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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).*

Disclaimer

The Editorial team takes no responsibility for any information given or views expressed in the Oxdrove and will not be held liable for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from the use of information and advertisements in this publication.

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 5th May 6th Sunday of Easter

08.00	Ellisfield	Holy Communion BCP IDT
09:30	Wield	Holy Communion BCP IDT
09.45	Cliddesden	Morning Prayer PR
10:00	Preston Candover	Morning Prayer JG
11:00	Northington	Holy Communion IDT
11.15	Dummer	Sunday Special
<i>Readings</i>	<i>Acts 10:44-48</i>	<i>1 John 5:1-6 John 15 9-17</i>

Psalm 98

” ”

Sunday 12th May 7th Sunday of Easter

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

*Readings Acts 1:15-17,21-end, 1 John 5:9-13,
John 17:6-19*

Psalm 45

Sunday 19th May Pentecost IDT away

9.00 Wield Morning prayer JG please note swap
9:45 Dummer Morning Prayer LH/CPT
10:00 Preston Candover Family Service AL
11.15 Cliddesden Family Service PR

*Readings Acts 2:1-21, Romans 8:22-27,
John 15:26-27,16:4-15*

Psalm 104

Sunday 26th May Trinity Sunday IDT away

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

Readings Isaiah 6:1-8, Romans 8:12-17, John 3:10-17

Psalm 29

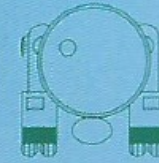
Sunday 2nd June 1st Sunday after Trinity

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 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 2 Corinthians 4:5-12,
Mark 2:23-3:6*

Psalm 139

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Message from David and Ruth

Ruth and I would like to thank every one for their kind notes, comments and gifts as we left the Benefice.

We were very touched by your kindness and grateful for the time we had to live amongst you and serve the churches.

We are not far away and will no doubt our paths will cross from time to time and look forward to hearing news!

With deep appreciation

David and Ruth

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The Annual Buried Church Service will take place on Sunday 16th June at St. Nicholas, Chilton Candover at 6.30pm followed by refreshments at the Yard.

Verge Clear-Up Preston Candover 27th March

The annual verge clear-up of ditches and grass verges in Preston Candover village and surrounding roads took place on the 27th of March.

We collected 10 black bags (2023=16 bags; 2022 =23bags) of rubbish thrown on the road verges including broken off cars-parts, rubber gloves, plastic & glass bottles, wrappers, paper cups etc. but not a single plastic bag (!) from Dummer Road, Axford, Berrydown Lane, Bradley road, Wield road to recreation ground, Alresford road to Chilton Candover and Bugmore Hill road.

A huge thank you to those who braved the weather and helped along the way!

Message from Ian

Once of the nice things about being retired is having a bit more time to catch up on some reading. I've had a book about Nelson Mandela on the bookshelf I've wanted to read for ages, and now I'm not commuting to Oxford and back each day finally have the time to look at it. It was gripping stuff. It filled me in awe of the man's ability as he left Robben Island to look for a way that a volatile nation on the brink of civil war could lay the foundations for peace.


On a totally different scale, each one of us faces things in our lives that either have changed or are about to change. For some the change will be obvious and joyful. There is a whole host of people getting married or having children within the Benefice this Summer. There will be some of us who face career changes or alternative options in our lives can lead to a positive outcome.

For others the change is less welcome. Losing a job, seeing children leave home, getting older or falling ill change our lives. This month we've lost two key members of the Cliddesden community, and the impact on their families' lives will be painful and long lasting.

Change always carried a risk. Mandela was aware that to fail to bring change acceptable to both communities in South Africa was something that would be counted in cost of lives if he got it wrong.

Three things that were at the core of Mandela's approach. Firstly, he always aimed for the best result, secondly he held onto what he knew to be true and finally he listened to people he trusted.


If you are facing an uncertain time and need someone to talk to, talk to your mates, that is that they are there for. If you feel we can help in the churches, please don't be afraid to ask.



