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*Owing to pressure of copy space we regret it may be necessary to abridge any
article. (E-mail copy much appreciated).*

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THE OXDROVE Church and Community News *Of* The Candover Valley and Wield Rector: Interegnum

Associate Minister Ian Thaker—07864 095 435

Ian will be in Preston Candover every Tuesday from 9.00am, to take morning prayers and available for anyone who wants to chat.

Benefice administrator – Tricia Knight email address:
beneficeFCW@hotmail.com Phone 07541 463750

Rota for Services

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship LL = Lay led

The Parishes of Farleigh, The Candover Valley
and Wield

The Benefice of Farleigh, Candover and Wield
Services for March 2024

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship LL = Lay Led

Sunday 7th April 2nd Sunday of Easter

08.00	Ellisfield	Holy Communion BCP IDT
09:30	Wield	Matins PR
09.45	Cliddesden	Morning Prayer IDT
10:00	Preston Candover	Morning Prayer JG
11:00	Northington	Holy Communion IDT and JG
11.15	Dummer	Sunday Special

Readings Acts 4:32-35, 1 John 1:1-2:2, John 20:19-end

Psalm 133

” ”

Sunday 14th April 3rd Sunday of Easter

08:00 Dummer Holy Communion IDT
09:45 Ellisfield Morning Prayer BC
10:00 Preston Candover Family Service JG
11:15 Cliddesden Family Holy Communion IDT
18:00 Wield Evensong PR

Readings *Acts 3:12-19 1 John 3:1-7, Luke 24:36-48*

Psalm 4

””

Sunday 21st April 4th Sunday of Easter

9.00 Wield Holy Communion BCP IDT
9:45 Dummer Morning Prayer
10:00 Preston Candover Holy Communion IDT
11.15 Cliddesden Family Service IDT

Readings *Acts 4 5-12 1 John 4:7-21, John 15:1-8*

Psalm 23

””

Sunday 28th April 5th Sunday of Easter

8:30 Bradley Holy Communion CW. IDT
9:45 Dummer Holy Communion CW IDT
11:00 Brown Candover Family Morning Worship JG
11:15 Ellisfield Family Holy Communion IDT

Readings *Acts 8:26-40 1 John 4:17-21, John 15:1-8*

Psalm 22:25-31

””

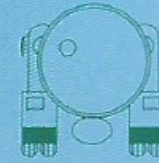
Sunday 5th May 6th Sunday of Easter

08.00 Ellisfield Holy Communion BCP IDT
09:30 Wield Matins PR
09.45 Cliddesden Morning Prayer IDT
10:00 Preston Candover Morning Prayer JG
11:00 Northington Holy Communion IDT
11.15 Dummer Sunday Special

Readings *Acts 10:44-48 1 John 5:1-6 John 15 9-17*

Psalm 98

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Hallo, with our Rector David moving not so much as pastures new but more round the corner the Bishop has asked if I could help out during the interregnum. I retired from being a prison chaplain last year having spent 22 years in HMP Huntercombe. Before that I was a vicar in North London and did curacies in Cornwall and Wales

I'm married with two grown up children and one grandchild who gets spoilt terribly. We have two monochrome cats who don't particularly like each other. My hobbies are sport photography – mainly cricket and rugby and supporting Aldershot Town.

During the interregnum I will be helping with the services but also have two days a week for pastoral support within the Benefice. If you feel there is anything I can help with please feel free have a chat after church or call my mobile number or you can catch me in Cliddesden Church on Tuesday mornings between 09:30 and 10:30.

Looking forward is seeing you around.

Best wishes, Ian

Ian Thacker, Associate Minister
Farleigh, The Candover and Wield
07864 095 435

I had a bit of an odd experience the other day. I went out and actually felt warm. It almost came as a shock when I realised that the sun was shining, there were hardly any clouds in the sky, and it wasn't raining. While this was short lived it still gave hope that after a damp winter there was the promise of some decent weather ahead. Flowers have started to grow and blossom, and things start to feel better.

For some, moving on into Spring can be tricky. Like so many over the pandemic we lost loved ones. My mother, and then both my wife's parents died in what seemed short order. People who have been at the centre of our lives, with whom we celebrated so much were no longer there. The first spring after they died was difficult. We were almost comfortable surrounded by the dampness and cold of winter. To celebrate the arrival of spring almost felt like leaving them behind.

But the world does move on, and so did we. We continue to celebrate the family events and in these they are never far from our thoughts. But for some moving on can be hard and the feeling of being stuck in winter can be a strong one. Help is found in talking about those whom we have lost with family and friends. If that is hard you are welcome talk to your clergy or bereavement support group like Cruse.

Easter, for Christians, is always at the heart of moving on. We stand in the horror of the cross and then rejoice in the promise of a new hope.

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**Volunteers and Sponsors
Wanted
Annual Wield Litter Pick on
Friday 5th April
10.15 at the Village Hall**

The team of volunteers pick up the litter and the sponsors raise funds to maintain our beautiful 12th century village church. £20 for a bag or £50 for a big bag of unmentionables.

Flyers will be delivered with more detail in March but please save the date and join the team on the day.

