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Issue 71 November 2019

For Avington, Easton, Ithen Abbas and Martyr Worthy





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# WELCOME to the Valley News



I would be tempted to start with the well known November poem, but I can't because there is an item in the magazine which claims to be the best bit of poetry in the News, so clearly, to avoid any controversy (there is enough of that going on elsewhere), it must be the only bit of poetry in this month's issue. There is in fact a little bit of doggerel in one of the other items bringing a local event to your attention, but no one would call that poetry - would they? I hope that you will recognise the items I am referring to when you reach them!

November offers a varied mix of possible activities for you to join in, including warm welcomes from the WI and a friendly duplicate Bridge Club. Why wait until January to try something new?

Right at the start are the Easton fireworks and the All Souls service for loved ones who have died, followed by Remembrance Sunday when we remember not only those who died in the two World Wars but also all those killed in the numerous other conflicts. Sadly there are still soldiers and civilians being killed every day.

On a more up-beat note, further ahead in December are performances you need to book tickets for in advance - the Easton Pantomime of course but also Elgar's amazing oratorio *The Kingdom* sung by the Waynefleete Singers; this choir includes so many of our best village voices. Do support these local efforts - a huge amount of work goes into putting them on and although it is fun to do, it is even better if it is appreciated by the community.

Save the Date gives early warning of more delights to come, enabling you to plan ahead as far as September next year!

The autumn colours are a joy, the display will soon be in full flood and gives a special charm to this season. As the cold weather kicks in you may need to stock up on Kleenex, get your boiler serviced and get the winter woollies out of storage. Turning the central heating down to 18° - 20°C and wearing a snazzy jumper is a small but worthwhile contribution to reducing carbon dioxide emissions - well, better than nothing!

Next month's editor is Verity Coleman.

*Charlotte Appleby*

## Itchen Valley News

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## What's On

### **Saturday 2 November Easton Fireworks**

Start time is 6.30pm. More details on page 13

### **Sunday 3 November**

All Souls service. See Page 20

### **Sunday 10 November Remembrance Day.**

The Annual Remembrance Sunday parade for 2019 will be held in front of the War

Memorial at St John's Church, Itchen Abbas at 10.50 am. The Remembrance Service will be held in St. John's Church, Itchen Abbas, shortly after the two-minute silence. The service will be ecumenical: it is designed for everybody.

*Richard Seymour, Hon. Sec. 779401*

### **Wednesday 13 November Upper Itchen Valley Soc. AGM**

All members are welcome to come to the Society's AGM on Wednesday 13 November in Martyr Worthy Village Hall. Do join us for a glass of wine from 7pm followed by the meeting at 7.30pm.

The Watercress Way is, as many will know, the local footpath and cycle track based on the disused Winchester/Alton railway. The Trustees will describe the progress so far and the way in which they see the route developing in the future.

This will be followed by the normal AGM business, election of officers etc. We look forward to seeing you.

Any queries to Alison Matthews tel: 779632 or



ralphandalimattthews@gmail.com  
UIVS Committee

### **Thursday 14 November**

Easton W.I. are delighted to invite you to join them for an evening of folk music with our good friends, Tony and Sandra Hurlin with the Itchen Folk Band, at 7.30 pm in Easton village hall.

### **Saturday 16 November**

Christmas Fair 3-5.30pm at Itchen Abbas & Avington Village Hall. Chance to meet Father Christmas and other children's activities, Café, cakes, tombola, raffle and plenty more! See Page 15.

### **Saturday 23 November 6 pm**

### **"A Christmas Knight" at Martyr Worthy Village Hall**

Every year at Christmas, in the kingdom of Bravely, they hold the Knight Trials, a contest to find those in the land who have what it takes to become a knight. What do you do if you're face to face with a dragon? Is jousting as painful as it looks?



Join us at Martyr Worthy Village Hall on Saturday 23 November at 6 pm to follow how Jack spends his Christmas Day finding out the hard way, in this magical new puppet show for all the family.

The show is brought to us by Scratch Built Productions in association with



Proteus Theatre Company, who have put on many successful performances in the past. It is suitable for families and children aged 4+ and runs for about 90 minutes, including an interval. Tickets are £7 per adult and £5 per child and are available from Sara Mason on 779169 or

splmason@hotmail.co.uk. Please book early to avoid disappointment.

All residents in the Valley are welcome but, as space is limited, priority will be given to those with a Martyr Worthy connection. Households in the village should also find further details enclosed with their copy of November's Itchen Valley News.

*Guy Green, Martyr Worthy Village Hall Management Committee*

### **Saturday 7 December**

Come and enjoy Elgar's *The Kingdom* performed by Waynflete Singers and friends with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and a stellar line-up of soloists directed by Andrew Lumsden. Tickets from £12.50 from cathedral box office. One of Elgar's finest pieces.

*Tony Gaster*

### **Wednesday 11 to Saturday 14 December Easton Pantomime**

Robin Hood, not to be missed! Book early to avoid disappointment, the Saturday 2pm Matinee sells out fast. Adults £10, 12 and under £5.

eastontickets@gmail.com or Mary and David Purser 779328

See advertisement on page 9 for more details.

### **Wednesday 18 December**

Itchen Valley Choir concert, IA&AVH at 7.30. See page 29 for more details.

## **Save the Dates**

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### **Next year:**

#### **25 April 2020**

Martyr Worthy Plant Sale at Chilland

#### **6 June 2020 EastonFest**

**13 June 2020** Party to mark 20 years since the opening of the new Itchen Abbas and Avington village hall.

**18 June 2020** Sparkling Preview at St Mary's Easton

**19-21 June 2020** A Festival Of Gardens & Flowers in Easton & St Mary's

**1 - 4 July 2020** Southwood Players are planning another open air play at Southwood House.

Open air theatre at Avington Park:

**19 July 2020** Sherlock Holmes

**16 August 2020** Twelfth Night

**19 September 2020** The Building Ball 7pm, at the David Roth Memorial Cricket Ground, Easton. To raise monies to complete the storage rooms at the village hall.

