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COMMUNITY**

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Village News

Issue 144/August 2025



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From Town to Country

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Editorial

We are certainly having a wonderful summer this year, albeit a bit too hot and dry at times. We shouldn't complain I know, but we wouldn't be British if we didn't complain about the weather!

The Up! Downley festival was a huge success as usual, with plenty of events including the welcome return of Open Gardens, and the Art Show which highlighted some amazing local talent (see the poem by Saeeda Hussain on page 13 which is so evocative of our wonderful countryside). Both Downley Day and Concert on the Common took place in glorious weather with great turn-outs to both events. Thanks as always to those organising all the events – from the months of prior planning to clearing up afterwards, it's a huge amount of work and it's all done by volunteers. If you can spare a few hours to help, do get in touch on the Downley Community or Up! Downley Festival Facebook pages.

On page 20 there is a fascinating article written by Martin Audcent about his parents' life in Downley and how they embraced the community and improved it in so many ways; yet more volunteers who helped make Downley the place it is today.

Our next edition will be the winter one, which will be out in mid-November. This is the last issue before Christmas so don't forget to include your Christmas events! 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. **Copy deadline is midday on Sunday 26 October 2025** but please get your copy in as early as possible as space is limited.

Anne, Editor • editor@downley.org

Front Cover Photo: Donkey Derby at Downley Day courtesy of Saul Pope. @the_downley_photographer

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Downley Simply Walk Simply Walk

Simply Walkers have been enjoying the lovely unaccustomed sunny weather for our walks in the last quarter – I can only recall one walk where we actually got wet! At the beginning of June, some of our leaders and regular walkers were involved with the Annual Village Walk. We had 55 people from Downley families and friends marking the ancient boundaries through the fields and woods around the village, ending at the Le De Spencers Arms for drinks and biscuits. We frequently find ourselves walking back through the Community Orchard, across the Cricket Pitch and the Common at the end of a walk, as shown in the photograph.



Walk at our local hostelry (yes, the Le De again!) and sit and chat in the sunshine in the garden with a mixture of Monday and Thursday regular walkers and some of

our 'old' walkers, returning to catch up. It was a jolly occasion, and we are now looking forward to our Christmas Lunch – another opportunity to sit and eat, drink and merrily enjoy each other's company. Oh, and we will still be walking in the meantime on Monday (90 minutes, Level 3), and Thursday (one hour, Level 2 and 50 minutes, Level 1) to suit all our walkers. We meet at the Community Centre at 10.00 on Monday and 11.00 on Thursday. Come and join us for the walking (and the socializing).

Jeanne Steward

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

**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

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)

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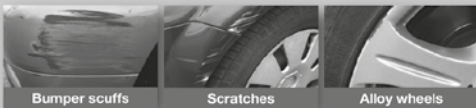
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Downley Common News

June saw our annual attack on the bracken in the coppice area adjacent to the lane to the old dairy. The bracken was seriously high and the saplings were hard to find and quite a few had died probably due to lack of water and nutrients but we were able to replace about



a dozen and cleared around many of the rest. Since then an inspection has revealed them to be alive and well although some further bracken clearance would be good if anyone has the time and inclination.

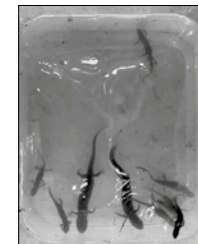
On 5th June a team from Naphill (certified to use Natural England approved methods) performed a newt survey on Mannings Pond involving "torching" (ie using high powered torches to observe and identify any visible newts) followed the next day by checking bottle traps laid the previous evening. The following were observed:

Torching:

- 1 female Palmate newt
- 3 male Palmate newts
- 4 unidentified Palmate newts

Bottle traps:

- 4 female Palmate newts
- 4 male Palmate newts
- 1 female Great Crested Newt (GCN)
- 1 male Great Crested Newt



The difference in size between the Great Crested Newts and the Palmate newts is quite obvious in the above photo. The male GCN has a silvery strip along the middle side of the tail and unique patterns on the

underside. Only the male has a crest. Both male and female GCNs have gold rings on the toes.

In July we flailed some areas of the Common in line with our management plan. These were areas that featured some wildflowers earlier in spring but

now are overtaken by bracken and brambles which we want to discourage. Ideally, we should be removing the grass as well in order to reduce the soil nutrient levels (which encourages wildflowers) but this is currently impractical except in a few limited areas. Last year, we raked the glade opposite the Golf Links villas and were encouraged to see both the snow drops and cowslips spreading further than they have previously. While it may be too early for there to be much effect on soil nutrient levels, it is possible that just removing the layer of cut grass has enabled more seeds to reach the soil and germinate.

We have also attacked the overhanging branches along the final stretch on Plomer Green Lane which were significantly encroaching on the road. There is a large cherry which is leaning and may need further work if it goes over any further.

Our September work party takes place on 7th September. It would be fantastic if you could come along and give a hand with the various tasks that need doing during the Autumn months.

Bill Thompson.

Downley Common Preservation Society

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Downley Community Centre

Web site: downleycommunitycentre.org.uk
The new online booking system has been up and running for a few months and has been very successful so far at making it easier for all to engage and communicate with the Community Centre. We've automated most bookings and all regular hirers, existing and new, can view and manage their own dates and check availability.

brought in many examples of their work specifically for the children's visit.



Separate visits were made by Woodlands Play Group and The Heights Nursing Home. All visitors showed a keen interest in the exhibits and fun was had by all.



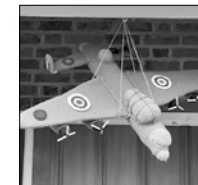
VE Day 80th Anniversary 8 May 2025



Some of the centre's regulars stepped in to mark the special commemoration

by decorating the centre with some amazing creative art displays. Works were on show from the Art Group, Crochet Club, Downley Wives, Lacemakers, Monday Minis and Zumba.

Aside from a crocheted Lancaster Bomber hanging in the porch and the decorated garden bench outside, the windows were decorated with various VE day inspired creations.



Building

As part of our environmental and energy saving plans, we met another milestone in our ambition to install a solar panel system to manage our electricity needs. A second site survey looking for the emergence of any bats was successful in confirming we have none in residence! We've now re-applied for planning permission to get the project going.

In June a working party from the management committee and trustees volunteered their time to undertake a general tidy up of the grounds outside the building. Our thanks to all for their great community spirited work.

Grants

Giving back is a key commitment for the Management Committee and Trustees. This month we've been delighted to support the Downley Cricket Club with a contribution towards a new electronic scoreboard.

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.

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Up! Downley Festival 2025

Well, in my opinion, this year's Festival was the best ever!

It kicked off with Disco Bingo, this year sponsored by A&M Refurbishment. The popularity, following last year's debut, was reflected by the fact that 130 tickets sold out very quickly, generating £260 for this year's charity, Sarcoma UK. We will, no doubt, be repeating this event next year and will look to have more tickets available.

'Art Within Tent' the following Monday was well attended by both young and old, all looking to develop their artistic skills, with demonstrations including pottery and alcohol ink painting.

The Comedy Night, this year sponsored by ABK Ltd, is always popular and this year was no exception – 400 tickets sold out in 24 hours! We were all entertained by four exceptional comedians. It is quite remarkable that we are able to attract such quality to a marquee on the Common in Downley!

The History Walk took place the following Tuesday, led by Hilary Brash. About 60 people enjoyed an informative and interesting walk around Downley finishing at the Le De

where a whip-round raised approximately £120 for the Downley History Group.

