

Valley^{ITCHEN} News

Issue 87 March 2021

For Avington, Easton, Itchen Abbas and Martyr Worthy





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WELCOME to the Valley News



The one thing we can be sure about in March is that the weather will be varied. It was ever thus, and is even more so in these climate changing times. I hope you will notice a climate change theme running through the magazine this month, Covid may be distracting many people from the much bigger elephant in the room, but from the article by Steve Percy on page 10 to the limerick on page 38, with much in between, CO₂ is in the picture. As our City Councillors point out (page 13), solutions are not simple and competing priorities make decision-making difficult. See page 19 for how to have your say on some aspects of this, and page 21 for how you can make a difference in - or rather on - your own home (if you haven't already done it - see page 31 for the experience of one reader who has).

I hope that my fellow editors of the month will ensure that readers are continually reminded of the climate issue, but we all have our own perspectives - do you notice the monthly variation?

There is an opportunity to put your own stamp on the Valley News, see the advertisement on page 40 for a new person to join the rotating editorial team - is this for you? Do think about it, it is a great team, our monthly editorial meetings are good fun, even without the coffee and biscuits.

Another feature of this month's magazine is the amazing photographs. 'For the love of wildlife photography' has, naturally, some stunning illustrations but other readers were inspired by the photogenic snowy weather, plants and animals.

Walking, reading, cooking, gardening and even box-watching interests are all catered for. If you would like to contribute your suggestions, please do email us. The 'Readers Recommend' feature is your opportunity to share something that has given you pleasure - no literary skills required. While on the subject of readers' contributions, note the continuance of Limericks - send us yours to fill the gaps left by a small shortfall in advertising.

There is not much in 'What's On' but perhaps more hope now that the Save the Dates on page 14 may be able to happen - worth pencilling into your diary perhaps. Next month's editor is Verity Coleman.

Happy reading and keep safe.

Charlotte

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What's On

National Trust Winchester Association – Wednesday 10 March 2.30pm.

Presentation via Zoom by Jeremy Prescott - 'Iconic Memorials for the Fallen' covering the relatively recent evolution of war memorials and the remembrance of the fallen in the aftermath of WWI. Free to members of NTWA, for Zoom link or membership information please email info@ntwinchesterassoc.org.uk.

National Open Gardens Scheme



Visit their website ngs.org.uk to find on-line talks (£10) on 2, 16 and 30 March or to see garden tours any time (free, donation please).

2021 Census - Sunday 21 March

On Census day this year, rather more of us will be in our own homes than in some years. How this will affect the results will be an interesting study for research for many years, as will the fact that it is being conducted online for the first time.

CAMEO – Come And Meet Each Other

In March we will be delaying our CAMEO day until the fifth Tuesday of the month in order to make it our Easter celebration. We hope to deliver a little something on Tuesday 30 March, Easter Sunday being 4 April. If you are over 65 and would like to 'join the club' and indeed in due course come and meet with us when our lunches can restart, please give me a ring.

Charlotte Appleby 779 778

Valley Happenings

Upper Itchen Valley Society Update

Recently, members enjoyed a delightfully informal virtual tour of the Houses of Parliament given by Steve Brine. The House was sitting in the main chamber so Steve took us behind the scenes including the library, and the voting lobbies. We also saw the cloakroom where we were amused to see his peg which includes a loop hook for his sword. Unfortunately, he didn't have his sword with him! He then took us underground, beneath Big Ben, to his office, where we had a question and answer session.

I'd like to thank Steve for this fascinating insight into his life as an MP. Invitations to this event were sent out at short notice by email from our new email address

upperitchenvalleysoc@gmail.com. This will be our main method of communication going forward so if you didn't get the email, (it might be in your junk folder or you may have changed your email address), please send an email to this address and I will reply so we have your confirmed address.

For those members who may not have access to email, we will always endeavour to announce future events in the Valley News.

If you would like to join the Society, or would like further information, do email us.

I hope we can all meet up in person later this year!

Elaine Labram, Chairman, UIVS

Mob: 07702 173001

Easton WI

Our monthly Zoom meetings are keeping us in touch with WI news, as



well as catching up with everyone's activities. Members have been joining the many varied Denman courses via Zoom, from Women Astronomers and walks around European cities, to beginners' Calligraphy classes. At our next meeting in March, Bill Lawson, a retired pharmacist, will be giving his talk on wildlife photography – Antarctica from both South America and New Zealand.

Sallie Peake

From the archives - a Valley Happening ten years ago

Ten years ago the Hampshire Chronicle published a series of articles about village life. This photo was taken in January 2011 for its spotlight on Itchen Abbas and Avington. Some of the people pictured are no longer with us, and everyone else will now be ten years older.

Were you there?

Vernon Tottle

Buying local for all your photography needs

Having come across a lovely digital photo in my lockdown rummaging, I was looking for a framed print. I wandered through ever more remote bits of the internet looking for a company who would print the photo and frame it so that it could stand on the metaphorical piano. Then I made a cup of tea and thought about it, and remembered that we had had a very tiny old print from the 1930s reproduced, enlarged and framed by Winchester Photographic in St George's Street.

Two days later I had exactly what I wanted, put together by Magali, who now runs the shop with her long term employee Tom. It was a reminder that it is always worth thinking about who can help locally, and I was so pleased to be able to give them some business.

Verity Coleman



In Memoriam - Jean Dunn

Jan, Geoff and Liz, children of Gerald and Jean Dunn, would like to express their sincere thanks for the very kind words in cards, letters and in person after the recent death of Jean on 4 January 2021.

The Dunn family moved to Itchen Abbas from the Midlands in 1969 where they were welcomed by wonderful neighbours, the church and the village community and where we



truly believe they found their natural home, being happier here than they had ever been anywhere.

We would like to thank the many people who have been Mum and Dad's great friends over many years and those who cared for Mum in her 90s. Also, those who diligently kept an eye on No 7 for us until its sale last October and to all those who cared for Jean at Abbots Barton which became her home from home for the last 18 months. We are certain that Jean's spirit will live on with Dad's and that they will both be at peace together again in St John's churchyard.
Jan, Geoff and Liz

For The Love of Wildlife Photography

My name is Will Hall and I have grown up and lived around the Itchen valley my whole life. I went to school in Winchester and then continued my studies of animal biology at Oxford Brookes. I spent far too much time doing sport before eventually returning to Easton. I now work full time as a rowing coach but I have also recently rediscovered my passion for wildlife photography and filmmaking.

For years I had taken photos on my smartphone. It's so easy nowadays to snap away happily and everyone has a camera in their pockets. However, I decided I would take the plunge and I bought myself a mirrorless DSLR at the beginning of 2020. Shortly after, Covid meant that I was furloughed and left with rather a lot of time on my hands! I decided I would "learn" photography and so I watched many YouTube tutorials and spoke to every photographer I knew. I took my prescribed "hour of daily exercise" to explore my local area in search of wildlife.

In March last year I got published in a couple of national newspapers for some

photos of a roebuck around Easton. It didn't pay much but I started to realise that I might be able to do more than I thought with my



newfound hobby.

