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COMMUNITY**

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Village News

Issue 148/August 2026



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From Town to Country

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Editorial

I am writing this on yet another beautiful summer's day – although the grass is looking dry and parched and now we have a hosepipe ban to contend with! I love a warm summer (although the very high temperatures were too much even for me) but I don't find gardening straightforward at the best of times, and climate change is certainly having a big impact on all of us for many reasons.

The Up! Downley festival was a huge success as usual, with the Art & Craft Show, Comedy on the Common, Disco Bingo, Art Within Tent, the Downley History Walk, the Downley 5K and several other events all well attended. Both Downley Day and Concert on the Common took place in glorious weather and brought Downley people together in large numbers. Thanks as always to those volunteers organising all the events – they take a huge amount of organising beforehand, and clearing up afterwards. If you can spare a few hours to help, do get in touch on the Downley Community or Up! Downley Festival Facebook pages.

During the summer, we have had a couple of companies filming in Downley at different times – all very hush, hush as to what they were filming for, but it just goes to show that we who are lucky enough to live in Downley aren't the only ones who appreciate it!

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 25 October 2026 at 12.00 noon, but please get your copy in as early as possible as space is limited.

Anne, Editor • editor@downley.org

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Downley Parish Council



At our July meeting several residents spoke about anti-social behaviour in the parish and surrounds, in particular concerns regarding speeding vehicles using the village as a “race track” during the night. It was mentioned that people don’t always want to report issues to the police feeling that it can take too long to get through on the phone. The easiest way to report incidents is through the Thames Valley Police website, here is a link to the reporting pages:

<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/>

It’s only where issues are reported that the police become aware of them.

Whilst the Parish Council understands the concerns of residents regarding speeding and anti-social behaviour on our roads, the responsibility lies with the Police. However, we are open to ideas and suggestions which can be sent via the email address below.

Also, at the July meeting the Parish Council agreed to use money received from the

Community Infrastructure Levy. This is money received because of property development in the Parish.

Following suggestions from the public, it was agreed that funds would be used:

- To help the Downley Common Preservation Society purchase new mowing equipment for the Common
- As a donation to the Scouts to help with their plans to build a new Scout hut
- To place “village gates” near boundaries to reinforce the 30mph limit message.
- To put additional bollards at Jubilee Green preventing vehicles from parking on the grass next to the Littleworth Road shops
- To help install an electrical supply to the Common to power events such as the Downley Festival and to provide lights for the Christmas tree at Jubilee Green.

*Giles Tandy, Parish Clerk,
clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org*

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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STREET LIGHTING

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**Include the street name and the
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Downley Parish Notice Boards

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

**All notices must be for local non profit organisations.
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Top Notes



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Up! Downley Festival 2026

Organising a festival is no small feat. It takes months of planning, so I'd like to start my DVN report by thanking my committee, plus all the additional helpers, who give their time voluntarily and all contributed to making this year's Festival such an enjoyable success.

Prior to the start of this year's Festival we distributed packets of wildflowers to the village schools, playgroups and nurseries, as well as the Le De Spencers Arms, for people to sow, grow and enjoy. We hope there was an abundance of flowers around the village.

The marquee arrived early on Thursday 18th June and we kicked off that evening with Disco Bingo, sponsored again by A & M Refurbishment. Following the popularity of the previous two years, we increased the number of tables to enable us to sell 150 tickets, generating £300 for this year's charity, One Can Trust.



'Art Within Tent', introduced by the Art & Craft Show committee two years ago, was again well attended by both young and old, all looking to develop their artistic skills, with demonstrations including stained glass, pottery and alcohol ink painting.

The Comedy Night, sponsored once more by ABK Ltd, was a raucous evening. We fitted an additional 75 seats into the marquee and the line-up of Ria Lina, Ian Stone and Jeff Innocent, together with MC Laura Lexx, was possibly the best show ever.

The History Walk around Downley saw c.40 people enjoying an interesting and informative evening, led by Hilary Brash

and finishing at the Le De Spencers Arms. Donations of £55 were raised for the Downley History Group.

Downley Voices presented 'Page to Stage' on Thursday 2nd July at St James' Church. This was a very entertaining evening and raised c£500 for Growing Hope.

The following evening, we introduced a new event. The Harbour Buoys, a sea shanty and folk band from Brixham in Devon, entertained us at the Le De. This was a huge success and very well attended. Our thanks to Clive Knapman for coordinating the event, along with Lucy and Darren for hosting. We will look to do something similar next year.

The Downley Art & Craft show ran from Saturday 4th to Friday 10th July in the Community Centre. New stands were employed to display the art which made the room seem brighter and more welcoming. The quality of the art and crafts on show was tremendous and the many different genres was striking. In total, 53 exhibitors submitted 143 pieces of work and 328 visitors, plus schoolchildren, enjoyed viewing the show during the week.

I would like to thank all those villagers who came along and supported the various events. The Festival is held each year for your benefit and any profit raised is available for any group, club or society within the village who would find a grant helpful in the running of their organisation.

See you next year!

*Fran Lazenby, Chairman
Up! Downley Festival Committee*

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An enormous thank you to everyone who visited the Downley Community Library book stall on Downley Day. As well as supporting the library, we hope you managed to bag a bargain!

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Downley Common News

Walkers on the Common around the cricket pitch may have noticed that the old log seat dedicated to John Brandon has been replaced by a shiny new one. The original was created from a fallen oak tree on the Common in June 1997 and the seat was carved by the DCPS with the inscription "John Brandon – Woodsman" by Norman Belson. His son Steven was also commemorated by the addition of a bronze plaque some years later. The

photo shows the volunteers who helped to make the seat in 1997 showing (from left)

Christine Moss, John Willson, Sam France, Bill Thompson and son James, Stephen Brandon (sitting) Brian Knott, Kristina Frydberg, Norman Belson (sitting), unknown, Owen Rush, Don Murray (kneeling) and Lynne Thompson. You can just see the old David Brown tractor in the background.

Sadly, the log seat has been slowly rotting from the inside for a number of years until it became unusable and finally fell



apart. The new log was found in the Dells in June this year and

dragged over the road, narrowly avoiding the cricket pitch, to its new home where the seat was carved into it and the bronze plaque reaffixed. The remains of the old

log have gone to an honourable retirement deep in the woods.

At the time of writing, the weather continues to be hot and sunny and particularly dry with no rain

for several weeks. Due to the risk of fire, the DCPS would like to request that all who visit the common should refrain from starting any form of ignition, be it barbecues, campfires or even carelessly discarded cigarette ends. Any of these can rapidly get out of control with potentially disastrous consequences.

Bill Thompson.

Downley Common Preservation Society



CHAMELEON SINGLES GROUP

Our spring and early summer events have gone well. Food events have been particularly popular including a garden BBQ and a Fish and Chip supper, both at members' homes. We also attended the

Hazlemere Quiz evening with our team finishing in a respectable place. Once again, we visited the Rebellion Brewery in early July for a very enjoyable warm and light summer's evening.

