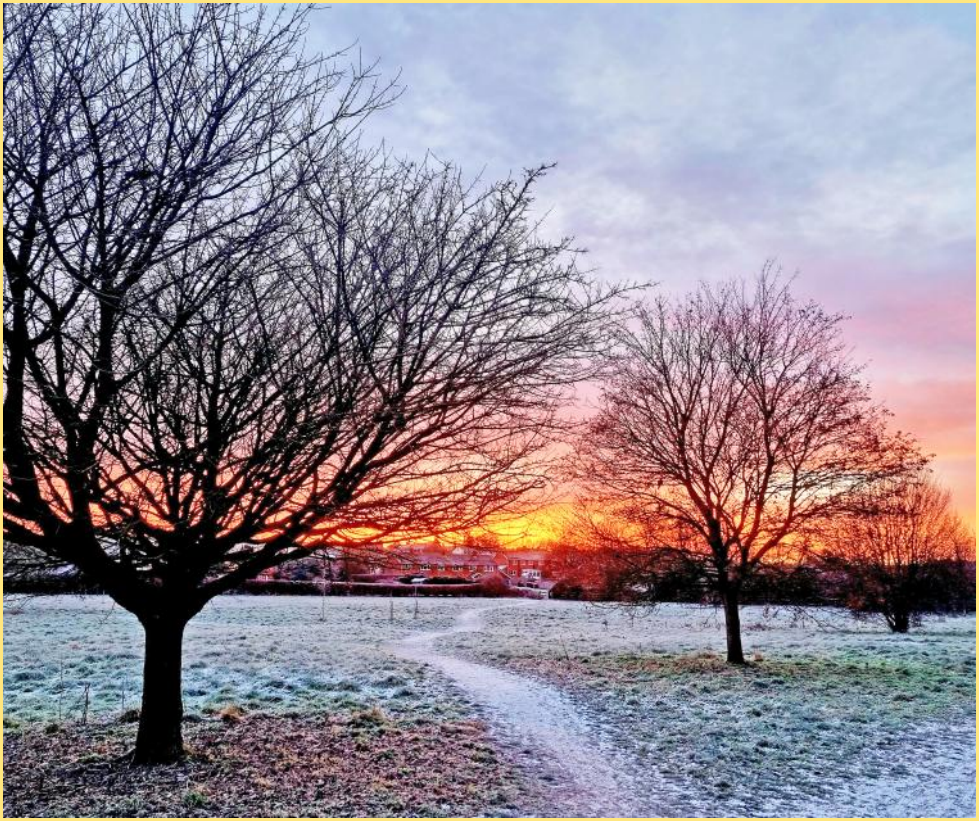
THE GAUNTLET

THE LOCAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SOMBORNES AND ASHLEY

FEBRUARY 2026



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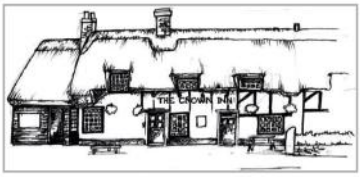

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Useful names and numbers

Parish Church

Priest in charge:
Rev Tom Benson 01794 368335
tbenson09@aol.com

Licensed Lay Ministers:
Howard Rowe 01794 388400
Sabine Kirby 01794 765273

Wardens:
Joan Appleyard 01794 388224
joanappleyard@aol.co.uk
Janet Ingleson 01794 388618
janetoingleson@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:
David Pye 01794 388405

Treasurer & Gift Aid Sec:
Carol Kent 07919 825152
carolkent-treasure-kings-somborne@outlook.com

Flowers: Pollyann Monk 01794 388482
Pollyann@afmonk.co.uk

Methodist Church

Minister: Revd Peter Rayson 02381 780560
Stewards: Marilyn Bolton 01794 389356
Marion Downing 01794 388121

Roman Catholic Churches

Hampshire Downs parish 01962 852804
St Swithun Wells parish 02380 273882

Village Hall

Bookings: Sarah Pennington 01794 389354
(tel. after 7.30pm please) or email
bookings@ksvillagehall.uk

Epworth Hall

Bookings: Marion Downing 01794388121
marion.downing@yahoo.co.uk

Doctors

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Schools

Somborne Pre-School 07530 893773
King's Somborne School 01794 388381
Danebury School 01264 810555

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Police non-emergency 101
www.hampshire.police.uk
Police emergency 999

Parish Council

Graham Searle
clerk@kingssomborne-pc.gov.uk

Borough Councillors

Stewart MacDonald 07803 594872
Ian Jeffrey 01794 388872
Alison Johnston 01794 500610

County Councillor

David Drew 01264 357024

Member of Parliament

Caroline Nokes MP 020 7219 1468
caroline.nokes.mp@parliament.uk

Local Authority

Test Valley B C 01264 368000

Village Website

www.thesombornes.org.uk

The Gauntlet

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Please deliver articles for *The Gauntlet* to **thegauntletmag@hotmail.com**

See our colour online edition at the village website (see above)

Village Directory

Allotments
Contact: Susie Upfield 01794 388198

Badminton Club
Monday evenings in the Village Hall
Contact: Sue Jackson 07891930684

Bellringing
Every Monday 7.30pm - 9.00pm.
Contact: Clare Thomson 01794 388268

Catherine Edwards Trust
Provides grants to village students
Contact: David Bevan 07769 682696

Computer Café
First and third Tuesday every month 10.00am - 12.00 at the Village Hall. Hands-on support and advice for all ages and experience on using internet, email etc.
Contact: Ian Bradley 01794 388386

Cricket Club
Contact: Rachel King 07809 289861

Christians Together Home Group
Bible study group. Usually third Friday of the month at 10.30am. All welcome.
Contact: Barbara Heffer 01794 389126

Dial-a-Ride
Trips to Romsey every Wednesday, for senior citizens and disabled people, at 2.00pm. Fare £3.75.
Contact: 01264 356808

Drop In Coffee Morning
Coffee morning at the Epworth Hall. Every Tuesday (except the second in the month) at 10.30am.
Contact: Marion Downing 01794 388121

Epworth Lunch
Lunch for over 50s at the Epworth Hall. On the second Tuesday in the month at 12.30pm.
Contact: Marilyn Bolton 01794 389356

Friends of King's Somborne Church
Contact: Sandie Pepperell 01794 388021

Football Club
Contact: Andy Gannaway 01794 388733

Footpath walk
Monthly walk on Parish footpaths on the last Sunday of each month. Check the Village Diary or village website for details.
Contact: Duncan Gould 01794 388049

Garden waste scheme
Garden waste will be collected w/c 1st and 15th Dec. 2025, 12th and 26th Jan. 2026

Household waste
NB CHECK XMAS AND NEW YEAR INFO FROM TVBC
Non-recyclable household waste (black bins) will be collected w/c 8th and 22nd Dec. 2025 [w/c 5th and 19th Jan 2026
Recyclable household waste (brown bins) w/c 1st, 15th and 29th Dec. 2025 and w/c 12th and 26th Jan. 2026

Julian Contemplative Prayer Group
Meetings for people from any denomination who are seeking a place for silent prayer and contemplation
Contact: Jane Duncan 01794 388059
janeduncan329@gmail.com

