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# Village News

Issue 138/February 2024



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From Town to Country

# Contents

Editorial	3	Green Leys Christmas Lights	27
The Annual Downley Walk	5	Downley Community Orchard	27
Downley Parish Council	7	News from St James	29
Downley Day Update	7	Downley Cricket Club	31
Downley Community Centre	9	News from Sunnybank	33
Downley Descants	11	Chameleon Singles Group	33
Changing Times at Downley Pharmacy	13	High Wycombe & District u3a	35
J Heartycough's Horticultural Hints	15	Downley Ancestors - Part 17	37
Downley Gardening Club	17	Hillclimb Garage News	39
Downley School	19	Downley Local History Group	41
Cycling with Chiltern Hills Group	19	News from Buckinghamshire Council	44
Downley Evening WI	21	From Westminster	47
Top Notes Choir	23	Downley Diary	48
Up! Downley Festival 2024	24	Useful Contacts and Advertisers	50
Downley Common News	26		

## Editorial

A very happy New Year to all our readers! Although by the time you read this, we will be well into February with longer days and hopefully plenty of snowdrops and other spring flowers to cheer us up.

We recently had an email from a Downley resident concerned about parking in the village and I must say I share their concerns. I know some of our roads are on the narrow side, but parking mostly on the pavement is dangerous for pedestrians, in particular those in wheelchairs or with prams or pushchairs. As we all know, we have some problems with cars speeding through the village too so having to walk in the road because of inconsiderate parking sometimes means taking your life in your hands. So please do be a considerate driver and don't park on the pavements unless you absolutely can't avoid it, and please ask any visitors you have to do the same.

Our next edition will be the Summer one, which will be out in mid-May. As usual, we will be delighted to hear from any organisation in Downley (or the surrounding area) with news or information. You can submit articles via the email address [editor@downley.org](mailto:editor@downley.org). Copy deadline is midday on Sunday 28 April 2024 but please get your copy in as early as possible as space is limited.

*Anne, Editor • [editor@downley.org](mailto:editor@downley.org)*



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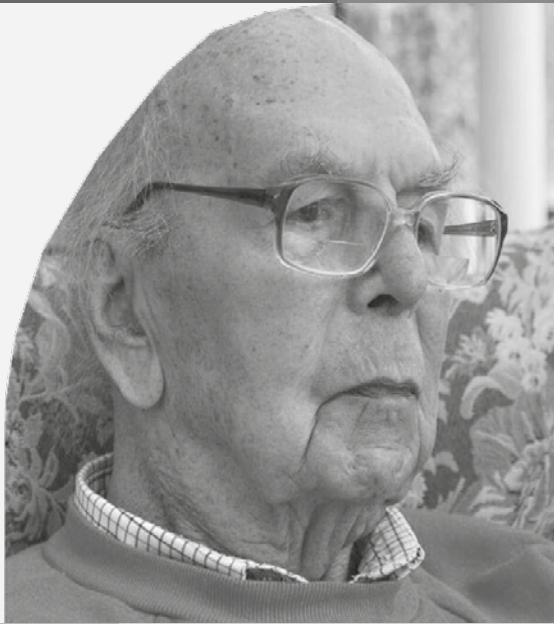
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# The Annual Downley Walk

Hour and a half walk in the Downley Countryside

Family Friendly, Dogs on a Lead, Tea/Squash at the Le De

In days of yore, it was traditional in Downley and in many other small towns and villages around the country to walk the parish boundaries on Rogation Sunday. Rogation Sunday (40 days after Easter Sunday) used to be a church event, when everyone turned out to mark the occasion. More recently, it has become a new tradition for villagers to walk with friends and family just for the fun of it and to get out into our lovely countryside. However, we try to trace at least some of our boundary (which is now much longer than in the old days).

All residents of Downley, their families and friends are invited to join in the community walk. Last year there were 50 of us walking – the youngest in a pushchair, the oldest well above retirement age! This year we will be following the part of our boundary on the West Wycombe side, on Sunday 5th May, and we will start at 2.00pm on the Common, near the Memorial Hall. The walk will take about an hour and a half and will end at the Le De Spencers Arms at about 3.30 pm where the team at the pub will be on hand to provide free orange squash or tea for all our walkers (or you can buy your own preferred tippie!).

The route will progress down the High Street, across Plomer Green Lane, onto Kiln Pond Lane and through to the school. We will take the path on the left-hand side of the school and continue downhill to Blacksmith's Way until it eventually joins Cookshall Lane – this path is known as 'The Coffin Path'. We take a path through a field up to the shoot lodge, towards Cookshall Farm and turn right into Cookshall Wood, past the bluebells and through a kissing gate into Mannings field. Through another kissing gate, then turning right and passing Mannings Pond and the way back to the Le De Spencers Arms for refreshments.

The walk will be lead and back-marked by trained walk leaders. Make sure you wear good walking shoes or boots and carry a stick if you need it, and some water if it's a hot day. Well behaved dogs welcome, on a lead. Hopefully by then the bluebells will be out and the weather will be wonderful.

No need to book, just turn up on the day with your friends and family and join in a fun walk in our beautiful woods and rolling Chiltern Hills.

*Jeanne Steward*

**Annual Downley Village Rogation Walk**

**Sunday 5th May 2.00pm**

Family Friendly Meet on The Common by the Memorial Hall Bus Stop Dogs on Leads



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Following a resident's suggestion, Downley Parish Council are looking to plant a wildflower garden in Faulkner Way. The garden will replace an area of grass adjacent to the footpath through to Gosling Grove. It should be attractive to both people and pollinators, providing a valuable support for insects and other wildlife.

Still on an environmental theme, the volunteers who have carried out such valuable work in restoring and maintaining the Sandpits Pond at Gosling Grove will soon be back to work. The first session of work is scheduled for 3rd February, other sessions are planned for Saturday 6th April, 6th July and 5th October. If you are over 18 and would like to become involved, then come down and give it a try, all sessions start at 10:00 a.m.

The Parish Council had obtained a supply of 30 mph wheelie bin stickers before Christmas and still have a few left. If you want to take one of these, they are currently available for collection from the foyer of the Community Centre.

*Giles Tandy, Parish Clerk • [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org)*

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## Downley Day Update

It seems a bit late for an article about the Christmas Tree that appears on Jubilee Green in December, but it has been suggested that villagers generally know little about it. Contrary to the belief that it is put up by the Parish Council, it is in fact the Downley Day committee that purchases and installs it, usually a week or so before Christmas.

There has been criticism (justifiably) of the lights being too dim to be visible; this is because they are battery powered as there is no mains electricity available. A request has been made to the Parish Council for a local electricity supply to be installed but this request is still outstanding, possibly due to the cost of the installation. Various types of lights have been tried; the current ones are solar-powered, the hope being that being charged up every day might improve visibility. However, the weather conditions in December were such that very cloudy conditions reduced the light intensity and hence the panels generated very little power and the lights were consequently dimmer than usual! Some means of improving the power supply is required.

Previously, local residents have decorated the tree but, despite advertising on Facebook, the message did not get through this year and the tree remaining undecorated. The committee will endeavour to advertise the decorating opportunity more widely next year.

### The dates for this year's Downley Day events are as follows

**Friday 14th June 2024, 7.00pm: Family Disco.** After last year's successful launch we will be including a barbecue run jointly with the Downley School.

**Saturday 15th June 2024, 1.00pm: Downley Day.** Application forms for pitches will be available later in the year.

**Sunday 23rd June 2024, 10.00am: Downley 5K Run.** Entry forms later in the year.

**Saturday 6th July 2024, 7.00pm: Concert on the Common.** We would like to invite local bands to play a short set (up to 45 mins). No fee is payable but a large audience will get you good publicity. Contact [info@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:info@downleyparishcouncil.org) if interested



# Le De Spencers Arms

Make the Le De your local refreshment stop. Inside you will find a warm, friendly atmosphere with an open fire, low ceilings and rustic beams. Outside is a large attractive garden with a patio, prettily planted arbour and a safe children's play area. *Booking advisable at this time!*



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# Downley Community Centre



Downley Community Centre is investing for a green energy future. The centre is continuing its drive to go green with a plan to install solar panels onto the south-facing roof. The project will be fully funded from the centre's capital reserves and has the full support of Downley Parish Council (DPC) which owns the building on behalf of the community.

