

Padworth Newsletter

No. 198

December 2025 / January 2026

Free



Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!



We are still hoping someone/people will come forward to take over doing the **Newsletter** next year. Rob Jones, chairman of Padworth PC, has written a plea on our behalf on page 3. Do have a read. It should really have been put on page 1 but we felt a little bit too embarrassed to put it there!

Your Parish Council has found itself in the money (well, a little) and is seeking ideas on how to spend it – see below. We've also been asked to publicise the **Padworth Parochial Charity** which exists for the benefit of the residents of Padworth – see p3 for how.

Another call, please, to the residents of **Mallard Way and Heron Way!** We are still looking for a new deliverer of the Newsletter for this patch. We've stood in for Hannah and Bertie in the past and it really only takes about half-an-hour. Is that too much to ask once a month? It's good exercise and you could set yourself a challenge to do it in less! Please contact us.

At this time of year, we like to express our appreciation once again to all our **contributors, advertisers and deliverers**, not to mention **Padworth Parish Council**, for their continuing support for the Newsletter. We really couldn't do it without you. So a bit thank you to you all.

Wishing you a fun and festive Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous 2026!

Mary & Sheila

Deadline for next issue: 25 January 2026

Dates for your DIARY

- **Monday 1 December** Beenham PC (p10)
 - **Wednesady 3 December** Ladies at Lunch (p5)
 - **4, 5, 6, 7 December** York Nativity Play (p8)
 - **Saturday 6 December** Jumble Sale (p3); two Christmas Fayres (p13)
 - **Monday 8 December** Carol Concert, Reading (p9)
 - **Tuesday 9 December** Aldermaston PC (p6)
 - **Sunday 14 December** Bramley Tractor Run (p13)
 - **Friday 19 December** Cantemus Concert (p8)
 - **Wednesday 24 December** Carols at The Loosey (p9)
- 2026
- **Saturday 3 January** Jumble Sale (p3)
 - **Monday 5 January** Padworth PC (p2) – TBC; Beenham PC (p10)
 - **Wednesady 7 January** Ladies at Lunch (p5)
 - **Tuesday 13 January** Aldermasteon PC (p6)
 - **Wednesday 21 January** Aldermaston History Group (p6)

 - **20/21 & 26-28 February** Aldermaston Players (p8)

Any ideas to benefit the community?

Padworth Parish has been given a generous CIL grant which arises from contributions collected in respect of the development 23/02825/FULMAJ Comfort Inn on the Bath Road, Padworth.



The Parish Council would like to reach out to the local community for suggestions on how this money could benefit any small community projects. If you have any ideas or suggestions please get in touch with Ellie Brewer, the Parish Clerk:

clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Padworth Newsletter is available online at <https://www.padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsletter>

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Padworth Parish Council – Notes of Meeting – 3 November 2025

Village Hall matters

- *Refurbishment works* will be managed to keep the Hall closed for as little time as possible though the toilets may require a longer period out of use
- *Finances:* A contribution of £6,000 from the Parochial charity was discussed to support the Village Hall Committee, who currently face a shortfall. The hall's finances have improved significantly due to increased utilisation and rental income.

Planning

- 25/00825/PASOL - Exolum PSD Padworth Highwood Rectory Road- Application to determine if **prior approval is required for:** installation of a 93.28 kWp Solar Photovoltaics array to the existing roofs on two storage warehouses. Not Required
- 25/00541/HOUSE – **Old Rectory Farm, Rectory Road, Padworth Common.** Replacement of a conservatory with new single storey extension with rooflights. Approved
- 25/01664/HOUSE - 44 Fallows Road, Padworth. Flat roof front and side extension to the property between main house and existing detached garage. Approved
- 25/00933/FUL - Norbrek, Bath Road, Padworth. Proposed 4No. terraced houses with ancillary parking and amenity space following demolition of **existing bungalow and outbuilding.** PC Objected
- **25/02133/FUL** Exolum proposed solar development at Sopers Lane. The address used in the application states to the Old Rectory, though the proposal is not connected to the property owners. A previous application had been refused due to rare snails identified on site, but the latest survey found no such species.
- Exolum are submitting the application in response to rising electricity costs (from £6 million to £23 million annually) and aim to increase self-sufficiency. They own three pipeline-related sites: Aldermaston, Sopers Lane and Rectory Road, with two still in operation. Concerns from new residents near Rectory Road regarding odour issues were noted. It was confirmed that the panels would not generate glare and would be positioned facing the gully rather than the road or church. **No Objections**

Four Houses Corner

This site was originally intended to operate as a short-term transitional location for stays of only a few days. Ca. £7 million has now been spent on the site, significantly exceeding original expectations. Questions were raised regarding when individuals may be returning to the area, noting that many had been relocated to Stephens Firs. Clarification was also sought on whether the buildings on site are intended as toilet blocks or residential facilities, and it was noted that 16 families hold rights of residency.

AWE Liaison meeting

It was noted that construction in the wider AWE area is expected to increase significantly, with the existing hub being small in comparison to the scale of development proposed.

Closure of Goring Lane for SSE Works

Goring Lane will be closed from 17 November for ca. 9 months but in different sections.

District Councillor Attendance

It was noted that the DC attendance at PC meetings was limited to a recurring clash with Beenham PC meetings, also held on Mondays. The possibility of adjusting meeting dates was considered.

Padworth Newsletter

It was noted that Mary and Sheila had given notice that Issue No 200 (March 2026) of Padworth Newsletter would be their last. Despite repeated requests, no volunteer has yet stepped forward to take it over. The possibility of the role becoming a paid position was discussed; it was noted that the PC already contributes ca. £2,000 towards publication costs. It was felt that it would be a shame if it moved solely online for cost-saving reasons. It is currently distributed both in print and electronically. It was agreed that the printed version should continue as many households may not be

connected by email. The chairman will compose a plea for inclusion in the next issue.