Queries and suggestions to Nikki Cowley on 01420 562520 or 07860 106 263.nicolacowley@hotmail.co.uk

**Cowslip Day at Blue Ridge Farm, Lower Wield
Sunday 14 April, 2.00pm to 4.30pm**



After a wet, dismal and chilly winter, what better way to cheer yourself up than a walk among wild flowers. An afternoon at Blue Ridge Farm, Lower Wield walking among the cowslips is sure to revive the senses and make you feel

that spring has, at last, sprung.

Following your stroll with a cream tea is just about all you need to set you up for the next week.

All proceeds in aid of Wield WI.
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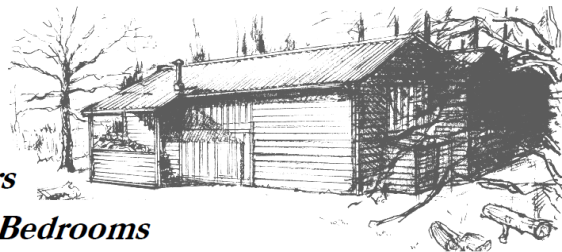
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Church sidesmen and readers

<u>Church</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Sidesmen</u>	<u>Readers</u>
St John's Northington	7 April	Emma and Colin La Fontaine- Jackson.	Emma and Colin La Fontaine- Jackson.
	Easter Sunday	Jane Bryant	
St Peter's Brown	28 April 11.00am	Sue Marriott	Celia Foote Edwin Curtis Hayward
St Marys Preston Candover	7 April 10.00am	Anne Luneburg	Gunnel Berry
	14 April 10.00am	Marina Avis Jane Laws	Marina Avis Celia Foote
	21 April 10.00am	Marina Avis	To be advised
	5 May 10.00am	Anne Luneburg	Gunnel Berry
All Saints Bradley			
St James' Wield	7 April 9.00am	Alwin Hutchinson Allan Futtly	Paul Markilie Amanda Bromfield
	14 April 6.00pm	Robert Grande	Anni-Lou Gibbs Nicola Robinson
	21 April 9.00am	John Lailey	Catherine Simons Alwin Hutchinson
	5 May 9.30am	Brian Collins	Eileen Collins Joanna Nelson (TBC)

Church flowers, cleaning and key holders

St. John's Church Northington			
St Peter's Church Brown Candover	Key Holder	April May	Sue Marriott Rhys Smith
	Flowers	April	Clare Gilmore
All Saints Church Bradley			
St. Mary The Virgin Preston Candover	Flowers	April 6, 13, 20, & 27	Lisa Crosswell
St James' Church Wield	Flowers	April 6 & 13	Nikki Cowley
	Cleaner	Permanent	Michelle & Nicole



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Church Finance or *Who pays for your Church?*

There is a common misunderstanding that the cost of running your local parish church is paid principally by the Church of England and that Sunday collections just add to the pot.

Parish Churches across the country, but especially in rural areas like ours are funded entirely by the generosity of the congregations, to whom we are all very grateful and whose gifts we never take for granted.

The Winchester Diocese has a budgeted expenditure for this year of £11.8 million and a budgeted income of £11.7 million. £9.1 million comes from the Common

Mission Fund (CMF) which is the money paid by parishes to a common pot. The amount each parish pays is determined by the average church attendance numbers (pew persons) and the area's average level of affluence. The rest of the income comes from investments, rental income and grants from the national church central funds.

The Diocese doesn't pay for the cost of Bishops and their housing and it doesn't pay for Winchester Cathedral. Those costs are paid by the Church Commissioners.

The biggest cost is the cost of ministry support: clergy stipends (salaries), their pensions and housing costs, cost of appointments, training expenses and clergy

support. At £8.248 million it accounts for 95% of the CMF income. The other 5% is made up of parish support (there is always someone on the end of the phone if you need help).

Everything else including support for the 100 CofE schools, safeguarding, Communications, the cost of running the diocesan office and finances and the diocesan share of national costs comes from investment and rental income, from fees for weddings and funerals.

The CMF request for our benefice is £115,155. We are part of the Alresford Deanery, and we are the most affluent deanery in the diocese, average weekly giving for the Alresford deanery is £12/week. Southampton is the least affluent deanery but has the highest level of giving per regular giver at £26.14/week.

The Alresford Deanery has the smallest population in the diocese (14,503) and has an average on 1 stipendiary clergy to 3626 of population. Southampton has the largest population (235,542) with a stipendiary cleric ratio to

population of 1:16,356. Of course, in Southampton there are many more other churches besides the CofE.

Alresford Deanery has the highest percentage of population attending church at 2.9%, more than 4 times the level of Southampton.

Besides our CMF request we must maintain and repair our churches, insure, and heat them. Every 5 years we must employ an architect to inspect the fabric of the church and to produce a report listing priorities of work to be carried out.

Who pays for your church? (Cont.)

We have the cost of maintaining our church yards, everyone who lives in the parish has a right to be buried in their church yard or burial ground (they also have the right to get married in their parish church). We have the cost of services, printing, candles, organist etc.