Please send your future event dates to [itchenvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:itchenvalleynews@gmail.com).



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## Valley Happenings, Views and Reviews

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### Harvest Lunch

Lots of people of all ages enjoyed a delicious Harvest Lunch in Easton Village Hall, traditional home cooked shepherds pie with puddings to follow.



A huge thankyou is due to the catering team of Vanessa Rosewell, Jill Croft and Gilly Greenwood and to the many others who made it possible.



### Easton WI

In October we welcomed members from six other Institutes from our Group. Kathy Winter, our WI Adviser, informed members of various dates including next year's venue for the AGM on 4 June at the Royal Albert Hall. The Alresford Show tea tent had been very busy with lots of interest shown by visitors.

The speaker for the evening was Richard Murphy who, after a lively discussion with a family member over good times past and the state of the world as it is now, agreed to research the subject and gave us interesting facts to show that things are better now than they were, immunization has eradicated smallpox, and life expectancy is much longer. Safety belts in cars are saving lives, women's education round the world has improved. A very uplifting talk with lots of optimism for us all.

Members enjoyed a delicious supper with time to socialise.

Our next meeting will be at Easton Village Hall, 7.15 on Thursday 14 November when Tony and Sandra Hurlin will be entertaining us with members of the Itchen Folk Band.

Everyone welcome

Sallie Peake

### Wildflower of the month

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Common toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)



## Awards and Achievements

### Bishops Commission for Mission

Winchester Cathedral was completely packed out when, amongst others, Lavinia Owen was given the Bishops Commission for Mission after the course that she attended last year. Lavinia completed the BCM Pastoral course, which gives her the Bishop's authority to lead our Valley Visitors who wonderfully visit so many people during the week in our Parish.



These BCM courses are very popular, some 90 people from across the Diocese were taking part in either Pastoral, Worship, Children Families and Youth, Growing Faith and Evangelism. We currently have five people attending the courses and will of course welcome them this time next year as they are given their commissions.

*Alex Pease*

### The Countryside Awards

The Watercress Way won the CPRE Community and Voluntary award 2019. A prestigious award for the work done so far by TWW!

The Countryside Awards Ceremony took place on 17 September 2019. Nigel Atkinson Esq, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire presented the Awards and Certificates to the Winners and Finalists.

We were delighted to receive the Campaign to Protect Rural England's Community and Voluntary award

against stiff opposition from other Hampshire charities and groups.

Trustees Kim Adams, Clive Cook and Jim Thompson discarded wellies and brush cutters for heels and suits to meet the main sponsor, Southern Coop and the new CEO of Hampshire's CPRE.

The award is a beautiful plaque set on a beechwood ring and will be shown at future events like the Watercress Festival.

Our chairman Jackie Porter said

"A big thank you to all our supporters who voted for

us. It is wonderful that the efforts of our dedicated group of trustees and volunteers over the last 3 years has been recognised. We are delighted that so many people use The Watercress Way for a wide variety of activities from dog walking or a short stroll through our railway heritage to long distance walks or even marathon running. Some sections are also accessible for cyclists and horse riders - see the map on the website."

*Mike Collis*

*Secretary, The Watercress Way*







Easton Players  
present



# Robin Hood

THE PANTO

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11, 12, 13 December at 7.30 pm  
Saturday 14 at 2pm and 6pm

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Children 12 and under £5.00

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## Itchen Valley in the forefront at a Golf Day sponsored by Eight Wealth Management

£10,000 raised for the Macmillan Nurses with a total of £51,500 to date.

96 golfers and cricketers enjoyed an immaculately

prepared Test Valley Golf Course to raise funds for the Macmillan Nurses.

Easton Wanderers comprising Nicky Lott, Lucy Wolfe, Liza Hunt & Hector

James with 94 team stableford points just pipped Easton & Martyr Worthy Cricket Club (Stu Upcraft, Andrew Wickham, Spencer Lock and David Parker) by a single point. Individual honours went to Teresa Yeates & Tim Hilton respectively.

Trevor Foreman thanked the sponsors, his superb support team, the ground and bar and kitchen staff and last but not means least, the 96 Golfers whose brilliant support & generosity contributed significantly to the huge success of the day.

Ryan Howarth, Fund Raising Manager at Macmillan, described how important

these type of events are to Macmillan with the money raised helping the Macmillan Nurses to

be there for someone with cancer when they need them most by funding vital services that support not only the people affected by cancer, but their family, friends and loved ones.

*Trevor Foreman*



## Junior Cricket

Easton Juniors held an enjoyable awards evening with over a hundred children and parents attending. George Burnand and all age group coaches gave brief reviews of the season and then trophies were handed out. This was followed by delicious food from Annabelle Maclay.

Notables leaving the club this season are Doug Umbers, Graham and Anna Croft. They will be missed. Lessons have been learnt and plans are in place to ensure the club continues to provide quality coaching and



3 of the Easton Wanderers



Under 10 boys trophy winners



Under 11 boys trophy winners



Some of the under 11 girls' team

opportunities for children of all abilities to enjoy the sport.

*Frances Skipwith*

## Bird of the Month



Large numbers of blackbirds migrate to the UK from continental Europe and Scandinavia so you may see several of these normally territorial birds in your garden

during November and the rest of the Winter. *Elaine Labram*

## Tiddler Joke

Q:What was Guy Fawkes favourite meal....

A: Bangers and Mash!



Flossy (8), Heidi (6) and Oscar (4) Barrett

## A pop up for Syria

Thank goodness for Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall! If your son and a group of Foreign Office friends decide to expand their Syrian supper club to encompass a Winchester pop up, the Hall is up to the challenge!

