

THE GAUNTLET

THE LOCAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SOMBORNES AND ASHLEY

AUGUST 2026



PUBLISHED BY THE CHURCH IN THE SERVICE OF THE PARISH

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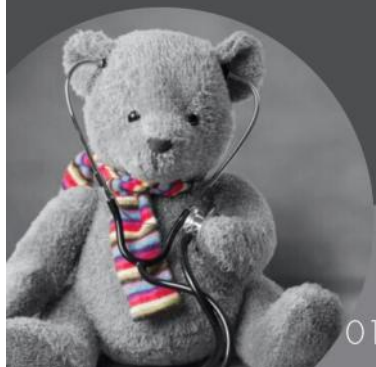
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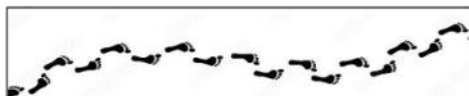
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Useful names and numbers

Parish Church

Associate Priest
Rev Ann Devereux 01794 368335
revadev316@gmail.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
janetingleson@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

Stockbridge surgery 01264 810524
www.stockbridgesurgery.co.uk
Broughton surgery 01794 301210

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Stockbridge Pharmacy 01264 810624

Schools

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

Police

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

Parish Council

Jordan Matthews
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: Roger Stephens 07483 211834

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

Garden waste scheme

Garden waste will be collected in w/c 3rd 17th and 31st August 2026.

Household waste

Non-recyclable household waste (black bins) will be collected in w/c 3rd, 17th and 31st August 2026.

Recyclable household waste (brown bins) will be collected in w/c 10th and 24th August 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.

Contact: Sam Barnes 07742 077114
sambarnesyouthworker@gmail.com

Neighbourcare

Transport to essential appointments.

Contacts: Sue Jackson 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 6.00pm

Contact: 11th Romsey Scouts @gmail.com

Village Directory (continued)

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 07765 106854
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: Kathryn Lee
sombornesisterhood@gmail.com

Somborne Solo's Group

Meet 3rd Wednesday of the month for lunch at a local pub. For people who are on their own.

Contact: Sue Fundrey 07720746516
sue.fundrey@btinternet.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: Rob Draper 07960 995 280
Heidi Barnes 07943 818 019

Ann Devereux – Our new Vicar

Ann has come to King's Somborne with a wealth of lived experience to bring to bear on her new role here.



She was born into a Christian family, but had a difficult time as a child and left home at 17. She became a police cadet as this also provided accommodation. A very shrewd choice for one so young! As she became more financially secure, she took a job with an airline, which meant cheap airfares to see the world! Ann met a wide range of people, looking after VIPs and accompanying minors. Life was outwardly secure and successful, but she was in an abusive relationship and in despair, left to seek sanctuary with her sister, a member of a Charismatic community church which held a

meeting that very evening. It was there that Ann decided to dedicate the rest of her life to Jesus and it was from this church that she volunteered to join a missionary team to Kentucky to help support members of the mother church who had been spiritually abused there.

A plethora of careers at home followed, all of them building Ann's empathy with people and understanding of their needs. Ann has sold houses in London, trained to be a Montessori teacher and set up a nursery. Through her life she has retrained to be a child social worker, a secondary RE teacher, and now a vicar!

Ann married, adopted a son and moved from London to Southampton so Ann could afford to be a stay-at-home mother. Here she worshipped in several churches; one had a brilliant mother-and-toddler group, another was more fun as her son grew older.

Most of Ann's Christian life has been spent in Charismatic churches, but she found these forms of worship over time lacked the space for calm contemplation which she found in the Anglican form of worship.

Ann feels that God has rescued her many times in her eventful life. Her mission is to focus on loving people, being available to her parishioners, and to encourage families and children to be part of the church community.

Ann Devereux was talking to Sue Jackson

Installation of our new Vicar

It was a very hot evening on Tuesday 7th July, but over 150 people gathered in the Parish Church for the Installation of the Revd Ann Devereux as our Assistant Priest, resident in King's Somborne. It was a truly joyful service as we welcomed Ann to live and work amongst us.

The occasion was led by the Bishop of Southampton, the Right Rev Rhiannon King, who encouraged us to look to a bright future asking us to cherish Ann and to love one another.

Friends from all over the Romsey Deanery joined us as well as lots of

folk from Ann's previous parishes. The Somborne Singers gave an excellent lead to the hymn singing as well as providing a beautiful anthem.

We were delighted to have representatives from many organisations in the village and to share most welcome drinks and nibbles afterwards!

Joan Appleyard



Three Plays – Two Venues



An ambitious summer production from the Somborne Players saw **'Jim Jam'** kick off the start of a triple bill on Friday 17th July at the Village Hall and Saturday 18th July at Little Somborne.

Sitting in the front row, sipping a pint of hand crafted beer on the Friday, I watched with increasing apprehension as Will (Samson Cuff), Jim (David Cottom) and Mary (Lesley Everard-Evans) battled hot tarmac, dead avians, and urinary retention in their quest to arrive at a holiday destination. Immediately apparent to the audience was Jim's masterful control of the imaginary square steering wheel of the car they were in.

However, we were in for a rough ride! Mary, dressed up to the nines, was clearly in charge of the operation, but was her method of sedating the rest of her family going too far? A waft of Yves Saint Laurent's 'Rive Gauche' wafted into the audience. Several gentlemen had to be carried out. Meanwhile the sinister Will 'the boy who lives upstairs' was doing something horrid in the back seat, in an incident related to an empty water bottle. I can go no further in a family magazine but hope to see Samson back in other 'adult' Players productions. That mobile phones, satnav and GPS were all mentioned is something I will

let you work out for yourselves. Not for the faint hearted!

'Bad Reception'
a two hander

with supporting cast was next.