For the Parish of the Candovers with Bradley that includes St. Mary's Preston Candover, All Saints' Bradley and St. Peter's Brown Candover. We have partially re-roofed both All Saints' and St. Peter's in the last 8 years. The cost of this has been funded either by generous donations at the time + grants (All Saints') or from legacy investments from previous benefactors (St. Peter's). A legacy enabled us to renew the heating and lighting system and install an audio/visual system at St. Mary's. In total over £240,000 was spent making sure the churches were in good order for the future. This is in addition to the £19000 annual running costs and the £36000 we are supposed to pay the diocese in CMF.

All the churches in the valley have the same challenges. If you would like to help all our churches use a scheme called Parish Giving (parishgiving.org.uk). You can donate online as a regular giver or one off and, if you are able to gift aid your Donation, Parish Giving will claim the tax back on behalf of the parish.

Julian Gibbons, Treasurer, Parish of the Candovers with Bradley.
Email:allsaintsbradley@gmail.com

The Parish of The Candovers with Bradley

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting and Vestry Meeting will take place in St Mary the Virgin Church, Preston Candover on Tuesday 30th April at 7.30pm.

All parishioners welcome to come and hear what is happening in their churches and the situation regarding a new incumbent. Refreshments will be served.

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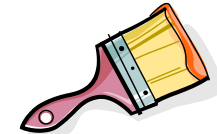
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Lay Vocations Morning

Saturday 6 April, 9.30am – 12.30pm
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Do you think God might be calling you to use your gifts to serve Jesus Christ? But unsure of what your next step might be?

Join Bishop David and the Winchester School of Mission team, to find out more about lay vocations and the pathways available.



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WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO LEARN A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT WE DO.

We are a local charity which provides friendship, emotional and practical support to parents with at least one child under five years old. We are an independent charity affiliated to Home-Start UK, the country’s leading family support charity. We help families from all backgrounds through their most challenging times by offering one to one home visiting support within the home as well as supportive groups which are nurturing and accessible. These are run by paid staff members and volunteers.

We work in a 12-mile radius of Winchester and a large proportion of Home-Start families live in the most deprived areas of the city including Stanmore and Winnall.

We receive referrals from health visitors, GP’s, mental health practitioners, early years practitioners, specialist workers and therapists and some families self-refer.

Our volunteers are recruited from the local community. They come from different backgrounds and range from 24 to 84 years. All have parenting experience and are DBS checked. They are thoroughly trained, supported, and supervised to exacting Home-Start UK standards. They receive safeguarding training every year.

The charity is overseen by 2 patrons and a board of trustees drawn from the local community. The board meet 4 times a year and are responsible for the overall management of the scheme.

In order to give children the best possible start in life, Home-Start aims to:

- improve children’s health, well-being and development
- reduce family isolation and increase social support networks
- encourage parents physical and emotional well-being
- affirm and develop skills in parenting
- enrich the home environment
- increase access to health, education and community services

What our parents say:

“My volunteer helped me to be the parent I wanted to be.”

“It’s hard to comprehend how life would have been if Home-Start hadn’t been involved. I was feeling overwhelmed with life. Home-Start, and my volunteer, helped me find a way through it.

“My volunteer never told me what to do, but she helped me realise what I wanted to be and gave me the belief to make it happen. She always made sure I knew how important I was.

’You couldn’t have picked a better volunteer for me, they were my lifeline.’

If you would like more information or would like to consider becoming a Friend, volunteer or trustee please be in contact – info@home-startwinchester.org.uk or www.home-startwinchester.org.uk

It’s still not too late to book an appointment with one of our practice nurse team for MMR, MenACWY, Shingles & Pneumonia.

If you have the NHS App you can view all your immunisation on your health record.

If your unsure if you are eligible for immunisations visit; NHS vaccinations and when to have them - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

COVID- Spring boosters

The practice will be offering the spring boosters COVID-19 from the 22nd April. COVID is more serious in older people and in people with certain underlying health conditions. For these reasons, people aged 75 years and over, those in care homes, and those aged 5 years and over with a weakened immune system are being offered a spring booster of COVID-19 vaccine.

You should be offered an appointment between April and June, with those at highest risk being called in first.

You will be invited to have your booster around 6 months from your last dose, but you can have it from 3 months.

If you are turning 75 years of age between April and June, you will be called for vaccination during the campaign; you do not have to wait for your birthday.

Stress Awareness Month 2024 is observed annually in April

This year’s theme, #LittleByLittle, emphasises the transformative impact of consistent, small positive actions on overall well-being. Even seemingly minor steps taken daily toward self-care and stress reduction can yield significant improvements in mental health over time. Here are some practical suggestions to incorporate into your routine:

- Connect with someone: Check in with your support network or connect with someone new. A sense of belonging and community can help reduce feelings of loneliness.
- Go outside: Spending time outdoors can have a positive impact on mental well-being.
- Get moving: Physical activity, even in small increments, contributes to stress reduction.
- Be mindful: Practice mindfulness techniques to stay present and manage stress.
- Breathe deep: Deep breathing exercises can help calm the mind.
- Prioritise sleep: Make small adjustments to your bedtime routine. Wind down by minimising screen time, creating a tech-free bedroom environment, and jotting down thoughts to set aside for the next day.
- House Analogy: Think of building mental well-being like constructing a house—one brick at a time. Each small action, such as taking deep breaths during a stressful moment or expressing gratitude daily, serves as a foundation for resilience.
- Ball Analogy: Just a 1mm change in the angle direction of a rolling ball can alter its trajectory significantly. Similarly, small positive actions accumulate and create a remarkable outcome over time.
- The Butterfly Effect + The Positive Ripple Effect: Lorenz’s butterfly effect theory highlights how seemingly insignificant initial changes can lead to significant consequences. Your small efforts contribute to a positive ripple effect in your life.

