

Community Matters



Lower Wylde & Till Valley
Parishes Magazine

DECEMBER 2024

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Front Cover: Christmas Stained Glass Window submitted by Caroline Gregory 1
(please do forward any suitable photos to her that you would like to see considered for inclusion on the front page).

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader – Welcome to our bumper Edition for December. With so much happening in all the villages, we have agreed to absorb the cost of a colour front page and to add an extra 4 pages. And I have had little trouble filling those pages! Wonderful to see so many Christmas related activities happening across the communities: Carols in Churches and around the villages, Church Services, Cafes / Teas / Cakes, Wreath Making, Thank you and Congratulation messages, a timely Benefice reflection from Yvonne, Welcome and Farewell messages, tips and specific events for your December calendars.

As it's Christmas perhaps there is also time for someone to reflect on volunteering for the role of Editor as we move forward into 2025. Let me know if you feel so inspired!

Meanwhile, may the spirit of Christmas fill your home with warmth and peace.
Charles Gregory Email: twovalleysed@hotmail.com

BERWICK ST JAMES

A very Happy Christmas to you all.

Our sympathies to everyone who has recently suffered a bereavement. We are thinking of you. Get well soon to all who are unwell, and many thanks to those who help out, especially in an emergency.

CHURCH NEWS

Christmas beckons and that mean a busy time for the church.

On **Sunday 1st December** there is a Holy Communion service at 9.30a.m.

On **Sunday 15th December** at 6.00pm we have the annual **Candlelit Carol Service with 7 lessons**. This year **the Bishop of Ramsbury, Dr Andrew Rumsey**, is taking the Carol Service and we look forward to welcoming him on his first visit to Berwick.

For new residents, the service is a highlight of Christmas and we look forward to seeing a full church once again. Mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies will be served after the service.

On **Christmas Day** itself, there is a **short Family Service at 11.00a.m** followed immediately by Holy Communion for those who wish to stay. Everyone is most welcome.

As the end of the year approaches, I would like to thank everyone who has helped with the church in 2024. There is a long cast of helpers with Martin Gairdner playing

the organ, Keith Lovett helping with the hedges, Ailsa Bush providing coffee after the Matins services, Lizzie Barnes organising the flower rota, Sarah Humphreys organising the church locking/unlocking rota, Kate Glyn-Owen sorting the reader rota and to James Douse and Stephen Bush giving invaluable advice and support. To them and to everyone on the locking/unlocking rota, the cleaning rota, the flower rota or the reading rotas, I send my sincere thanks. It is greatly appreciated and thank you so much.

CAROL SINGING

We have had an excellent response, for which many thanks, to the proposed house-to-house Carol Singing. It is planned for **Wednesday 18th December** (if it is pouring with rain on the Wednesday, we will try the Thursday 19th as a "reserve date"). Meet at the Reading Room at 5.45pm for a 6.00pm start.

PLANT PRODUCE and FLOWER Table supporting C.R.UK

Dear villagers and neighbouring villages. I would just like to say a big thank you for your continued support. The plants from our friends were amazing I loved the amazing Jade plants and have now learned how to propagate from them ... it's a long process and I appreciate your skill and patience. One of the most unusual plants this season have been Banana trees very locally grown. I haven't had the best season even my famous chilli plants have suffered but the upside of that is that I will try to overwinter for an early start next season.

I wish you and yours a peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Yours Aye Christine X

TEA AND CAKE AND CHAT IN THE READING ROOM

The December chats are on **3rd and 17th December 2.30 – 4pm**, lovely to see everyone. It is a great time to have a chat and relax away from the rush of the Christmas preparations. There is no charge, cakes are welcome too!

OLD FORGE FARM SHOP

Sam and everyone at the Old Forge Farm Shop wishes everyone a very Happy Christmas.

The shop will be open on Monday 23rd December closing for the Christmas holiday at 4pm. We will re-open, refreshed and ready for the New Year, on 2nd January at 9am.

FOR BERWICK ENTRIES:

Please send to me, Nicky Street, The Dairy House 790309, or e-mail chstreet@btinternet.com **by 14th** of the month before the magazine is due out, indicating it is a magazine entry. Or, if you prefer, directly to the editor (see elsewhere in the magazine). It is great to welcome new villagers and say goodbye to old friends leaving.

LOCAL HISTORY – ROAD NUMBERS.

I do like a bit of obscure history! Having done an article on Berwick's pavements, I wonder if you might be interested in why our roads have the numbers A36 and so on. We have a numbering system to classify and identify all our roads, with a single letter and a number of up to four digits. Originally intended to make the allocation of Government funding easier, the numbers were soon added to maps, and signs, to help with navigation.

In 1909 the Road Board was set up to administer Vehicle Excise Duty (first introduced in 1888). As motor vehicles became more popular it was necessary to allocate this tax and to work out which were the main routes and where to spend the duty raised. A definite list of major roads was published on 1st April 1923. The scheme divided Great Britain into 9 zones, 6 radiating from London, and 3 from Edinburgh.