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Our regular events continue including Lunch Club on the second Friday of the month, Pub Night on the last Monday and a monthly Zoom social where you can take part without even leaving home. Weekday morning coffee meets have proved popular and we are now expanding these to include venues around our area. All of these events are great places to meet other members and offer a warm welcome to those new to the Chameleon group.

For summer, we are planning some more trips out both in our local area and further afield too. Chameleon is also looking at doing some accessible walks during the year. Aware that sometimes the terrain can be a bit difficult, we will be finding some routes that follow paved pathways which are better for those who are perhaps a little less mobile. Distances for these walks will be kept short and at

the pace of the slowest walker.

Over the last few months Chameleon members have enjoyed a number of social events and we are always looking to include a greater variety. Our events are as broad as our members so why not join us and bring your ideas?

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 07720 383535, 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.

Downley Theatre Group

Everyone enjoyed our outing to see Johannes Radebe in the role of Lola in "Kinky Boots"; what a performance – who knew he could sing brilliantly as well as dance? Our third trip to "ABBA Voyage" was also a great success, we chose a Sunday matinee performance so no late-night travel home. And our ninth jolly to The Palace of Westminster took place on a gloriously sunny, not too hot, blue skies day with London looking at its best. A significant day for politics with Andy Burnham taking on the role of Prime Minister, the free Democratic Access tours of the Houses of Lords and Commons booked through Emma Reynolds, our MP, were excellent, then it was off to explore Battersea Power Station. A grand day out!

There are another four trips sorted for 2026: "Paddington"; "The Phantom of the Opera"; "Sinatra"; and our ninth trip to Cadogan Hall for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's "Christmas Cracker" concert which sold out in 52 hours!

With 231 members and outings selling out so quickly, we made the difficult decision to restrict new members just to those living in Downley. Due to tight time scales, we cannot advertise offerings in the Village News; please get in touch to be added to mailing list to be notified of future events and any last-minute cancellations.

Alan & Claire Baker

Downley Theatre Group - Established 2001

downleytheatregroup@gmail.com

01494 437552

Downley Community Orchard

We grow older, heritage varieties of apples in the Community Orchard. They are particularly susceptible to a conundrum - a bountiful harvest one year is often followed by a poorer harvest the following year. This phenomenon is known as biennial cropping and we have the perfect example of this in the orchard this year. In contrast to 2025, the fruit set has been poor this year and, coupled with the extreme heat and dry conditions, our apple trees have really suffered. Under stress the tree's natural reaction is to drop its fruitlets so it can focus on using resources for its own survival which happened during the first heatwave of this summer. The continuing extreme weather also leads to trees dropping their fruit prematurely before they are properly ripe. All this is sad news for the lovers of our delicious apple juice

'Downley Delight'. Supplies will be very limited this year.

Our maintenance programme will soon be under way to try and restore the vigour of the trees. First job will be to conduct some summer pruning which encourages the trees to form fruiting spurs. In the autumn we will be installing grease bands around the tree trunks to prevent insect attacks. In late autumn we will be mulching the trees to help them better cope with dry spells. If you are interested in the cultivation and maintenance of fruit trees contact Andrew Flint by email trhaeditor@gmail.com and we can let you know when our friendly bunch of volunteers is next meeting. We'll also post a notice on the Downley Residents Facebook about meeting times. Do come and join us.



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Village News • Autumn 2026

Downley Community Centre



Downley School children attend Art Show

On Thursday 9th July the whole of Year 3 of the Downley Junior School visited the Centre to see the annual Art Show which was staged in the Oak room for one week during the "Up! Downley Festival". Sixty children came to see the fine display comprising the usual wide variety of arts and crafts made by local people of all ages, and their own work created at school in the few weeks before. In addition, in the adjoining Beech Room our very own lacemaking and woodcarving groups gave live demonstrations of their work which also attracted considerable interest.

Solar Panels long may the sun shine! Sunshine saves electricity costs

You may be getting tired of the sunny weather we have been experiencing lately, but the sunshine has certainly benefitted the community centre solar energy project. Even in the winter the solar panels generate some power to help cover demand, but since April we have barely used any electricity at all with our bills only really covering the standing charge. After 6 months of use (January to June) our projections indicate that our annual electricity bill will be only 20% of what we were paying previously - a huge financial gain for the centre as well as helping to reduce our environmental impact.

Building Improvements

As part of the Centre's ongoing plan to improve the fabric of the building when funds allow, we have now installed new blackout roller blinds in the Oak Room.



We hope this will provide more privacy for hirers and improve screen visibility when projectors are used.

Grants

This quarter a further £500 has been donated again to One Can Trust.

Downley Community Centre offers a formal grant funding scheme to support local community projects. Any Downley area club or association may apply if they are looking for financial support for a local, non-profit activity or initiative that directly benefits the local community.

In the first instance please email grants@downleycommunitycentre.org.uk and a link will be supplied detailing the grants policy guidelines.

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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*Downley Old School Management
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J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Autumn 2026

Wal, here's a High Summer greeting to you orl, and wot a funny ole Summer it is and orlreddy has been eh! Wal up the plot my veg doesn't know quite wot to do with itself. Just to get a bit of flavour about this rather mixed up year so far I'll start orf with the sorry story of sum of my spuds... You'll remember that I decided to increase my spud production because of the worlds situashun.



"He's orlreddy orf agin, I just carnt stop him a'goin on and on about it" ses Mrs H. Wal ses I, I gose and buys five diffrent sorts of spuds. 'Swift' a very early one, then good ole 'Charlotte', then 'Maris Peer', 'Desiree', and, wait for it 'Picasso', wal, wot a name for a spud eh! Then me not being a risk taker when it comes to spuds I planted em just arfter Good Friday, as in the olden days they ses plant yor spuds on Good Friday, and this year it was on the third of April, so orl OK so far. Then up comes 'Swift', the early wuns, lookin good, just towards the end of April. But, guess wot, we has the latest frorst of the year, actually the only frorst of the year, I think it was the fifth of May, and that frorst really clobbered em. The other wuns coms up a bit later, but the 'Swifts' was pretty much finished. "I reckons they'll be orlright" ses a plot mate, but they wasn't. But I thought I'd give em a chance and let em struggle on, but then we had the first heat wave of the year, so thy got dried and roasted, then at the end of May we has a massive thunderstorm with a deluge of rain, orlmost two inches, so wot was left of them 'Swifts' was drowned. Wal, I dunno, wot is a'goin on, even them weather forecasters seem to have given up, and now as I'm a'typin this we're into the second heatwave of the year.