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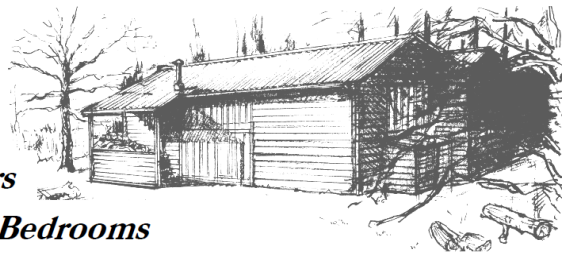
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Church sidesmen and readers

<u>Church</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Sidesmen</u>	<u>Readers</u>
St John's Northington		Mark Ashburton	
St Peter's Brown	25 May 11.00am	Celia Foote	Ed Daniells Rhys Smith
St Marys Preston Candover	5 May 10.00	Anne Luneburg	Gunnel Berry
	12 May 10.00	Marina Avis Gunnel Berry	Marina Avis Sue Marriott
	19 May 10.00	Anne Luneburg	To be advised
	2 June 10.00	Anne Luneburg	Jane Laws
All Saints Bradley			
St James' Wield	5 May 9.30am	Brian Collins	Eileen Collins Joanna Nelson
	12 May 6.00pm	Barbar Wells	Roger Fidgen Barbara Wells
	19 May 9.00am	Alwin Hutchinson	Catherine Simmons Alwin Hutchinson
	2 June 9.30am	Brian Collins Allan Futtly	Amanda Bromfield David Cowley

Church flowers, cleaning and key holders

St. John's Church Northington			
St Peter's Church Brown Candover	Key Holder	May	Rhys Smith
	Flowers	May	Alison Ellett
All Saints Church Bradley			
St. Mary The Virgin Preston Candover	Flowers		
St James' Church Wield	Flowers	May 4 & 11 May 18 & 25	Anni-Lou Gibbs Nicola Robinson
	Cleaner	Permanent	Michelle & Nicole



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LOCAL BEEKEEPERS URGE THE PUBLIC TO JOIN FIGHT AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE INVASIVE SPECIES

- Beekeepers across Hampshire are calling on the public to help spot and report Asian Hornet sightings as we head towards spring. The destructive insect poses the greatest threat to our native honey bees in a generation.
- Experts warn there could be catastrophic consequences for the UK's wider ecology if the insects are allowed to become established here.
- Asian Hornets can become aggressive when defending nests, posing a risk to public health.
- More nests were discovered in 2023 than in the previous six years combined.
- The cost to the economy in France, where Asian Hornets have become established, is estimated to be in excess of £26 million every year.

Local members of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) are calling on the public to be vigilant and look out for Asian Hornets and nests as we head into the warmer months.

Asian Hornets are an incredibly destructive invasive species that specialise in preying on honeybee hives - one Asian Hornet alone can kill 30-60 honeybees per day. First discovered in the UK in 2016, the insect has travelled to our shores from northern Europe, where there are now over half a million nests annually in France alone.

By 2022, just 16 Asian Hornet nests had been discovered in this country. But in 2023, this increased dramatically to 72 nests in 56 different locations, with Kent and the Southeast most predominantly affected. But there have been sightings in many other locations, including as far north as Scotland, and a credible sighting already reported in January this year, sparking fears the non-native insect may become established in the UK.

Experts are keen to point out that this is not just a problem for beekeepers but poses a significant risk to public health. Asian Hornets are aggressively defensive of their nests, which are often built in hedgerows and brambles, meaning disturbances by unsuspecting individuals could have dangerous consequences.

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An Asian Hornet can be identified by its very distinct markings - they're a similar size to a European Hornet, which is two or three times the size of a common wasp and are black with distinct yellow lower leg.

The public are being urged to stay vigilant and encouraged to report any suspected sightings on the Asian Hornet Watch app, which is available to download on iOS and Android.

Expert teams from the National Bee Unit, part of Defra, will then be deployed to track hornets back to their nests, which are then destroyed.

Reporting a possible sighting of an Asian Hornet is quick, free, and easy and has the potential to make a huge difference in the fight against this invasive species.

