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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 OXDRIVE

Church and Community News

Of

The Candover Valley and Wield

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Benefice administrator – Tricia Knight email address:

beneficeFCW@hotmail.com Phone 07541 463750

Contact preferred by e-mail

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

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

*Key to initials: JW = Jennifer Wright: PR = Peter Raine: JG = Julian Gibbons
LH = Lyn Hardy: AL = Anne Luneburg: DS = Debbie Scholey;*

Sunday 7th December

08.00 am	Ellisfield
09:30 am	Wield
09.45 am	Cliddesden
10:00 am	Preston Candover
11:00 am	Northington
3.00pm	Dummer

Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion
Matins
Morning Prayer
Morning Prayer
Morning Prayer – Toy Collection
Christingle and Nativity

Sunday 14th December

08:00am	Dummer
09:45am	Ellisfield
10:00am	Preston
11:15am	Cliddesden
5.30pm	Wield
6.00pm	Brown Candover

Third Sunday of Advent

Holy Communion
Morning Prayer
Candover Holy Communion
Family Holy Communion and Baptism
Nine Lessons and Carols
Nine Lessons and Carols

Friday 19th December

18.00 Cliddesden -

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Carols around the pond.

Sunday 21st December Fifth Sunday of Advent

9.00am	Wield	Holy Communion
10:00am	Preston Candover	Family service
4.00pm	Cliddesden	Nine Lessons and Carols
4.00pm	Dummer	Nune Lessons and Carols
6.00pm	Northington	Nine Lessons and Carols
6.00pm	Ellisfield	Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 24th December Christmas Eve

2.00pm	Cliddesden -	Crib Service
4.00pm	Farleigh -	Nine Lessons and carols
5.00pm	Preston Candover	Crib Service
9.30pm	Cliddesden	Bethlehem Mass
11.30pm	Northington	Midnight Mass

Thursday 25th December—Christmas Day

09.30am	Bradley	
09.30am	Ellisfield	Holy Communion
09.30am	Wield	
10.30am	Dummer	Christmas Day Service
11.00am	Preston Candover	Morning Prayer
11.00am	Brown Candover	Holy Communion

Sunday 28th December

11.00am Preston Candover Holy Communion

Sunday 4th January

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

Preston Candover Village Hall

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A message from Jennifer

As you are reading this, the run up to Christmas will be in full swing – and our brains will be in overtime – so much to do and get done. No wonder Jesus spoke about ‘peace’ so often.

I wonder if ‘peace’ is part of your Christmas experience? Can we really experience peace in the midst of such a busy season? I have always felt an extraordinary sense of calm, simply walking through the church doors. A place to breathe, to just be, no expectations or requirements, no pressure. Just calm.

Funnily enough some days I don’t feel this sense of calm walking through my own front door with having four girls at home! But there is always something to be ‘done’ and I think many of us feel guilty if we are not always ‘doing’ something.

But it is precisely when we are busy ‘doing’ that we miss the small, sacred moments that God has prepared for each of us every day of our lives. Some say that God no longer performs miracles – I say that He does, every single day – it’s just that we are too busy to notice.

This poem by Barbara Johnson puts it well. A man whispered, ‘God, speak to me’ and a meadow lark sang. But the man did not hear. The man yelled, ‘God, speak to me!’, and thunder rolled across the sky. But the man did not listen. The man looked around and said ‘God, let me see you!’. A star shone brightly, but he did not notice. The man looked around and said, ‘God show me a miracle!’, and a life was born. But the man did not know. So, the man cried out in despair, ‘Touch me God, and let me know you are here! – so God reached down and touched him, but the man brushed the butterfly away and walked on.

This Advent, this Christmas, take time to be still. Be still and notice the God who loves you, still speaks using more than words, and still performs miracles today. Throughout this double issue magazine, (Hill and Dale) you will see invitations to lots of services or community events throughout the season of Advent, followed by Christmas and the New Year of 2026.

Whatever you choose to join in with I hope you will find some peace and much joy. None of us know what 2026 will bring but we do have the reassurance that God will be with us in all that we do in his name.

I hope that the Christmas Services detailed in the magazine will provide an opportunity for you to join us during this Holy Season.

