation joining in the hymns. With a powerful text and stirring music this promises to be a memorable and immersive experience.

Tenor solo: Toshi Ogita

Bass solo: Lawrence Gillians

Organist: Jack Redman

Conductor: Sarah Seymour

Choir: The Stockbridge Church choir
with singers from across the Benefice.

Entry is free, no ticket required.
A retiring collection to support our
professional musicians.

For more information: call 01264 811072
or email: janet.williams5@hotmail.com



Stockbridge Community Market

Every Thursday morning
9.30 - 11.45am
in Stockbridge Town Hall

Selling the very best local and home-made produce

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

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

The Humorous Sagas and Secrets of a Black Rod

Lieutenant General
David Leakey CMG CVO CBE
Black Rod 2011 to 2018

Stockbridge Town Hall
29 April at 6pm



The talk is in aid of Stockbridge's two churches.

Tickets are £20 and need to be
purchased in advance.

Further information and full details of how to
make payment are on page 28

TERROR ON THE TEST!

By Agatha Christie William Moore

A most silly spoof murder mystery reading...

"Did I hear you
correctly? The
murder weapon
is a carrot?"

"Any fool can
play tragedy,
but comedy is a
serious business."

"Hope for the best,
expect the worst,
life is a play, we're
under-rehearsed."

"Is there a bar?
Can I fall asleep
in the corner?"
(yes and yes)

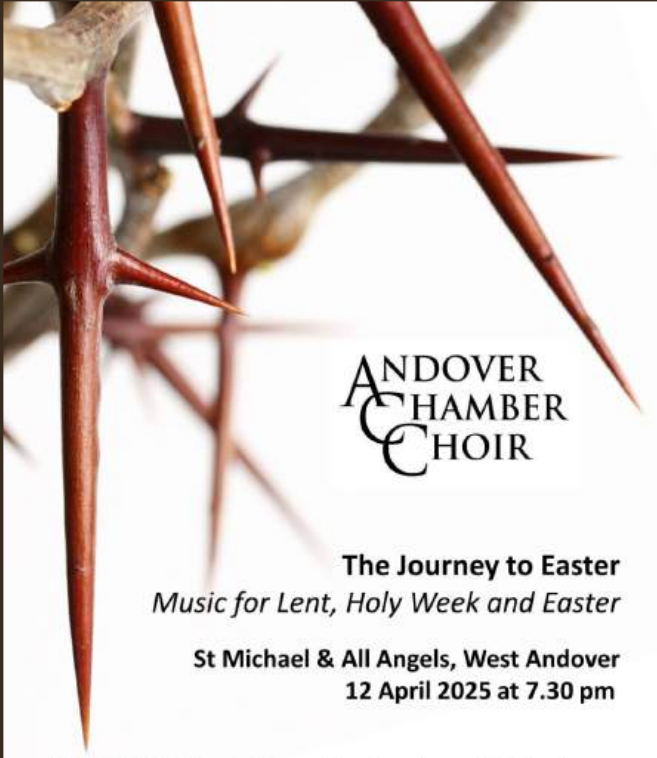


Saturday 12th April 2025, Stockbridge Town Hall, 7.30pm
Cabaret style tables, snacks provided, wine & fizz for sale
Tickets £8 + booking fee

For tickets scan the QR code
Visit: www.ticketsource.co.uk/sads/t-moxkemx
Or call 01264 513 676



SADS



**ANDOVER
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Music for Lent, Holy Week and Easter

St Michael & All Angels, West Andover
12 April 2025 at 7.30 pm

Tickets £15 (incl. refreshments) on the door or £12 in advance from Newbury Building Society, The Lights and choir members
Under-16s admitted free
In aid of Andover Young Carers
www.andoverchamberchoir.org.uk

**Bean Car Club Daffodil Run
2025**


Sunday 6 April





Stockbridge is on the route of this traditional vintage car run. Cars will gather for a 'pit stop' around the Grosvenor Hotel from about 9.30am providing a spectacular display of Classic Cars.

The Run started in 1964 and is open to all cars manufactured before 1940. For further details, see <http://beancarclub.org.uk/Daffodil-Run/>



Houghton WI
10am Monday 28th April
at Houghton Village Hall

Gordon Lewis
on
'Time's Up for Tyneham'
- the ghost village abandoned in 1943

Visitors welcome. Further information from Jane Anderton on 01264 810928

Wherwell History Group

Friday 18th April
8pm at Wherwell Village Hall



Phoebe Merrick
presents
'The WVS in Rural Hampshire'

For further details, please check our website at <https://www.wherwellhistory.com> (£5 entry fee for non-members)

Andover Concert Series
Military Wives Choir
Thursday 24th April 2025 - 7:30pm



Middle Wallop & Andover Military Wives Choir
and Andover Music Club AGM

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

Performed at:  **The Lights andover**

Presented by:  **Andover Music Club**


www.andoverconcertseries.uk

Copy for Magazine

Copy date for the April Magazine:
15 April 2025

Please send emails to:
editorsstockmag@gmail.com
or phone Frances on 01264 811776
Jennifer on 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481

Stockbridge Town Hall Events



Weekly

Mon am	Pilates with Paula
Mon am	Pilates Unlimited with Clare
Mon pm	Sing for Fun
Tues am	Iyengar Yoga with Melissa
Tues pm	Kathryn Campling Yoga
Weds am	Yoga with Dionne
Weds am/pm	Su Joy Art Class
Thurs am	Stockbridge Community Market
Thurs pm	Jo Caley Joga
Fri am	Moo Music
Sat am	Jo Caley Joga

This Month

Apr 1-2	Wild Bazaar
Apr 1	Stockbridge Drama Society
Apr 3	Little & Wild Soft Play Co.
Apr 5	Antique Fair
Apr 5	Stockbridge Ukraine
Apr 7-9	Jennifer Gay
Apr 9	U3A
Apr 12	South Central Makers
Apr 12	Stockbridge Drama Society
Apr 14-16	Capital Cashmere
Apr 17	Stockbridge Parish Council
Apr 18	Sale of French Decorative Items
Apr 18-21	Jules At No.43
Apr 22	Longstock and Leckford WI
Apr 23	Surrounded by Nature Photography
Apr 24	Stockbridge Surgery
Apr 25	Hawkmoor Books
Apr 25	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Apr 26-27	Antiques and Curios
Apr 26-27	Hawkmoor Books
Apr 26	Stockbridge Community Cinema
April 28-30	Wild Bazaar
Apr 29	St Peter's PCC

Longstock Garden Club

Tuesday 8th April

**Gillian Taylor
Shrubs**

- the Backbone of your Garden

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

Guests welcome, £3 each evening.

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

<https://longstockgardenclub.com/>
Peter Moore 07881573493



Test Villages u3a

**Thursday 3rd April
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall**

**'The use of predation control in
the conservation of
threatened wildlife,
especially ground-nesting birds.'**

Professor Nick Sotherton

recently retired Director of Research at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) will describe experiments conducted by the Trust to quantify the impact, if any, that predators such as foxes have on threatened native species, leading to a discussion of how conservation is conducted in the UK today.

**Thursday 8th May
(note change of date)
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall**

Joanna Sotherton

presents

**'Life of a Lingerie Buyer
for John Lewis'**

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 about our Test Villages group at:
testvillages.u3asite.uk

u3a
learn. laugh. live

Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society's

Curtain Call . . .

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

Tuesday 1st April

at 7.30pm

Stockbridge Town Hall

**Our intriguing theme this month is
'Random'**

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!