This year we decided to resurrect the 'Open Gardens' event which Andrew Flint very kindly took on the mantle of organising. 120 people enjoyed visiting 10 beautiful gardens in the Village, followed by refreshments at the Sunnybank Methodist Chapel which raised an amazing £564.89 for the Growing Hope charity.

Saturday 5th through to Friday 11th July saw the Art Show in the Community Centre.

Although there were not as many entries this year, the quality of the artwork on show was as good as ever.

I would like to thank all those who helped make this year's Festival a success, particularly those on the Festival committee, the Art Show committee, our sponsors, cake bakers and all those villagers who came along and supported the various events.

Finally, any group, club or society in the Village who would find a grant helpful to the running of their organisation, please contact me at ardsmore@btinternet.com

Fran Lazenby, Chairman, Up! Downley Festival Committee

Open Gardens Event

"What a wonderful afternoon it's been visiting people's gardens."

"It's been fascinating learning what lovely gardens exist behind the fences you pass everyday."

"Best cake I've eaten in ages!"

These are a small selection of comments received from satisfied customers that came along to the Open Gardens Event on Sunday 6th July which was included as part of the village festival after an absence of several years. Over 120 people came along to view the 10 gardens that opened their gates to the public, representing many different garden styles, shapes and sizes. The weather gods scared us with a clap of thunder and a downpour just

as the gardens were opening, but the skies cleared and the sun came out for the rest of the afternoon. Downley's cake makers excelled themselves with a delicious selection available to refresh garden visitors in Sunnybank Methodist Chapel.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the people who so generously opened their gardens, to everyone who made cakes, to the team at Sunnybank Methodist Chapel who worked their socks off serving teas and cakes and to everyone that came along to the event. We were raising money for 'Growing Hope' who provide a range of therapy sessions for young people with special needs, based at St James' Church. Thanks to your generosity we were able to donate £564.89. Thank you again.

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Arty Happenings at Up!Downley

Art Within Tent and the Village Art Show 2025 both again proved to be events full of Downley creativity!

The Art in the Marquee ('tent') event was launched last year as a free community evening to encourage anyone - child or adult - to have a go with different kinds of art materials, supported by established local artists who led an informal summer's evening sharing ideas and skills.

This year attendance rose dramatically and there was a real buzz with people of all ages busy trying their hand at various subjects - cartooning, landscapes, portraits (with Tom as willing model), still life with old flower pots and a vintage watering can, plus demos of alcohol ink painting and ceramics. It was a fun evening of creative activity and chat.

The well established Art Show at the Community Centre was a wonderful showcase of Downley's talents. It was full of colour and life - paintings and drawings in just about every medium, exquisitely crafted wooden chopping boards, poetry, ceramics, sculptures and photography.

The children's entries made for a colourful entrance, with individual and communal work ranging from age 2 to 12, including work by Woodlands Pre-School and The Downley School. 43 artists took part showing pieces large and small and the three hundred plus visitors could enjoy 117 items displayed. Winners for the different age categories in the junior entries were selected and for adult participants there was a winner chosen by visitors - this year the People's Favourite was the lovely poem 'Rooted in the Chilterns' by Saeeda Hussain, about her affection for Downley and its beautiful countryside. Other winners are:

Juniors: 1st Emily Styles; 2nd Amelie Howitt;
3rd Jaiden West

Adults: 2nd and 3rd Carol Lock

Well done everyone!

There were people demonstrating during open hours - portrait drawing, sketching, cartooning and abstract painting - and day time visits by local school children were again a great success. Thanks to everyone involved in organising the show and to everyone who took part or came to view!

Plans are already afoot for the 2026 event, which

will be called the Downley Arts and Crafts Show to widen its appeal and attract even more people to come and put up their creative work so that everyone can enjoy seeing what hidden talent there is in the village.

The volunteers who organise the show for next July would love to hear from anyone who could spare a few hours to support this event by helping with some of the admin work, publicity, setting up the entries or stewarding. If you would like to be part of it please contact downleyartshow@outlook.com

Rooted in the Chilterns

For Downley, my home since April 7th, 2021

I came to where the hedgerows sprawl,
Where woodlands whisper, magpies call,
The Chiltern trails and open skies,
Where ancient beech trees gently rise.

Four springs have passed since I arrived,
And in these hills, my soul revived.
Each leaf and bramble, stream and bend,
Became my path, my guide, my friend.

I run where roots like veins extend
Through Downley woods that twist and blend.
The chalk beneath, the birds above,
All teach me pace, breath, and love.

The runners, walkers, dogs that dart
Each plays a part, each warms my heart.
Hughenden paths and National Trust,
Zigzagging tracks lead through the dust.

My life towards this wilder place,
Where every season wears a face.
The winter hush, the summers burst,
The rain that blesses, never cursed.

The Chilterns shape my strength and soul,
Ach winding trail, a silent goal.
Now every root and branch I know,
Each stile I cross, each field I go
Downley, my compass and my flame,
In every step I know your name.

This land has taught me how to breath,
To move, to rest, to plant, to grieve.
And when I run, it runs with me
The woods, the wind, the bending tree
So here I stay, where wild things roam,
Among the hills I've made my home.

No finish line, no race to end
Just nature's arms, and time to mend.

Written By Saeeda Hussain ©

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There has been a lot happening this summer including day trips to Dorking Antique Centre (Antiques and Collectables Group) and to the art collections at Compton Verney (Discovering Art Group), as well as our annual holiday this year to Cheshire and North Wales. Also, the Local History Group were invited by the Earl and Countess Howe to Penn House which is on our doorstep, yet few of us had previously visited it.

Our other groups are all thriving. If you are interested in Bird Watching or Walks you will find details of their programmes on our website [highwycombe.u3a.site.uk], plus information about all our interest groups and contact details. Our outside speaker schedule for our monthly General Meeting is also advertised there. We are looking forward to Ruth Ellis, the Last Lady Hanged, and Castles in London in next year's programme.

Reports of recent activities are on our Facebook page [hwdu3a2022].

Courtesy of Eden Shopping Centre, our members have continued to enjoy the Silver Series of free monthly events available to all older residents. These include cinema viewings and coffee mornings. Contact customerservices@edenshopping.co.uk (01494 768068) for more information.

And finally ... we were very pleased to be asked again to support the Hughenden Flower Festival at St Michael and All Angels Church on the August Bank Holiday weekend. We will have a flower display in the church and some examples of our members' crafts in the North Hall with news and information about what u3a offers.

*Judith (Secretary), hwu3asecretary@gmail.com
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The Woodland Pre School

It won't be long before the start of the new school year and the children who have just left Woodlands will start their first year of Primary School. We've spent the last year offering them experiences and teaching them skills to help them be "school ready" so they can start school with confidence, make friends, do things for themselves and most importantly, enjoy learning. School readiness involves many things, but one skill underpins everything and is essential: communication.

However, across the UK, many children are starting school with significant communication delays. Research shows that as well as limiting their ability to express themselves, communication and language difficulties have a direct impact on the child's long term educational development. A recent study led by the University of Sheffield highlighted a correlation between a child's level of language development at the age of five years old and their GCSE results. That's a powerful reminder: how well a child can speak and understand language by the time

they start school could shape the rest of their educational journey.

At Woodlands we have noticed a decline in children's communication skills since the pandemic, for a variety of reasons - disrupted routines, fewer social interactions, increased screen time — but the result is the same: many children are arriving at pre-school struggling to listen, speak clearly, take turns in conversation, or express themselves confidently.

