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# Village News

Issue 142/February 2025



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## Editorial

I would like to start by wishing a very happy new year to all our readers! I hope 2025 will be a good year for you.

Of course, we must look forward but it's also good to reflect on what happened last year. As usual in Downley, after the many summer activities we had the bonfire on 5 November, which was hugely well attended. Coming up towards Christmas, there was the now-traditional Littleworth Road Christmas market, which seems to be growing in size and popularity each year, a children's pantomime at the Community Centre (which will hopefully be repeated next year), the decorating of the village Christmas Tree on Jubilee Green (along with mulled wine to keep out the cold) and, to finish off the year in style, the lighting of the beacon on a very stormy New Year's Eve. It is wonderful that there are so many community events in Downley and that they are generally well-attended.

To keep up to date with what is coming up you can visit the village website on [www.downley.org](http://www.downley.org), find us on Facebook, or sign up for the monthly Downley e-News (see the article on page 11). We will keep you up to date with Downley Village News as well, but as we only come out 4 times a year it pays to keep in touch electronically too if you are able.

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 27 April 2025 but please get your copy in as early as possible as space is limited.

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

Front Cover Photo: Lighting of the beacon for the New Year courtesy of Saul Pope, @atthe\_downley\_photographer



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# Downley Parish Council

## Local Government Elections 2025



Thursday 1st May 2025 will see local elections across all of Buckinghamshire. to elect councillors to Buckinghamshire Council and for Town and Parish Councils (if contested).

Buckinghamshire Council will publish further details as we head towards May. The Notice of Election will be published on Tuesday 18th March 2025.

Parish Councillors are passionate about their local communities and seek to make changes to improve residents' lives. Parish Councils can become involved in numerous services such as allotments, street lighting, celebrations and festivals, community projects and neighbourhood plans.

Parish Councillors are elected to serve the local community and so must live or work in the parish area. If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, then attending the Parish Council meetings would be a good starting point to understanding the work involved. We hold our meetings at the Downley Community Centre from 7:30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month. Beyond that, May 1st 2025 provides an opportunity for people to stand for election and there are further details on the Downley Parish Council website under links "How to become a Parish Councillor".

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

# Annual Downley Village Rogation Walk

## Sunday 25th May 2.00pm

Family Friendly Meet on The Common by the Memorial Hall Bus Stop *Dogs on Leads*  
**EXPECT MUD!!!!**

**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 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 01494 25 77 11 (office hrs 9am-1pm Monday – Friday)**  
E: [clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org) • [www.downleyparishcouncil.org](http://www.downleyparishcouncil.org)

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## Downley Common News

The last quarter started off with a very successful bonfire and torchlight procession at which all the torches were sold and the weather held fine. Thank you to all those who helped build the bonfire, assembled the torches and helped out on the night.



The DCPS organised the New Year lighting of the beacon on 31 December at midnight. The weather was a bit stormy and, as can be seen in the picture, the wind caused some issues such as flying fireballs. Nevertheless, everyone seemed to enjoy the evening.

Our work party in January was significantly affected by the cold weather at that time. The intention was to continue clearing excess rushes from Mannings Pond but thick ice made this a bit difficult so we reverted to doing a tree survey which is part of our new management plan. This concentrated on the area of woodland to the north of Vale Cottage and the objective was to identify specimen trees that need



some encouragement. Such trees can be crowded out by other growth such as holly that can deprive the specimen of nutrients and which therefore need to be removed. In fact, it turns out that the whole area is full of specimen trees and there is far too much competing holly. Ivy is also presenting a major load on many of the trees in this area as was seen by a number of fallen trees that have succumbed to excessive ivy overgrowth.

We recorded the position and condition of the more significant trees in the area and also measured their girth. The largest trees measured up to 3.5m around the trunk and from this we can estimate their approximate age. For example, the average growth rate of an oak tree is 1.88 cm circumference per year which for the example above works out at about 190 years. However, this calculation tends to underestimate for trees in woodlands where the competition tends to reduce growth rates so an oak of 3.5m girth is likely to be around 390 years old according to [www.wdvt.org.uk/pdf/Estimating-the-age-of-trees.pdf](http://www.wdvt.org.uk/pdf/Estimating-the-age-of-trees.pdf). Veteran trees are classified as anything over three metre girth.



*Bill Thompson.*

*Downley Common Preservation Society.*



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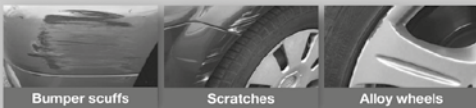
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# Downley Community Centre



## Building Maintenance

Plans for the fitting of solar panels on the roof have been delayed as Bucks Council (who previously owned the building) requires proof that there are no bats in residence! As the building is just inside a conservation area a second more in-depth bat survey is now planned during the next bat season in late spring. On completion a second planning application will be submitted.

Other minor issues have included replacing the back door fire exit by the buggy shelter with a new solid wooden door and fixing electrical issues such as the outside flood light. Redecoration of the lobby and toilets has been re-scheduled for early April.

## Christmas

- The trustees would like to thank Downley Parish Council chair Moyra Lazenby and Wendy Steneskog for their Christmas tree donation complete with lights and decorations that were hung by Sunshine Montessori.
- Pantomime - The Centre's first ever pantomime "Beauty & the Beast" - was almost full for both the morning and afternoon performances. The actors were a professional touring group who had performed the show 44 times in recent weeks, mainly in schools, before their finale at Downley Community Centre. Parents reported that the show seemed very fresh and was performed with colourful backdrops and excellent sound and lighting.



## Warm Hub

The Centre was used twice in January for its first "WARM HUB" This was organised by the Wycombe Wanderers Foundation - a charitable arm of the football club that fundraises and manages a wide variety of events. Each Warm Hub provides a hot dinner, chat and board games for anyone over 50 years and is free. Check location in advance on 01494 455736 or email community@wwfc.com They will be back with us again on 4th March.

## Exciting News!

The best is saved for last as for some time the trustees have been evaluating an online booking system that will streamline all bookings and ensure greater accuracy. Trials and tests are nearing completion so please await news of the date we will be going live. At that point all hirers, both regular and casual, will be able to access the booking calendar on-line and reserve slots based on live availability.

**Hirers** - *the latest list of regular hirers and their groups at Downley Community Centre is printed in the round-up schedule at the end of this magazine.*

Discover everything happening at the Downley Community Centre by visiting our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/thedownleycommunitycentre](http://www.facebook.com/thedownleycommunitycentre) where you can stay updated on events, activities, and community news.

*Downley Old School Management Association (DOSCA) committee*

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# Downley eNews

a monthly update on local events

Do you find the Village News useful but a bit infrequent? Can you receive electronic updates but are not interested in social media such as Facebook? Then the Downley eNews is for you.

This is a monthly email from the Downley Communications Forum which runs the village news, the downley.org website and community Facebook page and is targeted at those who can manage electronic communication through a PC or tablet/smartphone but dislike or are uninterested in social media.

eNews content is typically local events coming up in the next couple of months that are likely to be of interest to readers. Any local organisations that wish to publicise their events should send details to [info@downley.org](mailto:info@downley.org). Commercial organisations can be accommodated but will be expected to also advertise in the village news.