How do you spell trouble? Kayleigh (Rosetta Clark-Smith) and Lucy (Megan Horrell) were about to tell us. A school lets two pupils run reception unsupervised. What could possibly go wrong? Kayleigh and Lucy live on different sides of the tracks. They don't like each other and this play explores what they can do about it. Rosetta & Megan were able to produce



two believable characters who change over the course of the action. Eloise Monger (Mrs Sharp, Miss Hitchens, Miss Collins) David Crump (Mr McFee), David Cottom (Delivery Driver) and Samson Cuff (Ricky, The boy with the gerbil) all gave able support.

After a second interval the audience keenly awaited **'The Kidderminster Affair'** by Alan Ayckbourn.

Penny (Rebecca Rickard) and Lottie (Vanessa McClenagh) are friends and so are their husbands, Teddy (David Welton) and Reggie (Rory McClenagh). So who's having the affair? A garden barbecue to remember!

Should it be transactional pragmatism or boring old long term moral commitment? Under the slapstick Ayckbourn crafts a subtle look at modern behaviour.

Confusion reigns as the guilty parties attempt a cover up, but the truth will out to some, if not all, of the players. Comedy plays are the hardest and this one is no exception. Not helped in this one by all the names having the same endings but enthusiasm and good humour got us all to the right place in the end.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening and well worth all the hard work. Thank you KS Players.

Chris Hall



'A Handbag!'

It was uncharacteristically quiet in Horsebridge on the first Friday in July. The dogs were at home barking at passers-by, the John O'Gaunt pub was buzzing but many of the residents were missing. Where were we? The answer is The Burrow in Longstock, watching Horsebridge local and long-time SADS member, Anthea Coulson, in a performance of 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. What could be better on an English summer's evening than sitting in a quintessential Hampshire garden listening to the wit of the celebrated dramatist Oscar Wilde?

We Horsebridgers were there to support Anthea in her role as the formidable Lady Bracknell for the first time. There was certainly a palpable tension in the air as the audience waited for those famous words, "A handbag!"; the utterance of which brought the house down but fortunately did not put Anthea off her stride. But we were also there to support the excellent talents of the SADS director, cast and production

team who performed a most entertaining production. All were local, some were already acquainted, some were new. Over three nights, they met the challenges of an open air theatre in a residential area with professionalism, receiving standing



ovations from appreciative audiences. We are fortunate to have such accomplished thespians and crew among our midsts. As for Anthea, it will be some time before she can walk freely in Horsebridge again without the shouts of "A handbag!" following her around! The price of fame, eh?

Dawn Harrison

Photos for the cover

We now have the cover of *The Gauntlet* printed in colour by a commercial printer. To ensure that the printed pages are back in time to be collated with the rest of the magazine, I need to send them before the 15th. So, I can only consider photos for the cover if I receive them by the **12th**. To make sure that they reach me without delay, please now send them directly to me at harvey.saunders1@btinternet.com

This month's cover photo was supplied by Margaret Heffer

Will you join in a Jumble Trail?

I would like to hold a 'Jumble Trail' in the village on the 19th September. It's a bit like a car boot sale BUT it's on your drive or front garden. You pay to enter, that money goes to Macmillan, then what you sell is your money. When, or if, people are interested I will draw up a map of who and where the sales are going to be.

This has been done before in the village, a while ago now, but I seem to remember it was a success!

Please email me janettebatch25@gmail.com if you are interested or have any questions.

Janette Batchelor



The Bourne Supremacy (Not starring Matt Damon)



When they were offered a day by the water, these willing volunteers couldn't resist! A vital task of clearing weed in the bourne to keep everything flowing smoothly and helping to avoid possible flooding later on. A big 'village' thank you to them and all the other teams for their efforts!



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Somborne Sisterhood

Donations, Donations



After a discussion earlier in the year around a WI resolution to reduce women's homelessness, the Somborne Sisterhood nominated, The Trinity Centre, in Winchester, as its charity of the year. Over the last few months we have been busy collecting toiletries, towels and bedding to help support the people who use the Trinity Centre.

At our last meeting we invited Hannah, who is the CEO of the Trinity Centre, to come and talk to us about the charity and the services they offer. It was an inspiring talk from someone who has dedicated their life to helping the homeless and vulnerable. The charity's mission is to bring an end to homelessness in Winchester and they work alongside the council, social services and other organisations to support the people they work with. In the last year they have supported 631 vulnerable people including the

homeless and those suffering from domestic abuse and have served 20,956 hot meals. We were amazed at how much they offer: Long term accommodation, Addiction therapy, GP access, Counselling service, Employment & learning support, Art therapy, and Lunch provision. 90% of the people who visit the charity have experienced trauma in their life and the charity aims to break the cycle of homelessness.

At the end of the evening we were able to pass on to Hannah everything we had collected so far. We will continue raising funds for Trinity and also collecting toiletries. If you would like to help there is a box just inside the church door where you can leave donations of basic toiletries.

Christine Ball

A Life In Politics

Everyone is invited to an open meeting

The Somborne Sisterhood is delighted to announce that Caroline Nokes is coming to speak to us on August 5th at 7.30pm in the village hall.

Caroline will be talking about her life and role as a deputy speaker as well as her experiences and life in the political arena.

Make a note in the diary, as it is sure to be a fascinating evening.

Cake and coffee will be available as well as a raffle - cash only.



Cricket Club News



King's Somborne Cricket Club are enjoying quite a season. Bolstered by a few new villagers joining the side and jump-started with some Spring nets sessions, the early season momentum has carried us to wins against Crawley, Roke, Newport Inn Braishfield (home and away), Over Wallop and Redeemer Church Winchester.



There have been runs, diving catches and cricket balls despatched to all corners of the rec. There's even one that found it's way onto the roof of the village hall! Going alongside all the glorious heroics, including recovering

from 42-8 to 132-8 against Shirley, there are always those less notable moments too. For the first time in my cricketing career, I was (mercilessly) carted for four consecutive 6s by one of the Leckford batters on a mission. It's been brilliant to have some families of the players coming down in the evenings to cheer on "Come on Somborne!" and get enthused about the sport that we love.