A favourable site survey has already been completed indicating a potential payback of the capital cost in about 7-8 years. DOSCA (Downley Old School Management Association) and DPC are now working on the final details.

Key next steps include gaining assurance that the panels and other components are ethically sourced and ensuring we have the necessary planning permission.

## **Monday Minis Playgroup (formerly known as toddlers and bumps, parents and babies etc!)**

Monday Minis Playgroup is by definition a group of relatively short-term attendees who progress into older playgroups and beyond. Their leaders are always volunteers and fabulous work has been done over the past two years or so by young mums Caroline Vassie and Kimberley Reed who themselves are moving onto the next stage of their mothering "careers"! The committee and trustees of the Centre are very grateful for their dedication in building this community group in readiness for the next lead volunteer.

Fortunately the firm foundation of this baby and toddler group is now being taken over by Sam Edwards Price, a local mother who has significant experience in the childcare field. Sam can be contacted at the usual address of [downleymondayminis@gmail.com](mailto:downleymondayminis@gmail.com)

**The group will continue to run every Monday during term-time from 9.30-11.15am and costs just £2 per family.**

Following extensive research and reviews of trade estimates, the buggy shelter located at the rear of the building will be refurbished shortly. Visitors with buggies, especially on Monday mornings, are requested where possible to use this facility as obstructing entrance and exits inside the Centre can be hazardous.

## **New Hirers**

- a) Sam Azimi, past owner of Starlight Stores, is now running boxing courses on Monday and Wednesday evenings.
- b) Pre and postnatal classes are new for Thursday mornings.
- c) Arabic lessons are new for Saturdays.

**For details please see the schedule at the back of this magazine.**

*Downley Community Centre - Management Committee.*

# Jill - Tutor



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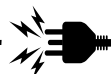
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# Staggering Around the Christmas Tree

Downley Descants have restarted rehearsals for 2024 and we are all so pleased after having nearly a month without our weekly 'fix' of music, fun and camaraderie. Just before stopping for Christmas, we were all 'sung out' with four events in the space of two weeks. We started with a very successful Christmas Concert, raising £500 for Child Bereavement UK, then followed this with an appearance at John Lewis, who were also supporting Child Bereavement UK. I think we managed to make a few shoppers stop and listen, but others carried on with their pre-Christmas shopping rush. We were then asked to go along to the Monday Coffee Stop to encourage the customers in singing some seasonal songs. The following day we went to the Le de Spencer pub (The Le de) to accompany a small band with Christmas Carols. Although the pub was fully booked for meals that evening, all the customers came out into the garden and joined in, creating a wonderful atmosphere. The next day some of us joined in with the Downley Churches singing Christmas Carols round the village, finishing up at the beacon followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Memorial Hall.



Some of the men in the Descants also sing with another choir in Wycombe so they had their own events to contend with in addition. It was good to have a rest but now we are looking forward to the New Year with anticipation. Some events have already been confirmed and perhaps there will be more to come. However many performances we have, we will be ready, as always, to give the best we can. Please come along to any future events you see advertised and we'll try to make sure you are not disappointed.

**We are always looking for new members to join us and to experience all the benefits of singing together in a group. We meet every Thursday evening, during School term time, at Sunnybank Church in Moor Lane at 8pm. There is no obligation to read music, you just have to enjoy singing, even if it's only in the shower. Our highly professional music team of Louise and Becky will bring out the best in you. If you think joining Downley's Community choir would be of interest, please contact Lyn on 07974 026213 for more details.**

## **COULD YOU HELP DELIVER DOWNLEY VILLAGE NEWS?**

**We need additional volunteers to help deliver Downley News four times a year. We have some regular rounds to cover and also need some cover for holidays etc. To find out more please email [editor@downley.org](mailto:editor@downley.org).**

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# Changing Times at Downley Pharmacy

As we start 2024 things are changing for us. We have lost two long serving members of staff, Sue who left us in the Autumn, and Louise who is spreading her wings and venturing off to Canada to work for 1-2 years and may or may not return.

I am sure you all join me in wishing them well. Thank you to all those who supported Louise for the Little Princess Trust, a sponsored haircut to provide wigs for sick children. A total of £600 raised; thanks to all who supported her with this. We have welcomed Izabela to our team; she is proving an asset and will, along with the rest of the team, be encouraging you to partake of extra services we now offer. Great news is that Marie has now completed her Accuracy Checking Technician Course so will now be able to do even more to help me in the dispensary, although we will need to adapt to a new working pattern as a pharmacist still needs to check the prescription for clinical detail before completion. Please bear with us if we are a little behind with prescription services whilst we are becoming familiarised with our new systems and training.

The NHS has now recognised the potential we in pharmacy have to take away some of the pressure at A&E, local Minor Injury and illness clinics, out of hours services and GP practices. From 31st January, patients will be able to both be referred by one of the above services and self-refer either by calling to arrange a time or potentially walking into participating pharmacies for help and advice. Under the new Pharmacy First service, seven conditions with specific criteria can be treated at the pharmacy without need for a GP prescription.

These conditions are shingles, impetigo, acute sinusitis, sore throat, ear infection

in children, UTI in women 18-64, and infected insect bites. Help and advice will be given as a minimum and where needed symptom relief sold and treatments, including antibiotics, issued with the usual NHS fee being charged. This is a very exciting opportunity to truly make Downley Pharmacy the first place for your healthcare needs.

We can now provide NHS treatment free of charge for minor ailments to those with low income and their dependents where expense of self-care is a problem under a local to Bucks Oxfordshire and West Berkshire scheme; no need to bother the GP or wait at A&E for simple pain relief.

The supply of oral contraception service has recently been increased to include those wishing to commence this method of birth control as well as those requesting a continuing supply. Please call to check for availability of a suitable pharmacist.

We hope that the success of our autumn COVID vaccination clinic will mean we will be commissioned for future campaigns, the next possible one being spring booster for over 75 and the most vulnerable if previous years' patterns are followed. Booking will be via the NHS system but please enquire with us if you are having difficulty so we can inform you of when appointments are being released.

Other services payable privately such as our otoscopy and ear wax removal by microsuction will continue by appointment. We also continually review any other services that could be offered depending upon local demand.

Looking forward to the new challenges

*Fiona and the team.*



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# J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

## Spring 2024



Wal, happy New Year to you orl, and isn't it wonderful to get a bit more light onto yor gardin and plot, Hooray! You'll orlready ave got them lovely snowdrops in yor gardin, perce-neige in French so my French cousin Jean d'Artichoke ses, wal pierce snow is not a bad name, so is snowdrops, but you've got to have snow for it to make sense I reckons, and what with climate change maybe we'll have to kum up with a new name, ideas please on a £10 note, ha ha! "Wot, on paper money, who's got that, they only uses them cards or phones now, I gives up" ses Mrs H. I reckons she's right, but wot happens when you loses yor card or phone, yor world ends, cash I understands, proper money is a weight in yor pocket, not a silly bit of plastic, eh? But there's one shop I knows sellin fruit and veg wot gives 5% orf if you uses cash, that's more like it eh!

Wal, you knows wot you'll have done through them dark evenins, or you should 'ave done instead of snoozin by the stove - and that's makin lists of yor seeds for the year to cum eh? It's a nice thing to do and sit there and dream of them crops you'll be a'bringin' home to yor loved one.. "Oh, here he goes, tryin to get round me now, I'll have to humour him a bit if I gets in the right mood after cleanin up when he takes orf his wellies", ses you knows who.

Then, as for bringin in the crops, wot was my larst year like? Wal, excellent broad beans, awesum runner beans, not very awesum onions and leeks, that allium moth as bin devastatin my crop, and they orlways used to do well up there. Then spuds, it was very dry just when they shud be a'fattenin up, but I must say I was surprised in the autumn to find I'd got a good crop, especially pink fir apple wuns, awesum for salads, and desiree was good too, small but perfectly formed! Summat else done well and that was pumkins, we've still got a couple left for soup. Wun Christmas present I got from the kids is a big packet of orlsorts of pumkin and squash seeds, maybe the'll be the star of the plot this year?