**If you are interested in receiving the eNews then you need to sign up on our website at <https://www.downley.org/news/enewsletter>.**

## 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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## Downley Theatre Group

Members of the Theatre Group have already been offered the opportunity to see "Starlight Express", "Hamilton", "Moulin Rouge" and "Oliver!" in 2025. All these trips are fully booked. Occasionally, people's plans change so it's worth joining the mailing list to be notified of last-minute cancellations and future outings.

We'll be looking at shows for later in the year soon, along with visiting the Palace

of Westminster as our trip last July was cancelled due to the General Election.

New members are welcome, please get in touch with us to be added to the mailing list. There's no joining fee or obligation to go on any of the outings.

*Alan & Claire Baker*

*Downley Theatre Group - Established 2001*

*[downleytheatregroup@gmail.com](mailto:downleytheatregroup@gmail.com)*

*01494 437 552*

## Downley Methodist Church (Sunnybank)

### Well, what a year 2024 was!

The chapel's 200-year Anniversary. We are the oldest church in the Circuit and we celebrated with a number of different events, the final one being a free Coffee Concert on a wet and windy Saturday morning in November with a packed church. Our thanks to those folk who organised and took part in all our events, especially to our Minister, Rachael, and to everyone who came along to support the celebrations.

In the midst of all the frantic activity however, it's all too easy to get swept along with the busyness and not allow ourselves time to pause, reflect and recognise just what we have.

In Downley, we're very fortunate to live in a beautiful place, with easy access to buses and the town's various facilities, frequent trains to London and Birmingham but also wonderful green space, with many miles of footpaths right on our doorstep. A combination of features which we too often take for granted but which are seldom found elsewhere.

Our thoughts around Christmas were being guided towards a "Hush the Noise" theme which focussed on setting aside the hectic busyness and listening. Making time to listen to the silence, to our inner thoughts, to appreciate our blessings and to listen to God who is always ready to listen to us.

It seems that fewer people write New Year's Resolutions these days, but taking time to do so always seems to help lift one's mind to greater things. To rise above daily concerns and problems and focus on more important things – a change of attitude, a lifestyle shift, a long-held objective, an intention to be different, to be better. So maybe we all need to make some time to reflect on what we have, where we are in life and where God would like us to be.

It may be belated, but may we all at Sunnybank still wish you a very reflective and peaceful New Year.

*Clive Knapman*

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## Downley Voices

New Year and it's all change for Downley Descants; we have renamed to Downley Voices which reflects the fact that we are now a truly mixed choir. We have also moved the venue of our rehearsals to St James' Church which is more accessible and has plenty of car parking as opposed to Sunnybank Church where we started in 2012 and continued to sing there until last Autumn. Many thanks to Sunnybank for hosting us for twelve years and being so welcoming and accommodating to us; we will be forever grateful.

Although the name has changed, we are still your local community choir. We hold this sense of community with great importance, as we always have. It has been proven that singing is good for your health, both mental and physical and, while we have great fun at rehearsals, we do work hard to be the best we can be in our concerts through the year. We achieve this with the help of our highly talented and professional music team. We are totally different to "franchise" choirs who sing to a backing track and pay a huge amount for the privilege. Some must even buy their own music on top. We have a musical director and an accompanist so sing to live music. Our subscription rates are kept to the minimum to cover our costs and we donate towards local good causes from the proceeds of our concerts. There is no requirement for an audition, and we don't charge for the music! If you want to join in with our fun rehearsals,

## The Times They Are A-changing

why not join us for a couple of weeks to see how much you enjoy it. At our last rehearsal, four new people came along, and all left with smiles on their faces saying they would be back next week.

**Let us know beforehand and we will make you most welcome. Just contact Lyn on 07974026213 or [grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk) and tell us you are coming.**

We are developing a new website (downleyvoices.org) with the generous help of Downley Old School Community Association, we must thank them for this. At our recent highly successful Christmas Concert we raised £750 for Wycombe Homeless Connection which was topped up to £1000 by a generous donation from an anonymous member of our choir. There was even a mini pantomime which seemed to go down well with the audience (Oh Yes it Did!)

We were asked to sing at The Heights Nursing Home in November to entertain the residents. I think, generally, they enjoyed our performance and even joined in with singing some of the songs.

2025 will be an exciting year for Downley Voices as we have been asked to be the guests at a Reading Male Voice Choir concert in June. This choir is one of the premier male voice choirs in the south of England and we feel very honoured to have been asked.

*Bob Cook (Bass)*

# Hillclimb Garage News

## A Bumper Christmas Market and 2024 Electric Vehicle Sales Report and what was the most popular car and colour 2024?



### Littleworth Christmas Market 2024

And just like that, Christmas is over and we are already looking forward to warmer weather and Downley Day in June! Looking back, we were proud to once again host the Littleworth Christmas Market in December. Thank you to Shirley Ellis and her amazing team for organising the event again this year, to all the fabulous stall holders and especially all the wonderful people who came along to support the market. The Christmas Market is another great example of the lovely community spirit we have in Downley and we are so proud to be a part of it.

### 2024 Electric Vehicle Sales Report

FULL YEAR 2024	
1 Ford Puma	48,340
2 Kia Sportage	47,163
3 Nissan Qashqai	42,418
4 Nissan Juke	34,454
5 Tesla Model Y	32,862
6 Volkswagen Golf	32,370
7 Hyundai Tucson	32,174
8 MG HS	30,207
9 Volvo XC40	30,202
10 Volkswagen Polo	28,981

We have been providing updates over the last few issues of the Downley Village News on how the electric and

hybrid car market is developing in the UK. Almost 2 million new cars were registered in the UK in 2024, 2.6% up on 2023. Of these, 19.6% were pure Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV). A record year, being more than 21% up on the previous year, but still short of the government mandate for BEV's to be 22% of the market. Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV) and Plug in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) accounted for 13.4% and 8.6% of the market respectively.

FULL YEAR 2024	
1 Tesla Model Y	32,862
2 Audi Q4 e-tron	17,622
3 Tesla Model 3	17,425
4 MG4	15,651
5 BMW i4	12,953
6 Mercedes-Benz EQA	11,617
7 Škoda Enyaq	11,516
8 Hyundai KONA	10,858
9 Volvo EX30	9,931
10 Volkswagen ID.4	8,927

now have 132 Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) models available, with an average range of 280 miles – more than two weeks' of driving for most people. The primary issue with BEV purchases is a lack of private buyers, with only 1 in 10 choosing a BEV in 2024. More action is needed by government to stimulate private demand and accelerate rollout of charge points to provide more confidence for private drivers to make the switch. Source SMMT

For those that have switched to BEV or Hybrid, Hillclimb is a specialist in the service and repair of these vehicles and will continue to invest in the evolution of alternative fuels to ensure we can maintain your car in the future, however it is powered.