The midweek fixtures carry on until the end of August, so there's still plenty more time for more cricket and more fun. We also have the annual KSCC vs The Crown village match on 5th September. A proper family fun day and hotly anticipated. KSCC are the current trophy holders having reclaimed the bragging rights last year! Get in contact if you'd like to play – no cricketing experience necessary!

*Adam King,
Club Captain*

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.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT OUR

VILLAGE PLAY PARK

Your views will help shape the future of our play park!

SCAN THE QR CODE

to tell us your view on the village play park



Everyone is welcome to respond – including children



Takes less than one minute to complete



Share with friends and family



All responses are anonymous

Kings Somborne Play Area
Development



THANK YOU FOR HELPING BUILD A BETTER PLAY PARK FOR EVERYONE!

Community Speedwatch - National Day July 15th

Hampshire Police, who coordinate our village teams, requested support for a National Campaign Day against speeding. King's Somborne Speedwatchers responded positively.

Our teams of 3 usually go out once a week for an hour, somewhere in the village, to encourage drivers to observe the 30mph speed limit. National analysis shows that speed is a key factor in a quarter of crashes leading to serious injury and death. Latest figures show 1600 deaths on UK roads in 2024.

To the credit of KS Parish Council, since the arrival of the electronic speed signs as you enter the village, with the smiley or angry faces, speeding is much reduced. Our volunteers report up to 50% fewer drivers arriving at

excess speed. The PC also kindly purchased the kit we use.

We were joined by PC 7591 from Hampshire Police on July 15th and that day we caught 7 cars speeding. However, since April we have recorded over 90 exceeding the speed limit. Those details were forwarded to the police who will issue warning letters to the drivers.

If you would like to help, by volunteering an hour or two per month, please contact us, details below. Hampshire Police provide simple online training and we are very welcoming to new volunteers. We'd love to see you!

Nicola Pye



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

King's Somborne Women's Institute



At our July meeting we welcomed our speaker - Steve Herra, a former QE2 Purser and a tour conductor aboard both P & O and Cunard shipping lines. He recounted the true story of the disappearance of a young actress named Eileen 'Gay' Gibson, whilst voyaging between Capetown and Southampton on 10th October 1947 aboard the ship the 'Durban Castle'. It was initially surmised that she must have jumped overboard when they

The facts of the matter were presented to our members who were invited to play the role of a jury and a majority vote of guilty was found. In reality in 1948, the trial was held at The Great Hall, Winchester where the jury therein took just 45 mins to also pass a unanimous vote of guilty! A very interesting evening was had by all and it created much discussion amongst our sleuthing members!



Next month our meeting is to be held at the Kings Somborne Working Men's Club on August 12th, where we will be hosting a delicious Afternoon Tea event at 3pm, raising funds towards The Beacon, Winchester and WI Funds.

Everyone is welcome and tickets are available priced £5 and can be purchased from our Secretary, Linda Aucock by 3rd August..

couldn't locate her anywhere on the ship. However, upon further investigation, a steward named James Comb was interviewed by the police and accused of murdering her by strangulation having unexplained scratch marks on his body. He admitted having illicit 'hanky-panky' in her cabin but maintained she suddenly became inexplicably limp and believing her dead he panicked and pushed her through her cabin port hole into the sea!

On September 9th we are back in the Village Hall for our meeting with a talk on Andover Young Carers with Sam Saxby.

New members and visitors are always welcome and we meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm at King's Somborne Village Hall.

Tina Heffernan

KING'S SOMBORNE

WORKING MEN'S CLUB

OPENING HOURS

FRIDAY	OPEN FROM 6PM
SATURDAY	OPEN FROM 6PM
SUNDAY	OPEN FROM 6PM
MONDAY	OPEN FROM 6PM

UPCOMING EVENTS

★ SUNDAY ★ 9TH AUGUST  OPEN FROM 6PM ★ BINGO STARTS 8PM	★ FRIDAY ★ 21ST AUGUST  OPEN FROM 6PM ★ QUIZ STARTS 8PM ADULTS ONLY	★ SUNDAY ★ 23RD AUGUST  OPEN FROM 6PM ★ BINGO STARTS 8PM	★ MONDAY ★ EVERY WEEK  MONDAY NIGHT CLUB FROM 6PM  SKITTLES FROM 8PM  CROP SWAP FROM 6:30PM
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★ *Everyone Welcome!* ★

King's Somborne Working Men's Club – Available for Hire!

Did you know that King's Somborne Working Men's Club is available to hire for private functions and community events?

Whether you're planning a birthday party, family celebration, anniversary, meeting, fundraiser, or another special occasion, our welcoming venue could be the perfect place to host your event.

If you're interested in hiring the club or would like to find out more about availability and facilities, we'd love to hear from you.

Please email us at [**kswmcevents@yahoo.com**](mailto:kswmcevents@yahoo.com) for more information or to discuss your booking.

We look forward to helping make your event a success!

Do you live alone?

We all worry that someone who lives alone may have a crisis at home - a fall or a health crisis - and nobody knows or is able to help.

So if you live alone, perhaps you could think about things you can do to avoid this:

- ◆ Does someone check on you every day? It could be a phone call or just checking that you've opened your curtains.
- ◆ Give a neighbour or a friend who lives nearby a key for your house so they can let the emergency services have access.
- ◆ You might like to consider having a key safe fitted.
- ◆ Also make sure someone knows the phone number or email of a person you would like to be contacted in an emergency.
- ◆ Consider a personal alarm for ease of calling for help if you need it.
- ◆ Have the phone number of a neighbour or nearby friend so you can contact them in an emergency.
- ◆ If you have a mobile phone, keep it with you all the time.

There are times when we all need help!

Village Hall News



Chairman's Address – AGM June 25th 2026

As Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to present my report for the past year and to reflect on the work undertaken by the committee to ensure that the Village Hall continues to serve the residents of King's Somborne and the surrounding community.