The English zones start with 1 being the East and based on The Great North Road, then clockwise with Zone 2 being (roughly) Kent, Zone 3 (us) from London down to Land's End, Zone 4 the West Midlands and most of Wales, and so on. Generally the main single digit road (the traditional main road) was the boundary of the zone starting clockwise. So zone 3 starts at the A3, and finishes just before the A4 (going clockwise). Other A roads were numbered from the main road going clockwise – A31, A32, round to us at A36 and onwards. Radial and cross linking roads follow the same principle. The A303 was numbered in 1933. Along with other three digit A roads, its number is taken from the local A road where it starts, so generally (but not always) numbering followed the general principle.

There are, of course, anomalies and odd roads! B roads are numbered distributor roads with lower traffic densities than A roads. They follow the same numbering system but generally have 3 or 4 digits. C and unclassified roads are generally numbered but for the use of the local authorities and often don't appear on road signs. Researched and written by Nicky Street (with thanks to National Highways, sabre-roads.org, Wikipedia and so on). What about our road? The B3083 – the numbers don't quite fit! An interesting story, and another article.

FARM WATCH & HORSE WATCH NEWSLETTER - SEPT 2024

Location: Berwick St James

Date: 16/09/2024

Report: Unknown suspects cut and removed a chain / lock from the gates on the farm leaving the gates open, the RP suspects they were hare coursing. The RP has spoken to a gamekeeper, who stated that a couple of pheasants had also been shot.

GREAT WISHFORD

Pudsey comes to Café in school

On 7th November, St Giles' church Café and Wishford Primary School together raised an amazing £187.49 for Children in Need. Parents and our Café bakers contributed masses of cakes, years 5 and 6 pupils served them, and the Café team served teas and cleared away. The Head, sporting a wonderful Pudsey T-shirt, was justifiably proud of her pupils and staff.

It was lovely to see a mix of generations enjoying the experience, and well done to the children who were such a great help on the day.

The highlight (for yours truly at any rate!) was our star guest Pudsey, who made us all smile. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen - it was a fantastic community effort.

Yvonne Allen

CHRISTMAS CAFÉ AT ST GILES'

This year we have two dates to remember. On **12th December**, we shall be welcoming children from Wishford school into church during Café so that they can practise their carols - that should get us in the mood for Christmas!

And then there's our annual Christmas Café on **19th December**. In addition to our usual collection of delicious home-made cakes, we shall have a raffle and mulled wine. We would very much welcome donations for the raffle, and if you have some, you can bring them along to any Thursday afternoon Café or leave them in church, where we shall pick them up. There will be no charge for refreshments, but we shall be happy accept donations.

We will then be taking a break and returning on **9th January**. A new year and new resolutions - if anyone out there would be prepared to bake for us, perhaps once a month, it would help tremendously. Just let Jamie or me know.

With immense gratitude to everyone who helps to make this community resource thrive - our organisers, our bakers and our punters - we wish you all a Happy Christmas and the very best for 2025!

Yvonne Allen

CHRISTMAS EVE VILLAGE CRIB SERVICE AT ST GILES' 24th DECEMBER

Do come along to St Giles' at **5:00pm** this **Christmas Eve**, to take some time out from the hustle and busyness of this time of year and to share the joy of Christmas. There will be carols, the stable to populate with Jesus, his family and his visitors, and readings to remind us of the story of Christ's birth.

Children are very welcome to come along dressed up as shepherds, angels or kings, and adults may wish to partake of a festive mulled wine afterwards.

Look forward to seeing you there!

Yvonne Allen

OAK APPLE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHT SWITCH ON

Saturday 7th December 5pm

Come and join us at the Oak Apple barn for our Christmas light switch on starting at 5pm. There will be food, hot and cold drinks, mince pies and mulled wine. We will be having a Christmas Raffle so if you have anything you would like to donate, please make contact with Rachael 07970 428659 or Helen 07555 605570, or message the Facebook page or the Instagram page. Also The Royal Oak will take in any prizes for us. We look forward to seeing you there and getting into the Christmas spirit.

Thanks! Oak Apple Committee

PARKING IN GREAT WISHFORD – CONSIDERATION PLEASE

Parking has been raised by several parishioners both recently and again at the last Parish Council meeting held on 24th July. Please could the parish council request that everyone park considerately and in line with the Highway Code.

The Highway Code states:

- You must not park opposite or within 10metres of a junction.
- You must not park near a school entrance.
- Do not park against the traffic flow.
- Stop as close as you can to the side.

These are just some key parts to the Highway Code. For full details please refer to the Highway Code which is available on line. More importantly please be considerate of your neighbours and fellow villagers when parking.

