

The Villager

May 2026 Volume 55 No 3

Newsletter for Mapledurwell, Up Nately, Nately Scures & Newnham

VILLAGER DISTRIBUTORS

Grateful thanks to distributors – former, present and hopefully future – on whom the *Villager* delivery depends. Particular thanks just now to Liz White who has delivered the *Villager* in Scures Hill for at least the last 20 years and is now stepping down.

Thus the *Villager* is in need of volunteers to deliver to almost all of Scures Hill, apart from the top houses on the south side near Heather Row Lane to the Heatherside Rest Home.

If you can help with deliveries, if only just for a few copies, please contact su.newnham@gmail.com 07515 777060.

Also please get in touch if you're not at the moment on the email list and would like to receive a pdf copy.

With thanks in advance

Susan Turner
Villager editor



THE CLUBHOUSE HOSTS ART & OPERA

Thursday 7th May 2026

Art Preview 5pm - 7pm

Opera 7pm - 9:30pm

An incredible evening hosting Suzie Horsey Art Preview & 'Love & Lust' Operatic Performances with Candover Brook sparkling wine & canapés.

Art Preview: £10 (members complimentary)

Opera: £45 (members) £55 (non members)

To attend both: £45 (members) £65 (non members)

Friday 8th - Sunday 10th May 2026

Exhibition continues, enjoy the opportunity to peruse the collection at your leisure & speak to the curator.

Palmers Bar & Orchards Cafe with be open all day serving drinks, breakfast, lunch & nibbles.

www.barnsgrove.com/whats-on/



AN INVITATION TO ALL RESIDENTS TO THE PARISH ASSEMBLIES...

For Newnham, Nately Scures and Water End on Tuesday 19 May, 7pm in the Clubroom.

For Mapledurwell & Up Nately, on Wednesday 20 May, 7.30pm in Mapledurwell Village Hall.

NOTIFICATION ON LARGE PLANNING APPLICATIONS IN THE BOROUGH

26/00802/OUT (Validated 20 April) Land at Upper Swallick (Cliddesden Parish). Outline application for development... with all matters reserved, save for new accesses from the A339 and Woods Lane, and alteration of accesses from Northgate Lane and Farleigh Road.

The application doesn't specify numbers but recent Environmental Impact Assessment scoping request was for 2,500 dwellings.

Newnham & Nately Scures



Newnham's Summer Banquet & Silent Disco

Date Saturday 30 May 2026
Venue Newnham Green RG27 9AH
Drinks From 6pm at The Old House at Home
Banquet 7.30pm - 11pm



Following the success of the Medieval Feast as part of the Newnham 900 celebrations, the Parish Council and the Friends of St Nicholas' are delighted to invite the village and its supporters to welcome summer with another Feast on the Green followed by a Silent Disco.

Catering will again be provided by the fabulous Berro Kitchen.

Banquet includes

Main Course venison or vegetarian option + sides + dessert

Children's Menu (13 and under)

Drinks at the Old House at Home beforehand (paid bar). Please bring your own for the banquet.

Additional information

Place settings Please bring your own plates, cutlery and tumblers

Attire 'A touch of pink'.

Tickets still available at

<https://buytickets.at/newnham900/2102678>

Newnham, Our Newnham



Nigel Bell

Newnham, our Newnham by Nigel Bell is available to buy for £15 a copy, signed or unsigned.

With over 90 years of first-hand knowledge, Nigel describes the village's history, people, houses, economy, church and environment – with maps and photographs. For today's villagers, those with family links to the village, local residents and history buffs alike, it is a fascinating account of a rural Hampshire community that has evolved over the last millennium.

The book has been generously supported by the Hampshire Archives Trust. All profits from sales go to The Friends of St Nicholas' Newnham. To order please contact the church Treasurer jeff.ford@hotmail.co.uk

NEWNHAM COMMUNITY'S



APRIL winners are

Georgie & Bob Scott-Kerr = £100

Andy & Nic Lowe = £50

Jamie Tschumi = £25 – Thanks to Jamie for donating winnings back to church.

PARISH PLANNING APPLICATIONS

26/00595/HSE (Validated 27 March)
Nately Scures House, Scures Hill. Single storey kitchen extension to rear elevation with balcony above.

26/00562/FUL (Validated 17 March)
Rowan Lodge, Crown Lane. Single storey flat roof extension to rear of building over area of external terrace to provide additional internal communal space.