Padworth Parochial Charity

Padworth Parochial Charity is a local registered charity offering limited support to residents. It is keen to ensure wider awareness, particularly for **students** who may require assistance with books or related educational needs. While funds must be allocated carefully in line with the charity's remit, they are open to receiving requests for support.

It was noted that the Charity also holds a **folding wheelchair** available for short-term use by parish residents. It would be good to bring the support the charity offers to the attention of residents in the next newsletter.

The Gravel Pit Nature Reserve

Berkshire Ornithological Club and the gravel pit nature reserve require significant remedial and conservation work, at a cost of ca. £400,000. The reserve contains several rare bird and plant species which need to be preserved as part of the planned improvements. The Canal and River Trust own the site, and have confirmed that the necessary conservation work can proceed. The Club have requested use of the small room in the Village Hall for meetings related to the project, which it was agreed would be acceptable, subject to the Village Hall calendar being checked in advance.

Local Neighbourhood Watch

A representative from the local Neighbourhood Watch group attended the meeting and explained that updates are circulated to interested residents via email, including local crime figures, scam alerts and general statistical information.

Churchyard Hedge

This has now been fully cleared and the remaining cut material will be burned; the clearance has significantly improved light levels in the churchyard.

Footpath at Padworth Park Farm

The obstruction in the culvert, which caused flooding, has now been cleared and the necessary works completed.

Defibrillator

A new battery is required for the defibrillator located at The Butt Inn, at a cost of ca. £100. If this cannot be replaced, a new defibrillator may need to be purchased.

Speeding Issues and Safety on A4 Bath Road

A resident from Macs Close attended the meeting to raise concerns regarding speeding on the westbound stretch of the Bath Road adjacent to the Berkshire Ford Centre. Their cul-de-sac exits directly onto a national speed limit section of 60mph. They questioned whether this limit was still appropriate since the road layout had changed from two lanes to one in recent years.

The recent addition of the Greggs at the garage could be as a contributing factor to safety issues, with slower vehicles turning left causing conflict with fast-moving traffic approaching from behind. There are an increasing number of young children in the area, particularly with new housing built close to the roadside, and Woolhampton was given as a comparable location where a 30mph limit is in place.

It was noted that children use the nearby crossings to catch buses into Theale, and that the bus stop on the opposite side of the road is difficult to access safely. The resident highlighted a younger demographic now living in the area and offered testimony from neighbours to support the need for a review. To be followed up with WBC.

Next Meeting

- **Monday 5 January** – 7pm in the Village Hall – **to be confirmed**

All parishioners welcome.

Ellie Brewer, Parish Clerk

◆ ◆ **Padworth Parish Website** ◆ ◆ www.padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

All correspondence should be addressed to the Parish Clerk: clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Celebrating 20 Years of Community Connection:

A Heartfelt Thank you to Mary and Sheila

For many years our community has been kept informed and connected thanks to the dedication of Mary and Sheila, whose unwavering commitment has produced the **Padworth Newsletter**. What began as a simple way to share local updates has grown into a valued source of parish news, stories, and events that reflect the spirit of our area.

Each month, they have gathered news, highlighted achievements, shared important notices, and celebrated the people who make our community special. Their work has done more than fill the pages of a newsletter—it has helped bring neighbours together, supported local groups and businesses, and preserved moments that might otherwise have been forgotten. The sense of belonging and pride they have fostered is truly remarkable.



Creating a newsletter takes patience, creativity, and genuine care, and Mary and Sheila have shown all of these in abundance. Today, we offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to Mary and Sheila, for their time, energy, and dedication to the **Padworth Newsletter**. Our community is better because of you.

The final edition will be published in **March 2026**, and we are now looking for someone to take on the rewarding role of continuing the Newsletter. Your community needs you, so if you are looking for a new challenge then don't hesitate to get in touch for more details about how you could help. If we can't find people who are willing to take up the challenge of producing the newsletter, March will be the final edition. There is much support available from many local contributors and on-going funding support will be available through sponsorship and a grant from the Parish Council. We look forward to hearing from you.

Rob Jones
Chairman, Padworth Parish Council

Padworth Parochial Charity

Padworth Parochial Charity is a local registered charity offering limited support to residents.

Did you know:



Students who may require assistance with books or related educational needs can approach the Charity for assistance? While funds must be allocated carefully in line with the Charity's remit, they are open to such requests for support.

The Charity owns a **folding wheelchair** available for short-term use by parish residents? If you are interested, contact the Parish Clerk: clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk



JUMBLE SALES

The .November Jumble raised our best ever amount, **£710.64**. This was in aid of the Kennet Branch of the Save The Children. They were overjoyed with the amount and would like to join me in thanking everyone who helped in any way. We can't do this without all of you.



The next Jumble Sales in the Village Hall will be on:

- **Saturday 6 December** – at 2pm in aid of St John the Baptist Church
- **Saturday 3 January 2026** – at 2pm in aid of Padworth Village Hall

We are always grateful for your unwanted donations which can be brought to the Hall on the morning of the Sale between **9.30am and 11.30am**. **No furniture please.**

PLEASE DO NOT "DROP OFF" DONATIONS AT THE HALL ON ANY OTHER DAYS. THEY WILL BE BINNED.

Jumble can be collected by ringing Hazel Ewart on 07876 073385 to arrange collection, or can be delivered to me by ringing the above number to arrange a time.



We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy 2026!

Hazel Ewart

Please check the Padworth Village Hall Facebook page for Jumble Sale updates.

The Village Hall

Website: www.padworthvillagehall.co.uk

Bookings: **Jacky Jones: info@padworthvillagehall.co.uk**

Rambles from the Common

This time of year the media gets clogged up with lists of greatest hits, so I thought I'd buck the trend by sharing my top five "**greatest misses**", featuring conservation tasks I didn't attend because they were too far from home or didn't suit my taste. Please stay with me as I present a tour around Newbury, Reading and Basingstoke featuring my greatest misses of 2025.