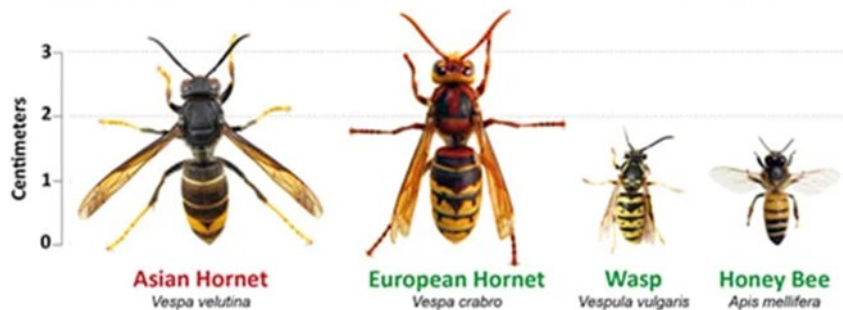
Members of the Meon Valley Beekeepers' Association are available for interview: please contact our Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) leader - Linda on asian-hornet@meonvalleybeekeepers.co.uk.

Further information including how to identify Asian Hornets, and the latest updates, can be found on the BBKA and National Bee Unit websites here:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk>

<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com>

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



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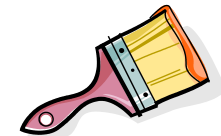
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On This Day in Wield

May

28 May 1881`

Wield Board School

Wanted, about 11th August-A second class CERTIFICATED MISTRESS. Average attendance about 35. Salary £40 and half grant. Good, unfurnished House and garden. Three miles from Medstead Station. Application, with copies of testimonials to MH Moss, Clerk to the Wield School Board.

15 May 1830

Ten Guineas Reward

Lost, from a meadow at Upper Wield, during the night of Thursday last, or early the following morning- A Bay Hackney Gelding, with black mane and tail about 14 hands and a half high, 9 years old, a slight collar mark on both shoulders, and on the off side of the back with the saddle; a little fulness in the near fetter lock joint before.

Whoever will bring the same to H Complin, Upper Wield, if strayed shall be rewarded for the trouble; and if stolen, shall on conviction, receive Five Guineas, over and above Five Guineas from the Alresford Association, on application to Messrs Dunn and Hopkins, solicitors.

14 May 1898

Wield

Band Festival: We hear that the Wield Band intend holding their annual festival on Saturday, the 18th inst, and that they are engaged to play at Brighton on Whit Monday, and Brown Candover Hampshire Friendly Society Festival on the following Thursday.

17th May 1890

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19th May 1888

A Stray Horse

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Saturday 18th May 2024

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Hampshire Choral Festival

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Sarisbury Choral Society, Twyford Singers,
Winchester City Festival Choir
Mark Dancer (organ)
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Conductor David Burgess

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Thank you.

Abusive patients

Sadly, our reception team have been on the receiving end of some abusive behaviour. This can be very demoralising for the team and affects their own well-being. Please be kind.

Help us focus on you.

We have the right to refuse treatment and take further action against anyone who threatens the safety of our staff & our patients. Thank you.

Did Not Attend - Missed Appointments

- People not turning up to their appointments - something called a “DNA” or “Did Not Attend”.
- In February, we recorded 65 missed appointments, across both the Doctor & Nursing teams. These appointments could have been utilised for others.
- We understand that life gets in the way sometimes, and things change. Any notice you can provide, even last minute, will enable your appointment to be offered to somebody else.

Please remember to change or cancel your appointment if you are not able to attend.

Please **do not** rely solely on text message appointment reminders from the practice as this is not a fail-safe system!

What service should I use?

Whether it's knowing when to visit your GP, heading to a pharmacy for expert advice, or dialling 111 for urgent medical help, making the right choice ensures you get the care you need and frees up emergency services for people who really need them.

Remember these simple steps:

1. Self-Care: Minor illnesses like coughs, colds, or headaches
2. Pharmacy First: sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bites, impetigo, shingles, UTIs and other non-urgent conditions
3. Book a GP Appointment: For non-urgent concerns or ongoing issues
4. Minor Injury Unit: Minor burns, sprains or other non-life threatening injuries
5. A&E: Life-threatening emergency

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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!

Bank holiday closures 6th & 27th May

The surgery will be closed for the bank holiday weekend from 6.30pm Friday 3rd May until 8am on Tuesday 7th May then again from 6.30pm Friday 24th May until 8am on Tuesday 28th May.