26/00566/RET (Validated 25 March)
Old House at Home. Container for additional kitchen facilities (retrospective).

26/00144/LBC (Validated 02 Feb) and **26/00151/ROC** (03 Feb) Newnham House, Ridge Lane. Variation of Con 1 of 24/02797/FUL to amend drawing numbers to allow for alterations to scheme [Coachhouse].

23/02080/FUL (Grant 17 April) Land East of Nately Scures House. Self-build single detached house and associated access.

REPORTING POTHOLES AND OTHER ROAD PROBLEMS

Note from County Councillor...

The best way the public can help is to report, ideally with photos, via the County Council website. Reporting via Fix my Street will get to us, but has no two-way communication, no way to update or track progress.

www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem

To particularly recommend the OurHants app which will upload reports and photos directly to the website

www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/ourhants

Also to bear in mind can claim for repairs for a tyre or wheel damaged due to a pothole on local roads; County are liable.

TO ALL RESIDENTS OF NEWHAM,
NATELY SCURES AND WATER END
PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
TUESDAY 19TH MAY 7PM

in Newnham Clubroom

Doors open 6.45pm
refreshments available

An opportunity to discuss issues relating to the Parish; to give feedback, raise questions and ideas



PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Are you happy to be involved and make a positive difference?
Do you have a small amount of time to contribute to the wellbeing of the Parish and its residents?
If interested please contact any of the Parish Councillors or clerk.newnham@gmail.com

OLD BASING & LYCHPIT
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thursday 30th April, 7.30pm at the Royal British Legion Social Club, Crown Lane, Old Basing
Featuring a presentation by Victoria County History Hampshire

HOOK ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING

Thursday 30th April at 8pm, Elizabeth Hall. Doors open 7.15pm with refreshments
Agenda includes: Highlights of the year – Pavilion Update with guest speakers – Hook & Odiham Rugby Club & Hook Shed – Hook Fun Run – Presentations of Hook Community Awards 2026 and Chairman’s Award Meeting close 10pm latest

AGENDA IN BRIEF

Times intended as a guide only

- 7pm 1. Chairman’s welcome
- 2. Police update from PCSO Andy Jones
- 3. Minutes of the 2025 Parish Assembly
- 4. The Parish Council 2025/26, brief recap
- 7.20pm 5. DISCUSSION WITH WARD COUNCILLORS
 - 5.i Borough issues will most likely include housing numbers, water infrastructure, our rivers; MOTO application, future of the Emerging Local Plan, new NPPF, Local Government Reorganisation.
 - 5.ii Update on Owens Farm in Hook Parish (Hart)
Q & A to follow
- 8.20pm 6. OPEN SESSION WITH Q & A
Thank you and close

We look forward to seeing you all, Newnham Parish Council

Questions and further suggested topics for discussion welcomed in advance of the meeting, to clerk.newnham@gmail.com

GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENT TO BE NOTIFIED OF INTENTION TO REFUSE 150 DWELLINGS OR MORE

Written Ministerial Statement from Secretary of State Matthew Pennycook on 23 March included:
‘To provide further support for housebuilding, a new Consultation Direction will be made this month specifying that where a Local Planning Authority (LPA) intends to refuse planning permission for a housing scheme of 150 dwellings or more, they must consult the Secretary of State to enable Ministers to decide whether to use their existing powers to call in that planning application.’

This came into effect via a new Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026 published on 31 March 2026 and will apply to applications which have not been determined by the local planning authority before 11th May 2026.

‘1. This Direction applies in relation to any application for planning permission which – (a) is for development which includes the provision of 150 or more houses, flats or houses and flats; and (b) has not been determined by a local planning authority before 11th May 2026. 2. Where a local planning authority proposes to refuse an application for planning permission to which this Direction applies, the authority must consult the Secretary of State before determining the application.’

The Owen’s Farm application won’t be decided by 11 May, and so will require notification to Secretary of State in the event of a refusal. Thus has the potential to be called in.



HOOK FUN RUN

<https://hookfunrun.com/>

Sunday 17th May
10am Hartletts Park, Hook

If you’re not running, the Fun Run depends on it marshalls... ‘the Hook Fun Run & Road Races Committee would LOVE to hear from you’.