Messy Church
Meets 3rd Sunday of each month in term time, 3.00pm - 5.00pm at the Methodist Church.
Contacts: Sam Barnes 07742 077114
messychurch@gmail.com

Neighbourcare
Transport to essential appointments.
Contacts: Sue Jackson, Mary Bradley
07470022396

Parent, Baby & Toddler Group
Informal friendly get-together for babies, pre-school children, parents and carers. Every Wednesday 9.30am - 11.15am in the Village Hall.
Contacts: Kate Johnson 07831 123893
ksparentandtoddlergroup@gmail.com

School Association (PTA)
Social and fund-raising events to benefit the school and its pupils.
Contact: Alex Hodge 07904 005570
kssa.contact@gmail.com

Scouts
Beavers Mondays 6.00-7.00pm in the

Village Directory (continued)

Village Hall
Contact by email:
11thRomseyScouts@gmail.com

Services for the over 50's
Contacts*:* Sue Jackson 07891930684
suejackson884@icloud.com
Gill Butler 01794 388831
gill_butler@outlook.com

Short Mat Bowls Club
Meet alternate Tuesday afternoons in the Village Hall.
Chair*:* Julia Bowen 01794 389631
Julia.Bowen@landsker.net

Somborne Café
Every Tuesday 10.00am—1.00pm in the Village Hall
Contact: Alistair Dodds 07831727271
sombornecafe@gmail.com

Somborne Community Cinema
Second Thursday of each month
Contact: Roger Stephens 07483 211834
hello@sombornecommunitycinema.co.uk

Somborne & District Society
Meetings held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 8.00pm, usually in the Village Hall.
Contact: Linda Aucock 01794 388542

Somborne Garden Club
Meets as advertised for talks and visits, for all garden lovers.
Secretary: Nickey Buckley 01794 388694
nm.buckley@yahoo.co.uk

Somborne Needleworkers
Meet each Thursday at 2pm at the Parish Church.
Contact: Eileen Humphries 01794 388427

Somborne Players
Amateur Dramatics Society. For both children and adults.
Contact: Rebecca Rickard 07748 189864
rebeccarickard65@gmail.com

Sombornes Pre-School
Early Years education for children aged from 2 to school age.
Contact: Rebecca Lane 07530 893773

Somborne Sessions
Details: www.sombornesessions.co.uk
Contact: Trevor Ryan 01794 388743
info@sombornesessions.co.uk

Somborne Singers
Weekly meetings to sing ballads, songs from shows etc. every Tuesday at 7.45pm in the Parish Church.
Contact: Howard Rowe 01794 388400

Somborne Sisterhood W I
Meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall
Contact: Kathyrn Lee
sombornesisterhood@gmail.com

Somborne Speedwatch
Contact: Nicola Pye 01794 388405
nicola@yewbank.net

Village Hall
Ian Newnham
Contact: chair@ksvillagehall.uk

Wednesday Wanderers
Walk on the third Wednesday morning of each month
Contact*:* Margaret Heffer 01794 389126
heffers@btinternet.com

Women's Fellowship
Meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2.30pm in the Epworth Hall.
Contacts: Marion Downing 01794 388121
Marilyn Bolton 01794 389356

Women's Institute
Meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
Contact: Linda Aucock 01794 388542

Working Men's Club
Various entertainments.
Contacts: Trina Masham 07852 257596
Carol Black 07847 528661

This month's cover photo is by Harvey Saunders

Christmas at The Parish Church

By its very nature, Christmas is always busy in the Parish and never more so than this year!

The festive season began with the Christmas Fair on Saturday 29th November where the Village Hall was transformed into a Christmas wonderland yet again, the morning-set-up team arrived and in no time had decorated the hall laying out tables and decorations ready for the festive stall holders to arrive. The wide range of attractions, treats and stalls were ready to entice everyone, from the main entrance using both the Committee and Jubilee rooms to complement the main hall.

The crowds flocked to fill the hall to capacity. The afternoon was a busy affair with a relaxed atmosphere. Many cups of tea and delicious cakes were enjoyed finishing with the grand raffle. The primary school welcomed children of all ages to their fun packed games and quizzes. We must thank all who attended for helping us raise a grand sum of £2,700 for Church Funds.

Alongside the event in the hall, the Somborne's Pre-school was transformed into a sparkly Santa's Grotto. It was amazing that Santa could find time to visit us, and with the help of some elves, he was able to meet lots of excited children and listen to their Christmas requests!

Thank you to everyone that came along to see us and helped to raise

funds for our pre-school.

The Christian Motorbikes Association held a Carol Service in the Parish Church on Wednesday 10th December. The service was led by Revd. Tom

Benson, a keen biker himself, and 45 members joining the service with a few of the of the local community. During the service £175.00 was collected for the Mental Health Motorbike charity.

Just before Christmas, Audrey Thomas, a talented needleworker and a member of the Somborne Needleworkers, completed a stunning pew cushion of the 'Nativity' scene,

which she had designed and worked so beautifully herself and which she presented to the Church for all to see.

For a second year running, the weather put paid to Carol Singing round the Village on Wednesday 17th December. A few gathered at the homes of Jo and Tony Brooke-Webb and Joan Appleyard for glûwein and mince pies before moving onto the pub, where we were joined by others. Deacon Anthony Cross, the Curate of the Braishfield Group playing his guitar, led us in the singing of the carols for a couple of hours, in the dry and warmth of 'The Crown'. Our thanks again to Jude and the staff at 'The Crown' for making us so welcome and to the Brooke-Webbs and Joan Appleyard for again hosting us before the start of the evening. Sadly it meant that our usual collection for the Save the Children charity didn't happen.

This year the Pre-School held their Nativity play in the Church on Friday 19th December. Parents and carers enjoyed watching the little ones take part, some for the very first time.

Thanks to all those who helped decorate the church so beautifully with the greenery and candles which, when lighted for the Carol service and Christmas morning service, just lit up our ancient church.

The annual candle-lit Carol service led by LLM Howard Rowe with our organist Guy Boney, was held on Sunday 21st December with the Somborne Singers leading the singing whilst members of the community read the lessons. A retiring collection of £272.10p was held for the 'Save the Children' charity.

The following Tuesday, a group of adults and children met to make the Christingles for the service to be held on Christmas Eve. It was great fun as always and we must thank Hansards of Awbridge and 'D' Orange for

sponsoring the oranges.

On Christmas Eve, at the 'Christingle' service, it was so good to see the Church overflowing with so many families coming along. Young ones collected a Nativity figure at the beginning of the service which, in turn, they took to the crib during the story of 'The Nativity' told by Howard Rowe. Sabine Kirby, also a Lay Minister, produced her own

enormous 'Christingle' to tell of its meaning. A retiring collection in aid of 'The Children's Society' amounting to £325.17p was sent off to help with their worthwhile work with homeless and vulnerable youngsters in the UK.

On Christmas Morning we welcomed again the Revd. John Rennie to conduct the family service, during which Lesley Everard--Evans as Rudolph and Peter Kent as Father Christmas, acted out a fun sketch with a powerful point: how Christmas can be a competition to spend on hospitality and presents, whilst the simple story of God in the world is forgotten and which costs nothing.