1. Let's start with a couple of tasks from BBOWT, the Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust. North-west of Newbury, near Lambourn, is **Watts Bank**, which appears to be a fascinating but challenging site, consisting of a steep bank with rabbit holes, ant hills, sixteen different types of grass and plenty of hawthorn to cut down before it shades out the grass. It's a place in which to tread carefully, because tripping over a hawthorn stump could send you rolling down the hill, or into one of the burrows for tea with Alice and the Mad Hatter.



grassland around the church and between the gravestones must be scythed; this helps to maintain a nutrient-poor habitat in which wildflowers thrive. Benefits for the volunteers here include a nave to shelter in if it rains, pews to sit on at lunch break and, to cap it all, home-made cakes provided by members of the church; a church with cakes is a perfect place to end our tour.



If you have family or friends who might enjoy the fresh air, exercise and banter of conservation volunteering, please encourage them to surf the internet for information about the groups mentioned above. Hopefully I'll return to Padworth Common in the next Ramble, so until then I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

2. North of Newbury we find **Snelsmore Common Country Park** where scrub bashing on the heathland targets birch, as we do on Padworth Common, but it also targets the damper, marshy areas that our Common lacks. I was sorry to miss the task described as "bog hopping in the mire" but wellingtons were obligatory footwear and my pastel-striped designer wellies are for posing and social purposes only.

3. Next we visit Reading, home of the Conserve Reading on Wednesdays team, aka CRoW, part of the Econet conservation group. CRoW practise traditional hedge-laying in Bradfield at **Rushall Manor Farm**, where there are plenty of hedges to maintain; there is a revival of interest in traditional hedge-laying because of the benefits it brings to wildlife. Although many of my volunteer colleagues enjoy hedge-laying, sadly it's not my cup of tea, so I leave it to them. Just as an aside, the farm hosts the **John Simonds Trust** which welcomes school groups (by appointment only I believe) and encourages children to learn about the countryside.

4. North-east of Reading lies the village of Ruscombe where we find several ponds and also **Ruscombe Church Meadow**. This year the team turned out to remove saplings, tackle brambles and scythe the grass, all the while enjoying the sight of the church tower, as the photo by Sandra from CRoW shows. Just dress in a peasant's smock and cap and whilst you're scything you'll feel like a feudal serf harvesting wheat and barley for his family's winter bread, though a portion must be paid as an annual tithe to the church.

5. Finally we join BCV, the Basingstoke Conservation Volunteers, on their annual visit to **Saint Leonard's Church** in Cliddesden, south of Basingstoke, for more scything. At this site the unfertilised

Peter Elliott

Padworth Common Volunteer Group

Veolia Household Waste Recycling Centres - Padworth & Newtown

How to book an appointment

- There will be a limited number of appointments available during the day between **9am and 6pm**
 - The quickest way to book an appointment is **online** but you can also book by contacting Customer Services on 01635 519080
 - When you book your appointment you will need to provide your details and car registration number
 - Eligible Hampshire residents with a blue permit are able to book an appointment to use Newtown Road recycling centre
- Locations: Newtown Road Recycling Centre and Padworth Recycling Centre.

Aldermaston CE Primary School

Our school value this term is **Hope** and the children are learning about what hope means and reflecting on the story of The Three Wise Men. Our superhero friend is the Firefly Thinker who is great at solving problems and explaining his ideas. He also reminds us of the British Value of Mutual Respect and Tolerance – we celebrate diversity and welcome opportunities to learn about ideas and beliefs which are different from our own.

Much has been packed into recent weeks including our **Armistice Day service** at St. Mary's Church, experiences like the **Rock Steady music** sessions and the inspiring **AWE Ada Lovelace Day** visit which brought STEM life to learning in exciting ways. We are now looking forward to all the traditional activities connected with Christmas including our **Nativity performance** (at the church for a new experience),

our school **Christmas lunch**, a whole school trip to **The Watermill Theatre**, Newbury to see 'Little Mermaid' and the making of decorations for the Christmas tree in House groups. This allows all the children in a particular house the opportunity to work together with the older pupils able to support the younger ones. Teamwork and collaboration in action, and great fun.

The school benefits from and values its strong links with the local community and we are thankful for the continued support.



On behalf of everyone associated with the school may I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and peaceful New Year. More news in 2026!

Cathy Jones, Foundation Governor

'PADWORTH PAST'

This month I would like to tell you a little about the **Kennet & Avon Canal** which runs right through our lovely village.

This canal, designed by John Rennie, was constructed, as its name suggests, to link the Rivers Kennet and Avon, thus making the whole stretch navigable from Bristol to the Thames in Reading. Work commenced in 1794 and the whole project was completed by 1810. Thus it is known as the Kennet & Avon Canal, being 87 miles long with 105 locks to cope with the changing water levels.

The two Locks in Padworth are the **Padworth Lock** with a water level change of 1.55m (5'1"), which was constructed between 1718-1723, and **Towney Lock** changing by 2.95m (9'8"), which was also built between 1718 -1723. However, in 1841 Great Western Railway had opened their line from London to Bath and in 1851 they took over administration of the canal itself. It remained in their possession until 1948 when it was nationalised. Once the railway had opened and road travel had improved, the canal gradually fell into disrepair, but in 1990 it received a major re-furbishment resulting in how we see it to-day, mostly for recreational use.

The main purpose of the canal was for **commercial transport** given that the roads were slow and in poor condition. The War also made sea transport from Bristol to London along the English Channel somewhat hazardous. Goods transported would have included coal, iron, agricultural produce etc.

Originally constructed with turf sides, Padworth Lock was totally re-built 1982-84 in brick. Towney Lock was deepened in 1970 when the Ufton Lock was removed, and adjacent is a wooden, arched bridge simply allowing access to the fields the other side of the canal.