That's why we've made communication support a core part of what we do, particularly through focused small group sessions in our Language Shed, which is outside and away from the general hubbub of the main room. This quiet space is great for encouraging less confident children to join in with small group discussions and has a wealth of resources. The children have enjoyed going to The Language Shed to play musical instruments, push cars down a track, play sound bingo, blow bubbles, listen to stories, sing nursery rhymes and generally have fun, without realising how much 'work' they are doing on turn taking,

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expert advice and information including the language skills toddlers learn through drumming and how you can help toddlers say words properly, among other things.

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Downley Voices

We have finished now for the summer at Downley Voices and it will be all change when we start back in September. As many of you know, Louise, our musical director since 2012 has decided to hang up her baton, but from September we will be in the hands of Becky, our very talented accompanist who has agreed to step up and become our new MD. Whilst talking about Louise, back in 2012 when Lyn decided to start a choir, we were looking for a musical director and conducted interviews for the post. The first person didn't share our views on what we expected from the choir, then someone suggested Louise. We thought she would be far too busy, as she was the MD of Wycombe Orpheus Male Voice Choir at the time, but she said, 'I like a challenge', agreed to join us and the rest is history.

Louise's last concert was at St Nicholas Church in Taplow when Downley Voices performed as the guests of Reading Male Voice Choir, a fitting swansong. She had the honour to conduct the joint piece, Anthem from Chess. There were over 60 choristers from Reading and 25 of us. Of all the favourable comments we received, one sticks in my mind. 'The power of the male voice choir and the harmonies from Downley

New Beginnings

Voices blended perfectly together'. This concert was only a week after our concert as part of Up! Downley Festival, where, together with the Disco Bingo evening, we opened the Festival. We had a very good audience even though we thought it might be adversely affected by having another big Festival event on the same day. We chose Alzheimer's Society for our charity and expect to make a significant donation to them, once all the expenses are in.

Moving to the new term in early September, we will be concentrating on Christmas.

For a choir, Christmas lasts for almost 4 months. Becky already has our Christmas concert planned and it will include pieces old and new, including a version of The Twelve Days of Christmas that you probably have never heard before. If you want to try Downley Voices please contact Bob or Lyn on 07974026213 or use our email downleyvoices@gmail.com. You can have a couple of weeks free before either making the commitment to join or simply walking away. We do not hold auditions but insist on a love of singing and the camaraderie and feeling of community choristers feel at our rehearsals.

Bob Cook (Bass)

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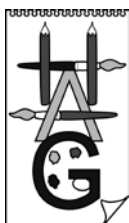
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J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Autumn 2025



Wal, wot a summer eh? I'm a'writing this in the middle of July, 'Wot a scorcher' they used to say when it got up to 80f, that's 27C in new money, but now it's 90f or 33C! Wal, I reckons that us gardeners ave got to think seriously about wot to do in these worryin times, you can't spend orl yor time waterin, but that's wot you've got to do to stop yor soil turnin into bricks, good ole Downley clay, no wonder they used to make bricks up 'ere!

Anyway, how ave you got on this summer? Wal sum of you will know if you visited them gardins in the 'Open Gardins' bit of the Downley Festival, and wot a luvly mix of gardins there was eh? Its orlways good to see how others duz it, ave a bit of a chat at the same time, I reckons gardeners are basicly friendly folk, though a bit competitive at times eh! Mrs H then ses...

"Im competitive, he's orlways sayin his spuds or onions are the best up the plot, and how the young wuns don't know wot they're at, especially them 'no diggers', a passin phase he ses, they spends lots of money on compost just to avoid a bit of diggin".

Wal, I dunno, wots wrong with digging, eh? A bit of exercise, and a newly dug plot looks wonderful, orl that luvly Downley clay with flints is a treat to behold! "Oh, he's off agin, He's actually a bit jealous of them 'no diggers' and their compost" ses you knows who.

So compost, wal I luvs proper compost, and I luvs bonfires too, but they've banned em up the plot, why it beats me, when there's an enormous wun on the common on Guy Fawke night, and bonnies are good for potash, and that's wot ripens yor tommy toes! And, wait for it... 'Unintended consequences', having to compost everything means compostin of bigger stuff takes years which means more and more compost heaps, and wot luvs compost heaps? Rats! So now we've got rat heaven up the plot, rat city I calls it, when a bonny is a pleasurable traditional thing, summat to tend and chat about, be proud of eh? "Oh, he's really avvin a go now, he'll be on about this right through the winter, he'll be sayin he's had one of his great pleasures taken from him, summat else for him to grumble about," ses Mrs H.

Wal, do get yor compost spread over yor plot and dug in, preparing for the year to cum, just watch how that Downley clay gets transformed into rich fertile soil, ave a look at mine to see wot nearly fifty years of diggin can do! Wal, wot's done well up there this year? Wal, loganberries, orl them currants just fabulous, spuds good arfter lots of waterin, and my squash bed Wal! You can see them pumkin runners getting longer as you watch em, I luvs it when they heads orf acrose the path, into the bean or beetroot plot, until you stumbles acrose a luvly pumkin or patty pan or turks turban, wot luvly names they ave too. We've got a poster in the kitchen with veg varieties, here's sum of em... 'cantaloup', 'potiron geant', 'brade de tours' and 'couge a la moelle'. Wal you've realised that these are French names, my French cousin, Jean d'Artichoke gave us the poster, he ses he grows orl these and more, he ses he orlways wins the village melon competition, he has a secret formula he ses, he injects em with sugar water..wal, I dunno!

From Gilbert White's diaries... "July 13th, 1778 - great watering". "July 30th, 1781 - Ants, male, female and workers, came forth from under my stairs by the thousands." "July 17th, 1783, The jasmine, very beautiful, now covered in bloom, is so sweet I am obliged to leave my chamber."

Wal, I reckons I'd better get out in the gardin and do a bit of waterin now, so it's cheerio, and a'bientot'.

J. Heartycough. Sent from my iSpade.

David and Christine Audcent

A reflection on their life in Downley by their son Martin Audcent

Justin, Jon, Alexa & Martin would like to inform all of Dad's friends in Downley that he sadly passed away at the age of 86 on 16 July at his home in Preston, Rutland. David will be put to rest alongside his beloved wife, Christine, who passed away in 2021.



As many of you will know, David & Christine Audcent were long-time Downley residents, living in Woodcote Green for 48 years before moving to Rutland in 2016. All four of us children grew up in the village and attended The Heights County First School and Downley Middle School, with many memories of school life under the tutelage of Miss Phillips at the Heights, and then Mr Burrows and Mr Rousell at Downley Middle. Mum and Dad were very community-minded people and came to know so many lovely people in Downley over the years. I think back to the 1970s and 1980s, where Mum would buy a joint of beef at the Butcher's in the High Street, have milk delivered from Stan the milkman, and where the weekly shop would be at Budgens in Cross Court. As kids we would buy sweets and comics with our weekend pocket money from Malik's and then Ward's in the parade of shops.

In those days, I remember well the winters when Downley would often get locked down from snowfall and the only way into Wycombe was to walk down Plomer Hill or across the fields where the Pastures would

later be extended down the "New hill". As a family we would attend the Catholic service at St James' Church every Sunday, led by Father Michael and later by Father Kevin. Dad, as a dedicated churchgoer, was heavily involved with the management and support of St James' Church and

was particularly committed to building bonds between the Anglican and Catholic communities at this shared church.

Mum struck up a lifetime friendship with Nellie and Bill Harvey, who lived in Plomer Green Avenue and had been Downley residents for most of their lives. Nellie and Bill would have been in their fifties when they came across a young Audcent family in the 1970s. Bill would provide us with regular supplies of vegetables from his garden and Nellie was a wonderful support to my Mum in some difficult years. In her later years, Mum gave caring support to Nellie with trips to the hospital, shopping and companionship. Mum never learnt to drive – she always preferred to take the bus where she could talk to people; do you remember the 310 & 311 buses from Wycombe?