First and foremost, I would like to record my sincere thanks to all members of the committee. The successful operation of the Village Hall relies entirely upon the commitment, time and expertise freely given by our volunteers. Throughout the year, committee members have worked diligently to oversee the management of the Hall, maintain its facilities, support our hirers and ensure that the charity continues to meet its obligations.

On a personal note, I would also like to express my particular gratitude for the support I have received from fellow committee members during the year. Due to one or two issues which affected my ability to contribute as fully as I would have wished at times, several members of the committee willingly stepped in and took on additional responsibilities. Their support ensured that the Hall continued to operate smoothly and efficiently, and I am extremely grateful for their efforts.

The committee remains committed to maintaining and improving the facilities entrusted to our care. During the year we have completed a number of important improvements, including upgrades to the plumbing system, the replacement of the stage curtains and the installation of a new dishwasher. These investments help to ensure that the Hall remains an attractive, practical and welcoming venue for the

many organisations, clubs and private hirers who use it throughout the year.

Looking to the future, we have also been exploring opportunities to strengthen the Hall's role within the wider community. In particular, we are currently engaged in discussions with the Parish Council regarding the possibility of the Village Hall serving as a focal point should the village Resilience Plan ever need to be activated. To support such a role, we are considering enhancements to our renewable energy capability, including upgrades to the existing solar installation and the addition of battery storage. These discussions remain ongoing and involve the Parish Council, Test Valley Borough Council and a number of potential grant providers. While no final decisions have yet been made, the committee believes that this initiative could significantly enhance the Hall's ability to support the community during periods of emergency or disruption. As trustees of a charitable organisation, we also have a responsibility to safeguard the Hall's finances and ensure that all users are treated fairly and consistently. Regrettably, during the year we encountered a small number of cases where hirers failed to pay the agreed hire charges. The committee considered the available options, including the possibility of pursuing these debts through the Small Claims Court. After careful consideration, we concluded that this would not be the most appropriate course of action at present. However, we have adopted a clear policy that any individual or organisation with outstanding hire fees will not be permitted to make future bookings until all monies owed have

been settled in full. We believe this strikes an appropriate balance between protecting the charity's resources and acting proportionately.

The Village Hall remains a thriving and valuable community asset, and this is due in no small measure to the efforts of many people. I would therefore like to thank, once again, my fellow trustees and committee members, our volunteers, our regular user groups, our hirers, the Parish Council and everyone else who contributes to the

continued success of the Hall.

On behalf of the committee, I look forward to another productive year as we continue to maintain, improve and develop the Village Hall for the benefit of current and future generations of residents.

Ian Newnham

Chairman, King's Somborne Village Hall
Committee

HAMPSHIRE & THE ISLANDS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

**helping to maintain the historic churches in
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight**

RIDE AND STRIDE 2026

Saturday 12th September 2026

Most of the churches and chapels in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight will be open.

- Have a family fun day out and discover the beautiful churches and chapels on your doorstep, by taking part in a sponsored cycle, walk or journey by car or horseback too if you wish.
- Enjoy a warm welcome along the way!
- Help to preserve our churches for future generations.

Visit the HIHCT website www.hihct.org.uk
or contact Phil Carr on 07860 107012

Village diary for August 2026

Every Monday	6.00 pm	Beavers
	6.00 pm	Monday Club at the Club
	7.30 pm	Badminton (September to April)
	7.30 pm	Skittles
Every Tuesday	10.30am	Drop in coffee (except the second Tuesday)
	10.00am	Somborne Cafe
	7.45pm	Somborne Singers
Every Wednesday	9.15am	WI Walking Group
	9.30am	Parent, Baby and Toddler Group
	2.00pm	Dial-a-ride
Every Thursday	2.00pm	Needleworkers

1st	Marquee Market	10.00am	18th	Computer cafe	10.00am
2nd	Bingo at the Club	6.00pm for 8.00pm	19th	Wednesday Wanderers	10.00am
4th	Computer cafe	10.00am	19th	Somborne Solos	Lunch
5th	WI Sisterhood	7.30pm	19th	Contemplative Prayer	7.30pm
8th	Marquee Market	10.00am	20th	Minibus to Boscombe	10.00am
10th	Parish Council	7.00pm	22nd	Marquee Market	10.00am
11th	Epworth Lunch	12.30pm			
11th	Short Mat Bowls	2.00pm	25th	Short Mat Bowls	2.00pm
12th	WI	7.30pm	26th	Women's Fellowship	2.30pm
13th	Community Cinema Send Help	7.15pm for 8.00pm	26th	Somborne Society	7.30pm for 8.00pm
15th	Marquee Market	10.00am	29th	Marquee Market	10.00am

District diary for August 2026

Winchester Science Centre

6 Aug *Fantasy Kingdom Silent Disco*
Step into an enchanting world of music and magic at our silent disco!

12 Aug *Solar Eclipse: Live at the Science Centre* An evening of the sun, science and celebration!

15-16 Aug *The Big Family Sleepover*
An unforgettable overnight adventure at Winchester Science Centre

Museum of the Iron Age

2 Aug *Lecture in the Loft: Roman Life*
with John Smith engaging one-hour talk

5 Aug *Wednesday Craft Club: Viking Invasion Paper Puppets!* Get creative every Wednesday

Winchester Cathedral

16 Jul-20 Aug *Jazz Lates at Winchester Cathedral Café Garden*

25 Jul-1 Sep *Family Trail: Discover, play and explore* Interactive summer family trail

All Aug *Tower Tours* Climb 213 steps for an exhilarating tower tour

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

1st Aug *The Summer Superpower Trail*
Self-guided family trail

8 Aug *ABBA Tribute* Picnic Concert

10 Aug *Afternoon Tea Week* in the Garden Restaurant

29 Aug *Stage & Screen* Orchestral Picnic Concert

Hawk Conservancy Trust

8-9 *Big Wild Weekend* nature-focused activities

22-23 *Art Weekend* Celebration of wildlife art

Army Flying Museum

Each week in August explores a different chapter in aviation history:

