

Valley News

ITCHEN



Issue 119 Dec 2023 / Jan 2024 Avington, Easton, Itchen Abbas, Martyr Worthy & Abbots Worthy



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WELCOME to the Valley

News



This is a double issue, in the tradition of Christmas Specials in the days when print was the reigning medium. Keep it through December and January to find out the dates of Christmas tree collections and other useful information. For this reason, among others, we have even less idea than editors usually do about what state the world will be in by the time the IVN heads off to recycling. Hence no comment from the editors about the current weather or world affairs. We can only hope and pray that things will get better. However, some of our contributors are more qualified to speak out, see page 18. On the subject of recycling, you can read about the Veolia depot on pages 19 and 20, or about the recycling of nutrients to the soil on page 35.

We give you reminders of some of what is happening in the Valley. If you haven't already done so, now is the time to book your tickets for the Easton Panto, the Martyr Worthy lectures, the Waynflete Singers Christmas concert in the Cathedral and nearer to home, the Itchen Valley Choir concert in the Itchen Abbas & Avington Village Hall. Incidentally, if you are organising an event in 2024 remember to let the News know in good time.

We also have reports of some of the things that have happened, both in the Valley and beyond. A Valley resident represented his country sailing in Portugal, another attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in the presence of their Majesties, various organisations held meetings and the school has been busy.

Some people feel that Christmas cannot be celebrated too much and you will find many aspects of it illustrated throughout the magazine. Maybe children of the right age can be set the challenge of counting the Christmas images.

The whole editorial team wish all our readers a very happy Christmas (all 12 days of it), a hopeful New Year and maybe a dry remains of January to follow?

The February edition will be edited by Verity Coleman.

Brigid McManus and Charlotte Appleby

Itchen Valley News

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What's On

Itchen Valley Choir Christmas Concert

Wednesday 6 December at 7.30pm at Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall. Tickets £10 on the door include a glass of mulled wine, mince pies etc see page 33

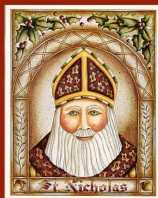
Waynflete Singers

Saturday 9 December 7.30pm at Winchester Cathedral

The English Chamber Orchestra and four outstanding soloists in Haydn's jubilant St Nicholas Mass and Britten's evocative narration of the story of St Nicolas of Myra. Tickets from www.waynfletesingers.org.uk/concerts

Haydn:
St Nicholas Mass
Britten:
St Nicolas Cantata

Waynflete Singers
English Chamber Orchestra
Conductor: Andrew Lumsden



Christmas CAMEO

Tuesday 12 December 12 noon

Tuesday 16 January 12 noon

St John's Church, Itchen Abbas. Short service and friendly lunch for over 65s. Ring me on 779778 for more information. *Charlotte Appleby*

Easton Panto

13, 14, 15 December at 7.30pm
and 16 December at 2pm and 6.00pm

Tickets from Sally Stone 779283 or eastoneventsqwe@gmail.com

See opposite

If you haven't already booked, better do it quickly - Eds

Family Reeling Party Saturday 16 December 7.30-11.45pm

Tickets £25, groups of 8, 10 or 12.

Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall
email: hampshirereels@gmail.com

Carol Singing Sunday 17 December

10am St John's Church, Itchen Abbas

6pm St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

Tuesday 19 December

5pm outside St Swithun's Church
Martyr Worthy

6.30pm The Plough Itchen Abbas

Thursday 21 December

4.30pm by the crib at St Mary's Church Easton. See page 7 for details of all Christmas services

Theatre Royal, Winchester Thur 30 Nov to Mon 1 Jan

Traditional Family Panto - *Cinderella*.

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www.theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk

Martyr Worthy Lecture Series Friday 12 January 6.30pm

David Leakey, Black Rod from 2011-2017 will give an insider's view of what goes on in political and parliamentary corridors.

Tickets from www.buytickets.at/martyrworthylectures or email Sophie Parry at martyrworthylectures2023@gmail.com

Alresford Surgery Patient Forum

Thursday 18 January at 6pm

See surgery website for details nearer the time.



Easton Players
PRESENT



Aladdin

A FAMILY PANTOMIME



**Easton
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13th, 14th, 15th
December
7.30pm
Sat 16th Dec
2pm & 6pm



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Sally Stone 779283

Upper Itchen Valley Society

Rachel Peppiat was the guest speaker at the recent Upper Itchen Valley Society (UIVS) AGM where she gave a most entertaining address to the 47 members present about her experience of running the West Lea Farm Shop. She bought the shop and surrounding watercress beds a few years ago. She made light of the work which she had put in, and said that it had brought her great pleasure to meet so many local people who were her main customers. She has even occasionally delivered to customers when they were unable to reach the shop. She told amusing stories about the burglar who panicked when the alarm went off and left with nothing (all caught on CCTV), and how she had become a “fish wife”, training to fillet fish because that’s how her customers wanted their trout. Her message was if you work in the retail sector you really have to like people!



The audience complimented her on the quality of the produce in the shop and very much enjoyed her talk.

The AGM followed the talk.

Reports were given by the Treasurer and Membership Secretary whilst Simon Ffennell reported on the river.

The Chairman, Elaine Labram, reported on a donation to the Itchen Abbas Primary School for a bench and story telling stool, as part of their Forest School, which is being enjoyed by the children. The proposals concerning the M3/A34 interchange were discussed as were other planning issues relevant to the Valley.

The following Officers were re-elected: Chairman: Elaine Labram; Treasurer: Richard Coleman; Membership: Lucy Collis; Alison Matthews; Simon Broadley; Simon Ffennell, Sophie Parry. Subsequently, Gavin Edgerley Harris has joined the Committee.

The Society, which exists to preserve the essential nature of the Itchen Valley, is open to all residents. Subscription is £20 per household for life. We hold a biennial party (next in 2024!) and other occasional events. Please do consider joining by contacting one of the Committee.