LOCAL ROAD CLOSURES WILL BE IN PLACE 0945-1300 (max). Roads will reopen as the races finish.

- Hook Road and The Street, Rotherwick – full closure both ways.
- Frog Lane, Lyde Green, and Rotherwick Lane, Hartley Wespall – full closure in both directions.
- Mill Lane, Lyde Green – full closure in both directions.
- Post Horn Lane, Rotherwick – full closure in both directions.
- Ridge Lane, Newnham and Rotherwick – ‘Stop and Go’ controlled from Newnham Road for access to/from Tylney Hall Hotel, Tylney golf course and Gordon Brown Centre. Access to Ridge Lane is via Crown Lane.
- Newnham Road, Newnham – full closure in both directions.
- Old School Road – residents’ access only.
- London Road (A30) from Old School Road to Elms Road – Road closed eastbound (ie heading into Hook).
- London Road (A30) from Elms Road to Griffin Way N/S – Full closure in both directions.
- Also closures for parts of Reading Road and in vicinity of Sainsbury’s.

Mapledurwell & Up Nately

TO ALL RESIDENTS OF
MAPLEDURWELL & UP NATELY
PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 7.30PM

in Mapledurwell & Up Nately Village Hall

With wine and crisps as always

An opportunity to discuss issues relating to the Parish; to give feedback, raise questions and ideas



AGENDA IN BRIEF

Times intended as a guide only

7.30pm 1. Chairman's welcome

2. Police update from PCSO Andy Jones

3. Minutes of the 2025 Parish Assembly

4. The Parish 2025/26, brief recap

7.50pm 5. DISCUSSION WITH COUNCIL LEADER, CLLR PAUL HARVEY, AND WARD COUNCILLORS

Borough issues will most likely include housing numbers, water infrastructure, our rivers; MOTO application, future of the Emerging Local Plan, new NPPF, Local Government Reorganisation.

Q & A to follow

8.50pm 6. OPEN SESSION WITH Q & A

Thank you and close

We look forward to seeing you all

Questions and further suggested topics for discussion would be welcome in advance of the meeting, to clerk.mapledurwellupnately@gmail.com



ROGATION SUNDAY WALK SUNDAY 10TH MAY

A United Parish event – bring your boots, bring your friends!

We'll meet at 11am at Alan and Charlotte's Farm Barn

Rogation Sunday falls on 10th May this year – the fifth Sunday after Easter and the Sunday before Ascension – and it's one of those wonderfully old village traditions that still has something fresh to say.

Long ago, people would head out to 'beat the bounds'; walking the parish boundaries, praying for the land, the crops, the animals and the wellbeing of the whole community. No beating required these days... just a gentle wander, good company and a chance to ask God's blessing on the places we live in and love.

So – come and join us! We'll meet at 11am at Alan and Charlotte's Farm Barn, Mapledurwell, and set off together for a short, friendly walk led by Alan and Charlotte. Expect fresh air, a few prayers, a bit of local history and plenty of laughter... and needless to say, refreshments!

All welcome children, grandparents, families, friends, and of course dogs providing they are on leads.

More details will follow in my weekly newsletter. If you're not on the mailing list, drop me an email and I'll add you.

Come and walk the parish... and maybe let the parish walk with you.

Blessings, Luke

Revd Luke Augustyn, Associate Curate, Mapledurwell Up Nately and Greywell contact luke@moretolife.church



PARISH TREE APPLICATIONS

T/00132/26/TCA (Approve 16 April) The Old Post Office, Kembers Lane. T1 Ash and T2 conifer, fell to ground level. T3 holly, reduce height from 8 to 4m and width from 4 to 2m.

T/00095/26/TCA (Approve 30 March) The Old Chapel, Tunworth Road. Conifer (T1) Reduce height by 3m to height of hedge. Oak (T2) Reduce height by 3m, 20% thinning, sever ivy. Three Beech (T3, 4, 5) Reduce height and shape by 3m, 20% thinning. Ash (T6) A small group of trees; take off lower branches over garden shed, 20% thinning. Hazel (T.7) Reduce by 3m, reshape and balance.

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Note from County Councillor

State of the roads – For this year's budget, County has brought £15M from capital receipts to road resurfacing.

Highways contractors are using 'jet patching' lorries for permanent square edged repairs using spray-injection to clean, fill, and seal. In winter the teams often resort to temporary patching to just get the holes filled, recognising doesn't last very long.