Remember, even the tiniest steps matter, and collectively, they build a stronger foundation for mental well-being. If you’re feeling stressed, consider checking your stress levels and explore ways to manage stress throughout the month.

For more information and resources related to Stress Awareness Month 2024, you can visit The Stress Management Society; www.stress.org.uk



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Good Friday & Easter Monday closure

Please make sure you have sufficient supplies of your usual medications to last over the bank holiday period which you can order in a number of ways;

- In person at the surgery
- By post
- Via the NHS APP or Patient Access

The surgery will be closed on Friday 29th March and Monday 2nd April. If you need urgent medical care you can access the Out of Hours service for advice, a face to face appointment or, if it is necessary, a home visit & the number to call is 111.

e-Consults will not be able to be submitted after 6.30pm on Thursday 28th March & will not restart again until 8am on Tuesday 3rd April.

Veteran Practice

This means that, as part of the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, we have a dedicated Clinician, Dr. Hannah Harring, you can read Hannah's statement here, who has specialist knowledge of military related health conditions and veteran specific health services. This is important in helping ex-forces to get the best care and treatment. If you are ex-forces, please let your GP know to help ensure you are getting the best possible care.

A veteran is someone who has served in the British Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) for at least one day. Veterans also include any member of the Merchant Marine who has served in a war zone. This includes crew from convoys in World War 2 and more recently in the Falklands conflict and Gulf Wars.

About 18,000 service people move back into civilian life every year and whilst most of these individuals have similar levels of health to the general population, around 2,000 leave on medical grounds. The top reasons for medical discharge are for issues relating to back, knees, mental health, and hearing.

Being accredited means that a practice can better identify and treat veterans, refer them, where appropriate, to dedicated NHS services (such as the Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison service (TILS), the Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS) and the Veterans' Trauma Network) and capture better epidemiological data to improve future health provision. It also means that the NHS is better able to meet the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, whereby the Armed Forces community, including veterans, should face no disadvantage in accessing health services and should receive priority care for military attributable conditions, subject to clinical need.

If you are a veteran, please let us know!

World Immunisation week – 24th- 30th April

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Fauré and Karl Jenkins

Saturday 18th May 2024
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Hampshire Choral Festival

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Sam Brown

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St John’s Church, Northington

on

Sunday, April 28th 2024

at 5.30pm

Ticket Price £10 – interval refreshment included and available on the door.

We very much look forward to seeing you as all funds raised will go towards the Organ Conservation and Restoration Project

All members of the family are welcome.



WEATHERWISE By Simon Bourne

Summary of weather observations taken at Northington Down in February 2024

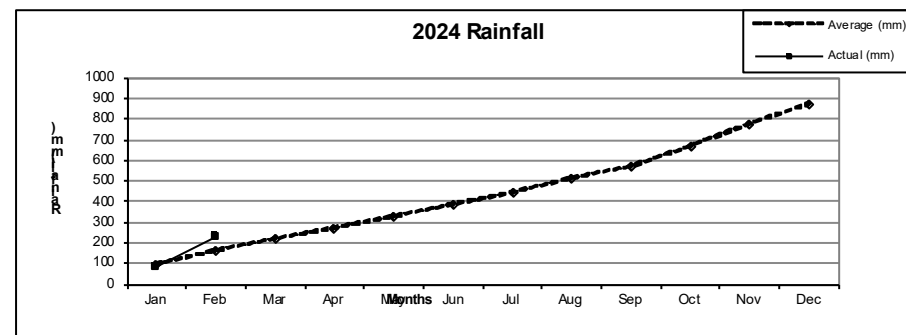
Temperatures (degrees centigrade/Fahrenheit)

Highest	15.1/59	(15 th)
Lowest	-3.8/25	(24 th)
Warmest Night	9.1/48	(15 th)
Coollest Day	6.5/44	(7 th)
Average maximum temperature	10.9/52	
Average minimum temperature	3.9/39	
Number of air frosts	5	

Rainfall (millimetres/inches)

Monthly total	140.9/5.55	(average 68.2/2.69)
Annual total	229.0/9.02	(average 163.2/6.43)
Maximum 24hr. rainfall	25.8/1.02	(8 th)
Number of days with rain	22	

Summary There was a bright start with sunny weather and light frost on the first of the month, but dull and mild weather followed with drizzle and light rain at times, and over an inch of rain on the 8th. This theme continued but with more sun in the middle of the second week and sunny spells in the third. It was wet and windy on the 21st and 22nd then more rain on the 25th with a cold northerly fresh to strong breeze the following morning. Temperatures dipped below average for a few days from the 23rd with the coldest at 25°F occurred the following night. The average temperature was 4°F above the seasonal norm and the second mildest in over two decades. There was rain on most days and the total was over twice the normal figure for February. The winter season was mild and wet with a third more rainfall than usual.