Covid spring booster programme

COVID-19 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 with a weakened immune system are being offered a spring COVID-19 vaccine.

Those eligible will be contact by the surgery either by text message or telephone call. The vaccination will take place at the surgery unless the patient is residing in a care home or is housebound. In order to keep our phone lines free, please do not contact us until you have been invited.

Off the Beaten Track



Bank Holiday Monday 6th May Farleigh Wallop

A 5k walk, partly on private land, through bluebell woods, by kind permission of Viscount Lymington

£5 per adult £1 per child up to 16

Dogs on leads welcome *** Muddy at some points! Raffle *** Cake & squash to purchase halfway

CPRE North Hants District Group

The team thought you would like to know what we have been involved with during January, February and March.

Basingstoke and Deane Draft Local Plan - the response to the Draft Local Plan consultation has been the focus of recent activity. Support from a planning consultant, to apply our responses to the position statements of CPRE Hampshire, allowed us to concentrate on individual sites detailed in the plan. We have objected to the proposed 'garden village' at Popham airfield but supported the development of a 'brownfield site' at Overton Mill. We also objected to the inclusion of warehousing at junction 7 of the M3 in the Local Plan and will be objecting to an application for 245 houses at Skates Lane, south of Tadley, a site which was excluded from the draft Local Plan.

Cliddesden Neighbourhood Plan Valued Landscapes – the response highlighted the importance of valued landscapes and stressed the significance of inclusion within the plan and, indeed, all neighbourhood plan. These areas of countryside must be protected along with the content; take into account the criteria set out in the Landscape Institute's 2021 guidance on assessing landscape value outside of national designations (TGN 02/21). Heritage, Cultural Heritage, Landscape condition, Distinctiveness, Perceptual (Scenic, Wilderness, Tranquility), Functionality (important farmland) and Recreational.

We have made comment on:

Local councils serving North Hampshire - continue to plan to build more and more new houses, becoming new towns! The Government's faulty housing algorithm (standard mythology) places councils in a difficult position. The number of houses required to be built each year as a directive of the Government, on green fields, important farmland, and with no real attention to water supply, waste water/sewage, electricity, infrastructure, schools, doctors, wildlife etc. is nonsensical. **Speculative development needs to be stopped** – unplanned piecemeal development is doing so much damage to our already stretched infrastructure.

Brownfield sites and high-rise building techniques (where appropriate) should be prioritised over destroying countryside, landscapes and farmland which is needed for food production. The Prime Minister, recently stated at the Farmers Conference, about the huge importance of farmland for food production in this country and how the countryside is, also, essential for recreational purposes for the wellbeing of all.

Green Belt countryside loss has tripled since 2012 – the countryside needs our protection now more than ever. If you are not a member of CPRE then please do consider joining us and help to protect our green belt before it is too late. Your support is vital to assist with the work we do for the countryside, so please do get in touch if you wish to know more about our wonderful events, campaigning or to become a member.

Thank you – CPRE North Hants Team hannahhoustonlacey@yahoo.co.uk

WEATHERWISE By Simon Bourne

Summary of weather observations taken at Northington Down in March 2024

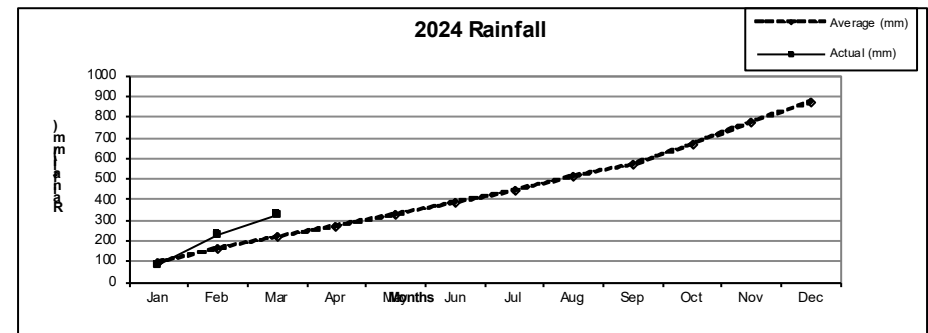
Temperatures (degrees centigrade/Fahrenheit)