Aeroplanes: 3rd – 7th August

Gliders: 10th – 14th August

Helicopters: 17th – 21st August

Drones: 24th – 28th August

Longstock Park Water Gardens

17 Jul-9 Aug *Join the Big Butterfly Count at Longstock Park*

7-28 Aug *An Evening in the Water Garden*

Farmer's Markets

2 Aug *Romsey, Alma Road Car Park*

9 & 30 Aug *Winchester, High Street & Middle Brook Street*

Karen Bolton

Theatres

Theatre Royal Winchester

1 Aug *Peter Pan* A musical retelling of J.M. Barrie's classic tale of Neverland, pirates, and adventure.

2 Aug *The Ultimate Commitments & Blues Brothers Experience* Two shows in one night

4 Aug *The Dinosaur That Pooped A Rock Show!* A family show based on Fletcher & Poynter's bestselling books.

5 Aug *An Evening with Arthur Smith & Caroline Quentin* A humorous chat about *An Evening with Gary Lineker*

6–7 Aug *Play in 2 Days* A creative workshop where young performers stage a show in just two days

9 Aug *Rock for Heroes* A feel-good rock tribute celebrating classic anthems

22 Aug *The Big Saturday Sing* A fun filled musical afternoon

Mayflower Studios , Southampton

14–16 Aug *Les Misérables School Edition* 50 young performers take to the stage in the powerful performance

28–30 Aug *The Lion Inside* A family-friendly stage adaptation following a mouse's quest to find his inner roar

29–30 Aug *I Was Always Here* An electrifying journey through trans+ histories

Chesil Theatre , Winchester

29 Jul–1 Aug *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* Based on the novel by Mark Haddon

Plaza Theatre Romsey

1 Aug *Can You Hear Me Major Tom?* A moving play exploring David Bowie's massive legacy

15 Aug *Elvis Raised On Rock* A musical journey through the decades

celebrating the King of Rock 'n' Roll
14 Aug *Madison Heights Soul & Motown Chartbusters Show* Soul classics performed live by a 10-piece band

The Lights Theatre , Andover

8 Aug *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* An amateur youth group production

15 Aug *Andover Comedy Club* Featuring acclaimed British comedian Dominic Holland

24 Aug *Magic Gareth: BALLOONATIC* Mind blowing magic and the biggest balloon in the world

New Theatre Royal Portsmouth

1–2 Aug *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* A musical adaptation of Judith Kerr's children's book

9 Aug *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* the Musical Classic story

18–21 Aug *Surinderella* Blend of storytelling, music, dance and humour

Karen Bolton

SOMBORNE COMMUNITY CINEMA

Send Help 15

Thursday 13th August 2026

2026 Thriller, Dark Comedy: 1h:53m

Linda Liddle, from strategy and planning, (Rachel McAdams) an overworked analyst, and her arrogant nepo-baby boss Bradley Preston (Dylan O'Brien) survive a plane crash near Thailand and must cooperate to survive on a remote jungle island while their workplace power dynamic collapses around them.



Finding Emily 12A

Thursday 10th September 2026

2026 Romantic Comedy: 1h:51m

When a lovesick musician is given the wrong number for his dream girl, he teams up with a driven psychology student to find her. Together, they spark a hilarious campus-wide frenzy that tests their own hearts and ambitions along the way.



Tickets for films are just £6 + booking fee online 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.

The Methodist Chapel celebrates 155 years

On Sunday 12th July we celebrated 155 years of the current Methodist Chapel serving in our village. Our service was led by Lesley Anne Ritchie and proved to be very inspiring and thought provoking. The singing was amazing as we heartily joined in our favourite hymns reminding us of God's goodness to us over the years, guiding and strengthening us in the work he has given us to do.



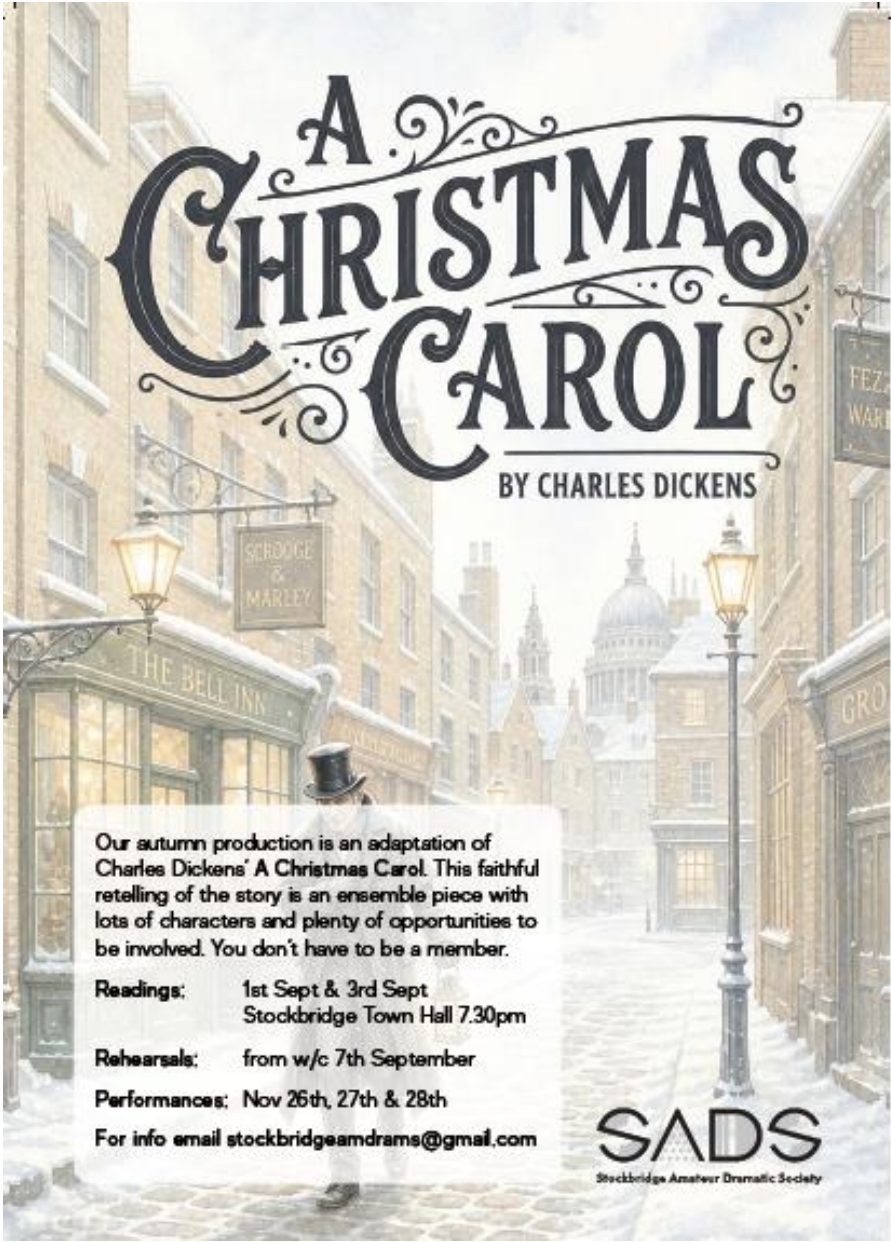
We reflected on how it can be good to look back at the path God has led us and our forbears during the past 155 years and to then look forward knowing and trusting that God will still be alongside us in the future. We shared memories of the Chapel and what it meant to us, from happy memories of Sunday School to special memories of getting married there. We celebrated our Chapel anniversary on the same day as Marion and Gordon celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary so we were able to enjoy a double celebration! Not only were Marion and Gordon married in the Chapel but Marion's parents were too.