Summat I likes makin in the kitchen is Welsh Caul, which is a luvly root veg stew, with diced mutton or hogget, "C'est quoi le hogget" ses my French cousin on his once a year phone call at Christmas, wal I ses, rather knowledgably, its wun year old lamb, more flaversum than lamb and more tender than mutton,- ave a look on yor device or phone if you avvent lorst it, you'll need swede and turnips, carrots and onions, and the hogget, with sum seasonin, its just luvly with a slice of welsh cheddar and sour dough bread just awes.. "I'll go mad if he ses that agin" ses Mrs H... Anyway wot with Covid and a stinker of a cough the gardin and plot avvent seen much of me this winter so I'm adjustin my philosophy and lettin natural re-wildin take place on sum of the plot and bits of the gardin, that's inline with wot we are supposed to do for bio-divertissy, that means I'll get more piggins, mice, rats, moles, catterpillers, slugs... hmmm, wot am I sayin?

So, as you've orlreddy heard from my French cousin Jean d'Artichoke, I'll sign orf as usual, Cheerio and bientot,

*J. H. Sent from my iSpade*

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# Downley Gardening Society

## December meeting in the hall

Our December meeting was one of the busiest we can remember! We had 65 people joining plus the Hughenden Community Singers, who entertained us with Christmas songs both old and new. The refreshments were lovely, with Alex's delicious mince pies and mulled wine. This was followed by an excellent quiz by John Willson which was enjoyed by us all. We have donated to the charity Breast Cancer Now, as requested, on behalf of the Hughenden Community Singers.

## January meeting on Zoom

We had a fantastic talk from Sue Kent, one of the guest speakers on Gardener's World, for our January meeting on Zoom. Her talk was entitled "The quest for easy fruit and vegetable growing".

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Sue spoke about growing in containers and on an allotment and the plant and variety choices that may make growing and harvesting easier with tips on storing and cooking. She had lots of practical and useful tips which can be found in her book 'Garden Notes'; we are all on the look out for mouldy hay now to mulch our gardens.

## Future events:

Our talk in February will be via Zoom and back in the hall from March.

## Dates for your diary

Monday, 19th February 2024 7.30pm -  
Geoff Hodge will talk about houseplants

Monday, 18th March 2024 – tbc

Monday, 15th April 2024

Jon Mason, the Early Birder

Monday, 20th May 2024 - tbc

Downley Day 2024

plant stall Saturday, 15th June 2024

Autumn Show 2024

Saturday, 7th September 2024

If you would like to become a member of the Gardening Society and join our meetings please contact Alison on [downleygardeningociety@gmail.com](mailto:downleygardeningociety@gmail.com) or Julia on 01494 447323. Membership costs just £5 single or £8 family per year. [www.downleygardeningociety.com](http://www.downleygardeningociety.com)

Please keep safe, enjoy your gardens and hope to see members and non-members, who are always very welcome, at one of our events.

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# The Downley School

**'Learning, Growing  
and Succeeding Together'**



This academic year seems to be flying by so fast because we are just so busy at TDS! Since the last edition of Downley Village News we celebrated anti-bullying week and held our own TDS concert where we could "Make a Noise about Bullying!" We also raised over £500 for Children in Need by completing 10,000 burpees for the 'bearpees' challenge.

Our art room is finally up and running and we have some keen artists entering Hughenden Manor Easter art competition. We also entered into general knowledge and science competitions and our scientists made it through to the online finals in July! TDS school choir took to the stage at the High Wycombe Christmas Lights festival and they are now busy practising for the Echoes concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

We continue to benefit from the support of ODBST and a teaching and learning check in was completed in the middle of January. As part of this process observations were conducted in Maths, English, Phonics, History, and Science. Children were also provided with the opportunity to share their views and spoke confidently about their learning experiences. ODBST were pleased with progress that has been made in the teaching and leadership of these subjects since our monitoring inspection in June 2023. Our TDS team have come a long way on our school improvement journey and are happy with the advancements we are making. We all will continue to work hard to ensure that children at TDS are developing well in their learning journeys.

The Spring term is always a great time to see children's learning flourish. This year we are hoping that the school site will begin to flourish too as improvement works commence on our site. The term ahead is set to be a busy one and we shall update you on our activities in the next Downley Village News.

*Leanne Dandridge - Interim Headteacher*



## Cycling with the Chiltern Hills Group

### Join your local Cycling UK group this spring

Chiltern Hills Cycling UK group offers both led rides and coffee pots every Sunday. With spring on the way, now is the time to get out on your bike and enjoy the warmer days after winter. There are a variety of rides along with coffee stops all taking place on quiet routes in the countryside that surrounds our local area. Spring means we can go a bit further but there is still time to enjoy your cycling and make new friends.



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**Downley Wives**

*present*

**a talk by  
Clive Knapman**

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Moor Lane

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at 2pm**

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email: [syme.pat@gmail.com](mailto:syme.pat@gmail.com)  
phone: 01494 530558  
[www.bridgewebs.com/downley](http://www.bridgewebs.com/downley)

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There is something for everyone of all ages and abilities who wants to get out with both pedal bikes and e-bikers welcome. Cafes such as Hughenden Valley Coffee Shop, Hildreths at Prestwood, The Potters Arms at Winchmore Hill and Costa or Matilda's in Great Missenden regularly feature in the club rides list so you are never far from home.

While most rides are easy paced and suitable for all, the group does have some moderate and slightly longer rides in the monthly rides list too. Occasionally there is also a chance to do some off-road riding.

Chiltern Hills Cycling UK have a Zoom social on the 1st Thursday of each month at 8pm and a meet up clubroom at Little Kingshill Baptist Church on the 3rd Thursday, 8pm -10pm.

Hope you can join us!

**For more Information:**

**Web: [www.southbuckscycling.org.uk](http://www.southbuckscycling.org.uk)**

**E-mail: [publicity@southbuckscycling.org.uk](mailto:publicity@southbuckscycling.org.uk)**

**For general information about Cycling UK visit: [www.cyclinguk.org](http://www.cyclinguk.org)**

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## **Downley Evening Women's Institute**



We're into another new year so let's see what's coming up at your WI for 2024.

Firstly though, our Christmas meeting was fun with mulled wine and various tasty snacks, plus a visit from the man in red and also, of course, our Christmas craft stall which this year raised around £200 for charity. A great achievement and once again our thanks to Janet for organising it all.

Byron was the subject of our January meeting with a very interesting talk about his life, his travels and his many loves! A fascinating history. During the meeting we also voted for our resolution to be put forward to the National Federation of WI's. Each year they give us four or five options to choose from and each WI puts forward their choice. We at Downley WI opted for 'Say No to Gambling Advertising'.

Before the end of the month a large group of us will be descending on the Le De for lunch, as we did last January. It's a lovely way to enliven this winter month.

Our 13th February speaker will be telling us of the Highs and Lows of a Diplomatic Career (we certainly cover a great variety of different subjects) and the March meeting will again be our birthday party, held in the church hall of St James'. This is the only meeting not open to new members, but otherwise we are always happy to see some new faces on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.45pm in St James Church.

*Heather Read*

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# Top Notes

“The music’s always  
there with you”



Rehearsals are back in full swing and we’re very excited for the musical year ahead.

We’re currently preparing for a performance at *The Beaconsfield Festival of Choirs* in March. This will be our third year at the festival and we’re delighted that this now features as a regular date in our calendar.

2023 ended with a spectacular *Charity Christmas Concert* in aid of **Growing Hope - High Wycombe**. We received our biggest audience to date and were able to raise a massive £2100.00 for the charity which we know will be greatly appreciated and put to good use. We were joined again by members of the High Wycombe Salvation Army Band, bringing extra Christmas spirit to the audience carols, which were enjoyed by all. Thank you so much to everyone who came and donated to such a wonderful cause - we couldn’t do it without you.

Looking ahead, we are also preparing for our *Charity Summer Concert - SAVE THE DATE: Sunday 30th June* - and we hope that our diary fills up with as many extra performances as we can manage. Please do get in touch if you’d like us to perform at your event or party, we’d be delighted!

As ever, you can follow us on our social media channels (*Instagram & Twitter: @topnoteschoir, Facebook: Top Notes*) to stay updated on what we’re up to as well as future concert and ticket information. You can also see us in action via our *YouTube Channel* or get in touch via [topnotestunes@gmail.com](mailto:topnotestunes@gmail.com) for any general enquiries.

Here’s to a happy and healthy year full of music and joy!