Highest	16.2/61	(20 th)
Lowest	-4.0/25	(3 rd)
Warmest Night	9.0/48	(13 th & 15 th)
Coollest Day	8.5/47	(2 nd)
Average maximum temperature	12.5/54	
Average minimum temperature	3.4/38	
Number of air frosts	4	

Rainfall (millimetres/inches)

Monthly total	94.0/3.70	(average 64.9/2.56)
Annual total	323.0/12.72	(average 228.1/8.98)
Maximum 24hr. rainfall	14.8/0.58	(27 th)
Number of days with rain	22	

Summary There was a somewhat unsettled start to March with below average temperatures and the coldest night at 25°F on the 3rd. It then became milder with temperatures for the most part above average from the second week. It remained unsettled throughout and there was a hail shower on the 23rd. Low pressure brought wet and windy conditions in the last week, with a fresh to strong breeze on the 28th. This was preceded by the wettest day, and distant thunder was heard in the early evening of the 31st. Overall the month was dull and mild with a succession of frontal systems that brought rain on all but nine occasions, and total rainfall that was 145% of the average figure.



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Walking with Wildlife, Robert Bryant

On Easter Sunday, we head along to Micheldever Woods for a springtime ramble, passing hedgerows now flushed a fresh green. The bare canopies of the wayside oaks show a ruddy glow in the sunlight as their buds begin to swell. The ash trees alas have largely gone -just stumps remain following winter clearances. Victims of ash dieback, a fungal disease, it is hoped to replace them in the landscape with hardy hybrid elms.

The busy beechwoods ring with the call of a blackbird on this bright breezy afternoon. As we pass a stand of young silver birch now leafing up a delicate green, we note all manner of spring birdcalls. There's a robin busking with a song thrush; a wren trills low in the shadows, while overhead nuthatches whistle loudly. Farther on, a blackcap gives a virtuoso performance and even a tawny owl joins in with loud hoots.

Deeper in the woods there are muddy puddles, rain-fed, with some now rippling with tadpoles. Along the grassy rides, clumps of primroses are in flower, the pale-yellow bouquets attracting foraging queen bumblebees. Beneath the beeches, there's a glimpse of early bluebells. Strolling back along the perimeter path, we look across to the neighbouring fields at an apparent heap of ash logs, before realising that the logs have legs and tails. It's a huddle of fallow deer, having a siesta in the sunshine.

The following Sunday, we head over to Preston Oak Hills to squelch along the muddy woodland trails, sheltered from the blustery winds of Storm Kathleen. We follow the way-marked bridlepath leading from the roadside, where the verge is patched white with wood anemones laced with greater stitchwort and wood-sorrel. The damper banks gleam with lesser celandines. From deep in the oakwood, a song thrush takes the lead among the concert of woodland bird calls, with a great spotted woodpecker providing the drumming. Beneath the oaks the woodland floor is densely carpeted with emerging bluebells and unfurling ferns. As we pause to look and listen, a muntjac deer skips quietly by.

Robert Bryant
11th April '24



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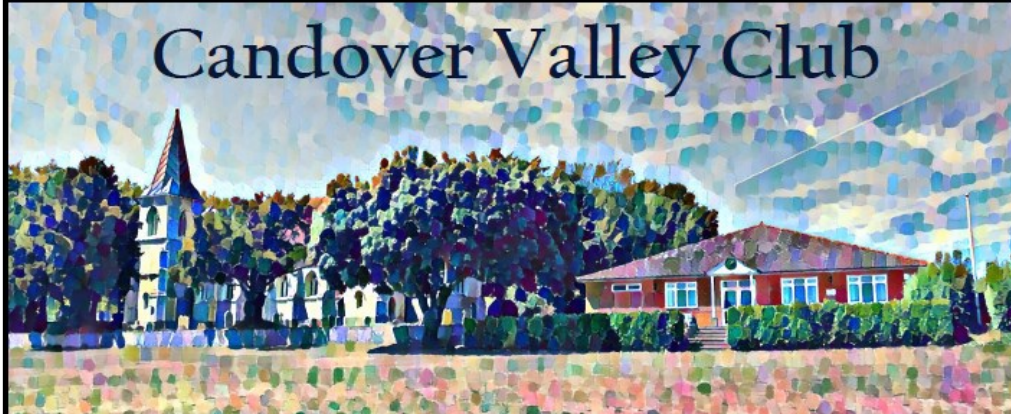
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Candover Valley Club



