

West Ilsley News

MARCH 2026

www.westilsley.org

Editors

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Deadline for the next publication is:
5 pm on Wednesday 25th March

EDITORIAL POLICY

We are editors (though we don't edit unless we have to) – we are not reporters, so we only write something if we want to. We rely on villagers to contribute news and information and welcome updates from groups, committees and businesses to let the village know what is going on in their area of interest. We are always happy to receive feedback about WIN so please get in touch if you have anything to say.

DISTRIBUTION

If you have received a paper copy of this newsletter but have access to email, please join the email distribution list by contacting westilsleynews@westilsley.org – help to save paper and shoe leather!

FUTURE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Tuesday 19th May 2026 7:00 pm

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Tuesday 19th May 2026 8:15 pm

Annual Parish Meeting

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

www.westilsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

The Parish Council has now separated its content from the village website and launched a dedicated site at <https://www.westilsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>. This step helps us meet the transparency and publication requirements expected of local councils and ensures council information is clear, accessible, and compliant. The village website at www.westilsley.org will continue to run as normal, focusing on community news, events, and local information. As we are still completing the transfer of some documents, the existing parish council pages will remain available for a short period, but they will no longer be updated. If anyone has difficulty accessing the village site, please try clearing your browser cache, as the new gov.uk address briefly redirected to the .org website during setup.

The Council has also moved to official **gov.uk** email addresses. You can now contact us at enquiries@westilsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Kind regards,

Sarah

Dr. Sarah Marshman PSLCC

Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
West Ilsley Parish Council

Correspondence address: Wilkins Centre, Burrell Road, Compton, Newbury, RG20 6NP

UPDATE FROM CLLR CAROLYNE CULVER

Dear residents

The government's public consultation into the proposed merger of West Berkshire Council with Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils is now open.

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire/>

The deadline is 26 March. There are three options. The one that WBC is proposing is called 'Ridgeway Council'. We will find out by the summer whether the merger proposal has been accepted by the government.

The council is planning some new anti-speeding measures in the Ilsleys, Compton and Hampstead Norreys during the financial year 2026/27. I had a meeting with the council's consultant in late January to find out more about their proposals and give my views, and they are consulting the four parish councils too. There will then be a full public consultation.

The council's proposed budget for 2026/27 was discussed at scrutiny on 10 February and Executive on 12 February. It will be debated at Full Council on 26 February. Council tax will increase by 4.99 per cent. Increasing demand for SEND support and adult social care means increasing deficits, which means more borrowing, which means more debt to pay off. Successive governments have made it more difficult for councils to operate without getting into debt.

From 2028 the government will be responsible for SEND spending, and they have said they will cover some of the historic debt BUT it isn't clear what will happen to deficits incurred between now and 2028. The government's financial package for WBC for 2026-29 is very challenging too. If you are interested in the details, search for West Berkshire Council meetings, and then Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee 10 February meeting and all the budget papers are there. The meeting is also available on the council's YouTube channel.

Residents can report problems (unemptied bins, broken streetlights, potholes, abandoned vehicles on public highways etc) by visiting www.westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem

For information about road works (eg utility companies digging up roads) please look at One Network <https://uk.one.network> which contains a map where you can search for details of what is happening in your area.

Information about the three weekly black bin collections is here www.westberks.gov.uk/3-weekly-collections There is a new electrical reuse scheme at both tips – Newtown Road and Padworth. Residents can now drop off used mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers at dedicated collection points at either site, giving their old devices a new lease of life.

Best wishes

Carolyne Cllr Carolyne Culver

Ridgeway Ward (Ilsleys, Compton, Hampstead Norreys, Yattendon and Frilsham)

Chairman, Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee
Local Government Association Member Peer and
Member of the Public Service Reform and Innovation
Policy Committee