When restrictions were briefly eased in the summer, I met another photographer at Bass Rock in Scotland to photograph a colony of Northern Gannets. On this rock, 120,000 birds meet and breed every year. The sheer number and noise of this spectacle was staggering.



This was probably the moment I decided that I wanted to pursue this as more than simply a hobby. I joined community Facebook and Instagram groups and started to make contacts in the business. I was incredibly fortunate to meet (albeit via Zoom in some cases) many fantastic and talented photographers.

The real appeal of wildlife photography is that it forces one to have a genuine connection with the outside world. One must appreciate the seasonal changes and what behavioural changes come about as a result. For example,



spring and summer are manic with activity but, come September, the red deer start to rut. Following this, in October, the fallow deer and roe deer rut. After that, migratory geese and other birds start to come into our coasts and wetlands for overwintering. If one wants to achieve worthwhile images, then a comprehensive understanding of what is happening around the country is required. I'm still learning and Google has become my best friend to expand my knowledge! For every "good" shot I have, there have been literally hundreds of dud images. It's often a thankless task of getting up in the early hours to scout a new location. It is even worse when I have scouted a location, then trekked there with all my gear, only to establish that the conditions are rubbish or the animal doesn't show. However, it's these challenges which make the shots I do get even more worthwhile.

I have just passed the anniversary of when I picked up a camera for the first time and since then I have been published 12 times and taught five new, budding photographers some skills for their own passion. I have had the good fortune to photograph otters, owls, gannets, seals, kingfishers, badgers and many more. We are incredibly lucky to live in such a biologically diverse part of the country. It's all too easy not to see the wood from the trees when walking in the Itchen Valley but wildlife photography has certainly encouraged me to investigate every trail and potential lead.

As Covid restrictions start to ease, I hope to offer wildlife photography courses to the local community and share my love for animals with others; teaching tracking, use of the camera and some dos and don'ts of working with wildlife. Following that, I'm hoping



to get abroad (when we can) to see some more spectacular animals further afield.

Will Hall

Palmerston the cat: how the famous Foreign Office cat retired to my garden



The day after the first lockdown in March, I woke up worrying about Palmerston. Let me explain. Palmerston is the famous Foreign Office cat. He is by far the most loved of the 14,000 staff members. He has a following of over 110,000 people on Twitter (@diplomog). For good reason: he is an awesome cat. Confident, handsome and aloof. He would send journalists into a frenzy in his turf wars with Larry

the No10 cat.

Palmerston would sit on the grandest pieces of furniture in the Foreign Office (the Gold Command chair in the Crisis Centre was a favourite) and he would nonchalantly pose for photographs with famous people. Sometimes he would hang out in the outer office of the Permanent Under-Secretary, and snore on the chair next to my desk, which was supposed to be for Ambassadors and the like waiting to see the boss. No one ever dared ask him to move.

My team pounced into action, and a few hours later, I welcomed His Majesty Palmerston to his new countryside abode in Hampshire... It was only supposed to be temporary. But he suited the countryside.

Palmerston became extraordinarily affectionate almost overnight – preferring his naps to be on our warm laps – and happily chit-chatting away all day long. He has different types of meows, which we can now easily understand. One particular meow clearly means: ‘human, lie down on the sofa, it is snuggle-o’clock.’

He had never seen grass before but turns out he loves eating grass and he has quite a talent for climbing trees too. He spends his hours pouncing dramatically on insects, intensely stalking rodents, and guarding our rhubarb patch.



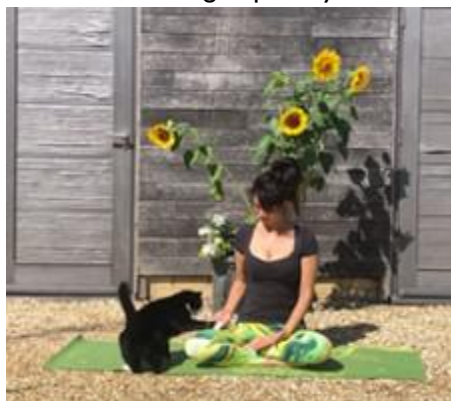


Palmerston's priority was to make sure all his furry and feathered garden friends knew there was a new boss in town. Despite his human

advisers trying to persuade him of the benefits of more enlightened social and institutional structures, he preferred rather more threatening and medieval ways of exerting control over his new green empire.

After far too many grooms and naps and snuggles, Palmerston decided to retire to my garden to spend more time relaxing away from the limelight. Palmerston is enjoying his retirement very much. His new favourite hobby, of course, is doing yoga with his mum (you can join too: www.sherinshe.com/yoga).

He likes stretching, especially after a



good hunting session, but his absolute darling pose is savasana (relaxation). He waits until I wrap myself up in a blanket at the end. Then he swaggers over, parades up on my chest like I am one of his many conquered victories, lies his body down (tummy to tummy) and purrs loudly.

Sherin Shefik

New Family Nature Trail Takes Flight!

Where did ladybirds get their name? Why won't you see ladybirds at Christmas? Why are ladybirds called The Gardener's Friend?

The answers to these questions will be found on the latest online quiz and trail, which can be downloaded from The Watercress Way's website, and completed by anyone in their own time out in our beautiful countryside just north east of Winchester.

This new trail has been launched especially for families around the 27 miles of The Watercress Way. 13 ladybird lodges have been placed around the trail to house the number of common native UK ladybird species plus the invasive brightly coloured Harlequin. They are tucked away discreetly in the undergrowth next to the old railway track beds, sparkling chalk rivers and in some of the housing estates and recreation parks along the Way. The lodges are all made from recycled materials.

To find out where the lodges are, download the pdf of sites and identification chart from the Watercress Way website <https://www.thewatercressway.org.uk/> and head out on a nature adventure!

The Watercress Way, a registered charity, is delighted at the support shown by all the landowners including HCC, Forestry England, Gratton Trust, Kings Worthy PC and Alresford TC, The Watercress Line and The Bush pub.

Emma Banks



Martyr Worthy Memorial is in Madagascar

Postcodes are very good at determining the approximate location of an address. But as readers of the Itchenlist will know, parcels do sometimes get delivered to the wrong house. Delivery drivers who are unfamiliar with the area can have difficulty locating a particular house within the ten or so that share the same postcode.

So why not use Dorset Explorer? Yes, that is the easily remembered name of a website that takes you to geowessex, a postcode based map service that has the locations of every single building in Dorset and Hampshire. Put in your own postcode and you will see that there is a dropdown list of every single building within the postcode, plus a map that shows where each one is. Precisely.

If anyone is coming to visit you, tell them to use Dorset Explorer as a useful location guide.

But you can be even more accurate than that. What3Words is a location identification website for the entire planet. The earth's surface area is about 510 million square kilometres. Back in 2013, Chris Sheldrick, and others, realised that this number is merely 51 million million blocks of 10 square metres and the cube root of this number was around 37,000.