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Vox Lucis Concert, Sunday, April 28th 2024 5.30pm St John's Church, Northington

For this final concert in support of the organ restoration fund at St John's, Northington, Vox Lucis has chosen a handful of pieces from the most influential and innovative composers of the 15th and 16th centuries. We begin with Guillaume Dufay – *Urbs Beata Jerusalem*.

Settings of two Marian Antiphons, *Alma Redemptoris Mater* and *Ave Maria*, represent the work of Josquin des Prez – the most famous composer between Dufay and Palestrina. Our selection of *Miserere Nostri* and *If ye Love Me*, by Thomas Tallis illustrate the very different styles in which he was accomplished. *Sicut Cervus* must be one of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina's best loved works so could not be left out and his setting of *Alma Redemptoris Mater* is a Vox Lucis favourite. Orlando di Lasso (Lassus) stands with William Byrd, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and Tomas Luis de Victoria as leading composers of the later Renaissance. The pieces we have chosen – *Veni dilecta me*, *Justorum Anima*, *Miserere Mei* and *O Quam Gloriosum* – represent their mature polyphonic styles.

We are joined, for this concert, by Sam Brown, a renowned lutenist, who will perform pieces by another genius of Renaissance music, John Dowland. His works – written mainly for accompanied or unaccompanied lute - are ideally suited to the beautiful setting of St John's and complement Vox Lucis' polyphonic pieces perfectly.

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Walking with Wildlife, Robert Bryant

On Valentine's Day, the blackthorn bloomed - a key event in nature's calendar, occurring quite early this year, being mild and wet. The wayside winter hedges, clipped and trimmed, were sprinkled white with blackthorn flowers, while blackthorn shrubs defy the drizzle to billow chalk-white from sombre woodland edges.

A few days later, dodging the showers, I head along to Micheldever Woods to check the pools and puddles for early frogspawn. The low winter sunshine lights up the smooth grey-green trunks of the beech trees. Flocks of chaffinches, plus a few bramblings, lift off from the leafy woodland floor as I walk up to a favourite pool – to find it blobby with fresh frogspawn.

While carrying out farmland bird surveys, both at Northington Down and along at Chilton Down, we were intrigued to find wintering woodlarks. Along with the spring songs of robins and a song thrush, a woodlark sang from a perch high in the trees at both locations. Although found mainly in the New Forest and over in the Thames Basin Heaths, woodlarks also occur on our wooded downlands and are noted for their melodious song, reflected in their scientific name *Lullula arborea*.

Common yews feature strongly in the winter landscape of the Candovers; being native to the chalk downs, they are widely spread in local woods and hedgerows, as well as some solitary specimens on the skyline. Some are planted to create avenues of great character as at Chilton Manor Farm or those leading from St. John's to Northington Grange. Each tree is generally either male or female. In February, the males develop a yellowish tinge as masses of their tiny flowers become laden with pollen. It is quite a sight to view clouds of pollen drifting from these trees on the slightest breeze, as if smoke from a bonfire.

While taking a lunchtime stroll, I was amused by the antics of five brown hares chasing each other at top-speed across a back field. Two large doe hares seemed to be able to easily outpace their ardent suitors.

Robert Bryant
5th March '24



THE HAMPSHIRE VET

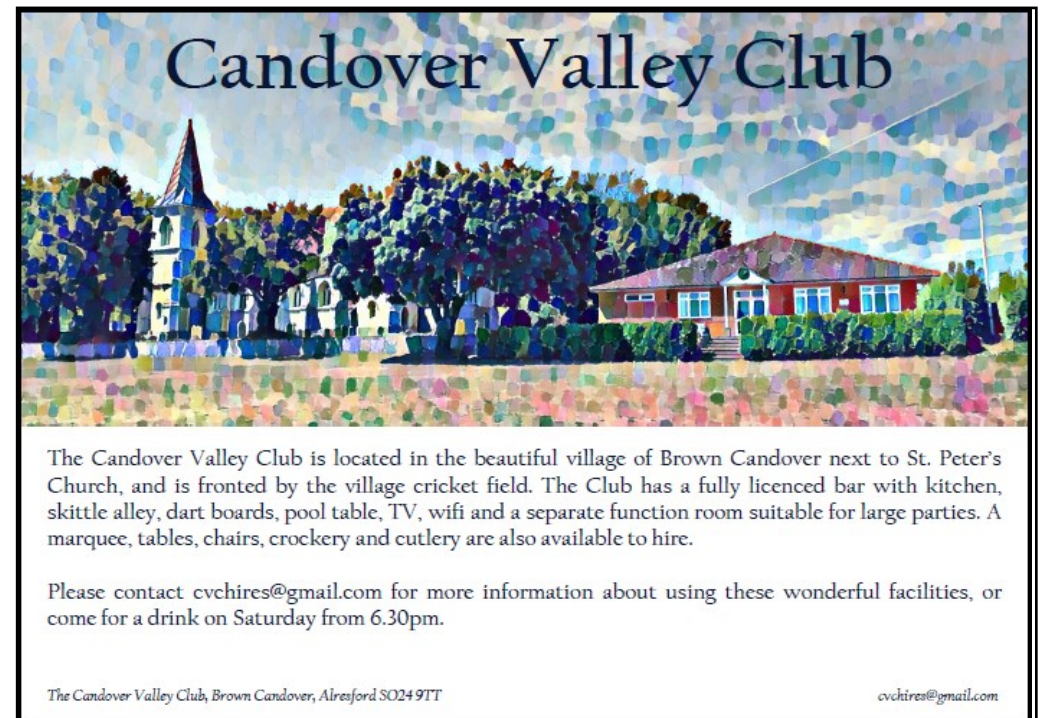
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Please contact cvchires@gmail.com for more information about using these wonderful facilities, or come for a drink on Saturday from 6.30pm.