In 2002, when Wycombe District Council called a meeting to discuss how community life could be enhanced in the village, Mum went along with good friends Joan Bradbury and Deborah Brewer, and Rosemary Cropper and Rhoda Cross. With Parish Council backing, they decided to start a

new weekly drop-in coffee shop, called the "Coffee Stop" which would be managed and run by volunteers. They were joined, amongst many others, by Noreen Talbot, Amarjit Tegala, and Cynthia Pryde. The venture opened up in the old School Building in Chapel Street and everyone was welcome. The Coffee Stop was a huge success and became a popular meet up for many of Downley's older residents as well as mums with young children. Special events were held for Valentine's Day, the Harvest Festival, Easter and Christmas, where Christmas dinner was served to many.

Fortune led to Joan Miles and Sandra Morris becoming visitors to the Coffee Stop – both of whom had recently retired from being school librarians. Joan, Sandra, John Morris and Dad then took it upon themselves to form a working group which led to the establishment of a new Downley Library service in the Old School building. This was also a great success and again run by a wonderful team of volunteers.

The Coffee Stop, which had become an increasingly popular hub for the village, moved to St James' Hall in 2006 so more people could be accommodated. Whilst Mum stepped into the role of chief co-ordinator, Dad helped by providing lifts to the elderly and infirm, and became the principal photographer, pamphleteer, poster designer and printer. Mum and Dad remained fully involved with the Coffee Stop until their move to Rutland in 2016.

In the late 1990s when Cross Court had started to become a hub of antisocial behaviour, Dad was instrumental in setting up the Downley Neighbourhood Watch Group. Working alongside the local councillors and village police officers, he helped run the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and raise security awareness in the village. Dad

also helped in setting up a new Downley Community Youth Group. Mum and Dad were later recognised by Wycombe Council with a well-deserved Community Award for their endeavours in the local community. In their last few years in Downley, Mum was a member of the Downley Descants community choir and was an enthusiastic member of an art group and book club. Dad remained fully involved with St James' Church and continued to contribute photographic prints, leaflets and posters for village activities.

Above all, Mum and Dad loved living in Downley, for the community, the people, and the countryside. Even today, a walk around the Pheasant Drive fields and back up through the woods is a delight, the view across to the Golden Ball, and a walk over the Common to watch the Downley Cricket Team on a Saturday.

I think it's fair to say their hearts reside in Downley, and what they overwhelmingly valued most of all was their friendships. So on their behalf, thank you to all those who shared close friendships with them over the years including Nellie and Bill Harvey, Fred, Joan and Ray Bradbury, Deborah Brewer, Noreen Talbot, Cynthia and Don Pryde, Ann and Peter Buxton, Des Ryan, the Palin family, Jim and Maureen Breen, and the many others who knew them.

Funeral Service

Dad's funeral was on 1 August at St Peter & St Paul's Church, Preston, Oakham, Rutland. If you would like to leave a message of remembrance or make a donation to David's chosen charity, please visit David's tribute page where details can be found:
<https://davidaudcent.muchloved.com>.

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Top Notes

"Ain't no mountain high enough!"



Plans are well underway for our *Ten Year Anniversary Charity Concert* on **Sunday 28th September, St Andrews Church at 4:30pm**. With it being a special year, we set ourselves an ambitious target to raise £10,000 for *Thames Valley Air Ambulance* through our performances throughout the year and online auction...we're delighted to let you know that we're already a quarter of the way there! Thank you so much to those who've supported us so far at performances, by bidding online and also the generous grants received from Downley Village News and the Downley Day Committee.

Our 2025 performance season started with a fantastic evening as part of **Beaconsfield Festival of Chors** in March, and then in May we were delighted to be asked to perform as part of **Wycombe Orpheus Male Voice Choir** Annual Concert, and even more pleased when they also elected to support our fund-raising efforts this year. It was

a wonderful evening of music and we thank them and their audience for their generosity.

Since then we've had some lovely preview performances in local care homes and at St James Church and we are now so excited to share our music and concert in September. Tickets are available via *Eventbrite* website - search for Top Notes Choir. The event starts with a drinks reception at 4:30pm, followed by the concert at 5:00pm and then a buffet and celebration party until 10:00pm. We hope you can join us for what is sure to be a brilliant evening.

You can follow us on our social media channels (*Instagram: @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 for any general enquires.

Hope to see you in September!

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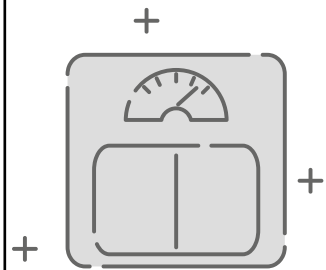
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Downley Pharmacy News

I am writing this as I prepare for summer holiday but with full knowledge that the autumn season is fast approaching! We do seem to go from one season/campaign to the next very rapidly with what seems like little time to recover to a sensible pace of work.

Autumn season means vaccinations! The flu and covid campaigns will commence on 1st October as last year. Booking will be via the National booking service (NBS) online or by calling 119. This service will open on 1st September and I am sure many of you will receive prompts from GPs or NHS apps. We will endeavour to provide as many appointments as possible. If you find you are not being offered on a given date choose a later date or location but keep in mind that the campaign runs through October, November and beyond. There simply isn't capacity anywhere for all to have vaccinations in the first week! For Covid vaccinations the cohort being offered is as the spring booster campaigns - only those over 75 and the immune suppressed. Criteria for NHS flu vaccines remain the same as previous years - those over 65 or medical need such as diabetes, asthma and other conditions. At this stage I am not sure what private vaccinations we will be offering.

The 10 year plan for the NHS will have an impact on pharmacies with more services to be provided by us rather than GPs or A and E. We have certainly seen positive feedback from patients given care via the Pharmacy First scheme as it is currently, providing advice or treatment for common minor ailments

where requested in the pharmacy or by referral from GP or 111. We are also able to initiate and provide ongoing oral contraceptives without GP involvement. We will be continuing to check in with those receiving new medications to ensure there are no problems and that there is full understanding of how and when to take etc.

Health promotion is one of the long term aims of the 10 year plan announced recently so we will have more campaigns, surveys and on the spot tests such as our current BP checks introduced into our daily routines within the pharmacy. Please help us by interacting with such requests as doing so maintains our profiles as a valued NHS contractor.

As ease of access to the NHS becomes more of a challenge for many and our income from the NHS decreases, we are continually looking for ways to move forward for the benefit of all and are able to offer more private services and treatments. One recent introduction has been our weight management service whereby patients are assessed for suitability for a selection of prescription products to assist with their weight loss programme. These are prescribed and provided with full support at a four weekly face to face appointments, so far a positive experience for both client and myself seeing positive results. Rachel and Louise continue to offer ear wax removal via micro suction and have also spotted and referred onwards some whose issues were not just a case of wax blocking the ear canal.

Please remember to allow 7 days for prescription supplies to be ready. The best and preferred method for ordering repeat prescriptions is via the NHS app, our service of dropping slips to the surgeries is not tracked and we often have reports that the surgery have not received the request and we cannot provide a definitive answer as to what happened to the piece of paper delivered on your behalf. It is also worth noting that GP systems do not allow for items to be issued more than 10 days

before next expected need. It is therefore essential that if anything changes in dosage frequency or you have plans to go away resulting in earlier requests these are noted on the request form and/or the surgery is contacted in this regard for details to be updated.