### What was the most popular car and colour of the year?

The best-selling car last year was the Ford Puma, with the Kia Sportage and Nissan Qashqai in second and third, respectively. The best-selling BEV was the Tesla Model Y, with the Audi Q4 e-tron coming in second and the Tesla Model 3 in third.

The most popular colour was Grey, for the

Manufacturers continue to pour billions of pounds of investment and incentives into the high voltage car market and

TOP 10 CAR COLOURS 2024			
Colour	No. Registrations	% market share	% volume change on 2023
1 Grey	543,464	27.8%	6.7%
2 Black	423,397	21.7%	9.9%
3 Blue	291,328	14.9%	1.6%
4 White	291,629	14.9%	-7.2%
5 Red	136,371	7.0%	-4.1%
6 Silver	122,473	6.3%	-1.6%
7 Green	66,230	3.5%	27.7%
8 Yellow	11,944	0.6%	0.5%
9 Orange	10,754	0.6%	-35.5%
10 Bronze	5,526	0.3%	-13.0%

seventh year running! Black was second and Blue came in third. Source SMMT



## CHAMELEON SINGLES GROUP

Our winter events have mainly been indoors with some members hosting events at home. Perhaps a good thing with the recent cold snap as we look towards the warmer days of spring and summer. As usual we had a Christmas Dinner Dance, this time held at the Spindle & Thread in High Wycombe. There were 16 of us who enjoyed a 3-course meal along with drinks and a disco to end the evening. It was a great evening out as 2024 drew to a close.

Our AGM is held at the end of January and is very much a planning meeting for events in the coming year. We will be looking forward to some more day trips out and perhaps a short holiday too. We continue to do our walks on a regular basis and this year once again will be supporting one of the Snowdrop Walks in West Wycombe Park.

Along with our popular regular events, including the Lunch Club on the second Friday of the month and the Pub Night on the last Thursday, we continue to do much more driven by our members and their ideas. We plan to attend the

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 the reason, we are here SERVICE – REPAIR – SUPPORT - ADVICE**

Hazlemere Community Centre Quiz in early March and so far we have avoided the wooden spoon! We have yet to be declared winner but will continue to try. For those who want to join us from home we have a Zoom social where we catch up for 40 minutes once a month. This is particularly useful for those who cannot easily get out and is also a place to swap ideas for future events and plan any travel.

**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 07879 332975 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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## J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Spring 2025



Wal, hello and a rather late happy new year to you orl, wal wot a funny old year larst year eh? Rain and rain and then an autumn of gloom and fog, where had the sun got we arsked our selves—but are we downhearted? Oh no, because us gardiners are orlways full of thoughts of things beginning to grow, nature sorts itself out and I reckons we duz the same, 'hope springs eternal' so sum wun ses, "wal orf he gose agin, too much a'wanderin the woods, thinkin too much, wal at least he's out of the house" ses Mrs H...

So wot duz a gardiner do in the Spring eh? Wal, pretty much everything, and sum things you may have got done orlreddy, like digging in yor green manure from larst autumn's sowin, to get some better structure into the soil, especially if you've got a plot up Jubilee to get that clay broken up a bit, and spread sum of yoor home made compost where it needs it. Then get sum sowin and plantin done. I likes to get my tommy toes sown, so that by May they'll be up a couple of inches reddy for a'pottin on. Then plant onion setts as soon as you can, and broad beans to get an early crop so as not to upset the senior management with big corse beans which needs shellin to meet her high standards eh! "He's finally got the message I reckons" ses Mrs H. Of corse there's lots of sowin to do, just read on... There's a'sprinklin annual flower seeds in gaps in yor borders, nasturshalums orlways good, poppies, marigolds and so on then get sum of these into seed boxes for transplantin or thinning out if direct sown, cabbages, beetroot, lettuces, chard, spinach and so on. And you'll orlreddy tidied up a bit more so that bulbs like snowdrops and daffs can get a bit of room. And of corse it's daff bloomin time, see how long you'll have em out in the gardin, ours woz out for two months larst year. Then there's squashes, mine did well larst year, so get em plantid in pots in the greenhouse or winder sill, I've still got four Turks Turbans stored up reddy to add to an interestin soup, we've found that Pumkins like Jackos don't larst too well, so I suggests that you use em up first, arfter Halloween of corse! Summat I've never bin successful with is dwarf French beans, I don't know why, but my runners woz good, especially "enorma" and "scarlet emperor". Oh, a good lady in the gardin club donated sum ollyock seeds, mine are just cumin up, nothing like em for a good show in the summer.

Then there's this bit I found in a gardinin book... you knows I likes spuds but William Cobbett, 1823 hated em, he said... "t is the root of sloveness, filth, misery

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and slavery, its use in England has seen the increase of paupers, but now the English seem to be on the return of beer and bread" Wal you can't please em orl eh!

My French cousin J d'Artichoke told me that a neighbour of his uses goat droppins to make a little nest into which he drops a pumkin seed to germinate, it orlways works he ses, but first get yourself a goat eh!

Wal, that's it for now, so I'll say Cheerio, keep you on a'diggin,

See you up the plot, and a'bientot.

*J. Heartycough. Sent from my iSpade.*

## Simply Walk - Downley



The Simply Walkers Christmas Lunch (16th December) was a great end to the walking year.

After our usual Monday Walk, we filled two rooms at the Downley Old School Community Centre with lovely food, wine, music and laughter. Those in attendance were representative of Mondays and Thursdays current walkers and some returning past walkers just coming to say hello and join in the fun; there were new faces and a lot of old jokes! The music was provided by Pat Greggor and 'The Hybrids', her quartet of saxophone players, who gave us Christmas songs and carols to add to the atmosphere, and an energetic rendition of the 12 days of Christmas to round it off. We were also able to donate to the players' chosen charity, MacMillan Cancer Support.

As a result of the Covid pandemic, we found our numbers at a low ebb for a few years, but this year's Christmas Lunch seems to have broken the ice again and we had a good attendance at the Christmas event. The number of walkers

on Mondays and Thursdays is increasing again on a regular basis. We are getting 20+ walkers regularly and after a recent Thursday walk we had 18 people coming back for coffee. A roomful of people laughing, chatting, keeping up with the conversations started on the walk and continued over a cup of coffee or tea. It was a very encouraging sight, let's hope for more of it. It was buzzing with life and enthusiasm.....or was it delight at the very nice cake someone had kindly brought in for a treat?



*Jeanne Steward*

**Our walks meet and finish at the Community Centre with tea/coffee after**

**MONDAY** 10am for a 1½ hour walk

**THURSDAY** 11am for either the 1 hour level 2 walk or shorter level 1 walk  
ALL WALKS HAVE A TRAINED LEADER/ BACK MARKER

**NEW WALKERS MUST COMPLETE AN ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM**

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**THURSDAY** 11am for either the 1 hour level 2 walk or shorter level 1 walk

**all walks meet and finish at the Community Centre with tea/coffee after**  
**ALL WALKS HAVE A TRAINED LEADER**  
**AND BACK MARKER - Walk at your own pace**

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**Contact Simply Walk on 07802 260812, email [simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) or visit [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/simply-walk](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/simply-walk)**

## DOWNLEY BRIDGE CLUB

**meet every Thursday at the Downley Community Centre from 7-10 15pm.**

We are a small friendly club and all standards of players are welcome with or without a partner. Our club would be ideal for those who play bridge but are hesitant in taking the next step and joining a club.