---

# Up! Downley Festival 2024



With the turn of the year, the committee are now focusing on this year's Festival.

The ever-popular Comedy Night, 'A Bit on The Commonsides', has been booked in the calendar for **Wednesday 19th June**. We can't provide any names at this stage but watch this space.

Planning for the Art Show has already begun and the History Walk and the Open Studios are pencilled in. We also hope to run the scarecrow and sunflower competitions again.

**The Up! Downley Festival makes a profit most years and the following organisations have benefited from a grant in the past:**

2017 Downley Dynamos - £1,995 for a defibrillator

2017 Hearing Dogs for the Deaf - £260

2018 Downley History Group - £684

2020 Downley Parish Council - £4,500 for 'Children Crossing' signs at the top of Coates Lane.

2020 Friends of Disraeli - £600

2021 Downley School IT Dept - £600 for a laptop

2023 Downley Descants - £300

2024 Downley Common Preservation Society - £500 for their management plan

**That's a total of £9,439 in the last seven years.**

If you are an organisation in the village that would benefit from a grant from us, then please ask for an application form. Please contact the secretary, Lea McDonald, at [leamcd@btinternet.com](mailto:leamcd@btinternet.com)

**For all things Up! Downley Festival, including many photos, visit our Facebook community page at: [facebook.com/UpDownleyFestival](https://facebook.com/UpDownleyFestival)**

*Fran Lazenby, Festival Committee Chairman*

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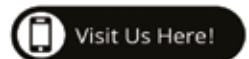
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# Downley Common News

As usual, much of the autumn was spent on the bonfire, mostly clearing up and tidying up the area next to Moor Lane that was being overgrown by bracken and young cherry trees. The cuttings have been made into a “dead hedge” to mark the border between grass and wood.

The oak tree on Commonside continues to attract the attention of shoe-hangers which were subsequently removed (the shoes, that is) following vigilance from the local residents.



The early January work party concentrated on Mannings pond where we try and keep the reedmace and sweetgrass under control. It's really just an excuse for grown men to splash about in muddy puddles without being told off!

These intrepid workers were fortunate that the work party was not one day later or they would have had to break the ice to get in the pond.

It appears that nitrous oxide is still on the menu at the tank crossing. A half-full canister together with attendant party balloon was found there recently.



Local residents will no doubt be aware of the tree-felling that has been taking place at the north end of the Common at the behest of West Wycombe Estate. The principal reason for this was to remove ash trees that may fall victim to ash die-back disease, although it is clear that other species such as oak and beech have also been removed, probably to recoup some economic benefit. The Estate has now replanted with native species in nice neat straight lines. It will be interesting to see if the plantings survive the attentions of the local muntjac population.



*Bill Thompson DCPS*

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# Green Leys Christmas Lights



Green Leys Christmas lights once again lit up the street over the festive period and attracted many visitors. Donations were requested for The Stroke Association charity and an amazing £650 was raised.

**The residents of Green Leys would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who donated to this worthy cause.**

---

# Downley Community Orchard News

Our team of volunteers recently attended a training day on winter pruning skills and techniques run by fruit tree expert, Andy Howard. Andy has over 25 years of experience caring for fruit trees so had a treasure trove of information on how to look after our trees. We are now putting the team's new skills into action and our programme of winter pruning is well under way.



*Some of our volunteers carrying out winter pruning*

We were immensely grateful to be awarded a £500 grant by the Downley Day Committee to help support our activities. Our thanks go to the Committee for this grant as it allows us to carry out a more extensive programme of maintenance and renewal to the trees in the orchard. We have been able to purchase good quality pruning tools, mulch for the fruit trees and we will be carrying out coppicing on some encroaching hazel trees.

We would love more people to join our friendly team of volunteers. We can pass on our knowledge of caring for fruit trees to you and you'll get hands-on experience. You can find details of forthcoming two-hour work parties on the notice board in the orchard or call Andrew Flint on 07788 135351. We'll also post details on The Downley Facebook page.

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# Journeying into 2024



*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

This verse is a promise that God made to Joshua in the bible as he was about to go into the promised land.

As we start 2024 in a world where there are many wars going on, many natural disasters, drought, flood and famine, and the effects of climate change are being seen in so many ways, it is easy to feel anxious or uncertain about what will happen in the year ahead. I find it helpful to remember that we do not journey alone.

Here in Downley, there is a really great community spirit, there are many different groups, activities and events that happen throughout the year where people can meet up with others (just read through this magazine!). So even if you do not live near family, you do not need to feel on your own. Sometimes it's hard to take the first step in going along to something new, but if you can be brave enough to do that, you will get to know people and make new friends you can journey with in the year ahead.

At St James over the past few months we have been thinking about our journey with God, and how that looks different for each one of us. We are all in different places on that journey, and we are all travelling at different paces, but that's fine. The thing that we find the most

reassuring is that God walks with us every day on our journey, and he is always there to guide us – so if you are uncertain about something coming up this year, then I encourage you to talk to God in prayer. Prayer doesn't have to be in long or complicated words, it's just about talking to God, as you would a friend, and telling him what's on your mind. Why not try it?

**Messy Church**  
last Sunday of each  
month 4-5.30pm



Messy Church is going well. It is a fun time where we do crafts and eat food together as well as singing and having a story. Everyone is welcome. Please come along and try it.

## Easter 31st March 2024

We have a short service every evening in Easter week – 25th to 29th March - then on Easter Sunday, 31 March, a Dawn Communion at 6.30am on Downley Common followed by breakfast at Sunnybank Methodist Church, and a family Communion service at 11am. Do join us for any or all of these!

**Easter at St James**  
25th to 29th March 2024  
7pm service every evening  
Monday to Friday

**Easter Sunday 31st March**  
6.30am Dawn service on  
Downley Common (followed by  
breakfast at Sunnybank Methodist  
church)

11am Easter celebration service

*Heather Graham, Vicar of St James*

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## Downley Parish Notice Boards

Notices for the Parish notice boards should be left at the Community Centre. Notices must be received one month in advance of the event. Notice boards are updated on the first Thursday of each month. Please post notices into the letterbox at the Community Centre clearly marked for the Clerks attention. Please notify the Clerk if you have posted a notice at the centre by emailing to [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org)

**All notices must be for local non profit organisations.  
Please ensure that A5 size notices are supplied.**

## STREET LIGHTING

Please report all lighting repairs to the Parish Clerk

**01494 25 77 11**

email [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org)

**Include the street name and the nearest house number, lights cannot be reported without this information.**

---

# Downley Cricket Club



The New Year dawns with high expectations at Downley Cricket Club. 2023 was our 150th year and to commemorate this significant milestone, the Club finished a creditable 3rd in the strong Berkshire, Chilterns and Mid-Bucks Div 2 League. Despite the third place finish the club has been promoted into the stronger Division 1, due to a restructure within the League. This will certainly present a bigger challenge for both the players and the club.

We have a few star players like charismatic captain Ben Hughes and his opening partner Pete 'Ledge' Stone who both reeled off centuries and 50s, bowling all-rounder Graham 'Boycs' Swales, who took almost twice as many wickets as anyone else, made useful runs and took some unbelievable catches, the classy stroke-maker Rajat 'Virat Kohli' Khator, the fast-improving Mehul 'Whiskers' Khemani and fast-bowler Rehaan Vats. Always contributing are legendary wicket-taking machines Graeme 'Aikers' Aitken and Colin 'Squeezer' Caesar. All-action young all-rounder Joe Holmes may be joined – rumour has it - by some returning cricketers. Sprinkling some stardust when available to play last season were former young-guns-now-fathers, Joffy Cox and Aaron Brown. But there is always space available to new players, whatever your skill-level, and we have been contacted by a few individuals who have expressed a desire to play (details of pre-season nets, sometime in April, will be announced once the outdoor nets are available for use). Friendliness, fun and laughter is guaranteed.

What earned us our lofty 3rd place was the week-after-week dedication throughout the season of long-serving scorer Mandy Aitken and umpire John Hughes. And selfless work by Martin Birkett, Den Cox and their tiny band of helpers ensure the pitch and outfield are in good condition, despite the vagaries of drought-like conditions or wet weather. Post-Christmas reports say there have been moles burrowing across the common, skirting the square.