Settling on blocks of 9 square metres (easier to create), Sheldrick used a dictionary of around 40,000 words to create a mapping grid where each 9 square metre block on the entire surface of the globe can be uniquely described using just three words.

Go to What3Words.com and look up your own house. You can find out the

three words that describe your front door, kitchen or bathroom – and they are purposefully very different sequences to discourage accidental errors. If you get the opportunity to enter what3words into any delivery instructions, give those of your front door. Mine is:

[mavericks.computersurfaces](https://www.what3words.com/mavericks.computersurfaces)

A word of caution. We all know that Martyr Worthy war memorial is at the top of Church Lane. However, try entering [martyr.worthy.memorial](https://www.martyr.worthy.memorial) in What3Words. You'll end up on the west coast of Madagascar. You never know, a Hermes delivery driver might be heading there right now

Vernon Tottle

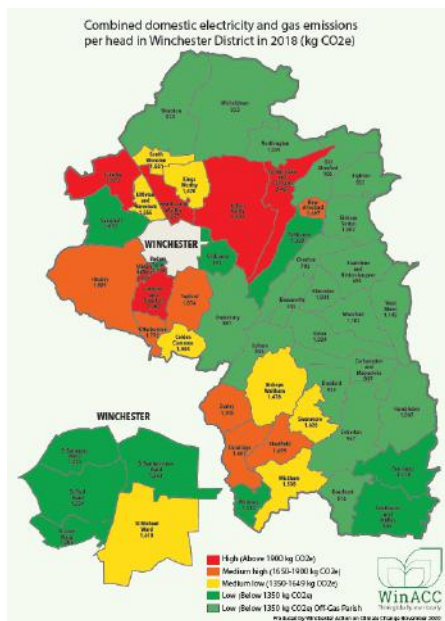
Are We Wasting Energy?

We all know that energy used in the home constitutes a high percentage of our personal carbon footprint. And domestic energy usage accounts for around 25% of total national emissions. Perhaps we feel that we are doing our bit in making sure we use energy wisely. Yet numbers produced by Winchester University on behalf of Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC) might give us pause for thought.

Using data provided by the Dept. of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Office of National Statistics, the University has calculated the amount of CO₂ produced in kilos per head of population per year by parish. The data includes electricity and gas usage in 2018.

The following is a sample of figures taken from their analysis with the Itchen Valley almost topping the list of all Winchester districts, in terms of kg CO₂ per person p.a. The map shows the worst areas in red.

Crawley	2,663
Itchen Valley	2,624
Itchen Stoke/Ovington	2,487
Headbourne Worthy	2,275
St Michael's Ward	1,610
Bishops Waltham	1,478
Kingsworthy	1,470
St Bartholomew's Ward	1,263
St Luke's Ward	1,005



So, are we wasting energy in the Itchen Valley? Whilst the above does not flatter our community, there are possible reasons that we might bear in mind. It may be that our housing stock tends to be larger than average, with more detached and sometimes older and therefore harder-to-insulate properties than the rest of Winchester. And we may have a lower average number of people per household with a greater percentage of retired people, for example. However, in spite of these potential caveats, it remains the case that we are second in the list for Winchester. Maybe this fact alone

should lead us all to reflect further on what additional actions we personally might take to lower our carbon emissions, in the face of the undoubted climate emergency threatening the world. For further information and ideas to reduce energy consumption, check out www.winacc.org.uk
Steve Percy cllr.s.percy@itchenvalleyparishcouncil.org.uk

The Itchen Valley News has checked the calculations with WinACC and after much discussion is now satisfied that the published estimates are fairly accurate. See the advertisement on page 21 for a suggestion for action - Ed

From the Parish Council.

Many will have seen either on the news or YouTube a parish council, a long way from here, holding a very dysfunctional meeting and a report of another council even further north banning the public from its meetings by Zoom. Rest assured, Itchen Valley Parish Council meetings are nothing like that and, unless it is one of those very rare occasions when we have a confidential matter to discuss, you are entitled and welcome to join us. While they are being held remotely, if you wish to attend please email our Clerk who will send you the link. (Please see our website for contact details and what is on the agenda).



Operation Transmission on the A31 has come to an end. Whether due to Covid 19 lockdown or the hauliers being better with paperwork than expected, or both, the problems envisaged did not come to fruition, which is good news. However there have been two side effects that are not so good. First is the level of litter on



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the verges along the A31 and the second is the increased level of traffic plus the amount of speeding on the B3047. Both these issues have been drawn to the attention of HCC Highways.

While remaining on the subject of litter, Keep Britain Tidy has announced that this year's Spring Litter Pick is planned for between the end of May and early June. Whether it will be able to take place will depend on how and when lockdown is ended. As soon as we know and are able to have plans fixed, we will let everyone know by all means at our disposal. In the meantime please keep picking up litter when out walking.

Our newly formed Rights of Way (RoW) Committee has held its first official meeting. It is looking at what can be done to improve some of the surfaces on our most used paths, how in the long term some future paths and bridleways might be enhanced and how best to achieve effective reporting of problems. These include blocked paths, damaged gates and missing finger posts and waymarks. Once again please try to avoid just posting a problem on the Itchen List. It may be missed and we cannot reply to it. Please report any problem to either our Clerk, or Denise Rosewell who chairs the RoW Committee, failing that any Parish Councillor. All our contact details are on our website.

Thanks to the help of one Valley resident we have been able to find out more about the repair work planned for the bridge at the southern end of Chilland Lane (or if you prefer, the start of footpath 48). It is anticipated that work will start early in March and last for two to three weeks. During that time all of footpath 48 will be

closed. Please do not try to use this path while it is closed. It is a construction site and therefore has to be closed as a matter of safety. If you wish for more details please find them on our website.

The Strategic Issues and Priorities Consultation on the Winchester District Local Plan has now started and will continue until 12 April. Although most of our Villages are in the South Downs National Park, all the land in our Parish north of the Old Railway Line is not and comes under Winchester District. This includes quite a number of houses and about half the land in the Itchen Valley Civil Parish. This consultation is looking for views on the key issues the new plan needs to address. The Full Draft Local Plan will then be published for consultation later this year or early next year. Once adopted the plan will be used for guidance on planning applications up to 2038. For more details please see the poster on page 19. The Parish Council will be commenting but remember we are only one voice. It is hoped that as many people as possible will participate. This is an opportunity to have your say. If you do not, then will you have grounds to complain later about decisions you may not like?

Patrick Appleby.

From the City Council

Solar Farms: There is a continuing debate on the proposal to locate a Solar Farm, an array of photo-voltaic cells, on 22 hectares (55 acres) of



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Save the Dates

Please be aware that, given the current situation, events may change.

17-20 June 2021 Easton Flower Festival

11 September 2021 Itchen Valley Flower and Produce Festival

18 September 2021 The Building Ball 7pm, at the David Roth Memorial Cricket Ground, Easton. Village Hall fundraiser.

23 November 2021, 9 January and 25 February 2022: Martyr Worthy Lecture Series in IA&A Village Hall in aid of Itchen Valley Churches

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agricultural land at Godsfield, to the north and east of Alresford. The Three Castles National footpath runs along the northern side of the field. WinAcc has suggested that this will meet 1% of the electricity for the district. WCC has declared a climate emergency and this forms a priority for all our policies. We are aiming for the district to be carbon neutral by 2030. It is very clear that climate change is not a 'Chinese hoax', so we have to find sources of renewable energy.