After the service we all retired to the Epworth Hall for coffee followed by a celebratory meal. There was a buzz of chatter and laughter and it proved to be a most enjoyable occasion. At the end of the meal Marion and Gordon were presented with a celebratory cake which was shared amongst those present.

Thank you so much to all those of you who came to support us on such a special day and a special thanks to Lesley Anne for a wonderful thanksgiving service full of encouragement and hope. We look forward to another year of God guiding us along the path he has chosen for our Chapel and for ourselves.

Marilyn and Marion

The background of the poster is a detailed illustration of a Victorian-era street in London, likely Covent Garden, covered in a light layer of snow. On the left, a building with a sign that reads 'THE BELL INN' is visible. Further down the street, a sign for 'SCROOGE & MARLEY' hangs from a building. In the distance, the dome of St. Martin-in-the-Fields church is visible through the hazy air. A man in a top hat and dark coat is walking away from the viewer down the center of the street. Ornate street lamps with glowing lanterns are positioned on both sides of the road.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

BY CHARLES DICKENS

Our autumn production is an adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. This faithful retelling of the story is an ensemble piece with lots of characters and plenty of opportunities to be involved. You don't have to be a member.

Readings: 1st Sept & 3rd Sept
Stockbridge Town Hall 7.30pm

Rehearsals: from w/c 7th September

Performances: Nov 26th, 27th & 28th

For info email stockbridgeamdrams@gmail.com

SADS
Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society

Community Group

The Community Group looking at the Shop and Crown have been busy in the background looking at the viability of a community stake in both enterprises should commercial operation cease.

Punch the owners of the Crown have reaffirmed their intention to perform some remedial works and re-lease the business. Their issue at the moment is that the premises still remains occupied by the existing landlord who has had his tentative position in TVBC assisted living accommodation withdrawn. Negotiation with HCC is in process. None of this detracts from the essential ground work being done by the Community Group and the PC are grateful for their continued efforts.

20pmh Zone

The meeting with HCC Highways on the 22nd May has resulted in them revising the plan for signage to incorporate the PC's observations which once sanctioned will allow determination of final costs.

The Hut

The structural engineer has attended to conduct a survey and will now produce the necessary documentation to enable installation of french -doors.

Bourne

We continue to attempt to get a preferred maintenance schedule for the bourne from the EA but despite several attempts none is forthcoming.

As a chalk stream EA weed cutting commences in April not July as for other lowland rivers. The bourne has a history of overtopping during periods of high groundwater and spring flow if

weed growth is allowed to accumulate unchecked into May and June. The margins are important for wild life and should be wherever possible retained until Autumn. A central channel deep enough to disperse water is essential during the spring months and early summer. The section along Vicarage Lane is wide and shallow and does not lend itself to an ideal maintenance at present. A deeper narrower central channel with some shade would it seem be preferable. Further exploration with the EA is required. The existing heaps of weed along Winchester Road should have been removed by the time of this issue of the Gauntlet. This always presents a continued headache for the clerk to enable timely removal.

The Three Fields

The observant will have noticed that the grass has been cut for hay when ready this year.

Parish Council

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 7th September at the Epworth Hall at 7pm.

Parishioners are welcome to attend and bring to the attention of the council any matter of concern.

*Graham Searle
Chair King's Somborne Parish Council*

Somborne and District Society



In June we had our annual outing, this time to the Army Flying Museum in Middle Wallop. Starting with tea and coffee we watched a pair of Juno helicopters on a training exercise. We had an excellent guided tour which was followed by lunch for most of the group. Despite the heat it was a very good trip and the tour really helped to put the exhibits into context.



Also, in June we had a stall at King's Somborne School fair, with booklets for sale, a display of archive material,

and the return of the very popular metal detecting activity. The photo shows children enjoying hunting for foil covered chocolate coins (parental permission was given for inclusion in The Gauntlet.)

This year our **Members' Summer Picnic** is on Thursday the **3rd of September**, yes September rather than our usual August gathering. It will be held in the grounds of St. Peter and St. Paul's church in King's Somborne. As usual we start with Pimms-like fruit punch from 12:30, with food from 13:00. Tickets are £10 per person and can be purchased from Linda Aucock. Please don't arrive on the day without a ticket!