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



## Downley Brownies and Guides would welcome new members

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**Or contact**

Margaret Stagg / Janet Smith  
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## Littleworth Road Christmas Market

Our 4th Littleworth Road Christmas Market went ahead as planned on 15 December 2024. Thankfully the weather was kind to us and all ran smoothly, with our largest number of traders to date!

We've had some really good feedback on our markets both via Facebook comments, both pre-Market '24 (people recommending it to friends or trader friends) as well as post-Market saying how full and varied it was with a great atmosphere. It's always difficult to judge things when you are involved in the organising, so hearing back from people who support us is always great!

There were 24 stalls (inside and out) including 2 food stalls, The Candy Store and Rungs Thai Food, which are always a great success. Also many selling varied self-made and very professional looking crafts, gifts and jewellery, with price ranges to suit all pockets, as well as

local honey and the Downley Orchard apple juice - and of course the man in red, Santa, and our Mulled Wine stall (which had some competition this year from the re-arranged - due to bad weather the previous weekend - decorating of the Parish Tree on Jubilee Common who were also selling mulled Wine). We managed to raise a healthy £420 final total for the Wycombe Food Hub!

I'd like to thank each and everyone who supported us; firstly Mark Darvill for allowing us yet again to use Hillclimb Garage forecourt and showroom; our Littleworth Tree; all our traders, some regular, some new; blessed volunteers who helped set up and clear away gazebos and tables; and all the lovely people who came along on the day! Whether to browse or buy, you all added to the great atmosphere.

*Shirley Ellis, Organiser*



# Downley Evening WI

Hello and happy 2025 from us all at Downley Evening WI.

Our local WI continues to thrive and to engage with all aspects of modern life, through our informative speakers and the activities we undertake. We are a friendly group who welcome visitors and new members. If you would like to join us and 'try us out', please come along to St James' Church, Plomer Hill, at 7.45pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Any month except March, that is, because March is our birthday month, and our meeting is

only open to our members that night as we celebrate ... I shan't tell you what we get up to for our birthday – you'll have to join us to find out! In the meantime, why not check out our website? [www.downleyeveningwi.weebly.com](http://www.downleyeveningwi.weebly.com) You'll find out much more about us and get a flavour of who we are. You can also contact [dewipresident@gmail.com](mailto:dewipresident@gmail.com)

Hope to see you soon!

*Angela Taplin*



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Cycling UK has a number of local groups including here in South Buckinghamshire.

South Bucks Midweek group offer a selection of rides every Wednesday from easy paced to moderate to rides that are faster and longer. Most rides meet at 09:30am and include a stop for elevenses at a local café or garden centre followed by lunch before returning home. There are also coffee Pots at local venues on Fridays. Chiltern Cycling offers both led rides and coffee pots every Sunday with the focus on welcoming new members. There are a variety of different length rides along with coffee stops all taking place on quiet routes in the countryside that surrounds our local area. Spring means we can enjoy rides with coffee stops offering both inside and outside space with most rides returning to the start point.

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

There is something for everyone of all ages and abilities who wants to get out with both pedal bikes and e-bikers welcome. Occasionally there is also a chance to do some off-road riding.

Hope you can join us, you would be very welcome!

### For more Information:

Web: [www.southbuckscycling.org.uk](http://www.southbuckscycling.org.uk)  
E: [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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## The Village People – The Heights Nursing Home

Well, what a year 2024 has been for the residents at The Heights Nursing Home in Downley. They have had a lot of inspirational visits by some very talented village people, local groups and individuals who have given them the best of their talents to brighten their days.



One resident, Linda Powell, was pleased to see the Downley Gardening Society and took part in their creativity programme at The Heights and entered a rather beautiful floral painting in their Autumn Fair Competition winning her second prize. Alison and Julia from the Society visit The Heights often, supporting the residents to pot bulbs of Tete-a-Tete Daffodils and Hyacinths for their individual windowsills, as well as potting various plants.



One memorable visit was back in March from the Chiltern Hills Montessori Nursery during Ramadan; Miss Mel and her staff and the children were doing random acts of kindness. The children brought bulbs they had planted that week for us to put in our garden. The residents and staff were all delighted to see the children, and it was a perfect way to encourage intergenerational mixing. They came again at Christmas time and watched a bit of Cinderella, our own internal pantomime, which brought smiles to their faces.

We have had much fun too with pupils from both Chiltern Woods School and Downley School who visited frequently, making us feel a part of the local community. The Downley School children excelled in providing a lovely and lively book club by bringing their favourite books to read aloud to residents, bringing the stories alive with fantastic interpretations and characterisations, all wonderfully enjoyed by the residents and supporting care staff alike.

We were also the grateful for the lovely visit from the highly talented Downley Descants Choir back in November who came and sang to us and entertained for well over an hour. Music is important to us and the residents just loved singing along with the Descants.

The very musical High Wycombe & District u3a Ukulele group were also very welcomed visitors to The Heights. u3a have fabulously talented players who know how to entertain! Many of them

wore Santa hats for the occasion but some even had antlers on their heads as part of their very Christmassy costumes. There was a real plethora of musical instruments on show too as they twanged and banged their way through the songs.



And let's not forget the absolutely fabulous woodcarvers, Downley Chipmunks, who delighted us with their visit and creativity back in September last year. Carol, from the Chipmunks,

brought in some lovely carved pieces and talked us through how they create such delicate and intricate carvings.



And back in May we also had a terrific visit from the Bucks Masonic Carpet Bowls team, which was an absolute joy to former bowls enthusiast Dennis. He just embraced the opportunity to bowl again.

As we move into 2025 we cannot wait for all the wonderful new and returning visitors.

## Downley Day Update

Our Christmas Tree Decorating event was a great success and the mulled wine and mince pies added an extra festive note to the afternoon. We hope to repeat the event next year.

The Downley Day committee is undergoing some changes with the resignation of Garfield Lewis who will be replaced by Kamila Turner. Huge thanks to Garfield for his many years of service ensuring the money comes in and stays in! We are also losing Dave and Emma Kendall in the summer so will be needing someone to look after pitch bookings. Again, many thanks to Dave and Emma for all their hard work. Finally, we are looking for someone to organise the Concert on the Common this year. Please contact [info@downley.org](mailto:info@downley.org) if you're interested.



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## News from St James Church



*"You, Lord, will keep the needy safe and will protect us forever from the wicked" Psalm 12:7*

Being safe is so important. We all want to be safe and to keep our vulnerable adults and children safe.



