# Spectrum



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# Editorial

his month's edition of Spectrum has a focus on volunteering. Hilary Hainge's fascinating article about The Monday Club tells the story of The Chase and the work of the dedicated band who ensure it continues to thrive as haven for nature. It's a green space that is more vital than ever in the face of ever encroaching development. The recent news of the go-ahead for 270 houses at Wash Water shows how important such well-protected countryside is for our community.

Elsewhere in Spectrum Chris Sketchley describes a day in the life of Neighbourcare, the local organisation that helps people get to their medical appointments and delivers their prescriptions. And the East Woodhay Management Team have written about what is



needed to preserve and reinvigorate East Woodhay Village Hall. Then of course there are the Spectrum regulars: reports from voluntary organisations such as the Women's Institute, Women in Touch and The Scouts, and the local cultural and horticultural groups. Alongside these there are regular news updates from the pillars of our community: the Schools, the Church, and the Parish Council. All depend on the help of volunteers.

This is nothing new. Two hundred and fifty years ago the political philosopher Edmund Burke wrote that what he called 'the little platoons' of people who gave their time to local causes were the cement that glued society together. And they remain so today.

But they face many headwinds. It seems that much volunteering in East Woodhay today is done by older people. Busy working couples have less time now to dedicate themselves to anything other than work and family. Then there's new technology which, for all its benefits, tends to make people more isolated from their communities, and possibly less likely to engage in traditional causes.

If volunteers are getting older, the question is whether they are becoming an endangered species. Some argue that it's not a worry. As people retire, they will always look for something to do; many will want to give something back. But you don't have to be an expert to know that organisations are invigorated by younger people. They need their energy and readiness for change. It's one of the biggest questions East Woodhay faces: how best to reinvigorate the little platoons that keep our community alive and well. And we are not alone – it's a pressing question for our country as a whole.

**Denys Blakeway** 





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Dia	ary	of Events	March 2024
Friday	1st	Woodhay Walkers	WHCH 10.30am
		Community Cafe	St. Thomas' Church 10-11.30am
Monday	4th	Evergreens	HVH 4.15pm
		Beavers	EWVH 5.30pm
Tuesday	5th	Cubs and Scouts	EWVH 6pm, 7.30pm
Wednesday	6th	EW Short Mat Bowls	EWVH 7.30pm
Friday	8th	Woodhay Walkers	EWVH 10.30am
		Community Cafe	St. Thomas' Church 10-11.30am
Monday	11th	Beavers	EWVH 5.30pm
Tuesday	12th	EW WI	EWVH 2.30pm
		Cubs and Scouts	EWVH 6pm, 7.30pm
Wednesday	13th	EW Short Mat Bowls	EWVH 7.30pm
Friday	15th	Woodhay Walkers	WHCH 10.30am
		Community Cafe	St. Thomas' Church 10-11.30am
Monday	18th	Beavers	EWVH 5.30pm
		History Society	EWVH 8pm
Tuesday	19th	Arbor Flora	HVH 2pm
		Cubs and Scouts	EWVH 6pm, 7.30pm
Wednesday	20th	EW Short Mat Bowls	EWVH 7.30pm
Friday	22nd	Woodhay Walkers	Downgate Pub 10.30am
		Community Cafe	St. Thomas' Church 10-11.30am
Monday	25th	Beavers	EWVH 5.30pm
		EW Parish Council	EWVH 7.30pm
Tuesday	26th	Cubs and Scouts	EWVH 6pm, 7.30pm
Wednesday	27th	EW Short Mat Bowls	EWVH 7.30pm
		Highclere Poetry Grp	Brick Kiln Cottage 7.30pm



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### Editor for April, May & June 2024:

Mary Gulliver email: mary@thegullivers.co.uk



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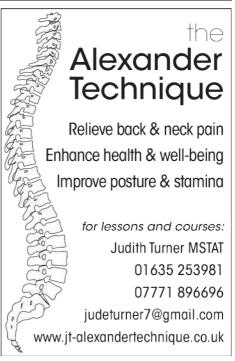
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# East Woodhay Local History Society

anuary's meeting was our AGM where the business was completed swiftly. We then had two members' talks before concluding the evening with wine and nibbles kindly organised by Avril Cole. David Skyrme gave a breakdown of the Parish in the 1921 Census with regard to population, occupation etc. I then gave a talk about two American planes colliding over Crux Easton in 1944 and how my research had unfolded.