Lots of "ho ho-ing", and great energy from the congregation. As they said, it was "as merry as Michelmersh at Michaelmas".

Whilst we have been waiting for the appointment of a new House for Duty Vicar, we are very grateful to all the visiting clergy who have helped during the year and especially to Revd. Tom Benson and the team at the Braishfield Benefice who, together with our churchwardens Joan and Janet ably assisted by others, have worked hard and tirelessly to enable our church to be open and welcoming for services.

Louise Causer
Sandie Pepperell

Church Floral Decorations

Thank you once again, to all those who gathered at the Church on 19th December, to help create all the beautiful decorations for Christmas. It is lovely to be joined by such an enthusiastic group of people, keen to participate in making the church look so very special over the Festive period.

For some this has become (I think!) a much-loved ritual in the run-up to Christmas. We enjoy catching up and armed with secateurs, diving with gusto into the glorious heaps of seasonal foliage and berries, which has been gathered for our use, and which this year was brimming with beautiful red and yellow berries. Each of the windowsills were individually decorated and completed with pillar candles, and the posies on the pew ends likewise had candles, ready for all the Candlelight services over Christmas. A smaller team reassembled on the 20th to complete the displays and ensure that all were watered and looking fresh, to last over the holiday. It was a pleasure to welcome so many willing helpers again. The transformation of the church for the Christmas season is always so heartening, and I am grateful to you all for such able and enthusiastic support.

I am currently drawing up the new rota for the weekly church flower arrangements over the coming year and we are always pleased to hear of anyone who would like to be part of the team for decorating the church, either to take a turn now and again with preparing the Pedestal arrangement, or on a more occasional basis, to join in a group effort at the times of Church such as Easter, Patronal Sunday, Harvest and Christmas.

Professional experience, whilst greatly welcomed, is not necessarily required. Just a good eye and an interest in decorating with flowers.

Do please get in touch if you would like to help.

Pollyann Monk

This month's cover photo is provided by Anna Mieszkian

Christmas Wreath Making

Not only is this evening a fun, social event, the KSSA raised over £1300 for the school. Plus, the money raised from the bar and raffle went to the Sombornes Pre-school.

We wanted to say a huge THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THE EVENT. A massive thank you to Ollie Godfrey from Kings Somborne Tree Care and Claire Marsden and her gardener Olly Samways for supplying the beautiful foliage we had on offer. Also, thank you to the many volunteers that helped both before, during and after the event. Finally, thank you to everyone who attended the evening, especially those who arranged groups of friends and family to come along!

The following day, we were busy at the Church Christmas Fair. We ran six stalls which were lots of fun for the children, and raised over £300 for the school. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us.

Katie Dynes KSSA

Amazing Poppy Appeal

Rather belatedly may I, on behalf of the Royal British Legion, thank all of you for your tremendous generosity.

Thank you to all those collectors who braved the elements to undertake the door-to-door collection and man the table outside Cross Stores for the appeal.

Together with donations for wreaths, quizzes, charity events and an amazing church collection, **£6,022.95p** was raised—a really tremendous result so thank you so very much. This does not include Gift Aid or monies gifted through the QR code. I hope to have the results of all by May.

Sandie Pepperell

Somborne and District Society

Back in November we had our special Christmas talk combined with drinks and nibbles. **Will Hargreaves** presented **Staging the Self**. This humorous talk looked at his photographic lockdown project where he re-created historic iconic self-portraits. Will turned his home into a studio and used whatever he had to hand at the time. This included lampshades, blankets, a bathrobe, and a potato masher! At the event we also

enjoyed drinks and nibbles. I'd like to thank everyone that contributed to the festivities in some way and hope you enjoyed the evening.

There was no talk in December, but we did have the annual members Christmas Meal, this time at The Grey Hound in Broughton. Thank you again to John Green for organizing the event.

Our February talk is on Wednesday the 25th, in the Village Hall, 7:30pm for an 8pm start. We have organised a special talk by **Emeritus Professor Tom James** concerning the devastating **Black Death in Hampshire** around 1348-9. There is exceptionally good evidence from Hampshire of the impact of the plague. Hampshire was in the front line and some 60% of the people died. Fragments of pre-plague architecture survive in King's Somborne church as elsewhere. A potentially dark subject for a dark month, but Tom commented that all was not gloom and doom!

Looking forward a little to March, Jennifer Crowdy will be talking to us about Beatice (Tilly) Shilling, a female engineer from Waterlooville.

Steve Silver-Warner (Chair)

somsoc@silver-warner.co.uk

Somborne Speedwatch

If you would like to help slow down the traffic coming through the village, please contact

Nicola Pye 01794 388 405 nicola@yewbank.net

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Thursday 12th February 2026

Downton Abbey : The Grand Finale

2h:03

2025 Drama

When Mary finds herself in a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble, the household grapples with the threat of social disgrace. The Crawleys must embrace change with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future.

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12A 1h:53

2025 Drama, Music, History

As war rages on the Western Front in 1916, the Choral Society in Ramsden, Yorkshire has lost most of its men to the army. The ambitious committee, determined to press ahead, decides to recruit local young men to swell their ranks. They must also engage a new chorus master, and despite their suspicions that he has something to hide, their best bet seems to be Dr. Henry Guthrie – driven, uncompromising, and recently returned from a career in Germany. As conscription papers start to arrive, the whole community discovers that the best response to the chaos that is laying waste to their lives is to make music. Written by Alan Bennett.

Tickets for films are just £6 each and are available from the Somborne Community Cinema web site at www.sombornecommunitycinema.co.uk or at the door on the night.

King's Somborne Village Hall

Doors open at 7.15pm and the films start at 8pm leaving plenty of time to get your drinks and snacks from the well-stocked bar.

SOMBORNE COMMUNITY CINEMA

NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

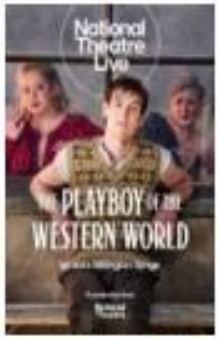
All showing at King's Somborne Village Hall

The Recreation Ground
Romsey Road
King's Somborne SO206PP

Saturday 28th March
Doors Open 2:15pm
Curtain Up 3pm

Tickets £10 online or at the door on the day

Friday 24th April
Doors Open 6:45pm
Curtain Up 7:30pm



Saturday 25th July
Doors Open 6:45pm
Curtain Up 7:30pm

Sunday 13th September
Doors Open 6:45pm
Curtain Up 7:30pm

Refreshments will be available at all performances

www.sombornecommunitycinema.co.uk

Test Valley Borough Council

King's Somborne Parish Council

Parish Council Notes February 2026

A happy New Year to all Parishioners. Council activity has been fairly quiet over the festive period with our first meeting in the new year having been held on the 8th of January.

Hut

The replacement windows to improve thermal efficiency should be carried out this month.

A leaking stopcock has also proved problematic as the location of the external isolation valve remains a mystery despite engaging Southern Water to find its location. Further exploratory work is planned but if anybody has definitive information, please contact the clerk - it will be gratefully received!