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A Square Piano in St Peter's



Concert goers who filled St Peter's Church on Friday evening, 7th March, were in for a treat. The renowned Patron of Stockbridge Music, David Owen Norris (pianist, composer, academic and broadcaster), came along with his 1781 square piano and entertained us with stories and anecdotes whilst educating us on the invention in the early 18th century of the keyboard instrument that gave the pianist some control over the volume with the use of levers - hence: piano = quiet, and forte = loud. And so the pianoforte was born. David's opening piece on this enchanting instrument was the Sonata in C minor by Johann Christian Bach (son of Johann Sebastian). The music that followed was by a young Mozart, who had arrived with his family in London in 1764, and who, during that summer, aged 8, composed the lovely three "Pieces from the London Sketchbook", which sound perfect on the square piano. David continued with Mozart's Sonata in G minor.

Into the mix, our accomplished and entertaining pianist also skilfully wove the musical talent and enthusiasm of Jane Austen, whose birthday 250 years ago we celebrate this year. David's title of the programme was "Yes, yes, we WILL have a Pianoforte", a quote from Jane to her sister Cassandra in 1808, telling her that she would buy one as good as she could get for 30 guineas. Jane practised the pianoforte every day before breakfast and she took lessons from the assistant organist at Winchester Cathedral. In her novel "Emma", Jane Fairfax receives a square piano from an anonymous donor, who is later revealed to be her secret fiancé,



Frank Churchill. Later in the programme, David played for us a Sonata in E flat. It is unknown who wrote it, but the musical manuscript is in Jane Austen's very own hand, the finale is preceded by a portrait of a young lady, and the question is still unanswered: could Jane have written the charming piece of music?

After the interval, during which the audience enjoyed their drinks in the Town Hall and our esteemed guest assiduously tuned his square piano (it seems to need a lot of tuning), he played a Rondo by Gustav Holst's great-grandfather, Matthew Holst. He followed that by "Robin Adair", A Favourite Irish Melody with Variations for the Pianoforte by George Kiallmark (1781-1835). This is the only piece of music actually named in Jane Austen's novels.

The concert finished with another of Mozart's sonatas, this one, unusually for Mozart, being in A minor. It was composed in 1778 after the sudden death of his mother whilst she had been accompanying Wolfgang Amadeus on a tour. The music seems to match his anguish, and apparently even the manuscript for this sonata appeared to be a bit more scrawled than his usual work.

The audience in St Peter's gave David Owen Norris a massive round of applause, well deserved, at the end of this entertaining, illuminating and enchanting concert. Stockbridge Music are lucky to have him as Patron, and we in turn are incredibly blessed that Stockbridge Music, under Paul Wing's superb direction, regularly attracts people from far and wide to come and enjoy such a broad range of concerts in St Peter's Church, Stockbridge.

Janet Williams

April Fool?

Visit the tropical island of San Serriffe

On April 1 1977, The Guardian published a seven-page 'special report' about San Serriffe, a small republic located in the Indian Ocean consisting of several semi-colon-shaped islands.

The report described the geography and culture of this obscure nation and generated a huge response as the Guardian's 'phones rang all day with readers seeking more information about this idyllic new holiday spot.

However, San Serriffe did not actually exist.

It was all an elaborate April Fool's Day joke — one with a typographical twist, since numerous details about the island (such as its name) alluded to printing terminology. The Guardian's Philip Davies, who came up with the idea, said "The *Financial Times* was always doing special reports on little countries I'd never heard of. So I thought: 'why don't we just make a country up?' British media's April Foolery has never looked back!

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STOCKBRIDGE CHIROPODY



TROUT 'N ABOUT!

Trout 'n' About 2025

Our TnA committee has already started planning for this year's TnA on 3rd August 2025.

Following the very positive feedback we received after closing the road for last year's festival, we are once again applying to close the High Street to traffic from 10am until 4pm on the day.

Again, if you are a resident/business and have absolutely no choice but to use your vehicle through the High Street during those hours, then a pass is available for you to use enabling you to return through the road closure. If you are simply leaving, and not returning until after 4pm, then no pass is needed. Again, I would emphasise that the conditions of the road closure are that any car use is totally unavoidable and we are really grateful for your help in this given the large crowd of pedestrians on the day.

If you need a pass, please write to:

carpass@tnastockbridge.com

with your address and car registration details.

With your support, we really hope that Stockbridge can have another very successful Trout'n'About festival this year. In 2024, we managed to raise £10k for local good causes and that was fantastic; as a voluntary committee we really felt our hard work was worth it.

Hope to see you on the 3rd August.

Bob Powell

Chair TnA Organising Committee

E : bob@tnastockbridge.com



A date for your diaries . . .

FRIDAY MAY 16th

LONGSTOCK PARK WATER GARDENS

These stunning gardens will be open for you to enjoy from 6.00pm until 8.00pm.

This is a fund-raising event for

St. Nicholas Church, Leckford

by kind permission of Waitrose Leckford Estate.

Entry at the gate (card payment only) £15

which includes a glass of wine to enjoy as you stroll around.



Free Parking

Tel:

David Barnes
01264 810516
for more info.

Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society

Terror on the Test

– Saturday 12th April

SADS are holding a **unique event** (see Poster p5)

It's part play reading; part murder mystery;
and part party.

We had originally planned to do a full production of the play *Terror on the Test* which is a Stockbridge version of *Death on the Dudwell* written by William Moore (son of Charles Moore - former editor of The Daily Telegraph and The Spectator) for a local drama group in East Sussex. Our director had to withdraw for work reasons and so we decided to use the script as the basis for this event instead.

The cast will read the play which is a very light-hearted spoof on traditional Agatha Christie crime stories. But the audience will also be invited to be involved. They will have the opportunity to read some of the small parts and there will be a competition to guess 'who did it' at the interval.

There will be wine and fizz available at the bar and some nibbles. If members of the audience feel like dressing up for a 1930s party, then that would add to the festive atmosphere.

Terror on the Test is **one night only** - 12th April in Stockbridge Town Hall. Doors (and the bar) will open at 7pm and the reading begins at 7:30pm. Tickets are £8 plus booking fee available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/sads or leave a message on 01264 513676 (Mark Frank).



SUSANNE
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GARDENS

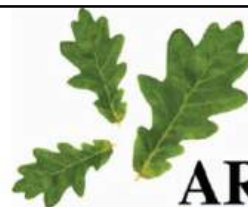


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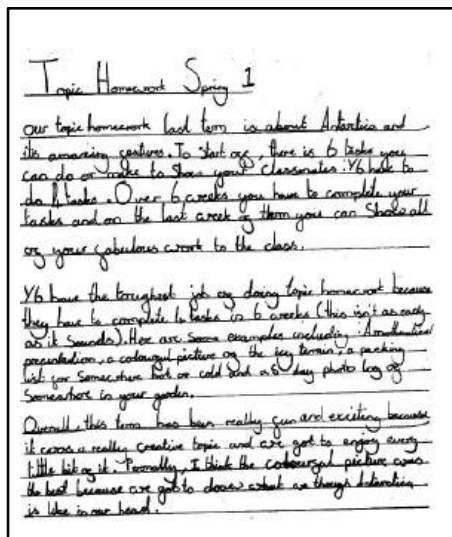




Stockbridge Primary and Pre-School News

Antarctica - a project for Year 6

The school is very proud of the way Year 6 really engaged with this project. The illustration of the display of their homework and the descriptions by Martha and Morris demonstrate the enthusiasm this project generated. We are delighted to be able to share their work with our readers - *Editors*



Topic Homework Spring 1

Our topic homework last term is about Antarctica and its amazing features. To start off, there is 6 tasks you can do or make to show your classmates, Y6 have to do 4 tasks. Over 6 weeks you have to complete your tasks and on the last week of them you can show all of your fabulous work to the class

Y6 have the toughest job of doing topic homework because they have to complete 4 tasks in 6 weeks (this isn't as easy as it sounds). Here are some examples including: A mathematical presentation, a colourful picture of the icy terrain, a packing list for somewhere hot or cold and a 5 day photo log of somewhere in your garden.