Wal, how about the rest of the plot, and the gardin eh? "I thought he'd never get round to it". Ses you knows who. She duz like the gardin, espeshually roses, and this year has been fabulus, they just keeps bloomin and bloomin. We've got three new wuns in pots at the front of the house, ramblers, and they luvs it there, just covered in dozens of little flowers, red and a yellowy white. I'll have to do a bit of research on prunin 'em, they ses it's quite different to prunin climbers wot we had before. And as they're in big pots feedin em is vital too. Then another new venture in the gardin is pots of nasturshalums, instead of geraniums, and now a'writin this in the first week of July they looks wonderful, orl sorts, dwarf and climbin wuns, great splashes of colour, but I just hopes the catterpillers and black fly don't get 'em. If they duz then the catterpillers munch up the leaves and leaves nuthin but the stalks, wal at least if the birds munch up the catterpillers its helpin nature wun way or another. Then another first for me is sweet peas. "wot" ses Mrs H, "I orlways wunders why he never growed em before, they'er my favourite flower!". Wal, this year I did, and they've bin fabulus, a'climbin up my cane pyramid to seven feet high, luvly long stems and a luvly mix of blues and pinks, and the scent on a warm evenin is just sublime. I thinks Mrs H herself was quite pleased when I presents her with a bunch of 'em, I even got a bit of a smile.

But wot about the Autumn, wal I'll be a'harvestin the spuds, pickin beans like 'Scarlet Emperer' and 'Carminet', luvly orlmost blackpods, cutting courgettes and pumkins, and



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turnin over my compost heaps, burnin orl the stuff wot wont compost easily now we can have bonnies up the plot, keepin the pidgins and rabbits orf the brassicas. The Purple sproutin plants looks good, so duz the Cavalo Nero, black cabbage I thinks that's wot it means.

Then there's my French cousin Jean d'Artichoke, believe it or not he took sum advice from me and bought a Loganberry

plant, he tells me its just brilliant, wal he ses 'tres formidable', or summat, he ses them fruits just keeps a'cummin. But he also has a little go at moi, he ses his melons and peaches is tres fabulous, he ses our melons is orlways too hard, while his is warm and juicy and sweet. Wot, melons up at the plot, wal I suppose we can have dreams eh?

Cheerio for now, and a'bientot,

J. Heartycough. Sent from my iSpade.

Downley Day News

After another successful Downley Day, the committee would like to thank all those who contributed to the day, including raffle



donations and sponsors (Independent Living, Cineworld, Omniplex, Playtrain, Hillclimb Garage, Bricklayers Arms, Already, Wycombe Wanderers). Thanks also to the Downley 5K sponsors (The Mortgage Store, Hillclimb, Paul Pidgeon Fitness, APS Windows and Houseshaw)

Also many thanks to RH Amar for the loan of the truck to Concert on the Common and to Dave Wallace for DJ-ing the Family Disco.



The committee would like to offer grants to local voluntary organisations within the Downley area. Each grant will need to support particular projects and not just organisational running costs and should demonstrably benefit Downley residents. Grants are typically of the order of a few hundred pounds each.

The Annual General Meeting will take place on 9th November 2026 at 8:00pm at the Downley Community

Centre. Grant requests should be submitted to info@downley.org no later than 8th November and the successful recipients will be announced at the AGM.

Finally, the committee would like to issue a plea for more people to help with Downley Day and associated activities.

Such activities could include helping to run the bar and helping run the raffle. We are also considering including a bouncy

castle next year but cannot consider it unless there is an additional person available to look after it. You don't need to be on the committee if that's not your thing, but being reliable and a self-starter would really help.



Join us every week for walks in your local Downley countryside

A chance to meet new friends and feel good!

MONDAY 10am for a 1½ hour walk

THURSDAY 11am for either the 1 hour
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**all walks meet and finish at the
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Downley Brownies and Guides would welcome new members

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Guide aged Girls from 10 years from 7pm until 8.30pm

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Everything from working in a team, to taking the lead, to speaking out on issues they care about. It helps them develop the skills and confidence to become the young women they want to be, and to make a difference to the world around them.

For more information or to Register please visit

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child/>

Or contact

Margaret Stagg / Janet Smith

jansmith1611@gmail.com • margaretstagg75@gmail.com

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Downley Voices Lyrics and Listening

Lyrics from Beauty and the Beast, one of the songs from our sell out summer concert “From Page to Stage”, sum up what is going on at Downley Voices

**“Just a little change,
small to say the least”**

There is change ~ from MD, committee, uniform and music, but we are also **“ever just the same, ever as before”** in our commitment to community, our aim for the highest standards and our respect and gratitude for what’s come before.

One of the biggest changes building on the “before” is about listening. Most people can hear but how many people or choirs, actually listen? There is a big difference, and that is one of our small but encouraging areas of change. Listening to yourself but also, vitally, being aware of the people around you. Are you matching tuning, volume, breath, intention behind the words? The sum of the parts are greater than the individual, and listening is the act of being aware and reacting, rather than just hearing and not!

An unusual but fun example of listening I challenge myself with daily is filling up my soda stream bottle to make fizzy water! There is an optimal line on the bottle and I always “listen” to the note/pitch rising as the bottle fills. I try to hit the correct visual line not by looking but by the pitch, by listening, and I can do it 100% of the time which makes me laugh! However, it is also a very good example

of decades of musical training, and pinpoint accurate listening to enable me to encourage and truly listen to our choir’s blend and sound.

How often do we truly listen in our lives? We hear “I’m doing ok” but don’t listen to the inflection that tells us they’re not. We hear “thank you for inviting me but I’m busy” but don’t listen to the regret and desire to not be a burden. We hear “I love you” but don’t listen to the desire to connect behind it. All easy things to miss if you are hearing and not listening. Hearing involves no action, listening involves understanding, empathy, togetherness and activity, everything that makes the best community choir. As we listen and adjust to each other, not only does our pitch become better, but our community becomes stronger.

Being listened to is a form of love, and the choir certainly felt that amongst ourselves, and from all the lovely comments and messages we got after our last concert. If you would like to join us do please visit our website downleyvoices.org, message me the MD, or Craig our chairman, or just turn up to St James’ on a Thursday evening 8pm from September 10th. We can’t wait to speak to you and to listen to your voice blend with ours.

*Becky Holt,
Musical Director, Downley Voices*

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THE DOWNLEY SCHOOL

"Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together"



What a great end to another academic year at The Downley School – work on the top field has finally begun to remediate the land and provide us with our own playing field and sports track!



The World Cup may have been hitting global headlines but at TDS our very own world cup has been keeping the community gripped! We launched TDS World Cup on World Culture Day when we all wore traditional clothes or colours representative of our country flags. It is always a lovely day and great to celebrate the wide range of cultures that that are represented in our TDS school community.



We feel that celebrating the World Cup in a primary school can have a range of educational, social, and wellbeing benefits. Done thoughtfully, it links naturally to many aspects of the curriculum and wider school values. Spending some time focusing on the world cup provides a valuable opportunity to promote global understanding, celebrate cultures, foster unity, and deliberately present the world in a positive, inclusive, and age-appropriate way—free from the complexities of adult political discourse. Every child and staff member was placed into mixed age teams, competing in a TDS world cup tournament with matches being played at play time throughout the last half term. It was a great opportunity for all older children to take the lead and for everyone to work together in teams supporting each other through winning and losing. Our TDS final was between England and Paraguay with England winning 6-3!