Elaine Labram

Easton WI

We welcomed a return visit from John Pitman to our September meeting. His topic this time was Radio Memories, from the very first broadcast in 1906 when the radio was fixed to the light socket in the ceiling, during the war years when the Germans confiscated all radios although the BBC were able to send coded messages to the forces overseas. During the newspaper strike in 1926 radio news became the main source of information for the public. John will be returning for another talk next year.

In November, Dr Tim Mason gave a fascinating talk on the history of malaria, which has been around long before man. Mosquitoes infect victims



You are warmly invited to the Itchen Valley Christmas Services

Sunday 10 December

4pm - Christingle at St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 17 December

10am - Family Carols and costumes at St John's, Itchen Abbas

6pm - Traditional Carol Service at St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

Tuesday 19 December

5pm Carol Singing outside St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

6.30pm Carol Singing at The Plough, Itchen Abbas

Thursday 21 December

4.30pm - Carols by the Crib at St Mary's Church, Easton

Christmas Eve

4pm - Crib Service at St Mary's Church, Easton

11pm - Midnight Communion at St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy

Christmas Day

10am - Family Communion at St John's, Itchen Abbas

**For information on all December Itchen Valley Church Services
visit: www.itchenvalleychurches.org**



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through salivary glands and transmit the parasite to the liver damaging red blood cells. These mosquitoes have been found in amber resin discovered in Myanmar dating back 100 million years - when dinosaurs walked the earth. Scientists have recently discovered traces of malaria parasites from the remains of Tutankhamun's blood and pictures illustrate Egyptian pharaohs sleeping under mosquito nets. Malaria reached western Europe in the 4th century CE (common era) affecting the eastern coast of England's marshland and was known as marsh fever. The last UK epidemic was on the Isle of Sheppey in 1917-21 with nearly 500 cases of malaria.

The Quechua people from Ecuador used herbal remedies and realised the active ingredient in bark from the Fever Tree (*Cinchona*) was quinine, which reduced fever and improved digestion. In 1649 a Jesuit Cardinal recommended the bark as a treatment for malaria and sold it to the rich which enabled him to give it to the poor. When Oliver Cromwell contracted malaria whilst fighting in Ireland he refused any treatment, objecting to "Popish Remedies" – he died of malaria in 1658.

In 1897 Ronald Ross worked out the

lifecycle of the mosquito and received the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1902 for research and methods of combating malaria. The disease still means widespread poor health in many tropical areas.

Sallie Peake

Easton Fireworks



The fireworks and the splendid bonfire were much enjoyed by everyone especially as the rain kindly stayed away. Many thanks to all the hard-working organisers. *Eds*



Hansa World Sailing Championships

A British team of 21 sailors went to Portimao in Portugal to compete in the Hansa World Championships.

coaching. In total 45 people were involved in the operation. Many of the sailors had engaged in fundraising activities in order to make it possible. The RYA also provided some support



*Hansa World Championships at Portimão, Portugal –the British team - photo © Nicky Durston
James Woosnam of Itchen Abbas, front row, third from left*

They needed to transport 16 boats to the event, as well as volunteers for rigging, launching, helping sailors and to provide on water support and

for the team, which included some pre-event training held at Rutland. A second training event was run in conjunction with the Andrew Simpson



Foundation at Chesil, attended by 13 sailors. The whole exercise was a real team effort and an amazing achievement. We're very grateful to all who supported us: RYA Sailability, Frensham Pond Sailability, Evolve Leadership, Royal Southern Yacht Club, Woosnam Trust, Bruce Wake, Wooden Spoon, and others who wish to remain anonymous.

There was a wide range of sailing ability and experience within the UK team. For many this was their first experience of an international event, and what an event to start with.

There were an amazing 189 boats competing, divided into 4 classes. Whilst the event is open to all, there is a sub plot because Hansa 303 one-person class is also a Parasailing class; 58 of the sailors were classified as having a qualifying disability. All three of the sailors on the podium in the open event qualified as Para sailors, quite a performance. Hansas are designed to enable everybody to compete on level terms, the results across the fleets have demonstrated that this has been achieved.

Despite the unusually inclement weather, the organisers managed to provide an almost complete programme of social events in the evenings. Everybody from all 17 nations got involved, enjoying great food, music, dancing, singing, and most of all, each other's company. The International Hansa Class has become a fantastic, friendly community of people who help each other to make such events possible and enjoyable. That said, the event is an extremely high standard, and once out on the race course competition is fierce.

James Woosnam

Little Rainbows

Every Monday morning (except bank holidays) at St John's Church, Itchen Abbas at 10am around 12 or 14 toddlers and babies (with their parents, grandparents or nannies) come to Little Rainbows for play, dancing and a Bible story. It is fun, do join us!

Verity Coleman



Rhooey Aker and helpers telling the story of Daniel in the Lions' Den.

Festival of Remembrance

Last year I received a membership to the Royal British Legion as a birthday present, and this enabled me to apply for a ticket to attend The Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. Having watched this event on the television for many years, it was moving to experience the true atmosphere. The audience glittered with medals which represented years of service and the breadth of



campaigns fought in. The Royal British Legion Standards entered before a Royal Fanfare announced the arrival of Their Majesties The King and Queen. Military bands accompanied throughout the evening and Tributes were paid to both the bereaved and surviving personnel. Alfie Boe sang as the Drum Laying Ceremony took place before the Muster of members of the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Air Force, Merchant Navy and Civilian Services with the Book of Remembrance being carried by the recently reunited family of PO Stuart Jones.

The Service of Remembrance followed with the poppies tumbling down during the two minutes silence and the National President of the RBL gave the Dedication "When we go home tell them of us and say: For your tomorrow we gave our today". The National Anthem followed the Blessing and when the King had left a

shout of 'AT EASE' was heard and all the servicemen broke ranks and chatted as the amazing organist played Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance March. What an emotional evening!