The Candover Valley Club is located in the beautiful village of Brown Candover next to St. Peter's Church, and is fronted by the village cricket field. The Club has a fully licenced bar with kitchen, skittle alley, dart boards, pool table, TV, wifi and a separate function room suitable for large parties. A marquee, tables, chairs, crockery and cutlery are also available to hire.

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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Candover Valley Gardening Club

Last month we had our AGM and then a very interesting talk from Pauline West about the National Gardens Scheme. Elsie Wagg was a co-founder back in 1926. She came up with the idea of opening gardens to the public to raise money for charity. In 2023 over £3.5 million was given to various charities in the UK. The King is a patron and Mary Berry is the President. Pauline went on to describe the requirements for open gardens including at least 45 minutes of interest, a well maintained and attractive garden and of course it always helps if the owner is present to talk about the garden and answer questions. Refreshments are always welcome too!

In May we begin our summer garden visits with a trip to West Green in Hartley Wintney. There is lots to see at this renowned garden, which is celebrated for the vibrant plantings, series of walled gardens, orchard, sweeping lawns and a lake.

We also have our Plant Sale on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th – see separate article. This is our major fund-raising event so we welcome any plants and purchases!

Our indoor meetings are held at 7.30pm in Preston Candover Village Hall on the third Thursday of the month from September to April. 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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Saturday 18th May 10.00- 12 noon

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From the 1st October 2024 everyone who keeps poultry and other captive birds must by law register on the National Poultry register. Previously keepers of more than 50 had to be register, but in an effort to combat Avian influenza and other avian diseases this requirement has been extended to all poultry keepers.

Bird keepers will need to provide information, including their contact details, site where the birds are kept and details of the birds (species, number and what they are kept for).

This will cover all kept birds including chickens, ducks, geese, guinea fowl, pheasants, but also pigeons, budgies, parrots and birds of prey. Search Poultry register on www.gov.uk for more details.

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Swarraton and Northington WI

After a late change to the WI Programme Patrick Kempe gave a talk titled 'Working backstage with Lorenzo and his amazing Lusitano horses'. He explained that Lusitano horses were bred in Portugal originally for war, bullfighting, and dressage. Nowadays they are mainly used for dressage and have often competed in the Olympics for Portugal and Spain. Lorenzo, known as 'The Flying Frenchman', has a team of eight horses and trains them for a modern take on trick riding which includes bending them through obstacles or taking them over jumps while standing on their backs.

Patrick showed us a film of Lorenzo in action standing bareback on 2 horses, legs astride, while 6 more horses followed in perfect unison as they wove through an exacting course. The training is quite intensive and is done by voice commands, he told us about the horses and the places they have performed. His talk was enjoyed by the members, and he was warmly thanked.

New members are always welcome, we have a large selection of used books, the collection of used stamps and pennies for charity and any surplus plants or produce.

We also have an ongoing project for a really worthwhile charity called Days for Girls which involves sewing sessions held in Old Alresford Village Hall. Guests are always welcome at any meeting for a small charge of £3. At the end of the afternoon, we always enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, cakes and sandwiches and a chance to chat to other members.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 7th May at 2pm at the Village Hall

This meeting will be the AGM, Resolutions and Plant sale

On the Farm - Julian Gibbons

April finally saw some better weather for planting crops, although we did manage to get some spring barley planted in March.

Andy and I went many, many years ago to a talk by a mechanisation officer for ADAS (the old government advisory service). He covered the eastern counties and had a lovely slow eastern counties way a speaking. He said if making a seedbed in the autumn you think it might need one more pass with a cultivator or harrow it won't. In the spring if you think it might need an extra pass, it always will. This was sound advice and has always stayed in my mind even now in the age of minimum tillage and zero tillage.