Ladies at Lunch

Our November Ladies at Lunch raised £116 which we donated to the Foodbank.

Our next lunches will be on

- **Wednesday 3 December** at 12.30pm at Sheila Jay's house
- **Wednesday 7 January** at 12.3pm at Sheila Jay's house

Sheila's address is Midway, Bath Road, Padworth. Please contact her on 0118 971 3367 if you wish to attend.

If you have any questions, please let me know. My email is caroline.givan@gmail.com or 07808 400843

Caroline Givan

The **canal bridge** over Padworth Lane, No. 27, would originally have been a **timber swing bridge**, probably with ball-bearing pivots, but was converted to a modern, metal swing bridge in 1987.

In the early 1900s, just south of Padworth Lock, the canal used to be very wide, forming a natural area for the locals to swim whilst their families and friends socialised on the banks, and fished. This local congregating place was known locally as the **Swimming Pool**, with a diving board as well as a changing area and a shower under the lock overflow.

During WW2, **concrete pill boxes** were constructed along the canal in case of German invasion, mainly close to roadways or railway lines, and there is one of these just before Padworth Lane on the northern side as you walk along the canal. There was another one over the lane on the southern side which I believe may be hidden in the undergrowth.

Weather Fact

On 25th June 1762, a terrible hailstorm swept over Padworth and surrounding areas. It laid waste to hundreds of acres of oats, wheat, beans, peas and hops. George III exhorted Parish Authorities throughout England and Wales to organise collections for those who were suffering from this weather disaster. The estimate for the damage in those days was £1,143.00 - about £205,000.00 nowadays. Berkshire MP, Mr Christopher Griffith, of Padworth House was responsible for distributing aid to the people of Padworth.

Delia Potter

Aldermaston Parish Council – Notes of Meeting - 11 November 2025

Parish Hall

The Parish Hall Committee gave a presentation and requested financial support. Despite the Committee's best efforts, the Hall's costs are higher than its income, so reserves are being depleted. APC agreed that it can fund improvement projects and encouraged the Committee to produce financial forecasts to help identify expenditures suitable for PC grants.

Traffic

Concerns were raised about increasing HGV traffic on weight-restricted Church Road, Spring Lane and Rag Hill. Drivers using phone SatNav rather than prescribed HGV routes are to blame. Cllr Shepard-Price said WBC had prosecuted HGV drivers that he photographed using Church Road and encouraged others to report to WBC if they had similar evidence. APC will follow up on a long-standing request for improved signage which was approved in principle by WBC but not prioritised.

Caravan Site, Reading Road

Concerns were raised about the new caravan site established on the Reading Road. APC confirmed that the development is unauthorised. WBC has issued a Temporary Stop Notice (currently being ignored!) and confirmed that the land is owned by those occupying it who have already submitted a retrospective application for 13 traveller pitches. We have been advised this application will likely be refused and then appealed. Only after an appeal is dismissed will WBC be able to enforce the removal of caravans. The whole process will take 2-3 years. The lengthy process is frustrating, but APC appreciates the decisive, early intervention of WBC Enforcement.

Planning

- There were 5 new applications, all to Discharge Conditions for the new Blacks Lake Industrial Estate, Paices Hill. We will comment on the Construction

Management Plan, Travel Plan, and Emergency Plans, but will not be Objecting.

- WBC made just one planning approval, for changes to an industrial unit at Youngs.
- Praxis' Appeal relating to the renovation of its Lodge Houses has been upheld, which means it will not have to make repairs to a bridge in the park as part of the development.

Road Safety by school

Delays to road safety works next to the school meant they weren't completed over half-term. APC agreed to pursue a request for physical traffic calming measures in the same location having seen clear support for this in the school's survey on road safety.

AWE's recent LLC meeting

AWE highlighted the significance of the dismissal of an Appeal for 148 houses in the Burghfield DEPZ by the Secretary of State. All appeals in the DEPZ will now be decided this way giving more weight to AWE/MOD and ONR recommendations. There was also an impressive presentation from the MOD police on their proactive community policing that aims to disrupt criminality and construct a network of vigilance!

2026/27 Budget

Costs will be slightly higher, but we have adequate reserves so are likely to keep our precept fixed at £13.5k. To be confirmed at our next meeting.

Next Meetings

- **Tuesday 9 December** – 7.30pm in the Parish Hall
- **Tuesday 13 January** – 7.30pm in the Parish Hall

All residents welcome to attend.

*Sophie Crawford
Chairman*

For full information on Parish Council matters, please visit our website at www.aldermaston.co.uk



**ALDERMASTON
HISTORY GROUP**

proud to have created and maintain
Aldermaston History Online
<https://aldermastonhistory.uk>



Meeting & TALK

Weds 21st January 2026 , 7:30pm

Officers Mess, The Hinds Head Inn

talk on

“Flying from Aldermaston 1942-1952”

By Paul Burton (local author & researcher)

Free to members , non members £5

For more information on Aldermaston History Group Membership visit: <https://group.aldermastonhistory.uk>

ALDERMASTON COFFEE CLUB

1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month any time from
10.00am – 11.30am



Join us in the café at **Hilliers**

Drop by for a chat, a chance to meet old friends and make new ones

Everyone is welcome – just come along

For further details contact Cynthia Newman
cmnewman2021@outlook.com 0118 9713 525

Tea Rooms Aldermaston Wharf



Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday 9.30am – 4pm

Come and join us in the run up to Christmas. We have a number of **Christmas Specials** on offer such as:

◆ pigs in blankets ◆ turkey, stuffing & cranberry sandwiches ◆

or a warming bowl of creamy roasted parsnip & rosemary soup... as well as our usual menu and a wide range of homemade cakes.

Looking for a gift for a friend or teacher?

Don't forget we sell **gift vouchers** for Cream Tea, Afternoon Tea or a monetary value. We can also put together take-away cake boxes for you to gift of 2, 4 or 6 pieces.