BOATs (byways open to all traffic) Re the temporary closures to vehicles for Five Lanes End, the resulting ecological improvement very important; a noticeable increase in number of hares. If can prove ecological improvement can continue with the closures. The devolved authority (Hampshire and Solent) Mayor (once elected) will have the power to close byways.

PARISH PLANNING APPLICATIONS

26/00717/LBC (Validated 03 April) Mapledurwell House, Tunworth Road. Reinststate and repair the section of collapsed flint boundary wall.

26/00539/HSE and **26/00540/LBC** (Validated 13 March) Eastrop Farm House, Heather Row Lane. Removal of conservatory and erection of a single storey side extension. Alterations, internal and external. Erection of greenhouse.

26/00455/FUL (Validated 03 March) Eastside, Frog Lane. Conversion of outbuilding from ancillary residential accommodation to a single self-contained residential dwelling (use Class C3).

25/02579/ROC (Pending 27 October) Bridgeway Mansion, Heather Lane. Relief of conditions – 1 Approved Plans; 3 Details of Materials; 5 Landscaping; 7 Brickworks Docks; 14 Visibility and 16 Front Enclosure – of BDB/74968 (Erection of one dwelling following demolition of piggery buildings and barn).

25/00304/HSE (Pending 26 February) 6 St Stephens Close. Erection of part first floor, two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extensions.

24/00756/FUL Land North of Parrotts. (Considered by Development Control Committee of 08 April.) Four detached new dwellings, garages, access, parking, amenity space etc.

DC decision to defer on two grounds: to request further information on flood risk, and re levels of noise from M3.

22/02210/RET (Pending 05 August 2022) Priory Farmhouse. Variation of Con 2 of 15/04301/FUL for continued use Class E children’s nursery to 2032.

PLANNING APPEAL

APP/H1705/X/26/3378064 (Appeal in progress) The Gamekeepers. Certificate of lawful development for the existing use of the Gamekeepers as a restaurant; ref 25/02178/LDEU. (Refused BDBC 03 November.)



Gentlemen of Mapledurwell

Could you be crowned our Star Baker? Using the recipe shown, please bake a Victoria Sponge Cake (decorate it as you wish) and deliver it to the Brevins @ Fourwinds (Unit 101010101) by **11.00am on Sunday 14th June**, where judging will take place (Your name and phone number must be written underneath the plate)

The cakes will then be served at a 'Tea and Cake' (or a glass of fizz) event at Mapledurwell Pond from **3.00pm on Sunday 14th June**

All welcome. The overall winner will be presented with a cup and certificate 'Mens Star Baker of Mapledurwell 2026' Sponsored by The Friends of St.Marys (Registered Charity number 284649)

Recipe

- 200g caster sugar
- 200g softened butter
- 4 eggs
- beaten
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsps milk

Judging criteria

- Lightness of the sponge
- Even rise
- Creativity of filling and decoration
- Overall taste

Sunday 14th June from 3.00pm Mapledurwell Pond

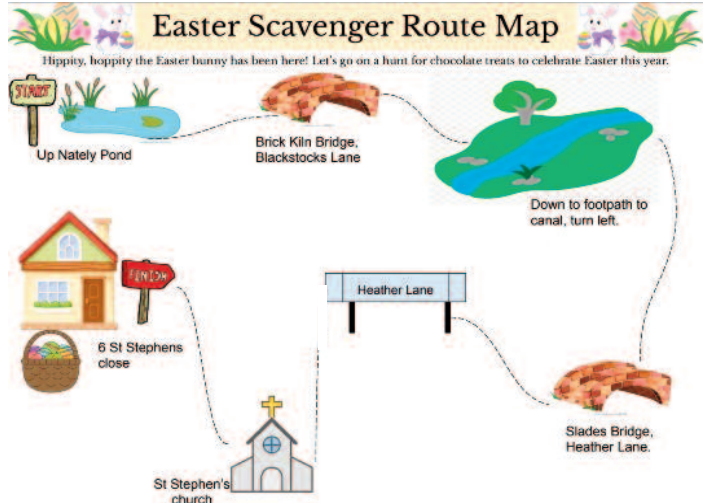
UP NATELY NEWS

Up Nately children enjoyed their Easter Trail finding treats on the way, organised by Charlotte...