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Remembrance in the Valley

On a smaller scale than at the Royal Albert Hall the Remembrance Sunday service was held at St Mary's Church Easton with a short Act of Remembrance at each of the other three War Memorials. The Last Post was played by Andrew Salmon. Eds



Valley Volunteer

One of the most moving parts of the Remembrance Day events is surely the Last Post, played either on a bugle or a trumpet. Andrew Salmon, an Itchen Abbas resident, performed this poignant piece at St. Mary's Church Easton on 12 November.

Andrew started playing the trumpet in the 1970s as a young boy. His parents asked him if he wanted to learn an instrument, and Andrew chose the trumpet as it was the loudest instrument he could think of! By the time he was 11, he was playing 1st trumpet in the school band and

orchestra, in the local British Legion band, 1st trumpet in the Mid Sussex County Youth Orchestra and the West Sussex County Youth Orchestra.

Andrew won a place at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) aged 11, so added the RAM Orchestra and a 20th Century Orchestra, also at the RAM. Whilst at the RAM Andrew took his grade 8 and scored an amazing 148 out of 150. Andrew's professor mentioned the option of a professional music career in the army and as Andrew wanted a varied musical career, at age 16 he left home and joined the army as a bandsman. Whilst in the army Andrew furthered his qualifications by taking the ALCM (Associate of the London College of Music) diploma. In 1992 Andrew left the Army and set up his own IT business which flourished. He moved to Itchen Abbas in 2014 and soon had the opportunity to join the Winchester Chamber Orchestra (WCO). After 25 years of not playing, this was a great opportunity to start again. Andrew is





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now a regular with the City of Southampton Orchestra (CSO) and has also performed with the Charity Symphony Orchestra playing the mammoth Strauss Alpine Symphony. He also performs with several smaller groups to accompany various choral societies. In September 2023 he joined the Winchester Symphony Orchestra. As well as music, he is also involved with a charity called SERV. Blood vans, transporting this essence of life, only operate during normal working hours. If a hospital needs blood or blood products out of hours, they end up paying a courier or taxi. Andrew was one of the founding members of SERV H&B (Herts and Beds) so when he moved to Hampshire he was keen to continue with the service and joined SERV Wessex. With work commitments and playing with several



orchestras, Andrew doesn't volunteer as much as he would like these days, but still raises money and is on call several times a year. Andrew also volunteers with the Watercress & Winterbourns charity which is part of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Tasks include surveying rivers for redds (the trout nests) and signs of water voles.

Andrew Salmon was talking to Catherine Hahn

Itchen Abbas School News

Thank you so much for the amazing turnout at our school Volunteer Day in November. Everyone turned up, ready to get stuck in! Our grounds are looking lovely and on my Year R tours this term, parents were commenting on how loved our school looked. The garden area is now prepared for planting some lovely herbs and flowers, ready to begin to create a really special place for our children and school community to enjoy. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time. As a school we have spent time talking about the significance of November 1918 and why Remembrance Day is so important. We also talked about the British Legion and why we wear poppies every year. In their classes every child helped create a poppy wreath, which was laid at the War Memorial at St. John's Church Service on Remembrance Day by one of our Year R children, as a sign of respect from everyone at our school.





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Some of the children from Itchen
Abbas Primary School celebrating
Children in Need. Read more about it
on page 18 overleaf.

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During the last half term, we have taken part in Anti-Bullying Week, Road Safety Week, Children in Need and so much more! We supported Anti-bullying Week with the children wearing odd socks to school and discussing this in their Key Stage assemblies. Our Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO's) took a whole school assembly, talking to the children all about how to stay safe when out and about - and launching a competition for the children to take part in – watch out for posters in the local area! The children also had the opportunity to wear something spotty and count up how many 'Bearpees' (Burpees!) they managed to complete over a week for Children on Need! By taking on this brand-new challenge, we have been making a huge difference to the lives of children and young people who really need our help. It has also helped all of the children stay active, stay positive, and support their wellbeing. We were very proud that Itchen Abbas' first all-girls football team got to play against Westgate Primary this half term. They drew 4-4 and showed great enthusiasm and teamwork throughout the match - well done!



Whilst writing this we are looking forward to our Christmas events including our Nativity and Carol services at St John's Church, another opportunity to entertain the older folk of Cameo at their Christmas Lunch, and our Christmas Fair – lots of opportunities for us to be part of in our wonderful local community.

Rob Bogan Headmaster

From the Rectory: All Eyes on the Holy Land



Things took a significant turn for the worse in our world on Saturday 7 October. The next morning our newspapers were full of the outburst of violence in Gaza. And, a few days later, Georgie and I were grieving deeply for what had happened in the car park of the Al Ahli Anglican hospital, where Georgie had been a volunteer nurse back in the 1980s. For 48 hours or so, as the media tried to establish the source of the bomb, it was as though all the eyes of the world were focused on that hospital compound and the surrounding Christian enclave (with its Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, next to the Baptist-run 'Lighthouse' school). The 900 or so Christian believers, gathered there for safety, were seemingly at the epicentre of the world. And a few days later they were mourning for the deaths of dozen or so of their number, resulting from a bomb landing nearby.

Since then I have been in several Zoom meetings with Palestinian Christians (living both in Gaza and Bethlehem). At one of those gatherings, a Western commentator (an active supporter of

the Al Ahli Hospital for 30 years) simply said: "This is their Calvary moment"; and then he prayed that, through this time of acute suffering, God would be able to bring about something with Resurrection - hope, bringing good out of all this evil. His prayer inspired me and others deeply at the time; and I pass it on to you. When we are at loss *how* (or indeed *if*) to pray, perhaps we can simply say something like this: "Lord God, please bring good out of this evil, in Christ's Name, Amen."

All eyes will be on the Holy Land for a different, but related, reason in December as we get ready for Christmas and recall the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. On page 7 you will see the list of our special Christmas services and events and I do hope you will find something there that you would like to come to - along with your family and friends. We are aware of some other lovely events which are being planned more 'locally' within some of the villages, but please know that the events listed here are very much designed for *everyone* who lives in the whole of the Itchen Valley. Please 'take your pick'!