An energy survey will shortly be performed too in order to reduce the carbon footprint and running costs.

Community Asset Survey

The results of the survey have now been analysed thanks to David Munro and Will Bond who have worked proactively and helped the small working group of councillors formulate a rough plan going forward which was discussed and approved at January's PC meeting.

Unsurprisingly the shop is foreseen as the most important asset followed by the Crown - these two facilities being viewed as the most important by some margin.

It was resolved to hold two public meetings one in the evening and one on a Tuesday morning in March, when the better weather and lighter evenings are with us, to present the results of the survey and discuss future plans. Details will be published in the Gauntlet.

In the meantime, we will endeavour to register with the charity Plunkett as the King's Somborne Community Group so further guidance can be obtained into obtaining and running community assets. This will help any village community group or the PC in the future.

Traffic

Hampshire highways are still working on the costs of the 20 mph scheme, despite being contracted to do so back in April. The only information we have is that they have now upscaled their preliminary figure to £35k without defined information to justify it. County Councillor David Drew has been asked to expedite the matter.

John o'Gaunt Field

Work should start shortly to extend the surfaced footpath from The Gorrings round to the playing field thus making a circular walk and then plant a further wild flower area. This has been made possible through a grant from TVBC.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday the 9th of February at Epworth Hall. Parishioners are welcome to attend

Graham Searle

Chair, King's Somborne Parish Council

Do we need our own Health Centre?

Somborne Neighbourcare

Firstly a big thank you to all who have helped those without transport to medical appointments in 2025. As ever if there are any readers who would like to volunteer their services as a driver or to help in administration do please let me or Sue Jackson, our chair, know.

You may be aware that there is a survey of villager's opinions regarding the use of the very substantial funds that the Parish Council will have at its disposal.

We would like to propose that the Hut be adapted for use as a Medical Centre. KS has one of the largest populations of any village in Test Valley, at 1732 and still rising; larger than either Stockbridge or Broughton both of which have medical centres. We also have, proportionately, the largest population of elderly people with some 510 eligible for bus passes, almost 30% of the population. King's Somborne also has one of the highest ratios of social to private housing within TVBC, with the ratio at 26%. Thus we have one of the largest communities within rural Test Valley of people without independent access to transport and who have limited financial means and with no public transport to doctors surgeries.

Why, you might ask, are we proposing this, given that our lift service exists? Apart from the very obvious benefit to our community from having a Medical centre in such an accessible place either on foot or by car, the service provided by Somborne Neighbourcare must not be taken for granted. Our volunteer drivers do between 200 and 300 medical lifts per year dependent upon client need. Of these 57% are to either Stockbridge of Broughton surgeries. Our drivers are mostly elderly themselves and not without their own health problems.

Volunteer drivers are in increasingly short supply and finding any who are available when a lift is required is becoming progressively more difficult. In summary the continuation of this service cannot be relied upon when formulating future village plans.

In conclusion we believe there to be a compelling case for the Parish Council to work with Test Valley BC and others in seeking to establish a Medical Centre here in our community.

We think too that this would benefit a far wider group of villagers than either a sports pavilion or gymnasium, the current suggestions for the Huts' use. Many more people would be grateful for, and feel the benefit of, this "windfall money" investment for many years to

Tony Knight
Neighbourcare Administrator

.....back by popular demand
'The Geriactors'
Present
'A Comedy of Terrors'
Saturday April 11th 2026
6.30 for 7pm
King's Somborne Village Hall
Tickets available from:
Jonathan or Rebecca Rickard
Rickardsathome@gmail.com 01794 388680
or
Kings Somborne Post Office
Tickets: £25 each or tables (of 8) £200
To include 2 course Dinner
Pay Bar - Raffle
ALL PROFITS will go to Cancer Charities and Village organisations

‘Geriactors’ to return to Kings Somborne

The Geriactors have been a regular annual fixture in the village hall helping to raise thousands of pounds for charities over the years. 2026 will see them return with their new hilarious whodunnit ‘A comedy of Terrors’. Can you solve the mystery?

The event will be on Saturday 11th April in the village hall (see advert opposite) and will include a drinks reception, 2 course dinner, coffee and mints and a pay bar. All profits from this event will be divided between local cancer charities and various village organisations.

Events like this do take a lot of voluntary help to deliver. Thanks should be given to the previous team of Tony and Jo Brooke-Webb and John Davies amongst others who have done a great job in raising money for charity over the years.

The responsibility for this event has now been handed over to a new team, so if you would like to help in any way or your village organisation needs some funds in return for some help do get in touch!

As in previous years, early booking is recommended as it has been popular in the past and spaces are limited.

So get a table of friends together who can help you solve the mystery or come as you are and we will allocate you to a table.

Jonathan Rickard

rickardsathome@gmail.com

01794 388680

Stamps for the Kidney Association

As we go into the New Year I would like to thank everyone who has kindly given me stamps for the Kidney Association, not just from the Sombornes, but Andover and beyond.

We plan to open more holiday centres so patients can have fun and dialysis at their holiday.

Stamps can be left in the sleeve at the Post Office counter, or with Jen for me.

Happy New Year

Cathy Newell

King's Somborne Football Club

KSFC – Men v Women and Community Day a great success

What a fantastic way to wrap up 2025 for King's Somborne Football Club!

We're incredibly proud (and a bit overwhelmed!) by the amazing amount raised — money that will go straight back into keeping our club alive and thriving. To put that into perspective, the annual cost to keep a grassroots football club running in England typically ranges from £1,500 to over £4,500 per year for a single adult team, so every pound truly makes a difference in covering pitches, kits, officials, equipment, and more.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make this possible:

- Those who organised and planned
- All the volunteers who gave up their time
- Everyone who donated raffle prizes
- Support of the Parish Council and Village Hall
- And of course, everyone who came along to support the event.

And a massive thank you to everyone who played. We were especially proud of our women, pictured below, who put in an incredible effort— particularly given how tough it is going up against men who play week in, week out (and some even twice a weekend!). Your determination, spirit, and teamwork were brilliant to see. Final result 12-5 to the men.

This was our first fundraiser on this scale, and we're really happy with how it turned out — and we've already spotted lots of ways to make it even better next time.

Here's to building on this success and keeping our community club strong for years to come.

Andy Gannaway

Somborne Sisterhood

Our first meeting of 2026 at the beginning of January gave members the opportunity for an interesting discussion on the five resolutions being considered by the WI nationally this year.

Members are being asked to vote individually on the five issues but those present at the meeting were most interested in following up the issues of homelessness and Independent Visitors for children in care.

The discussion raised a number of ideas for local initiatives and possibly speakers for future meetings, even if these resolutions are not taken up nationally.

The February meeting of the Somborne Sisterhood is Wednesday 4th February at 7:30pm in the village hall. We will be hearing from Professor Catherine Gale of Hampshire Swifts

www.hampshireswifts.co.uk

Guests are welcome (£7).

King's Somborne Working Men's Club

There will be a members' meeting at the club on Friday 13th Feb (7:30pm start with club opening at 7pm).

This informal meeting is being called by the members and is intended to give everyone an opportunity to openly discuss possible fundraising ideas as well as 2026 events and ways we can help support and strengthen the club moving forward. Your ideas, input and involvement would be very much appreciated.