Love and prayers
Jennifer

Church sidesmen and readers

<u>Church</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Sidesmen</u>	<u>Readers</u>
St John's Northington	7 Dec 11.00am	Mark Ashburton	Mark Ashburton
	21 Dec 6.00pm		
	24 Dec 11.30pm		
St Peters Brown Candover		Curtis Haywards Moseleys	Curtis Haywards Moseleys
St Marys Preston Candover	7 Dec 10.00am	Anne Luneburg	Celia Foote
	14 Dec 10.00am	Jane Laws	Marina Avis Jane Laws
	21 Dec 10.00am	Marina Avis	To be advised
	24 Dec 5.00pm	Anne Luneburg	Various
	25 Dec 11.00am	Marina Avis Gunnel Berry	Anne Luneburg Marina Avis
	28 Dec 11.00am	Anne Luneburg	Anne Luneburg Jane Laws
	4 Jan 10.00am	Anne Luneburg	Gunnel Berry
	25 Dec 9.30am	Christopher Swan	Don & Gibbons Families
	7 Dec 9.30am	To be confirmed	Mark Kemp Gee
St James' Wield	14 Dec 5.30pm	To be confirmed	Various
	21 Dec 9.00am	To be confirmed	Catherine Simons
	25 Dec 9.30am	To be confirmed	

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Toy Sunday and candlelit Carols at St Johns, Northington

St Johns, Northington is holding **Toy Sunday at 1100hrs on Sun 6 Dec**. It is Morning Service - Please bring a new (unopened still in packet) Toy for the less well-off child, 2 - 12 years.



St Johns, Northington is holding its annual **Candlelit Carol Service at 1800hrs on Sun 21 Dec** with the Valley Choir. Mulled wine and mince pies at the end to sustain - "thirst after righteousness".

St Johns, Northington is holding a **Candlelit Midnight Mass at 2330hrs on 24 Dec**



Nine Lessons and Carols at St Peters. Brown Candover

The Annual Service of 9 Lessons and Carols at St Peters Church, Brown Candover will take place on Sunday 14th December at 6 pm with the Candover Valley Choir.

This will be followed by refreshments and everyone is most welcome.

Christmas Carol Singing Around Wield Saturday 20th December

Kick off the Christmas celebrations
with a traditional village sing-song



Gather outside the village hall at 6.30pm before singing
your way around Upper Wield; festive refreshments
offered en route

The finale will be at the Yew Tree Inn, Lower Wield

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For more details or to offer a carolling stop at your house
please contact:

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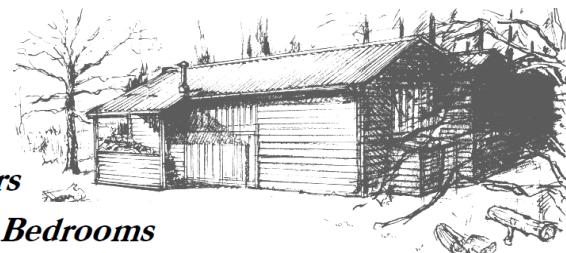
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New Year Drinks 2026

To welcome 2026, the Trustees and Committee of Preston Candover Village Hall invite all residents of Preston Candover, Axford, Nutley and Gobley Hole, as well as regular hirers, to join them for drinks and nibbles.

Date: New Year's Day, Thursday 1st January 2026,
Time: 12.00 midday to 2.00pm,
Venue: Preston Candover Village Hall.

We hope to see you there!

Swarraton and Northington WI

Guests are also always welcome at any of the speaker meetings for a small charge of £5. Please could members not able to attend send their apologies to Gill Graham Maw

Autumn Group WI Meeting

Gill Graham Maw thanked the many members who had attended and welcomed two members from Wield WI and six members from Bramdean & Hinton Ampner WI. She thanked Janet Anderson and Maureen Wood, the tea hostesses and Jill Parker for the flowers. Carole reported that the finances were in a good shape, the sewing sessions were going well and a recent visit by Peggy Bazlington to the Winchester Hospice had been warmly welcomed and much appreciated and she showed some samples of the items that had been made by the group. A reminder that the **Lasagne Lunch will be on Thursday 22nd January at 12 for 12.30, many** members had signed up but could anyone who has not paid please pay Carole as soon as possible and one more dessert needed. There was a lovely selection of Save The Children Christmas cards on sale at the meeting.