We are very grateful for all those who 'behind the scenes' are investing time and effort into our Christmas Eve Crib service, and especially to Kevin Rosewell who has constructed for us a larger platform for the crib: this will enable lots of children to bring up their own *smal* - I 'sheep' to ensure there are large flocks in the Shepherds Fields below Bethlehem! This also means there will be a new event this year in Eastona a few days earlier on Thursday 21 December - when children can come for a 'sneak preview' of the crib and sing a few 'Carols by the Crib'. Also new this year is my series of

webinars at 5pm on the three Wednesdays in Advent (5, 12 and 19 December) when I will be sharing some of my videos filmed in Nazareth and Bethlehem. Zoom-link details will be given out nearer the time, but do please put those dates in your diary if you are interested in 'going to the Holy Land' in this 'virtual' way.

So may Georgie and I now wish you all, as residents in the Itchen Valley, a very Happy Christmas. More than ever this year the world stands in need of a true 'Prince of Peace'. As all our eyes are on the Holy Land this year, may we begin to sense in a new way how the One born in Bethlehem might be just what we need - life.

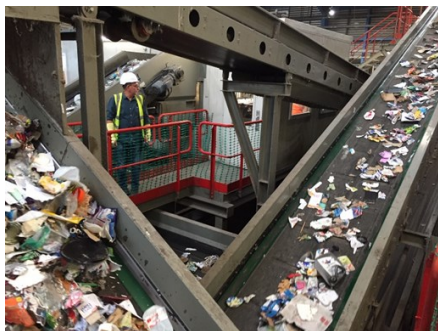
Revd Peter

Follow that lorry!

Driving along the M27 at a steady but perhaps too sedate a pace, we were passed by a Veolia lorry, presumably going to its recycling depot in Portsmouth. As we were headed for the same destination, I thought it prudent to follow. Alas, not only did it go faster than I could, it turned off one junction before the one I intended to take. Nevertheless, we did reach the huge Veolia depot in good time for my lucky place on the organised tour of the facility.

The site is split into two very different units. All the stuff you put in your black bin gets taken to the Energy Recovery Facility. Here, the pile of rubbish, all 500 tonnes every day, gets emptied from the doorstep collection lorries into vast pits, where it is mixed up by large mechanical grabbers and then lifted into hoppers that feed a huge furnace. No fuel is used to burn the rubbish as, once it is hot enough, it self-ignites. The resulting ash, 20% of the

incoming rubbish, is sifted and sorted into various solid materials suitable for sale, such as metals and road foundations. The acid gases produced, 80% by weight of the incoming rubbish, are scrubbed with lime water to make neutral precipitates and relatively clean exhaust fumes are vented at the top of a large chimney. This process does produce a lot of carbon dioxide and no effort is currently made to capture that. The other half of the site is devoted to dealing with the contents of your



green bin. The mix of paper, tins and plastic is sorted partly by machine and partly by humans. Air jets blow away the light paper into one bin, card is extracted manually into another, steel cans are removed by magnets and aluminium cans are given a temporary electric charge that allows other magnets to sort them into a different bin. Plastic bottles are blown into yet



another bin and the remaining mix of material is passed in front of a team of workers who sort the items into yet more bins. Alas, a lot of the material put into the green bin isn't yet recyclable by this facility and it gets transported to other processors elsewhere. The logical solution of mixing the remainder with the black bin rubbish already onsite apparently isn't feasible!

A gigantic enterprise and a very noisy one but the sheer scale of the machinery, miles of pipework and conveyors, is necessary to deal with all the stuff we throw away.

Vernon Tottle

Turns of phrase

One of the challenges when trying to learn a foreign language is dealing with local idioms. Imagine a German speaker confronted with "don't beat about the bush", when the equivalent in their own language is "don't talk around the hot porridge." There are many examples of such variations which can confuse the listener who is new to the language concerned. We might say "take it with a pinch of salt", but the Portuguese say "take it with a grain of couscous". On the other hand, when we say "once in a blue moon", or alternatively "pigs might fly", the Spanish would get the latter expression immediately, whereas a Frenchman might expect to hear "when hens have teeth".

Someone slow to make up their mind might be accused of "sitting on the fence", whereas the French (somewhat more coarsely) talk of "having one's behind between two chairs". If you are impatient to hear a secret, you might say "spill the beans" - whereas an Italian native speaker would expect to be told to "reveal the cards" - rather different from being expected to drop

the pot of fagioli! When it comes to articles of clothing, we might say "if the cap fits" - other European languages replace 'cap' with hood, shoe, boot, glove and hat.

Is there a moral from this? Well, when speaking to someone whose first language is not English, be careful with your choice of words - a lesson I learnt early in my career, having tried to crack a joke in a European meeting that used the phrase 'lost his marbles' and being confronted by blank faces - which clearly indicated that my audience was thinking, in their own language, that I had lost my own!

Peter McManus

Mike Knight 1933 - 2023 RIP

A former resident of Itchen Abbas, Mike used to divide his time between his house at Oakwood and his family's home at Lockerley, where he died in September. His

career was spent firstly as a spy for MI6 in Hong Kong followed by a long spell for the Colonial Office in Nyasaland.

Subsequent years with the security services involved postings to the USA and Northern Ireland.

Married to Sue in 1961, most Itchen Valley residents will remember them as a team who helped out at numerous local functions. Sue was always ready with her baking and Mike often managed the bar.

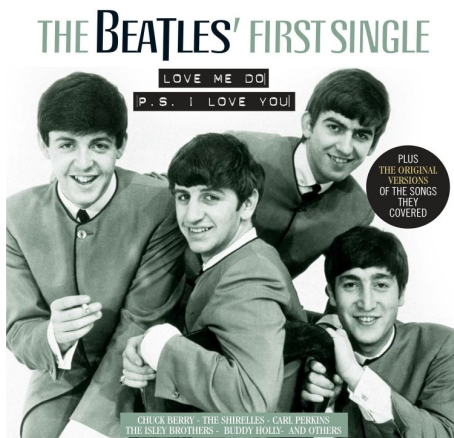
Their four children, Nicky, Tim, Debbie and Bridget paid tribute to their father at the funeral in Lockerley church.