The idea is frequently put forward that the solar farms should go on 'brownfield' sites; unfortunately such sites are few in number and small, apart from being in demand for housing. If we are to develop clean energy, we need to set guidelines that give developers of such farms parameters as to what is acceptable; 'not in my backyard' is inadequate.

The demand for electricity is expected to double before 2050, as the gas central heating and petrol-powered vehicles are phased out. If the country is to be carbon free by 2050, then more solar farms or wind turbines will be needed. Precious as our landscape is, we need to find ways of accommodating this necessary infrastructure.

In planning terms, we are required to assess the gains against what is lost. On this site there would be the loss of extensive views of chalk downland from the footpath where there is that increasingly rare commodity of no traffic noise, possible destruction of Bronze Age remains identified from crop markings and the industrialisation

of the setting of several nearby heritage assets.

What mitigation measures could be offered by developers? Maybe a properly managed biodiversity plan, to enhance the ecological value with proper and enforced management, with penalties should it not be implemented. Possibly a prohibition on the use of weed killer, which pollutes run off. Any such sites in Winchester need to be an exemplar for well-developed solar farm schemes.

WCC is developing a new Local Plan. This is called 'Your Place, Your Plan' and this is the philosophy behind its development. There is a widespread consultation on Local Plan Strategic Issues and an Options process that will lead to the Local Plan. The planners gave an excellent introduction to the process at a well-attended presentation to parish council members. Please do go to the website and fill in the questionnaire to give us your views. If you go to www.localplan.winchester.gov.uk you can take part, either online at one of the four public sessions or on the website. The response deadline is 12 April 2021.

Digital Survey: Please help us get a good picture of connectivity in Alresford & the Itchen Valley. This is not an alternative to your Gigabit schemes, which I hope go ahead, but would give us a picture of the current situation for mobile and fixed data communications. We are working on decent data for all, but without understanding the 'not spots', we can't best direct our efforts. You can get to the survey by going to <https://>



Panorama of the Godsfield site of the proposed solar farm

winchester.citizenspace.com/economy-and-arts/digital-winchester/. We think that the online pattern of working that has been established during the lockdowns is going to be a trend that carries on even after the pandemic is over, so sorting this issue is going to have long-term dividends.

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rgordon-smith@winchester.gov.uk 733219

From our MP

First up this month and Winchester came to me recently as my new series of Visit Westminster came to life. The wonderful Upper Itchen Valley and Dever Societies had behind the scenes tours at the House of Commons and got to put any questions they liked to me in a Q&A session.



Thank you to everyone who joined the call and your kind comments since. If you are part of a local organisation in the Worthys it could be your turn next; we'd love to have you. Please visit www.stevebrine.com/visit-westminster-virtually for more details. Last month in Itchen Valley News I was setting out my case for the re-opening of our society and economy that moves in lockstep with the incredible success of our covid-19 vaccination programme. I hold 100% to that view and predict the public, let alone Parliament, will grow increasingly furious if one doesn't follow the other. That is why I continue to push the case for schools to re-open fully on 8 March given the untold damage being done to the forgotten victims of this pandemic – our young people.

As I said to the Prime Minister in the House of Commons last month, I am

genuinely shocked by the sense of desperation and concern parents in the constituency are communicating to me given what they are seeing from their children. We have a vaccine that is being rolled out at pace – and while it will face challenges as new strains emerge – we have to accept a balance of risks as we always have. I have called for teachers and school (as well as early years) staff to be vaccinated as soon as possible because, as I see it, if schools really are our national priority we need to start acting like it.

Continuing my determination to remind constituents that Parliament is doing other things at this time alongside managing the crisis, you may be interested in some of the other strands of my work at this time. Through my ongoing work as the Chair of the all-party group for childcare and early education, I am stepping up efforts to make the case for the early years sector and I am about to embark on some work around the vexed issue of shared parental leave for new mums and dads which was fudged by the coalition Government.

Equally, I am picking up again my work on local transport services as commuters prepare (someday) to return to the railways. The issue of 'part-time' season tickets hasn't gone away – in fact it just got even more important – so watch this space from Government / SWR this Spring.

And finally, you will be aware that following the awful Kings Worthy school bus crash last year, Hampshire Police have revealed they've now had a decision from the Crown Prosecution Service to charge the bus driver with Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving. This was a truly horrible day for a large number of students and their families as well as those working



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at the school. I think many people will instinctively be pleased to hear this news but it's important now to stand back and let the justice system run its course.

Much more, and daily updates, via www.fb.com/SteveBrineMP

Steve Brine

MP for Winchester & Itchen Valley

Readers' Recommendations - To watch:

The Dig

The story of the 1939 excavation of the anglo-saxon ship burial at Sutton Hoo whose treasures were donated to the British Museum by the owner of the land, Mrs Edith Pretty. Ralph Fiennes is the amateur archaeologist with Carey Mulligan as an assistant on the dig.

News of the World

Tom Hanks, as a retired Federate Captain after the Civil War, finds a

traumatised kidnapped girl and journeys through remote country in his wagon to return her to her family.

Both worth a watch.


Sallie Peake

Readers' Recommendations - To read:

'The Fortnight in September' by RC Sherriff

Shortly after the acclaimed production of 'Journey's End', RC Sherriff was on holiday in Bognor. Whilst there, he found himself studying the faces of the other holiday-makers and creating stories about these people. Then, for his own entertainment, he spent his evenings writing this little masterpiece which was so wisely snapped up by Victor Gollancz, who had also published 'Journey's End'.

This novel is about a suburban family who spend a fortnight, every September, on holiday at 'Seaview' in



Is someone you know facing hard times due to the current crisis?

The Trust has been given extra funding by local Christians to help individuals or families living in the rural areas of Winchester who may be suffering hardship during these difficult times.

For instance, we can help to pay for a grocery delivery or a utility bill.

Help is available immediately and is not conditional on income, size of house or any other measure.

All discussions will be kept in the strictest confidence.

If you are in need at the moment for any reason, or know someone who might be, please contact Itchen Valley trustee Penny Russell at penny@flemons.co.uk

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Winchester District Local Plan

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Bognor. The family comprises Mr and Mrs Stevens, their grown-up son and daughter and their young son, Ernie. Unfortunately, Mrs Stevens is afraid of the sea and Mr Stevens organises the preparations for their departure with such precision that he is greatly stressed before the holiday even begins. He has to allow an extra ten minutes for the walk to the station in case they should pass a lady who had fallen or fainted. Because he is a humane and courteous man, he knows they would have to stop and take care of the lady and that they might therefore miss their train!