As Spring arrives there will be a concerted effort to spruce-up the Clubhouse and set up outdoor nets in Mannings Field. If you would like to join us at nets, or indeed help in any way with umpiring or scoring, please contact us on [webmaster@downleycc.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@downleycc.co.uk), and you will be made most welcome.

At the end of most games there is fun, good food, laughter and relaxation at the hospitable Mark and Sarah's Le de Spencer Arms, often with opposition players and supporters, the garden in the sunshine on a warm summer's evening an abiding memory sustaining us through winter.

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# News from Sunnybank Chapel

Happy New Year! I hope that Christmas was a peaceful time of celebration, even if that feels like a dim and distant memory now. One of my favourite memories of the season was welcoming children and parents from the Chiltern Hills Montessori nursery for their lantern carol singing - the chapel was packed with families and their magnificent lanterns. We shared Christmas songs and remembered how Jesus came as the light of the world. I hope that we will be able to welcome the nursery back again soon.

We were also pleased to welcome new faces at the performance of A Christmas Carol which was enjoyed by all who came, some returning for our carol service.

A new year means that the chapel building is in its 200th year and we are celebrating God's faithfulness to us as Methodist Christians in this place. We are busy planning a series of events throughout the year but we need your help! Do you have any memories of the chapel that you could share with us? Did it play a particular role during the war? The outside wall of the chapel has bricks with initials on - is one of them a relative of yours? Please get in touch using my email below - I look forward to hearing from you.

Our anniversary events will be kicked off on March 23rd with our annual Lent lunch. Pop in for a bowl of warm soup between 12noon and 2pm and pick up information about what else will be going on this year. The chapel itself will be available for quiet reflection, a haven in our busy lives. You will be guaranteed a warm welcome - muddy boots and paws are equally welcome so maybe combine it with a walk on the common?

Each Sunday we meet at 10am to worship our God who is faithful and has loved and known us since before we were born. He knows and loves you too - why not come and find out more?

With every blessing,

*Rev. Rachael Prince • 01494 562491 • revrprince@gmail.com*

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## CHAMELEON SINGLES GROUP

The winter months have seen us doing more indoor events including, in December, our Christmas Lunch Club and an evening out at Wycombe Town Hall. Shopping for the festive season was not forgotten as we made our way to Stockbridge on the River Test and then onto Salisbury to look at the Cathedral and Christmas Market.

Early events for 2024 included a Coffee Morning in Princes Risborough, our regular Lunch Club and an evening social held over Zoom. The Pub Night at the end of January serves as our AGM. This is a chance to look back at the year just gone and plan events for the future. No doubt several of those ideas suggested at the AGM will be included in our programmes during the year.

We plan once again this year for some day trips out including one to the coast and to Guernsey. Our walks will continue on a regular basis throughout the year. Walked at a gentle pace it's the perfect way to meet with others and enjoy a chat along the way.



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Contact Sam: [downleymondayminis@gmail.com](mailto:downleymondayminis@gmail.com)



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At home evenings, take-away food nights and the occasional Quiz Night also feature in our bi-monthly events programme. The Pub Night on the last Thursday of the month is held at The Crown in Hazlemere. Lunch Club is on the second Friday at the Spindle & Thread in High Wycombe. Both events are ideal for newcomers giving them a chance to meet other members in an informal location.

If you are single, 40-60's, looking for new friends and a great social life why not give Chameleon Singles Group a try? There are no strangers at Chameleon, just new friends to be made. The group has several local people from Downley, West Wycombe, Sands, Bledlow Ridge and the surrounding areas and you would be very welcome too. To find out more call Terrie on 01494 445816, Trevor on 01494 529067 or e-mail: [info@chameleonsingles.org.uk](mailto:info@chameleonsingles.org.uk). Visit the group on-line at [www.chameleonsingles.org.uk](http://www.chameleonsingles.org.uk) or search Facebook.

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## **u3a** learn, laugh, live **High Wycombe & District u3a**

Happy New Year.

Following the Christmas break, all our interest Groups reported excellent attendance in both Halls including Naphill Village Hall where Quiz, Discovering Art, Computer and Rummikub meet, and in private homes where smaller Groups such as German Conversation and Music get together once a month. At Hughenden Village Hall our Antiques and Collectibles were still talking about their Christmas lunch whilst Art (painting group) were viewing and enjoying each-others' latest creations.

Our upcoming programme at the monthly General Meetings (at Lacey Green Hall, third Wednesday of the month at 14.15) includes talks on M19: The British Secret Service, Homeward Bound – Railway Stations, and Coffee from Tree to Cup. Do come along if you are interested.



In January we held our annual Group Convenors meeting where we reviewed progress made in 2023, especially the successful introduction of Psychology, Geology and Local History. We continue to canvass for ideas for new Groups. We plan to hold a New Members Day in the spring. Non-members would also be very welcome.

Following a review of our new Facebook and Website, we discussed the steps we are taking to improve further communications between members and the general public. Our exhibition at Wycome Library (2nd floor) also came in for a positive review and we will be continuing to have a presence at other local events.

A full list of all our Groups, meeting dates, times and topics, as well as events can be found on our brand-new website [highwycombe.u3aite.uk](http://highwycombe.u3aite.uk)

Please remember that, provided you are not in full-time employment, people of any age are welcome to join us. Your first visit is free.

*Contact Judith (Secretary): 01494 562236,  
or email Paul (Groups Co-ordinator): [gilliamph@aol.com](mailto:gilliamph@aol.com) • Registered Charity.1065069*

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# Downley Ancestors Part 17

Following on from part 16 (Nov 22, issue 133) I have listed my family tree and note the historical links to High Wycombe after finding my noble ancestors. I start with Richard Tugwell and Judith Thorpe and then list each generation of my family tree going backwards, eventually to Alan Basset and Hugh Le Despenser. The Le Despensers on my family tree are not direct ancestors of the current Le Despencer family, after whom our local pub is named and reside at West Wycombe Park, the title being passed through different families.

Richard Tugwell = Judith Thorpe (1696-1777) - My 7 x Great-Grandparents

Benedict Thorpe Browne = Mary Ann Poolley

Benedict Thorpe 1634-1697 = Susanna Browne

William Browne = Susannah Cooper

Benjamin Browne (Educated at Christs College Cambridge: Vicar of Ifield 1596-1638) = Sarah Leachford

William Browne 1534-1613 (Vicar of Horley 1563-1613) = Magdalene Elsick

John Browne = Joan Ferret

William Browne = Agnes Knight

William Browne = Mary Malet

Thomas Browne (MP for Dover: Sheriff of Kent: Chancellor of the Exchequer: Either beheaded or hung, drawn and quartered, depending on sources - possibly at Tyburn 1460 – Treason against King Henry VI) = Lady Eleanor FitzAlan (Arundel)

Sir Thomas FitzAlan (Arundel) = Johanna Moyne

Sir John FitzAlan 2nd Baron Arundel = Elisabeth Le Despenser

Edward Despenser II (Fought with Edward the Black Prince in France and was rewarded with a barony and was made a Knight of the Garter: His memorial is known as the 'Kneeling Knight' and is located in the Holy Trinity Chapel in Tewkesbury Abbey) = Elizabeth de Burghersh

Edward Despenser (killed fighting in France 1342) = Anne Ferrers

Sir Hugh Le Despenser (Knighted at Westminster Abbey in 1306: Hung, drawn and quartered 1326 after the overthrow of Edward II; buried at Tewkesbury Abbey) = Eleanor De Clare (Granddaughter of Edward I and Eleanor of Castile : 6 x Great Granddaughter of William the Conqueror : 2 x Great Granddaughter of Louis IX of France).

Hugh Le Despenser (1st Earl of Winchester: Chief advisor to King Edward II. Hanged and beheaded 1326 by Queen Isabella. His head was sent to be displayed in Winchester which had been loyal to the King) = Lady Isabella de Beauchamp.

Hugh Le Despenser (Constable of the Tower of London. Killed at Battle of Evesham during the 2nd Baron's War 1265) = Aline Basset (1228 – 1281)

Philip Basset (inherited the Manor of Wycombe, the town received market borough status in 1237) = Hawise de Louvaine (4 x Great Granddaughter of Henry I)

Alan Basset (Witness to the Magna Carta at Runnymede under King John who rewarded him with the Lordship of Wycombe, and witness to the re-issue of the charter under Henry III in 1216)

# SYNERGY PILATES



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Patrick

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confident, engaging and  
openly honest, and has  
enabled me to gain  
renewed joy and  
confidence in my singing.