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The Candover Valley Choir is always interested in hearing from potential new singers interested in joining.

The Choir performs a wide repertoire including classical, contemporary, and popular music

This is an ideal time to join the choir, as we set out on the new programme for 2024. If you would like to know more about the **Candover Valley Choir** or would like to come and try us out (there are no auditions), **do contact:**

Julian Jones, Choir Chairman, on:

juliang.jones@btinternet.com

or

Jane Bryant, Music Director

bryantjane50@gmail.com

[07740 871341](tel:07740871341)

REHEARSALS TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAYS AT 7.45



Candover Valley Gardening Club

We had a very interesting talk last month from Tim Woodland. Generally, we tend to think of bulb planting in the autumn for Spring colour, tulips, daffodils, etc. Tom, however, gave us some wonderful ideas of bulbs and tubers to plant now for summer/autumn colour. Amongst other ideas he had some beautiful examples of dahlias which are having a moment in the limelight after years of anonymity! The colour they provide in late summer is really welcome. Needless to say, members were very keen to purchase from the items Tim brought along.

Our April meeting will bring a new programme for the year 2024/25. Our first speaker is Catherine Leonard who will be speaking to us about her work with the National Trust, 'A Garden World – Introducing the global family of National Trusts and some of the gardens in its care'.

Our indoor meetings are held at 7.30pm in Preston Candover Village Hall on the third Thursday of the month. If you would like to join us at any time, guests are very welcome for a small fee and, of course, we always welcome new members. The annual subscription will remain at £12 pp and I hope you will agree this is extremely good value for 7 talks, 4 garden visits and a summer social event.

You can find us on Facebook – Candover Valley Gardening Club



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On the Farm - Ben Robinson

Lambing is now in full swing and has mostly been going well. We man the lambing shed 24 hours a day for around 17 days- the ewe’s first cycle. After the 18th day the lambing frequency drops off significantly. At the peak 35-40 ewes a day will lamb, requiring penning up and turning out after 36-48 hours inside.

Though wet, the weather hasn’t been cold, and lambs have been turned out into the fields in decent enough conditions. On more inclement days we have trialled ‘lamb macs’, a piece of biodegradable plant-based plastic that provides protection for lambs at their most vulnerable stage. The jury is currently out on them, but it is worth testing out new ideas and products as and when they become available.

We have had around 25 fit and healthy ewes who have had strong lambs but whose milk has dropped off very quickly a few days after birth. Following blood tests on the ewe by the vet this was confirmed as Schmallenberg, a midge borne disease that has become prevalent in Western Europe over the past decade. The ewes would have been bitten back in September/October. Luckily for us this is a very mild manifestation of the disease compared to other farms. Many early lambing flocks have been much more adversely affected with substantial numbers of newborn lambs born severely deformed and having to be euthanised at birth. The Schmallenberg also explains our disappointing scanning results; 160% rather than the 180-190% that we normally hope for. The ewes that have had Schmallenberg are now immune to it for around four years. However, it is debatable that it is worth keeping on ewes without enough milk to rear a lamb for a whole year. Usually, ewes that do not rear a lamb are sold as culls as soon as they are fit.

The incessantly wet weather has made it impossible to drill any Spring crops. Frustrating as this is from an arable perspective the silver lining is that it has allowed me to leave the hoggets on the stubble turnips for much longer than is normally possible. At a time of record sheep meat prices every kilo put on a hogget carcass at this time of year is well worth it.

I am writing this while waiting for the inspector to arrive and carry out our annual inspection for the JCB forklift and its associated attachments such as muck grabs, grain buckets and bale handling equipment. Regular checks ensure the machinery will perform effectively and remains safe to use.

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Swarraton and Northington WI



Ferrets wearing bandanas and pink frilly skirts, a drunken goat and snakes and lizards - just a few of the more unusual patients treated by veterinary surgeon Gillian Taylor who described her work in an entertaining talk to members at their March meeting.

Although her parents hoped that she would become a lawyer or a teacher, the books by James Herriot inspired her and she qualified in 1984 when few women became vets.