We will be **CLOSED** for our Christmas break from:

- **Monday 22nd December** - re-opening **Friday 9th January 2026**



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
The Tea Rooms Team



07917 631730 tearoomsaldermaston@gmail.com

Joyce's Quiz

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

You may or may not know that Joyce Rothschild does an annual quiz around this time of year to raise money for **Macmillan Cancer Support**. This is the 29th year, and so far she has raised more than **£300,161**. Last year alone, the quiz raised £25,103, another rise from the previous year. It would be great for the charity to see if we can raise a similar amount again this year.

There are always

- 100 teasing questions based around a theme – this year it's **Connected to Places!**
- cash prizes
- a prize draw for all entries
- **and** the proceeds go to the charity

All for a minimum donation of **£3.00**. How can you say no?! Deadline for submissions is **8 January 2026**.

If you would like to take part, then just email Joyce joycesquiz@gmail.com and she will send you a copy of the quiz.

It comes with all the information you need to take part.

Held in the Parish Church of
St Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston

Aldermaston York Nativity Play

The 69th year



Thursday 4th December 8:00pm
Friday 5th December 8:00pm
Saturday 6th December 7:00pm
Sunday 7th December 7:00pm


For free tickets
Online at www.aldermastonnativity.co.uk
eMail to tickets@aldermastonnativity.co.uk
Or send S.A.E. to
York Nativity Play, Church Lodge, Aldermaston, Berks RG7 4LT

By Arrangement with Fiery Angel Limited

THE 39 STEPS


ADAPTED BY PATRICK BARLOW

From the novel by John Buchan
From the movie by Alfred Hitchcock
Licensed by ITV Global Entertainment Limited
And an original concept by Simon Corble and Hobby Dixon



Dinner/Theatre:
20th/21st Feb '26 £28
27th/28th Feb '26

Theatre Only:
26th Feb '26 £12



ALDERMASTON
PARISH HALL

Tickets from: boxoffice.aldermastonplayers.co.uk

Discounts available: early booking, opening night and booking a table of 8

This amateur production of "The 39 Steps" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

CANTEMUS sings CHRISTMAS

Doors open 6.30 pm
Concert 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm
Friday 19th December 2025
Shaw House, Newbury
RG14 2DR

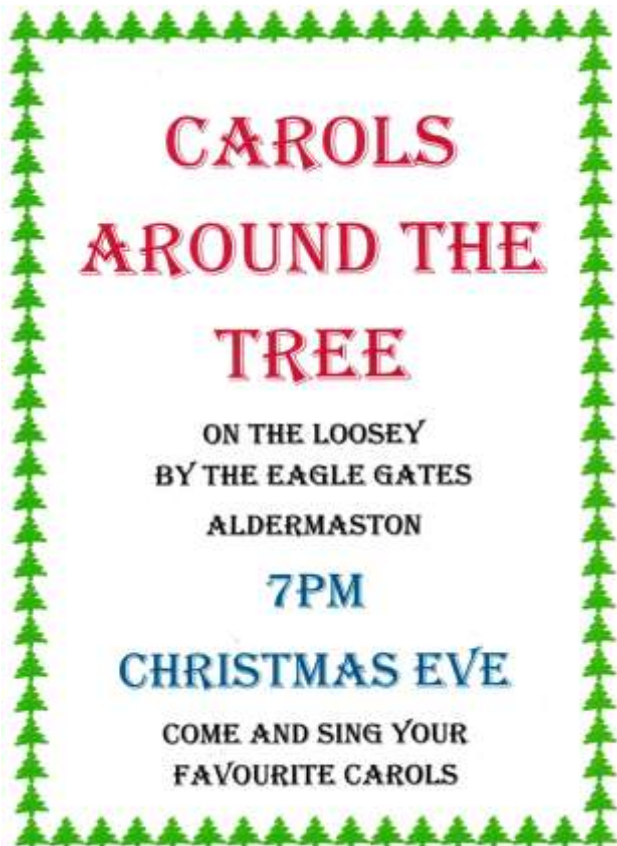
Adults £12 Children £6
from the Shaw House web site

Café serving mulled wine
and mince pies and more ...



Conductor: Ian Westley
Accompanist: Mary Westley

www.facebook.com/cantemusnewbury



WHATEVER THE WEATHER!

I've dug out all the **wandering bamboo** I told you about but left the original clump as it was just too much. I've dug a trench all around and filled it with stones; this way I can spot any escapees and cut them out.

Final **mow** of the year was this week when the rain allowed me to. It does seem that these days we go for ages with nothing and then days when it doesn't stop. I can't remember such hard frosts in November before, minus 4 this week. All pots now in the greenhouse and tender plants dug up and housed. The **dahlias** have been covered with fleece and Strulch, the mineralised straw I like.

I mentioned the three white **rhodies** which are flowering. Well, a fourth has joined them. Christmas Cheer which normally flowers in January, a bit late for its name, but this year November, a bit early. One day it might get it right.

The **ornamental grasses** are doing very well and the new ones growing well. Ones I've had for years, *Stipa gigantea* and *tenuissima*, are looking very good, as is the Pampas grass, which has very much gone out of favour, but this worries me not. I like it so I grow it. I have sown 24 trays of seeds from Plant World, all not grown before and many never heard of, and still have 15 packets to sow in March.

As well as mowing I've done a lot of **leaf blowing** and **collecting**; record numbers this year and the oaks have still to drop theirs.

This month I purchased some **carnivorous plants**, *Sarracenias*, the Fly Trap, not grown before as they are tender plants. These new varieties are said to be hardy, and they have survived this week, so hopefully they'll be here next year.

I mentioned last month about the **bulbs** I was being offered at reduced prices. Well, this week I received 100 mixed bulbs for FREE! If you haven't planted any yet, there is still time and you can buy them at quite a reduced cost.