Jill

*Top Notes*



# Hillclimb Garage News



**Christmas Market Heroes** – The Festive holidays seem so long ago now but, as always, we packed in a whole lot of fun across the Christmas period at Hillclimb, from putting up our traditional Community Tree on the forecourt, to seeing the showroom windows decorated by the Woodlands Pre School and taking part in Christmas Jumper Day to raise funds for Save the Children, we had a great time!

We were also proud to, once again, host the Littleworth Road Christmas Market. The Market has grown over the years and this year the organising committee had more stalls than ever with a fantastic collection of local crafts and festive goodies. Unfortunately, the wonderful British weather didn't read the script and threw rain and wind at the stall holders from the moment the market opened! However, in typical Downley fashion, the die-hard residents turned up to support the market and browse the goodies on offer and a very soggy Santa arrived as a treat for the youngsters who braved the elements. In spite of the appalling weather, the heroic stall holders kept the market open for three hours before being beaten by rain that was now coming in horizontally down Littleworth Road! Thank you so much to all who supported the event. The Christmas Market Heroes will be back in December and we hear Santa has been promised fine weather!

**Electric Car Sales Forecast** – New Car Sales in the UK rose 17.9% in 2023, with Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) volumes at record levels, although the total market share slipped to 16.5%. More than 300,000 BEV's were sold last year, 18% up on 2022. However, there has been a slow down in demand for BEV's from private consumers due to concerns regarding high purchase costs, inadequate charging infrastructure and poor residual values. The industry is calling on the government to halve VAT on new BEV's from 2024 for 3 years to encourage more demand from private consumers. It is estimated this initiative would put almost 2 million new EV's on the road by the end of 2026, cut CO2 emissions by 5 million tonnes and encourage even more investment in chargepoint rollout. \*Source SMMT

**Hearing Dogs for Deaf People** - We are proud to continue our support of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People by making a donation for every bag of yummy sweets we place on the seat of our customers' cars to thank them for choosing Hillclimb Garage. Through their fantastic work with hearing dogs, the charity continues to make incredibly positive changes to deaf people's lives. You can find out more at [www.hearingdogs.org.uk](http://www.hearingdogs.org.uk).

As always, we finish with a huge thank you to everyone who continues to support us. As your local, independent garage we, in turn, are here to support you and maintain your vehicle to the highest standards. Whatever you drive, whatever you need, we are **'At Your Service'**



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# DOWNLEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

## How Downley embraced the Prims (Part II)



### The Chapel of Chapel Street, c. 1920

You may recall [DVN, September 2023] that by 1851, eleven percent of High Wycombe were Primitive Methodists, according to the religious census of that year. If that proportion was reflected in Downley, then about fifty Downley folk may have embraced the Prims. By 1864 they had finally raised enough money to build themselves a place of worship, albeit a small one, and applied to Lady Dashwood for some land, which was gifted, sans the mineral rights. The Chapel of Chapel Street had a platform, a pulpit, a table, chairs, and an organ, which had to be pumped by a volunteer. On the side, there was a small room (now demolished) that was used for a Sunday School.

Downley now had two chapels, and there seems to have been an intense rivalry between the two. They each attracted a different sort of person, perhaps, with the Chapel Street worshippers probably coming from the poorer houses. Even when the two branches of Methodism – the Wesleyan and the Primitives – formally united in 1932 on a national scale, there was little co-operation in

Downley. Ignoring the new ‘union’ with the Sunnybank Methodists, The Chapel held its own services, at 6 or 6.30 pm every Sunday, for a further thirty years.

Norman Brown remembers these early evening services well: he was the only child present, since he came to help his blind father, Leslie, the village shop keeper. The Chapel’s square interior was plain and spotlessly clean. In the 1940s, about thirty people attended, with enthusiastic singing accompanied by Mrs Hatton of Commonsides on the organ, and stirring sermons provided by a guest (Lay) Local Preacher from within the High Wycombe Circuit. Reg Langley recalled one sermon that made sparks fly: ‘Arthur Hawkins [the Steward] became so angry with the preacher for talking politics that he jumped up and told him to be quiet!’

Four times a year, Communion was held – in a more informal way than in an Anglican church – which required an ordained Minister, who was usually the Circuit Superintendent Minister based at Wesley Chapel in Priory Road, High Wycombe. The table was covered with a linen cloth and then, for reasons he never fathomed, Norman was always asked to withdraw.

In addition to services, a successful Sunday School met in The Chapel at 2:30 pm (so timed because the bus service only started after lunch on a Sunday). It drew a wider crowd ‘from more distant parts of the village like Littleworth Road’, remembers Norman,

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and was run by Arthur Hawkins, or his father, Leslie. Singing at Sunday School was unaccompanied and occasionally there was a guest speaker. There is a wonderful photo of a Chapel Sunday School meeting, taken at the end of the Second World War or shortly thereafter, when film became available once again. Norman recalls that someone in the village with a Kodak Brownie box camera had offered to take a photo, which explains the larger-than-usual turn out, smart coats, and ribbons in hair.



### Sunday School, c. 1945-46

From left to right, the back row were: Peggy Mines; David Hawkins (the son of Arthur, and soon to be a Sixth Form prefect at RGS); an unknown young lady; Arthur Hawkins (The Chapel's Steward, not ordained, who died in 1962); Ethel Hawkins, his wife ('a lovely soul, very caring'); Leslie Brown (who was blind, and ran the village shop); and his son Norman Brown, aged 10 or 11, in Cub Scout uniform. Norman went on to become an Anglican priest: now retired and in his 80s, he 'realises how much [he] was influenced (for good) at The Chapel'.

In this fashion, with its Sunday Schools and evening services, baptisms and weddings (after it was licensed for weddings in 1943), social evenings, youth

club, harvest auctions, and events for the Sick Fund, The Chapel stayed in use until the late 1960s. By that time numbers had so declined that the decision was taken to end 100 years of Primitive Methodism in Downley. For a while, the building was used for storage, then in 1985 it was sold and converted into private dwellings. The conversion sadly covered up most of the evidence of the building's past, other than the internal 1887 memorial plaque, and a round window high up at the back. The Prims had the final word, though: by its deeds, no inhabitant of The Chapel can host a wrestling match, sell alcohol, gamble, or operate machinery, within.



**Chapel wedding:  
Jeanette Brooks &  
Gordon Alderman,  
12 September 1964**

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 16 March 2024**

## 'Tales of Old Downley'

Presented by the

Downley Local History Group

**Downley Memorial Hall**

**at 7:30 pm.**

**Tickets £4.00 payable on the door,**

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# News from Buckinghamshire Council



For more information and to keep up to date with the news from Buckinghamshire Council please see <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/news> or, as always, contact me – see below. You can also view Full Council, Cabinet and committee meetings as a webcast either live, or watch the recording in full on Buckinghamshire Council Website.

Happy New Year to you all.

## **Low-income families missing out on vital Healthy Start food payment**

Over a thousand eligible parents and expectant mothers in Buckinghamshire are missing vital food support provided by the NHS Healthy Start scheme.

NHS Healthy Start offers financial aid for healthy food and milk, providing vital food assistance for families facing financial constraints. Eligible parents receive payments onto a contactless card that can be used to top up their grocery shop with fruit, vegetables, pulses, milk, and infant formula. Parents could benefit from financial support totalling over £1,200 in their child's first 4 years.

Unfortunately, despite eligibility, a significant number of Buckinghamshire mums-to-be and parents are not signed-up for this payment. If you are over 10-weeks pregnant or have a child under 4 years of age, you could be eligible for Healthy Start payments. You also need to be on one of seven income-related benefits including Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit or be under 18 and pregnant. Even if you're not a British citizen, if your child is, you could qualify. For more information, and to check eligibility, visit: [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/healthystart](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/healthystart)

## **Could you help these children shine?**

“Help Them Shine” is Buckinghamshire Council’s campaign to find a loving home for children in the council’s care who are waiting for adoption, and whose circumstances mean that they often have to wait longer to find their new family. This can be because they are a little older, or they are brothers and sisters who need to stay together, or that they have non-white ethnic heritage. It may also be because they have additional needs due to significant developmental delays. These children are looking for a family where they will be nurtured in a loving environment so that they can reach their full potential. A family that will Help Them Shine.