Our events this Summer have been exceptionally well attended. From sports days and family picnics to school fairs and concerts. Every year

group also performs a showcase of learning to celebrate the academic year, presenting this to parents and the years below as part of the transition process. It's a lovely opportunity to capture highlights and reminisce on the great experiences shared in our school teams.

We were fortunate to remain open during the exceptional hot weather due to having air-conditioned classrooms.



So many of our children demonstrated our school value of resilience by attending school every day despite hot sleepless nights. Measures included making use of our air-conditioned spaces and also cooling down with water play at lunchtime. Our Year 6 residential trip to Osmington Bay also continued as planned despite the heat. They were exceptionally well behaved and every activity leader commented on how polite the children were and how well they listened. We were even told that activity staff requested to have TDS due to the good reputation we have begun to build! This reputation is not only due to the children but also due to the support and high levels of engagement from the teaching team that give up their free time to ensure that trips like these can go ahead.

Our Year 6 finished the year with an exceptional performance and recruited the new Pupil Leadership Team, house captains and prefects. We say a very fond farewell to them - they may have finished their chapter with us but they will forever be part of our story.

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Downley Evening WI



We recently enjoyed our annual garden party hosted by Janet Durkin and it was a very pleasant occasion, as always. Our members love to come together for the garden party, for a chat over a Pimms, cup of tea, cake ... it's a fundraising opportunity for our chosen charities and always well supported. Our meetings have hosted a variety of speakers on diverse topics, most recently the Saunderton Bombs in 1913. I had not heard of this event, so I learned a lot that evening. It is believed the bombs were part of a campaign waged by suffragettes. Our next meeting, in August, is titled Tales of an Accidental Actor, presented by Michael Kerry White, to be followed in September by Tales from the Auction Room, by Evan Willison. Outside of

our monthly meetings, we often have other activities organised. We have had an evening of pottery painting and a garden visit in recent times. There is a craft group, and we have a literary coffee morning (nothing high flown or highbrow!) and we're open to suggestions for other activities and groups. The Women's Institute is very much what you make it! So, Ladies, come along and visit us and sample the Women's Institute for yourselves. We're always happy to see new faces and there's cake at refreshment time! We meet on the second Tuesday at 7.45pm in St James' Church, Plomer Hill. Check out our website www.downleyeveningwi.weebly.com or email dewipresident@gmail.com. We hope to see you soon.

Angela Taplin

TheWoodland Preschool

The impact of Screen Time on Toddlers & Pre-schoolers

Most families these days have a variety of screens in the house; TVs, tablets and phones are no longer considered luxury items. 'Screen time' particularly how much is 'too much' is often a heated topic of discussion between families (including mine when my children were younger!). If you are not a parent of a young child you may not be aware of recent studies, including one by The Early Years Screen Time Advisory Group, on the effects of all types of screen use in children under 5. Their research showed that screen time in the first 2 years has a negative effect on the development of movement, language, social, emotional and thinking skills as well as a negative impact on sleep. Screen time also reduces the amount of play with others and play outside resulting in reduced physical and social development.

It showed the effects of screen use in under 2's can be long lasting and linked to childhood obesity and developmental delays in later childhood.

The Starmer Government used this research as the basis of their new screen time guidance for parents of under-5s, advising parents to avoid screens for under 2's and to try to limit 2-5-year-olds to 1 hour per day, unless it was part of a shared activity. It also suggested slow paced, age-appropriate content was less harmful and to avoid screens at mealtimes and the hour before bed. Some people may wonder why the Government thought the guidance was necessary but with research by the 1001 Critical Days Foundation finding that 85% of parents receive no screen time guidance from health professionals and 10% of babies

now fall asleep with a screen, the guidance seems beneficial for families.

If you do regularly spend time with under 5's, the Best Start in Life website is a useful tool, for screen time guidance as well as playtime activities, baby and toddler teeth care advice and recipes and meal ideas. The CBeebies Parenting section on the BBC website is also great for under 5s, you can click on the relevant age category for fun activities to help your child with their communication skills. From September this year there will be Screen Use Guidance for Early Years settings too. A report by early years charity Kindred Squared found that 28% of UK children starting reception cannot use a book properly, trying to "swipe" or tap physical pages like a tablet. With 90% of children's development happening before the age of five, families and Early Years Settings have a shared responsibility to work together to help children learn the social, emotional, physical and language skills to give them the best start in life before they start school.

The new guidance will be easy for us to follow at The Woodland Preschool as we do not have a vast number of digital devices the children can access; we don't have gaming consoles, toys with screens, computers or TVs and the children don't have unsupervised access to the iPads the staff use. A few years ago, when we moved from recording our observations on paper, to using tablets and an online system, I was worried we were "old fashioned" and behind the times. These days I am very happy to think of us as an "old school" setting with a vast array of physical books and a dedicated Language Shed to encourage communication, toys and resources to spark imaginative play, a large outside area for children to explore and a new Forrest School programme designed to engage with nature and inspire curiosity.

If you are looking for a nurturing, term time preschool then come and see us at Woodlands. To find out more go to <https://www.thewoodlandpreschool.co.uk> Or contact us at admin@thewoodlandpreschool.co.uk

Greetings from Sunnybank,

Thank you to those who have noticed our "church open" board on occasional Mondays, especially if you have popped in to say hello. It will be lovely to welcome you if you are passing and need a quiet space for a moment. We are usually open on Mondays between 10.00 and 12.00. Less quiet are our two monthly free film and tea afternoons and it's lovely to have a regular group of people joining us. We try to select a variety of films to appeal to everyone but do let us know if you have a special request.

Thank you also to those who stopped by to share a coffee under our gazebo in May and helped us to raise money for

Christian Aid.

We all enjoyed sharing space with the other village churches on Downley Day and were very impressed by the expertise of people trying our games. Well done if you won a very melty chocolate!

Our Sunday services start at 10 o'clock and we would be delighted to see you there.

Our minister Rachael often fills the church with wonderful music and creative worship. When she can't be with us, your voices would be particularly welcome to help us maintain our Methodist tradition of worship in song.

There's no need to book - just come!



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Top Notes

“Release your
inhibitions . . .”

Well, hello Top Notes fans—and our wonderful super fans! We're sure you've been wondering what we've been up to...

It's been a busy and exciting six months! We've challenged ourselves with some wonderfully difficult songs, culminating in an epic 11-minute Wicked medley that pushed every single voice in the choir to its limits. We even tackled some dance routines—complete with a double clap—which, let's just say, provided plenty of laughs along the way!

As always, every rehearsal has been filled with fun, friendship and laughter, all under the expert guidance of our fantastic choir leader, who somehow keeps us sounding (and occasionally looking!) fabulous.

Our summer concert, held in aid of **Rosie's Rainbow Fund**—a charity supporting sick and disabled children and their families through music therapy and other therapeutic services in hospitals,



schools and the community—raised an incredible **£1,500**. Thank you to everyone who came along, donated and continues to support us.