GREAT WISHFORD CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

Everyone welcome. Meet at the Christmas tree in the Oakapple field 5:30pm Monday 23rd December 2024. We will sing at various stopping points around the village before ending in the warmth of the Royal Oak around 7pm for refreshments and carols. Again, we will be collecting for Salisbury food bank. Please wear hi-vis jackets, festive gear and bring a torch. Parent/ carers to supervise children at all times. Song sheets will be provided. Any queries, please contact Anna Tattersall on: 07767277604

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING

On Wed 4th Dec, 2 pm in St Giles' Church, Daphne Smith will be showing us how to use local greenery to make our own Christmas wreaths! You can bring your own additions to personalise your creation or just use materials provided. Please ring Daphne on 01722 790694 to register. A small donation covering costs would be great!

CHRISTMAS WREATH COMPETITION

Our annual Christmas Wreath Competition kicks off on 4th December. Hang a wreath on your door which you/your family has made from anything – local vegetation or create something fun to reflect you. The Committee will judge the wreaths on 20th Dec based on Artistic Flair, Impact and Effort. Please make your wreath visible on your front door or gate. Who wouldn't like to win a delicious home-made Christmas cake?! For more information contact Caroline: 07804210866

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

The drains on Station Rd/ Grovelly Rd have been reported to Wilts CC for review. The Pothole near Rest Harrow has been reported and reviewed by highways but deemed the private household responsibility not the Council's.

The Stile of the Donkey track has been repaired as I am sure many people will have noticed.

The Parish Council would like to thank the Breadstone committee for the great work they did and for putting on such a fantastic village event to celebrate the historic milestones.

Our next meeting is at 19:00 at the Church on the 27th November if anyone has any items to add please contact Clerk@greatwishfordpc.org.uk

Our Precept and budget meeting will be held in January - date tbc, this is where the council decides on future projects and how we can support the local community.

YOUR GREAT WISHFORD PARISH COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!

The Parish Council continues to be on the look out for new Council Members. Please come to the next meeting to find out more or contact clerk@greatwishfordpc.org.uk.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY- STAYING VIGILANT

Sadly, the beautiful stained-glass window in St Giles' Church, dating back to 1863, was vandalized earlier this year. The repair quote is over £900. This kind of behaviour, along with other recent acts of vandalism in our village particularly to a homeowner's property, not only cost a lot to fix but also hurt the sense of safety and community spirit we all love. Please keep an eye out to try and stop this from happening again. Thanks for helping keep our village safe and beautiful for everyone.

STAPLEFORD

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Autumn Village Hall Quiz was keenly contested by six teams and narrowly won by 'The Competent Crew' – John and Christine Townsend, Sue Rhind-Tutt and Jo Cetti. The Church Furlong Team arguably deserved to share the prize, but a bottle of prosecco only goes so far!

Keith dished up a very tasty Bolognese and Steve Mason was kept busy at the bar, so it was a very convivial evening. Great to welcome newcomers, Steve and Tony, and the Mundys, who travelled from South Newton. The next quiz is planned for February. Our programme of occasional winter talks was launched by Dr Robin O'Neill who has spent years researching the background to 'Schindler's Ark'. Thanks to Susi for compering, to Dr O'Neill for sharing his knowledge and to those members of the Village Hall Committee who make these events possible. Proceeds from the talk and sales of Dr O'Neill's book (£145) have been donated to the charity, OneUkraine.

There are, at the time of writing, a few places left for the Village Christmas Lunch on December 11th. £20 seems a bargain for a turkey dinner cooked by Keith with all the extras that make it special, including musical entertainment.

The Village Garden club has held its first meeting and launched an informative What's App group. A plan to plant a fruit orchard near the playpark using grafts of village apples is just one of the ideas to come from the first meeting. If you'd like to join, come to the hall at 7:30 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Forthcoming Events:

December 4th: 10:30-12 Christmas Coffee and Chat

December 11th 12:30 Christmas Lunch (booking essential)

HARVEST

Stapleford celebrated a wonderful harvest weekend 26th/27th October, kicking off with a good tidy up of the churchyard on the Saturday. Huge thanks to all those who got involved - especially Susie & Steve (who discovered some long-hidden gravestones beneath the undergrowth!), Richard, Hector, Christine, Colin, Sophie & Fergus and the entire Rawley family. It was a beautiful autumnal morning and after some fabulous strimming, pruning, hacking and leaf blowing (well done boys!) we enjoyed coffee and delicious fruit cake provided by Vicky A.

On the Sunday, a lovely Harvest service in a beautifully decorated St Mary's (thanks to the fabulous flower team) was well attended and followed by a delicious lunch in the Village Hall - so popular that we had overflow guests in the garden! Keith kindly served hearty baked potatoes followed by crumbles packed with Stapleford apples and it was

great to see so many villagers putting the world to rights over a glass of wine or 2! Thanks to generous donations, we raised just over £200 for St Mary's.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas Cards: We are once again selling Christmas cards in aid of the church, featuring one of Terry Waldron's beautiful images of St Mary's. As per last year they are an inflation busting £7.50 for 10 or £4 for 5 and available from Tracy Jackson or Sophie O'Sullivan.