Overall, this term has been really fun and exciting because it was a really creative topic and we got to enjoy every little bit of it. Personally I think the colourful picture was the best because we got to draw what we thought Antarctica is like in our head.

Morris



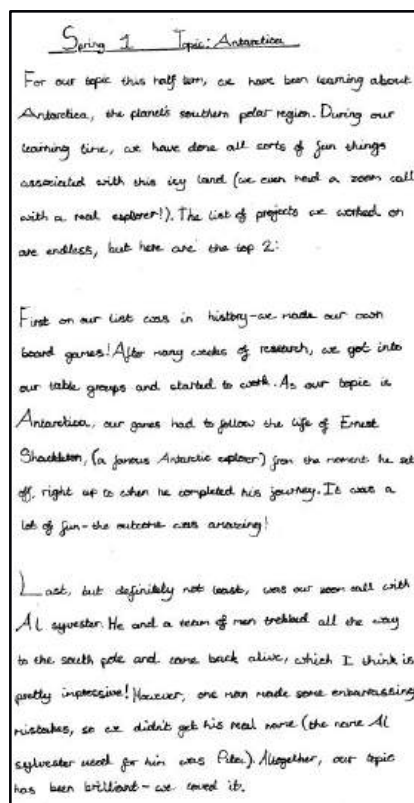
Spring 1 Topic: Antarctica

For our topic this half term, we have been learning about Antarctica, the planet's southern polar region. During our learning time, we have done all sorts of fun things associated with this icy land (we even had a Zoom call with a real explorer!). The list of projects we worked on are endless, but here are the top two.

First on our list was in history - we made our own board games! After many weeks of research, we got into our table groups and started to work. As our topic is Antarctica, our games had to follow the life of Ernest Shackleton, (a famous Antarctic explorer) from the moment he set off, right up to when he completed his journey. It was lots of fun - the outcome was amazing.

Last, but definitely not least, was our zoom call with Al Sylvester. He and a team of men trekked all the way to the south pole and came back alive, which I think is pretty impressive! However, one man made some embarrassing mistakes, so we didn't get his real name (the name Al Sylvester used for him was Peter). Altogether our topic has been brilliant - we loved it.

Martha



... that proves you have a sense of humour. (Max Eastman)



Stockbridge Parish Council News

High Street Parking and HCC Survey

In June 2023, HCC undertook a parking survey on Stockbridge High Street. It took until January 2025 for HCC to provide the PC with the final version of the report of this survey. A draft report had been produced in the Autumn of 2023 and it took considerable perseverance by Cllr Lawrence and then the Information Commissioner's Office with Freedom of Information requests and then sanctions for the draft report to be released in Spring 2024.

The PC is now being asked by HCC to provide a response to the report and the Council is seeking to get as much feedback as possible. The question the PC is seeking to answer is simple – does the community support paid parking or not? The ramifications of installing a paid parking regime are explained in the article on the opposite page and it is important that residents and traders consider carefully what is best for Stockbridge.

The survey is available on the Parish Council's website at

2025 Parking Survey - Stockbridge Parish Council - Stockbridge Parish Council, Stockbridge.

There are also other articles published there concerning matters that respondents may like to consider. The survey is an online survey but, if you prefer a paper copy, please contact the Clerk (contact details below) who can arrange for a paper version to be sent to you. Paper versions can be returned to Hoxton's Bakehouse or Prego. Only one response per resident, please, and only residents of Stockbridge. High Street traders are also invited to respond. The responses will be verified to ensure they are from Stockbridge residents or traders so the survey will be asking for your address. This will enable the PC to prove that the response to HCC is from the community as well as the Parish Council.

The survey closes on 30th April 2025.

Local Government Reorganisation

HCC's proposals for bringing together the 11 borough and district councils and neighbouring unitary authorities into a reduced number of new unitary authorities - that will provide the same services as both county and district councils - were to be presented to the HCC Cabinet on 21st March and the GVT by 31st March.

HCC's proposals will look at how the services it currently delivers can continue under the proposed new unitary authorities. HCC, which will be broken up, is responsible for the vast proportion of local government services and budgets across the area. This includes vital services from social care for children and adults, public health, education, libraries, roads and registration, to transport, waste disposal, strategic planning, trading standards and countryside services - and all of these services benefit from HCC's significant scale of operation.

HCC is aware that a higher number of unitary councils with the number of residents close to the minimum 500,000 does not stack up financially. This will cost the taxpayer more and weaken the financial strength of each individual council.

Victory in Europe (VE) Day Anniversary

Communities across Test Valley are being encouraged by TVBC to mark a special Victory in Europe (VE) Day anniversary in May. Thursday 8 May 2025 will mark 80 years since Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces, bringing the end of World War Two in Europe. To honour this, Test Valley Borough Council have set up a VE Day 80th Anniversary Grant Scheme, which will enable communities to apply for up to £500 towards local celebrations to mark the historic event. Not-for-profit organisations, clubs and societies, parish and town councils and schools can all apply for a share of the pot. The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 25th April and all activities must take place within two weeks of 8th May 2025. If a temporary road closure is needed for your VE Day event, the application fee will be waived. For more information about how to apply visit www.testvalley.gov.uk/VEDayGrant.

Stockbridge Parish Council AGM

The next Parish Council will be the Annual Parish Council meeting when the Chair of the Council is voted on. This will be held on Thursday 15th May at 7:15pm at the Town Hall. All welcome.

*Belinda Baker, Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council
Email: clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk
Tel: 07770 406607*

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The 2025 Parking Questionnaire from The Parish Council

Stockbridge Parish Council has been asked by Hampshire County Council to yet again try to find out the views of residents and businesses with a fresh survey of attitudes to paid parking. I have seen an early version of the survey form and have the following points that I think everyone should consider before responding. The PC has debated and written about this issue extensively over the last few years. If you look on the PC's website you will see a very good article that shows that the PC now seems to have its own view about paid parking; it is much against the idea.

There are a number of qualifications to these bald questions on the survey that need to be drawn to your attention because paid parking is a complex issue, not subject to simple questions and yes/no answers. As the PC's own work in previous years has shown, paid parking implies considerable costs to both businesses and residents some of which are outlined below;

1) Who will have to pay? All residents of Stockbridge parish? Who would be exempt, if any? Would residents have to buy a residents' permit giving them an exemption? How much would that cost? Would residents on Old London Road and Trafalgar Way have to buy permits? Or would they have to pay if they went to the High Street in their car?

2) Who would qualify for a permit? Drivers who have off-street parking as well as those who do not?

3) If those who have off-street parking would have to pay for their cars to be on the High Street and elsewhere, would this alter their perception of what they are being asked?

4) Will there be fines for transgressors? The only way to enforce parking payments is for there to be a system of noting which cars are where, recording the time they arrived and departed, but with a time limit. This is usually done nowadays by cameras watching over the area concerned. If the time limit is exceeded will there be penalties?

5) The payments for parking are only a small part, usually, of the revenue that the Highway Authority will be seeking. In the surrounding towns, the system used is an electronic eye and there are many instances where drivers are caught out overstaying their time by a matter of a few minutes and then being rewarded by a hefty fine; the system is ruthless in its efficiency. So how much will the fines be? Current levels are often in the range £80 to £120. Setting up these monitoring cameras and analysing the results and sending out penalty notices are expensive.