Vernon Tottle



Now and Then

I first heard The Beatles' debut single, *Love Me Do*, on the day it was released, 5 October 1962, on my way home from school in a booth at McKenzie's record shop in Birkenhead. Sadly, I was unable to buy a copy, not having the necessary 6s/8d (33p in decimal currency).



So, I feel that I have finally redeemed my failure of sixty-one years ago by buying a copy from HMV Winchester of their final single, *Now and Then*, on the day it came out. In addition to the new wistful John Lennon song, the record has *Love Me Do* on the B side. The price was £14.99, forty-five times that of 1962. But no matter, at least I can say I was there now and then.

Steve Percy

Welcome

Helen and Chris Knight with Molly the springer spaniel have arrived at Post Office Cottages, Easton from Devon, via Alresford. They are retired with three grown-up girls.

Lucy Varcoe



Halloween was celebrated in style in Itchen Abbas!

Luxmuralis

We must have picked up two of the very last available tickets for the Luxmuralis Poppy Fields display in Winchester Cathedral which was due to finish the following day - the 4 November. Waiting outside was somewhat chilly but eventually we were allowed into the Cathedral about 9.15pm.

The lights and sounds just sent everyone to silence as we were encouraged to walk slowly around the outer aisles whilst music by David Harper and the lighting effects bombarded the senses. Walking along the north aisle from the Welcome Desk, the red glow ahead slowly changed to poppy flowers appearing to fall from the ceiling.

Turning the corner, other flowers appeared - cornflowers and foxgloves. In the transepts, the work of Florence

Nightingale and Mary Seacole were celebrated. The Lady Chapel showed aspects of the Somme and elsewhere visual effects of WW2 in the air and on the ground. Eddie Redmayne appeared on the walls of the Presbytery orating



war poems.

But at the end of the tour, the nave
completely transformed as sunflowers
turned to poppies raining down whilst
bird song filled the space followed by a

flock of doves taking to the air.

The whole experience was totally
mesmerising, thought provoking, yet
full of hope.

Jenny Sloan



The Chestnut Horse, Easton

November 2023 - The Chestnut Horse is now nearing completion, following its full refurbishment. This significant investment will bring the 16th-century pub back to its former glory, including newly appointed bedrooms and a new village shop with deli for the local community to enjoy.

Set to open its doors officially in January 2024, Regional Manager Jacob Riggs is excited to welcome the local community. He says: "As we near the completion of our extensive refurbishment, I am very much looking forward to welcoming guests and we are excited for the village community to see what we've done with their much loved local pub."

With a new Head Chef, Joe Hibberd, now appointed, the team have been busy creating the menus, which will feature a range of small plates, pub classics, sharing boards, and seasonal dishes, all made with locally sourced



produce. With a great selection of local ales, wines, spirits and ciders alongside, the Chestnut Horse is sure to become a much-loved village pub once again. A new village shop and deli will provide a welcome addition too, offering everyday grocery goods, fresh takeaway items or dishes to heat and eat at home.

To keep updated with its latest news, visit www.chestnuthorse.com and [@thechestnuthorse.hampshire](https://www.instagram.com/thechestnuthorse.hampshire).
Victoria Rose



The Practical Gardener

Well, as I write it's 30°C, the sun is shining in Phuket and all is well. But I fear not the same in rural Hampshire. I think this must prove to be the wettest year ever and even living on free draining chalk land, our gardens are saturated. I have never seen my greenhouse so full of condensation which of course is an enemy to the plants that I am trying to keep over the winter. So clearly a lot of ventilation is needed.

But (as I write) we are still in autumn and surprisingly there are still lots of green leaves to be seen everywhere. I have a dahlia in full bloom which needs to be moved so I can plant some onions. And the dreaded grass is still growing but too wet to cut. I feel sure there will be compensation and a dry spell to follow, but when?

This also used to be the time to wash out pots and store them for next year. It's a necessary task. I've also lifted all my geraniums, some are inside the house and will flower over the winter, bringing some joy and colour, and others are in the greenhouse. It pays to try and keep as many as possible and they are very undemanding plants. Probably in the next months, fruit pruning will be needed but not the plum trees. I had a good apple crop this year but it was so early none has kept as it's been too warm. Previously, I used to keep cookers until April! I wish I could understand why the season is now two months earlier than it used to be.

It's also a time for planning, perhaps buying seeds for next year and maybe even arranging a swap with friends. Possibly also the time to look at our own trees and shrubs and whether they overhang neighbours or footpaths

and need some trimming. Big trees are lovely in the open, but in more enclosed places, they do need attention. Big trees bordering roads are a special case, particularly now huge storms are common.

I have to get my heated propagators back into service for January. I have a good collection of photos of the garden showing what does well. Many of the old perennials can be divided in January, again a chance to maybe swap. I'm delighted to report that I have used no chemicals in the garden this year and the only fertiliser I have added is what I had in stock. It will not be replaced.

The holly tree is full of berries but a month or more too soon!

Happy Gardening

Tony Gaster.