The Hands Up Foundation was set up in 2012 and has held over 100 suppers - with other fundraising initiatives it has





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raised over £4m and helped over 100,000 Syrians gain access to education and health services, including prosthetic limbs. The supper clubs are a way of gathering people together, to introduce them to a delicious part of Syria's rich heritage and to raise money for those in need.

Our son Roger and the team have been running a supper club in a bakery in London every month for the last couple of years, raising not just much needed funds but awareness of the consequences of a tragic war. Bringing the concept to Winchester gave a bigger audience the chance to enjoy middle Eastern food, cooked in the Hall kitchen by a professional team from the River Café, and hear some expert views.

Adrian Sindall, formerly British Ambassador in Damascus, gave his view of the conflict, we heard about delivering UK projects into a war zone, and one of the Syrian refugees resettling here gave a moving account of her journey from her homeland to the sanctuary of Winchester.

The Itchen Valley came up trumps, not only producing a couple of retired



Starters

Ambassadors and 75 other guests but also putting us in touch with the seven families from Syria now living in Winchester who are setting up their own catering business (contact me for details!). There were all kinds of connections in the room, and



Some of the team

plenty of Arabic being spoken by the multicultural volunteers, the linguists and the group of Syrian refugees themselves. The hall was a buzz of conversation, there were tears and tagine, there were raffle prizes and jars of Marmalaid – and we raised over £3,000! A big thank you to everyone who helped in so many ways, and to everyone who came.

*Verity Coleman*

## Remember, remember the fireworks in November

*Remember, remember the fifth of November,*

*Gunpowder, treason and plot*

*There is no reason*

*Why gunpowder treason*

*Should ever be forgot.*

Come and join us for this year's firework display on Saturday 2 November at Easton Village Hall & Cricket Ground. Fun for all the family. Come and enter our Guy competition and win a prize. There will be refreshments including hot dogs and a bar. The guy competition will be judged at 6.30pm followed by the fireworks at 7pm. Donation on entry  
*Lyn Russell*

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## From our MP

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First of all, you may have noticed some exciting news about major new investment we have secured for the Royal Hampshire County Hospital. The Trust will be able to access 'seed' funding right away to develop plans for a £500m major re-build that will secure long-term safe and sustainable services in our much-loved and relied upon District General Hospital. In recent years I've successfully lobbied for small amounts of funding to improve the Emergency Department or relocate the hospital Pharmacy team, and they are all really important to the patient experience, but this is on a totally different scale. It's a huge vote of confidence from the Government and the NHS.

I am regularly in the hospital, meeting clinicians and senior management and was there recently with the Health Minister – and Gosport MP – Caroline Dinenage. I look forward to working closely with the Trust, and Government, as we develop plans to transform the hospital for the benefit of my constituents over many years to come. More on this at

[www.stevebrine.com/prioritynhs](http://www.stevebrine.com/prioritynhs)

Secondly, do you know Trinity Winchester? If not, please look them

up because something really special is stirring in the city that builds on many years helping people affected by homelessness and social deprivation to maximise their life chances. It's a charity I have supported since before becoming our MP and their new project 'Under one Roof' will deliver a housing element next to the existing day centre in town. More at: [www.trinitywinchester.org.uk](http://www.trinitywinchester.org.uk)

And finally, as I have told visiting schoolchildren more times than I care to remember, I first got inspired to 'switch off my TV set, and do something less boring instead' (remember that?) by the issue of deforestation in the Amazon. So it was nice to speak in a debate on the subject in Parliament recently where I called for our collective trading might – EU and UK – to make President Bolsonaro realise that the future of the Amazon rainforest is all our sovereignty. You can watch what I said at [www.stevebrine.com/amazondebate](http://www.stevebrine.com/amazondebate) Much more via my website at [www.stevebrine.com](http://www.stevebrine.com) but please 'like' my Page at [www.fb.com/SteveBrineMP](https://www.facebook.com/SteveBrineMP) for instant updates and this is where I will post any news from me in relation to the ongoing Brexit saga that has become our normal.

*Steve Brine*

*MP for Winchester & Itchen Valley*

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## Jackie's County Corner

The Alresford Fireworks Event is on 1 November this year, so by the time you read this, your Firework night may be over! (Please note: other exciting Firework events in most villages are available!)

There were magnificent fireworks at the Worthys Festival this year: in fact the whole Festival was a testament to



Steve with the visiting Health Minister at the hospital





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everyone who volunteered to provide free events not only during that week in the Worthys, but right across the area this summer.

Even volunteer run events can cost money. You can apply for a County Councillor grant online at [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk), search 'grants' for the terms and conditions of a wide range of options, including the County Councillor grant, which runs until the middle of February 2020.

October's Rural Policing Event at Sparsholt College was well attended, and very good. Inspector Korine Bishop, lead on Rural Crime, gave an excellent talk, and the Crown Prosecution Service explained what evidence from a 'good witness' looked like. Discussions included marking all goods of value, and I raised the legal use of CCTV to protect communities: I'll be feeding this back to villages determined to beat the current flood of car thieves. Most importantly, please report crime first to the Police, not just on facebook!

Hampshire County Council talked about fly-tipping. Whilst there, I met Michael Montague who has set up

[www.ClearWaste.com](http://www.ClearWaste.com). He started the site (there is an app too) as a way to combat the non-reporting of fly-tipping, and the difficulty of identifying the exact location in rural areas. It's especially useful in rural areas: you can snap it, then report it (but please don't touch it) and Clear Waste will refer the case of fly-tipping to the correct authority to deal with it. You can check waste-carrier licences too.

Another way to find your location for any purpose is to use #What3Words. It is really useful for rural incidents of all kinds and a valuable way of identifying your location to the Police. Climate Change is on everyone's lips now: public opinion has changed hugely even this year, and I was really pleased to hear that more and more people are cycling, by pedal power or on electric bikes.