About three months ago I had a dead **birch tree** taken down, something I would have done myself a few years ago, but to make sure I don't push my luck I sold my four chainsaws. The contractors chipped up the tree and spread the chips under the **oaks**. To my amazement and joy the chips are now covered in **toadstools**. These are called **Scurfy Twiglets** and there are hundreds. They love to grow on rotting wood so this was just the spot for them. As you know, I love my fungi and this has been a good autumn for numbers and varieties, an extra bonus for me, besides the late flowers, the berries and the colours at this time.

The **sparrow hawk** now sits in the magnolia right by a window which has enabled me to get some good close up photos. I like him and I don't like him. He's very handsome but scares away my bird family. As cold weather arrives so do the **pheasants**. I'm now feeding 7 ladies and 1 male. They are still nervous except for one I call Mama, and she follows me around demanding peanuts.

Groan Time

- What do you call a dog that can do magic? A Labracadabrador
- I once had a dream that I was swimming in an ocean of orange juice. Thankfully it was only a Fanta Sea
- Two slices of bread got married. The ceremony went well until someone decided to toast the bride and groom
- What do you call a bee that can't make up its mind? A Maybe
- What did the baby corn say to the mama corn? Where's Pop corn?
- Why don't lobsters share? Because they are shellfish



Keep gardening! May I wish you an early Very Happy Christmas and an excellent gardening New Year!

Mike Warner

Beenham Parish Council – Notes of Meeting – 3 November 2025

Public Forum

- Beenham Tea Party raised £200 for MacMillan
- The Community Connect bus service now operates a route to Royal Berkshire Hospital. The PC will obtain a full list of new services for parishioners
- The new owners of the field to the left going up on Beenham Hill introduced themselves
- The recent accident on the junction of the Bath Road at the Beenham turn off was raised in the context of the junction's danger. It was explained that only 3 months ago WBC reported back to the PC that they considered the junction to be safe if drivers followed road marking directions

Library Services

With WBC's decision to stop the mobile library, their Library services manager gave a presentation of the three options available to parishioners:

1. A pop-up service
2. Use of a community bookshelf
3. WBC's e-book service

The PC felt that the e-book service may be a positive option with parishioners able to receive up to 7 books at a time for reading over a two week period. Beenham Tea Party offered the potential to hold tutorials for the e-book service. It was suggested the matter be pursued with a survey of parishioners' wishes with details of what is available.

Vandalism

The recent vandalism at the school which resulted in obnoxious graffiti in the playground was discussed. It was agreed that children must be protected from such behaviour and that WBC, who are aware of the incident, be approached for ideas to help. CCTV is possibly an option as it is installed in many schools now.

Road signage

A possible Give Way signage on the single track section of Back Lane was discussed. As the section is not straight, this could cause more confusion as line of sight is not possible. WBC will be approached for guidance.

Repainting Parking Bay Lines

The parking bay lines for the School/Community Room need to be repainted. As the land is owned by WBC, they will be contacted.

SID (Speed Indication Device)

Further to ongoing discussion with WBC, we will be using

the SID to record traffic speeds at approved sites in the village later in this calendar year. Please be assured that any data recorded by the machine will not be used for traffic enforcement purposes. We plan to share the findings at a future PC meeting prior to further discussion with residents regarding our ongoing work to review the speed limit within the village.

Parking on Footpaths/Pavements

The increase in vehicles being parked on footpaths/pavements in various locations in the village continues, causing obstruction to users. It is an offence for parked vehicles to obstruct footpaths in this way, so the PC strongly urges parishioners to be considerate and refrain from parking in such a manner.

Aldermaston Wharf/Mallard Way parking congestion

WBC have proposed various options to the ongoing serious parking congestion on Mallard Way. Our Parish Councillor for Aldermaston Wharf has considered all the options and concluded that the proposals will not resolve this matter. A letter from the PC has been sent to WBC detailing the perceived flaws in these and asking for a meeting to discuss the matter.

Planning Matters

- 25/02231/FULMAJ: Pips Way, Beenham. Wording of condition to be amended. The PC will leave it to WBC
- 25/02041/HOUSE: Fairview, Bath Road. Demolition of conservatory and erection of rear extension. **No objection**
- 25/02313/FUL: Butlers Farm, Beenham. Erection of barn and diversion of footpath. **No objection**
- 25/02243/NONMAT: Hillside Cottage, Bourne Lane, Beenham. Non-material amendment to planning permission 19/02959/HOUSE internal alterations. **No objection**

District Councillor

Dangerous driving incidents have been reported to WBC on the Bath Road between the Ufton turnoff and Beenham Village turn off.

Next meetings

- **Monday 1 December** – 7pm in the Community Room
- **Monday 5 January 2026** – 7pm in the Community Room

All parishioners welcome

Peter Hamblin

All correspondence to the PC should be addressed to the Parish Clerk, Lauren West: 07919 916125/clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk
Parish Council website: www.beenham-pc.gov.uk Beenham Community Website: <https://www.beenhamonline.org/>



Drivers Wanted!



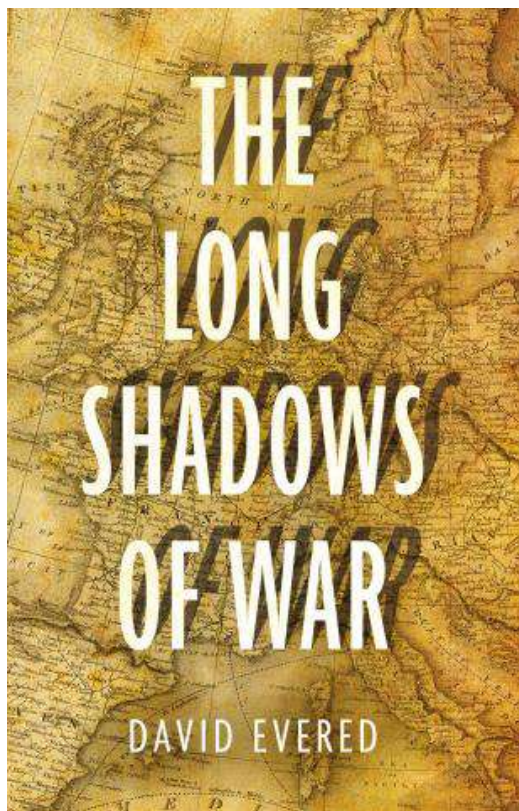
If you cannot get to your medical appointments we, at the Burghfield and Mortimer Volunteer Bureau, give our time and use our own private vehicles to get you to **Hospitals, GP Surgeries, Dentists and Opticians** in our area. We take you to your appointment from your home, wait for you and then return you home.