About a third of the novel is taken up with the train journey and during this account we learn much about Mr and Mrs Stevens and their life together. When they arrive at the 'perfect seaside station,' the family set out for Mrs Huggett's boarding house and find that they have reached 'the disturbing little moment that comes in every

holiday.....when suddenly the tense excitement of the journey collapses and fizzles out....'

But for us, the readers, the story continues to enthrall. More and more is revealed about the family and about the people they meet and the whole book is infused with Sherriff's humanity and sensitivity so that we are pulled into the lives of these ordinary but extraordinarily interesting characters. Many thanks to Alex and Steve Percy for introducing me to this Pearl of a book.

Clare Gaster

Bird of the month - The Blackcap

This beautiful warbler used to be a Summer visitor but is increasingly resident throughout our Winters and is occasionally seen in the garden. This is a male, the female has a chestnut cap. Listen out for its lovely fluting song in Spring.

Elaine and Henry Labram



For meteorologists spring starts on 1 March but astronomically it starts with the vernal equinox on 20 March. Ed



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Readers Recommendation - Walks

4 mile Circular Walk Watercress Way
Itchen Wood Chillingham Lane
Approximately 1.5 - 2 hours

This walk explores the southern facing slope of the Itchen valley, with beautiful views. It passes between open fields and Itchen Woods famed for bluebells which is managed by Forestry England, please stay on main rights of way.

It starts at the carpark at Couch Green, King George VI playing field SO21 1EA.

It follows an old gravelly railway track, part of the Watercress Way 27 mile trail, a paved main B road, two minor roads with no pavements, and bridleways. There are no stiles and just one gate, which can be opened.

The paths are well drained, but chalk can get slippery. The railway track and woods are a bit muddy in places. Buggies are possible but the bridleway is narrow between Lone Farm to the

woods. NB steps from Chillingham Lane up to Railway track. Cyclists can follow the whole route, but at Chillingham Lane, the steps mean you will need to go to the B3047 back to the carpark.

The walk can be extended to Micheldever woods or Bridget's Farm. You can shorten it by taking the bridleway from Northington Lane by the Vets Centre south-west to Chillingham Lane. Suitable for dogs, the area is used for shoots so there are copious pheasants! No livestock fields.

Directions and Points of Interest

Old railway track. From Couch Green Playing Field carpark, walk around the children's playground up a gentle ramp to the old railway track. Turn right past a bench and interpretation board.

A rare single main line track in Britain, part of the speculation of Jane Austen's nephew Edward Knight, to link London to Southampton via Winchester. Opened as the 1865, nicknamed Watercress Line after a boom in watercress production in the late 19th

C. The volunteers who reopened the line east from Alresford to Alton adopted the name for heritage trains. Look out for old concrete sleepers and an old telegraph pole artefacts. Spot the bendy trees searching for light. Follow the track to the end. Turn right through a gate towards the B3047. Follow the pavement along the B3047 down Station Hill. Turn left up Northington Road, under Northington Road bridge. Follow the road north until it bears right. Carry straight on past the Veterinary Centre to Lone Farm, on the Oxdrove Way. The bridleway winds uphill to Itchen Wood. It is somewhat overgrown! Turn left at the top where there is a T junction of paths.

The Roman Villa (see map) was built probably in the 1st or 2nd Century AD. It had a spectacular view of the Itchen Valley and would have been a dominating feature of the landscape. Partially excavated in 1878 by permission of the Shelley family at Avington Park, it was found to contain several beautiful mosaics and a hypocaust – needed in such an exposed location. As with many Roman villas, it sits on a site of an earlier Iron Age settlement and just to the east of a Bronze Age barrow (you can see it if you look!). These are all now part of a Scheduled Monument meaning that they are some of the most special archaeological features in England. Walk west along the track until a junction with Chillandham Lane. Turn left, south. This narrow little road winds gently down the valley. Just before the railway bridge, before the road meets the B3047, take some steep steps back up to the old railway line. Turn right back to Couch Green, retracing your steps to the carpark.

Kim Adams

Letter from the Rectory

A real sense of excitement is starting to build! Don't you just love this time of year? Even though the frost may be a recent memory, the bulbs are pushing their way up through the



recently laid compost, the days are getting longer and we may be finding our way out of lockdown! At the vaccination centres there is an atmosphere that reminds me of the London Olympics – of course, it is wonderful to see firemen and soldiers delivering the injections, but I think it is the volunteer marshalls who really set the tone, happy for those going to get vaccinated, excited to be involved in something quite so successful, proud to help turn the nation around.

But this time of year is exciting for something else as well. Easter is round the corner. One of the things I have missed both this year and last (because of the pandemic) is my annual trip to our two local primary schools to explain about Easter. One Head years ago told me that she could do most assemblies, but that Easter really foxed her....and indeed how do you explain to a group of children from 5 to 11 about this most supernatural of events in history?

I am not sure whether it was entirely wise, but I chose to explain Easter using bananas – a green banana and a ripe banana. I asked the children what would happen if I left a banana outside – we agreed that it would rot (if it didn't get eaten before). Bananas go from being green to going rotten. I said to the children that it is the same with human beings. We all go from being green and young (like them) to being old and ripe (like me) and, sadly,

eventually we will all die. I said that everything in the universe runs down; everything moves from order to disorder – I said that (although I was no scientist) I understood this was called ‘entropy’ and involved the third law of thermodynamics: unless something else intervenes, all things eventually cease to function, they rot. ‘So (wielding the green banana) I said ‘if you imagine this green banana is a person, he/she goes from being young (like you) to being (here picking up the ripe banana) old like me. It’s the way the universe is...

Then I showed them a picture of Jesus as a baby and then a picture of Jesus on the cross. I explained that Jesus was a real person crucified by the Romans in Jerusalem in about 30AD. But Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead and that’s what we celebrate at Easter. That Christians believe that if we trust in Jesus, even though we die, we too will come back from the dead one day.

So, I continued (wielding the green banana) if you imagine that this banana is a person, he /she goes from being young, to being old (picking up the ripe banana) and eventually dying.

But Christians believe that there is a third banana! That we go from being young to being old, to being young again, if we trust in Jesus, we will come back from the dead one day.

Well, I am not sure that this explanation works better on the page than it did in the assembly. Indeed, even in the assembly I got a lot of puzzled faces. But as we see around us in our beautiful Valley the bulbs springing up everywhere out of the dead leaves of autumn and the frost of winter, we see that principle of re-birth is modelled for us every year in nature. It’s exciting. It fills us with hope...

Alex Pease

Jackie’s County Corner

Revised Minerals and Waste Plan

This is being reviewed as the previous Minerals and Waste plan was published in 2013 and the ways in which we use building materials, recycling and disposal of waste has changed considerably in a decade too. Planning the sites is essential because these sites don’t always make good neighbours. One example is the proposal for the inert waste recycling plant at Three Maids Hill which was rejected by HCC last month.



County Council Accounts

The County budget went to Council in February. The Council tax rise includes 3% for adult/children social care, but not enough: it will raise £21m but costs have increased to nearly £30million

Funding for Broadband: During 20-21 HCC supported the Government Gigabit scheme with a £1m fund for this county, but because of the difficulties of the scheme and Covid, take-up was low. We are awaiting news of the 2021-22 schemes now. See more on www.hants.gov.uk/broadband or contact me for details.