Steve Silver-Warner (Chair)
somsoc@silver-warner.co.uk

Did you know?

You can experience The Gauntlet in glorious Technicolour by visiting www.thesombornes.org.uk

Stockbridge Practice News – July 2026



In July and August most of our team have a well-earned break for a week or two.

This may mean patients waiting longer to see their GP of choice.

Alcohol and me - what's your story?

Alcohol Awareness Week falls in July. Alcohol Change are encouraging people to stop and think about their relationship to alcohol. How is alcohol impacting our lives and what can we do about it?

Whether it's sleepless nights, low energy, increased anxiety or a lingering sense of feeling not quite right, alcohol can affect us in ways we don't always realise, having a knock-on effect on our health and wellbeing, our relationships, our productivity, and those we love. It can also put us at real risk of developing many other long-term health conditions such as liver disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and cancer.

Take 2 minutes to explore the role alcohol is playing in your life. This could mean understanding more about your alcohol risk level, cutting back on how much you drink, experimenting with an alcohol-free experience or simply learning more. And we get it – exploring your relationship with alcohol might feel uncomfortable, confronting, or even a little daunting. That's okay – you're not alone in that feeling. But it might be a sign that this is just the right time to learn more, get advice and take a step forwards.

When we drink less alcohol, the benefits often reach far beyond ourselves, strengthening our relationships, our families, and improving our working lives, communities, and society. For more information see: alcoholchange.org.uk or ring Drinkline, the national alcohol helpline if you are worried about your drinking or someone else's on 0300 123 1110 (9am -8pm on weekdays and 11am-4pm on Saturday and Sunday).

The Great Gatsby - The Castle Grounds, Ashley

Wed 5 Aug 2026 7:00pm-9:00pm

Step into the roaring 1920s, where the champagne flows, the jazz trumpet blows, and the American Dream gleams with irresistible allure. This electrifying stage adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's timeless novel brings Jay Gatsby's glittering world to life — a place of opulence, obsession, and heartbreak.



As Nick Carraway is drawn into the orbit of his mysterious neighbour, the secrets behind Gatsby's lavish parties begin to unravel, revealing a story of love lost and illusion pursued.

Featuring live music and a dynamic ensemble, This Is My Theatre's adaptation invites audiences to experience one of literature's best-loved stories like never before — glamorous, grandiose and undeniably... Great.

This performance will take place **outdoors**.

Doors Open from: 6.30pm

Tickets: thisismytheatre.com

Parking: Parking is available at Ashley Manor. Picnic tables and chairs can be dropped off at the castle site before parking as it is a 5 minute walk from our field to the castle site.

Seating Provided: No—Please do bring your own.

Food and Drink: Please feel free to bring food and drink to enjoy during the performance.

Dogs: No dogs other than guide dogs will be admitted to this performance.

Toilets: There are no toilet facilities except for a toilet near the parking at Ashley Manor.

Wheelchair User Access: If you have any access requirements before your visit, please contact the Box Office via [email](#) or phone (07981 227790) ahead of the performance date.

Latecomers: Will not be admitted.

EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE SCREENING of "Land of Silence" & "Counterforts"

Two Short Documentary Films by
the United Nations Development Programme



STOCKBRIDGEUKRAINE have been given exclusive rights by
the UNDP to screen two short documentary films
(one of which is still on the Film Festival circuit).
Please book your tickets via our website (below)
or the QR code (right).



Raising funds to send essential life-saving kit to the Ukrainian Frontline



STOCKBRIDGE TOWN HALL

WED 12TH AUGUST, Doors 6.30 pm, Close approx. 8.30 pm

www.stockbridgeukraine.org

**Get ready for another
unforgettable season
of live music
in King's Somborne!**



We at Somborne Sessions are currently finalizing the line-up for our SIXTEENTH season of live music in King's Somborne, which will run from October through to April 2027. The season will feature a truly diverse range of music - dynamic, punchy songs from **Rob Clamp** and his band, traditional music given a rock/pop makeover by **Celtic Social Club**, ska-infused soul from **Lucca Mae**, intimate songs and guitar brilliance from **Alex Roberts**, and Americana meets Northern Soul with **Lauren Housley and the Northern Cowboys**.

Five out of the six events are now booked, and individual tickets are already on sale. Please see our

website (sombornesessions.co.uk) for details (and please also sign-up for our email updates if you haven't already).

SPECIAL OFFER: This season we are once again offering a 'season pass' as a special pre-season deal. This will grant entry to all six gigs for a one-off cost of £95 - by far the best value!

To buy one, or to find out more, please email us at: sombornesessionsmusic@gmail.com

Trevor Ryan

TEST VILLAGES U3A

Thursday 3rd Sept in Chilbolton Village Hall

Conservation of the Great Bustards on Salisbury Plain

David Waters' presentation will introduce Great Bustard (one of the heaviest flying birds in the world) that was hunted to extinction in the UK in Victorian times. David will highlight the story of how its restoration and conservation was achieved.

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

Summer Salad

An easy tasty salad to assemble—serves 4

200-250g carrots, grated
1 large or 2 small fennel, finely sliced
2 spring onions sliced (optional)
1-2 pak choi, sliced
3 tbs herbs, chopped—mint, oregano, coriander or parsley of your choice, with extra for serving
50 g of mixed sultanas and raisins (optional)
30 g pine nuts, roasted, with extra for serving

Dressing

3 tbsp olive oil,
1-2 tsp lemon juice
1-2 tsp maple syrup
1-2 tsp mustard to taste, salt and pepper

Method

1. In small bowl or jam jar, mix dressing ingredients.
2. Add to large salad bowl of all mixed salad ingredients and toss well.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning before covering and chill in fridge for 30 mins to allow flavours to intensify!
4. Remove from fridge 10 mins before serving and garnish with extra herbs and pine nuts.

Serve with cold salmon, chicken or beef fillet, green salad and potato salad.