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Wishing you all a happy Christmas and a healthy 2024! The Meals on Wheels service provides healthy food for those who don't feel able to prepare food themselves. Food is now served by a new provider, but with the same offer. It's a service generally for over 55s who need a little more support, but also open to adults aged 18-54 who are living with dementia, learning difficulties and disabilities, a history of substance misuse, including support for adults with a temporary disability (eg living alone with broken leg etc). Meals are served hot to your door with a wellbeing check. Delivery drivers are trained to spot customers who may need extra support. The meals cost

£8.50 for a two-course meal (£10 for three courses) and an afternoon tea if required costs £3.95 Full information on the Meals on Wheels page, but if you need assistance, please contact me. www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/meals-on-wheels

The County Council is consulting on **School Transport** changes: there are two current consultations both covering eligibility and updating the costs and benefits for children. The first consultation is for children of school age, and the second for 16-25 years . Both consultations run until 11.59pm the 6 December. You can see them on this link <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/schooltransport>

The **Emergency Planning** briefing that we had recently seems especially relevant after a week of heavy rain. Ground water levels are rising, and so it was useful to receive a refresher of who takes command, and what and who to contact in case of flooding or any other emergency. It is also worthwhile registering for flood updates too. More information here: www.hants.gov.uk/community/emergencyplanning/prepareyourcommunity

Councils urge all families to consider how they would cope if there was a household emergency. I have put details about some flood protection items for your home on my website www.jackieporter.co.uk I can send a printed sheet on request.

Progress towards new hospitals for Hampshire Hospitals Foundation (HHFT): I am a member of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) at HCC. The meeting at the end of October was very interesting: my role there is to

represent your views, so please keep them coming! Health services provided by the different parts of the NHS are scrutinised by the County Council and this JHOSC looks specifically at the progress of the HHFT's application for the 'new hospital'. Our local Hospital Trust has received confirmation that new hospital funding is still available, but choice of design is not for our Trust alone: work is being done nationally to look at value for money/best practice designs for new hospitals. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) is looking at provision, bearing in mind that the number of over 75s is predicted to increase by over 50% in the next 20 years. There are a few more hurdles to cross - but a consultation for all of us is expected relatively soon: picture yourself in a decade - what services will you and your family need then and in 2050? Responses will be online, and in person. I'll advertise details asap. You can contact me as usual over the holiday period: details below. Cllr Jackie Porter www.jackieporter.co.uk 07973 696085 email jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk

The banana alchemist pudding

The other day I saw a lovely recipe on YouTube for a banana and vanilla pudding. "I'll do it right away", said I, happening to have all the ingredients to hand. I made the vanilla part very easily from a tin of condensed milk, 200 ml of milk, 250 ml double cream, 3 tablespoons of cornflour and a teaspoon of vanilla essence. (The recipe actually said a tablespoon of vanilla essence but that didn't match the video!) Boiling all that lot in a saucepan produced a lovely thick

vanilla cream that went into my serving dish.

Then the problems started. The film showed the chef making a simple liquid caramel by heating a cup of sugar for a few minutes. She then added three mashed bananas to produce a caramel/banana mix that she spread over the cream in the dish. Into the fridge for an



hour and you have your banana pudding ready to serve.

Alas, no. I tried doing this twice but as soon as I added the mashed bananas to the caramel, the sugar crystallised into a hard mass and the bananas swam around in their own juices. It just wouldn't follow the video.

So I turned the pudding into a rhubarb one by cooking up some pink, forced rhubarb from my freezer with some sugar. This made a pint of rhubarb

sauce to which I added four leaves of gelatine. I poured this mixture over the cream and allowed it to set overnight.

Result, a lovely banana pudding that doesn't taste anything like banana.

Pure alchemy!

Sue Sheff





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Plant of the Month - The Medlar



Before we all had freezers, expensive imports, or an Ocado delivery slot, it was useful to have fruit that did not ripen until after the glut of summer fruits and the apples and pears. Related to apples, this little tree originating in South West Asia bears fruits that need a lot of preparation but make a nice compote or jelly. You shouldn't pick them till they are ready to fall off in your hand, usually after a couple of frosts. Then they give you plenty to do peeling and pitting them in late November or early December.

Simon and Dorothy Broadley

'Killers of the Flower Moon' – a review

You will need a very comfortable cinema seat and a good attention span to enjoy the new Martin Scorsese film

Killers of the Flower Moon without moving from your place! At three and a half hours in length, it is very long, but I felt the time watching was well spent, albeit with some caveats.

The film is based on David Grann's 2017 book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the F.B.I.* This is a sad and sorry tale of the betrayal and subsequent systematic murders of members of the Osage Nation. These trusting, loyal people have discovered oil on their land and are now living "the good life".

Alongside the Osage, in northern Oklahoma, are the white settlers who wage a campaign of dispossession of the Osage's land and the oil rights which go with it. Their leader is William Hale, self-styled as King of the Osage Hills and played brilliantly by Robert De Niro. He and his not particularly bright nephew Ernest, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, are the leading male roles and both utterly believable in their character's skins. Hale believes that the Osage money should come to him and his white friends and so starts a campaign of sickening violence to make that happen.

So, to those caveats I mentioned. Well, I did find the film too long – perhaps 45 minutes or so – the end dragged on for me. The violent murders of so many of the Osage people are graphically portrayed and turn your stomach and shock your mind. Seeing those now, whilst every day the news is full of the horrors taking place in the Middle East, was tough to watch.

Other than that, this is truly an exceptional film. The storytelling is compulsive, and you are truly sucked into the location and care deeply about the welfare of the preyed upon Osage people who one by one meet their fate

at the hands of the cruel and greedy white settlers. The cinematography is breathtaking, and I think it is not an exaggeration to call this a masterpiece, albeit a heartbreaking one.

The fact that it is a true story makes it even worse because it is, as Manohla Dargis of the *New York Times* puts it, a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward American Indians that allowed the murderers to operate with impunity for so long. 'Killers of the Flower Moon' is utterly compelling, but also emotionally devastating.

Catherine Hahn

Alresford Surgery

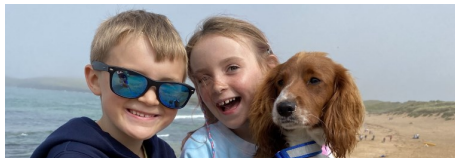
eConsult will be switched off during the Christmas and New Year bank holiday period. Any eConsult request you submit outside our normal surgery opening hours will not be read until we open the next working day. Patients will not be able to submit eConsults over the weekend or bank holiday period. All the other eConsult advice services will still be accessible 24/7.

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Tiddler Joke

What do you get if you cross
a shark with a snowman ?