We truly couldn't do it without you.

This year we've said a fond farewell to some of our lovely choir members, who we'll miss enormously. But we're also delighted to be welcoming **seven new voices** when we return in September, and we can't wait to hear them join the Top Notes family.

As for Christmas... we're still waiting to discover what festive musical challenges lie ahead! Whatever our repertoire turns out to be, we're sure it will be another exciting adventure.

So, pop **Monday, 7th December** in your diary and come and join us. We'll be doing our very best to entertain you with another evening of top-notch performances—and we can't wait to see you there!



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE

at Downley War Memorial Hall

Sunday 8th November 2026

Service Starts at 3pm

A Collection will be taken during the service

All proceeds to The Royal British Legion

ALL WELCOME

Hillclimb Garage News

Downley Day Report and eVED Looming for Electric Vehicles



Downley Day 2026 – It was ‘Nice to see you, to see you, NICE...!’



The sun shone, the residents of the village turned up in brilliant numbers and Downley Day was yet another fantastic day of fun and wonderful community spirit! The day started with the crowning of the Downley King & Queen and it was an honour to have them come and say hello at our stand.



As always, the Hillclimb Team were excited to be at Downley Day and proud to, once again, be headline sponsors for the event. We had a few new vintage cars on show, including a gorgeous Triumph TR6 and a fabulous little Triumph Herald. The big competition this year was to guess the number of Ball Pit Balls crammed into one of our lovely little courtesy cars. To compliment the competition, we also had

some new fun and games, including the crossbow challenge (with sucker darts) and Play Your Cards Right. Our very own managing director, Mark, donned his Gold Lamé Jacket and got into his Bruce Forsyth alter ego to host Play Your Cards Right! We have never had so much fun, with residents of all ages literally queuing up to have a game with Brucie and try and win our fabulous prizes! Good Game, Good Game!

The day was topped off by two of our team, Harrison and Adam, pairing up and going one better than last year's runners up position and winning the Donkey Derby race! Congratulations lads!

Congratulations also to Dianne from Downley on winning our Ball Pit challenge, guessing there were 3,573 balls in the car. Amazingly, just 5 short of the actual total! Dianne won a fabulous Hillclimb and Hearing Dogs goodie bag, together with a £100 Amazon gift voucher! Our competitions and donations on the day raised over £350 for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People!

Thank you so much to the Downley Day Committee for organising yet another fantastic day and a special thank you to everyone that visited the event and came over to say hello to the Hillclimb Team and joined in all our fun and games! We had a truly brilliant day!

UK government announces terms for new Electric Vehicle Excise Duty (eVED) pay-per-mile scheme

From 1 April 2028 eVED, a new mileage-based charge, will apply to Hybrid and Electric cars. The rates of Tax will be: 3

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As more people choose to switch to cleaner, greener electric cars, the Office for Budget

Responsibility (OBR) has forecast fuel duty receipts will decline. eVED is intended to help replace lost fuel duty revenue from cars over the long term so, like fuel duty, the amount motorists pay will vary based on the amount they drive.

It's worth noting that eVED is in addition to normal Vehicle Excise Duty 'Road Tax'. More to follow on this topic next time!

Source: GOV.UK/Parkers

Finally a BIG thank you to our lovely customers for your continued support and encouragement of Hillclimb Garage. It really does mean the world to us all and we remain 'At your SERVICE'



Cycling in South Buckinghamshire

Cycling UK has a number of local groups in South Buckinghamshire

Join your local Cycling UK groups this summer

Cycling UK has a number of local groups 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 from local start points including Wendover, Great Kingshill, Cholesbury and Beaconsfield. A stop is included for elevenses at a local café or garden centre followed by lunch before returning home. There are also Coffee Pots on Friday mornings and these include Princes Risborough, Chiltern Velo Café, West Wycombe and Bulbourne.

Chiltern Cycling offers led rides and Coffee Pots on Sundays with the focus on welcoming new members. Rides take place on quiet routes and include a coffee stop with most rides returning to the start point. There is a Zoom social on the 1st Thursday and Clubroom at Little

Kingshill on the 3rd Thursday 8pm to 10pm (No clubroom in August).

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.

There is something for everyone of all ages and abilities 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:

E-mail: publicity@southbuckscycling.org.uk

Web: www.southbucksmidweekcycling.org
(Midweek Group)

Web: www.southbuckscycling.org.uk
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Fridays at Downley Community Centre (Term time only)



DOWNLEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

How Downley Got Educated (Part 2)

Long before Downley had a purpose-built school, education for most families was a patchwork affair – dame schools, Sunday classes and evening lessons were the only options for anyone other than the upper classes.

This part of the story takes up the reins of Part 1 (see Downley Village News Spring 2026 issue 146) and starts

probably in the 1830s when the Downley philanthropist Miss Carder established a school at her own expense “for the free education of poor children”. It was most likely housed at Sunnybank in Moor Lane, the Methodist chapel built in 1824. Samplers stitched by Downley pupils – including one by nine-year-old Emma Plumridge in 1847 – survive as charming evidence of those early days.

By 1862 a Methodist committee had taken charge of the Day School. A new school house had been built adjacent to the Sunnybank Chapel and together with Miss Steel, a newly appointed trained teacher, it opened its doors in this new guise on 6th January, charging three pence a week.

The Superintendent Minister of the High Wycombe Circuit acted as chairman and the secretary was Mr Henry Collins who owned a Downley chair factory and lived at The Elms (now 43 Plomer Green Avenue). The Bible was the textbook



Sampler stitched by 9-year-old Emma Plumridge,
Downley School, 1847

to teach reading, and writing was learned through copying out passages from the scriptures. This was a great step forward for the children of Downley, yet our community probably reflected the national picture that half of England’s children did not attend school at all.

Change was to come via the 1861 Newcastle Commission which

made it clear that systematic reform was urgently needed nationally. It reported the following:

- “The children do not in fact receive the kind of education they require. We have seen overwhelming evidence from HMIs [school inspectors] to the effect that not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the children receive a good education.” The majority left without the power of reading and writing.



The Downley School, together with its datestone of 1873

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- Girls fared worst of all: “Girls leaving school can scarcely read or write and certainly not spell, and only a few can cast up a simple sum. They have no knowledge of needlework and cannot cut out or even mend.”

The answer came in 1870 with the Forster Education Act, which laid the groundwork for universal elementary education requiring Elementary School Boards to manage the establishment of primary schools for 5-13yr olds delivering a curriculum in the form of the classic 3 Rs. For Downley it meant a proper school at last. Plans were approved in October 1872 with a loan of £785 secured over fifty years. Miss King was hired as the first teacher and the building was designed for 204 of the younger Downley children, with the older ones expected to walk to a newly erected school in West Wycombe.

So on 1st September 1873 Downley School opened its doors (*photo on previous page*). Within weeks 125 children had been registered – a strong start. Henry Collins served as chairman and was instrumental in bringing the project to life.