There have always been dangers, and

people who have sought to harm or take advantage of others. Now with more technology there seem to be increasing numbers of ways that this can happen. We see many young people now being bullied on social media platforms.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of past abuse and those who are living with abuse today. It is so hard to stand up to abusers and it takes much courage to do so, so we need to be prepared to listen when people do pluck up the courage to say something. This is a very current issue in the Church of England where Archbishop Justin Welby has just rightly stood down from his position over safeguarding failures. We need to address and take responsibility for the harm caused to others through our failure to act on reports received in the past, and we need to make changes for the future.

I think that people sometimes see things like this on the news and wonder what happens at a local level, so I just wanted to explain that. Downley is part of the Oxford Diocese, and we have a very good safeguarding team who give excellent training and advice on any safeguarding concerns. Each parish in the diocese has a parish safeguarding officer who is trained to deal with safeguarding concerns in the

parish, in the same way that every school has a safeguarding lead.

We know that, as much as we want to, we cannot get rid of every danger, there will always be those who seek to hurt or abuse others, but having good clear ways to report things that give us cause for concern really help. Living in our community, talking regularly to our neighbours and looking out for others around us also makes a big difference. I know several elderly people whose neighbours will ring them if they notice they haven't drawn their curtains in the morning, just to check they are ok.

If you have concerns about others, you can report abuse in High Wycombe to the police (**Call 999 in an emergency, or 101 for non-emergencies**). You can also report abuse online or in person at a police station), Buckinghamshire Council (**01296 383 962 for urgent safeguarding concerns. [www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/care-children-and-families/child-protection-and-safeguarding/](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/care-children-and-families/child-protection-and-safeguarding/)**), or other organizations.



I pray regularly for the safety of my family and friends and for the congregations of St James and all who live in Downley. I know I cannot keep everyone safe, but

I can ask God to do that. I find that when I am feeling anxious about others it really helps me to talk to God and imagine that



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I am lifting up those people and putting them into God's strong arms to look after. You might find this helpful if you are anxious about your loved ones.

### Life at St James:



We continue to host Growing Hope High Wycombe giving free therapy to children with additional needs. You can find out

more about this at <https://growinghope.org.uk/high-wycombe/>



Everyone is welcome to our Messy Church on the last Sunday of each month 4-5.30pm where we do crafts, singing and eat together.

*Heather Graham, Vicar of St James*

## Top Notes

### "The rhythm of life!"



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 fourth consecutive year at the festival and we're delighted that this now features as a regular date on our calendar.

The Autumn was our busiest season of performances to date, from private parties to *John Lewis, Downley Gardening Society* and *Downley Evening WI*. The season was well and truly full of Christmas spirit, music and cheer! The pinnacle was a wonderful *Charity Christmas Concert* in aid of *Chiltern Music Academy* at St Andrew's Church. We raised £2,100 which will go towards supporting disadvantaged young musicians. Thank

you so much to everyone who came and donated to such a wonderful cause - we couldn't do it without you.

2025 is a particularly special year as we are celebrating ten years of singing together and contributing to our community! During this time we've raised over £13,000 for eleven local charities and so, to celebrate, we're planning a spectacular *Charity Summer Concert* with champagne reception and buffet/party afterwards - **SAVE THE DATE - Sunday 28th September**. More details to follow soon!

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 concerts 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 enquires.

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



**Florence  
Nightingale**  
HOSPICE CHARITY

**Remember a loved one this spring with a Precious Pink Peony**

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity has partnered with the magnificent Waddesdon Manor to launch a very special Forever Flowers event to celebrate and remember loved ones this spring.

A stunning, temporary display of 1,200 bespoke metal pink peonies will be installed in the Rose Garden at Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury in April. Each flower will represent the life, love and memories of a loved one.

The Charity is offering you the opportunity to be a part of this event by dedicating one of these limited Precious

Pink Peonies, and an invitation to a private viewing of the display on Monday 28th April whilst the grounds are closed to the public.



The installation will then remain on display to the public for three weeks. Once the installation is removed, those who have dedicated a flower will be able to take it home to display as a forever keepsake.

By dedicating a Precious Pink Peony, you will help us to provide compassionate local hospice care and be there for more patients and families across Buckinghamshire and its borders.

**To dedicate a Precious Pink Peony visit <https://www.fnhospice.org.uk/foreverflowers> or call 01296 429975 for more information.**

# Downley Cricket Club



As snowy days subside and occasional shafts of sunlight become more frequent, here at Downley Cricket Club we are gearing up for another season. A recent inspection of the square reveals it to be okay with plenty of grass and not many weeds. There is evidence of moles burrowing up towards the square, but just affecting the junior football pitches so far.

Indoor nets are being planned in conjunction with High Wycombe Cricket Club at John Hampden School, with HWCC's excellent coach Obi who has already been working with some of Downley's more enthusiastic and keen-to-improve cricketers. HWCC welcome us to use their superb outdoor nets – and bar facilities - on the London Road, starting after Easter. Since we only field one team, HWCC play at Downley when the pitch is free.

Several players have joined in the past year and are already regular contributors, Richard, Suresh, Fionn and Ben D. Having new players join the club is important for the running and future of DCC. With the departure of Martin Birkett, our long standing Secretary, we will be electing new officers at the club AGM on Wednesday 5th February. This will be at the pavilion, start time 19.30.

The team has players of mixed ability, some star performers such as Graham 'Boycs' Swales (who catches everything and purveys an unusual, but very successful brand of flighted deliveries that brings him a rich harvest of wickets) metronomic wicket-taking speedsters such as Club Chairman Graeme 'Aikers' Aitken and Colin 'Squeezer' Caesar, big fast-bowlers Rehaan 'R-dog' Vats and Amish Pandey

and swing-bowler James Beavis. Batting is held together by Pete 'Ledge' Stone, the elegant Rajat 'Virat Kohli' Khator, stylish batter-keeper Ben 'Medals' Alsop, Ali Q, and big-hitter/keeper Rob 'Spreckers' Spreckley. When available, Aaron 'AB' Brown always provides huge runs and brilliant fielding. Plenty of work went into a hugely successful President's Day in August thanks to Fionn and Morwenna with her great publicity posters, Awais – and his Mum's cooking - and the extraordinarily hard-working Anna Hughes and Squeeze at the food and drinks counters. Charlie's Fine Legs easily beat Awais' Leg Side Legends in the Final as the light faded. It was the biggest such event for at least the last ten years.

Throughout the season, our all-action captain Ben Hughes who changes the course of many games with his batting, bowling and catching, ensures that everyone has a fair crack of the whip and every opportunity to contribute. Win or lose, there is plenty of laughter and good-natured comments to keep drifting minds in the field sharp. Afterwards the opposition and us repair to the hospitable Mark and Sarah's Le de Spencer Arms, where on a summer's evening kids play on the swings while mums and dads partake of the excellent food and drink, and relaxing chat.

If you are interested in playing for Downley in the coming season, or helping with scoring or umpiring or pitch and ground preparation, please contact us at [webmaster@downleycc.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@downleycc.co.uk) and you will be made most welcome.