Carol Service: This year's carol service will be held at 6pm on Sunday 15th December. For many, this feels like the start of Christmas festivities and it's always a lovely occasion. The church will be lit with candles, the choir will lead in some well-known carols and there will be festive refreshments after the service. Do come along if you haven't been before.

Carol Singing around the village: On Monday 23rd December you are invited to join choir members in singing carols around the village – or to listen to the angelic tones from the warmth of your home!. Details will be confirmed nearer the time.

Village Christmas tree: As last year's village Christmas tree was appreciated by villagers and visitors, we will be erecting a tree again outside the churchyard gate, in view of the road, and inviting anyone who would like to help decorate to come along on Saturday 7th December at 11am. Do bring any decorations you may have to spare, but don't let that put you off. We have plenty. Hot and cold drinks and mince pies will be provided!

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The children's corner in the church is looking very tired and we'd like to provide more to keep smaller people occupied and entertained. We'd especially like some books – they don't have to be religious but any story with a theme of how we can live well with one another and look after the world around us would be great. A few toys would be good too, but those need to be sturdy and quiet! Any unwanted colouring books and colouring pencils are also welcome.

ST MARY'S CELEBRATES 900 YEARS

Next month we begin the celebration of (approximately) 900 years of history for St. Mary's church. There will be village celebrations in the summer, a new booklet about St. Mary's, a commemorative tea towel for sale and an exhibition. What we'd like now is to gather as much information and as many memories as we can from you all (and from others you can think of) for the exhibition. Please get in touch with Sue Bale via the village whatsapp group or speak to someone else who can get you in touch. Anything and everything is welcome.

POPPY APPEAL

Many thanks to all who generously donated to the appeal this year. The following amounts were raised: for Berwick St James the door to door collection raised £120; for South Newton the church service raised £265; Stapleford door to door raised £482, and additional collections at the Pelican raised £81 and Riverside Garage £150.

STAPLEFORD COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The Stapleford Parish Council have successfully secured a grant from the Coronation Living Heritage Orchard Fund to plant an orchard on the land adjoining the playground, alongside the River Till. This is an exciting project for the Community that will provide a number of interesting varieties of fruit trees, including apple, pear and quince. The trees will be planted in February. An update will be issued in the January edition. Your help will be needed! For further information, please contact Richard Wells (tel: 790847)

SOUTH NEWTON AND STOFORD

NEWSHOUND REQUIRED

A few months ago Steve Black stood down from the role of magazine editor; however, he has continued as the South Newton Parish Newshound but will soon relinquish that role also. So, we are now looking for a willing and able contributor/collator. Please consider volunteering, or persuading someone you know! Do contact Steve on 07510391900 if you feel you could fill the role (either now or in the future), or would like more information.

SOUTH NEWTON HOUSEHOLDS.

The latest census figures of 2021 (<https://censusdata.uk/e63005961-south-newton>) indicate that South Newton had a population of 703 residents (347 male, 356 female) within 273 households. 57 households consist of 1 person, 104 of 2, 46 of 3, 43 of 4, 12 of 5, 6 of 6 and 4 households of 7 persons.

The UK statistics reveal that throughout the 1800s and 1900s the South Newton population rose steadily from approx. 400 to over 700. In the 2000s it peaked at 819 in 2011, probably due to persons associated with the hospital/care facility.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – DECEMBER

To Remind: Saturday 30th November 7:00pm St Andrew's Quiz Night with a supper, Village Hall; £10:00 per person. Everyone is welcome.

3rd, 17th and 31st December – Bingo

Each Tuesday evening at South Newton and Wishford Village Hall, doors open from 7:00 p.m.; its great fun, we would love to see you.

4th, 11th and 18th December - Andy Pandy's baby and toddler group

Now being held at South Newton & Wishford Village Hall. Wednesdays 10.30am – 12:00, during term time.

A friendly group for you and your little ones, aged 0-4. Contact Laura Myers on **07801 448301** for more details.

Saturday 7th December 3:00-5:00pm Christmas Tree Decorating in the Church - fun craft activities, carols, decorating the Christmas Tree with "memory stars" and so much more. Everyone is welcome

7th and 21st December - Mobile Library

This month the mobile library visits South Newton on Saturdays 7th and 21st, located at Vale View Road, South Newton, Salisbury SP2 0RB. Doors open from 3:45 to 4:15pm

10th December – Christmas Bingo

Prize Bingo all welcome. Money flyer - Over 18s only. Christmas raffle South Newton Village Hall. Doors open 7:00pm; Eyes down 7.30pm

15th December – Carol and Crib Family Service

St Andrew's Church, 4:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday 22nd December 4:00pm South Newton traditional candlelit Village Carols and Crib Service for all the family with seasonal refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

28th December - Charity Football Matches

South Newton and Wishford Village Hall.