In a 38-year career working with small animals, 18 of those with PDSA, she encountered many pets with strange tastes, notably dogs who enjoyed eating towels, dishcloths, stones and pegs and cats who favoured needles. After what was obviously an enjoyable career Gillian is now a trustee of Canine Partners, finding puppies suitable to become 'help dogs' trained to help with up to 70 tasks.

The next Days for Girls sewing session will be on Tuesday 9th April from 2-4.30 p.m. at Old Alresford Village Hall. The last session was so productive that 50 kits have been sent off to the Halo Trust which is working to clear land mines in Sri Lanka.

Our next outing is to Longstock Water Gardens on Thursday 23rd May, followed by lunch at the Mayfly near Stockbridge.

The next meeting, to which new members are always welcome, is at Northington Village Hall on Tuesday 2nd April at 2 p.m, titled "Tea & Reminiscences" by members, and the May meeting is Tuesday 7th May.

Last chance to grab a community grant.

Do you want to protect, enhance, or celebrate your local chalk stream? The Watercress and Winterbournes scheme offers grants of up to £5,000 for community-led projects focusing on the Candover Brook, Cheriton Stream, Bourne Rivulet, Pillhill Brook, River Arle, Upper Anton, or Upper Test. The grant scheme closes permanently this November, so now is the perfect time to act!

Your project must focus on at least one of the above streams and must have one of the following aims. It could improve the condition of locally important chalk stream habitats, or their associated built heritage. It could also enable people to explore, enjoy and learn about the streams' natural and cultural heritage. The proposed activities should be accessible to, or beneficial for, the public.

We'd love to hear from passionate groups of people who want to bring their project idea to life. You might be part of a school, a parish council, a registered charity, or a Community Interest Company. Voluntary and community groups are also welcome to apply, if you're constituted and have your own bank account. If successful, you'll have one year to complete your activities.

The projects we've funded so far have been varied. Grant recipients have included Hampshire Bat Group, New Alresford Town Trust, Andover Trees United, and Whitchurch Conservation Group. They've installed bat boxes, created information boards, published educational booklets, and run a range of engagement events. Since 2021, we've awarded almost £30,000 of funding.

The current funding round closes on 15th July, and the final round closes on 4th November. We recommend expressing interest as soon as possible, so that we can help with your application. You can find more information, including details of eligibility criteria, by visiting hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes/communitygrants. Our work is made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Free Online Talks

'An Introduction to Floodplain Meadows'

25th April, 7pm

Floodplain meadows bring beauty and biodiversity to the landscape, but many have been lost over time. How can we restore these habitats?

'The Role of the River Keeper'

14th May, 7pm

Often responsible for habitat management in fisheries, river keepers can play a crucial role in protecting our precious chalk streams.

Book your tickets at hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes.

Photo courtesy Ross Hoddinott



The Yard Hampshire Friday 12th April | Doors open at 7pm

Zoe Barnett is a dynamic and accomplished musician and a proud D'addario Artist. Her distinctive contributions to the classical guitar world is her innovative technique of performing standing up, a method that has been described as 'a total engagement and communication of the performer's mind, body, and soul.' Her performance promises a dynamic and immersive experience for her audiences. Zoe will be playing a guitar crafted by the Wimbledon-based luthier Nick Branwell.

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From Steve Brine, MP for Winchester, Alresford & Itchen Valley
0207 219 7189 (House of Commons) Email: steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk

It may not have been the wettest March on record but water has been everywhere again recently courtesy of **Southern Water**.

Whether it be the ongoing national concern about combined storm overflows (where the system does exactly that in heavy downpours to prevent waste material coming up your bath/toilet), water supply problems - or the cyber-attack which saw customers personal data stolen by criminal gangs - it's been another difficult period for our water company.

Through my casework of course, I maintain extremely close contact with Southern Water but periodically I sit down with their top team to look them in the eye and put many of the issues constituents bring to me.

I met with CEO Lawrence Gosden to see how the 'Storm overflow discharge reduction plan', brought about by the Environment Act is being made real in our area. It requires water companies to make their largest infrastructure spend in water company history to increase capacity and is backed by up to £56 billion capital investment.

The Environment Agency and Ofwat have launched the largest ever criminal and civil investigations into waste-water treatment works and they've dramatically increased funding for EA inspections via the 'Plan for Water'. See my explainer stevebrine.com/factorfake-waterquality

On a connected issue, the past two Winters have seen constituents hampered by disruptions to the water supply, stemming from issues at Otterbourne and Easton Water Supply Works. I robustly criticised Southern Water at the time so am now welcoming the investment which hopes to reduce chances of a repeat. And to that, SW have announced the 'Southampton Link Main' which seeks to connect Otterbourne Water Supply Works with Andover and Testwood, ensuring water can be swiftly moved around the network in line with demand as part of what's called the 'Hampshire Grid'.

I can shout and grandstand on these issue but my job is to secure openness and honesty from providers such as Southern Water while leaving them in no doubt we need to see significant progress in all areas. I've left them with plenty of homework for the coming months and will be keeping extremely close tabs on it all.