Thank you all once again for your support and kindness to us. It was great that so many stopped by our stand at Downley day just to say thank you, or you do a wonderful job!

Fiona and the team

Downley War Memorial Hall

A Heart at the Centre of the Village

A small update from the trustees

There's something special about a space that brings people together, and at Downley War Memorial Hall our small committee of trustees is proud to help care for this much-loved community hub. This spring, we were thrilled to welcome so many of you to our VE Day 80th Anniversary Coffee & Cake Afternoon. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with smiles, memories, and the delicious smell of homemade cake. Thank you to everyone who came along and to those who baked, poured tea, or simply took the time to chat with a neighbour.

We are also busy working behind the scenes to ensure the Hall continues to serve the village for generations to come. Recent improvements include new electrics and an upgrade to the fire doors, and we're lining up more enhancements with a full redecoration and repairs to the outside brickwork. Also, work to replace

the tired steps at the front of the building is scheduled to start this September. We are proud to be preserving a space that means so much to so many.

Our next community gathering will be for **Remembrance Day on Sunday 9th November at 3:00pm**. This annual event is always a meaningful moment of reflection, and we hope to see many of you there.

And don't forget that the hall is available to hire for birthdays, anniversaries, clubs, and classes. To check availability or make a booking, email us at dwmh.bookings@gmail.com or visit:

<https://e-voice.org.uk/downley-memorial-hall/>

We're lucky to have such a strong and supportive community here in Downley, and we thank you for helping to keep our Memorial Hall at its heart.

Lea McDonald

On behalf of the DWMH Trustees



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Downley Day News

Another good Downley Day happened on 21st June although there were a number of hurdles to overcome on the way. First of all, one of our dance performances in the arena was cancelled owing to difficulty in recruiting the requisite number of dancers. Efforts to replace the group with a martial arts display also came to nought. Then the weather conspired against us by forecasting temperatures so high that the vets advised that the dog show be cancelled to protect their health. Lastly, on the morning of the event, I had a phone call saying the fair had lost their main truck containing the generator to a breakdown and wouldn't be able to make it. There has been a suggestion that we managed so well in the fair's absence that perhaps we might do without them next year; it would be good to get the opinion from readers. Many thanks to the scouts for stepping up with their big tent and axe throwing and archery games. They say troubles come in threes and they certainly did this year.

Still, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and the donkey derby was deemed a great success. Congratulations to the team from Norfolk and Good who ran away with the Downley Donkey



Challenge Cup in a thrilling final race. It was good to see a team all the way from East Anglia!

Many thanks to all the volunteers who made the event a success and thanks to the sponsors (Hillclimb) and many raffle prize donors.



Concert on the Common was its usual success and the charity collection raised £713 which will go to Scanappeal. Thanks to RH Amar for providing the stage and to the three bands for playing for free.



The Downley 5K run was entered by 89 runners and was won by Ben Styles (junior male) in a time of 19 min 8 secs. The top female (adult) was Louise Fry with a time of 21 min 49 secs. Well done to all who competed and many thanks to all the volunteers and sponsors who made it happen.

As usual, the profits from this year's events will be disbursed to successful

grant applicants who need to be local groups or groups supporting local residents. Applicants should contact info@downley.org with details of the amount requested and what it will be used for. Please note that we support one-off expenditures rather than routine operating

expenses and grants will be paid on receipt of allowable invoices. The decisions on successful applicants will be made at our AGM in early November (date to be confirmed).

Bill Thompson, Downley Day Committee



THE DOWNLEY SCHOOL

"Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together"



What a great end to our year! The start of our improvements to our grounds has finally begun and we are excited to see the new MUGA on our return in September.

Our events this Summer have been exceptionally well attended. From school fairs and concerts to year group performances that showcase all our learning from this academic year. Each class presents to their parents and to the year below as part of the transition process. It's a lovely opportunity to capture the highlights and reminisce on the great experiences we have shared in our school teams.

We are pleased with the academic progress our children have made this year achieving above national standards in phonics, multiplication and end of Y6 SATs. Our curriculum offer has been enhanced through some great trips which have helped us to reinforce our learning in other curriculum areas, in particular Science and Geography. Not



only are we proud of our academic achievements but we are also super proud of our football team who not only won their league but also the cup!

Of course, it wouldn't be a summer term

without a Sports Day and a 'TDS Colour Run'. The latter event was organised by our amazingly supportive PTA. Everyone that took part had an amazing time - you can see some of the smiles on the faces in the photo .

Next year we are pleased to be able to once again make use of our amazing site and offer Forest School to every child at TDS. We are also looking at our extra-curricular offer to improve on our clubs and will continue our work on transforming playtimes...all this whilst continuing to raise academic standards!

This time of year always brings excitement for the year ahead mixed with some sadness as we say a very fond farewell to some super staff who are returning to overseas. We are also sad

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to say goodbye to our amazing Year 6 children - they truly are a great bunch and we hope that they do themselves proud in their next stage of learning and their wider community!

There is a great buzz of energy here at TDS whilst we continue to raise standards. The future looks promising for all those involved in the school – we really are learning, growing and succeeding together.

We will once again be opening our doors to TDS and encourage you to come and have a look around at our great school in action. Our open days are all at 9:30am on Tuesday 21st

October, Wednesday 5th/Tuesday 25th
 November, Thursday 11th
 December and Thursday 8th Jan 2026.

Do you have a background in finance, health and safety or marketing with a few hours to spare? If so, The Downley School would love to hear from you. We are currently looking for people to join our governing body. It is an exciting time to join the school as we transition into our next stage of improvement. For this role you must not have any direct links to the school.

If you are interested in becoming a governor please email Sally Perkins on chair@dnl.odbst.org

News from St James' Church



Over the last few months we have had the joy of spending several weekends with our grandchildren. I love watching them explore the world – everything is exciting and to be celebrated. They are filled with joy at the simplest things like splashing in the stream in Hughenden Park or watering the garden with Grandpa. I was reflecting on how we lose that ability to be joyful in that abandoned way as we get older, and how much I could learn from my grandchildren if I were able to see the world in the same way that they do. See it as a place of possibilities. See the best in each person that I meet. Start each day with a determination to look for the joys in the day, and end each day by reflecting on the little things that brought me joy in the day.



The bible verse from Nehemiah 8:10 says “The Joy of the Lord is your strength”. God longs for us to be filled with his joy, a joy that comes from knowing him and



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from seeing the world through his eyes. This kind of joy is not about all in life being great, it's about knowing joy even in the hard times and drawing strength from God in those times.

At St James we host Growing Hope High Wycombe, a charity which provides free therapy for children with additional needs. We have a speech and language therapist, Occupational therapist, Music and Art therapists who work in our church buildings with families each week. I love to see the transformation that happens through their therapy sessions. Parents and children often arrive feeling really stressed, then as they progress through their sessions they have opportunities to express themselves, process trauma and anxiety and learn new skills and coping mechanisms. By the end of their block of therapy sessions they are filled with joy and I see them leaving in a much better place, with a renewed sense of hope and joy.



We are very grateful to the Downley charities who have made donations and are supporting the work of Growing Hope and enabling this transformation to take place.

If you would like to know more about the work of Growing Hope High Wycombe or to support our work please visit our website <https://growinghope.org.uk/>

[high-wycombe/](https://growinghope.org.uk/)

Our Annual Caribbean Evening is always an opportunity for a joyful fun-filled evening. If you would like to come along to this on Saturday 11th October please contact our administrator for more details admin@stjamesdownley.org.uk

Whatever you are going through right now, my prayer is that you will be able to draw strength from God. If you would value someone praying with you please come along to our coffee poppin on a Thursday morning, 10.30 till 12 noon, or to one of our services at 11 am on a Sunday or 10 am on a Thursday.