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## Downley Gardening Society

### November meeting review

Sandy Primrose had us entranced, as he always does, with his talk entitled "A tale of two poppies"- the opium poppy and the field or corn poppy. The background to the opium poppy was fascinating. A papyrus had been discovered dating back to 1600BC which described how opium was used for quietening crying children. The Minoan civilisation on Crete worshipped the poppy wearing the flowers in their headdresses. In the Middle Ages opium was known as laudanum (opium dissolved in alcohol) and this was still on sale until the mid-1950's. Shakespeare referred to "Twilight Sleep" in Othello. Many famous poets are known to have been addicted to opium - Byron, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge. Currently the biggest supplier of opium in the world - for medicinal purposes - is Tasmania. Sandy explained the convoluted history which led to the opium wars...our love of tea has a lot to answer for!

### December meeting review

Top Notes choir sang a medley of Christmas and other songs which was a delightful start to the last meeting of the year. This was followed by a short interlude when mulled wine and Alex's home-made mince pies were devoured prior to the fun seasonal quiz prepared and delivered by our own John Willson. We also visited the Christmas lights in Kew gardens.

### January meeting review

Our January meeting was on Zoom. One

of the benefits of having a meeting on Zoom is that we can book speakers from further afield as we don't have to pay travelling expenses, and certainly at the moment it saves spreading the cold and flu bugs which are currently circulating. Fiona Inches from The Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh gave an informative and interesting talk about the current palm house restoration at the gardens.

### Dates for your diary:

February meeting - Monday 17th February 2025, 7.30pm - Lucie Ponsford will present a talk on "The Mimosa Way"

March meeting - Monday, 17th March 2025, 7.30pm - Sandy Primrose will talk about "The Tulip's Story"

April meeting - Monday, 14th April 2025, 7.30pm - AGM followed by a talk on "Growing and exhibiting hostas including their propagation using aeroponics" by Jonathan Hogarth

Trip to RHS Wisley - Sunday, 27th April

May meeting - Monday, 19th May 2025, 7.30pm - Geoff Hodges will talk about "Bugs & Plagues"

*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 and £8 family per year. Website - [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.

# DOWNLEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

## How Downley had fun!

Before radio, cinema and television, before smart phones and social media, what did folks in Downley do for fun? A search through the newspapers up to 1880 reveals a much more sociable life than one might have imagined, and some remarkable examples of continuity.

Most Downley men's favourite pastime was probably going to one of the four pubs. Drinking kicked off the Victorian 'Downley Day' equivalent, which was held on Whit Monday (a medieval holiday replaced by the current Spring Bank holiday in the 1970s). It was reported on first in 1857 but was clearly long standing since it was 'in the usual customs of olden times'. The day involved a heavy session of drinking, singing and playing skittles in the old Bricklayer's Arms, which must therefore have had a skittle alley, followed by twelve bouts of bare-knuckle fighting on the Common, and consequently 'black eyes and bloody noses'. Downley's Wesleyans, meanwhile, celebrated the holiday by singing hymns and drinking tea.

Cricket was the other local passion. The Downley cricket team was first mentioned in August 1846, playing a game on the Common against a team from West Wycombe. Unfortunately, 'the Downley lads were beaten, very much to their astonishment'. Four weeks later, the return match was held on Church Hill, 'when the Downley lads, much to the surprise of their opponents,

were the victors'. These matches seem to have been a regular thing, and soon the net of opponents spread more widely, to include Amersham cricket team in 1857 (we won), Cholesbury in 1864 (we lost), Peterley Manor in 1874 (we lost), and Prestwood in 1876 (we won). By 1866, there was also a junior cricket team, the Downley Juniors: it lost to the Wycombe Marsh Juniors that year; lost to Great Missenden in 1876; and won against West Wycombe in 1879. More unusually, in 1874 a cricket team from Mr Collins' Downley chair factory played against eleven members of Messrs. Hutchinson and Son's chair factory, opening a Musical Festival in the grounds of Wycombe Abbey. In other words, there was clearly more than one cricket team up here – and no football.

Then there were church-related social events. For example, Sunnybank Methodists held an annual fund-raising tea party – that of July 1860 was attended by 300 people and raised £8. From the 1870s, the children of the Anglican Sunday School had an annual summer holiday treat: tea and games with the vicar at West Wycombe. In 1874, this was reported in some detail. *'The Downley children met those of West Wycombe at the school on the Church Hill, and forming in procession, to the number of 120, with their banners, and headed by the West Wycombe brass band, proceeded round the hill and through the village to the vicarage grounds, where they*

*soon dispersed: the boys to cricket, and the girls to swinging, base ball, and other amusements. At three o'clock they sat down to tea, consisting of currant and seed cake, bread and butter, &c. Tea over they again proceeded to amuse themselves. At four o'clock the mothers of the children and the teachers partook of tea. During the evening races were run by both boys and girls for money prizes, the gift of Lady Dashwood, also for toys, neck-ties, &c. Sweets were also distributed amongst them and scrambled for. The Vicar and Mr B. Young, with Miss Young, of Mallard's Court, and the curate, the Rev. A. K. Noon, were most indefatigable in their exertions to amuse the children.'*

In 1876, 190 children attended the treat, and the reporter was a little more detailed about the games they enjoyed: cricket (of course), trap bat, flat races, hurdle races, blind race, three-legged race, spoon race, and a tug of war. There was also a Christmas treat for the children – though given the weather, they stayed put in Downley. In 1878, after an excellent tea provided by the vicar, they were entertained by 'a splendid magic lantern'.

In 1877, the same very proactive vicar set up the 'Guild of St Lawrence', an Anglican association to which some 40 people in the parish belonged, which ran Bible reading classes in Downley, and tea parties. The other social item run by St James Church was a choir, which operated out of the tin church on Narrow Lane, with 20 members in 1876 when it was set up, conducted by Mr Dons of High Wycombe. For those willing to walk to West Wycombe,

there was a brass band, and a parish philharmonic orchestra was set up in 1876, with practices on Monday evenings in the church loft.

In January 1865, about forty Downley men set up a Literary Institute – intending to host lectures and loan out books – which was funded by a monthly subscription of 4d. The first lecture was given the following month by the vicar of West Wycombe on 'The History of England before the Conquest'. Actually, that was the one and only lecture that was ever reported on. However, there was a subsequent development: in 1876, a 'night school' was opened for 'men and lads' for 'their improvement' in Downley, running on Monday and Thursday evenings at 7:30 in the Sunday school room, under the auspices of the vicar and curate. How many attended is not reported.

The same school room was extended to be a Reading Room 'for the accommodation of the young men of Downley'. It was effectively a library, suggesting reading as another pastime. Of course, the Downley Reading Room was probably yet another effort to keep lads out of the pubs, as the press report suggests: 'The opening of the addition made to the Church Sunday Schoolroom at Downley' in December 1877 'was inaugurated by an entertainment, consisting of readings and singing. ... It is hoped that the efforts made to provide for the moral and mental improvement and comfort of the men of Downley will be appreciated by them.'