Sewing Group A reminder that the sewing sessions will be held at 2pm at Old Alresford Village Hall on the third Tuesday of every month, the next one will be on **Tuesday 18th November at 2pm**.

Speaker There being no further business the speaker, Graham Birchmore was introduced. Graham gave an interesting talk about the meaning of dreams starting with some amazing personal incidents he had experienced as a young man. He related that the Egyptians seemed to think that dreams were God speaking to you, but Plato dismissed this and said that dreams were not divine messages. He talked about the most common dreams such as flying or falling. Although the scientific opinion is that dreams are just memory fragments, he did relate some astonishing incidents where a prediction seemed to play a part. There was a lively question and answer session at the end and Graham stayed on in the hall during tea chatting to many members.

Future talks and Events Some interesting speakers have been arranged for later in the year and 2026 such as a Festive Christmas Tea with a talk titled "The Great American Christmas" with audio and visual clips. Then in February we have "Jane Austen's Wicked Women" - Girls Behaving Badly!

The next meeting at Swarraton & Northington Village Hall is at 2pm on **Tuesday 2nd December 2025. This is the Festive Christmas Event with a talk by Chris Walker titled "The Great American Christmas" followed by a special tea and a glass of fizz!**

Tea hostesses - Lizzie Laird and Veronica Gibbes

Flowers - Judith Hand

Guests are also always welcome at any of the speaker meetings for a small charge of £5. Please could members not able to attend send their apologies to Gill Graham Maw

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- **Barley Mow, Oakley** – Saturday 6th December, 1–2 pm
(During the Our Oakley Community Market)
- **Ellisfield Memorial Hall** – Saturday 13th December, 11 am–12 pm
- **Preston Candover Village Hall** – Saturday 13th December, 1–2 pm

There's no speech or presentation – just a chance to talk, listen, and shape what comes next together.

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Walking with Wildlife, Robert Bryant

There were huge numbers of Canada geese spread across the lawns on the far side of the lake at Avington Park. Most were just sitting, basking in the afternoon sunshine with their long black necks held upright. A small number of greylag geese were also present.

On the lake itself were all manner of waterfowl: mallard, teal, mute swans and coots – dozens of coots, in their slick black coats, each with a bright white headshield gleaming in the sunlight. The swans were feeding, tipping over to stretch down with their long necks to browse aquatic plants deep below. An upended swan is a curious sight: a huge floating dome of feathers, snowy white, seemingly adrift on the calm waters.

Leaving the lakeside, we strolled across the grassy slopes of this scenic pocket of parkland, an HCC Countryside Site. Heading up to the wooded hangar of Beech Hill, we noted the vivid autumn colours, the ambers and russets of the woodland edge. Crossing the cattle grid, we walked down the lane, passing the historic Easton Lodge with its yellow walls and white trellis.

Looking for signs of the foraging pigs, a feature of the wayside woods in previous visits, we eventually found two large sturdy pigs emerging from the shadowy undergrowth. Clearly keen to see passers-by, they gobbed up some apples scattered on the well-churned woodland floor.

Emerging from the trees, we turned right, squelching along the footpath that leads across the damp meadows of the Itchen valley towards Chilham Mill. A flock of long-tailed tits twittered above us, flickering through the dense canopy of willows bordering the path.

Having crossed the footbridge over the Itchen at Chilham we were intrigued to find a notice pinned up, outlining the life cycle of the brown trout. At this time of year, the trout are spawning, laying their orange eggs in the gravel bed of the river.

While we were heading back in time for our tea, a flock of swans flew low overhead, the woowump of their rhythmic wingbeats quite atmospheric in this wetland setting.