If you have ever visited or know someone who has been to Salisbury Hospice you will know what a fantastic place it is and what a wonderful charity they are. You may not know that, mostly, they rely on donations to run the hospice.

On Saturday morning 28th December there will be charity football matches for the kids and adults. Timing to be confirmed but possible kick off 9.00/9.30am.

The event is being held to remember Pip Dewey of Great Wishford who did so much over many years to support the local Football Club and was looked after at the hospice.

The Village Hall committee will be supporting the event and we shall be serving teas/coffees, bacon and sausage baps all to raise funds for **Salisbury Hospice** Please do come along and support the event.

28th December - Breakfast Morning.

South Newton and Wishford Village Hall, any time between 9:00 until 11:00am. A delicious cooked breakfast for only £7.50, with plenty of tea, coffee, toast and marmalade. All proceeds to the Village Hall.

BENEFICE NEWSLETTER FOR DECEMBER

Keep calm this Christmas - we're heading towards the light!

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. James 1:17

By the time you read this, we shall be in Advent, a time of anticipation and inevitably of busyness. It's the time of year in the Church calendar when we look forward to Jesus' birth, to celebrate and give thanks for God's gift to humankind. Salisbury Diocese has chosen for its Advent theme *calm and bright*, taken from the Silent Night Christmas carol. As Christmas approaches, and our 'to do' check lists grow ever longer, it's not always so easy to be calm and bright.

However, keeping in the forefront of our minds the reason we celebrate may help us to see it in perspective. Of course, there are the inescapable expectations that commerce (and we ourselves) have encouraged - presents, over-indulging, squabbles over whose turn it is to host, etc, etc. But perhaps we can use Advent as a time to reflect on why we are doing it, and what the real joy of Christmas is all about. This would be the period of calm..... not before the storm, but before the joy of remembering the birth of a child who would grow up to find a place in the hearts of shepherds and kings, the poor and the mighty.

And as we near the day of Christ's birth, we remember the angels lighting up the sky above the shepherds, the bright star that led the wise men to that humble stable, and the joy that lit up the faces of those who encountered the Christ child. All who came were in some way transformed and went away with joy and positivity in their hearts. What will Christmas leave us with this year? A resolve to diet, a depleted bank balance and a sense of relief that it's over? Or..... might we instead aim for those feelings of comfort and joy that feature in another well-known carol. Along with all those post-Christmas thank you letters, we could include gratitude for the birth of Christ, who came to live among us, share our frailties and weaknesses, and bring us closer to God - the ultimate gift that kept on giving!

In these four weeks of Advent, we travel from darkness to light, symbolically, spiritually and in reality. We light the four candles in the Advent wreath to symbolise hope, peace, love and joy, reserving the fifth for Christmas Day, when we welcome Jesus as the light of the world. Spiritually, we are comforted by the knowledge that God came to dwell among us. And in reality, we head towards the shortest day of the year, after which we can look forward to lengthening days and a gradual banishing of those dark evenings. *Calm and bright* - isn't that exactly how we would love to start the new year?

Yvonne Allen

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2024 ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASON

Sunday 1st December – Advent Sunday: Year C starts

9.30am	Berwick St James	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
9:30am	Stockton	Advent Holy Communion (BCP)
11:00am	South Newton	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Stapleford	Advent Worship
11:00am	Wylve	Advent Matin (BCP)
4.00pm	Little Langford	Advent Service of Carols and Reading with members of the Benefice Choir

Saturday 7th December

3:00pm	South Newton	Tree Decorating
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Sunday 8th December – Second Sunday of Advent

9:30am	Winterbourne Stoke	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Steeple Langford	Advent Holy Communion (CW)
6:00pm	Great Wishford	Advent Evening Prayer

Sunday 15th December – Third Sunday of Advent

09:30am	Great Wishford	Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Wylve	Holy Communion (BCP)
6:00pm	Berwick St James	Trad'II candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service
6:00pm	Stapleford	Trad'I candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service

Monday 16th December

6:30pm	Wylve	Carols around the village
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Thursday 19th December

6:30pm	Stockton	Carols and Barrels in The Carriers, Stockton
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Friday 20th December

5:00pm	Steeple Langford	Community Procession and Crib Blessing
6:30pm	Fisherton de la Mere	Trad'I candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service

Saturday 21st December

5:00pm	Winterbourne Stoke	Carols through the village
6:30pm	Wylve	Traditional candle-lit Carol Service Carol

Sunday 22nd December – Fourth Sunday of Advent

09:30am	Little Langford	Holy Communion (BCP)
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11:00am	Stapleford	Holy Communion (CW)
4:00pm	South Newton	Trad'l candle-lit Carols and Crib Service
6:00pm	Steeple Langford	Trad'l candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service
6:00pm	Stockton	Trad'l candle-lit Carol Service Carol Service