The County has declared a Climate Change Emergency too, but the County Council's Highways mending criteria of 'Tennis-Ball-deep and Car-Wheel-wide' means that many holes do not get repaired, even if requested. Local cyclist and resident Steve Cramoysan is helping to compile a list of places that need repair for better cycling.

If this affects you, please let us know: we need practical examples from right across the area to illustrate the point. Why not try #What3Words to check the location?

*Councillor Jackie Porter,*  
[Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk), tel/text:  
07973 696 085, Tweet @JackieLibDem

## From the Parish Council

---

There was a chance that this month there would be no need to mention travellers again. Unfortunately that is not the case. Unlike in June, we are



now receiving reports of travellers in relatively near locations. It has to be a matter of judgement but when thought necessary it is better to take the precaution of closing and locking the low level barrier to the car park at the King George V playing field, Couch Green. It is realised that this does cause inconvenience to those who wish to park there but better than to give easy access to travellers and have to repeat the inconvenience and costs experienced this summer.



While on the subject of precautions, some comment has been made regarding the fencing off of the gap at the south end of the bridge at the bottom of Chilland Lane. This gap gave dogs access to the river. It has been fenced off for two reasons. First is that the river bank has become seriously eroded and needs to be restored. Without this restoration the reduced flow will result in silting which in turn will be detrimental to the aquatic life. The second reason is that unfortunately in recent years some dogs (and humans) have disturbed the wildlife that inhabits the banks and the nearby adjacent land. Time is needed to allow these important habitats to recover and it is especially important that they do so in time for, and during, the nesting season. Residents and visitors to the Valley alike enjoy looking at the river from this bridge and watching the ducks, moorhens and swans, but if these birds are denied safe and undisturbed nesting we will see fewer, if any, of them. The river without them would be a dull place and taking action now is necessary to preserve it for the long term future.

Another environmental issue it is sad to report on is the increase in litter. While carrying out an inspection of trees and their safety (please see Christopher Langford's article in October's Itchen Valley News) the three Parish Councillors concerned spent as much time picking up litter as they did looking at trees. The litter ranged from the usual sweet wrappers and drink containers to the remains of several portions of fish and chips! Considering the efforts made by all those who have worked hard during our annual litter picks it is a pity that there are others (hopefully a small minority) who do not take their litter home or put it in a bin, one has to assume because they are either too lazy, or simply do not care. Finally, as many are aware, there has been a spate of break-ins recently. Many of these, but not all, are into cars. As a consequence it has been suggested that CCTV cameras are sited at known "hot spots". Unfortunately this is not a simple issue. Apart from the cost of purchase or hire followed by maintaining them, there are numerous regulations as well. All these issues would have to be addressed. The Parish Council is looking into the problem with other interested parties including Neighbourhood Watch and our County and City Councillors. At present it is a case of what can be done and how best to approach it. In the meantime please be vigilant.

*Patrick Appleby*

## From the Rectory

---

As Harvest passes with the end of October, so we move inexorably to our next staging post on the journey to Christmas and then to Easter. We are

## Itchen Valley Churches

### 3rd November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy
10am	Family Worship	St Mary's, Easton
6pm	All Souls Service	St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

### 10th November

10am	Act of Remembrance	St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy
10am	Act of Remembrance	St Mary's, Avington
10.30am	Act of Remembrance	St Mary's, Easton
10.50am	Remembrance Service	St John's, Itchen Abbas
6pm	Evensong	St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

### 17th November

8am	BCP Holy Communion	St John's, Itchen Abbas
10am	St Mary's Friends Service and Valley Worship	St Mary's, Easton

### 24th November

10am	Parish Communion	St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy
6pm	Evensong	St Mary's, Avington

### Rector

Revd Alex Pease  
rector@itchenvalleychurches.org  
01962 779845

**Days:** Sun, Mon, Tues & Weds.

### LLM

Mr Gerry Stacey  
gstacey@easynet.co.uk  
07554 438973

### Parish Administrator

Beccy Clark  
admin@itchenvalleychurches.org  
01962 779845  
Mon-Fri, 9am - 1pm (term time)

[www.itchenvalleychurches.org](http://www.itchenvalleychurches.org)

### Church Notice of the Month

**All Souls' Day Service** - during a time of special prayer, we will mention by name all those whose funerals have been conducted in the Itchen Valley during the last 3 years, together with any other names given in before or during the service. Later in the service, everyone present will be invited to light a candle in memory of their loved ones and leave it burning on the altar as a visible sign of remembrance.

### Churchwardens

Robin Greenwood 779540  
Sara Mason 779169  
Vanessa Rosewell 841182  
Theo Mezger 779277  
Tony Gaster 779110  
Nick Owen 779162



now in the season of Remembrance. Our Remembrance Day Service this year is at St John's Itchen Abbas on Sunday 10 November at 10.50 am. We will all stand, rain or shine, to remember the many who have given their lives for our nation. Some will remember friends and comrades. Some in uniform will remember the heavy responsibility of defending the nation that they have inherited from those of the past. All of us will come together before God in civic and national duty to show our appreciation of what another generation suffered to enable us to have the freedoms that we enjoy today. But our remembrance season includes not only Remembrance Sunday but also our All Souls Service. This year this service is at St Swithun's Martyr Worthy at 6pm on Sunday 3 November. All Souls is an opportunity to remember those whom we loved who have passed on before us, on a path that one day we will all have to tread.

I have been thinking about the shocking pain of bereavement in the last few weeks. In August a man of my age (or slightly younger), a friend, died from a massive stroke just after playing tennis. This happened on a Thursday. On the Saturday I had the great joy of conducting a wedding in Easton. On the following Monday, also at St Mary's, I led the funeral service for little Elsie Binney-Martin.