If you feel that you could give a child their new family life and their new future, don't hesitate to find out more about starting your adoption journey. Find out more at: [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/help-them-shine](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/help-them-shine)

## **Emergency Provision for Rough Sleepers**

If you see anyone sleeping out on the streets of Buckinghamshire contact StreetLink

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online or call 0300 500 0914. They will notify our dedicated Outreach workers. If you see anyone you believe to be under the age of 18 and/or are concerned about the health or welfare of anyone that you see sleeping rough call 999.

During office hours you can contact our Housing Team on the following numbers.

Aylesbury Vale area: 01296 585 168

Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe areas: 01494 421 212

## **Council approves new Transport Strategy for High Wycombe**

Following a public consultation, Buckinghamshire Council has now approved and adopted their Transport Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for High Wycombe.

The High Wycombe Transport Strategy envisions that by 2050 High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley. All the journeys from start to finish aim to be considered low emission, seamless, and safe for everyone, setting an ambitious goal for the town's transport system. To achieve this, the high-level Transport Strategy sets out the key transport schemes required in the next 5, 10, 15 years and beyond. Specific proposals identified in the plans will be subject to further development and public consultation as they are taken forward and as funding becomes available.

I have been working hard to ensure that the pedestrian crossing proposed in the above plan, between Morrisons and The Spindle and Thread on Bellfield Road is moved forward at the earliest opportunity, and I have negotiated that the required funding for this has been secured.

## **Council enforces higher penalties for fly-tipping in Bucks**

Those caught fly-tipping in Buckinghamshire face the consequence of paying a higher penalty for their crime following changes to the law which have been adopted by the council. In 2023 the government increased the maximum Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for fly-tipping from £400 to £1,000. The penalty for Failure in Householder Duty of Care has also been raised from £400 to a maximum of £600. This penalty relates to people who have waste removed by a third-party waste carrier. By law, householders have a duty to check that the carrier they are using is legally authorised to carry out the work and will do so responsibly. If the waste they have given the carrier is found dumped illegally, the householder is deemed to have failed in their Duty of Care regarding their waste and can be liable for prosecution.

Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet voted in favour of amending local policies to reflect the changes, bringing in powers to enforce the highest rate for FPNs for those caught breaking the law in this way.

*Paul Turner, Buckinghamshire Councillor for Downley  
paul.turner@buckinghamshire.gov.uk 07825 842292*

# DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are held  
on 2nd Tuesday of the month  
**at Downley Community Centre,**  
School Close 7.30pm

*Up to 30 minutes are allowed for public questions*

Downley Parish Council,  
Community Centre School Close,  
Downley, HP13 5TR

**The Clerk can be contacted on**  
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**E: [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org)**  
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# From Westminster

## *Steve Baker - MP for Wycombe*

Parliament returned in early January and there is a great deal on the Westminster agenda for the coming months. I would like to begin by sending everyone my best wishes for 2024.

Wycombe Hospital is close to many people's hearts. I was glad to visit recently and congratulate staff on their accreditation as an elective surgical hub, recognising high standards in clinical and operational practice. Surgical hubs, which are separated from emergency services, are part of plans nationally to increase capacity for elective care with more dedicated operating theatres and beds. The hubs exclusively perform planned surgery and mainly focus on six specialties – ophthalmology, general surgery, orthopaedics, gynaecology, ear nose and throat, and urology. Hubs bring together the skills and expertise of staff under one roof, with protected facilities and theatres, helping to deliver shorter waits for surgery. Wycombe Hospital is one of 31 hubs to date that have been accredited. This is great news for local people waiting for an operation, and I am now working with other Bucks MPs to have a new building on the hospital site.

There is other good news on tax and National Insurance contributions for those in employment. From 6th January, the National Insurance rate for employees will decrease from 12% to 10%, meaning they should see more money in their wages at the end of the month. Also, self-employed Class 2 National Insurance contributions will be scrapped in April 2024, saving sole traders around £179.40 a year. I'm expecting there to be more changes to personal tax when the Budget is announced on 6th March.

For those who use public transport there is Government help with fares. On most bus routes the fare has been capped to £2 until the end of this year. It's available on Carousel and Arriva buses and might well offer a saving if you were thinking of a day out somewhere, or just to get around the town.

The Government is having a campaign to encourage more people to get inoculated against measles. Although there is not a large outbreak in Wycombe there are rising cases in London and Birmingham and this could easily spread to our area if people travel to these places. If your child is not up-to-date with their MMR vaccinations you should make an appointment with your GP.

I send my congratulations to the Old School Community Association that recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. This is a wonderful milestone and underscores the enduring strength of the community in Downley. I also send my best wishes to Downley School on its incorporation into the Oxford Diocesan Bucks School Trust. I am sure this will mean high standards at the school and an environment where children will thrive.

**As ever, if you would like to get in touch with me,  
please email [steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk) If you would like my help with a  
particular urgent issue please telephone my constituency office on 01494 448408.**



# Downley Diary | Round-up of Regular Activities

## DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [bookings@downleycommunitycentre.org.uk](mailto:bookings@downleycommunitycentre.org.uk) or call Cathy on 07580 953 181

GROUP	DAY	TIME	NEW MEMBER WELCOME	CONTACT
Arabic Lessons (New)	Saturday	10.00 - 14.00	✓	alhimah78@gmail.com 07500 895 283
Art Group	Monday	10.00 - 12.00		alastair.pike@artsmartuk.com
Better Balance	Friday	13.00 - 14.00	✓	katie.youngman@aitc.org
Boxing (New)	Monday	20.30 - 21.30	✓	Sam Azimi: 07594 305 407
	Wednesday	20.30 - 21.30	✓	
Bridge Club	Thursday	19.00 - 22.00	✓	paulf.goddard@icloud.com
Children's Dance Group.	Wednesday	16.45 - 18.30		Zoe.k.thompson@hotmail.com
Chipmunks Woodcarving	Wednesday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	downleychipmunks@outlook.com
Community Library	Monday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	enquiries@downleylibrary.org
	Thursday	15.00 - 17.00	✓	
	Saturday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	
Craft Group	1st Tuesday	9.30 - 12.30		Helen 01494 564 414
Crochet Group	Tuesday	19.00 - 21.00	✓	woollywonkas@gmail.com 07833 910 238
Dance Classes (Ballroom & Latin)	Tuesday	19.00 - 21.00	✓	karen@comedancingwithme.co.uk 07873 53 8709
	Wednesday	19.30 - 20.30	✓	
Downley Parish Council	2nd Tuesday	19.30	✓	clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org 01494 257 711
Downley Wine & Beer Club	2nd Wednesday	20.00 - 22.00	✓	stevedavison200@icloud.com
Kingdom Dynamics Chapel	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00		Sharon 07961 822 347
Lace Making	Thursday	13.00 - 15.00	✓	Frances 01494 524 835
M00 Music	Friday Term-time	9.50 & 12.10	✓	elvan@moo-music.co.uk
Mondays Minis Playgroup <i>formerly Toddlers/Bumps etc</i>	Monday Term-time	9.30 - 11.15	✓	downleymondayminis@gmail.com 07724 385 895
Natalie Jane Dance School	Monday	15.00 - 19.00	✓	natalie@njdance.co.uk
	Friday Term-time	15.30 - 19.30	✓	
Painting for Pleasure	Tuesday Term-time	10.00 - 12.00		Sue 01494 443 393
Pilates	Thursday	18.30 & 19.30	✓	Emma@asenseofbalance.co.uk
Pre & Post Natal Classes (New)	Thursday	9.30 - 10.30	✓	viv@empoweredwomenscollective.co.uk
Pregnancy Yoga	Monday	19.30 - 21.15	✓	steph@nestandnurture.net
Simply Walk (free)	Monday	10.00	✓	Starts from the Community Centre simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
	Thursday	11.00	✓	
Taekwondo	Monday	18.30-19.30	✓	mohzamtgd1@hotmail.com Tel 07870 219 746
	Thursday	19.45-20.45	✓	
Twins & Multiples Club	Thursday	10.30 - 12.30	✓	wendy@questcost.co.uk
Ukulele	4th Thursday	10.00 - 12.00		Sylvia sylvia.chadwick@me.com
Wycombe Spiritual Centre	1st & 3rd Friday	18.30		ashleydarkwood@gmail.com
Yoga Qigong Exercise	Friday	8.00 - 9.00	✓	Claudia 07540 892 708
Zumba Gold	Wednesday	10.30 - 11.15	✓	jennifer.morais.zumba@outlook.com