Monday 23rd December

5:30pm	Great Wishford	Carols around the village
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Tuesday 24th December – Christmas Eve

3:00pm	Little Langford	Trad'l candle-lit Carols and Crib Service
5:00pm	Great Wishford	Trad'l candle-lit Carols and Crib Service

Wednesday 25th December – Christmas Day

9:00am	Little Langford	Holy Communion (BCP)
9:30am	Great Wishford	Holy Communion (CW)
10:00am	South Newton	Christmas Day Worship
10:00am	Stockton	Christmas Day Worship
10:30am	Steeple Langford	Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Stapleford	Christmas Day Worship
11:00am	Berwick St James	Holy Communion (CW)
11:00am	Wylfe	Holy Communion (CW)

Sunday 29th December – First Sunday of Christmas

10:30am	Stapleford	Benefice Holy Communion (CW)
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CW = Common Worship, BCP = Book of Common Prayer, Trad'l = Traditional

Please look at the Parish News Sheets for any changes to services or contact the Rector, Rev'd Jonathan Plows

Monday being his day off Rectorwtv@gmail.com 01722 790616

SOUTH NEWTON AND STOFORD - DECEMBER

(Continued from Page 10)

SOUTH NEWTON AND WISHFORD VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall AGM was held on 24th October, the meeting followed the usual agenda, commencing with the approval of the previous year's minutes. The Chairman's report was presented by Mr Derek Blake, praising the valued efforts of the Trustees, Committee members and supporters.

The Treasurer's Report was read by Mrs Karen Barnes, explaining the incomes and outgoings relating to the various accounts in detail. Major expenses being: Insurances,

Electrical works, CCTV and External doors. The Committee were extremely grateful for fund raising activities, i.e. Bingo events, Breakfast Mornings, Stofest and the Football Tournament, to name but a few. Overall the 2023/2024 finances have increased by approx. £6,000, with the balance sheet now standing at £228,791.90.

A Q & A session followed, with bullet point responses being :-

- Security has been enhanced in an effort to reduce the volume of vandalism.
- It is possible to fish from the riverbank, a notice explaining the rules may be erected.
- There are no immediate plans to demolish the Music Room and Cricket Pavilion
- There are no plans for the purchase solar panel, battery storage and microwave heating systems; however, the Committee is considering additional roof/ceiling insulation.
- The Committee were aware of the need to replace the soft play material within Children's Play Area; they were also made aware that the surface of the basketball /football area is breaking up and requires sealing, recoating or replacing.

The existing Committee members were re-elected and it was good to see that other villagers volunteered to join the committee. After a brief AOB session the meeting closed.

SOUTH NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL

The lack of magazine space does not enable a comprehensive report of the meeting but the agenda and minutes can be located at: www.southnewtonpc.org.uk/

The meeting was held on 4th November, no other parishioners were present and no correspondence had been received. Our Area Councillor (Mr. Kevin Daly) was unable to attend, sending his apologies and a report which included an A303 update.

Wilton Rural Police Team

The session was attended by PCSO Charlotte King and PC Matt Boon of the Wilton Rural Police Team, who provided the attendees with a Parish Council Policing Report for the months of August to October and answered questions relating to community support/consultations. They advised that the Team would do their best for a member to attend/support any local events, please let them know on their email address: salisburyareanpt@wiltshire.police.uk.

The Council members suggested Bingo evenings, Breakfast mornings, etc. would be a good opportunity to meet the local populous.

NOTE: Please report crime through 999 for an emergency or 101 after the event / risk has passed.

Surprisingly, the police representatives advised the meeting attendees that Stoford and Little Wishford were not part of the Wilton Rural Area; this curtailed a number of

prepared questions. A few days later an email apology was received correcting the error, confirming that all four villages (Little Wishford, Stoford, South Newton and Chilhampton) were indeed part of the Wilton Rural policing area; this may explain the lack of community policing and presence over the past couple of years.

A36 Drainage Issues

On 31st October several members of the parish council met with drainage engineers from National Highways to discuss the ongoing drainage problems along the A36 in South Newton and Stoford.

We can report that over the next three months, work will commence to properly clean out the existing drains and outfall pipe by the bus stop section in South Newton and more gully drains will be installed where necessary with a modification in some of the gully levels to improve drainage, with the possibility of a proper discharge pipe to the river.

There are many other areas along the A36 in our parish which flood after heavy rain and it is important to report these incidences, either by calling the National Highways switchboard on **0300 123 5000** option 5, or by using their user friendly reporting link: <https://report.nationalhighways.co.uk>

Quite simply the more residents that report each flooding or drainage incident along the A36, concerned about road and pedestrian safety and a genuine anxiety to our properties and gardens, the more pressure this puts on National Highways to resolve these drainage issues in our parish compared to other sections of this road which flood.