Census 21

The ten year census is being held on Sunday 21 March 21 - this time it’s broadly online but you can see more on the website

www.census.gov.uk or if you prefer social media: #Census2021

Connect 4 Communities

The County Council has funds for play schemes at half term and holidays. Schemes must include elements of play, activity and food at lunchtime, primarily for children and families needing free

school meals. It is open to childminders, sports clubs and schools too. Contact me or Suzanne.smith2@hants.gov.uk direct It's called '**Your Place, Your Plan**' The consultation on the Local Plan Strategic Issues and Options is open. The response deadline is 12 April 2021. (see page 19 - Ed) Go to www.localplan.winchester.gov.uk to take part, either online at one of the four public sessions or on the website. Short, longer and full versions of the questionnaire available too!

Footpaths and Bridleways

The delivery plan for the Worthy Down to Winchester bridleway has been agreed and it is hoped it will be in place for September 2021. The final part of the route is being worked on as we speak: I have always wanted the route to go into Winchester, not end on the Andover Road. I hope this persistence will pay off!

Flooding, A31, and Solar Farms:

There's a lot more to discuss, and I cannot hold surgeries for a while yet, but please see my website through the month or contact me direct, my details below.

*Cllr Jackie Porter, 07973 696085,
Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk
www.jackieporter.co.uk*

The Practical Gardener

The weather has been really cold in recent days, confirming we have had wetter and colder so drier and warmer will follow. Seems to me a good time then to plan for water storage, and collecting rainwater in butts is an obvious solution. I feel sure in years to come, water storage and use in gardens will become a bigger issue.

My greenhouse is just about OK and being kept frost-free. I have another propagator and all of them are at

maximum use now. It is the peak sowing month. Many of the seeds I sowed in early January are doing well but not all. I'm sure in nature we have to expect some failures. I keep a note of seeds which do not do well and never buy them again. My biggest issue now is to decide when to remove the pots of little vulnerable plants from the safety of their propagator. Here's when the kitchen windowsill comes in handy.



Now I had some really nice coriander, doing well but suddenly it's decided to wilt and no amount of care makes any difference. It must be a variety called "Pike" – stupid boy! The only solution is to sow more. I also planted 10 broad beans in a plastic tray. Only 3 germinated and the rest appeared to have rotted. I don't have an answer but teachers will know that not every student gets an A grade.

Perennials that I sowed in the autumn



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also have mixed results. I have a lot of heathy lupins which will soon go into a cold frame but the echinaceas are looking a bit sad. I'm trying to say here that we all must expect some things don't work out – that's why we have garden centres which happily are all still open.

One of the nicest vegetables to grow is peas and there are lots of different varieties. Time to sow now. Some children think peas come in a plastic bag from the freezer, so some education is needed. My own grandchildren are fascinated by things that grow and keen to help in the kitchen podding. The onion sets and seed potatoes were also delivered (and contrary to the experience of some, I've never had a missed delivery living here). You should grow onions, so easy and so rewarding. I planted 100 sets in a recent dry spell using a small dibbler. I'm still using onions stored in my garage from last season. First early potatoes will be planted in early March under fleece. My favourite is named after this month's editor! Outside I have harvested carrots, beetroot, leeks and kale; no work to do outside except harvest.

I was once quizzed by big brother Tesco: "Why did I rarely buy vegetables, did I not understand the value of fresh veg?" I had to explain I was a gardener and preferred my veg fresh, seasonal and grown in UK!! It's also pruning time – ah the value of having a gardener. So many fruit trees and roses will benefit from a prune now. I also think it is a good time to move. No, not house, but plants. Perennials can be divided or moved if in the wrong place, one advantage of looking at photos of the garden taken last year.

Happy Gardening! Tony Gaster.

Comings and Goings

Pip and Simon Bailey and a cat called Charlie have moved to No 1 Cocketts Mede, Easton from Dorset.


Peter Thacker, the Headmaster of Prince's Mead school, and his wife Bambi (pronounced Bombi) moved into Nevasa (New Cottages, Avington) at the end of last year with William (in stripes) and Oliver (with friend).



A Vintage Year - 1971

Most of us have musical memories from our youth that form a precious part of our personal life stories. As a teenager growing up on Merseyside in the early sixties, mine were bound up with the Cavern, the Beatles, Gerry and the Pacemakers, the Hollies and many others. However, this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of a truly vintage year in the annals of popular music. In January 1971, Carole King recorded *Tapestry*, an album full of her own wonderful compositions that have readily stood the test of time. The LP, including *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow*, *A Natural Woman* and *You've Got a Friend* has sold over 25 million copies but was recorded with a speed and simplicity that only adds to

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its appeal. I still treasure my original copy and, having given away my HiFi system twenty years ago, had to buy a replacement to listen to it. It still sounds great.

But half a century ago also saw the release of many other classic albums in my collection: Blue by Joni Mitchell, Mud Slide Slim by James Taylor, Live by Randy Newman and other best selling LPs by Carly Simon, John Denver, Crosby, Stills & Nash and Neil Young. And who can forget the exciting ground-breaking contributions of Stevie Wonder, John Lennon, Fleetwood Mac and Billy Joel during this year. Artists come. And artists go. But who can seriously doubt they don't make 'em like that anymore?

Steve Percy

For the love of Donkeys

Twelve years ago I became weary of trying to find a donkey for the Valley Palm Sunday and Nativity duties so when I heard through the blacksmith that just across the valley there were three donkeys needing a new home. I jumped at the idea of having one. Donkeys are very sociable creatures

and hate losing their companions so it was a case of take one and get another two free and I soon discovered how different it was from looking after horses. A donkey only willingly does what it wants to do! They all have such different characters. Fudge, the brown one, has always been the boss and very keen on his food. Mischief certainly lives up to his name, always looking for ways to escape and lead the others astray. It was he who led their one great freedom-run down the lane into Easton but I am glad to say they tired of eating someone else's lawn and came home very meekly once they saw me with the headcollars. Max was quite the gentlest and nicest and stepped naturally into Nativity appearances at Avington and Palm Sunday duties. I remember a long walk back from Itchen Abbas through Avington Park which took ages because so many people wanted to make a fuss of him. Sadly he died last year after losing a long battle to ill health. However





Mischief stepped in for him and has now made the role his own.

On the whole they are easy to look after.

Their coats are not very waterproof so

they head for their shelter when it rains. They don't have shoes but the blacksmith comes every eight weeks to trim their fast growing hooves. Mostly they just graze in the field and only need extra food in winter.

Donkeys can live up to forty years.

We don't know how old mine are, they were said to be twelve when they

arrived and I have had them twelve years so hopefully they will be with me for a few more years yet. When I lived at The Old Rectory they were in the field next to the playground and really enjoyed all the attention they received from the children. Life is a little quieter now they are in the field behind my new house but some small friends still come and visit them. If anybody else would like to give them a polo from time to time, they would be very welcome.