Heather Graham, Vicar of St James'

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.

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E: johnmorris4@ntlworld.com

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Downley Evening WI

Hello, everyone.

I hope you're all coping with the heatwaves and paying attention to good advice for keeping your cool as the mercury rises.

Our members nationally have voted to have a new campaign – 'Bystanders can be lifesavers'. We hope through this campaign to increase public confidence and training in CPR and the use of defibrillators. Would you recognise if someone was having a heart attack and would you know what to do whilst waiting for the paramedics to arrive? Your action could save a life.

There are over 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests a year and the frightening statistic in our country is that fewer than one in ten people survive. In fact, women have a lower chance of survival than men. Research shows that a great number of people are fearful of giving CPR to a woman, and they would feel uncomfortable using a defibrillator on her because the pads need to be placed on bare skin in the chest area. Their reluctance is understandable, but our campaign will seek to overcome this fear by giving people the opportunity for training on more realistic mannequins (at present those

used are usually flat-chested, and braless) and in the use of the defibrillator. Early administration of CPR and defibrillation can more than double the chances of survival. We hope to increase the number of defibrillators available in our communities. Do you know where your nearest one is? And if you do, do you know how to use it?

Important questions, and I, for one, will be taking full advantage of any training offered to me. As a start, I will visit the British Heart Foundation's website (www.bhf.org.uk) and follow the free online training session called RevivR. It's 15 minutes long and if it teaches me how to save a life, that's 15 minutes well spent.

So, you see, the WI is not just about cake and socialising (though we do a lot of that too). We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.45pm in St James' Church, Plomer Hill. If you would like more information, check out our website www.downleyeveningwi.weebly.com or you can email dewipresident@gmail.com. We love to welcome visitors.

Angela Taplin

Downley Theatre Group

Since the last Village News, the group has seen "Oliver!" and "Hadestown", both excellent productions. Looking ahead, we're off to "The Lion King" in September and the annual trip to Cadogan Hall for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's festive concert in early December. These are both fully booked. We don't operate a waiting list; members are notified of any cancellations

- a good reason to be on our mailing list if you're interested in either of those. **Please contact us with any questions or 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

01494 437552

Chiltern Wood School Chat

At the time of writing this the school has just broken up for the summer. We have had another very busy and exciting year with the children and young people becoming more involved in the community around them. During the summer term we have managed to get a bit further afield, to the zoo, sailing at Henley and a wonderful trip along with some learners from our Cressex site to Garsington Opera on the Wormsley estate.

This year we have had some of our classes start to take the bus into High Wycombe where they have been using the library to change their books each fortnight. They have really enjoyed going on public transport and venturing into town. This has linked in really well with our reading and phonics updated training for all staff. We have a 'Literacy for all Approach' alongside using 'Total Communication' for all our learners and they amaze us everyday with the variety of ways they share their wants

and needs as part of their communication. This could be spoke language, using a device such as an iPad with a specialist programme on it, pointing at a symbol, using Makaton or their Universal Communication books. Our Speech and Language Therapists really help and support us all with this.



I had the privilege of being invited to the Downley Parish AGM at the end of May, where I was able to update the community on our activities as a school. We also enjoyed being part of Downley Day where the 'Friends of Chiltern Wood' were in charge of the refreshments. This is always a super event and the weather was perfect this year. I hope you all have a wonderful summer and I look forward to updating you again later in the year.

Rachel Chapman, Headteacher



CHAMELEON SINGLES GROUP

Summer has seen Chameleon members enjoy a number of social events both indoors and outside taking full advantage of the warmer days recently. As in previous years we have two BBQ's, the first of which has already taken place with the second due in late August.

Following a spring walk in April we have done two more, firstly starting out at

Little Kingshill and going up to Peterlee Farm then returning to the Full Moon for a light lunch and drinks, then a walk from West Wycombe Village going up the hill to do a loop back to the village with coffee at the Apple Orchard in the High Street. Both walks were only short making them accessible to virtually all. 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 Hazlemere Community Centre Quiz again in October coming a respectable 6th out of 10 teams at the June Quiz Night.

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. Visit the group on-line at www.chameleonsingles.org.uk or search for us on Facebook and Nextdoor.

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Riding with Chiltern Cycling

Join your local Cycling UK group

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

South Bucks Midweek group offers a selection of rides every Wednesday from easy paced, 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 Friday's.

Chiltern Cycling offers both led rides and coffee pots every Sunday with the focus on welcoming new members. The rides take place on quiet routes in the countryside that surround our local area. We enjoy coffee stops offering both inside and outside space with most rides returning to the start point. Thames Valley Cycling group offers led rides in the southern tip of the county and into Berkshire. There are led rides on both Wednesday and Sunday from

local start points in Marlow, Bourne End, Maidenhead and Holtspur.

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

E: publicity@southbuckscycling.org.uk

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Starlight Update

Coffee, convenience and community

Welcome to Bebo's Café and Pizzeria

Greetings! We are Deep and Bebo, Starlight's new owners on the High Street, in the heart of Downley village. We've loved getting to know so many of you since taking over and we're proud to announce the opening of Bebo's Café and Pizzeria!

This is Downley's store and café and we want you to make it your own. Come and catch up with a friend over lunch. Fancy a pastry and coffee with other parents after nursery or school drop off? Running late and need to grab a quick meal or snack? Or are you part of a club and want somewhere different to meet? Then Bebo's Café and Pizzeria is the place for you!

We offer both eat-in and takeaway options. Come and taste our cooked breakfast, pastries, bread, pizzas, burgers, sandwiches, paninis, shakes, ice-cream, cakes and a wide range of beverages. It's an evolving menu as we get the café up and running so all feedback is more than appreciated. Post suggestions to our new Facebook page: BEBO's CAFÉ and PIZZA or better



still, pop in for a chat and a copy of our menu. Watch out too for special offers around local holidays and events such as Easter, Christmas, Euros, World Cups, Up Downley, Pancake Day,

etc. We're always open to suggestions so please don't hesitate to ask; we will consider any reasonable request. Plus, we're happy to offer reductions to groups of 10 or more, with a bit of advance warning! We're really impressed by Downley's close-knit community and we hope to be

so much more than shop owners. We're aware there's been a lot of change in ownership in recent years which makes us even more grateful for your patience and input. Please keep it coming, involve us in any events you may be planning and we will do our very best to help. Thank you Downley for your kind welcome,

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DOWNLEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

How Downley tackled crime

The internet is a wonderful thing. With the click of a mouse, one learns that exactly one hundred offences were committed in Downley in the six-month period of November 2024 to April 2025. Thirty-six of these offences (or just over a third) were for theft, usually shoplifting. The internet also indicates clear-up rates: seventeen of these thefts have been solved; in thirteen cases, the investigation is complete but there is no suspect; while the remaining six are still under investigation. That is a clear-up rate of 47%. That is a really good clear-up rate indeed, incidentally, since the national clear-up rate for shoplifting is 14.5%.