School life was not without its struggles. Attendance was a constant battle. Children were regularly absent and inspection reports revealed high failure rates. Epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and whooping cough forced closures, and the building often bulged beyond its capacity. Board meetings indicate that teachers felt unsupported and regularly resigned.

The curriculum was limited, with the day starting with prayers and religious instruction. Writing in the form of dictation, oral reading of short passages chanted out loud and simple arithmetic using an abacus (providing skills needed to work in a shop or bank) were the order

of the day. The development of a fine hand in writing was also seen as a crucial part of education.

But despite it all Downley school thrived as evidenced in the inspection report of January 1882 which cites:

“Another successful examination has been passed, at the rate of 90%. The order continues good, and there is a very healthy tone about the school generally. The answering in grammar was very fair; that of the 2nd and third standards being good. Sewing is thoroughly taught, but the girls are not yet forward enough in this subject to be presented in any stage higher than the fourth. Under the 5th rule of the third schedule the grant for needlework cannot be recommended.”

At the start of the 19th century roughly 60% of women and 40% of men were illiterate. By 1895 90% literacy had been achieved. Downley’s school played its own quiet part in that transformation, helping to turn the residents of the village into a more educated community whose school building and legacy endure to this day.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

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Downley Gardening Society

May Meeting Review

Dr Jill Evers gave a fascinating insight into the geology and archaeology of the Chilterns AONB, an area of 833 square kilometres covering 5 counties. She explained that half a million years ago there were no hills and valleys in the Chilterns but rivers shaped the landscape and today chalk streams are a globally rare habitat with 9 major chalk streams found here. If you missed this talk or would like to know more, then Dr Evers' book "Chiltern Trails and Tales" would be a good way to discover the rich history of the Chilterns.

Trip to RHS Hyde Hall

On a sunny Sunday in June, a coach party of 41 DGS members and friends made the smooth 90 minute journey to RHS Hyde Hall near Chelmsford for a wonderful day enjoying the beautiful gardens. From its earlier beginnings as a windswept, hilltop Essex farm, Hyde Hall was transformed from 1955 onwards into a celebrated public garden by the Robinson family who planted hundreds of trees (many from a local market) and developed herbaceous borders before donating the gardens to the RHS in 1993. Since then, Hyde Hall has evolved into a wide ranging garden spanning approximately 350 acres of which approximately 85 acres are devoted to grassland and 90 acres leased to a local farmer. The remainder features diverse styles such as the Winter garden, Hilltop garden with its magnificent roses and herbaceous borders, a dry garden inspired by Beth Chatto

containing many drought resistant and Mediterranean plants, the Australia and New Zealand garden, the more recently completed Global Growth vegetable garden, 2 ponds (upper and lower), the lake, woodland and much more!

Downley Day

A big thank you to everyone who donated plants in the morning and those who came along to say hello and buy a plant or two from our stand in the afternoon! It was a very busy and well supported Downley Day.

Dates for your diary:

Autumn Show

Saturday, 5th September

November meeting

Monday, 16th November

*Dr Sandy Primrose will talk about
Orchids and Ice Cream*

Trip to RHS Wisley Glow

Wednesday, 25th November

All our meetings are held in St James' Church Hall, Plomer Hill, Downley and start at 7.30pm

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

Website - www.downleygardeningociety.com

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



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Downley Cricket Club



President's Day on Sunday 30 August this year is dedicated to Dave 'Willa' Willans, a stalwart footballer and one of Downley Cricket Club's most liked and popular cricketers over several decades, who sadly passed away in April this year. His passion for cricket took him to Australia to watch The Ashes this winter, but he fell ill and had to return to the UK.

Willa's former team-mates, led by Kevin Stratford and Willa's brother Dan, will be entering a team in his honour in the series of 7-a-side cricket games on the Common starting at 10:30am. Willa himself often played for the President's team, and he is sorely missed by all of us. Other participants include teams from Great Kingshill, High Wycombe (in the last two years HWCC have provided a Ladies' team and a Coaches' team), Phoenix Rugby (last year providing the most entertainment, with their outfits and sense of fun), Le De Spenders (starring the Beavis boys), President's, and a few teams from Downley, including Asian Rage!

There will be plentiful food (local restaurant Mowchack supplied popular fare last year, and will do so again this year, courtesy of Imran Hossain) and a well-stocked bar, a family atmosphere, fun and laughter as non-regular cricketers have a go – with a lot of swishing and missing – as well as some good cricket to watch. Plenty of good-natured 'encouragement' is provided from the sidelines from family and friends (and rival teams). It all makes for a fast-moving day. Everyone is invited to come along and enjoy the day.

This cricket season has seen a tough introduction to Thames Valley League cricket on the hard pitches this hot summer favouring high scoring, against hard opposition, with plenty of travelling to games but no more so than in previous years whilst we were in the Mid-Bucks League. But the higher level of cricket on offer has attracted some fine cricketers to Downley, mainly through the efforts of new captain Rehaan Vats, who has

done a great job of organising and running the team.

Meanwhile huge amounts of work has been done on the square and outfield by Den Cox, Club Chairman Graeme 'County' Aitken, Fionn Napier, and others. There would not be any cricket at Downley without this extraordinary dedication. Scorer Mandy Aitken makes sure everything is perfectly recorded.

In June we had Uxbridge on the ropes, 7 wickets down, Downley having put in a spirited bowling performance. Later against Ickenham, Abhi Kurup, returning to Downley having had to cut short his previous season, scored a whirlwind 81 with 5 sixes. Graeme 'County' Aitken then ran through Ickenham's strong batting line-up with a destructive 5 for 35. Versatile cricketers like Anurag Tiwari (currently averaging 40 this season), who has opened the batting, can keep wicket, and bowls his off-spin with a well-grooved action, is complemented by surprise performances by players like Usama Nawaz (a dedicated winter net-practice attendee) who smote 3 sixes in a 30 ball 51 not out, Downley posting a very creditable 256, narrowly losing. Reliable all-rounders like Ali Qureishi also excel.

As I write, news is filtering through of a quite remarkable and unprecedented chase-down of a mammoth 331 score set by Ickenham, with Muhammad Ali having captured 4 for 47, then opening the batting scoring 85, with 4 sixes, in the company of Ben 'Medals' Alsop who scored a cultured 36 whilst bludgeoning 6 fours. Abhi Kurup then weighed in with 4 sixes in his 61. Meanwhile Graeme 'County' Aitken had been selected to play for Bucks 060s First Eleven against the touring Western Australia side at High Wycombe CC, the following Sunday.

All at Downley hope to see you at President's Day on Sunday 30 August, where you will be warmly welcomed.

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Art at the 2026 Up! Downley Festival

The 2026 Art Within Tent and the Village Art Show (renamed as the Art and Craft Show) again proved to be events full of Downley creativity and enjoyed by the entrants and visitors, judging by the increased numbers for both events and the very positive feedback!