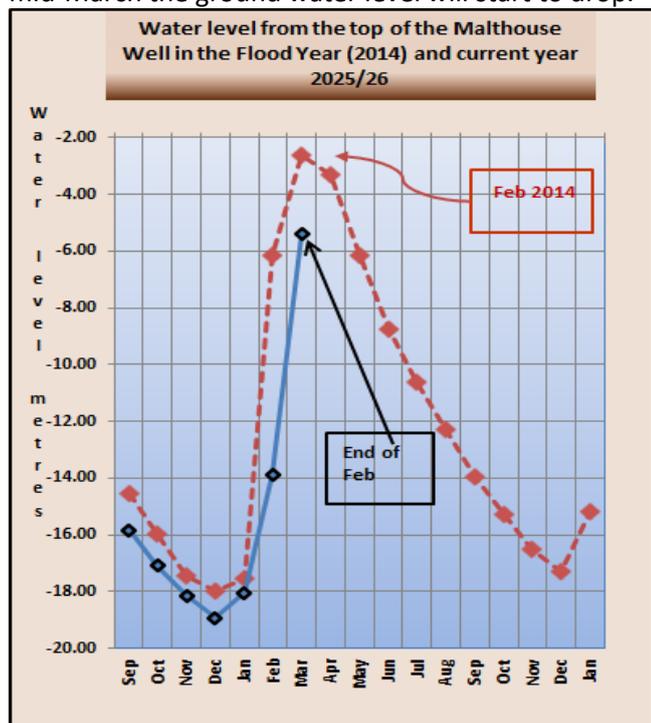
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(m) 07976 374146

www.westberks.gov.uk

MALTHOUSE WELL MARCH 2026

The rain continued from January into early February and naturally, as the ground is already quite saturated, the Malthouse Well level continued its rapid rise. During February its water level rose by about 6.4 metres and the Malthouse Well now reads around 5.4 metres below ground level at the end of the month. Thankfully, as we move into March the daily increase should continue to slow and hopefully by mid-March the ground water level will start to drop.



VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR WIN

Thank you so much to everyone who, back in January, emailed views and suggestions to us about WIN. We're still thinking about it, so if anyone would like to give their views about the emails and the monthly edition, please drop us an email.

THE ILSLEYS NEWSLETTER

At the end of January, six people from The Ilsleys and Hampstead Norreys went to an archery tournament at Park House. There were different activities including:

- hitting cups with a bow and arrow
- hitting cups with a Nerf gun
- hitting a target with a bow and arrow and many more things!

We all had three minutes to practise and then five minutes to get as many points as possible. At the end, medals were awarded to the winners.

On Wednesday 4th February, Atlantic Class went to Hampstead Norreys to take part in a Mexicolore Mayan Day and did some fun activities as part of their curriculum work. During the first half of the day, some people came into the hall and told the children more information about the Mayan civilisation and brought in replicas of artefacts. During the second half, everybody created their own Mayan glyph and painted it. At the very end, they did some taste testing of some traditional food including: tortillas, black beans, cheese, sweetcorn and guacamole. All of the pupils really enjoyed this day and would gladly do it again.

A few weeks ago, Pacific and Atlantic Class had a hockey taster session which was run by a lovely man called Mr Kay. They were taught how to play proper hockey and not just uni-hoc. They had six challenges that they had to complete in groups. The children really enjoyed it and were happy to hear that they might be running a club at the school.

A few weeks ago, Arctic Class went on a class trip to Bucklebury Farm and were very excited that they got to feed the animals. As part of their topic work, they also had a visit from Buttercup (a wooden cow which the children could milk) and Clover (a wooden goat which the children could also milk). They were shown how a spinning wheel worked too.

The next week, Pacific Class went on a trip to the Mary Rose Museum where they hold half of the ship and they also got to explore The Victory.

On Friday 6th February, the Year 5s took part in a Maths Challenge held at St Gabriel's School. They were one of many teams to try and make the longest dragon in the whole competition. Each part of the dragon was a tricky maths question that they needed to answer. They struggled with some of them but with amazing teamwork they managed to complete most of them.

Unfortunately, they didn't win but they really enjoyed the experience.

Some Year 4s also attended a Maths Challenge at St Gabriel's. They did a quiz called 'The Caterpillar Quiz'. It had twenty questions which were all maths related. Some questions had two parts and the second part was a bonus point to help you win. They completed fifteen questions and five butterfly bonuses in the time available. They all had a great time!

Two children from The Ilsleys also went to Park House with some children from Hampstead Norreys for a speed-stacking competition. It was great fun and they were delighted when they won the competition and wore their medals proudly when they returned to school!