6) What would this mean to a resident with off street parking who inadvertently left his/her car in the High St overnight by mistake?

7) How long will the permitted time be? Two hours/three? This matters, because a recent report

of a survey which the PC organised shows that 70% of people in Stockbridge on summer and presumably spring and autumn days came from more than 10 miles away. This indicated that Stockbridge is a DESTINATION for a day out for people from far and wide who also eat, drink, go shopping as well as walking their dogs. A good lunch in a restaurant or pub may well take more than two hours followed by a walk around the shops, buying as well as looking. The length of stay recorded in the survey was in some cases for the whole day. How many will be fined if they overstay the permitted time? No-one would be likely to stay longer than the time available but the economy of Stockbridge as it is now, depends to a large extent on these people and their activities here, NOT on locals' expenditure alone.

8) Will paid parking and fines drive visitors away, never to return?

9) If there is paid parking will residents be happy if there are growing numbers of shops, restaurants and other services which close because of a lack of trade? What will Stockbridge look like if this happens?

10) Who will benefit from paid parking? Businesses? NO. Visitors? No. Residents? Possibly Yes if you don't mind the slow decline of the economy and appearance of Stockbridge as well as the decline in the value of your house, which you may well have just bought with a mortgage?

11) Are there examples from other similar towns such as Alresford and Lymington where paid parking and fines have been experienced and which might help in making informed judgements about the issues?

These are just some of the questions lying hidden behind the current and indeed any such survey, the answers to which are essential to anyone trying to make a balanced and informed judgement about the simple questions asked in the survey. I believe, however, that the answers to the questions I have posed are simply not available. The County should have come clean about these but seems reluctant to do so. However, there have been a number of local surveys and reports commissioned by the PC and the results sent to the Highways Agency in recent years. These have been the reactions to the prospect of paid parking and fines, and the question to the County remains: why another? The answer was clear three years ago; NO!

However, you are asked to comply and fill in this new survey. Without the answers to the questions I have set out above, I will have to vote 'No' for no other reason than that I don't have any idea about what the reality will be if I answer 'Yes'. May I politely suggest you do the same? It's your future, your business, and your Stockbridge that's at stake here, not a simple matter by any means.

Roger Tym

St Peter's Church Communion Plate

By reader request, we are re-running the following article which featured in the magazine some years ago. It was written by the late John Stephenson, erstwhile Churchwarden of St Peter's, who will be remembered by many.

David Williams, current Churchwarden, writes:

'As a retired major general, John Stephenson was a driving force in Stockbridge for many years, notably as Churchwarden and as President of our local branch of the Royal British Legion.

As Churchwarden, he oversaw both the restoration of Old St Peter's church and significant improvements to St Peter's.

John was an ardent traditionalist and his article about our historic communion set reflects that inclination. It is appropriate to remind parishioners of this precious possession as we approach the start of Holy Week and the celebration of Easter.'

Most parishioners will know that the Parish is fortunate to possess two most valuable pieces of Communion Plate.

The silver gilt Chalice of 1697, weighing 26 ounces of Britannia silver, bears the Stockbridge crest and the crests of the two donors, Thomas Jervois and George Pitt.

These two gentlemen also donated the silver Paten of c.1700, weighing 5 ounces of Britannia silver.

Few readers, however, may be aware of the more recent history of our valuable inheritance.

When extensive repairs to the Church were under way in 1992, the Treasurer, Steve Weighall, reminded me that the Chalice had been kept in the vaults of Lloyds TSB Bank in Andover for many years. Not only did this cost the Church £50 annually, but it was never seen publicly. After lengthy negotiations with the Curator of Winchester Cathedral (John Hardacre), it was agreed that the Chalice would be kept in the Cathedral Treasury where it could be viewed at all times.

Furthermore, the Cathedral Insurance Policy included the loan of the Chalice to our Church four times annually. So, on the appropriate day, Steve Weighall and I visited the Bank Manager to collect the Chalice (no, we were not offered a glass of sherry!). When a large locked box was produced from the vaults, the Manager asked "Who has the key?" Since the key had been lost many years ago, we signed for one 'locked box containing a Chalice'. Returning to Stockbridge, Steve and I carefully dismantled the box to reveal a tarnished but very beautiful, ornate Chalice. After polishing, it was taken for display at Winchester Cathedral Treasury where it can be viewed today.



Silver gilt Chalice

The Paten also has an interesting recent history. When I took over as Warden in 1989, the Paten could not be found and was therefore noted as 'missing' in the Terrier and Inventory. In the early 1990's, the safe in the Vestry was broken open and the previous collection taken by the thieves. On careful inspection of the safe later in the day, the Police said that the lock was so simple it could be picked by a child. Before arranging for the fitting of a new lock, I took everything out of the safe. At the bottom, wrapped in old brown newspaper, I found a very tarnished piece of silver bearing a hallmark. It had been so badly damaged that it resembled the shape of a Cornish pasty. The Cathedral silversmith confirmed that it was the Paten and subsequently repaired it at a cost of £50. It then joined the Chalice in the Cathedral Treasury.



Silver Paten

While I was Warden, I collected the Chalice and Paten from the Cathedral for use during our Communion Services at Easter, Christmas and Harvest Festival every year. This custom was continued by my successor (the late George McMeekin) but has lapsed in recent years.

John Stephenson

Editor's note:

The Church also owns a silver flagon, dated 1879, which was badly dented some 15 or so years ago, but has recently been repaired and was used for communion for Easter 2011.



Silver Flagon



Stockbridge Scouts' Exciting Trip to the Basingstoke Gangshow!



On the 14th of February, 27 excited Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts from Stockbridge set off on a grand adventure to the Haymarket Theatre in Basingstoke to watch the fantastic Basingstoke Gangshow.

The journey itself was an adventure as we all caught the train from Whitchurch to Basingstoke, full of anticipation for the evening ahead.



For those who may not know, a Gangshow is a variety performance put on by Scouts and Guides, featuring a mix of songs, dances, comedy sketches, and plenty of enthusiasm! The Basingstoke Gangshow did not disappoint – we were treated to a brilliant evening of entertainment, full of energy, laughter, and impressive talent. It was inspiring to see so many young people on stage putting on such a professional and enjoyable performance. We also enjoyed plenty of ice cream and sweet treats!

The next morning, we were up bright and early, packed up our things, and headed home, tired but happy after an amazing trip.



It was a wonderful experience for everyone involved, and we can't wait for our next adventure!

A huge thank you to all the leaders and helpers who made this trip possible – and to the talented cast of the Basingstoke Gangshow for giving us such a memorable evening!

Morwenna Collins



After the show, our adventure continued as we headed to the Gill Nethercott Centre for a fun-filled sleepover. We tucked into delicious chips, sipped hot chocolate while snuggled in our sleeping bags, and chatted about our favourite parts of the show before eventually settling down for the night on the floor – a true Scouting experience!



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Reflections on...

...the healing power of sacred music

Music has played a key role in my life since I was a very small child. During the Second World War, I would listen to my mother playing classical music on our upright piano in the evenings. On top of the piano was a photograph of my father in uniform before his regiment went off to war. He was away almost continuously for six years. Before bedtime, my brothers, sister and I would say goodnight to his photo. Then I would lie awake listening to the haunting strains of Bach or Chopin drifting up the stairs. The music was my comfort blanket.