Finally, as I know many of you will have seen, I was at the centre of a very high-profile story recently as the Health Select Committee I chair, published a long-awaited report on **assisted suicide/assisted dying**. Our 14-month inquiry aimed to produce a comprehensive report to inform MPs as/when/if we are asked to formally consider any proposals to change the law. You can read all about it at stevebrine.com/ASAD

You can find more on these subjects, and my wider work as our MP, at fb.com/stevebrinemp and stevebrine.com



As a County Councillor, every day is different, and visiting Micheldever on World Book Day, I saw a Dalmation, Barbie, Spiderman and several Harry Potters! I also went to say hello to Rajeev at Micheldever Shop. Please pop in - he has a good range of merchandise, including milk *and* wine!

Like all village shops, the best and only way to make sure they thrive is to spend money there. These oranges were delicious!

Train journeys have been fraught this month with a lot of cancelled trains, delays, and broken journeys, so it was a pleasure to be at the first anniversary of the Platform 1 café at Shawford Station. The renovation was carried out by the Community Rail Partnership, using capital from several funders including Southwestern Railway and Winchester City Council. It's a great place to visit, even if you aren't catching the train. Marco sells ice cream too; it's a lovely spot to start a walk back to Winchester, and again, good to support an independent local business.

School Crossing Patrols provide so much more than just a safe crossing point. The SCP's watch out for children and keep an eye on the area too. They know the school environment and the families who cross there regularly and can pick up the concerns if there's a stranger on the scene, or a child is unhappy. Hampshire County Council is proposing more cuts to these patrols including at the Church Lane crossing point in Kings Worthy. I hope that HCC sees sense so the 'Lollipop Gang' will still be at school entrances in future years.

Good news: Perin's School will have a new unit for five SEND children in September, growing to 15 pupils in the next three years. But I am becoming increasingly concerned at the pressure that is mounting on parents of children with Special Needs whose needs can only be served using an Educational and Health Care Plan (EHCP). I am asked to intervene in too many cases of children who are left to learn at home, schooled online for a few hours a week, because Hampshire's Education Authority doesn't have a suitable place for them in a Hampshire school. Despite being an outstanding authority, too often, social work support just doesn't work well enough with education to get children into school, nor enough hours in the day for the social workers to work with the children frequently. HCC must challenge the schools to provide the best support they can for a good education. The price of this support is mammoth-and Hampshire seems to be sinking under the cost and availability of staff, putting lives of children at risk. If this affects your family, please contact me.

Flood alerts continued through February and into March: by the time you read this it should be drier. The Flood Action Group in Sutton Scotney has worked hard on their plans to protect the village I'm sure that residents are grateful for their reassurance and others are inspired to re-establish Flood Action Groups for other communities affected in this way.. Thankyou SSFAG!

Cllr. Jackie Porter:

01962 791054, Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk website www.jackieporter.co.uk

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community made

Social media and the store

In a move to market the store to a wider audience and build its social media presence, a local business, Worry Less Design has been tasked by the CVCS committee to revamp the look of our pages and posts on Facebook and Instagram, linking them to our recently updated website. The company, based in Ellisfield, is run by Caroline and Christie who take over the role from Anna Hoyle.

For almost five years Anna has done a magnificent job by regularly keeping all aspects of store news in the social media spotlight. Thank you, Anna, for over 400 posts on Instagram alone!

Welcome back Becky!

A familiar face has reappeared at the store! Weekend customers are likely to be greeted by Becky Jackson who will be managing some Sunday shifts. Having moved away to another part of Hampshire at the end of last summer, Becky, who has long and strong links with Preston Candover, missed the village and the buzz of the store so much that she wanted to come back.

She said, "I love where we're living but there is no shop and no real social hub and I realise how important that is to a community."

It's good to have you back with us Becky and taking your comments on board, it makes us appreciate our store all the more.

May bank holidays

On the two May bank holidays this year (Monday 6 and Monday 27 May) the store will be open 08.30 – 12.30pm and the post office will be closed.

On This Day in Wield

April Manor of Wield

A court Baron, of the Right Hon, George Lord Rodney, Lord of the Manor, will be holden at Wield, on Tuesday the ninth day of May next in the forenoon, of which the Tenants and others having business, are desired to take Notice, and transmit instructions for any Acts of Court, to the Steward, in Winchester, in the meantime.

William Faithfull- Steward – Winchester 21 April 1809.

To be sold by Auction Winchester April 25 1808

In one or more Lots on Saturday the 28th day of May next at the Swan Inn Alresford, punctually at Three O'clock, on Conditions then to be produced.

A most desirable Freehold Estate, part of Lower Wield Farm, situate in the parish of Wield, and County of Hants, about five miles from Alton, six from Basingstoke, and fourteen from Winton in the occupation of William Budd, whose term will expire at Michaelmas next.

The Estate consists of a newly erected Farmhouse of brick and tile, having a parlour, kitchen, back kitchen, bed chambers, and garrets, a milk house, and a very good underground cellar in good repair, with convenient out-buildings, and a cottage and garden. Together with about 112Acres ,1Rood 26 perch of land statute measure. For particulars apply at Mr Faithfull's Office, Winchester, where a plan may be seen. Mr Windibank, the woodward at Wield, has also a plan and will shew the Estate.



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