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Monday Night Club – every Monday night from 6pm

Skittles – every Monday from 8pm (club opens at 6pm)

Bingo – alternate Sundays from January 11th. 8pm start (club opens at 7pm)

Upcoming events will be announced in the Gauntlet each month.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR 2026 MEMBERSHIP (renewals due by by 31stJanuary 2026). Fees can be paid at the club (see above for opening times).

SOMBORNE
PLAYERS
Peter Pan
by J.M Barrie
Script by Alex Jackson
Script kindly presented in agreement with
www.alexjacksonpantomimes.com
SCAN HERE
FOR TICKETS
Friday 20 February 2026 7:30
Saturday 21 February 2026 2:30 & 7:30
TICKETS ON SALE FROM
www.ticketsource.co.uk/somborne-players
KING'S SOMBORNE
VILLAGE HALL
This amateur production of "Peter Pan" is presented by arrangement with Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity and Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

YOUNG LIVES vs CANCER

A registered charity – number 1107328

The South Hampshire Fund Raising Group
Young Lives vs Cancer
invite you to a talk

It's a mad world – Thoughts on defence and security by
Lieutenant General Sir Charlie Stickland KCB OBE RM

On Friday 13th March 2026

at Stockbridge Town Hall, SO20 6HE

6.30 for 7pm

Tickets £20 Hamper Raffle
to include a glass of wine and canapés

For further information and to book tickets please
contact Ann Oxford Wright 07759 605654
annow17@googlemail.com

Footpath Walk 4¾ miles (7½ Km) 2 hours

Sunday 22 February 2:00 pm King's Somborne Village Hall

We cross Palace Field and alongside the churchyard to pick up the Clarendon Way alongside Cow Drove Hill. We follow the Clarendon Way past How Park and across the water meadows to Houghton. From Houghton, it is road walking past the site of Bossington village before taking the footpath along the line of the Roman road to Horsebridge and the footpath back to the village.

What's on in February 2026

Winchester Science Centre

All Month *Van Gogh Alive*: An immersive art exhibition inside the Planetarium

10 Feb *Flow (Film Screening)*: An animated feature about animals in a changing world

14–24 Feb *February Half-Term*: Explosive science demonstrations and space adventures

17 Feb *Night Sky Live:* An evening of planetarium shows and guided stargazing

Museum of the Iron Age

18 Feb *Doodle Club:* A creative half-term workshop for children

Winchester City Mill

Wed–Sun (All Feb) *Working Mill Demonstrations:* Experience the 1,000-year -old mill in action

Weekends (All Feb) *Guided Walk and Talk: T*ours focusing on the mill's history and engineering

14–22 Feb *Half-Term Island Trail:* **F**amily -friendly nature/history trail around the mill and River Itchen

14–22 Feb *Baking Demos:* Live demos showing how to use the mill's own flour for traditional recipes

Hawk Conservancy Trust

1 Feb *Winter Woodland Lights*: Final night of the immersive light trail and evening owl flying display

14–22 Feb *February Half-Term:* Three daily flying displays and the "Vulture Voyagers" trail

14–22 Feb *Tractor Rides:* Seasonal rides around the grounds (available weekends and half-term only)

Daily (from 14 Feb) *Meet the Burrowers:* Interactive "VIP" session with the resident Burrowing Owls

Marwell Zoo

9–13 Feb *Conservation & Biology Conferences:* Specialist half-day conferences for students

14–22 Feb *The Creature Cases Trail:* Juniors can solve "The Case of the Missing Pebble."

14–22 Feb *Mascot Meet & Greets: Z*oo mascots, Lenny the lemur and Sammy the snow leopard

14–22 Feb *Firepit Marshmallows:* Seasonal toasted marshmallow and s'mores sessions at the firepits

23–27 Feb *Expedition Marwell:* "Home Educator" week with hands-on science/ animal workshops

Winchester Cathedral

All Month: *Helios:* A massive, internally lit sun installation by artist Luke Jerram

2–23 Feb (Mondays) *Morning Pilates:* Unique exercise sessions held under the glowing sun

3 Feb *Late Night Opening:* A chance to view the Helios installation after dark

5 Feb Festival of the Spoken Nerd: Science -based comedy performed under the sun

7 Feb *Canticle of the Sun:* A concert by the Cathedral Boy Choristers and Lay Clerks.

14 Feb *Sun Love:* A Valentine's special featuring the London Community Gospel Choir

16–20 *Feb Half-Term Fun:* "Under the Sun" themed family activities and trails

The Gurkha Museum

13 Feb *Mughals and Rajputs:* A study day and lecture lunch on Indian architecture and art

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

Until 5 Feb *Hampshire Artists Co-Operative:* An exhibition of local contemporary art

3–5 Feb *The Pushchair Murder:* A "lecture lunch" exploring a historical true crime

8 Feb *Snowdrops in Watercolour:* An art workshop focused on botanical illustration

10–12 Feb *Titanic:* A Night of Ice – A lecture lunch about the famous maritime tragedy

14 Feb *Valentine's Dining:* A romantic evening meal in the Garden Restaurant

17 Feb–1 Mar *Art Impact:* A new art exhibition by the Vision 5 group

21 Feb *Family Bushcraft:* Outdoor cooking for children (breads and batters)

24 Feb *Gardening for Butterflies:* A lecture lunch with a butterfly expert

Karen Bolton

Theatres

Theatre Royal, Winchester
1 Feb *The Americana Revue*: A musical journey through the roots of American music
2 Feb *Shanty Night:* in the Cafe Bar
4 Feb *Cosi fan tutte*: Merry Opera Co.
6 Feb *Ultimate Girl Band:* Featuring Michelle Heaton (Liberty X), a celebration of 90s and 00s pop
7 Feb *Amazing Animals*: An interactive stage show for families and animal lovers
9-11 Feb *Romeo and Juliet:* A full-scale production of Shakespear's classic tragedy
12 Feb *mapdance 2026*: Contemporary dance from the University of Chichester
14-16 Feb *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*: The musical adaptation of Judith Kerr's beloved book
19-21 Feb *Curtains*: A musical murder mystery by Encore Youth Theatre
22 Feb *Mark Simmons: Jest to Impress:* Expertly crafted one-liners from the TV regular
26-28 Feb *Spitfire Girls:* True stories of the women who flew during WWII.
Chesil Theatre, Winchester
11-13 Feb *Chesil Youth Theatre Presents..:* Two short plays
27 Feb – 1 Mar *Take Ten: Angels:* Ten 10-minute plays based on the theme of 'Angels'

Winchester Guildhall (The Broadway)
12 Feb *The Music of Bruce Springsteen:* "Candlelight Concert"
Plaza Theatre, Romsey
9-14 Feb *Faith Healer*: A man who may or may not have a gift for healing.
20 Feb *Chuckl. Romsey: C*omedy night – Shappi Khorsandi, Mike McClean, Mad Ron, and Tom Alban
21 Feb ELO Encounter: tribute to the music the Electric Light Orchestra
22 Feb *Ronnie, Reggie and Me:* An evening with Fred Dinenage, sharing the true story of the Kray twins