Robert Bryant
6 Nov '25

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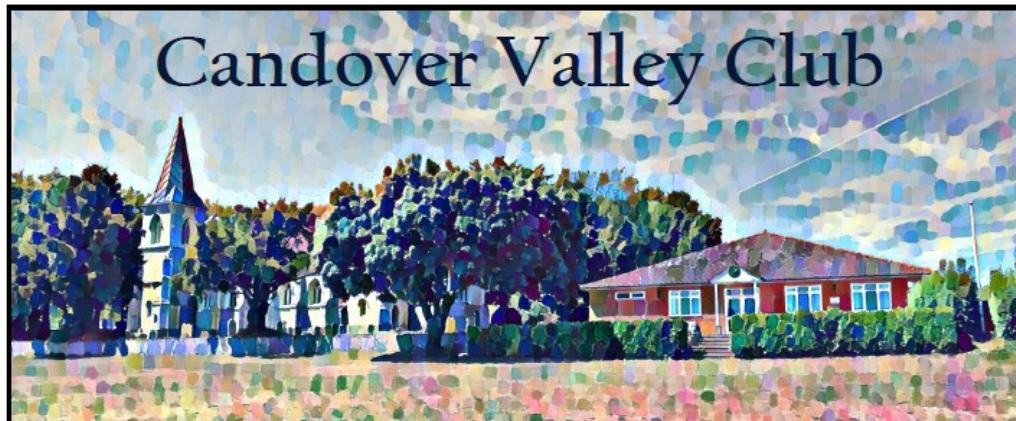
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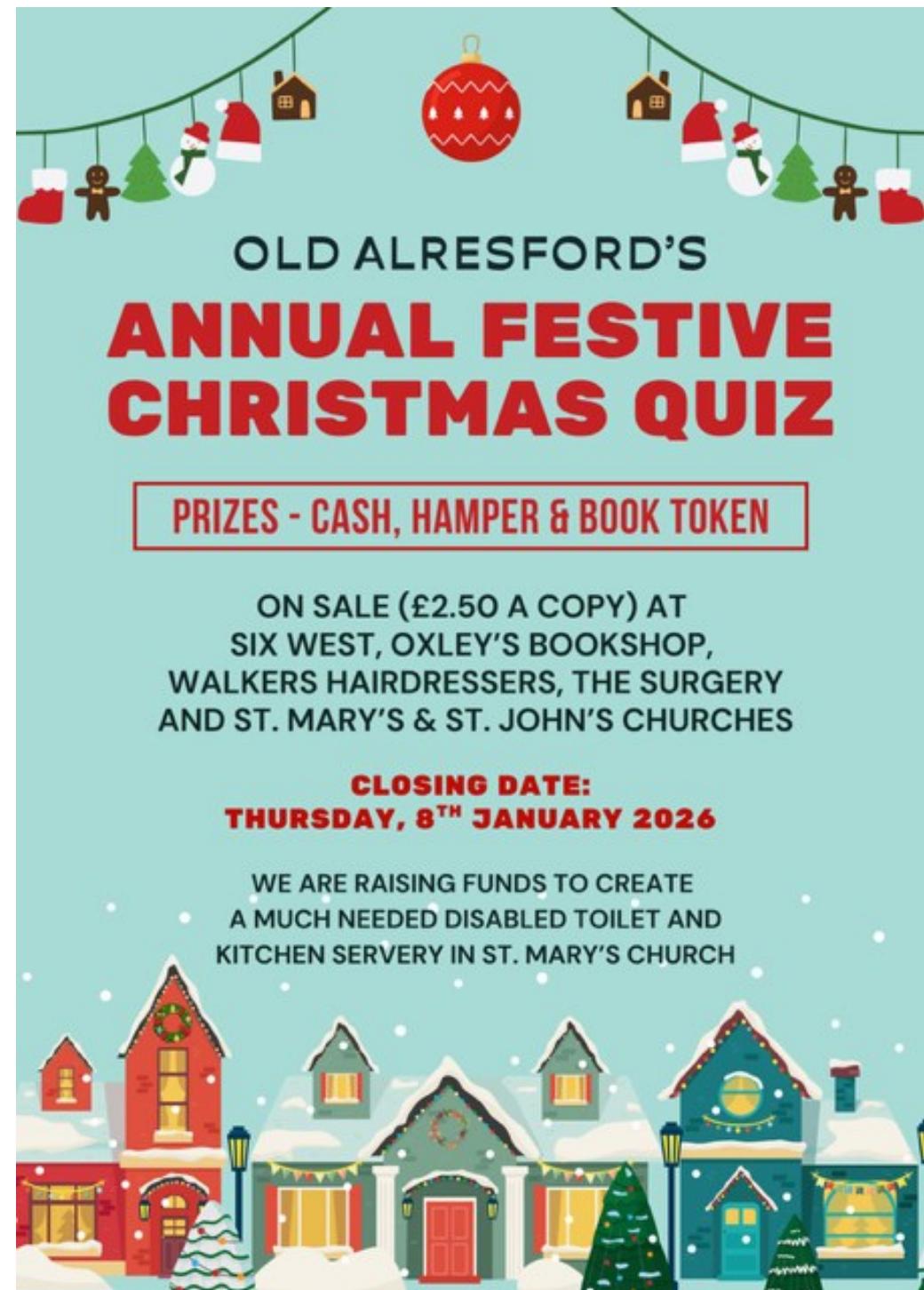