How can any of us respond to early, shocking bereavement? How can we be with those of our friends and



neighbours who have suffered such a terrible loss? In C.S. Lewis's book *A Grief Observed* he refers to the 'sudden stab of red-hot memory' in which 'common sense vanishes like an ant in the mouth of a furnace'. The widow of our friend who died said that one letter that she had received which really put the finger on how she was feeling, had been from someone who had also experienced the loss of a spouse too early in their marriage. He had written

'How can you deal with a pain which is so great, when the absence of the one person who could have provided any real comfort, is the cause of that pain?' Platitudes don't help. But listening and being with the bereaved can help in a small way. Not avoiding those who have lost someone and allowing the bereaved to grieve at their own pace is important as well.

I feel that we should also, as a community, stand with those in our midst who are bereaved. In the same way that a funeral is an essential stepping stone on the journey of grief, so an All Souls Service can be an annual opportunity to mark that journey and to hold the one that we love up to God in the company of our neighbours, many of whom will also have suffered the terrible pain of loss.

Please do join us on Sunday 3 November. If you would like someone in particular to have their name read out, please do advise Beccy Clark in advance at [admin@itchenvaleychurches.org](mailto:admin@itchenvaleychurches.org)  
Alex Pease

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Matthew - Year 6**

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**Or Contact  
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## The Practical Gardener

For much of 2019, we have had dry conditions and as I write it has not stopped raining for days. Not good to prepare our gardens for the winter. However, it's also not been too cold so the last of the flowers are still giving of their best. I have a large pot of trailing



Begonias that is just stunning and visible from 40m.

Two activities come to mind now: pulling up the annual crops and spreading compost. Most annuals or summer vegetables will be past their best (did anyone have decent courgettes this year?). The ground needs to be cleared, weeded and ideally spread with compost. All areas will benefit from this essential work. Not a task for the rainy days though!





I find some plants cannot be composted as they are and need shredding – oh yes, that most wonderful of garden power tools – e.g. runner bean stalks and most perennials which will also need cutting down soon. I separate soft leaves and dead flowers which clog the shredder. Such shredded material will turn into usable compost by the spring mixed with vegetable waste from the kitchen and grass mowings. I also shred all hedge cuttings except yew which takes too long to break down.

Leaves will be an issue now. Many have blowers but I do find chasing leaves around the garden with a strong air flow rather too much. Leaf sweepers are much more efficient even though they can also be quite noisy. I keep leaves separate from the compost heaps and put them in home-made wire containers. The resultant leaf mould takes a few years but it is an excellent product to use on the garden as a mulch.

Now is a good time to look at seed catalogues and frankly get what works for you. Just because your neighbour

has wonderful delphiniums doesn't always mean you can have the same. The greenhouse is being put into winter mode now meaning I clean it very thoroughly and also use a pressure washer. It's a great time to plant bulbs and I never seem to have enough space. I wonder if the first daffodil will flower before the new year!

Happy Gardening!

*Tony Gaster.*

## Our Wild Valley - pumpkin facts

---

The world record for the heaviest pumpkin in 2010 was 1810 pounds / 821 kg; ours below weighs 8kg, and is much softer to carve out than the bought ones. Pumpkins are useful fruit (they contain seeds) and are great for storage and eating over winter.

They are said to come from the Americas, with North American Indians using them to eat, for medicine and also they were dried and woven into mats.

The pumpkin is mostly water but they have good content of potassium and vitamin A.



Last but not least, the humble pumpkin was recommended for freckles and for curing snake bites!

(thehistorychannel.com).

Enjoy your pumpkins this autumn!

*Sophie Rogers*

## Clubbing in the Valley -Bridge

In May 2014, Simon Broadley with Elaine and Henry Labram (all excellent bridge players) established a monthly duplicate bridge club in Easton. It was very well received. They invited players of differing standards and, inspired by the trio's own style and ethos, an atmosphere of friendliness,

tolerance and good humour has prevailed. Although there is an expectation that members will play to the best of their ability, there is no place for recrimination or "bad sports". Maureen Bohill-Smith and Vanessa Wills (again, excellent players) took over running the club from 2016-2018 and have just taken the reins again. I was the organizer for the intervening year. Diana Cornish and Christine Atkinson have taken over tea and coffee-making duties from Val Probert and Tricia Smith.

At present, the attendance runs to an average of 3 to 4 tables. The club meets from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm on

## Telephone advisers needed

Could you spare a day a week (or two half days) to give advice over the phone to people in need?

Citizens Advice Winchester District has an exciting opportunity for new volunteers to train as telephone advisers.



You will need to be:

- Able to commit to one full week of training in early November (and one day a week thereafter)
- Computer literate
- Have a good telephone manner and be non-judgemental
- Able to travel into central Winchester or Bishop's Waltham

If you are interested, then we'd love to hear from you.

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the first Monday of each month in Easton village hall and the charge is £3. New members - including singles - would be most welcome. So if you'd like a great start to the month, contact either Maureen at s.m.bohill.smith@googlemail.com or Vanessa at vanessawills@aol.com  
*Jill Sindall*

## Itchen Insight

*This month's focus is on a pantomime star - you will be able to see her in the role of Robin Hood in December*



**Name:** Suzannah Duke

**Current Occupation:** Special Needs Assistant at Sunhill Infant School.

**Previous Occupation:** Civil Engineer.

**Years lived in the Valley:** Lived in Easton since 2003.

**Your Life in 180 characters:** Grew up in Fleet. Studied Engineering at University of Warwick. First job & met Martin in Chesterfield. Worked in Hong Kong & Malaysia between 1995 & 2000. Married in 2002. Greatly appreciate my 3 life-changing children!