Reflecting on my life from a distance, I recognise that regular church attendance and then singing in the choir (Matins and Evensong) for all of my school years was the seedbed for my enduring love of church music. As an adult, I have been fortunate enough to sing in some fine choral groups both in Greece and the UK. Now, as my vocal cords suffer



Singing with the Athens Choral Group

old age as restrictively as my joints, I am still privileged to sing with the Stockbridge Church Choir under the talented leadership of our organist, Sarah Seymour.

And I can echo George Eliot who famously said, "Life seems to go on without effort when I am filled with music". Listening to (and singing) sacred music can be therapeutic, evoking feelings of connection to something larger than oneself, and the power of singing in a communal setting promotes feelings of connectedness to each other. Church attendance may sadly be diminishing but the search for meaning still goes on.

The birth of Christian music is lost in time but believers have been singing praises to God since time immemorial. Gregorian chant, still sung regularly in holy orders, dates back to the 9th century. It is monophonic, unaccompanied and liturgical. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) was a German Benedictine abbess, a multi-talented writer, composer and theologian. One of the earliest and best-known composers of sacred chant, she wrote, "Music stirs our hearts and engages our souls in ways we can't describe". It is often thought that polyphony (the combination of two or more voices singing in harmony) started in the Renaissance but evidence has been uncovered of such singing being written down in the 10th century.

Many of our great composers have given us magnificent, large scale, sacred musical compositions. Think of the power of Verdi's *Requiem Mass* or Mozart's *Requiem* which grapples with the mystery of death, as he himself approached his end. Gabriel Fauré said that his *Requiem* "did not express the fear of death but as a happy deliverance, and aspiration towards happiness above". Listening to the exquisite melody of the *Pie Jesu*, (try Andrea Haines of Voces8 *) and the *Sanctus* later in the piece, I understand what Beethoven meant when he said: "Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life".

Many of the great sacred music composers of earlier times were European, although Handel, who had been born in Germany, was a naturalised English citizen and composed his Oratorio, *The Messiah*, using the English Language from the St James Bible. It is often played at Easter and celebrates the risen Christ. Another English composer was John Stainer. As you will see on p.5, the Stockbridge (augmented) Church Choir with soloists will be singing "*The Crucifixion*" on Good Friday. I would defy anyone not to be soulfully moved by his choral setting of "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son...". Stainer wrote his Cantata with church choirs in mind and it includes participation by the congregation in hymns, which have become well known over the years.

Of course, sacred music is frequently played in concert halls and not churches, but as I grow older, I am most happy listening alone or in a sacred setting. And how lucky we are to have digital access to whatever music we choose through the internet. Research proves that music has got healing powers. Stroke patients can learn to talk again after music therapy. Listening to classical music by composers such as Bach, Mozart or Brahms can lower blood pressure, steady the pulse and alleviate anxiety. Recently, I became nostalgic for the weekly singing of the psalms from the Parish Psalter. The repetitive rhythm is meditative and very spiritual. I recommend the old recordings of Guildford Cathedral Choir to be found on YouTube.

Classical music, like many other sorts of music, can inspire and unite people. But there is something spiritual about sacred music which speaks to the heart where the soul resides. Perhaps it is where we find the 'still, small voice' that summons us to be our best.

Janet Williams

* Stockbridge Music are bringing this inspirational group Voces8 to sing in St Peter's on May 9th. Unfortunately there are no more seats available, but happily they will be returning for another concert in 2027!



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Views from the Potting Shed

I have become increasingly dissatisfied with my own garden over the past few years and plans

are afoot to work out why this is so and, a conclusion once made, how to rectify it.

Looking back on old photographs of a once well-conceived plan, of which I could be proud and which was filled with harmony and the (to me) much-needed odd spot of anarchy, I finally managed to pin down my more recent mistakes. Alongside small, piecemeal changes over time which did not help the overall picture; the need to simplify things to make gardening easier; invasion by one ill-chosen plant or the indulgence of buying a plant I liked, but which did not fit successfully into the entire picture, and finally admitting that increasing years were making me slower, my light bulb moment came when I realised I had forgotten something rather important. Gardens are full of things which are growing, and a beautiful shrub, tree or plant which has grown out of proportion to the whole puts the entire picture out of kilter.

Artists and garden designers alike will talk of Fibonacci and the 'golden ratio' or 'golden rectangle' by which certain proportions produce the most pleasing effect aesthetically; Mother Nature herself offers us many examples in the natural world. Whether we are familiar with the principles or not, we tend to use it unconsciously, planning spaces and planting with due regard to height and width to produce a harmonious whole.

Colour choice also plays an integral role in promoting this 'whole'. In our own, normal-sized spaces, by restricting our palette to 3 main colours used in various shades and with differing textures, this, when combined with green leaves and stems, help to create the effect. Fortunate gardeners with large areas to work in can create separate 'rooms' exploring different atmospheres and moods – think of Monty Don and his 'Jewel Garden' filled with rich colours, compared with the simplicity of his Cottage Garden. His garden at Longmeadow has not stood still since 1991 but has grown and evolved over the years; he has never shrunk from admitting mistakes. And how boring Sissinghurst would be if Vita and Harold had only designed the White Garden and left out the Nuttery or the Tapestry Garden. Christopher Lloyd understood the need for different moods in the garden and, controversially, loved to use a little anarchy within one border, as those who have visited Great Dixter will know, but most of us have neither the space nor the courage to go 'off piste' in any serious way. If a little anarchy is what you would like, Lloyd's 2001 book 'Colour for Adventurous Gardeners' is a wonderful,

controversial exploration of going outside your comfort zones.

So, my journey to re-establish the harmony/anarchy balance in my plot has begun, the first bold steps towards this end being by removing or reducing the size of shrubs which have outgrown the proportions of the whole. Next, I will clear my canvas of thugs which have created their own havoc and move or give away plants which are definitely in the Wrong Place. This will not be a quick fix, but a proper Plan with a proper Strategy. All in all, I'm rather excited about it.

Micki Nadal

Local Hero

Many of you will have noticed the transformation of several areas of flint cobbles along Stockbridge High Street near the Town Hall. For many weeks, a certain Stockbridge gentleman has been quietly and assiduously clearing away the grass and weeds which had despoiled the cobbles, and has returned the areas to an

immaculate state. We can all imagine how laborious and 'hard on the knees' this painstaking job must have been, especially during the cold weather.

Mr Jerry Lea - we thank you for your voluntary initiative in taking on the task and your patient hard work. We hope

you will feel richly-deserved pride and satisfaction every time you walk past your handiwork.



What a difference!



And we know Mr Lea follows in the footsteps of many other public-spirited, but unsung, heroes who have generously undertaken this and similar tasks over the years. We salute and thank everyone who helps to keep Stockbridge so attractive and well-tended.

Editors

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So since my last instalment, I have become a dehydrator! As well as a mad air-fried potato eater!

Anyway, I discovered that if you add sliced bananas to the air fryer in a single layer, set to dehydrate over night, 7 hours later you have the most amazing banana bites. My rabbit loves them too! I promise to try something more useful with the Air Fryer in my next column.

We are already well into Spring so, rather than the usual Lamb recipe, I thought we should have a most amazing and easy Pork instead ... it's something to master and will always work - try your own spice rubs, it is obsessive!

(See tips at end for picking the best meat for this.)

Slow Roasted Fennel and Coriander Pork Belly

Serves 6-8

Ingredients

1 tbsp sea salt
2 tsp coriander seeds
2 tsp fennel seeds
3kg outdoor-reared or free range pork belly with ribs removed (but retain) and skin scored.

Method

Preheat oven to its highest temperature. In a pestle and mortar (or anything that will grind the spices), add the salt, coriander and fennel and crush them together. Rub these all over the pork.