Two months later, in February 1878, the vicar effectively declared war

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on Downley's pubs, by setting up a Temperance Society. He tried to persuade a packed hall to renounce alcohol with all its evils – crime, insanity, poverty, misery, neglect, and so forth. It is difficult to say whether he succeeded since no further meetings of the Downley Temperance Society were recorded, while the pubs stayed open.

**A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!**  
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**'FURTHER TALES OF OLD DOWNLEY'**  
**7:30 pm Saturday 26 April**  
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## Wycombe Homeless Connection

The particularly cold start to the year with snow on the ground has been a stark reminder of how dangerous it is for people who are sleeping on the street.



clothes. And, most importantly, they have a safe and warm place to sleep. All of this is happening alongside our Support Centre and homelessness prevention work to end homelessness in

On 6 January, Wycombe Homeless Connection's 14th winter night shelter opened its doors. Hosted by seven churches for one night each every week, it will be open for three months over the bleakest months of the year. On the first night one of our guests came in exclaiming "I'm so hungry". He was delighted to be served a hot meal shortly after arriving, and to find that there was plenty to have seconds!

A team of 300 volunteers from across our community have come together to make it happen. Guests are greeted with a warm welcome. A hot meal is served and volunteers sit together with the guests which creates a feeling of community. Hot showers are available at some of the venues and guests can have fresh warm

South Buckinghamshire.

If you would like support the night shelter and all our work, please give to our winter appeal. Gifts of money unlock life saving and life-changing possibilities for our clients.

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**£24.50** can go towards a welcome pack for a guest in our winter shelter.

**£49.00** can help keep our homelessness helpline open for a day.

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Grow Together was born out of the offer of an overgrown allotment in High Wycombe five years ago. We took on the challenge and thanks to the commitment of our band of volunteers, it is now a thriving and productive growing space. In addition to the community allotment, we run classes in local schools to give pupils experience of growing vegetables; we also arrange and manage volunteering days, for staff from local businesses. These are at local venues which require assistance.

Last year we ran monthly teaching sessions for one of the classes at Chiltern Wood School, Downley. To prepare the garden area for the classes, we organised two volunteering days at the school. Assisted by staff from Bucks New Uni, we cut back an over-grown hedge and created two new growing spaces. These were then used throughout the rest of the year, with pupils growing a variety of plants including runner beans, carrots, broccoli and tomatoes. The children thoroughly enjoyed these monthly sessions.

This year we are working at two other local schools; one in Wycombe Marsh and the other in Micklefield. both near our community allotment. We run sessions there through the growing season. Community allotments are a great way



to work alongside others and experience the joy of growing edible produce. The volunteers share what we harvest, with surplus being donated to One Can Trust. Once a month, our regular volunteers enjoy a communal meal at the allotment. We cook it on site, endeavouring to use

produce harvested that morning



If you are interested in a community allotment, helping at a local school or taking part in a volunteering day, contact us for more information. We are a Community Interest Company; we are a not for profit organisation, our main objective is to benefit our local community.

**Richard, Grow Together Bucks.**  
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## u3a learn, laugh, live High Wycombe & District u3a

We ended 2024 with a rousing Christmas Coffee Morning with over 80 attendees at Naphill Village Hall in December. There was entertainment led by our new Handbell ringing group, followed by our well-established Ukulele players and lead singer Nadya. Then there was the Shakespeare quiz, and of course the unique and hilarious pantomime. The traditional community singing finale cheered us all on a cold winter's day.

Previously, members at the final Science Group meeting of the year had been left spellbound by an in-depth talk by Simon, one of our members, on the art of building telescopes. We were treated to a demonstration of the skills involved in building his own telescope. His Dad had started him off with a drainpipe, and members of his telescope-making night school class gave him other parts. However, we failed to lock onto Father Christmas as Simon's telescope was unable to penetrate the cloud cover.

Not to be outdone, our Antiques and Collectables Group enjoyed a fascinating talk on *Christmases Past in Wycombe* from Tony Mealing from the High Wycombe Society. We were left with images of retail shops and customs many of us will have been pleased to forget.

Recent General Meetings have attracted record audiences. No wonder, as our expert in tax law gave her talk shortly after the budget on how best to protect

our family's nest egg including advice on inheritance and lasting powers of attorney.

This set us up well for the wide range of talks and visits planned for 2025. Coming up at our General Meetings are: *The Role of the High Wycombe Mayor; Art, Science and the Unfeathered Bird; Indian Culture – Arranged Marriages*. Come and join us at Lacey Green Hall at 2pm on the last Wednesday of the month if something interests you. You will be very welcome.

With over 30 different groups it is impossible to publish all our news and events here. Our interest groups have busy programmes for 2025. So do visit our Website ([highwycombe.u3asite.uk](http://highwycombe.u3asite.uk)) and Facebook page ([hwdu3a2022](https://www.facebook.com/hwdu3a2022)) or get in touch with me for more information. Several of our activities are geared towards involving our community, by taking part in events such as the Christmas Lights celebrations in Wycombe.

New members are always welcome. If you have an expertise or interest in a particular subject you would like to share with us, or would like more details of our visits, monthly Guest Speakers and monthly Groups, please email Paul ([gilliamph@aol.com](mailto:gilliamph@aol.com)).

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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.

This will be the last column before the local elections on 1st May, and hopefully I will continue to write for you if I am re-elected.

Thank you to all the many residents who volunteers and everyone who contributes in many ways to the life of the village, giving up your own time for everything

that makes Downley such a unique and special place to live.

Paul Turner  
Buckinghamshire  
Councillor for Downley

paul.turner@

buckinghamshire.gov.uk 07825 842292



## Downley Community Orchard

The New Year marks the start of our annual maintenance programme for the trees in the orchard, starting with pruning the trees before they come into leaf to help maintain their right shape and form. We will also be mulching the trees to encourage their health and fruitfulness – we are ever hopeful for a larger harvest!

Our 2024 harvest has helped us raise funds to support the ongoing maintenance of the orchard. We juiced most of the apples collected and had this bottled and pasteurised. The resulting nectar we labelled as 'Downley Delight' and sold this at the December Littleworth Road Christmas Market, where it proved very popular with the customers. We wished we had had a bigger harvest because we managed to sell out within three hours of opening! Many thanks to everyone who bought a bottle – your contribution to our funds will be put to

good use. Thank you also to people who expressed an interest at the Market in volunteering at the orchard. We will be adding your names to our WhatsApp group to let you know about forthcoming activities and work parties.



Our stall at Littleworth Road's Christmas Market

If you would like to learn about caring for fruit trees whilst enjoying gentle exercise outdoors with a friendly group, do consider becoming an Orchard volunteer. More details from Andrew Flint on 07788 135351.



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## From Westminster

Emma Reynolds - MP for Wycombe



I would like to wish the readers of Downley News a happy and healthy 2025. My team and I have been busy helping Wycombe constituents with many issues. I have had the privilege of recently visiting many different businesses, schools and charities. I know many constituents continue to be concerned about our town centre, including the levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and empty shops. I met with a group of small businesses in High Wycombe in December and answered their questions on a range of topics, including the Government's plans to permanently lower business rates for small shops and pubs, paid for by asking online giants to pay their fair share of tax. I recently met with police Inspector Harry Gehnich about the outcomes of the police's recent Town Centre operation which targeted shoplifting, drug-related offences, and anti-social behaviour.