By an extraordinary coincidence, the current Downley clear-up rate is almost exactly the same as it was for Downley in the years 1736 to 1859. According to press reports, Downley experienced eighteen thefts (including poaching) in that period. That figure – eighteen thefts over 120 years – reflects a much smaller population, of course, and inadequate press coverage. The true rate of crime was undoubtedly much higher. Still, it is conceivable that the crime rate was lower than it is today. One reason for this is that harsher penalties would have acted as a deterrent. For example, in 1857 Mrs Woodbridge was sentenced to three weeks in prison for stealing a shawl valued at 3s. (which would equate to about £22 today). In 1858, two chairmakers of Downley were fined 5s. plus 10s. 9d. costs each (equating to £115 today) for trespassing in search of rabbits on Dashwood land – they had not killed any rabbits when caught. Had

they failed to pay, they faced 14 days in prison. In 1859, George Pawley, aged 16, was committed to prison for six weeks for stealing a loaf of bread. His crime was effectively shoplifting, so George's punishment can be compared to the caution given to a shoplifter for a crime committed in January 2025.

Deterrence aside, the key thing here is that 48% of Downley's reported thefts between 1736-1859 were solved which is pretty well exactly the same clear up rate that we have today. It is a remarkable clear-up rate considering that eighteenth and nineteenth century Downley lacked CCTV, finger printing, DNA testing, smart phones etc. What Downley did have was a local constable who knew his beat, and a small community who knew one another.

A wonderful example of instant crime detection occurred in 1859. On the morning of 7 August, Miss Mary Ellen Tilbury of Plomer Hill noticed that six of her chickens were missing. She then found one of the fowl dead and the head of another. She summoned P.C. 85 [local police were reported by numbers only in those days] who examined the surroundings and found evidence of people having recently passed through a gap in the hedge. He informed his superior, Superintendent Hodgkinson, and the two of them, with Mary Ellen Tilbury in tow, went to visit the home of Daniel and Rhoda Putnam of Littleworth. They searched the house and found a chicken thigh in a cupboard and the carcass of a headless chicken in a bed.

Mrs Putnam dug herself into a hole by first denying any knowledge of chickens, and then saying the one in the bed (which had to be wrestled from her hands) was found while she was fetching water. Mary Ellen Tilbury then announced that this carcass was a match for the head she had found, and the Putnams were arrested. Twelve days later the Wycombe magistrates committed them for trial at Aylesbury, although at the request of Mr Coates, farmer of Hughenden, the two were granted bail. Mr Coates said Mr Putnam was an honest and hardworking man who was innocent of the charge.


The trial took place on 18 October. The judge said the evidence against Mr Putnam was negligible and instructed the jury to acquit him. He also said the evidence against Mrs Putnam was very thin, but the jury found her guilty, albeit not of stealing six chickens but of receiving one fowl knowing it had been stolen. She was given two months with hard labour.

The speed with which this chicken crime was solved (at least in part) is extraordinary. The case was done and dusted in a day and tried eight weeks later. But the way the police went straight for the Putnams' house where they found just the evidence they needed is also a little unsettling. It suggests a small community where everyone knew what everyone else was doing. Someone saw Rhoda Putnam buying that chicken while she was fetching water and told Mary Ellen Tilbury about it. So besides using harsh penalties as a deterrent, Downley also tackled crime by employing a sort of crossover between a medieval 'hue and cry' system, a Stasi-like network of

informants, and modern social media. People noticed suspicious activity and reported on each other, so nothing was private. It kept folks honest and made solving crime much easier for the police, but it must have had a stifling effect on freedom of expression for anyone remotely outside the locals' idea of 'normal'.

Incidentally, half the unsolved thefts of Downley involved sheep rustling, especially in the early 1840s. Mr William Bridgewater lost five sheep over five months in 1841. If one can deduce anything from contemporary reports, this was probably not some organised gang preying on Downley's farmers, but hungry travellers passing through the Chilterns as they walked to London in search of work. Though the date precedes the Great Famine of the later 1840s, they were possibly from Ireland since these cases were reported in the *Dublin Mercantile Advertiser* and the *Tipperary Free Press*. Whoever they were, the rustlers may well have enjoyed barbecued lamb in Downley's woods, but it was an exceptionally dangerous thing to do since the penalty for sheep theft was fourteen years' penal servitude.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!
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Downley Cricket Club



At Downley cricket club planning is underway for our President's Day to be held on Sunday 24 August 2025. Last August Bank Holiday saw the biggest turnout anyone can remember, with High Wycombe CC entering several teams, including a Ladies' team and a Coaches' team. The high standard of cricket and the enthusiastic audience-cheering made for quite a spectacle. This year there will be a BBQ, a variety of food, a busy bar, fun and games for all the family. Do come along and join in the fun and merriment, with family and friends warmly invited.

During the season Downley play at home on alternate Saturdays, and HWCC use the ground for some of their matches. Driving past during the week, it is heartening to see many youngsters playing vibrant evening matches on The Common, cheered on by parents and friends. Downley cricketers can use the excellent HWCC facilities on the London Road for net practice during the season.

In the League Downley are playing at a more appropriate level this season, enthusiastically led by Graham 'Boys' Swales. The loss of a few players to other clubs has been made up for by new talent joining the club, leading to some stirring victories, amidst a few disappointing losses. We thank the departees for their contribution to Downley over the years, and wish them

every success in the future. Recently, all-rounder Ali Q achieved his best ever bowling figures vs Hawridge taking a magnificent 6 for 38, including 5 bowled. In response, we chased the runs well, especially Ben "Medals" Alsop, but in the end he did not get the rub of the green as he was adjudged run-out to cut his magnificent innings short. The run chase concluded with Suresh "Wisden" Rao, who in the determined company of captain 'Boys' Swales ran like the wind to earn Downley a scarcely-believable tie.

Other recent highlights include Ben Dolan capturing the prized scalp of former Downley captain, Ben Hughes' wicket (guesting for the opposition), caught by Anurag Tiwari, who has been a revelation as a wicket-keeper, in a win in a friendly game against HWCC. Also, we recently celebrated Colin 'Squeeze' Caesar's 60th in the Mowchak, and Club legend John 'Bronc' Styles' 80th in the Le de Spencer, both enjoyable affairs.

Sincere thanks to Mandy Aitken for scoring, John Hughes for umpiring and groundsman Den Cox and his band of helpers, for making cricket happen at Downley.



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Hillclimb Garage News



- Downley Day Fun & Games

- A Community Initiative Award and New Funding for Electric Vehicles

Downley Day Fun & Games



And just like that, Downley Day and UP! Downley is done for another year. We had the best time at Downley Day where, once again, there was so much to do and so many lovely visitors, new and familiar, coming and saying hello to us on our stand. The weather was very warm and, although this meant the dog show had to be cancelled this year to protect our lovely pooches, the Downley Donkey Derby provided so much fun and laughter



for all to enjoy. Thank you to everyone that entered our competitions, raising over £250 for the lovely Hearing Dogs for Deaf People charity. Congratulations to the organisers for, once again, providing a wonderful series of events and thank you to everyone who supported them.

A Community Initiative Award

We are very proud to have won another national industry award! This time, our work with the lovely community of Downley was recognised by The Automechanika



UK Garage Awards at a ceremony in June at the NEC in Birmingham. Judged by a panel of experts, our support for local initiatives such as Downley Day, Downley Dynamos Junior Football Club, Top Notes Choir and, in particular, the Littleworth Road Christmas Market (celebrating its 5th year this December) was commended by the judges. We continue to be amazed at the wonderful clubs, events and voluntary workers that are active in the village and are proud to support these wherever we can. We were also finalists in three other categories; Garage of the Year, Customer Service and Marketing. In September we head off to another awards night where we



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have reached the finals of the British Independent Garage of the Year Awards again and will be very much hoping to bring back more silverware to Downley and make it four Garage of the Year titles in a row!