Frostbite! *Finley and Iris Earnshaw*



From the Parish Council.

The latest news from the contractors working on the Avington to Easton sewage pipe is that the Auger team will be starting



work on site on 27 November. It is anticipated that this part of the operation will take three weeks. Unfortunately while the auger equipment is there access will be even tighter. Please note bad weather can result in the start and duration being delayed. We will try to keep you informed if changes occur. After consultation with Avington residents and with agreement by a large majority it has been decided that over the Christmas period while work is not taking place the road through Avington will remain closed. In the experience of the contractors opening a road causes confusion and can become a safety issue. Agreement between land owners and Southern Water has now been reached and the pumping station will be on the south side of the road to the east of Ivy Cottage. As this is close to a public right of way and in the South Downs National Park the Parish Council will be asking for suitable screening and noise suppression. It is estimated that completion of the project will not be until spring next year, a long wait but it will result in an improvement to the condition of the River Itchen.

Two other pieces of work taking place are further surfacing of footpaths. Hampshire County Council are resurfacing two paths at the west end of the Valley. Footpaths 49 and 56 can both become very muddy, being close in parts to the river. While this work is

being carried out these paths will remain closed. We also have some funding for one other path. As this is still in the planning and consultation stage, more details later.

One other piece of news just received is the next stage in the process for the M3/Junction 9 project. For those who wish to look at the detail the link is:-

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/TR010055-001018>

Many will have seen that for quite some time the speed indicator, at present on the verge close to Couch Green, has not been working.

Unfortunately it has come to the end of its working life and will have to be scrapped. New speed indicator devices (SIDs) are being investigated and there are funds in this year's budget for a replacement. At present there are two locations available and a third has been requested. All are on the B3047.

Other suggestions are welcome but remember they have to be in speed restricted areas where 40mph or less is the rule. That raises, in the long term, whether there should be speed restrictions in Avington and Easton as many have requested, and whether some places should be considered as part of the '20 is Plenty' campaign.

Our December Full Council meeting will be looking at what projects will be budgeted for in 2024/25. If you have thoughts please let any of the Parish Councillors know. Once we have a wish list we can decide what is possible, what are the priorities and from that produce a budget which will include setting the precept. Last year despite inflation we managed to keep the precept the same as the previous year. In the current climate it may be difficult to do this again.

There is still a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. Martyr Worthy has only

one representative and Easton three while the east end of the Parish has five. It would therefore make a good balance to have a second representative from MW or failing that, Easton. If you live in any part of the Valley and are interested please let me know and if you are asked to join please consider it.

From all the Parish Council we wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and all the best for 2024.

Patrick Appleby

Valley Quiz No.20

1. What is the name of the USA's highest mountain, what State is it in and what was it called before 2015?
2. In Handel's Oratorio *Messiah*, what is the first solo (sung by a tenor), after the Overture?
3. Where are the two driest places on earth?
4. If you are up before dawn this Christmas, and look towards the east, you will see a very bright heavenly body. What is it called?
5. Who wrote "We Didn't Mean to go to Sea"?
6. It has a ferro at one end, a fórcola near the other end, is 11m long and coloured black. What is it and where will you find it?
7. In Australian Rules Football, the playing field is what shape and how many competitors are on the field at any one time?
8. Until 1986, Kings Worthy used to have a Shell filling station. Where was it?
9. One of the world's best known (fictional) characters has his own postcode. HOH OHO, Canada. Who is he?
10. According to the Holy Bible where, and when, was Jesus born?



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Wassail !



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AD 878

The 878 AD visitor experience recreates life in Anglo-Saxon Winchester on the eve of the Battle of Edington between King Alfred the Great and the mighty Viking, Guthrum. Live performance brings the stories to life, while real artefacts from the period, including the exquisite Winchester Reliquary, are on display, alongside Anglo-Saxon games to play.

Hannah Coombes



Manager Daniel Thompson (centre) and actors at 878 AD ready to tuck into a bowl of honey cakes specially prepared to an original Anglo-Saxon recipe.

Christmas Stuffing

2 smallish onions

25g butter / non-dairy block

1 small Bramley apple
peeled, cored and diced

2 x 400g packs of Good Cumberland
Sausage meat or sausages with their
skins removed

Handful sage leaves chopped, plus
extra leaves for topping

140g granary breadcrumbs

Slice the onions and fry in 25g butter



for 5 mins, add diced Bramley apple and cook for further few mins. Leave the mixture to cool.

Once cool, mix with the Cumberland sausage meat, chopped sage and the granary breadcrumbs, season to taste. Either roll into balls, or pack the whole mixture into a 1kg loaf tin (I much prefer this method as it keeps it far more moist) then top with the extra sage leaves. Bake for 30-40 min in a medium oven temperature. Drain off any fat and serve sliced. May be frozen.

Mary Purser

Coward at Sea

On 21 October, after performing Flanders and Swan seven years ago, Michael Lunts returned to St Mary's Easton and did a most wonderful performance of 'Coward at Sea' - it





was a very enjoyable and amusing evening. We even had the deck rails, the P & O flags and the font turned itself into a Grand piano!! Michael performed to a full house and those attending were given wine and canapes prepared by the 'ladies' of Easton.

Given that I had a broken elbow and was not able to do very much, I would especially like to thank all those who helped and supported me and to all those who attended. A sum of over £3,500 was raised which will go towards the work that urgently needs doing above the font area in St. Mary's Church.

Penelope Kellie

Hampshire Wildlife Trust

Carpets of colourful leaves are one of the signature signs of autumn, as deciduous trees prepare for the long winter ahead. Leaf litter provides a variety of species with a warm, safe place to shelter from the elements. Hedgehogs use leaf litter to build their nests. They spend the winter hibernating, surviving off their fat reserves. During this time their breathing will slow, and the heart rate and body temperatures will drop, and leaf litter will provide essential warmth to help them survive the cold. Common toads also rely on leaf litter.