Have you recently retired? Have a car and enjoy meeting people

Contact us on **0118 983 1814 (Mon–Fri 9:30-11:30am)** or email bureauvolunteer@gmail.com

and chatting? Looking for a way to give some of your time to your community? The Burghfield & Mortimer Volunteer Bureau needs **more drivers** and would welcome **any** of your time (daytime Mon-Fri). An allowance of 50p per mile is available to cover motoring expenses.

From Padworth to Post-War Germany



Former Padworth resident and Treasurer of the Village Hall, **David Evered**, has just released his new novel, *The Long Shadows of War*, a moving dual-timeline story exploring the impact of wartime absence on family life.

Inspired by his own father's experiences in the Royal Engineers during and after the Second World War, the book delves into the psychological consequences of unexplained loss, while tracing events in post-war Germany up to the country's re-unification in 1990.

Mark, the central character, discovers his father's journal decades after his death, revealing the man behind the wartime silence and the challenges of rebuilding lives in a shattered country. David's narrative draws on historical research, personal family history and first-hand accounts from Germany, blending fact and fiction to tell a heartfelt story of resilience, family and reconciliation.

The novel has already been featured on **Radio Berkshire** and is available to purchase now in both digital and paperback formats – AND from **The Baobab in Mortimer**.

Some reviews:

"Congratulations on your book - it is very good; I especially appreciated the way you differentiated between the 2 time lines. The story is gripping and brings to mind so many memories of the 40s and 50s."

"A well written and absorbing family drama."

"I became totally absorbed by this book. It's a wonderful, largely heart-warming, story which follows a family's investigation into the past."

"It is very skilfully written with surprising twists along the way..."

"What a best seller! I just couldn't put it down. You must have done so much research before you wrote it..... It was full of emotion....I was in tears near the end! It's always good to learn something from every book you read."

LOCAL LIBRARIES

Opening Hours

Burghfield Common – 0118 983 3632

Monday 2-5pm
Wednesday 2-5pm
Thursday 10am-5pm
Friday 2.30-6pm
Saturday 10am-12.30pm

Mortimer – 0118 933 2882

Monday 1-5pm
Tuesday 9.30am-5pm
Friday 1-6pm

Saturday 10am-12.30pm

Pangbourne – 0118 984 4117

Monday 2-5pm
Tuesday 10.30am-6pm
Thursday 9.30am-12pm
Friday 10.30am-5pm
Saturday 10am-12.30pm

Theale – 0118 930 3207

Monday 1-5pm
Wednesday 10.30am-5pm

Thursday 2-6pm
Friday 10.30am-5pm
Saturday 10am-12.30pm

Thatcham – 01635 866049

Monday 9.30am-5pm
Tuesday 9.30am-5pm
Thursday 9.30am-5pm
Friday 9am-5.30pm
Saturday 10am-12.30pm

library@westberks.gov.uk www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries



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CHURCH MATTERS

St John the Baptist, Padworth

Parking on left hand side of Padworth College Drive

Sunday 7 December	Evensong	6.30pm
Sunday 14 December	Eucharist	9am
Sunday 21 December	Evensong	6.30pm
Thursday 25 December	Eucharist	9am
Sunday 28 December	Evensong	6.30pm



NB: Please check the Benefice website for Church Services for **December** and **January** as this information was not available when we went to press.

St John's, Mortimer

The **Eucharist** is offered daily at 9.15 am & **Night Prayer** each weekday at 9 pm
The **Eucharist** is also each Sunday at 10am via Zoom

Zoom link for services <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6931233940>

Everyone is welcome to join with the clergy and to take part in these services.
Details are also available on the website: www.mortimerbenefice.org.uk

For more information contact the Benefice Office: 0118 933 3704 or email Lorna Jones lornajones48@gmail.com

For Aldermaston and Woolhampton Benefice, go to www.awb.org.uk

Carol Services



St Nicholas, Wasing	10.45am	7 th December
St Mary's, Beenham	4pm	14 th December
St Peter's, Brimpton	6pm	14 th December
St Peter's, Woolhampton	4pm	21 st December
St Matthew's, Midgham	6pm	21 st December

Christingle Services

St Saviour's, Mortimer West End

24 December 4pm

St John's, Mortimer

24 December 3pm & 5pm



Christmas Services

Methodist Church, Mortimer

Christmas Eve at 23.30hrs

Christmas Day at 9.30am

St John's, Mortimer

Christmas Day at 10am

St John the Baptist, Padworth

Christmas Day at 9am



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SAVE THE DATE!

BRAMLEY CHRISTMAS TRACTOR RUN



14 DECEMBER 2025

For more details visit the Bramley Christmas Tractor Run on Facebook

BURGHFIELD ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE

SATURDAY 6TH DEC 12 – 3PM

Join us for a fun afternoon with fantastic Raffle Prizes, Stalls, Games, Refreshments & Santa's Grotto!

Entry: Adults £1, Children Free! All Welcome!