Put the ribs in the middle of a large roasting tin and then sit the pork belly joint on the top

Roast on high oven temperature (c. 200°C) for 30 minutes, then reduce the oven temperature to 140°C/ fan 120°C /gas1. Cook for 6 – 7 hours until tender.

If by any chance the crackling is not as crisp as you would like, then increase the temperature at the end and continue to cook for a further 20 minutes or so; it will not harm the meat.

Serve with lovely crispy potatoes and beautiful roasted vegetables.

It's so simple but amazing ...

Tips for buying a pork belly joint

Always look for a good layer of fat between the meat and the skin - not something we are that keen on nowadays but it's this that will ensure you get the best crackling and tender meat.

Linda Hotchen

Covid Vaccinations

Our Spring Booster Covid vaccination clinics will take place at Broughton Surgery on 4 and 5 April for those who have booked.

Patients aged 75 or over (including those who turn 75 by 17 June 2025) and patients who are immuno-suppressed are eligible for the Covid booster.

Blood tests

This is just a reminder that we need a request from a healthcare professional to take blood. If you were seen at Winchester or Andover hospital, the request can be made electronically. If you were seen at Southampton or Salisbury, we will need the paper request.

Test results go back to the person who requested it, so the results of tests requested by hospital staff are not sent to the GP surgery and will not be available to you on the NHS App.

Medication Update

We have recently updated our website with information about requesting medication which you are not regularly prescribed (not on your repeats). This is the link: www.stockbridgesurgery.co.uk/ordering-repeat-prescriptions

If you do not have access to the website, please ring our reception team if you want to request medication which is not on your repeats.

If your medication has been started or recommended by someone at hospital, please be aware that we cannot prescribe this medication until we have received a discharge summary or letter. Further information is available on our website:

<https://www.stockbridgesurgery.co.uk/specialist-and-hospital-discharge-medication-requests>

*Ann Spooner
Practice Manager*

April Fool?

Flying Penguins

On April 1 2008, the BBC reported that camera crews filming near the Antarctic for its natural history series 'Miracles of Evolution' had captured footage of Adélie penguins taking to the air. They offered video footage of these flying penguins, which quickly became one of the most viewed videos on the internet.

Presenter Terry Jones explained that, instead of huddling together to endure the Antarctic winter, these penguins took to the air and flew thousands of miles to the rainforests of South America where they 'spend the winter basking in the tropical sun.'

The BBC later explained how they had created the special effects in the video. Now we have CGI!

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Courts Baron and Leet

March 2025

The Courts Baron and Leet met on 5th March in Stockbridge Town Hall. It followed the traditional format of a summons by the Town Crier, the swearing in of the Officers and Jury, and then an address by the Lord of the Manor, Guy Boney KC. Again, traditionally this involved obituaries of those who had passed away during the year, (one always learns things one didn't know with obituaries), and an overview of 'the state of the village', highlighting items of interest and thanking those involved. Catherine Hadler of the National Trust then spoke about issues on the Common and Marsh, and took questions from the audience. A tried and tested, informative and enjoyable session, but then there was a small break with tradition. The Foreman of the Jury gave his report *without* the Jury retiring, explaining as follows:

"The role of the Jury at the Courts Baron and Leet has gradually changed over the years. The historic position is that the Jury represents the Burghers of Stockbridge, and maintaining their rights on the Marsh and Common remains central to that role; but the way that is enacted has changed. The Jury historically was chosen by the Bailiff at the door of the Courts, and served while the Courts were in session, ie for a few hours. Nowadays the Jury meet about twice a year, and Jurors are expected to serve for three years or so; this enables them to get to know the various issues and contribute sensibly. It also provides continuity. The meetings are chaired by the Lord of the Manor, and attended by the Officers of the Courts and the National Trust. As a result, the Courts has developed into a very positive interface between the community of Stockbridge and the National Trust.

Discussions this year have been wide-ranging; on the Common we have covered such topics as Ragwort, Security, Drones, Birdlife, Ferreting, Digging on the earthworks, Poaching, Hare coursing, Shooting, Commercial dog walking and much else.

On the Marsh, discussion has covered: Water quality, Restoration of the riverbank, Fencing along the river, Drainage gullies across the marsh, Bridge moving, Intensity of use, Dogs, Birdlife etc."

The Lord of the Manor wished to place on record the sense of gratitude widely felt by the Burghers of Stockbridge at having the Down and Common Marsh on their doorstep, and the National Trust on hand to manage and maintain them so well. They fund and do all the hard work, and make the final decisions. The Courts comment, contribute as appropriate, and are usually listened to. There is always a need for Jurors, so anyone who would like to join the Jury, please let the Bailiff, Andy Soper know, see contact details at front of magazine.

Kim Candler, Foreman of the Jury

Visiting Stockbridge

We all know that Stockbridge and our neighbouring villages offer constant delights for residents and visitors. However, it is always gratifying to read an endorsement, especially from a young visitor - (Mealtimes en famille sound fun too!)

'I love coming to Stockbridge, it feels like a real treat. I really enjoy walking down the High Street and playing in the park. All the people that live here are so kind and welcoming it makes me feel like I have a second home. I'm not the only one that really likes coming, my whole family does including my cat Cleo who loves watching the birds and chasing the ladybirds.

Stockbridge is a really different place to the area I live in, it's much more quiet and peaceful. We love going on day trips to old castles, ruins, and places we don't normally go. I also have a lot of fun baking apple crumble and helping with lunch or dinner with my family; I love eating the homemade meals at dinner they're very tasty. Every time we go down the High Street I like stopping in the Town Hall and walking around the different stalls. I also always go to Broughton crafts for birthday presents.'

Abby B, age 9



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Eco News from Lisa Trailor

How to help children deal with Eco anxiety

If you've read my recent articles you know I've been feeling challenged about how to deal with climate change. 'Eco anxiety' is something many people are experiencing but what about the effect on the youngest generation? Apparently 78% of 6-12 year olds are already worried about climate change. What should you say to them about it? How can you help them feel more positive about the situation?

Greenpeace have published a handy guide for talking to primary-age children about the climate crisis – and I'm happy to forward this to anyone who wants to e-mail me (lisalamberti@hotmail.co.uk) – or check out the Greenpeace website. Here are a few tips in the meantime which, to be honest, could apply to those of us who are a bit older too:

- 1) **do talk to them** – they might already be concerned and hearing worrying stories
- 2) **you don't have to know all the answers** but you can explore the topics together
- 3) **balance bad news with good news** (see below for this month's good news offering)
- 4) **take action together** – I'll be interested to hear what you do or maybe you've got a suggestion for an activity that we can run at church aimed at children and their parents - let me know. We'll be doing our citizen science nature count at St Mary's on the afternoon of June 15 - a great family activity! And mending broken things could be something you do together (see below).

Who heals the broken?

At the time of writing, I've not long started the Lent course and today's reading was from Psalm 147, with words of hopefulness about God healing the brokenhearted.

Each day we've been given a little challenge and today's was to bring to mind something broken and ask God to make it into something beautiful – I went off on an environmental tangent ... and, as a result, here are a few suggestions about mending broken things!

- there's a **repair café** in Andover on the 3rd Saturday of every month, 10am to 1pm at St Ann's Hall on Suffolk Road. Take along your broken items for repair.
- I've taken things along to the **Men's Shed** in the Andover Chantry Centre (check website for opening hours) and they've given them a new lease of life
- or if you want to **try mending things yourself**, how about trying a creative 'visible mending' course. Beaker Buttons at Weyhill is a good local venue for crafts and Jen, the owner, runs many courses including visible mending
- or perhaps you've already got the skills to do the mending yourself – when I was at school we were

still taught sewing/woodwork etc. and valuable skills were passed from grandparent to grandchild. How about **passing on your skills** to the next generation – a great way to spend quality time with the grandchildren?