This was the third year of Art in the Marquee - a free community evening to encourage anyone to have fun with different art materials and subjects. Local artists and craftspeople led this event, sharing ideas, activities, chat and skills.

Even more people came along this year, on a lovely summer's evening, with people of all ages busy trying their hand at various things: cartooning, landscape drawing, portraits and a still life, plus demos of alcohol ink painting, ceramics, stained glass making and silversmithing. It was a busy evening of creative activity and chat, ending dramatically with a downpour of much needed rain!

The 14th show at the Community Centre was again a colourful and expanding showcase of Downley's creative talent. There were paintings in just about every medium and, given the aim of encouraging more craft entries, this year was a great success – with a record number of entries, showing a wide range of creative skills with pieces ranging from intricate lace and embroidery to ceramics, stained glass and crochet – including a large dolls' house (which took three years to make).



Individual and communal work in the junior entries included work by Woodlands Pre-School and The Downley School. Winners in the junior entries were selected and, for both adult and child participants, there were certificates for

those with the highest numbers of votes in the Visitors' Favourite choices.

Well done everyone! Remember to keep creating.....always room for everyone's work next year!

Visitors commented positively on the new set up at the show, with items displayed on table stands, which enhanced the light and space in the Oak Room. The art and craft show team are grateful to the Festival Committee for their generous support in funding the purchase of the stands and the colourful feather publicity banners. Thanks also to the Community Centre for hosting the show – we are looking forward to seeing even more entries and visitors at the two events next year.

The volunteer team who organise the show are already planning for 2027 and would love to hear from you if you could spare just a few hours to support this event (helping with design/ admin work, publicity, setting up the entries or stewarding). If you would like to be part of these successful and friendly community events, please contact Sue at downleyartshow@outlook.com

Juniors – judges' Award		
1st	Kairav Joshi	A Bad Hair Day
2nd	Ada Kendall	Daisies
3rd	Emma Thatcher	A Hidden House
Juniors – Visitors' Favourite		
1st	Amelie Howitt	The Cat
2nd	Kairav Joshi	A Bad Hair Day
3rd	Amelie Howitt	The Cat and Fish Bowl
Adults – Visitors' Favourite		
1st	Julie Cuthbert	The Blue House
2nd	Tessa Taylor	Buddies
3rd	Carol Lock	The Parrot
3rd	Helen Willson	The Wye at West Wycombe

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The Pharmacy First service is now embedded in the NHS triage systems both via 111 (call or online) and the GP systems. We currently are able to give advice on self care, sell remedies for symptom relief, advise when to get further help and, where appropriate within the service specification, treat with antibiotics or other prescription medication. We often receive referrals for cough for which we can offer symptom relief and advise when further checks are needed, but there is no scope for treating chest infections with antibiotics. Generally we try to work on a walk in basis for patients seeking help, but a call to check for suitable time if referral is made will avoid a long wait if the private consultation area and/or pharmacist are occupied.

Oral Contraception - new start, ongoing repeat, and emergency/morning after contraception can all be provided free of

charge via pharmacy. Again a quick call to the pharmacy to check the pharmacist's availability is advised but we can often provide the service on a walk in basis with only a slight wait. The GP contract now has incentives to embrace working with pharmacy to free up their time and this is a specific area that is being targeted.

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 mid August and I am sure many of you will receive notification of how to book from the NHS. We will endeavour to provide as many appointments as possible; if you find we are not available on a given date choose a later date. 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



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Covid vaccinations the cohort being offered is as last year -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.

As always, we request that folk allow seven days between requesting medication and being able to collect. If, however, you have run very short please contact us and we will endeavour to expedite your supply.

Private services

We continue to offer micro suction for the removal of ear wax.

Weight loss - we continue to offer the weight loss injections Mounjaro and Wegovy and can also offer the Wegovy tablet. The service is fully supported with four weekly check-ins to monitor progress and any problems

that might arise. It is extremely rewarding to follow individuals' journeys and success as they progress. Please book appointments via the link in our ad.

Travel clinic - this is newly launched and will cover health advice and vaccinations for all travel to those areas of the world where risk is greater than we are used to in the UK. Please call in to discuss, but booking must be made via the link provided in our advert to ensure we can prepare the specific advice needed for your trip.

Other vaccinations - we are striving to add to our availability and will also be commencing a private service for supplementary vaccinations such as shingles, pneumonia, Covid, flu where individuals would like the protection for themselves or loved ones but are not in eligible cohorts for the NHS.

Welcome to our u3a

Some news of our summer so far.

There was a great turnout for the annual u3a picnic at High Wycombe Museum on 15th July. Shade was still welcome on a lovely sunny day with a gentle breeze and without the fierce heat of previous weeks. We were entertained by the Ukulele Group who excelled themselves and encouraged the audience to join in (when they could remember the words!).

The Enjoying Shakespeare Group also visited the Museum gardens in July to watch the Unbound Shakespeare Company's production of *The Tempest*. The cast did a great job with seven very hot actors playing 12 parts, in basic costumes of black trousers and cream cotton smocks.

On our annual 5-day holiday to the Peak District in June, 40 members enjoyed a hotel stay in Sheffield. We had daily visits to local places of interest in our luxury

coach. The highlight was the final day when we visited The National Tramway Museum at Crich for Past Times – Homefront. From wartime displays and historic vehicles to live music, family activities and immersive 1940s experiences.

The Publicity Team took the opportunity to publicise the work of our u3a at an event run by Hazlemere's Highfield Surgery Patient Participation Group on 27th June at Hazlemere Community Centre.

If this appeals to you, do take a look at our website or Facebook page.

website <https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk>

For any information feel free to contact

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News from St James' Church

Services: Sundays 11am / Thursdays 10am followed by community coffee

Contact: admin@stjamesdownley.org.uk
/ www.stjamesdownley.org.uk

Events coming up

Messy Church starts again on **Sunday 27**

September at 4.00pm.

We have crafts, food and 15 minutes of story, song and prayer for families. Popular crafts this past year have included making sandals, mixing “cocktails” and anything food-related! You can find out more about Messy Church here: <https://www.messychurch.brf.org.uk/>



*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot. *(Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)*

I'm writing this during the third heatwave of the year, but now, as you're reading, we are on the verge of changing season once more, and for some of us that will mean a new academic year or a return to routine and regular activities that may have stopped for



a summer break. The quotation (above) comes from Ecclesiastes, a part of the Bible that contains wise sayings, and is often used at funerals to remind us that both routine and change, as well as seasonal activity, are part of life's variety. Whether we prefer some structure or like things a bit more relaxed, the Bible recognises that life is a complex mixture of things and that people react in many different ways to that mixture.



At St James our vision is to live God's love in our community, our worship and our prayer. What this means is that we are here for you, whatever you're experiencing. Please reach out to us for coffee and a chat or you can post a request for prayers on our website.