With the chilly weather we have had, I was reminded of the day my then small granddaughter was helping to feed

Itchen Valley Churches

7th March - 10am Family Worship

14th March - 10am Parish Communion

21st March - 10am Valley Worship

28th March - 10am Parish Communion

All of our services are currently online, this may change during the month so please do refer to our website for up to date information.

Private Prayer

Church opening times will be open between 10am and 2pm as follows:

St Mary's, Easton - Wednesdays

St John's, Itchen Abbas - Fridays

St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy - Sundays

St Mary's, Avington - Every day by arrangement

please contact Dan at Ivy Cottage or on 07500 860949

We may not be able to gather as we normally do, but we're still here if you need prayerful or practical support.

Rector - Revd Alex Pease

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LLM - Mr Gerry Stacey

gerry.Stacey@biblesociety.org.uk - 07554 438973

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them. You could see our breath in the cold night air and as the donkeys approached she said "Oh look the donkeys are cigarettin'".

I check them in their stable each evening. The smell of their deep bedding, the warmth of their bodies, the peaceful sound of breathing as they chomp away on their hay makes it is easy to imagine what it might have been like in another stable in Bethlehem a long time ago.

Judy Bishop

Flower of the month

Hazel catkins

The male flowers are big and conspicuous. At the end of February they develop from a cylinder into a floppy "lamb's tail". If you look carefully where this tail meets the branch you see the tiny female flower with red filaments which later form a hazelnut.

Dorothy and Simon Broadley



The solar power debate

Some years ago, this magazine carried articles about solar power and many on the Itchenlist were interested in results. I have recorded energy use at my home now for almost 10 years. The results are interesting:

- Peak months are May, June and July but unless the panels rotate, it is not possible to benefit fully from long sunny daylight hours in the summer as panels have a fixed reception arc.
- South facing panels are needed for maximum benefit. Absence of tree cover is crucial. One downside is that the panels are not pretty.
- There is quite a big power generation variation year on year, more than $\pm 25\%$
- It's not possible to predict accurately the savings to the electricity bill when solar power is used. Clearly it helps to change the way electricity is used. For example, best to use the washing machine during daylight hours.
- My system cost £14,000 to install. The converter failed after 9 years and cost £1,000 to replace but no other maintenance has been needed. I received £1,690 in FIT during 2020. I could estimate savings in my electricity bills at £200.
- I also note a variation in gas bills (used only for heating/hot water) of $\pm 20\%$ depending on ambient temperature. So any statistical analysis will be very difficult.
- I've seen at least a 10% fall in gas usage since installing a condensing boiler.
- 2013 was by far the coldest year of the last ten, 2020 was the sunniest.
- It has to be understood there is no government grant for FIT, we all pay for it. So those without solar panels are

financing my (FIT) income. Some might see this as unfair!

Tony Gaster

See poster on page 21 if you haven't already got solar panels- Ed

Gigabit Broadband for Rural Communities Scheme

It is said that you have to be told something seven times before it sinks in! Well, I am certainly guilty of that as far as the "Gigabit Broadband for Rural Communities Scheme" is concerned, I'm probably not alone!

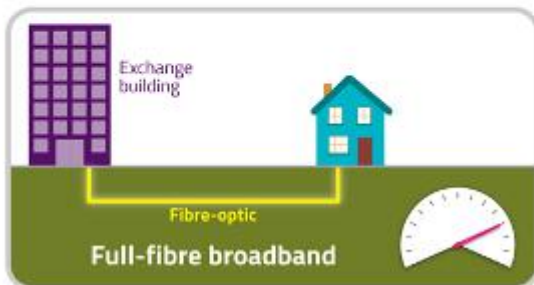
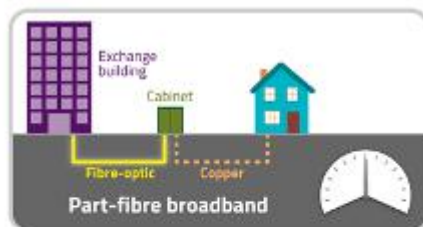
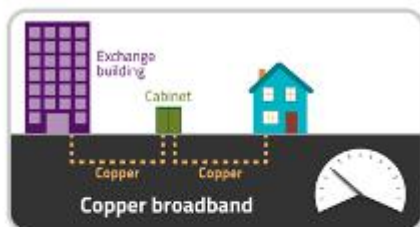
With more of us than ever working, learning and streaming our entertainment services at home, the need for a faster reliable broadband service in rural areas has never been greater and it seemed there was meaningful help out there via the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme and Hampshire County Council's top up.

You'll no doubt remember our villages were at the back of the queue for

superfast broadband, with the green cabinets only being installed 2 ½ years ago. Interestingly, many of us would not have been able to Zoom without them! But the Community Gigabit Scheme enables rural communities to get to the front of the queue for the next generation of full fibre Broadband Gigabit, future proofing our properties for the next decade and beyond.

Worth investigating, we thought and a modest expression of interest in November soon turned into a scheme to bring full fibre Ultrafast Gigabit Broadband to 160 houses in Martyr Worthy and Itchen Abbas West.

We have been working with Openreach on this exciting opportunity to get the village's broadband infrastructure upgraded to provide full fibre broadband. This is a stepped improvement: delivering broadband via full fibre capable infrastructure enables internet speeds of up to 1000Mb/s = 1 Gigabit (1 Gb/s) compared to the maximum speed of 80mb/s obtainable from the Openreach green cabinets.



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And the best bit.....with the Community Gigabit Broadband Vouchers the upgrade will in effect be free to each of the 160 households. However, exciting times rapidly turned to disappointment when the government closed the current scheme with effect from 19 February: the closure was anticipated, but 6 weeks early has caused a big problem to our and the five other schemes running in our area that cover approximately 1,000 houses. The good news is that the mood music is for another scheme, but there are still many unknowns: the

value of the voucher and whether HCC will top up the scheme, let alone whether the schemes that were a long way through the process will be able to continue or will need to restart. However, we remain 100% committed to getting our scheme delivered. We have learnt such a lot along the way. So if you'd like to come on a roller coaster ride with us and are interested in starting a scheme in your area please do get in touch.

Yvette Riley & Mark Frankland
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Photo by Jean Wheeler. View from Long Walk, Easton



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Flower Foray in Easton

A new business will be flowering in Easton soon. Our IVN reporter caught up with James Greig to ask a few questions. More to come later on in the year and walkers along the footpath from the Chestnut Horse to Easton Lane will soon see the results of James' labours.

What are you doing in Easton?

So, I'm in the process of setting up and planting a flower farm in the heart of Easton, I'll be growing a mix of annuals and perennials which I'll be selling as cut flowers, both to florists and to the public. It's going to look a bit bare until May and June - when it should be awash with beautiful classic English blooms.



How did you come up with the idea?

I've always loved cutting fresh garden flowers and having a jug of home grown blooms on the kitchen table. So I wanted to offer that same opportunity - to have seasonal, scented, fresh and local flowers available - and all grown along organic methods.