And on the way, **you'll be helping to mend this broken world**; repairing something to give it new life helps stop things going to landfill and mitigates the need to use more of the world's limited resources.

Good news

The government has recently given the go-ahead for specially-licensed releases of beavers into the English countryside. In the Government's own words "Beavers can bring many benefits including boosting biodiversity, creating and restoring wetland habitats and reducing downstream flooding" and we all know that flooding is becoming a bigger issue in our area.

In the last few years, beavers have been living in enclosures throughout the country, including at Knepp and, more locally to us, as Ewhurst Park. This new ruling will allow for their release – albeit with human oversight to ensure their activities aren't detrimental to us - and lots of consultation with local people in potential release areas.



There are no plans, as far as I'm aware, for releases around the River Test, but Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust have a project well underway for the River Yar on the Isle of Wight. We're off to Isle of Wight for our holidays later this year – it's lovely to think that maybe next time we go, we'll be able to see beavers in the wild.

SURROUNDED BY NATURE

Through the lens of
Conceicao Praun

A new collection of black and white photographs of the English natural world

Wednesday 23 April, 9am - 6pm in
The Porter Room, Stockbridge Town Hall

Free admission, a not-for-profit event.
Organic wine and drinks will be served free.

For more information contact cpraun0@gmail.com

Photographer's website: www.howplanet.net
which summarises Conceicao Barata Praun's worldwide voluntary activity since 2009, focusing on environmental concerns. She also set up a series of annual Art Festivals to mark UN World Environment Day, culminating in 2022 in London.

Talk in Stockbridge Town Hall
on
29th April at 6pm
The Humorous Sagas and
Secrets of a Black Rod
Lieutenant General
David Leakey CMG CVO CBE
- Black Rod 2011 to 2018

David Leakey's term as Black Rod in the House of Lords coincided with that of John Bercow, the controversial Speaker in the House of Commons. His talk will cover behind the scenes in the Palace of Westminster through the eyes of Black Rod: history, humour, some unheard tales, some serious points. David Leakey is well known for his fascinating and humorous talks about what goes on in Parliament but is largely hidden from public view.

David Leakey has strong local connections. He started his education at Marshcourt when it was a prep school. His father, Major General Rea Leakey, lived in Houghton and is buried in the cemetery at All Saint's church. Following a Law degree at Cambridge, David spent 39 years in the British Army as a 'tank soldier' and commanded on operations all over the world, retiring as a Lieutenant General.

The talk is in aid of Stockbridge's two churches.
Tickets are £20 and need to be purchased in advance by bank transfer to:

St Peter's Stockbridge PCC A/C No. 17804768
Sort Code: 30-98-90 Reference: *Talk*

or by cheque made out to:

St Peter's Stockbridge PCC
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High Street, Stockbridge SO20 6HF
For any questions call David on 07958 229446.



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Saturday 5th April, 6 - 8pm
At Stockbridge Town Hall

We have been given exclusive access directly with serving soldiers live from the Ukrainian frontline. They will talk about their life on the front, followed by a Q&A session.

This is a fundraising event with a silent auction. All profits will go to the purchase of a 4x4 which Stockbridge Ukraine will drive to Ukraine in May.

Tickets £16 (incl. booking fee) from
www.tickettailor.com/events/stockbridgeukraine
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St Peter's Stockbridge
Flower Festival 2025

Theme:

'One Moment in
Time'

Friday 2nd – Monday 5th May



Friday, Saturday and Sunday

10am-5pm

Sunday 12 am – 5pm



Delicious Teas on the
Church lawn

Saturday, Sunday and
Monday afternoons

The Ultimate April Fool?

Joseph Boskin, a History professor at Boston University, was interviewed by an Associated Press writer about the history and meaning of April Fool's Day.

During the interview, Boskin stated that April Fool's Day originated during the Roman Empire when a group of fools and jesters boasted to Emperor Constantine that any one of them could rule the kingdom as well as or better than the Emperor himself. Amused, Constantine gave them a chance to prove this boast by appointing Kugel, the King of the Fools, emperor for a day. Kugel immediately decreed that only the absurd would be allowed in the kingdom on that day. The custom stuck, and the tradition of April Fools was born. The interview with Boskin appeared in newspapers and was widely attributed.

Several weeks later, Boskin confessed that he had made up the whole story. Kugel was, in reality, a kind of Jewish casserole, not the King of the Fools. What's more, Boskin admitted that he didn't actually know how April Fool's Day began!

Church News

St Mary's Longstock



Ash Wednesday on Wednesday 5 March was the beginning of Lent and there was a service at St Mary's Church, Longstock at 7.30pm. This was preceded by the first session of the Lent Course in St Mary, Longstock. We had 12 people arrive for the first session and many of them stayed on for the service which followed, with the opportunity for being 'ashed'. The Priest marked the sign of the cross in ashes on the forehead with the words: 'Remember you came from dust and to dust you shall return.' (Based on God's sentence on Adam in Genesis 3: 19). It was special to have a good congregation for this.

The Lent course is going well, with three occasions to take part, on Tuesday mornings at Mottisfont, Wednesday afternoons in Stockbridge and Tuesday evenings in Highfield House, Broughton. 'Living Hope' provides those following the booklet with the change to read a bible passage, to reflect on the meaning and to consider a challenge which is set.

Mothering Sunday took place on 30 March. Always a lovely service, with posies having been made on Saturday to give to mums, grannies, step-mums and, if enough, to anyone to take home, or share.

The posies were made at The Old Vicarage, with a group of young people helping with the making of the posies. Thank you to Sophie and Edward for the hospitality.

The churchyard

is starting to grow, the primroses are out in force, as are the daffodils:

Lisa and Chris are preparing the wildflower bed at the top of the churchyard and, for this year, they're making it a little bigger for more impact.



We are working on the faculty to give us permission to repair the cracked tiles which are under the Lych Gate. Our Architect is preparing a plan for a small drain at the end of the path so that water will not 'pool' over the tiles. Colin Avery, stonemason, will be working on this during the summer.

I have asked permission from the Leckford Estate for the **Good Friday walk along the River Test**. This is very weather dependant. If it stays dry, or dryish, we may be OK. If not, another route has been planned by Chris Reynell. The walk will start on Good Friday at 10.30am from the Lych Gate at St Mary's Longstock and will take around one and a half hours. There are suitable readings which we have along the way. Revd Joe is able to join us this year. Refreshments, as we did last year, will be in the church after the walk.

The Easter Day Service is on 20 April at St Mary. 9.30am for the service, but we are waiting to hear from the Registry which vicar is available to come and take the service. This will be All Age, with a short communion.

There will be the usual **Easter Egg Hunt**. Please do try to come – not so many children last year – so those that did come had a good stash of eggs!

Dates for the diary:

5 April, 10am-12noon. Church spring clean and churchyard tidy. As usual, please bring your own rake, secateurs, green bag, dusters and long-poled dusters for cob-web removal. Refreshments available. 10.00am – 12noon.

18 April, 10.30am Good Friday Walk. We will start at the Lych Gate, St Mary's.

20 April. Easter Day

30 April, 7pm. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place at St Mary's Church. Please do come along and hear about the year just gone and a few plans for the next 12 months.

Service dates are on Page 31.