Written by 2 Year 6s, 2 Year 5s and a Year 4

MARCH AT ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

Sunday 1st Family Service at 11.00am

Sunday 8th Communion at 8.30am

Sunday 15th Communion at 9.30am

(Mothering Sunday)

Sunday 22nd No service at All Saints'

Sunday 29th No service at All Saints'

Please look on the notice board in the lychgate or on the East Downland website:

<https://www.eastdownland.org.uk/news-and-noticeboards/this-week> for other services in the benefice during March.

Café in All Saints' Church

Our next monthly cafe will be on Sunday 8th March at 10am. No charge for refreshments, but each month donations are sent to a different charity. Last month your donations of £125 went to Time to Talk, a West Berkshire charity that provides emotional and psychological support for young people and their parents. Everyone is invited for coffee, cake and a chat!

Lent Groups

As we are now in Lent, we are holding Lent Groups for anyone in the benefice to attend. These are taking place on Wednesday mornings at 9.15am at St Mary's Church, Chieveley before the weekly celebration of Holy Communion at 10.30am. There is a repeat session on Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm at Chieveley Vicarage. This year the groups are focusing on the teachings of Jesus through parables, with scope for questions and discussion. Everyone is very welcome to join either of the groups.

Saturday 28th March – Easter Church and Churchyard



Tidy-up at 10am. As usual we hope you can spare a little time to help with cleaning, cutting and trimming in the church and churchyard, so bring your gardening implements or dusters and polish and help make the church shine for Easter.

5th Sunday – 29th March

There will be one service in the benefice which will be a United Benefice Communion at 9.30am in St Barnabas' Church, Peasemore. All are very welcome.

Holy Week 30th March – 2nd April

There will be short reflective services twice a day at 12 noon and at 8pm during Holy Week at different churches in the benefice - a time to sit quietly and bring a period of calm to our usually hectic lives. Details of all services will be in the Easter card which will be out later in March. West Ilsley will be holding a Service of Compline with reflection on Monday 30th March at 8pm.

Dates for your Diary

5th April – Easter Sunday – 9.30am Family Communion in All Saints.

12th May – All Saints' Annual Parochial Church Meeting at 8pm in church.

Private Prayer

All Saints' will continue to open on Saturdays and Sundays for private prayer between 9.30am and dusk.

Pastoral

If you would like prayer (or other support) for you or someone else, please get in touch. We are happy to be contacted by phone or email using the details of contacts shown below.

If anyone needs help, do contact the wardens or clergy who will do their best to help.

To subscribe to the weekly pew sheet, which contains readings, prayers and notices about church events in the benefice, please go to the East Downland website (see above).

Contacts:

Churchwardens: Ian – 01635 281625; Alexandra – 07769 645470

Rector: Revd John Toogood – 01635 247566 or 07748 822336 - edownlandrector@gmail.com

Associate Priest: Revd Douglas Dales – 01635 247404 – revdjdales@gmail.com

East Downland Benefice Office: 07957 458107 - eastdownland@btinternet.com – Usually manned on Thursday & Friday mornings between 9am and 1pm.

Kay and Ian Fewtrell-Smith

DOWNLAND VOLUNTEER GROUP

The Downland Volunteer Group celebrated its 40th anniversary by holding a buffet lunch in the Compton Village Hall on Friday 6th February. Among the guests were four pupils from The Downs School and the Deputy Headmaster. This was in recognition of the social service project held in the school in 1984 which resulted in the DVG being formed in January 1986. The photo shows the four pupils along with Mrs Deb Jeffs, a co-founder and the first Chairperson of the DVG. Over the last 40 years the DVG has enabled Downland residents to attend their medical appointments as

there isn't a very regular public transport service available. In addition, the DVG operates the HandeBus service, a 12-seater all electric community transport vehicle which enables the more senior members of the community to go shopping and visit places of interest in the area. Also, the DVG also runs a monthly Lunch Club for older residents in the Compton area.