If you are interested in booking a stall or becoming a sponsor of this event please contact:
 Bsmpta@burghfield.w-berks.sch.uk
 or Call 07722446626



ST PETER'S PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday 6th December 12-3

BRADFIELD VILLAGE HALL

STALLS £15



EMAIL TEACHERS@STPETERSPRESCHOOL.ORG.UK FOR STALLS OR MORE INFO

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Towards the middle of the trail, you'll find a food and drink court offering a variety of sweet treats, hot drinks, including mulled wine, hot chocolate, and soft drinks. At the start of the trail, you can enjoy marshmallow toasting and warming drinks to accompany your visit.

We're open from Saturday 15th November 2025. Tickets are limited for each session, so we recommend booking in advance to secure your spot.

Useful Numbers and Contact Information

Aldermaston CE Primary School: Chair of Governors		971 3362	enquiries@aldermaston.w-berks.sch.uk
Aldermaston Parish Councillors:	Charlotte Watchorn	971 2236	CoG@aldermaston.w-berks.sch.uk
	Sophie Crawford(Ch)	971 2549	scrawford@aldermaston.co.uk
	Dave Shirt	971 4686	dshirt@aldermaston.co.uk
	Alison Faulkner	07887 522610	afaulkner@aldermaston.co.uk
	Adam Shepherd-Price	971 0142	adam@aldermaston.co.uk
	Rob Smith		rsmith@aldermaston.co.uk
	Ed Tilsley		
	Angela Woodley	971 2803	awwodley@aldermaston.co.uk
Aster Communities			
Neighbourhood Officer	Rachael McCarthy	01264 405692	rachael.mccarthy@astercommunities.co.uk
ASB Officer	Sue Barton	01264 405583	sue.barton@astercommunities.co.uk
Beenham Parish Councillors:	Graham Bowsher (Ch)	07557 967575	g.bowsher@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	Graham Bragg	971 3688	g.bragg@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	Alex Cother	07764 637190	a.cother@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	Peter Hamblin	971 2959	p.hamblin@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	David Hancock	07471 148256	d.hancock@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	Peter McEwen	07717 718608	p.mcewen@beenham-pc.gov.uk
	Revd Jane Manley	971 2891	awb.benefice@gmail.com
Benefice Office – Aldermaston		933 3704	admin@mortimerbenefice.co.uk
Benefice Office – Mortimer	Elizabeth Porter	971 3136	
Churchwarden – Padworth Church		0800 80 70 60	(24-hour number)
Environment Agency	Caroline Givan	07808 400843	caroline.givan@gmail.com
Ladies at Lunch		01635 519827	
Mobile Library			
Neighbourhood Watch			
Rectory Road	Mike Warner	970 0391	
The Fallows			
Network Rail			
Network Rail 24 hour Helpline	Gail Evans	01793 777471	gail.evans@networkrail.co.uk
<u>NEWSLETTER</u>		08457 114141	
	Mary Dance	07713 680671	maryedance@hotmail.com
	Sheila Evered	933 1451	sheila_pusinelli@hotmail.com
No 3 Bus route	Reading Buses	959 4000	www.reading-buses.co.uk
Parish Clerk (Aldermaston)	Abi Lewis		parishclerk@aldermaston.co.uk
Parish Clerk (Beenham)	Lauren West	07919 916125	clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk
Parish Clerk (Padworth)	Ellie Brewer	07877 122127	clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
Padworth Parish Councillors	Robert Jones (Ch)	07475 744182	robert.jones@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Andrew Griffin	07473 803979	andrew.griffin@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Jonathan Johnson		jonathan.johnson@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	John Miller	933 2966	john.miller@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Emily Robinson	07769 674460	emily.robinson@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Tommy Tucker	971 2180	tom.tucker@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Andy Williams		andy.williams@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
Padworth Common Advisory Committee:			
Chairman	Mike Warner	970 0391	
Police Neighbourhood Watch	Pangbourne team	101	
Veolia Environmental Service	Daytime	0203 567 2900	west.berkshire@veolia.co.uk
	Out-of-hours	08701 660 309	
Village Hall - Bookings	Jacky Jones	07756 820263	info@padworthvillagehall.co.uk
Village Hall Committee - <i>Chairman</i>	Rob Jones	07475 744182	
Volunteer Bureau		983 1814	
Website manager			clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website			http://www.padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk
West Berks Council		01635 551111	
Local Councillors			
Aldermaston, Padworth & Beenham	Dominic Boeck	971 0330	dominic.boeck@westberks.gov.uk
Bradfield	Ross MacKinnon		ross.mackinnon1@westberks.gov.uk
Burghfield & Mortimer	Nick Carter		nick.carter2@westberks.gov.uk
	Vicky Poole		Vicky.poole1@westberks.gov.uk
	Geoff Mayes	933 2536	geoffrey.mayes1@westberks.gov.uk
Planning Department		01635 519111	
Highways & Transport			
WBDC Customer Services		01635 519080	
Environmental Health		01635 519192	
Fly Tipping & Waste		01635 519080	
Emergencies (out-of-office hours)		01635 42161	

◆ ◆ Padworth Parish Website ◆ ◆

www.padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Please send your contributions to: clerk@padworthparishcouncil.gov.uk



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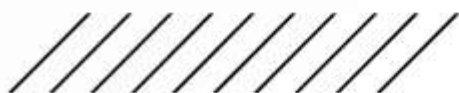
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Christmas plans are well underway!
This year we have 3 amazing events.

BOOK NOW!

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Shop until you drop, enjoy some nibbles from our cafe and let your littles one get into the Christmas spirit & make some reindeer food!

29TH NOV

Christmas Show

A delightful show inspired by nursery rhymes, specially created for the EYFS, featuring a playful storyline that follows beloved characters on a quest to find Santa!

12TH & 13TH DEC

Santa Sessions

Treat your little one to a magical Christmas experience! Enjoy a festive play session where a cheerful elf shares a Christmas story, with a special visit from Santa with a sack full of presents!

15TH - 19TH DEC

www.thelittleplaylounge.co.uk PADWORTH, RG7 4JD