**Passions:** My family, my friendships, plays and musical theatre, reading, traveling, walking, talking....

**Favourite place in Hampshire:** Driving into Easton over the bridges under the canopy of the beautiful trees!

**Best thing about the Valley:** The friends I've made, pantomiming...Abba partying...barn dancing. So many things!

**Worst thing about the Valley:** The speed of the traffic coming in to Easton from the Percy Hobbs Roundabout.

**Favourite books:** "Redeeming Love"

by Francine Rivers, "The Versions of Us" by Laura Barnett, "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen

**Favourite Musicals:** "Hamilton", "Amelie", "Blood Brothers", "Waitress", "Les Miserables"

**Favourite Quotes:** "The more you know, the less you know.", "Less is more."

**Champagne Moment:** Three moments; births of Jessica (16yrs), Elise (14yrs) and Matthew (10yrs)

**Would you like to try a straight acting role for a change?:** I have never really pursued that, but might try it one day.

## Now you see it, now you don't

As winter approaches, it is more likely that it will be dark if you are out walking in the evenings. Do wear something reflective or light coloured so that you can be seen. If you can see approaching headlights, it doesn't mean that the driver can see you!

*Vernon Tottle*



*Quick look - how much passing space do you need to give the lady with the white hat?*

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*Ooops - lucky her companion had taken Vernon's advice!*

## Counting eels in the Itchen

By great good fortune we were walking near the Fulling Mill at Easton in August at the very moment that the Environment Agency team were about to start their biennial eel index survey to count the wildlife in the river. With their encouragement, we scooped up the grandchildren and provided a rapt audience!

We watched as the team netted off a 100m stretch of the river - the water continues to flow but everything in it is contained. They then carried out three electric fishing runs, which allows them to estimate the populations of fish.



This year at the Fulling Mill they counted:

3	Three spined stickleback
58	Brown trout
242	Bullhead
159	Minnow
4	Stone loach
5	European eel

The fish were put into large buckets, counted and measured where appropriate, and then put into a large keep area slightly downstream, ready to be returned to the original length of river after the nets had been removed.



Georgina Samoluk, the Environmental Monitoring Officer for our area, told us that the programme was initiated in response to the severe decline in eel numbers. Many people are totally unaware that European eels are **critically endangered** (the same level as pandas!). The survey is conducted at ten Eel Index sites (of which the Fulling Mill stretch is one). She says 'A good catch of trout, but not a very good catch of eels, which sadly reflects the general decline in their numbers that we've seen over the past ten years.'

*Verity Coleman*



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## The best bit of poetry in the magazine this month!

---

The Itchen Valley Choir holds its concert in December  
It's Wednesday the eighteenth, that's all you really must remember  
Along with well-known classics such as Sleigh Bells and White  
Christmas

You really ought to come along or else you will have missed us.

With seasonable readings from the books you love to hear  
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For further information do please phone our secretary  
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*Vernon Tottle*



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Authentic Pilates	Mon	0900 & 1830	Fri 0830	Judy	07774 899909
Ems Bray Pilates	Tue & Thu	0845		Emily	07876 033893
Sally Stanyard	Tue	1615	Thu 1830	Sally	01962 776562
School of Dance	Fri	1530	Sat 0900		
Brew with a View	Wed	1500 - 1700		Ina	01962 779465
Dionne Yoga	Tue	2000	Fri 0945 & 1100	Dionne	07961 888676
Mahjong / U3A	Tue	1400 - 1700		Anne	01420 563393
Yoga for men	Mon	2000	Sunday 1700	Alex	07814 678155
Panto rehearsal	Wed	1930	Sun 1600	Anna	01962 779350
Yoga with Helen	Mon	1400		Helen	07703 278892
NCT Yoga	Wed	10.30 & 1800		Janet	07973 855107
Older Adult Exercise	Thu	1130 - 1230		Caroline	01962 779796

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Riverbank	Mon Wed Thur	8.30am to 3pm	Maria	07900 437685
Kindergarten	Tues & Fri	8.30am to 1pm		

### Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall

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#### Regular Bookings

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Zumba	Fri	10.00	Sue	07947 410394
Pure Circuits	Mon	19.30	Juliette	07799 890860
Rugby Tots	Tue 10.00, Wed 10.15 & Thur 15.50		Phil	03453 133258
Ladies Short Tennis	Wed	14.30	Arminel	01962 779611
Pilates	Wed	09.15 & 18.00	Aimee	07546 941489
Choir	Wed	19.30	Gary	01962 732350
Badminton	Thur	19.30	Mike	07887 503345
Swing It Dancing	Thur	21.30	Neil	07825 709691
Qi Gong Tai Chi	Tue	19.00	Emma	07863 203630

## Christmas Pudding recipe of the month

---

This quantity will make four Large Christmas Puddings; halving it makes 1 large, 1 medium and 1 small pudding. This recipe was given to me by my mother-in-law who in turn got it from the mother of her home help. It therefore dates from around the 1950s, as you will see when you study the ingredients. Frozen Orange Juice was then easily available from the freezer cabinets in your local supermarket; diluted with a suitable quantity of water it led the trend towards drinking fruit juice. No freshly squeezed juice from the fridge in those days. The weights and measures are imperial, as they were in those days. Metric users will need to convert them, easily done with web-based conversion programs.

It makes a very dark pudding, definitely fruit with some sponge rather than sponge with some fruit as seems to be the fashion these days. Serve in small slices!

In very large bowl or plastic bucket mix:

- 14 oz suet
- 1 lb sifted plain flour
- 2 pinches salt
- 6 oz brown bread crumbs
- 1 lb currants
- 14 oz sultanas
- 8 oz raisins
- $\frac{3}{4}$  lb mixed peel (buy whole peels & chop them up into small pieces; try not to use ready chopped mixed peel as it's not nearly as tasty)
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  small tins prunes (keep juice) stoned & chopped
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  lbs soft brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon grated nutmeg

- 2 teaspoons mixed spice
- Grated rind 2 lemons & 2 oranges
- 2 grated cooking apples

In separate bowl:

- Whip 8 eggs
- Lemon juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tablespoons concentrated Florida Orange (hard to find these days so use orange juice squeezed from the oranges used above)
- 3 teaspoons gravy browning
- 1 wine glass sherry
- Prune juice saved as above
- Brandy or rum to taste – about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  fluid oz

Pour liquid over dry ingredients and stir in 5oz soft margarine & add milk to mix if necessary (up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint) to make into a stirrable mixture (not too dry and not too wet). At this point if no time to cook you can leave it overnight. Indeed this is a positively good idea.