The Candover Valley Club is located in the beautiful village of Brown Candover next to St. Peter's Church, and is fronted by the village cricket field. The Club has a fully licenced bar with kitchen, skittle alley, dart boards, pool table, TV, wifi and a separate function room suitable for large parties. 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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We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

At Candover Valley Preschool learning doesn't just happen at tables or during circle times – it unfolds in the bustling play corners and in the treetops.

This may look like a simple train ride, but when children slip into pretend roles they're doing far more than acting out stories. They're developing language skills as they negotiate roles, narrate scenarios and experiment with vocabulary. They're building social and emotional understanding as they practice empathy, cooperation and conflict resolution. When we nurture imaginative play, we nurture confidence, curiosity and creativity.

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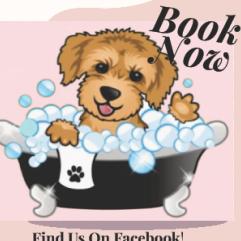
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CANDOVER VALLEY CHOIR

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NEW YEAR NEW BEGINNING?**

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Singing is good for you – it is creative, has great health benefits, is very rewarding, and is hugely enjoyable!

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 2026. 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:**

Jane Bryant, Music Director
bryantjane50@gmail.com

07740 871341

REHEARSALS TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAYS AT 7.45

Candover Valley Store

community made

Candover Valley Store – Prescription Collection Service

The Alresford Surgery has approved a community-led prescription pick-up service run by the Candover Valley Store (CVS). This free service is carried out by trusted, nominated volunteers and operates independently of any other collection arrangements.

Registering - Please complete a CVS registration/consent form, available in the store.

How to order and use the service - Order your prescription as usual.

There's no need to notify the surgery that CVS will be collecting. However, you must tell the store when you have placed an order, either in person (we'll log it) or by WhatsApp to our dedicated number: 07857 726184.

Volunteers collect from Alresford Surgery on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, aiming to have prescriptions in store by 4pm the same day. Prescriptions are typically ready 3–4 working days after ordering. (Orders must reach the surgery by 2pm to count as "day one".)

Please note:

Urgent prescriptions and refrigerated medicines cannot be collected.

Order repeat prescriptions in good time.

All items are delivered to CVS only; no home deliveries.

We hope the community finds this service helpful and thank our dedicated volunteers for making it possible!

Christmas at Candover Valley Store

We'd like to wish all our customers a wonderful Christmas season. Don't forget that we have plenty of last-minute gifts and delicious festive treats in store to make your celebrations extra special, especially from our fantastic local producers.