Also an Egg Hunt in the churchyard, organised by the other Charlotte!

Coffee fun will be on May 1st at Blaegrove Cottage, call 07799 564957 for more information.

Dog poo is a problem again A dog walker is seen on video failing to pick up after the dog outside gates or drives. We request this doesn't continue.



Easter Scavenger Route Map

Hippity, hoppity the Easter bunny has been here! Let's go on a hunt for chocolate treats to celebrate Easter this year.

Up Nately Pond

Brick Kiln Bridge, Blackstocks Lane


Down to footpath to canal, turn left.

6 St Stephens close











Heather Lane

Slades Bridge, Heather Lane.

St Stephen's church



Up Nately Easter Scavenger Hunt

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  <p>Look up for some eggs on a tree, count them 1,2,3!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>Keep going in a hurry, holding a blue egg - there's a bunny!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>There's lots of animals out today, can you find a squirrel that's grey?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>You may have been here before, but did you hear a "Hee-Haw"?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>If you're after some chocolate you're in luck - your nearly there once you've found some little ducks!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  <p>Poking out is a bunny's lunch - a bunch of crunchy carrots to munch!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>Beneath the door with the wreath, there will be your Easter treats!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>A sunny day in spring, will help you see these rabbits on a string.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>Can you see where this is sat, a green Easter Bonnet hat?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |  <p>Go down the path super quick, somewhere close will be a spring chick!</p> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Church Notices

'Journeying together, we worship God and serve the community'
www.united-parish.org.uk
www.moretolife.church

From the Parish Registers

Funeral: Patricia Stubbs at Basingstoke Crematorium on April 1st, followed by Thanksgiving Service at St Mary's Mapledurwell on April 17th

Wedding: Russell Parker and Loretta Cruikshank at St Swithun's Nately Scures on April 17th

Funeral: David Nicol at St Nicholas' Newnham on April 22nd

Interment of Ashes: John Ashworth at St Swithun's Nately Scures on April 23rd

CHURCH SERVICES MAY INTO JUNE

Sunday 03 May 9am St Mary's Mapledurwell, CW Holy Communion
11am St Mary's Greywell, Morning Worship with Baptism
5pm St Swithun's Nately Scures, Kneeler Rededication Evensong

Sunday 10 May 9am St Stephen's Up Nately, BCP Holy Communion (said)
11am Mapledurwell, United Parish Rogation Walk
(from Alan & Charlotte's Farm Barn)

Thursday 14 May 10am St Mary's Upton Grey, Ascension Day Benefice Service

Sunday 17 May 9am St Mary's Greywell, CW Holy Communion
11am St Mary's Mapledurwell, Informal Service

Sunday 24 May 10.30am St Nicholas' Newnham, BCP Holy Communion (said)
11am St Stephen's Up Nately, Morning Worship

Sunday 31 May 11am All Saints' Odiham,
Benefice Trinity Sunday CW Holy Communion and Picnic

Sunday 07 June 9am St Mary's Mapledurwell, CW Holy Communion
11am St Mary's Greywell, Morning Worship
5pm St Swithun's Nately Scures, Evensong



FROM THE BENEFICE MINISTRY TEAM

Dear Friends,
I'm writing this with the sun streaming through my study window, echoing the glorious return of light and warmth after these long winter days.

As I look back to Palm Sunday, the Cathedral Chrism Service, the candlelit shadows of Tenebrae, and the joyful alleluias of Easter morning, it has been a privilege to walk this sacred journey with so many of you across our benefice.

We live in times when we need more than ever to be reminded of love's first light. Richard Rohr writes:

'If you want others to be more loving, choose to love first. If you want a reconciled outer world, reconcile your own inner world.'

It's a gentle reminder that resurrection didn't begin with trumpets, but in the dark stillness of a garden and an open tomb. It begins quietly, in the small corners of our lives where we choose kindness, forgiveness and hope. And I've seen so many glimpses of that across our parishes since I last wrote.

One such glimpse has been the launch of our new informal worship service in Mapledurwell. There was a real sense of joy and possibility in St Mary's on the morning – a feeling that something fresh had begun. The warmth of welcome, the relaxed

atmosphere, the willingness to try something new together... it all spoke of a community ready to dig deeper, to experiment and to make space for those who might not feel at home in more traditional settings. We are genuinely excited to see where this new beginning will lead.