The reasoning behind this is that an autumn sown crop has an extra 5-6 months to get itself established and produce shoots (or tillers as we call them). A spring sown crop has to get up out of the ground and grow quickly. An April sown spring barley crop will be in ear in 6-7 weeks. It needs to be planted in a much better seedbed to achieve this.

This has been a real challenge this spring. We had already decided that some of our heaviest fields we will fallow, plant a green cover crop and get them ready for wheat in the autumn. This decision was made easier by the severe shortage of spring seed. We have taken to just one pass with the cultivator for some years, but this year we were having to carry out that extra pass.

Where the sheep have grazed stubble turnips or green cover crops it has been particularly challenging. The rain combined with the sheep treading the soil down (poaching in our parlance), resulted in soil that was hard to penetrate with a cultivator tine. Often farmers talk of the golden hoof, the benefit of grazing livestock on arable fields. This will definitely not be one of those years.

What harvest will be like for these late sown crops will depend on the weather. Hopefully it will be better than last summer. In 2020 we had a late spring planting season, but seedbeds were good, and the weather was kind, and the crops did reach their potential, just lower than it might have been if planted in February and not April.

At least farming on the top of the hill we haven't got spring water coming up in our fields. You then have to treat it as though it were a river with all the restrictions on fertilising and spraying that is entailed. Someone did however comment on our ducks on the ponds that have been a permanent fixture of the winter at the top of Bradley Hill.



**The Yard Hampshire
Wednesday 22nd May | 7-10pm**

The Yard is hosting a special screening of Six Inches of Soil followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with the producer Claire Mackenzie, Andy Bason - Farm Manager of Chilton Manor Farm, Harrison Fannon - Co-Founder of Worthy Earth and Charlie Cheney - Dairy Farmer of Middle Farm.

Six Inches of Soil is the inspiring story of young British farmers standing up against the industrial food system and transforming the way they produce food - to heal the soil, our health, and provide for local communities.

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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

This year will, almost certainly, see a General Election and I am quite sure the environment will feature. Who knows, this time there may even be a full range of candidates.

What I know for sure is, whenever I visit a local school and talk to the next generation, it's right at the top of their agenda.

Good news recently therefore that the UK is the first major economy to halve its emissions – having cut them by 50% between 1990 and 2022, while also growing our economy by 79% over the same period. This compares to a 23% reduction in France and no change in the USA. You may not hear it from the media, or more partisan figures, but they are the official figures.

With renewables now accounting for more than 40% of the country's electricity – up from just 7% in 2010, this shows the UK is leading the way on cleaner energy. These reductions are largely due to cutting emissions from energy generation, through the shift away from using coal to using renewables. In 2012, coal provided almost 40% of UK electricity, but later this year, this figure will be zero.

So, the UK has cut emissions faster than any other G7 country over the last decade and this has allowed us to take a more realistic approach while reaching our green targets, to ease the burden on local families.

But that doesn't mean the work is stopping. Since September alone companies have announced plans for £30 billion of new investment across the energy sector, including to advance green technologies and support green industries of the future. We have also set more stretching targets for 2030 than most countries. We plan to cut emissions by 68% by 2030, which is more than the EU, Japan or the United States.

We have also increased our renewables electricity generation from just 7% in 2010 to nearly 50% now. In an election year, you can expect the cynicism to be at peak levels but I think these are all positive achievements.

Secondly, and linked in a way, Ministers have just announced we are increasing the State Pension by 8.5 per cent as we stick to the plan to for pensioners, offering dignity and security to those who have worked hard all their lives and paid into the system.

This year's increase, hot on the heels of last year's highest ever cash increase of 10.1 per cent, means that from the start of April pensioners are set to receive an extra £900 a year. Oh and you'll have seen the Chancellor commit to the Triple Lock; expensive but the right thing to do. And we are also continuing to protect those most vulnerable by boosting benefits by 6.7 per cent to ensure a genuine safety net exists whilst we support those towards financial independence through work.

You can find more on my wider work as our MP, at fb.com/stevebrinemp and steve-brine.com. **Steve Brine MP**

Jackie's County Corner for May '24

So good to see lighter nights at last! With summer events starting this month, please look out for The Watercress Way stand at local fetes and fairs. If you are running an event, please let me know- we'd love to come along.