Salisbury Playhouse
13 Feb-7 Mar *Rock & Roll Man:* The original musical about a musical original

Mayflower Theatre, Southampton
27 Jan-7 Feb *Miss Saigon:* The spectacular new production of the Boublil and Schönberg classic
10-14 Feb *Darren Brown: Only Human:* The master of psychological illusion with a new live show
17-18 Feb *MÁM*: A visionary fusion of solo concertina music and contemporary dance
20-21 Feb *Bluey's Big Play:* A theatrical treat for families featuring the beloved Heeler family
24-28 Feb *Legally Blonde The Musical*: The fabulously fun hit musical based on the adored movie
6 Feb *The Classic Rock Show:* A "greatest hits" performance of the world's biggest rock anthems
7 Feb *Professor Brian Cox: Emergence:* A preview show exploring the wonders of the universe
14 Feb *Carmen*: Ellen Kent's farewell opera tour, featuring the Dnipro Opera and a live orchestra
19 Feb *Justin Live: Justin Time to Rock*: Justin Fletcher brings a high-energy show for little ones

Kings Theatre & New Theatre Royal, Portsmouth
6 Feb *Dreams of FM*: A high-energy tribute to Fleetwood Mac
13 Feb *Carmen:* Another chance to catch this spectacular Ukrainian National Opera production
21-22 Feb *Sensational 30:* A celebratory showcase of 30 years of musical theatre
25 Feb *Celtic Illusion*: A fusion of Irish dance and grand-scale magic

Andover: The Lights
5 Feb *Parody of the Rings*: A comedic take on the Tolkien epic
6 Feb *Women in Rock*: Celebrating the world's greatest female rock icons
27 Feb *Women in Rock*: Stand-up comedy from the popular Northern comedian

Karen Bolton

Village diary for February 2026

Every Monday	9.30	WI Walking Group
	6.00pm	Beavers
	7.30 pm	Badminton
Every Tuesday	10.30am	Drop in coffee (except the second Tuesday)
	10.00am	Somborne Cafe
	7.45pm	Somborne Singers
Every Wednesday	9.30am	Parent, Baby and Toddler Group
	2.00pm	Dial-a-ride
Every Thursday	2.00pm	Needleworkers

School holidays, Bank Holidays and other events may cause changes.

3rd	Computer cafe	10.00am
10th	Short Mat Bowls	2.00pm
4th	WI Sisterhood	8.00pm
7th	**Soup & Sherry**	**12.30pm**
9th	Parish Council	7.00pm
10th	Epworth Lunch	12.30pm
11th	WI	7.30pm
12th	**Community Cinema**	**7.15pm for 8.00pm**
13th	**KSWMC Member's meeting**	**7.00pm for 7.30pm**
17th	Computer cafe	10.00am
24th	Short Mat Bowls	2.00pm
18th	Contemplative Prayer	7.30pm
20th	**Panto Peter Pan**	**7.30pm**
21st	**Panto Peter Pan**	**2.30pm & 7.30pm**
21st	**Soup & Sherry**	**12.30pm**
22nd	Footpath walk See page 19	2.00pm
25th	Somborne Society	7.30 for 8.00pm

District diary for February 2026

Markets
Romsey Farmers' Market *Sun 1st Feb* Hampshire's food and drink, direct from the producers
Romsey Vegan Market *Sun 8th Feb* A mix of vegan stalls and live music for the whole family
Whiteley Farmers' Market *Sun 8 Feb:* Local food and craft market at Whiteley Shopping Centre
Winchester Farmers' Market *Sun 8th & 22nd Feb* Hampshire's food/drink direct from the producers
Stockbridge Market *Every Thurs* A charming market with fresh produce, flowers, and artisan treats

North & Central Hampshire
5 Feb *Regenerative Farming Journey (Stockbridge)*: A "Time to Talk" event on a local farm
10 Feb *Timothy's Tots (Selborne)*: A nature discovery session for under-5s at Gilbert White's House
11 Feb *Gilbert's Garden Tours (Selborne)*: Expert-led tours of the historic 18th-century gardens
14–15 Feb *Snowdrop Weekend (Selborne)*: Half-price entry to Gilbert White's House
14–22 Feb *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Trail (Mottisfont)*: A National Trust nature trail
14–22 Feb *Magic of Locomotion (Watercress Line)*: Steam train journeys with on-board magicians

South & Coastal Hampshire
1 Feb *Guided Tour of Stansted House (Rowlands Castle):* A rare winter opening of this stately home
7 Feb *Civic Centre Clock Tower Tour (Southampton)*: A rare guided climb of the iconic clock tower
7, 14, 21, 28 Feb *Snowdrop Saturdays (Warnford Park):* Exclusive Saturday afternoon access
7–27 Feb *Bronze Casting Workshops (Butser Ancient Farm)*: Cast your own bronze tool & jewellery
14–15 Feb *Brickstravaganza: Pokémon Edition (SeaCity Museum):* LEGO-building event
16 Feb *Castles and Catapults (Tudor House, Southampton):* A hands-on history workshop
18 Feb *Love Nature Family Event (Swanwick Lakes):* A wildlife exploration day at the nature reserve **20 Feb** *Sláine: The Horned God (Butser Ancient Farm):* An evening of Celtic storytelling by firelight

West Hampshire (New Forest)
Daily (all Feb) *Winter Woodland Walk (Beaulieu): S*elf-guided trail through Victorian flower gardens **14–22 Feb** *Hands -on-History (Beaulieu):* Interactive sessions at the National Motor Museum

Active & Outdoor Hampshire
1 Feb *Melp Mindful Miles:* A social, non-competitive community run at Edenbrook Country Park
7–8 Feb *Portsmouth Coastal Half Marathon Weekend:* A multi-terrain running event
11 Feb *Wet Winter Walk at Winnall Moors (Winchester):* Floodplains 2-hour, 2-mile guided walk
15 Feb *Bramley 20/10:* A popular road running event (20-mile and 10-mile options)
16–20 Feb *Time Traveller Holiday Club (Butser Ancient Farm, near Petersfield):* For children
18 Feb *Forest Bathing (Lime Wood, New Forest*): A guided "mindfulness in nature" session
21–22 Feb *RYA Dinghy & Watersports Show (Farnborough):* Indoor expo for sailing and watersports
22 Feb *Winchester 10K:* A classic road race starting from the Guildhall
22 Feb *BigMud Trails (Queen Elizabeth Country Park):* Guided or competitive trail runs

Resilience Reminders! Be Prepared!

With the vagaries of climate change and the precariousness of the political situation at the moment, it seems a good idea for us all to be prepared for disruption to our daily lives.

We may lose electricity, water, or internet connection…... or all three.

Deliveries of food and essentials to local stores may be disrupted.

Below is a list to help you keep essentials at home so you can make your life easier in an emergency until supplies are resumed.

Preparing for a power outage

Keep a stock of torches, candles and batteries. Determine whether your home phone and/or mobile will work in a power outage and how long the battery will last. Have a battery powered radio that can receive FM.

Medical needs

If you have any medical devices powered by electricity and/or refrigerated medicines, it's worth talking to your doctor about what to do in the event of a prolonged power outage. Find out how long medication can be stored at higher temperatures and get specific guidance for any medications that are critical for life.