## SUNNYBANK CHAPEL, MOOR LANE - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [margaretstagg75@gmail.com](mailto:margaretstagg75@gmail.com) or call 01494 530 736

GROUP	DAY	TIME	NEW MEMBERS	CONTACT
Downley Descants	Thursday	Term time	20.00 - 21.30	✓ <a href="mailto:grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk">grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk</a>
Chiltern Hills Montessori	Weekdays	08.00 - 18.00	✓	<a href="mailto:admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk">admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk</a> 01494 514 544
Bible Study	2nd & 4th Wednesdays	10.00 - 12.00	✓	

## GUIDE AND SCOUT CENTRE - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [margaretstagg75@gmail.com](mailto:margaretstagg75@gmail.com)

Rainbows	Monday	16.45 - 17.45	✓	<a href="mailto:downley2ndrainbows@outlook.com">downley2ndrainbows@outlook.com</a>
Brownies	Monday	17.45 - 19.00	✓	<a href="mailto:downley3rdbrownies@outlook.com">downley3rdbrownies@outlook.com</a>
Guides	Monday	19.00 - 20.30	✓	<a href="mailto:downleygg@gmail.com">downleygg@gmail.com</a>
Rangers	Monday	19.30 - 21.15	✓	<a href="mailto:gill.lawrence@btinternet.com">gill.lawrence@btinternet.com</a>
Brownies	Tuesday	17.30 - 18.45	✓	<a href="mailto:jansmith1611@gmail.com">jansmith1611@gmail.com</a>
Guides	Tuesday	19.00 - 20.30	✓	<a href="mailto:margaretstagg75@gmail.com">margaretstagg75@gmail.com</a>
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Wednesday	18.00 - 21.15	✓	<a href="mailto:gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com">gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com</a>
Dog Training	Thursday	18.30 - 20.30	✓	<a href="mailto:suzannebullworthy@hotmail.co.uk">suzannebullworthy@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Friday	16.30 - 21.30	✓	<a href="mailto:gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com">gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com</a>
Dog Training	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	<a href="mailto:lisa@shunty.co.uk">lisa@shunty.co.uk</a>
Woodlands Preschool	Daily	08.00 - 15.30	✓	<a href="mailto:admin@thewoodlandspreschool.co.uk">admin@thewoodlandspreschool.co.uk</a>

## ST JAMES CHURCH - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [hilmad1842@gmail.com](mailto:hilmad1842@gmail.com) or call 07973 770 180

Downley Evening WI	2nd Tuesday	19.45	✓	
St James Church Coffee Morning	Thursday	10.30 - 12.30	✓	
Top Notes Choir	Monday	19.45 - 21.45		
Chepping Wycombe Trefoil Guild	2nd Thursday	19.45		

## ST JAMES HALL - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [hilmad1842@gmail.com](mailto:hilmad1842@gmail.com)

Art Club	Thursday	09.30		
Coffee Stop	Monday	10.30 - 12.30	✓	
Downley Gardening Society	3rd Monday	19.30	✓	
Dr Sue's Pilates	Monday	18.00 - 19.00		
Karen Pilates	Wednesday	09.30	✓	<a href="mailto:karensynergypilates@gmail.com">karensynergypilates@gmail.com</a> 07786 567 376
	Wednesday	10.35	✓	<a href="mailto:karensynergypilates@gmail.com">karensynergypilates@gmail.com</a> 07786 567 376
	Wednesday	19.00	✓	<a href="mailto:karensynergypilates@gmail.com">karensynergypilates@gmail.com</a> 07786 567 376
Natailie's Meditation Class	Wednesday	20.30 - 22.30		
Philatelic Club	Alternate Thursday	19.30		
Rebound Fit	Wednesday	19.00 - 20.00		
Sing and Sign Baby and Toddlers	Tuesday	10.00 - 13.00		
Sunaina Prolife Pilates	Saturday	08.00 - 09.00		
Tuneless Choir	1st and 3rd Tuesday	19.30 - 21.00		

## DOWNLEY WAR MEMORIAL HALL - SPRING 2024

Hall Bookings: [dwmh.bookings@gmail.com](mailto:dwmh.bookings@gmail.com)

Chiltern Hills Montessori	Weekdays	08.00 - 18.00	✓	<a href="mailto:admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk">admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk</a> 01494 531 565
Pilates	Monday	19.00 - 20.00	✓	<a href="mailto:karensynergypilates@gmail.com">karensynergypilates@gmail.com</a> 07786 567 376
Yoga with Jenny	Tuesday	19.20 - 20.45		07904 438 411
Fencing 1 to 1	Wednesday	17.30 - 19.30		
Yoga with Jenny	Thursday	19.15 - 20.45		07904 438 411
Yoga with Jenny	Friday	10.20 - 11.50		07904 438 411
Fencing 1 to 1	Friday	17.30 - 20.00		

## USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Life threatening or critical situations only

**Telephone: 999**  
and ask for relevant service  
**AMBULANCE • FIRE • POLICE**

### HEALTH

NHS Direct 111  
Downley Pharmacy 01494 513 060

### POLICE - NON EMERGENCY

Report 101 or [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)

### List Of Advertisers

Altea Beauty and Holistic Treatments	30
Applicant Mortgage Brokers	25
Arnold Funeral Directors	16
Beardons Builders	16
Better Balance	6
Biology Tutor	42
Canine Cutz Dog Grooming	18
Care & Companions	46
Chiltern Hills Montessori Nursery	25
Clubs and Societies	20
David Nicholas Estates	40
DJ Coles Property Services	38
Downley Community Library	42
Downley News Delivery Volunteers Wanted	7
Downley Parish Council	30 and 46
Downley Pharmacy	18
GSL Property Maintenance	40
Hillclimb Garage	28
Homecare Gurus	4
Independent Mortgage Solutions	28
James Donald Estate Agent	52
Jill Burrell Tutor	10
Le De Spencers Arms	8
M A Hunt Painting & Decorating	14
Mark Evans Plumbing & Heating Engineers	12
Mark Gonsalves Kitchen & Bathroom Specialist	6
M.D. Garden Services	22
Monday Minis	34
Moo Music	36

### COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Paul Turner [paul.turner@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.turner@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)  
Cllr. Maz Hussain [maz.hussain@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:maz.hussain@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)  
Cllr. Melanie Smith [Melanie.R.Smith@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.R.Smith@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

### DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org)  
01494 257711 (office hrs 9am-1pm Monday – Friday)

**Further suggestions of what should be listed here to the editor**  
[editor@downley.org](mailto:editor@downley.org)

Muted Whispers	46
Natalie Jane Dance School	32
Nest and Nature	40
Optionz Hair & Beauty	51
PACE Big Walk	17
Personalised Learning Tuition	30
Pieds Sur Terre - Reflexology	22
P K Stroy, Builder	28
Plugs Electrical Services	22
Poseidon Heating	16
Postnatal Fitness Class	30
Revive Car Bodywork	14
Singing Lessons with Emma Barr	38
Skyline Electrical Services	10
Slimming World	34
Spirit Hair Co.	52
St James' Church Hall Hire	10
St James Coffee Stop	12
Suttons' Property Maintenance	36
Synergy Pilates	38
The Barr Academy of Performing Arts	8
The Downley Garage	4
The Grange Restaurant & Gift Shop	46
The Mowchak	34
The Professional Chimney Sweep Company	32
The Wye Partnership	2
TLC 4 You	32
Tom Coles Pest Guard	6
Wycombe Concert Band	42
Xtra Time Football & Futsal Coaching	25

### Downley Village News

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**Steering Committee:** The Downley Communications Forum set up as part of the Community Plan, provides oversight to the Village News, the Village enews and the [downley.org](http://downley.org) website.

**Chairman:** Bill Thompson; **Secretary:** Peter Loadman  
**Treasurer:** Bob Cook; **Webmaster** Mark Starkey

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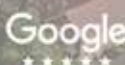
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