Please find our Christmas and New Year opening hours for the Store and Post Office overleaf:

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Date	Store	Post Office
Sun 21 Dec	8.30am - 4.00pm (open extra hours!)	Closed
Christmas Eve - Wed 24 Dec	8.00am - 4.00pm	8.30am - 12.30pm Last collection 10.50am
Christmas Day - Thu 25 Dec	Closed	Closed
Boxing Day - Fri 26 Dec	Closed	Closed
Sat 27 Dec	8.30am - 5.00pm	8.30am - 12.30pm Last collection 10.50am
Sun 28 Dec	8.30am - 12.30pm	Closed
Mon 29 Dec	8.00am - 6.00pm	8.30am - 5.00pm
Tue 30 Dec	8.00am - 6.00pm	8.30am - 5.00pm
New Year's Eve - Wed 31 Dec	8.00am - 4.00pm	8.30am - 12.30pm Last collection 10.50am
New Year's Day - Thu 1 Jan (BH)	8.30am - 12.30pm	Closed

Candover Valley Store community made

Store and post office trading hours

Monday to Friday	Store open: 8.00am – 6.00pm Post office: 8.30am – 5.00pm
Saturday	Store open: 8.30am – 5.00pm Post office: 9.00am – 12.30pm
Sundays & Bank Holidays	Store open: 8.30am – 12.30pm Post office: Closed

We look forward to welcoming you!

Alresford Road, Preston Candover, RG25 2EE
Tel: 01256 389500 www.cvcs.org.uk



Candover Valley Gardening Club

In October, Claire Mitchell spoke to us about how to cope with climate change and what we can do, as gardeners, to minimise our impact. She stressed the importance of recycling plastic pots, having as many water butts as possible, mulching the ground, grouping pot plants together, choosing perennials over annuals and suggested several perennials that are drought resistant.

There is no gardening club meeting in December, but we are looking forward to our meeting on January 15th when Cliddesden, Farleigh Wallop and Ellisfield Horticultural Society will be joining us for our annual quiz. More detail next month but suffice to say you don't need to be a gardening expert to take part.

Our indoor meetings are held at 7.30pm in Preston Candover Village Hall on the third Thursday of the month from September to April. In the summer months we visit some beautiful gardens. If you would like to join us at any time, guests are very welcome for a small fee and we always welcome new members for an annual subscription of only £15 per person.

Contact blighrosemary@hotmail.com for more information or you can find us on Facebook – Candover Valley Gardening Club

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All the other eConsult advice services will still be accessible 24/7.

NHS 111 can help if you have an urgent medical problem when your GP practice is closed. Dial 111 on any phone for advice, or visit the NHS 111 website – 111.nhs.uk. Remember to call 999 at any time in a medical emergency. This is when someone is seriously ill, or injured, and their life is at risk.

Christmas & New Year

We wish everyone a very happy Christmas – please make sure you have sufficient supplies of your usual medications to last over the 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 (<https://www.patientaccess.com/>)

The surgery will be closed on 25 and 26 December and 1 January. 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**.

111 is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. Call **111** and speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you.

NHS **111** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

May we wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year from all the staff & partners at Alresford Surgery.

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The Alresford Surgery
Station Road
ALRESFORD, Hampshire
Out of hours telephone number 111

Thank you to our wonderful staff

We would like to say a HUGE thank you to our wonderful staff who have organised, co-ordinated, vaccinated & inputted at our covid & flu clinics.
We have vaccinated 2,328 covid and flu patients & 1,053 flu only patients (to date) & this is all in addition to our usual workload.

Medication supplies over the Christmas break

If you take regular medications, please make sure you have enough to see you over the festive period and please place requests with us in good time if repeats will be needed. If you have family coming to stay with you remind them not to forget their medicines.

Spotlight

In each issue we will provide details about a product, service or healthcare role.

What does a Reception Care Co-ordinator do?

Reception Care Co-ordinators play a vital role in ensuring our practice runs smoothly by supporting patients. They are the first point of contact for patients offering assistance both in person and over the phone and respond to certain requests via your online services, ensuring a good healthcare experience.

Reception Care Co-ordinators:

- Handle incoming calls, address patient enquiries, and ensure patients are connected with the right department or specialist professional
- Perform reception duties, including scheduling appointments and managing administrative tasks to support the smooth operation of the practice

Working collaboratively within a team, they enjoy making a difference in people's healthcare journeys.

We currently have 8 Reception Care Co-ordinators (a mixture of full and part time)

How to set up your notifications in your NHS App account

Check the set up in your device e.g. mobile phone, or tablet etc for the NHS App and make sure you have enabled notifications so that you get a prompt when NHS services have sent you a message.