Enjoy! *D*



Summer Marquee Markets
Come and Enjoy Saturday
Mornings

August 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th

10.00 – 12.00

In The Church Garden

Cakes Books Plants Produce



Tea Coffee Cakes

Weekly Raffle with Super prizes

Contact Linda Aucock on 388542 or Louise Causer 389364
If you would like to help



Tuesdays 10.00 – 13.00

Jubilee Room Village Hall

Rocky Roads return

Back by public demand



Drop In



for a cuppa and a chat
in a friendly, relaxed
atmosphere at the

Epworth Hall!

Every Tuesday

(apart from the second one
in the month)

10.30am to 12 noon.



All proceeds go to charity.
Everyone is welcome!

LONGSTOCK
 Village Fete
SATURDAY
5 September 2026
12.30 - 4.30 pm

Otterbourne Brass Band
BBQ Bar Teas
Dog Show Sheep Racing
Tug o' War Laser Tag Axe Throwing
Coconut Shy Golf pitch 'n putt
Tombola Bottle Stall
Books
Produce, Cakes & Jams
Grand Draw

**Come and help us raise funds for
 our church & playground,
 while everyone has fun!**

Stockbridge Amateur Dramatics Society presents:
A PLAY IN A WEEK
SUMMER SCHOOL

Calling all 9-14 Year Olds
 Learn to Act / Make Friends /
 Have Fun / Build Confidence /
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SADS

The Friends of the Church of St Peter and St Paul, King's Somborne

For their second outing this year, a group of 'The Friends' visited the New Art Centre at the Roche Court Sculpture Park.



What an inspiring visit it was. The gallery was founded in 1958 by Madeleine Bessborough in Sloane Street, London, giving many Modern British artists their first opportunity to show their work. It moved to East Winterslow in the late '80s and was the first sculpture park of its kind in the UK.



Having been greeted with coffee and cake, Amanda and Rebecca, from the Art Centre, gave us a short talk on the background of Roche Court and then guided us through the three galleries where a varied programme of temporary exhibitions are held, before we walked out into the beautiful park from where, under the shade of the age old trees, we viewed many of the outdoor sculptures.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the morning and it is well worth a visit. It is also the base of the Roche Court Educational Trust, which organises guided tours for all.

Sandie Pepperell

Marriage blessing at Ashley St Mary



Blessing of the Marriage of George and Lucy Everett Saturday 13th June

Although marriage services are frequently held in the Parish church it is many years since any celebratory services have taken place at Ashley St. Mary so it was lovely when a Blessing Service for George and Lucy's marriage took place in June.

It was a beautiful warm day and the church was packed! The bride and her bridesmaids arrived in style in an enormous tractor and Rev. Jane greeted them and then conducted the service in a very moving and thoughtful manner. Altogether a delightful day and it was a reminder that Ashley St. Mary would welcome similar events in the future.



Terry Mackintosh

Parish Home Group

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Thursday August 20th 2026

Boscombe

£10.00 Pick up 10.00am Home for 4.00pm



From The Parish Registers



18th June Funeral of Robert Inglethord

26th June Wedding of Jade Duncan and Matthew Williams

29th June Funeral of John Harfield

11th July Wedding of Charlotte Parsons and William Watson



Jade and Matthew



Charlotte and William

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.



Church services in August

Parish Church

**Sunday, 2nd August—Ninth
Sunday after Trinity**
08.00 a.m. Holy Communion
(1662)

10.00 a.m. Morning Worship

Readings:

Jane Duncan: *Romans 9.1-5*

Guy Boney: *Matthew 14.13-21*

**Sunday, 9th August—Tenth
Sunday after Trinity**
10.00am Holy Communion

Readings:

Antony Chilton: *Romans 10.5-15*

Alwena Rowe: *Matthew 14.22-33*

**Sunday, 16th August—Eleventh
Sunday after Trinity**
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Readings:

David Pye: *Romans 11.1-2a, 29-32*

Sandie Pepperell: *Matthew 15(10-20)21-28*

**Sunday, 23rd August—Twelfth
Sunday after Trinity**
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Readings:

Louise Causer: *Romans 12.1-8*

Linda Aucock: *Matthew 16.13-20*

**Sunday, 30th August—
Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity**
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion
(Group Service)

Readings:

Joan Appleyard: *Romans 12.9-
end*

Sandie Pepperell: *Matthew 16.21-
end*

**3.00 p.m. Hymns of Praise and
Cream Teas**

Methodist Church

August 2nd
10.30am
Mrs Su Parsons

August 9th
10.30am
Mr Graham Hepburn

August 16th
No morning service

August 23rd
10.30am
Mrs Elizabeth Britton

August 30th
10.30am
Local arrangement

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 Vicar's Last Word

Dear Friends,

August often feels different from the rest of the year. Schools are on holiday, many people take time away, gardens are in full bloom, and the sun is out. It is a season that reminds us of the importance of rest.

In the opening chapters of the Bible, we read that God rested on the seventh day—not because He was tired, but because rest is part of the rhythm of life that He created for us. In our busy world, it is easy to think that we must always be doing something, answering another email, completing another task, or rushing to the next appointment. Yet God invites us to pause, to notice His presence, and to be refreshed.

Jesus Himself often withdrew from the crowds to quiet places to pray. Even amid the demands of His ministry, He recognised the value of stepping aside to spend time with His Father. His invitation still speaks to us today: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

Whether you are travelling this month, welcoming family and friends, working as usual, or simply enjoying the slower pace that August can sometimes bring, it is good to make space for moments of stillness. Sit in the garden with a cup of tea, take a walk through the countryside, watch the changing skies, or simply spend a few quiet moments in prayer. In these ordinary moments, we often become more aware of God's extraordinary grace.

As we enjoy the beauty of summer and look ahead to the busyness of autumn, may we remember that our strength comes not from constantly dashing about, but from resting in God's love and taking time to smell the roses.

May God bless you, your families, and all those you love throughout this August.

God Bless you this season,

Tom



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