

West Ilsley News

DECEMBER 2025

www.westilsley.org

Editors

Andrea Cook

☎ 281224

Liz Dray

☎ 07766 413174

Email: westilsleynews@westilsley.org

Deadline for the next publication is:

5 pm on Thursday 25th December

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!

What's on in West Ilsley

DECEMBER

6th Village hall Christmas Jumper party

JANUARY

24th Village Hall Burns Night Supper

FUTURE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Tuesday 10th February 2026 7:30 pm Full Council

Tuesday 19th May 2026 7:00 pm

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Tuesday 19th May 2026 8:15 pm

Annual Parish Meeting

UPDATE FROM CLLR CAROLYNE CULVER

Dear residents

I have successfully made match funding bids to WBC on behalf of Frilsham parish council for their playground, East Ilsley for some picnic tables for their recreation area, and an EV charging point for West Ilsley village hall. The total amount is £5,000.

By 28 November, the council will be submitting its proposal to the government for a merger of WBC, Vale of White Horse District Council, and South Oxfordshire District Council. The tentative name for this new authority is 'Ridgeway Council'. WBC anticipate a

decision from the government by the summer parliamentary recess in 2026, if not before.

If the merger is approved by the government, there will be elections to a 'shadow authority' in May 2027, and existing WBC councillors will have to serve an unanticipated additional year on WBC (until May 2028, when the new council is 'vested' – ie born!). If the merger is rejected, we carry on as normal and there will be elections to WBC in May 2027. A 'shadow authority' is necessary because you can't wait until day one of a new council before you agree its constitution, appoint to key officer positions, and so on.

If the government approves the merger it will do some public consultation about this but there will not be a referendum. This process has already happened in some area of the country and will continue to happen in the future. It is not unique to this area, and it is dictated by government.

The Compton Institute site for up to 160 homes will be built by David Wilson Homes. The 'affordable' housing, including social housing, will be adopted and run by Soha Housing <https://soha.co.uk/> The planning application to build 40 homes on the site of Baxter's on Wallingford Road, Compton, is not ready to go to committee for a decision yet. The applicant has to submit some more information to the council, after which there will be more public consultation.

If you are aware of any more social homes being sold off on the private market please let me know. I'm aware that one of the Morland Close bungalows was sold a while back. We are going to look at social housing on the scrutiny committee that I chair, because councillors are concerned about sell-offs and long-term reduction in the number of social homes available in the local area.

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.

If you need any more information about the three weekly black bin collections see

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 Carolyn Cllr Carolyn 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
Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD
carolyne.culver1@westberks.gov.uk
(m) 07976 374146
www.westberks.gov.uk

DECEMBER AT ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

Sunday 7th Family Service at 11.00am
Sunday 14th Carol Service at 6.00pm
Sunday 21st No service at All Saints'
Christmas Day Family Communion at 9.30am
Sunday 28th 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 December or see the Benefice Christmas card, which will be coming through your door very soon.

Café in All Saints' Church

There won't be our monthly cafe on Sunday 14th December, but we hope you will come to our Carol Service that evening. Our next Cafe will be on Sunday 11th January 2026 at 10am when donations will go to the Children's Society for warm winter coats.

Working Party Tidy Up for Remembrance Day

Many thanks to those of you who kindly gave up an hour or two of your Saturday morning to help tidy the church and churchyard ready for Remembrance Sunday. Thanks also to those who assembled such beautiful flower arrangements.

Remembrance Day Service

This year our service was ably taken by the Revd Stephen Pix, a visiting priest from Hampstead Norreys. The church was full and £347 has been sent to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Christmas Services



There will be numerous services around Christmas in all nine churches in our benefice, including All Saints' and you are warmly invited to any of these. Please see the Benefice Christmas card for dates and times. Our Carol Service will be held on Sunday 14th December at 6pm and, as always, will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies. This year the collection will go to **the Newbury Soup Kitchen** and foil and plastic food containers can also be brought to the service to be sent to the Soup Kitchen. Food items donated will be sent to the West Berkshire Foodbank. Any wandering Angels and Shepherds are warmly invited to join us, so dig out those wings and tea-towels for all the younger children and 'come all ye faithful'!

Those of you around West Ilsley on Christmas Day, do come to the Christmas Day Family Communion Service

at 9.30am while the turkey is in the oven and before the jollities begin.

Sunday after Christmas – 28th December

There will be a United Benefice Communion service at 9.30am in St James' the Less, Winterbourne to which everyone is invited.

Christmas WIN Greetings

A huge 'thank you' again this year to those of you who have given so generously with the WIN Christmas greetings and of course a particular thank you to Andrea and Liz for kindly donating the total amount to All Saints' 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

THE AUTUMN GROUP

This year seems to have flown by with a fantastic and full programme, including:

Guest speakers who came to talk on a wide range of topics, ranging from general interest to valuable advice, several entertainers, including the fantastic "Elvis" afternoon, which virtually got all those present to their feet "bopping in the aisles" and, of course, the craft & games afternoons, which are a regular feature.

We are now looking forward to our annual Christmas Lunch, which again is hosted by the Swan at Compton. Finally, we would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year.

For more information, contact:

Patricia 07786 856 440 or Fiona 07769 654 604



The generous greeters this year have donated £450 to the church – many thanks to everyone.