Please also look out for text messages, emails and phone calls.

eConsult will be switched off during the Christmas & New Year bank holiday period:

Any eConsult request you submit outside of our normal surgery opening hours will not be read until we open the next working day.

Patients will not be able to submit eConsults over the weekend or bank holiday period.



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WEATHERWISE By Simon Bourne

Summary of weather observations taken at Northington Down
in October 2025

Temperatures (degrees centigrade/Fahrenheit)

Highest 19.0/66 (6th)
Lowest 1.5/35 (26th)

Warmest Night 11.4/53 (3rd)
Coolest Day 11.5/52 (26th)

Average maximum temperature 14.9/59

Average minimum temperature 6.9/44

Rainfall (millimetres/inches)

Monthly total 98.5/3.88 Average 101.7/4.00
Annual Total 534.0/21.02 Average 672.5/26.48

Maximum 24hr. rainfall 34.4/1.35 (17th)
Number of days with rain 17

Summary

Storm Amy was the first storm of the 2025/26 season and brought two thirds of an inch of rain with a fresh breeze on the 3rd and fresh to strong breeze the following day.

Conditions improved by the end of the week with some brighter weather. High pressure then trapped low cloud to provide settled conditions with some sun, but it was predominantly overcast (anticyclonic gloom) from the 10th through to the middle of the third week. There had been virtually no rain for almost two weeks from the 6th then the complete reverse to the end of the month with rain on all but one day. This included the wettest day of the month with 1.35 inches of rain on the 19th and much less rain but fresh breeze from Storm Benjamin on the 23rd. Daytime temperatures dropped in the second week and with few exceptions remained below the seasonal norm to the end of October. The month was frost free, with the coldest night at 35°F on the 26th. Overall, rainfall was very slightly below the long-term average, and the temperature was below the seasonal norm.

On the Farm— Ben Robinson

It has been a kind Autumn with plenty of growth in the grass and the forage crops. We have plenty of fodder for sheep and in order to chew down the many acres of cover crops available we have arranged for hill ewe lambs from Wales to shepherd over the winter for a fee. Taking sheep off the hills in winter means that there is more grass for them when they return home to the Brecon Beacons in the Spring. These hill ewe lambs should do well over wintering in Hampshire where our climate is much kinder than what they are used to.

Over the past few months, I have been involved with a joint National Sheep Association and Centre for Ecology and Hydrology project looking at the benefits of using sheep in arable rotations. The model used was the 'Global Farm Metric'. This has involved greenhouse gas emission and sequestration calculations along with productivity, animal welfare and social enterprise indicators. Soil and crop sampling and analysis was undertaken by a soil scientist to gain knowledge of changes in organic matter. It is a fairly complicated process, especially with our sheep farming system which makes use of short term rented grazing over a wide area. However, from an industry perspective we hope it will prove a useful exercise to promote the sustainability credentials of the livestock sector.

One example of sheep in arable rotations being beneficial to the system as a whole is the grazing of Oilseed Rape (OSR). This year OSR, which is largely sown in August, has established well, leading to large leaf canopies. Though to an extent this is a positive thing, too much leaf can leave the plant susceptible to pests such as Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle (CSFB). This insect can have devastating yield impacts and make the whole crop uneconomic to grow. Since the ban of Neonicotinoid seed dressings for largely political rather than scientific reasons there is now no reliable chemical method of controlling CSFB. One farmer has asked our sheep to lightly graze off the OSR canopy in his crop.

The theory is that the sheep graze out the CSFB and by taking out some of the leaf area also reduce fungal disease pressure on the crop. It is important to not graze the crop too hard, but as long as the crop is well established enough, we hope there should be benefits for the OSR, as well as feed for the sheep. We may also try a similar strategy on some forward winter wheat, as long as it doesn't get too wet this winter.

May I take this opportunity to wish all Oxdrove readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



THE YARD

Christmas at The Yard

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Christmas Fair with CLM
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December 6th

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December 14th

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December 20th

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+ a Happy New Year.



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ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

A CHRISTMAS EVENING WITH FLANDERS & SWANN AND HINGE & BRACKET



Sunday 14th December 2025 at 6pm

Preston Candover Village Hall

Alresford Road, Preston Candover, RG25 2EE

Tickets £15