Among the guests at this buffet lunch were doctors from the Downland surgery with whom we are closely involved, District Councillors and many volunteers both from the past and the present who give their time for free to support our community over the last 40 years

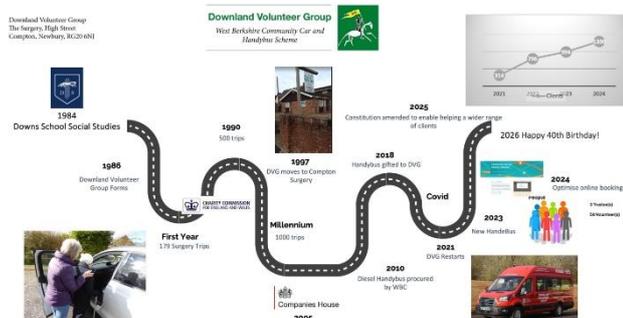
The enclosed flow chart shows the various stages of development of the DVG from its inception, becoming a registered charity, a limited company and taking full responsibility for the HandeBus service. In our last financial year, we made 1337 trips for residents to attend their medical appointments. With the continued demand for our service we are always looking to recruit new volunteers who could spend a few hours a month supporting the Downland community.

To contact us

Email: dvgs.office@btinternet.com

Phone 01635 578394 (Between 9.30am-11.30am Monday -Friday)

Web: downlandvolgroup.org



Quiz Night

Friday 13th March from 7pm

at Brightwalton Village Hall

Come along and support local mental health organisation 'Recovery in Mind'. We provide free of charge courses and workshops (based in Newbury) to help adults living in West Berkshire to self-manage & improve their own mental health & wellbeing. We have helped over 800 local people since 2016. Local support, self-referral and no waiting lists – all vital when you are struggling with your mental health.



Tickets £10 include a glass of wine or beer
Maximum team size of 8
BYO supper or snacks for the interval
Bar and raffle

To buy your tickets please email: Helen@recoveryinmind.org

Thank you for your support –

Angela Ryan – Founder of Recovery in Mind

Dave Judge will be our quizmaster for the evening

www.recoveryinmind.org for more information on what we do and how to book



WHO TO CONTACT

DEFIBRILLATOR is outside the village hall. In an emergency call 999 who will alert the emergency services that are needed and they will also give you the code for the defib. The danger of people knowing the code up front is that they don't call 999 so an ambulance doesn't turn up.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT Olivia Bailey MP

If you want to get in touch with me or book a surgery appointment you can email me at

olivia.bailey.mp@parliament.uk or write to me at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. If you want to keep up to date with what I am doing in Parliament and in the constituency, I send out a weekly email newsletter to constituents. If you would like to receive it, you can sign up at <https://shorturl.at/qgoHw>.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – Carolyne Culver 07976 374146
Carolyne.Culver1@westberks.gov.uk

PARISH COUNCIL

Council members are:

Alan Bloor alan.bloor@westilsley.org

Georgie Carlisle-Smith georgie.carlisesmith@westilsley.org

Katy Morris katy.morris@westilsley.org

Tim Pearey timothy.pearey@westilsley.org

Rachel Hudson rachel.hudson@westilsley.org

Johnny Rayfield jonny.rayfield@westilsley.org

Sarah Marshman – Clerk clerk@westilsley.org

PATIENT REPRESENTATION GROUP rep is Joe Clerkin
(01635) 281150 or joeclerkin@georgeweb.co.uk

PRESCRIPTIONS are delivered from Compton on Tuesday mornings at 8.30. Please collect yours from Ann Barnes, 3 Morland Close on **Tuesdays only between 2 pm and 4.30 pm**. Repeat forms can be posted through the letter box at any time before Monday evening for the following week's delivery.



TENNIS COURT "Pay & Play" is available to non-members for £10 per hour. Non-members can book up to 24 hours in advance. To book the court please use <https://westilsleytennis.jezzam.com> or scan the QR code!

For all enquiries, please contact the Tennis Committee via <https://westilsleytennis.jezzam.com/contact>

VILLAGE HALL

Bookings & enquiries:

Any new bookings should now be done via the village

Website: <https://www.westilsley.org/>

Any booking enquiries please contact Jo by email: village.hall@westilsley.org

Anyone without access to the internet can leave a message on: 07958 239891

Rates: £12/hour for villagers and £15/hour non villagers.

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – REPORT A PROBLEM:

<https://westberks.gov.uk/reportaproblem>

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – REPORT SPEEDING:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/speedingtraffic>

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL – REPORT DOG FOULING:

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/article/36781/Report-Dog-Fouling>

HOW TO CONTACT WEST BERKS COUNCIL REGARDING

EMERGENCIES 01635 551111

<https://westberks.gov.uk/emergency-contact#reporting%20outside%20office%20hours>