There has been lots to celebrate across Wycombe. It was great to meet with SV2G (St Vincent 2nd Generation) and Hansford Sensors who both recently received Kings' awards. As a keen swimmer, I enjoyed presenting trophies at the Wycombe District Swimming Club's annual awards event at the Wycombe Swan. The club has an impressive 700 swimmers and took part in 36 competitions in 2024, coming top in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire for the 11th year running.

In December, pupils from the Downley School Council had the opportunity to grow their understanding of Parliament during their visit to Westminster. They learnt more about my role as their local MP with some students highlighting their

aspirations to become elected representatives in the future.

I am honoured to be appointed by the Prime Minister as Economic Secretary to the Treasury. I look forward to working with the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, to boost the critical role of financial services in driving growth across the country and delivering vital services to people.

Alongside my ministerial duties, I will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of my constituents. Since being elected last year, I have been privileged to meet so many local residents, businesses and community groups, and look forward to continuing that work.

## Do you enjoy singing?

Why not try your local  
Community Choir  
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St James' Church  
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Contact Lyn on 07974 026 213

We are Downley Descants rebranded as

Downley Voices

# Downley Diary | Round-up of Regular Activities

## DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - SPRING 2025

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

GROUP	DAY	TIME	CONTACT
Active Adults	Friday	13.00 - 14.00	katie.youngman@aitc.org.uk
Al-Anon Polish Group	Thursday	19.00 - 20.30	Maria 07749 068 420
Art Group 2	Monday	10.00 - 12.00	alastair.pike@artsmartuk.com
Boxing	Thursday	17.00 - 18.00	Sam Azimi: 07594 305 407
Bridge Club	Thursday	19.00 - 22.00	syeme.pat@gmail.com 01494 530 558
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 Thursday Saturday	10.00 - 12.00 15.00 - 17.00 10.00 - 12.00	enquiries@downleylibrary.org
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 Wednesday	19.00 - 21.00 18.30 - 20.30	karen@comedancingwithme.co.uk 07873 53 8709
Downley Parish Council	2nd Tuesday	19.30	clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org 01494 257 711
Downley Wives	2nd Monday	14.00 - 16.00	cathyprice18@hotmail.co.uk
Downley Wine & Beer Club	2nd Wednesday	20.00 - 22.00	downleywinebeer@gmail.com
Kingdom Dynamics Chapel	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00	Sharon 07961 822 347
Lace Making	Thursday	13.00 - 15.00	Frances 01494 524 835
Mindstreams Education	Thursday	18.00 - 19.00	info@mindstreamseducation.co.uk
Mondays Minis Playgroup	Monday Term-time	9.30 - 11.15	downleymondaysminis@gmail.com 07724 385 895
M00 Music	Friday Term-time	10.50 - 12.40	elvan@moo-music.co.uk
Natalie Jane Dance School	Monday Term-time Friday Term-time	15.30 - 19.00 16.00 - 19.00	natalie@njdance.co.uk
Painting for Pleasure	Tuesday Term-time	10.00 - 12.00	Sue 01494 443 393
Pilates	Thursday Term-time	18.30 - 19.30	Emma@asenseofbalance.co.uk
Pregnancy Yoga	Monday	19.45 - 21.00	steph@nestandnurture.net
Simply Walk (free)	Monday Thursday	10.00 - 11.30 approx 11.00 - 12.00 approx	Starts from the Community Centre simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Scopum Tutoring	Saturday	11.00 - 12.00	scopumtutoring.com 07376 974 416
Taekwondo	Monday Thursday	18.30-19.30 19.45-20.45	mohzamtkd1@hotmail.com Tel 07870 219 746
Twins & Multiples Club	Friday Term-time	10.30 - 12.30	wendy@questcost.co.uk
Ukulele	4th Thursday	10.00 - 12.00	sylvia.chadwick@me.com
Wycombe Spiritual Centre	1st & 3rd Friday	18.30	ashleydarkwood@gmail.com
Zumba Gold	Wednesday	10.30 - 11.15	jennifer.morais.zumba@outlook.com

## SUNNYBANK CHAPEL, MOOR LANE - SPRING 2025

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

GROUP	DAY	TIME	NEW MEMBERS	CONTACT
Chiltern Hills Montessori	Weekdays	08.00 - 18.00	✓	admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk 01494 514 544
Bible Study	2nd & 4th Wednesdays	10.00 - 12.00	✓	

## GUIDE AND SCOUT CENTRE - SPRING 2025

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

Rainbows	Monday	16.45 - 17.45	✓	downley2ndrainbows@outlook.com
Brownies	Monday	17.45 - 19.00	✓	downley3rdbrownies@outlook.com
Guides	Monday	19.00 - 20.30	✓	downleygg@gmail.com
Rangers	Monday	19.30 - 21.15	✓	gill.lawrence@btinternet.com
Brownies	Tuesday	17.30 - 18.45	✓	jansmith1611@gmail.com
Guides	Tuesday	19.00 - 20.30	✓	margaretstagg75@gmail.com
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Wednesday	18.00 - 21.15	✓	gsl3rddownley@gmail.com
Dog Training	Thursday	18.30 - 20.30	✓	suzannebullworthy@hotmail.co.uk
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Friday	16.30 - 21.30	✓	gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com
Dog Training	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	lisa@shunty.co.uk
Woodlands Preschool	Daily	08.00 - 15.30	✓	admin@thewoodlandspreschool.co.uk

## ST JAMES CHURCH - SPRING 2025

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 2025

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

Art Club	Thursday	09.30		
Coffee Stop	Monday	10.30 - 12.30	✓	christinelstyles@hotmail.com
Downley Gardening Society	3rd Monday	19.30	✓	
Downley Voices	Thursday Term time	20.00 - 21.30	✓	grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk
Dr Sue's Pilates	Monday	18.00 - 19.00		
Karen Pilates	Wednesday Wednesday	09.30 10.35	✓ ✓	karensynergypilates@gmail.com 07786 567 376 karensynergypilates@gmail.com 07786 567 376
Natalie's Meditation Class	Wednesday	20.30 - 22.30		
Philatelic Club	Alternate Thursday	19.30		
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 2025

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

Chiltern Hills Montessori	Weekdays	08.00 - 18.00	✓	admin@chilternhillsmontessori.co.uk 01494 531 565
Pilates	Monday	19.00 - 20.00	✓	karensynergypilates@gmail.com 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)

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### 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)

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### Downley Village News

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Any copy or photographs sent to this address may also be used on the [downley.org](http://downley.org) website and facebook page: [facebook.com/Downley.Community](https://facebook.com/Downley.Community)

**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.

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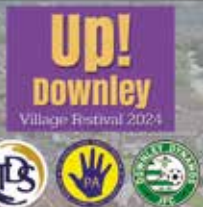
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Jose & Penelope - OCTOBER 2024



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