Put into 4 large greased pudding basins full almost to the brim (puddings hardly rise at all). Cover with foil & boil for 7 10 hours. Yes, ten hours. For a shorter cooking time you can pressure cook them. Put in the trivet, add 3 pints water and 1 tablespoon Vinegar. Bring to the boil and add a pudding (only one will probably fit at a time). Steam on LOW heat 15 mins then pressure cook on high pressure for 3 hours. Do not undercook. Allow to cool, remove the foil, clean up the basin, wrap in cling film and store in a cool place until needed.

To reheat for a meal – bring to high pressure for 45 mins or steam in steamer for 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

*Sue Sheph*

*Stir-up Sunday, the traditional day for making Christmas puddings, is 24 November - Ed*



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## What does three thousand feet look like?

---

No, the answer isn't thirty centipedes all in a row.

In common with other residents of the Itchen Valley, I have noticed that aircraft destined for Southampton airport frequently pass directly overhead. On a sunny day I can see them, but when it's cloudy, often the noise is there but the plane isn't visible. "Aha!" I thought. If I knew the height that the plane flies, I can work out how low the cloud cover is. So I got out my tape measure .....

Yes, I did get out my tape measure and worked it out. With some experimentation I observed that the width of my forefinger, when held at full stretch away from my eye, just about covers the wingspan of a typical airplane. My tape measure indicated that my forefinger measures about 20 mm across and the distance from my forefinger to my eye at full stretch is around 700 mm.

A quick look at aircraft photographed by plane spotting enthusiasts at the airport gave me some registration marks. I looked those up to give me the make and model of the planes and then a further search dug up their dimensions. 27 or 28 metres turns out to be a typical wingspan. Extrapolating the angle subtended by my finger to that of the plane gave me an altitude of around 3,000 feet. Who said that geometry was boring?



So if you can hear but can't see a plane overhead, the cloud must be below 3,000 feet.

Isn't that useful to know?

*Vernon Tottle*

## Fungi – the unsung heroes of autumn

---

Fungi are the unsung heroes of autumn - they come out in force to fuel our forests, prettify our paths and breathe life into our beloved wild places. As the trees shed their leaves and the land braces for winter, the humble mushroom thrives.

Fungi are part of a vast and varied group of decomposers, and play a vital role in our ecosystem. By transforming dead animals and vegetation into raw nutrients that can be absorbed by plants, fungi sustain and nurture the plant life around them.

There really is no end to the generosity of fungi – when they're not pumping nutrients into the soil, they're providing a valuable food source for a host of birds and mammals, including badgers, deer, mice and squirrels. From great gelatinous blobs on the ground to the neat toadstools on which a fairy might perch, fungi come in a spectacular range of shapes, sizes, colours and (sometimes very pungent) smells. There are some bizarre varieties of fungi, some attractive and dainty, and some so revolting that even the most committed fungi enthusiasts retch at the sight of them.

The infamous stinkhorn, for example, emits a foul odour like rotting flesh, so strong that it can be detected from as far as 20 metres away. At the start of its life the stinkhorn resembles an egg, later developing a slimy red stalk which may grow up to 20cm high. Its dark green cap is covered with a stinking

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mucous designed to attract flies. The flies feed from the stinkhorn and disperse its spores wherever they next land – an unusual method of reproduction but effective nonetheless. At the other end of the attractiveness spectrum we have the fly agaric, a cheerful red mushroom decorated with fetching white spots. Often portrayed in children's fairy stories with a pixie sitting on the top, the bright red caps can measure 15cm across. It is a little known fact that the signature white spots that characterise this fungus are actually the remains of a veil which covers the immature mushroom.



Human beings have always had a fondness for fungus, and mushroom foraging has become increasingly popular in recent years. However, it shouldn't be done on wildlife sensitive sites, and expert guidance is essential. Alice Ashcroft Communications Officer, **Picture** Fly agaric © Hayley Muir - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust



## Comings and Goings - Easton

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We welcome Tunde Hordos and Mark Purvis who have moved into The Moot, Easton, which they are renting. Tunde is a Holistic therapist. Her mobile number is 07507 995498, Mark is a digital consultant.

We welcome Jules Hoffman who has moved from Henley-on-Thames into Wheelwrights. She has 3 grown up daughters, one living locally in the Meon valley. She has three small dogs. It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to the Tan family from Wheelwrights: Olivia, Andy and toddler Henry. We wish them all the happiness in their new house near Romsey  
Judith Mezger






**We would like to hear news of comings and goings in the other villages. Please send to [itchenvallnews@gmail.com](mailto:itchenvallnews@gmail.com)**

## Book of the Month - The Enchanted April

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Until I started looking for an image of the book to illustrate this review I had no idea how many editions there have been, not to mention plays and other formats – some of these had the most unattractive and, to my mind, inappropriate, images. So many of the book designs missed the point, or simply did not match my conception of the important elements of the book, one even insulted the author by putting 'Vintage von Arnim', as though that was her name! Others over-emphasised the sea, or the building, or pictured one of the



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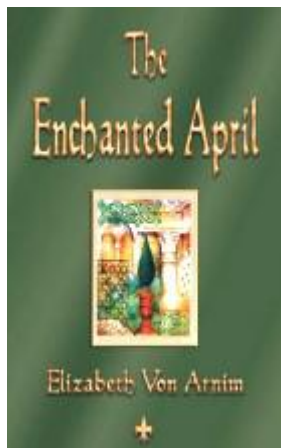
characters. No picture can match a loyal reader's mental image of a beloved, or even disliked, character. "But what about the book?" I hear you cry.