Since the County Council took over responsibility for parking on roads right across the county, issues are arising right across the division, especially in Alresford.

This also means that *all* concerns about road markings, flooding, and road and street works faults must be reported online to Hampshire County Council. For simpler problems (including reporting fly tipping), you can use www.FixMyStreet.com too. The County Highways team does not have inspectors and relies mainly on public reports. If you see a pothole without a surrounding white line, it means one of two things: either it hasn't been reported or it isn't deemed bad enough. So please retain your tracking number and track it online as you would a parcel. If nothing gets done, please let me know., so I can chase it too.

The www.hants.gov.uk search box can help with most things, but recently, I have been asked how to apply for a Disabled Parking Bay (called a Blue Badge parking space) on the road near to the home of a household. This information may be of use to readers too. <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/parking/bluebadge/bluebadge-parking-place>

The County Council has many roles, including social care of adults and children, but it isn't a housing authority. But I'm acutely aware that inadequate or expensive housing can make life more difficult.

I'm often asked 'how can I apply for a Council house or flat'?

To make a start, you need to look at the Hampshire Home Choice pages on the Winchester City Council website <https://www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk>. This describes the process and what you will need to do to get started on your journey.

If you still live at home with parents, getting to the top of the list may take a while, and meanwhile you can see what is available for rent or for shared ownership.

The rain is pouring (again) as I write this, but even so, Water Companies are saying there may be a water shortage in the summer. A gentle reminder if your tap ran dry earlier this year: have you claimed your compensation yet? Affected residents have been granted sums from £30 to £400 so if you haven't made your claim yet, it may be worthy doing so. If you are struggling with your bills, you can also apply for a hardship grant using this link. <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/water-for-life/community/customer-and-community-grants/customer-hardship-fund>

The HCC 'Future Service's consultation is now closed, but the threat of loss of School Crossing Patrols, School and Subsidised Bus transport, and the smaller Recycling Centres (Alresford is the smallest of 24) is very real. We really need facilities within villages and towns to make sense of our community: without them we risk being merely a development of houses. I am currently asking residents who use the bus services -do they enable you to manage without a car? If they do, I'd love to hear from you. If they don't-please let me know why.

CLlr Jackie Porter Jackie.porter@hants.gov.uk 07973 696085 www.jackieporter.co.uk



Candover Valley Store

community made

Bank holiday opening times

There are two bank holidays this month, on Monday 6 and Monday 27 May. On both days the store will be open from 8.30am until 12.30pm but please remember that the post office will be closed.

Introducing the CVS hot drink loyalty card!

Now it makes even more sense to arrange to meet friends at the store! As the weather improves, the decking area, overlooking the tennis courts and vineyard, is a beautiful spot to enjoy a well-earned rest and a chat with a chum over leisurely cup of tea and a slice of cake. To make the prospect more tempting still, the store's newly launched loyalty card means that once you have collected eight stamps (one for each hot drink purchased) the ninth drink is on us! To claim your free drink, you must bring your card with you. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Seasonal local produce is in stock

As spring progresses the New Forest Fruit Co are beginning to harvest their early crops. First to arrive on our shelves is tender asparagus grown without any chemicals or artificial heating. Later in the summer they will supply the store with tasty strawberries. Grown in our own county of Hampshire, it's good to know that each deliciously fresh purchase has minimal food miles and supports a British farming business - as well as the store!

Coming up ...

It is astonishing to realise that our amazing little community store is heading for its fifth birthday! Next month marks the anniversary of the store opening its doors to customers for the first time. Watch out for more information about how we will be celebrating this red letter day!

Wield Cricket Club Fixtures – May

Matches are played on the ground opposite
the Yew Tree Inn, Lower Wield

5 May	Medstead	14.30	Away
6 May	Coronation Cup Football - Upper v Lower Wield	13.30	Village Green
12 May	Not the MCC	14.00	Home
19 May	Candovers	14.30	Home
26 May	XIIth Men	14.00	Home
2 June	Chase	13.30	Home

If you are interested in playing a senior game, please contact:
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