Garden Hedgehog© Tom Marshall

Leaf litter also provides an important source of food for detritivore and decomposer species. Both are very important as they help break it down and recycle nutrients back into the soil. Detritivores, such as woodlice, ingest and digest decomposing plant matter. Woodlice are mainly active at night and breathe through their knees! Decomposers, such as fungi, directly absorb nutrients through chemical and biological processes.

Helen Skelton-Smith

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School Christmas Fair

Christmas came early to the Itchen Valley this year with the Itchen Abbas Primary School Christmas fair.

This is the most important fundraising event in the school year. This year, money raised will go towards a new 'trim trail' for the school grounds after the previous structure was condemned - though luckily it could be used to form part of the new sensory garden in its repurposed form.

The most magical, festive afternoon

raffle by hampers overflowing with edible treats, collated by each year group at the school, as well as wonderful prizes donated by local businesses.

In the cafe there was an array of home-baked delights. All the cakes were made and donated by parents from the school. The barbeque provided delicious hotdogs from Alresford's Sole Butchers who kept them coming right to the very end. Mr Bogan, head teacher at the school, thanked everyone for



unfolded in the heart of the village with Father Christmas himself arriving to welcome little visitors and their parents to his spectacular and very sparkly grotto. The children's faces were a picture of awe and wonder as the great man himself strode into the hall to the ringing of bells and the fair got underway. There was face painting, glitter tattoos, biscuit decorating, outdoor games galore, doughnuts on strings waiting to be devoured (no hands allowed) and the chance to play some good 'old fashioned' racing games on a vintage console. The tombolas were popular, as was maggot racing! Visitors were drawn to the

attending the fair, the businesses for generous gifts and prizes for the raffle. Thanks was also given to the hard working parent team 'Itchen Abbas Parents' who organise the fair as well as all the parents and children who did such an amazing job running the stalls and adding to the festivities. It is the local community who make the Christmas Fair such a fun and festive afternoon and it would not be possible without that support and as many visitors attending as possible. Thank you to everyone and see you next year!

Georgie Davey



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Sunday 3 December – Advent Sunday

10am – Parish Communion - St Mary's, Easton

4pm – Café Church – Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Sunday 10 December

10am – Parish Communion – St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

4pm – Christingle - St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 17 December

8.30am – Holy Communion (1662) - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

10am – Family Carol Service – St John's, Itchen Abbas

6pm – Traditional Carol Service - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

Christmas Eve

8.30am – Holy Communion (said) - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

4pm – Crib Service – St Mary's, Easton

11pm – Midnight Communion – St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

Christmas Day

10am – Family Communion - St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 31 December

10am – Parish Communion - St Mary's, Avington

Sunday 7 January

10am – Parish Communion - St Mary's, Easton

4pm – Café Church – Itchen Abbas Village Hall

Sunday 14 January

8.30am - Holy Communion (said) - St John's, Itchen Abbas

10am – All Age Worship - St John's, Itchen Abbas

Sunday 21 January

10am – Parish Communion - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

6pm – Christian Unity Service - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

Sunday 28 January

8.30am - Holy Communion (1662) - St Swithun's, Martyr Worthy

10am - Valley Worship & Ark (our Parish Kid's Club) - Location TBC

www.itchenvalleychurches.org



Local monthly information

Itchen Valley area waste collections:

Black and brown garden bins on Fridays 1 Dec, 15 Dec, Sat 13 Jan, Fri 26 Jan and black only on Tues 1 Jan. Green bins on Fri 8 Dec, Mon 8 Jan and Friday 19 Jan.

Glass boxes on Fri 8 Dec, 22 Dec and Mon 8 Jan and Fri 19 Jan.

Christmas Tree recycling
Saturday 13 January If over 5ft cut in pieces

Full Parish Council Meetings:

The next meetings are at 7pm on 7 December and 11 January both at IA&AVH

Bus information



67 Bus operated by Stagecoach.

To Winchester:

Monday to Friday

Sch 8:20 NSch 8:23

9:23 12:43 15:43 17:23

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

To Alresford:

Monday to Friday

10:39 13:39 15:19 17:14 18:09

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

No Sunday or bank holiday service.

Key: Sch School days only

NSch School holidays only

All times shown are at Itchen Abbas. Times are 5 minutes later (or earlier) at Easton.

Quiz Answers

1. With a height of 20,310ft Mount Denal and in Alaska, is the USA's highest mountain. Before 2015 it was called Mount McKinley.
2. "Comfort me, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord." (Taken from Isaiah 40:1-3.)
3. Although there are several places that can claim this distinction, the two best qualified are the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica, and the Atacama Desert of Chile.
4. The planet Venus.
5. Arthur Ransome
6. A Venetian Gondola.
7. The playing fields is oval and each team has 18 players.
8. A33 just south of the Cart and Horses junction. There were in fact two, one on the Kingsworthy side for north bound traffic and the other on the Abbot's Worthy side for traffic heading south.
9. Father Christmas.
10. He was born in the city of David which is called Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King.

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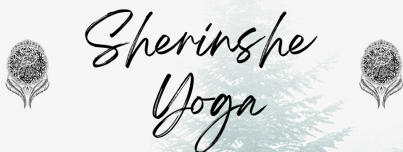
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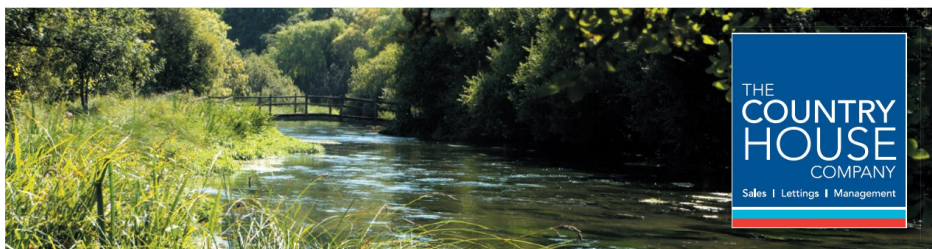
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