Local Elections

It was noted that Wiltshire Council elections and Town and Parish Council elections will take place on Thursday 1st May 2025.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on 6th January at the Village Hall, parishioners are welcome to forward any proposals or attend the session in person. We shall be discussing the established agenda, as well as the forthcoming budget and donation proposals.

POLICE CRIME FIGURES

There was one instance of crime reported within the South Newton parish during the month of September:

1 x 'Vehicle crime.

A total of only seven crimes were reported within the whole of the Wilton Rural Area.

During the early hours of an October morning three vans were broken into, one in Great Wishford and two in Stoford; one vehicle had over a £1000 worth of equipment taken. The thieves, believed to be driving a black Audi with black alloy wheels, were recorded on a Mount Pleasant webcam. The Police have informed that thieves have broken into over one hundred vans within an area from Hampshire to Dorset, so many that replacement Ford Transit doors are now in short supply. .

ONE-NETWORK ROAD WORKS AND ACTIVITIES

There are currently no plans for any roadworks within the South Newton parish during the month of December; however, there are many “instances” of possible disruption within the surrounding areas. Watch out for roadworks at Stapleford (Wessex Internet), Wilton and Ditchampton.

Search the internet for: <https://one.network/>, then add your postcode and timeframe for all planned data.

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A couple of months ago I came across a credit card at the roadside and returned it to its owner. Last week I lost my mobile phone; unknown to me it had dropped out of my pocket at a location in South Newton. Many thanks, once again, to the gentlemen who found my phone and went out of his way to return it to me later that same evening.

200 Club October Draws

1 st - £100	(35)	Angela Baldwin
2 nd - £60	(211)	Liz Jefford
3 rd - £40	(125)	Charlie Blake

WINTERBOURNE STOKE

CONGRATULATIONS

To Milly Knight of Church Cottage and her partner Ashley, on the birth of their son Albie.

THE BELL INN

It was with a heavy heart that a difficult decision had to be made, due to personal family commitments, to close The Bell. They pulled their last pint on Saturday 2nd November and a massive thank you to all those who came along and supported the team on its last night, the turnout was incredible, the atmosphere was amazing and it was a great firework display! Also a real show of appreciation to Rob and Emily, along with the rest of their dedicated team, who over the last 6yrs have brought life back into the pub and we wish them the best of luck with their new adventure. You will be missed.

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Saturday 21st December 5:00pm Carols through the Village and Santa's Grotto. Seasonal refreshments before and afterwards. Watch out for further information. Everyone is welcome.

PARISH COUNCIL

During this past month the Parish Council's focus has remained on the A303 and communications with National Highways. The Chairman's letter to the Chief Executive of National Highways resulted in a meeting on 29 October in the village with the Wiltshire Route Manager (responsible for the M4, A303 and A36 within the county), members of the Parish Council, and, as an observer, a member of Shrewton Parish Council. All matters raised by villagers at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Village in August were discussed on the ground along the road between Scotland Lodge Farm and Cleeve View. Notes of that meeting are on the village website and noticeboard. Since that meeting the Route Manager has been back in the village examining all the points raised with their member of staff responsible for future strategy.

The Parish Council received a response to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regarding the condition of the Bridge over the River Till. The response enclosed a copy of the National Highway's policy on maintenance. The policy states that if concrete spalling is observed, then a safety inspection is required. Cllr Shuttleworth has sent photographic evidence of spalling, and so another FOIA has been submitted to ask why a safety inspection has not been carried out. This is important, because if the bridge were to fail, or be closed for maintenance, then the disruption to the village and to other local villages would be enormous.

There has been no response to the FOIA request regarding the width of the A303 and whether it conforms to modern standards. This matter may have to be escalated to the Information Commissioner. This is important because it could help the Parish Council's case that that the High Street is not fit for purpose as part of the nation's Strategic Road Network, that takes one third of all traffic, and two-thirds of all freight.

The next step in the Parish Council's campaign is to arrange a meeting in the village with the Wiltshire Route Manager and the Wiltshire Police Road Safety Officer. The main aim is to reduce the speed limit within the village to 30 mph, and to have the 40 mph limits moved East and West away from houses on the A303 to slow traffic before it is in the village.

On 12 November the Project Team for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down scheme held their last Community Forum in Antrobus House for members of local parish councils and farmers/landowners affected by the scheme. The project is closing down as the scheme was cancelled by the Government in July. The plans remain in place should there be a change of heart by the Government but this seems unlikely. It is clear that there is no Plan B. The Development Consent Order (DCO) remains in place. This is good news for those who would wish the scheme to take place sometime in the future. However, it is not good news for those farmers and landowners affected by

the scheme as their land is now under long term planning blight which impacts future investment, including in seed and fertiliser for next year's crops.