And I think this idea is picking up, more and more people are now far more conscious of the sustainability of flowers, where they come from and how they are treated. I think there is



nothing nicer than knowing your vase of beautiful blooms has only travelled a mile or so and has been grown in a way which is kind to the local nature.

What's it like working Easton?

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spot for flowers, as it's nestled in the valley, but everyone is so friendly.

How did you get into this line of work?

My father was a farmer, so maybe it's in my blood and I've always had a huge passion for flowers and gardening. For the last 15 years I've worked in and around horticulture as a TV producer, working with the likes of Monty Don, Sarah Raven, James Wong, to name a few, but secretly I think I wanted to join in with the digging rather than watching it through a camera lens.

To keep up to date with developments, you can sign up to my newsletter at www.stemandgreen.co.uk

Fly-Tipping

Unfortunately, one of the side effects of the lockdown restrictions has been an increase in fly-tipping. Fly-tipping is defined as the 'illegal deposit of any waste onto land that does not have a licence to accept it'. Uncontrolled illegal waste disposal can be hazardous to the public, especially if it contains toxic material or asbestos. There could be a risk of damage to watercourses and soil quality from the dumped waste. In 2017/18, approximately 998,000 incidences of fly-tipping were dealt with by councils in England whilst 2018/19 saw this increase to 1,072,000 incidences. The cost of clearing up this waste has risen to £60 million per year and this figure is likely to increase for 2019/20.

In 2018/19, 46% incidents occurred on our Highways whilst overall 33% of total incidents were categorised as 'small van loads' whilst 28% were 'car-boot loads' or less. Some people did not realise that dumping garden waste in hedgerows, grass verges and woodlands counts as fly-tipping and it is illegal; just because it may eventually

compost down, does not make dumping acceptable or permissible.

What can we do?

If we see any fly-tipping we should:

1. Try to work out what the waste is and how much there is.
2. Note the day, date and time you saw the tipping.
3. Note the waste's exact location and whether it is in or near water.
4. Take a photograph and give this to the local council.

NB - If the fly tipped materials have been marked with a spray painted yellow 'W', the council are already aware of the incident, it is being investigated and the removal has been scheduled.

How can it be reported?

We can also report fly tipping using your iPhone, Android or Blackberry phone. You can use the Your Winchester app to report fly tipping wherever you are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Using the app means the actual location of the fly tip is recorded on the mapping system and you will be able to upload pictures of the waste to help the council investigate and collect the materials.

What else can the general public do?

There have been instances where members of the public have paid for a waste carrier to remove rubbish or building materials from their property only to find it has been dumped elsewhere and they are then liable for the costs of clearing the mess up.

The Environment Department have an online Register of Waste Carriers. The local Council's Environmental Health Service is the first point of contact for complaints and the Winchester Contact Number is: 01962 840222.

Neighbourhood Watch

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For hours and hours
The rain surely stays in the plain



Henry Labram's photo of a otter

Recipe of the month

Golden Soup

All measurements are utterly approximate, use the whole squash or half if is a big one and you have plans for the other half .

500 g butternut squash, skin on but stalk and seeds removed

300 g carrots

400 g sweet potato, peeled

200 g split red lentils

2 or more cloves of garlic, peeled

2 - 3 cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped

2 - 3 bay leaves

The zest of an orange

1 tsp turmeric, ½ tsp ground cumin, some chilli flakes if you like spicy food

A stock cube

Water, to just cover the veg. add more at the end if necessary

Salt and pepper to taste

Cut the carrots, sweet potatoes and squash into chunks, boil it all up until the vegetables are soft, blend with a hand blender, adjust seasoning. You do want to blend it thoroughly, the squash skin is the last thing to blend and you don't want to find bits of that showing. It blends better when it is thick, so blend before adding any extra water.

If you want to be posh put a swirl of yoghurt in the centre of the bowl and/

or sprinkle with parsley - fresh or dried. I always make enough for at least 2 meals - why cook every day?

Commie Sheph (Sue Sheph's revolutionary brother)



Corinne Kozok's photo of a robin

Home Baking - your questions answered

Is it necessary to use strong flour to make bread?

If you want a decent loaf - yes! Flour strength is a measure of the level and quality of protein in the flour. For a good loaf 12% protein is needed, for a wholemeal loaf 13% is better.

What is the difference between white, brown and wholemeal flours?

A grain of wheat has three base components: - the white part contains starch and protein; the skin is bran thus fibre; and the germ which would have grown into the new plant is oil and protein. White flour leaves out most of the bran and germ, using about 75% of the grain. Brown flour uses between 85%-90% of the grain and wholemeal, as the name implies, uses 100% of the grain and is thus higher in fibre.

Should I use fresh flour?

No! Flour for breadmaking improves with age as long as it is stored

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properly, which means safe from infestation from moths, beetles and mites (not weevils!).

What is the best way to store flour?

In a sealed container kept in a cool dry place. Leaving it in a paper bag in the cupboard is asking for trouble.

What flour do you use yourself?

We use a white flour called Royalty, which we buy in 16kg bags from Botley Mills. We store it in a plastic bin with a tight fitting lid and use it up in one to two months. One advantage of using white flour is that, by law, in the UK, white breadmaking flour has vitamins and minerals added.

What sort of bread do you make?

Mainly brown or seeded brown. We buy wheat bran, wheat germ, oat bran and seeds and mix and match - another advantage of using white flour is that every loaf can be different. We use a breadmaking machine and it takes about 5 minutes to throw it all in - carefully weighed of course.

Should I get a breadmaking machine?

My advice is if you are starting out buy

a cheap machine. If you find you use it a lot keep going until it wears out then buy a top quality Panasonic.

Any other advice?

Be wary of using stoneground flour from historic mills, it is unlikely to have had the same infestation protection as commercially milled flour.

If you are kneading by hand you need to knead for at least 20 minutes.

A pinch of Vitamin C powder in the mix will improve your loaf.

Patrick Appleby



Local monthly information

Itchen Valley area waste collections in March

Black bins and brown garden bins on Fridays 12 and 26 March. Green bins on Fridays 5 and 19 March. Glass boxes on Friday 5 March.

Farmers Market in Winchester

Sundays 14 and 28 March.

Parish Council Full Meeting

Thursday 4 March. Via Zoom

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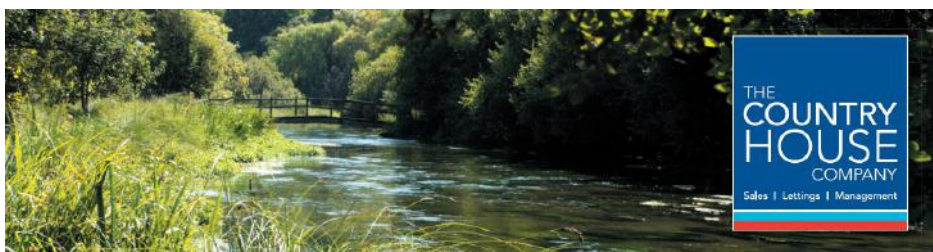
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