New funding for Electric Vehicles

The Government has announced significant, additional funding to boost the manufacturing and purchase of Electric Vehicles. The DRIVE35 funding initiative is set to provide a staggering £2.5 billion of capital and research and development funding to manufacturers and startups to further support the development of vehicle electrification over the next decade. In addition, the government announced in July a new £650m electric vehicle purchase scheme, providing buyers a grant of £3,750 against the purchase of an electric vehicle with a

cost at or below £37,000. The scheme will run for 3 years and will be administered by the vehicle manufacturers, making it easy for the car owner to access the grant. The Electric Vehicle ChargePoint grant is also still available with grants of up to £350 or 75% off the cost of installing a socket, whichever is the lower. More to follow on the governments drive to zero emission cars in the next issue of DVN.

As always, thank you to everyone who continues to support us and, as your local, independent garage, we are here to support you too with advice, maintenance and repair of your vehicle to ensure you have safe and happy motoring.

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Dance Classes for Adults

M O N D A Y

Minis

playgroup

Mondays during term-time 9.30-11.15am

£2 per family (cash and card accepted)

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

- A chance for local parents and carers to meet and for babies and toddlers to make new friends!
- Seasonal arts and crafts
- Reading corner
- Hot and cold refreshments and snacks for everyone
- Baby changing facilities
- Free car parking
- Drop-ins welcome

Follow our page on Facebook – search for "Monday Minis"
Or Instagram – search for "Downley Monday Minis"

Contact Sam: downleymondayminis@gmail.com



Buckinghamshire Council Update



A warm hello, from your new Buckinghamshire councillor for Downley. I've already met a good number of you before the election and, thanks to the wonderful Up! Festival and other local events, I've now met many more.

Work-wise, I'm already looking at the issue of our Downley to Sir William Ramsay bus being stopped, and making sure the Council are aware of the importance of this service and our lack of local secondary school provision in general. I'm also working to make sure the grass cutting and public waste bin collection schedules are kept. Do keep reporting to FixMyStreet, and contacting me when things need escalating. Parking/speeding is also a big issue and I'm raising concerns on residents' behalf, and have attended the Police Crime Commissioner's Q&A at The Hive, to learn more about how our neighbourhood teams operate and prioritise. I would urge anyone who sees something of concern to report it to 101 each time, as those reports are how the teams prioritise. I am also working with police to organise Have Your Say events to make sure our concerns, including anti-social behaviour issues, can be shared directly.

Regardless, we also live in one of the most beautiful areas around Wycombe, with a great, vibrant community, and I hope we all enjoy the summer exploring some of the great countryside we have to offer, and making new friends and acquaintances.

There's lots to do nearby for families this summer, and the council have set



up a number of WhizzFizz events which you can find out more about here: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/whizzfizz-2025/>

If you have children receiving benefits-related free school meals, the Council HAF programme has a number of free activities and a healthy meal on offer

and you can find out more here: <https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/advice-and-support/buckinghamshire-haf/haf-information-for-families/>

However, it's not a great time for everyone. The police have highlighted the rising number of domestic violence cases that they attend. If this affects you, they are very much here to help. Ring 999 in an emergency, 101 for non-emergencies, or you can ring the National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 or visit: <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

Some children cannot continue living with their families, and that's where our amazing foster parents step in, offering vital care and a stable, loving home for anywhere between a night, a week, months or even years. We need more though. If you'd like to find out more about becoming a foster parent, visit <https://fostering.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/>

Have a great summer. I look forward to getting to know you better. I'm always here to listen and help where I can.

Hazel Arthur-Hewitt/

Hazel.arthur-hewitt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Mobile: 07985 468154



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Pregnancy Yoga

at Downley Community Centre

Mondays
7.45 to 9pm

Yoga to balance and strengthen your body & help you feel calm and prepared for labour, birth and beyond. Suitable from 14 weeks of pregnancy - no yoga experience needed!



For more info & to book visit
www.nestandnurture.net/pregnancy-yoga



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From Westminster

Emma Reynolds - MP for Wycombe

Just over a year ago, I was elected as the new MP for Wycombe. Serving our local community is a real honour and a privilege. I am proud that my team and I have resolved over 6,000 cases for constituents with a wide variety of concerns and issues. I continue to hold regular advice surgeries to help constituents and advocate on their behalf.

The government had a very difficult inheritance - with stagnating economic growth, the worst fall in living standards in modern times, and public services stretched to breaking point. I'm proud to be part of a government delivering change, making people better off and driving improvements in public services, including extending free school meals to an extra half a million children and raising the minimum wage for 3.5 million of the lowest-paid workers.

We promised change, and we've had some great local wins already, including funding for our local schools and our local NHS services. I am passionate about improving our local public services which is why I am delighted to see the government commit record investment in

our National Health Service at the recent spending review. We have already delivered 4 million additional NHS appointments and waiting lists are falling month after month, but we know that there is more work to be done.

It's been fantastic to attend so many



local events over the past year, including Downley Day, where I spent a wonderful afternoon meeting constituents alongside Local Councillor Hazel Arthur-Hewitt. Thanks to all those who made it such a success, especially Chiltern Wood School and their delicious cakes.

Over the past year, it has been a privilege to meet and engage with

so many Downley residents. Whether that has been on the doorstep or whilst out and about in the local area, these conversations are invaluable. I look forward to continuing this engagement in the months ahead and meeting even more constituents across our area. If there is anything my team and I can help you with, please email me at emma.reynolds.mp@parliament.uk.

Downley Diary | Round-up of Regular Activities

DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: www.downleycommunitycentre.org.uk

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	Agatka 07935 789 041 sagata75@gmail.com
Art Group 2	Monday	10.00 - 12.00	alastair.pike@artsmartuk.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 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	19.00 - 21.00	karen@comedancingwithme.co.uk
NEW CLASSES START SEPTEMBER	Wednesday	18.30 - 20.30	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
Indian Dance Classes for ladies of all ages - NEW	Saturday	08.30 - 10.00	Sesha 07840 288 292
Kingdom Dynamics Chapel	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00	Sharon 07961 822 347
Lace Making	Thursday	13.00 - 15.00	Frances 01494 524 835
Mondays Minis Playgroup	Monday Term-time	9.30 - 11.15	downleymondayminis@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	15.00 - 19.00 16.00 - 19.00	natalie@njdance.co.uk
Painting for Pleasure	Tuesday Term-time	10.00 - 12.00	Sue 01494 443 393 Sue 01494 443 393 dianacrabbe@btinternet.com
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	Thursday	19.45-20.45	mohzamtkd1@hotmail.com 07870 219 746
Tai chi Shibashi - NEW	Monday ad hoc	13.00 - 14.00	sheila 07737 581 664 44spag@gmail.com
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 - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: 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

GUIDE AND SCOUT CENTRE - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: 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
Rainbows	Tuesday	17.30 - 18.45	✓	jansmith1611@gmail.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 - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: 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 - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: hilmad1842@gmail.com

Art Club	Thursday	09.30		
Coffee Stop	Monday	10.30 - 12.30	✓	christinestyles@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
Nataillie'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 - SUMMER 2025

Hall Bookings: 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	18:15 - 19:20		07904 438 411
Yoga with Jenny	Tuesday	19.30 - 20.40		07904 438 411
Fencing 1 to 1	Wednesday	17.30 - 19.30		
Yoga with Jenny	Thursday	19.30 - 20.40		07904 438 411
Yoga with Jenny	Friday	10.20 - 11.30		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

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Downley Village News

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COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr. Hazel Arthur-Hewitt
Hazel.Arthur-Hewitt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk 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

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Any copy or photographs sent to this address may also be used on the downley.org website and facebook page: 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 news and the downley.org website.

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