The author is Elizabeth von Arnim and

the book is one that I turn to when I need cheering up, it is romantic, and uplifting. I don't think the term magic realism was invented when it was written, nor do I really know what experts mean then they use it, but to me it fits the book perfectly, in the sense that what happens is unlikely, although theoretically possible. No genies or fairy godmothers, but the lives of the main characters are transformed in ways that would seem impossible from their prosaic starting points; many of us have spent time in Italy without our lives being transformed, although we may have happy memories.

The setting is a very important element, the author is perhaps better known for 'Elizabeth and Her German Garden' so it is not surprising that the garden is lovingly described and that its beauty has a big impact on the development of the plot, but it is the people who really appeal, particularly of course the somewhat unlikely - especially in her own eyes - heroine. It is a book full of love, very different from the works of Lee Child reviewed a little while ago.

*Bookworm*



## DIY - A heat and water proof mat

You will be thinking of bringing tender plants indoors at this time of year, pelargoniums will keep flowering all through the winter if they are happy out of the wind, rain and frosts, and not overwatered. Pieces of tile left over from a new kitchen or bathroom, or even whole ones, can be made into very useful mats on which to stand your plant pots on a sunny windowsill.

Take a wine bottle cork, natural or synthetic will work equally well, and cut the cork into discs about 6mm thick, making sure they are all the same thickness. You will need four slices for small tiles but more for larger ones.

Damp the surface of each cork slice and the underside of the tile. Put a small blob of Gorilla glue on the damp surface of each cork slice and with the tile upside down push the cork slices glue side down onto the underside of the tile. For smaller tiles one in each corner is enough, for larger tiles put extra slices equally spaced in between the corners. Excess glue can be wiped away with a damp cloth. Then cover a flat surface with a sheet of newspaper and place the tile with the corks underneath onto the paper. Put a heavy weight on

top of the tile and leave the glue to set for at least the time recommended on the instructions – overnight is best. When the glue has set, lift up the tile, cut away any excess glue





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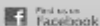
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heat and water proof mat that  
matches the decor in your kitchen or  
bathroom. Some plants very much  
appreciate a steamy bathroom setting.  
*The DIY Man.*

## Heritage Open Days

I do hope that many of you managed  
to get to at least some of the  
Heritage Open Days events. What a  
feast we were offered! About 150  
different events over 10 days.  
However, one can only be in one  
place at a time and so we had to  
choose. At the visit to Jeremy France  
jewellers we were regaled with  
champagne and learnt about diamonds  
and watched a gold ring being made in  
front of our eyes. We saw Wolvesly  
Castle from a privileged angle and  
were enlightened about its history.  
At Chilcomb House we  
saw a small proportion  
of Hampshire's  
collection of ceramics  
and costumes, both old  
and modern, as well as

those available  
for hire. We  
saw and learnt  
about a charter  
by which King  
Cnut (better  
known to  
schoolchildren  
as Canute)  
admitted having  
made a mistake

– imagine that from the leader of a  
country! We also learnt about  
medieval queens, the Black Death and  
about political protest in song. This  
last courtesy of The Madding Crowd,  
whose future concerts can be found  
on their website

[www.maddingcrowd.org.uk](http://www.maddingcrowd.org.uk).

Altogether it was a brilliant  
programme and it was fortunate that  
blue skies and bright sunshine added  
to the holiday and festive atmosphere.  
*Charlotte Appleby*



# Alresford Surgery News

## Flu Clinics

Bookable appointments are available & can be booked by telephoning reception or you can book online via Patient Access if you are over 65 but couldn't attend a walk in clinic, under 65 or in an at risk group or pregnant. Child Flu Clinics

Child flu clinics will run very similarly to previous years with 2-3 year olds and 2-17 year old at risk patients being vaccinated at the surgery while children in year R to 6 will be vaccinated in school by the School Nursing Team. Patients who are eligible for vaccination at the surgery will receive a letter from us.

We are unable to vaccinate children who have missed their vaccination at school unless they are at risk, but School Health will run catch-up clinics and you can contact them should the need arise.

For more details on the child flu vaccine please visit; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>

There will be no GP appointments available on Wednesday 20th November in the afternoon. If you need medical help in a hurry you can use the normal Out of Hours service by dialing 111.

If you would like us to cover other GP practices please let us know.

## Local monthly information

### Waste collections in November

Black bins and green bags on Fridays 8 and 22 November. Green bins on Friday 1, 15 and 29 November. Glass boxes on Friday 15 November.

## Cameo

Tuesday 19 November.

### Farmers Market in Winchester

Sunday 10 and 24 November.

### Parish Council Full Meeting

Thursday 7 November. MW VH.

**67 Bus** operated by Stagecoach.

**School term timetable** operates 4 - 31 November.

Mondays and Thursdays to Winchester:

07:53 09:23 13:53 16:23 17:23

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays to Winchester:

07:53 09:23 11:53 13:53 16:23 17:23

Mondays and Thursdays to Alresford:

11:49 15:19 17:11 18:09

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays to Alresford:

09:49 11:49 13:19 15:19 17:11 18:09

**School holiday timetable** operates 1 November

Mondays and Thursdays to Winchester:

07:53 09:23 13:53 17:23

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays to Winchester:

07:53 09:23 11:53 13:53 15:23 17:23

Mondays and Thursdays to Alresford:

11:49 15:19 17:11 18:09

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays to Alresford:

09:49 11:49 13:19 15:19 17:11 18:09

**Saturday service (same for the whole month.**

Towards Winchester:

08:23 11:23 14:23 17:23

Towards Alresford:

09:19 12:19 15:19 18:09

**No Sunday or bank holiday service**

All times shown are at Itchen Abbas.

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