If you have any queries please contact Maddie Hedley, Churchwarden, 810284; email mjh723@btinternet, or the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman at midtestbenefice@gmail.com. Revd Joe can be contacted :

01264 810810 (the old number has been restored)
Or email: revjoysweetnam@btinternet.com;
or rector@midtest.org.uk

The website is now up and running:
Midtestbenefice.2day.uk

Maddie Hedley



Church News

St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge

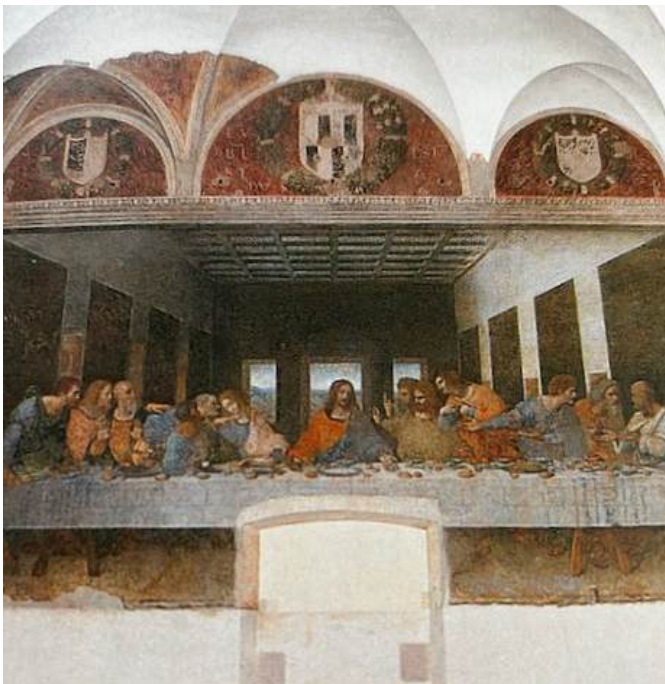


How is your Lent going? Have you given up chocolate, biscuits or even alcohol? Rector Joe preached about 'doing something extra' in a recent sermon. A worthy principle and perhaps an easier one to achieve and maybe more worthwhile. The Lent courses are underway in Mottisfont, Longstock and Stockbridge.

And, if you have received this magazine early, a reminder that Mothering Sunday services will take place on 30 March at 10am in Longstock and at 11am in Stockbridge.

The liturgical colours in our churches have changed from green to purple. The solemn nature of Lent gives the church a more sombre atmosphere with flowers removed, eventually giving way to the celebration of the Resurrection on Easter Day 20 April. Easter services are listed on p31. There will be no Maundy Service in Stockbridge. The final Lent course will be in Mottisfont on 17 April followed by a Maundy Thursday service in the church at 7.30 pm.

On a personal note, I was in Milan last weekend and visited the refectory in the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie where Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* painting is displayed on the wall. Begun in 1497, it is a masterpiece although faded after over 500 years! *(A photograph doesn't really do justice to its glory!)*



Welcome to Stockbridge

Discussion has taken place concerning newcomers to Stockbridge and the need to welcome them into our community, be they churchgoers or non-churchgoers. I am taking on responsibility to deliver a Parish magazine to those people by way of introduction and to help with awareness of Stockbridge activities. Hopefully it is, as a PCC member, a direct welcome from the church. Please let me know of individuals or families who have recently moved in. My email is chrissiequayle@gmail.com and I will endeavour to follow up.



Supporting our Churches

On behalf of the PCC, David Williams as Churchwarden sent out a letter to all parishioners appealing for financial support for our two churches. He would like to thank all those who have generously responded.

Looking ahead:

Sunday 6 April at 3pm - Tea and cake at Angela McMeekin's house for those living alone.

Wednesday 9 April - The Annual Parish Church Meeting (APCM) at 7pm in St Peter's church. Everyone who is interested in the life of our two Stockbridge churches is invited to attend even if they are not regular churchgoers.

Note for May - Friday 2nd to Monday 5th

As it is the weekend of the Flower Festival, teas on the lawn will be available at St Peter's church.

Chrissie Quayle

The Column for March

There were no baptisms, weddings or funerals.

RIP Marjorie Patient, formerly of St Peter's Church and Chattis Hill.

Passed away peacefully at Royal Hampshire County Hospital on 6th March 2025, aged 91 years. Much loved mother to Christopher, Stephen, Lesley and Timothy. Grandmother to Sophie, Tommy, Natasha, Alex, Nathalie, Phoebe and Oliver. A Thanksgiving Service took place at St. Bartholomew's Church, Hyde on Thursday 20th March at 12.00pm

RIP Graeme McPherson, who died earlier this month. Graeme lived in Stockbridge for many years before moving fairly recently to Houghton.

Church News

From the Rural Dean

This year, Easter falls in the middle of April (Easter Day – 20th April). The month will have the contrast of the 'getting ready' of Lent and the 'party' that is Easter. Easter falls at the end of School Holidays which will make church and schools mark Easter in a different way to usual. How will you celebrate Easter?

On Palm Sunday (13th April) – the Sunday before Easter – we hear the story of how Jesus came into Jerusalem a few days before his death, riding a donkey. The crowds waved palms and cheered him as a king. Some churches get a real live donkey for this service, and everyone gets palm branches or a cross made out of palms to hold and take home.

In the New Testament of the Bible, the Resurrection (Jesus becoming alive again) is said to have occurred three days after Jesus was crucified by the Romans and died in roughly 30 AD. The holiday concludes the "Passion of Christ," a series of events and holidays that begins with Lent - a 40-day period of fasting, prayer and sacrifice - and ends with Holy Week, which includes Holy Thursday (the celebration of Jesus' Last Supper with his 12 Apostles, also known as "Maundy Thursday"), Good Friday (on which Jesus' crucifixion is observed) and Easter Sunday.

Although a holiday of high religious significance in the Christian faith, many traditions associated with Easter date back to pre-Christian, pagan times.

In Romsey Deanery, there is a wide range of ways in which Easter is celebrated – services at all times of the day; some in traditional language, some in modern; some indoors, some outdoors; some with chocolate, some without! Wherever and however you choose to celebrate Easter – do have a great time.

Rural Dean, James

Revd James Pitkin - revjamespitkin@gmail.com

Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am

April Services for Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford 6th April

- 08.00 **Leckford** Holy Communion BCP
- 09.30 **Longstock** All Age Worship
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist
- 14.00 **Longstock** Baptism - Archie Jude Moore

13th April (Palm Sunday)

- 08.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Joint Palm Sunday Service for Leckford, Longstock and Stockbridge

17th April (Maundy Thursday)

- 19.30 **Mottisfont** Maundy Thursday Service

18th April (Good Friday)

- 10.30 **Longstock** Good Friday Walk
- 13.45 **Stockbridge** Good Friday Service with Stainer's 'The Crucifixion'

20th April (Easter Day)

- 08.00 **Leckford** BCP Eucharist
- 09.30 **Longstock** Easter All Age and Eucharist
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Easter Eucharist

27th April (Easter 2)

- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship

Prayer for April

Lord, we thank you for the seasons, for the coming of spring, bringing light and hope, of flowers and trees coming to life, lifting our spirits.

But this is also a time of contrast, the sorrow of Good Friday as expressed by the Collect for Good Friday:

Eternal God, in the cross of Jesus
we see the cost of our sin and the depth of
your love:
in humble hope and fear may we place at
his feet all that we have and all that we are,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

After three days you rose to new life as promised
so we pray for new hope for all the oppressed,
the fearful in war torn countries, for the lonely
and for all who feel lost,
we pray this Easter Collect:

Risen Christ, you filled your disciples with
boldness and fresh hope:
strengthen us to proclaim your risen life
and fill us with your peace,
to the glory of God the Father.

Fill us lord, with your love and hope Amen.



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