Finally, it is understood that in 2025 National Highways are to conduct a safety survey on the A303 from Countess Roundabout to Longbarrow Roundabout. Following the meeting in the village on 29 October, the Route Manager is pressing for the survey to include Winterbourne Stoke. As a result the Parish Council will be asking National Highways what we can do as a community to assist the survey. It may be that we can add qualitative data to National Highways quantitative data.

ALL VILLAGES

SWANS W.I.

This month's talk was given the title of 'scarf tying' but it was so much more than that. Lindsay West, an image consultant for the House of Colour, captured all of our interest as she talked to us about how the Bauhaus School of Art and Design's colour theory, dating back to the early part of the twentieth century, has influenced the way we put colours and textures together. The art of scarf tying, the practical part of our talk, gave us further insight into how wearing the right scarf to suit our individual colour palette and tied to suit our neckline can support our confidence and 'feel good' emotions. SWANS business was then swiftly dealt with, with thanks as always, going to our members who provided us with a variety of delicious refreshments.

Our next meeting is on 5 December at Wilton Community Centre at 2pm. You are most welcome to join us as we 'party' our way into the festive season.

Alternatively, if you would like to learn more about us, please call Caroline on 01722 792759. We meet on the first Thursday of each month at 2pm usually in the Wilton Community Centre.

BERWICK GIRLGUIDING CENTRE

In 2024, we have been celebrating 30 years of the Girlguiding Centre at Berwick. It has been a busy year with volunteers and tradesmen putting in long hours to update and maintain the centre. A huge thank you to Wessex Water who worked to resolve the ground flooding.

It is always a joy to host events or hire the centre to Girlguiding groups. One of the leaders reviewed the site saying 'None of the Guides had camped before so our team decided to construct a more traditional camp. Everything was arranged for us which helped enormously. I would encourage anyone who hasn't used the facilities to make every effort to support Berwick.' We recently welcomed a group of Brownies from

across the county, keen to discover ‘What’s the big deal about Guides?’ A fun day of Guide activities, as part of a South West Region ‘Next Steps’ badge.

During this year, we have been able to hire the facilities more widely, welcoming Launch2Learn to use the site each week in term time, and hiring the centre for community and private events. We would like to develop our links with the community and Launch2Learn would welcome those with gardening skills to work with pupils to grow their own vegetables. If you are able to help with this project, please contact wsberwickmc@gmail.com to find out more.

RECYCLING CENTRES - WINTER OPENING HOURS

On 1st November all Wiltshire Council Household Recycling Centres switched to their annual winter opening hours of 10:00am to 4:00pm. Salisbury, Trowbridge and Stanton St Quinton centres are closed for an additional day each week, so will not be open on Thursdays and Fridays. More info: <https://orlo.uk/HyaBP>

PENSION CREDIT

Are you or someone you know eligible for Pension Credit but not claiming it? It gives people extra money to help with their living costs if they’re over State Pension age and on a low income. In addition to Pension Credit, those who qualify could also receive Winter Fuel Payment and other support like help with housing costs, help with Council Tax and a free TV licence for those aged 75 and over.

Thanks to the Pension Credit backdating rules, it is possible to apply for Pension Credit and have the claim backdated by up to three months, this means that the latest date to apply and still qualify for Winter Fuel Payment is 21st December. Checking entitlement is easy with an online calculator: <https://orlo.uk/vNNYD>

HOME HEAT LOSS!

Did you know that Wiltshire residents can borrow thermal imaging cameras from Wiltshire Libraries to check for heat loss from their properties to aid home upgrades and save money on energy bills. The cameras are available **free of charge** and can help people make small improvements, such as covering gaps causing drafts in the home, or consider if more substantial home upgrades would be appropriate such as insulation. For more information, see

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/10315/thermal-imaging-cameras>

WYLYE VALLEY WRITERS READING

Stoford resident, Martyn Allez, has been chosen to read from his own work at the next Wylve Valley Writers quarterly event. Martyn will be reading a piece of his contemporary fiction and will be joined by four other writers from the local area who will delight us with their own comedy, poetry and fantasy work, with a Q&A afterwards. All welcome at this entertaining evening to be held in the nearby Langford

Parish Hall on 16th January at 7.30pm. Entry is free (small donations requested to cover costs.) Bar open for refreshments.

WILDLIFE WATCH

An interesting time of year for birds – any migratory visitors seen?

A report on 21st October on Stoford Hill Farm – up to 10 Marsh Harriers, Stonechats and a Caspian Gull (first winter) ringed in the Netherlands. Also Marsh Harriers seen over western Berwick parish, also many Red Kites, some Buzzards and Ravens.

All reports very welcome – from all our villages. Nicky Street chstreet@btinternet.com
The Dairy House Berwick St James.

PROTECTING YOUR VALUABLES

Operation Siege from Wiltshire Police is promoting the benefits of self-prevention, protecting your tools and valuables – go to www.selectadna.co.uk/nhw

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