Alongside this, there is growing energy around nurturing children and youth ministry rooted in Up Nately and shared across our United Parish with all families who wish to join in. And in Greywell, a Summer Songs of Praise is beginning to take shape.

We have also held our first United Parish fundraising event, with live music generously provided by Jazz Club X and the Bluestone Bills, filling the hall with music, laughter and unmistakable joy – all while raising £750 (profit) for our churches in Newnham, Nately Scures, Mapledurwell, Up Nately and Greywell. This was the first of more events already being planned.

Looking ahead, early conversations are underway about a possible men's group to restore the Greywell

churchyard shed – a project that could bring practical renewal as well as friendship, conversation and (inevitably) shared food.

If you'd like to stay in the loop and don't yet receive my weekly Thursday newsletter, feel free to pass on your email address (with no obligation to stay subscribed).

All of this, the worship, the music, the shared work, the gentle beginnings of new ministries, feels like resurrection in real time. Not loud or dramatic, but steady, hopeful and full of life.

As we continue through this Eastertide, may we keep choosing the kind of love that starts small and grows quietly. May we be people who reconcile our inner worlds so that our outer communities can flourish. And may we keep discovering, together, the joy of being a benefice – and a United Parish – that is very much alive and looking ahead with enthusiasm.

With every blessing,

Luke luke@moretolife.church

Rev Luke Augustyn, Associate Curate, Mapledurwell, Up Nately and Greywell

ROGATION SUNDAY, UNITED PARISH - BRING YOUR BOOTS, BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

We'll meet at 11am at Alan and Charlotte's Farm Barn, Mapledurwell

See notice on Mapledurwell & Up Nately page 4



JOIN US ON ASCENSION DAY!

Have you marked your calendar for Ascension Day on Thursday May 14th? Please do join us for our beautiful Ascension Day service at 10am that day (note it's in the morning this year!), in St Mary's Church, Upton Grey.

As we look ahead to this important date in the Christian calendar, people often remark that they've not even heard of Ascension Day. But for hundreds of years, Christians have affirmed Jesus' ascension in the words of the Apostles Creed, as part of which we say:

'...I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead...'

The adjacent picture is of one of the earliest remaining sculpted-panels in ivory, dating right back to AD400. It depicts Jesus' ascension, and underlines how important this event has been to Christians right through the centuries.

Today the Ascension reminds us that Christianity is not only a historical faith, but a faith of the present and future.

For the present, Jesus is not just our suffering servant who came and died and rose triumphant, but our actively ruling, actively conquering king, who remains active and engaged in our world and our lives.

And as Christians we have this steadfast hope in a glorious future - with him, forever.

This is great news... Please come and join us in St Mary's Church, Upton Grey at 10am on Thursday May 14th to find out more! Refreshments afterwards...



TRINITY SUNDAY, 31ST MAY

Trinity Sunday invites us to pause and wonder at the mystery at the heart of our faith: one God, known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit—three persons, perfectly united in love. It is a day when the Church celebrates not a puzzle to be solved, but a relationship to be drawn into: God above us, God beside us, God within us.

So, on Trinity Sunday, 31 May at 11:00, I will be leading our Benefice Common Worship Holy Communion Service at All Saints, Odiham and Revd Chris Dudgeon will preach to us. This is a wonderful opportunity for all 12 churches in our benefice to gather as one family, worship together and share fellowship across our parishes.

After the service, we will enjoy a relaxed bring your own picnic in the church grounds - so pack a basket, bring a blanket and let's pray for the kind of warm sunshine that makes outdoor fellowship a joy. (Should the heavens open, we'll simply bring the picnic inside. After all, British weather builds character... and indoor picnics!)

We would love to see you there.

With every blessing, Revd Luke Augustyn
Associate Curate, Mapledurwell, Up Nately and Greywell
luke@moretolife.church



North Hants Downs MU

Mothers' Union have a link with Spurgeons who support the prisoners in Winchester Prison and their families in the community. Spurgeons run family events to ensure that the prisoners are able to keep in contact with their families and to let their children take part in fun activities with their fathers. Children of prisoners miss out in many ways, including in some cases not being invited to birthday parties with other children in their class.