God rest ye merry ladies and gentlemen of West Ilsley. Wishing you a jolly Christmas and a slightly less stressful 2026! Love from Sean, Carmel, Alastair, Charlotte, Anna and Teddy xxxxx

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas from The Beaumont Family x

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone in West Ilsley.
Enjoy the festivities and all the best for 2026.
Vicki and Brian, from Downside Cottage x

Wishing everyone in West Ilsley a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. With love from Martin, Zu and Kester xxx

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Bryan and Karen Marriott

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year. With love from Justin, Rosanne, Georgia and Honor Pilditch xx

A very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year to everyone in West Ilsley Carol & Joe

Wishing all our friends and neighbours a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2026 Rob & Lindsey X

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. With love from Ed, Anna, Caspar, JJ, Jonty and Banter! xxx

Merry Christmas to all in West Ilsley
Wishing you a successful and happy 2026 From The Briggs Family

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New year. Best wishes The Coakleys

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2026
Andrea and Mel

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Richard and Sandy

My very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy, healthy New Year to all friends and fellow villagers in West Ilsley. Wendy x

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2026.
With love,
Ian & Kay xx

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a happy and healthy 2026!
With best wishes from The Banks family xxx

To all my wonderful West Ilsley friends and neighbours a very merry Christmas and a happy healthy New Year. With love Janice and Sadie xx

Wishing all our friends and fellow Villagers a very Merry Christmas and A Happy, Healthy New Year
Avice & Alan

Dear friends,
Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year, love and best wishes
Sue and Andy Carrington xxxx

A very merry Christmas to all in West Ilsley and best wishes for 2026 from The Knight Family

By the Harrow's warm glow and the church bells' bright chime,
Our village feels magic at Christmastime.
With carols and candles and friends gathered near,
We wish all merry villagers good Christmas cheer.
Wishing you joy as the tree lights all glow,
And a bright New Year like freshly fallen snow.
Merry Christmas from
Will, Alexandra, Henry, Charlie, Folie (and ChatGPT!)

Sending our best wishes to all in the West Ilsley community. Kristie, Will and David TF

Happy Christmas to everyone and good wishes for the New Year,
From Tom, Jane, Adam, Tash, Reuben and Jacob

Wishing everyone in West Ilsley and beyond a happy Christmas and best wishes for 2026! With love from The Drays



THE ILSLEYS NEWSLETTER

At the end of the last half term, everyone had an assembly all about harvest. We all donated cans of food for West Berkshire Food Bank. The children sang the song 'Paintbox' to parents and Pacific read out a poem. Arctic also sang a song and Atlantic explained what harvest was all about.

On November 5th, the whole school had a Diwali dance workshop to retell the story of Rama and Sita which is a traditional Hindu story. Jordan from the West End taught every class the story through dance!

On November 10th, Pacific Class went on a school trip to London. They rode the London Eye and had lunch at the national theatre and then they went on a river cruise on the River Thames. The coach journey was around an hour and a half. On the boat, they saw Big Ben and they were all very excited about it.

As you all know, Tuesday 11th November was Remembrance Day so the whole school went down to the local church for a service and took part in the two minutes silence at 11.00am. After that, the children laid down poppies that they had created along the altar. Some pupils read out the names of local soldiers who died in the World Wars and a poem called 'Lest We Forget'.

At the beginning of November, it was Anti-Bullying Week and the Year 6s officially became Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. Every child learnt about how they have the power to stop bullying for good. For a fun activity, they made posters about anti-bullying. The Year 6s made lessons for the other classes about all the types of bullying. They discussed different scenarios and used roleplay to look at how people should communicate with each other. One of the groups even prepared a PowerPoint Presentation to explain bullying to the children.

Recently, it was 'Children in Need' and, to celebrate it, the children came to school in non-school uniform. Some students wore Pudsey based outfits such as a headband with bear ears. They all watched a live assembly featuring Joe Wicks and a girl named Abby who got awarded a Blue Peter Badge.

A couple of weeks ago, Year 3s and Year 4s went to a cross-country event at Elstree small schools event. This run was a distance of 1 kilometre. All of the children really enjoyed this activity and would happily do it again.

Our next Stay and Play Session is on Monday 1st December and our next Open Morning is on Tuesday 9th December, starting at 10.00am with a tour with Miss House. Please contact the school office if you would like to come.

Written by a Year 6 and a Year 5

FREE E-LIBRARY ACCESS WITH YOUR WEST BERKSHIRE LIBRARY CARD!

Did you know that you can now access e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines and e-newspapers from West Berkshire Libraries all in one place, from a single supplier, [BorrowBox](https://westberkshire.borrowbox.com/).

(<https://westberkshire.borrowbox.com/>)

BorrowBox offers a user-friendly interface and a wide selection of content, with new titles added regularly. You can read or listen on smartphones, tablets, and other devices by downloading the BorrowBox app and logging in with your library membership number and PIN.

Library members can borrow up to 7 e-books or e-audiobooks at a time, free of charge, for 14 days. Access to e-magazines and e-newspapers is unlimited and also free.

The BorrowBox app is available on the App Store, Google Play, and Amazon Appstore. If you need help downloading the app or navigating its features, library staff are happy to assist. You'll also find a Help section on the BorrowBox website (bottom right of the homepage).

If you don't have a West Berkshire Library card, visit – [Register | West Berkshire Libraries](https://westberks.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/JOIN)(<https://westberks.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/JOIN>) to sign up today!

Burns Night Reels Party **Saturday 24th January 2026** **7-11pm** **West Ilsley Village Hall**



Licensed Bar

Tickets include supper and dancing

No prior reels experience necessary

£15 per person (£10 for Under 12s)

Please contact Juliet for tickets by 14th January

Email: juliet_lamb@hotmail.com

WHO TO CONTACT

DEFIBRILLATOR is outside the village hall - code: C159

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 – Carolyn Culver 07976 374146
Carolyn.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://www.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://www.westberks.gov.uk/emergency-contact#reporting%20outside%20office%20hours>