Using appliances during power outages

Be careful of carbon monoxide poisoning if using generators, camp stoves or barbeques by using them outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows. Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home. Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment, or electronics. Power may return with momentary surges or spikes that can cause damage.

Food storage

Have enough nonperishable food, such as tinned food, and water. Keep freezers and refrigerators closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Throw out any food that has an unusual smell, colour or texture.

Money

Cash is king! In the event of a prolonged power outage or wide-spread internet failure card machines and ATMs will not work and cash will be the only means of buying anything.

King's Somborne Women's Institute

Our December Meeting started with a festive drink, followed by a short demonstration from Shane O'Connell whose new fitness classes are on Mondays in the Village Hall for the over sixties. The exercises are accompanied by music and focus on balance, co-ordination and mobility. Many of us are the right age and attempted some of the exercises with varying degrees of success!

Our speaker for the evening was Robbie Sprague with "Poetry to Amuse and Entertain". Robbie sends any money he makes from speaking to a safe haven in Knysner, South Africa where there are poor townships needing support.

Robbie entertained us with a wide range of poetry, both amusing and moving, interspersed with personal reminiscences and amusing anecdotes. Writers included Auden, Betjeman and Laurie Lee. A poem that was particularly well received was " Warning, when I am old I shall wear purple" by Jenny Joseph.

After Robbie's excellent entertainment we enjoyed the wonderful spread, prepared by members, with more festive drinks.

Linda presented Sarah with a lovely plant to thank her for all her hard work during the year.

Eileen Reynolds.

Our January event was a talk by Ruth Kerr entitled "A Walk Without Wellies". Ruth guided us on a virtual walk around the UK using historic routes. The Romans built over 2000 miles of roads. Our route took us from the Meon Valley, up the west side of the country, through Wales. Thence to Teesdale where the Coverhead Estate support black grouse through habitat restoration.

On through northern counties using Coal Roads (often impassable in winter), through Scotland using Caulfield and Wade Roads, built by military men to allow troops to police the highlands. We learnt of "destitution roads" - built by the poor in return for oatmeal.

We returned south via Watling Street, Ermine Street and Icknield Way and learnt about local wildlife. Wheat and barley are grown along the Icknield Way, (between Thetford and Yeovil), due to optimal soil conditions. Ruth's talk was beautifully illustrated. We were pleased to support her chosen charity, The Country Trust, which provides access to the countryside for disadvantaged children.

Our February meeting will include a talk about birds of the Ascension Islands. Visitors always welcome.

Sarah

Courgette Butter Bean Lemon and Ricotta Stew

A nourishing, gluten free healthy salad for 4

1 tbs olive oil 2 courgettes, sliced
2 cloves of garlic thinly sliced 2 tins butter beans
4 stems cavolo nero, stalks removed, leaves shredded
1 lemon, zest and juice 1/2 250g tub of ricotta
Handful fresh parsley and mint, chopped
50g pumpkin seeds toasted

1. Heat half tbs oil in a shallow casserole over a medium heat. Add the courgettes and cook for 6-8 minutes, turning occasionally until golden and tender. Remove and set aside.
2. Add remaining oil to pan and gently cook garlic until fragrant but not brown. Add the butter beans, reserving the juice, to the garlic and warm through.
3. Add courgettes to the pan, stir in the cavolo nero, most of the lemon zest and a good pinch of salt. Simmer until the greens have wilted.
4. Beat the ricotta and lemon juice into the bean juice until a smooth and creamy sauce. Add to the bean stew, with lots of freshly ground pepper, stir to coat the ingredients, and simmer until melted. Add a splash more water to loosen if needed. Taste!
5. Remove from heat, stir in some herbs, serve warm sprinkled with pumpkin seeds, a drizzle of oil and extra herbs, and some parmesan if wanted.
6. Serve with chunky bread

Enoy! *D*

Services for the over 50s

Sue 07891 930 684 & Gill 388 831

Do contact us if you need any support or have anything that is worrying you.

Blue Badge applications, attendance allowance, pension credit, dementia support services etc

Epworth Lunches

Tuesday February 10th

12.30pm £7

Sausages Ratatouille* *Mash*

Broccoli *Cauliflower*

Fruit Crumble and Custard

*Coffee *

Booking essential - Marilyn 389 356

Over 50s Minibus Trips

Booking essential

Phone Sue 07891930684

Thursday February 19th 2025

Eastleigh

£10.00 Pick up 10.00am Home for 4.00pm

From 1 April 2026, patients will not be able to access free ear irrigation in Andover via the surgery.

There are several private services available locally – see below for more details.

Romsey: https://www.romseyclearears.com/ tel: 07450 249006
Winchester: https://www.justears.co.uk/clinic/winchester-clinic/ tel: 03455 272727
Andover: https://earwaxremovalclinic.co.uk/ear-wax-removal-clinic-andover/ tel: 0300 1247600

Ear irrigation can also be done at most branches of Specsavers.

Salisbury Bloods

If you are under the care of a Consultant at Salisbury Hospital, please be aware that we are not linked to them for blood tests requests and results. There is more information on our website (stockbridgesurgery.co.uk) under the news section or we can send you a copy of the information or print it out for you upon request.

Menopause Help and Support

Female patients aged 45-65 years old can now access specific menopause support via virtual groups run by Mid Hampshire Healthcare. There is also free online help available to patients via Harley Street at Home.

All the links are available by searching 'Menopause Help and Support' on our website https://www.stockbridgesurgery.co.uk. You can also telephone Mid Hampshire Healthcare for more information on 01962 657825.

David the Giant Killer

It's the third Sunday afternoon in the month – it's Messy Church! Children and families converged on the Methodist Chapel at 3pm on 18th January for a set of Bible stories with the theme of 'Facing New Challenges'. Our first was the story of David and Goliath, with crafts, fun, singing and food.

Goliath was a huge, strong man, with a huge spear, who challenged the people of God to fight him. But our hero David, just a young boy, with experience of keeping sheep and protecting them against wild animals, heard Goliath's challenge and set his face against the big bully. 'Doesn't he know that the Lord God watches over us?', he asked.

David took only his sling and some small stones and slung a stone against Goliath. The giant fell dead. God had delivered his people from the enemy!

We constructed a big picture of Goliath, and made sling-bags with decorated stones. We experimented with slinging (sadly only soft items!), and we made (and ate) chocolate and marshmallow 'stones'. We went on a scavenger-hunt around the chapel and hall, and prepared prayers on stones for later.

Then we watched a story video, sang a song 'My God is so big', and brought our prayers to God. After that we all gathered round the food table for sandwiches, cakes and squash..

Our next Messy Church will be on Sunday 15th February at the Methodist Chapel at 3pm. All families are welcome! See you then?

Howard

TEST VILLAGES U3A

Thursday 5th February at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall
"From rivers and oceans to the night sky, adventures in wildlife conservation."

Paul Colley, an accomplished photographer and conservationist, presents his remarkable photographs of wildlife.