In March, Spurgeons ran a 'Dads and Lads' event and we were delighted to support them by supplying items that the children could take home with them. One item was a worry monster, which has a zip for a mouth. The child is encouraged to write down their worries, then pop it in the monster's mouth to be eaten!

Because of the Bank Holiday on Monday 4th May, our branch meeting will take place on the second Monday, 11th May, at 7:30pm. We will meet at the RAF Chaplaincy Centre as usual.

Sue Murphy
01252 845011 / 07881 828450 or
suemurphymubbranch@outlook.com

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Event at the River Loddon, Monday 13th April (see BBC South) to focus attention on issues relating to water shortages and the health of all our rivers



Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) © David Tipplin/2020VISION www.hiwwt.org.uk

Spring's song in the sky

Often heard long before they are seen, skylarks fill open fields and grasslands with a joyous, bubbling melody. Males rise high into the sky, sometimes 100 of metres above the ground, singing continuously while hovering or slowly circling. These flights serve both to attract a mate and to mark a breeding area.

Skylarks are omnivorous, feeding mainly on seeds, grains, and small invertebrates. In spring and summer beetles, caterpillars and spiders (for eg) become a key part of their diet, providing protein for growing chicks.

Their reliance on open farmland, grassland, and heathland means that habitat loss and intensive agriculture has a major impact on populations. Research shows 66% of ground nesting birds in the UK are in decline.

Skylarks are streaked brown and buff above, with pale underparts – colouring which provides excellent camouflage – and a short crest that can be raised when the bird is alert.

Females build shallow nests hidden among grasses, laying three to four eggs. Chicks grow quickly and leave the nest within a couple of weeks, allowing some pairs to raise multiple broods during the season.

Like all ground-nesting birds they are very vulnerable to disturbance, for eg from dogs. Even if dogs don't harm eggs and chicks they may causing adults to abandon their nests.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust is advising dog owners to help by keeping pets on short leads, especially from March through July when birds are breeding. The Trust works with farmers, landowners, and communities to protect open grasslands and farmland, helping skylarks perform their iconic song flights for generations to come.

To support local wildlife and to help give nature a wilder future, please join the Trust hiwwt.org.uk/join-today or call 01489 774408.

*Helen Skelton-Smith,
Communications Officer*

ODIHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

1st to 3rd May Join us for a joyful celebration of music for all ages and interests. Cherished classics and hidden gems, by outstanding musicians at All Saints' Church Odiham Festival Chamber Concert on Friday 1st May at 7.30pm. For more details and tickets visit www.odihammusicfestival.co.uk

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME

Open Garden: Dower House, Church Lane, Dogmersfield RG27 8TA (Sat Nav RG27 8SZ) Opening: Sunday 10th May 2-4.30pm, admission £6, children free. Cashless payments available. Home- made teas (in aid of All Saints' Church). Six acres, incl bluebell wood with spectacular rhododendrons, azaleas, magnolias etc; parkland with views over lake.



CROSS BARN THEATRE, ODIHAM

15th May NT Live: *All My Sons* Six Olivier Award nominations for a modern take on the classic Arthur Miller play, painting an honest, emotionally compelling picture of the power of guilt, legacy and the dark heart of the American Dream.

22nd May Film: *Hamnet*. Golden Globe, Bafta and Oscar-winning fictionalised drama. It follows the courtship of Agnes (Buckley) and the aspiring writer William Shakespeare, their marriage and the impact of the devastating loss of their son Hamnet from the plague in 1596, which led to the creation of the play Hamlet.

Doors open at 7pm, NT Live/Jazz start at 7.30pm, films start 7.45pm. Coffee/tea, wine and ice cream available. www.thecrossbarn.org.uk

St Mary's Church Upton Grey more+
North Hampshire Diocese Churchlife

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

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

Parking on Church Meadow Church Street

North Warnborough & District Garden Club

Next meeting with plant stall Thursday 28th May from 2.10pm North Warnborough Village Hall. Speaker Andrew Halstead, a retired RHS entomologist on 'Pest Recognition and Control'. Visitors welcome £3. www.nwdg.org.uk.

BIG WHEEL 2026

In aid of St Michael's Hospice on Sunday 14th June starting at War Memorial Park, Basingstoke. Whether you're a seasoned cyclist chasing the challenge or a first-time rider looking for a fun day out, there's something here for you – this event is enjoyable for all ages and skill levels See details at stmichaelsospice.org.uk/events.