We too are in a time of change as we advertise and interview for a new vicar to lead us. And the eagle-eyed among you will have spotted that my role has also changed. On 4 July I was ordained at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and so I'm delighted to be able to sign off as

*Rev'd Rowena Harrison, Assistant Curate,
on behalf of St James, Downley*



Wycombe Homeless Connection's Big Sleepout and Together Festival are on **Friday 13 November**. Sign up to sleep outside for the night and raise money to help bring homelessness to an end for people in south Buckinghamshire. All are welcome to join the Together festival beforehand at The Walled Garden in West Wycombe for a fun-filled community evening.

Find out more, register to sleep out and book your festival tickets:
www.wyhoc.org.uk/bigsleepout2026

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Non-Emergency

By Phone: If it's not an emergency, do not call 999. This doesn't mean the crime is not important – it just helps the police to make the best use of their resources. Call 101 for non-emergency enquiries. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use the textphone service on 18001 101.

Online: Online reporting has been introduced to offer another option to victims of crime when reporting a crime or incident where an urgent police response is

not required. Examples of crimes and incidents that can be reported online and also by phone include: criminal damage and vandalism, thefts from a vehicle, shed, garage, outbuilding and house burglaries when the reporting is after the event.

You should try to include as much information as possible about the crime.

Online reporting allows you the freedom to report non-emergencies at a time that is convenient for you.

<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

Reporting Anonymously

If you have information regarding a crime and don't want to talk to the police, contact the charity Crimestoppers online or call 0800 555 111. You will remain 100% anonymous. Always.

Following a crime

Support for yourself: if you have been affected by crime and need confidential emotional support or advice on what to do next, you can contact Victim Support on 08 08 16 89 111.

Email: office@wdnhwatch.plus.com

Buckinghamshire Council Update



Hope you've had a great start to the summer and had a chance to enjoy some of the events that have been going on in the village. I particularly loved the Art and Craft Show at the community centre, and appreciating the array of talent on show, from not only our talented adults but our budding child and teenage artists. Keep up the fabulous work!

It's been a busy time at Council leading up to the holidays. The Bucks Local Plan has gone out for consultation. Downley has no land listed in it for housing development, but I will be keeping a firm eye on how other proposed developments affect parking and spaces in town, and there being enough places for our

children at secondary school. With builds in Widmer End, Gomm Valley, Princes Risborough and Hazlemere – there's going to be more demand in all the places our children heavily rely on for their education. We need enough secondary school places to keep Downley thriving as a great place for families to live. There are also way too few affordable homes planned for in Bucks – we must make sure families and key workers are able to afford to live in our county as a whole, and the right homes at the right prices are built to attract them. The consultation closes on 6th September and all the documents are here:



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My local councillor surgeries on the 3rd Saturday of each month between 2-4pm at the Community Centre are a great way to have chats with residents and find out about your concerns. From speeding, to blocked paths, potholes and waste services, to school submissions, education, social care... Council covers a lot of areas

and I'm there to make sure your concerns are represented and taken seriously.

Do continue to contact me directly where you need or wish to:

Cllr Hazel Arthur-Hewitt
hazel.arthur-hewitt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
07985 468154

From Westminster

Emma Reynolds - MP for Wycombe

It was fantastic to visit The Downley School and talk to pupils about how Parliament works. Councillor Hazel Arthur-Hewitt joined me to explain how we work together to get things done for local residents.

I was pleased that the Downley Theatre Group enjoyed their visit to Parliament. If your family or community group would like a tour, please book through my website: emmaforwycombe.org.uk.

As a mother of two young boys, keeping children safe is hugely important to me. Parents are increasingly concerned about online harms, which is why the Government is introducing a social media ban for under-16s to help create a safer digital environment for young people. These reforms will help create a safer and healthier online environment for children, set a new standard for protecting future generations and reinforce the Government's commitment to giving every child the best possible start in life.

Children's health is another important priority. Action on Smoking and Health reports that around one million 11 to 17-year-olds in Great Britain had tried vaping by 2025. Colourful packaging,

prominent retail displays and child-appelling flavours are among the factors encouraging

young people to take up vaping. The Government has announced plans to keep vapes out of sight in shops and airports and introduce plain packaging for all tobacco products.

Keeping children safe also means ensuring they can travel to and from school safely. I recently visited the crossing on The Pastures outside Disraeli School after hearing concerns from parents and the school's lollipop lady about the dangers. I am once again urging Buckinghamshire Council to take action. With the Government's new Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and £9.1 million awarded to Buckinghamshire Council for active travel, we have an opportunity to improve safety and better protect vulnerable road users.

I was honoured to be appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury by Prime Minister Andy Burnham, but I want to reassure residents that Wycombe remains my top priority.



Downley Diary | Round-up of Regular Activities

DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - AUTUMN 2026

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	Wednesday	19.00 - 20.30	Agata 07935 789 041 hwradosc@gmail.com
Artsmart School of Art	Monday	10.00 - 12.00	info@artsmartuk.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
C'lor Surgery - Downley Ward	3rd Saturday	14:00 - 16:00	hazel.arthur-hewitt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk 07966 159 791
Craft Group	1st Tuesday	9.30 - 12.30	Helen 01494 564 414
Crochet Group	Monday Tuesday	19.00 - 21.00 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
Indian Dance Classes for ladies of all ages	Saturday	09.30 - 10.30	Ananya 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
MOO 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	Monday Monday Thursday	18:30 - 19:30 19:30 - 20:30 09:30 - 10:30	Joseph 07983 159 678
Simply Walk (free)	Monday Thursday	10.00 - 11.30 approx 11.00 - 12.00 approx	Starts from the Community Centre simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Soft Mobility Fitness	Tuesday	18:00 - 19:00	Kseniia 07710 000 256
Tai chi Shibashi	3rd Monday	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
ZKT Childrens Dance Academy	Wednesday	16.45 - 18.30	zktdanceacademy@gmail.com
Zumba Gold	Wednesday	10.30 - 11.15	jennifer.morais.zumba@outlook.com

SUNNYBANK CHAPEL, MOOR LANE - AUTUMN 2026

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 - AUTUMN 2026

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 - AUTUMN 2026

Hall Bookings: admin@stjamesdownley.org.uk

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 - AUTUMN 2026

Hall Bookings: admin@stjamesdownley.org.uk

Art Club	Thursday	09.30		
Clinical Pilates - Prolife	Saturday	8.00 – 9.00	✓	sunainamenra@gmail.com
	Saturday	9.15 – 10.15		07809 771 542
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	09.30	✓	karensynergypilates@gmail.com 07786 567 376
	Wednesday	10.35	✓	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		
Tuneless Choir	1st and 3rd Tuesday	19.30 – 21.00		

DOWNLEY WAR MEMORIAL HALL - AUTUMN 2026

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

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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Downley Village News

Editor: Anne at editor@downley.org

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Copy: Please send text in editable format and photographs as separate files in high resolution. Copy should be sent to editor@downley.org.

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 enews and the downley.org website.

Chairman: Bill Thompson; **Secretary:** Peter Loadman

Treasurer: Bob Cook; **Webmaster** Mark Starkey

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