Doors open at 1.40 pm for the presentation followed by refreshments
New members are very welcome to attend our meetings
u3a is a UK-wide network of groups that provides the opportunity to socialise and learn for fun.
Find out more at: u3a.org.uk, or see the latest on our Test Villages group at: testvillages.u3asite.uk

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Tuesday 3rd February 2026
at 7.30pm Stockbridge Town Hall

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No experience necessary!

Stockbridgeamdrams@gmail.com or find us on Facebook

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Raphael Wallfisch, Cello and Simon Callaghan, Piano

13 March 2026 7.30pm
St Peter's Church Stockbridge

In their first concert of their 2026 season, Stockbridge Music will welcome cellist Raphael Wallfisch and pianist Simon Callaghan for a programme which includes several famous cello pieces as well as showcasing less well known works. The concert includes music by Bach, Beethoven, Bloch and Rachmaninoff.

There is a very moving story behind one of the works being played, Ernest Bloch's Baal Shem. This piece will be played in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Bloch composed Baal Shem in memory of his mother, and Raphael Wallfisch has chosen this piece because his own mother Anita Wallfisch Lasker is a survivor of the Holocaust, having been a prisoner at Auschwitz. She was spared the gas chamber only because she was considered to be of value playing the cello in the Auschwitz Camp Orchestra. Still alive today, her remarkable story was told in the 2024 documentary film *The Commandant's Shadow*.

Raphael Wallfisch is one of the most prolific recorded performers of cello music with over 70 discs to his credit. A BBC survey named Wallfisch's recording of the Dvorak Cello Concerto the best recording of the work in the past 25 years. He regularly tours internationally and plays with many major orchestras including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony and the Hallé.

Simon Callaghan performs internationally as a solo pianist, chamber musician and recording artist. Recital partners have included Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Adrian Brendel, and Raphael Wallfisch. He is Professor of Piano at the Royal Northern College of Music. His playing has been widely acclaimed with BBC Radio 3's Andrew McGregor saying: "I have nothing but praise for the performances... impressive pianism".

The concert will take place at 7.30pm on Friday 12 March at St Peter's Church, Stockbridge. Tickets are available at www.stockbridgemusic.uk

An invitation to Winter Warmer Soup & Sherry Lunch

Sat 7th and 21st Feb, 7th and 21st March

Parish Church 12.30pm-1.30pm

A warming glass of sherry, a delicious bowl of soup, and plenty of good friendship awaits!

Church Merchandise

The Parish Church has a supply of tea towels showing scenes from the Village priced at £5 each and mugs illustrating the Church and School priced at £7.50.

A variety of cards are also available

The tea towels are always available at the Post Office and all items from Louise (389364) or Eileen (388107)

DO YOU LIKE TO WALK?

Every Wednesday at 9.15a.m. a group of us from the W.I. meet behind the Parish Church, beside the John O'Gaunt sign and walk together exploring the local countryside. We walk for a couple of hours with occasionally a stop for coffee on the way and very occasionally even cake and always a good chat.

If you would like to join us we would be delighted to see you.

Either come to the John O'Gaunt sign one Wednesday or phone me, Frances Shone, on 388626 for more information.

World Day of Prayer
Friday, 6th March 2026
2.30 p.m. in the Parish Church

This year it is the turn of the parish church to host the World Day of Prayer service. We do hope you will come and join us. This year it has been prepared by Christian women from Nigeria. The service will be followed by refreshments.

Up Somborne Carol Singing

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance Service sent a letter of very grateful thanks to the residents of Up Somborne for a donation of £300 collected on the evening of the annual village Carol Singing . The letter also explained how public funding is so desperately needed for this lifesaving service to operate .

Liz Jones

Julian Contemplative Prayer Meetings

These meetings are for those, from any faith or none, who are seeking the opportunity to practice silent prayer and contemplation in the companionship of others.

The meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm. The venue is 1 Highfield Cottages, off Strawberry Lane, Up Somborne.

If you would like to know more, please contact Jane Duncan on 01794 388059 or 07766 811 623.

All are very welcome.

Parish Home Group

Weekly on Thursdays, 7.30 - 9.00pm during term time
Contact Howard Rowe for details
howard_rowe@btopenworld.com or 01794 388400

Church services in February 2026

Parish Church

Sunday, 1st February—Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)
08.00 a.m. Holy Communion (1662)
10.00 a.m. Morning Worship
Readings:
Louise Causer: *Hebrews 2.14-end*
Peter Kent: *Luke 2.22-40*

Sunday, 8th February—Second Sunday before Lent
10.00am Holy Communion
Readings:
Christine Ball: *Romans 8.18-25*
Linda Aucock: *Matthew 6.25-end*

Sunday, 15th February—Sunday next before Lent
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion
Readings:
Antony Chilton: *2 Peter 1.16-end*
Alwena Rowe: *Matthew 17.1-9*

Alive Service 6.00pm

Wednesday, 18th February—Ash Wednesday—location to be confirmed

Sunday, 22nd February—First Sunday of Lent
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion
Readings:
David Pye: *Romans 5.12-19*
Linda Aucock: *Matthew 4.1-11*

Friday, 6th March
2.30 p.m. World Day of Prayer in the Parish Church

Methodist Church

February 1st 10.30am
Rev Bob Kitching

February 8th 10.30am
Rev Rachael Hawkins

February 15th No morning service
3.00pm Messy Church

February 22nd 10.30am
Mr Peter Castle
Holy Communion

Roman Catholic Churches

St Thomas' Stockbridge

St Joseph's Romsey

St Andrew's N. Baddesley

Details of services at RC churches, see:
www.hampshiredowns.org.uk and
www.stswithunwellsparish.org.uk

The Curate's Last Word

The beginning of February is a fairly strange time within the Church of England. It starts with Candlemas, which is the feast of the presentation of Christ in the Temple, from which we get the glorious prayer the *Nunc Dimittis*. Yet two weeks later we're gearing up to Lent, the season of repentance and preparation for the events of Holy Week and Easter – Jesus' arrest, crucifixion and resurrection.

The first of February is also the traditional Gaelic festival Imbolc, which marks the coming of the season of Spring. Three weeks after the celebration of Plough Sunday, this date is when the earth awakens from its Winter slumbers and the arable agricultural work truly begins, with clearing, ploughing and sowing of the crops needed to feed everyone.

Being awake and aware is the meaning of Christian spirituality. It is to be aware of the loveliness and beauty of human existence, of the potential we have as human beings, and to see and encourage that potential in other people. One of the joys of ministry is meeting people across the parishes, discovering, nurturing and growing their skills, and helping to put them to use within the church, the community, and in improving their own lives.

As well as loveliness and beauty, it is also essential for us to be awake to and aware of the hatefulness and ugliness in the world, where so many people experience injustice on a daily basis, and where wealth is unevenly distributed. Whilst the world's troubles are great, we can support causes and situations through prayer, campaigning and action. Even signing and sharing a petition online can bring different causes to fresh audiences.

So as Spring awakens the earth, let us be open to a new springtime of the soul. Let our senses become attuned to the needs of all people locally, nationally and internationally, and our hearts wide open to feel and share God's love throughout the world.

Anthony

Revd. Anthony Cross,
Curate of Braishfield Benefice and the
Benefice of Somborne with Ashley

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