My investigation started many years ago on a walk at Crux Easton with my husband. Under a beech tree we found a small





memorial garden that often had a poppy on it, but then became neglected. In 2022 I decided to find out more about the crash, and asked about it in Spectrum. Information was forthcoming and I discovered that two US military Lockheed Lightnings had collided whilst on a training mission from their base in Andover. Both pilots. William E. Evers and Thomas Dee Stewart, died. By the wonders of the internet, I found out that one plane crashed at Crux Easton and the other near Ashmansworth. I also found photos of the two pilots on Ancestry and wrote to the families. I had a reply from one family who were delighted that the men were still remembered. Having done all my research, I then discovered that Lady Carnarvon has an excellent website about all the air crashes on the Highclere estate during WW2 & is well worth a look: ladycarnarvon.com/airmen

Our March meeting will be on Monday 18th at the Village Hall, Heath End at 8pm. The speaker will be Pauline Stokes. Penny is a well-known local history author and her most recent book is 'Georgian Newbury'. In her talk she will focus on some of the stories and characters of this important period in Newbury's history.

**Chris Dalton, Secretary.** 

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### Women In Touch

Our first topic of the year, Your Favourite Group, posed a difficult choice for some. We listened to a variety of music, tapping our feet to the beat.

We heard Queen and Pink Floyd, both formed by college students who were also talented musicians, The Small Faces, a 1960s Mod group, based around Carnaby Street, Fleetwood Mac, an American band, formed in the 1960s and Annie Lennox, originally part of the Eurythmics and a successful solo artist in the '90s.

In contrast were The Seekers, an Australian Folk group, their melodic songs selling over 50 million records worldwide and Cherish the Ladies which took its name from a traditional Irish jig, an all-female group that plays Celtic music. Ben Bruant and Will Cashel, known as Duo, play Classical Guitars in a style fusing Flamenco, Pop, and Classical music and have performed at Newbury Spring Festival.

After an introduction to the evolution of the modern symphony orchestra from small instrumental groups to the large ensembles of today with 100 plus musicians and the Conductor taking a significant role we enjoyed Champagne Polka by Johann Strauss.

An entirely different type of group was the Hash House Harriers, formed in 1938 in Kuala Lumpur, an international, non-competitive running club with a 'Hare and Hounds' theme. The 'Hare' would leave a trail of paper or flour for the 'Hounds' to follow, ending up in a pub for beer and refreshments, leading to long-lasting friendships and keeping fit.

Our second meeting tackled the issue of The Future of the High Street. Personal experiences and opinions were in no short supply as the group discussed this topic. Its future as the thriving heart of a town's community was accepted as in decline, not only because of the tremendous growth in on-line shopping, but also because of high business and property rental rates and expensive car parking. On a brighter note some success stories were mentioned; Totnes, Bury St Edmunds and Marlborough to mention just a few. These towns have capitalised on their architectural heritage and maintained small and diverse independent retail and personal service businesses.

The presence of banks was important and a move away from large



retail stores and modern shopping precincts. Possible solutions mentioned were to have more residential housing, attractive green spaces and schemes for more community ownership.

We concluded Newbury High Street still hasn't managed to solve some of its ongoing problems but for most of us it was still a pleasure to visit it.

**Nicole Bentham** 

www.wooltonhill.com/spectrum

Spectrum is a monthly community magazine serving East Woodhay and Woolton Hill. It is run by a committee of volunteers and is a not for profit publication.

Reports on village activities and articles of local interest are welcomed for publication subject to the discretion of the editor. Copy should reach the editor by the seventh day of the month preceding publication and should be a maximum of 500 words. In the event of pressure for space, the editor reserves the right to reduce the length of the article while attempting to maintain the style of the writer and retaining as much content as possible. The editorial committee accepts no responsibility for the views expressed by Spectrum contributors or for the quality of goods and services provided by advertisers in this magazine.

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# East Woodhay Women's Institute

Our WI meeting in January was a discussion, led by our WI advisor, on the 2024 Resolutions which are as follows:

- Dental health matters (chronic shortage of NHS dentists)
- Impact of poor housing and effect on human health and quality of life
- INSPIRING WOMEN
- Say NO to gambling advertising, a global problem
- Improving outcomes for women in prison, in particular pregnant women and women with children.

Votes will be taken forward and one of these issues will become the 2024 Resolution at the NFWI annual meeting to be campaigned for nationally.

Last year the Resolution was Clean rivers for people and wildlife ('Water you waiting for'). Water quality in our rivers is shameful. Legally designated bathing waters must be regularly monitored for pollution. The National Federation of Women's Institutes urges its members, the wider public, local authorities and Government to make, support and promote applications for officially designated bathing sites on appropriate stretches of rivers in their area. This will be instrumental to the clean up of rivers as it has been for water quality improvement at coastal beaches.

There followed the usual tea, cake and chat.

### IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TO A WI MEETING

Do think about coming to the meeting on March  $12^{\text{th}}$  at 2.30pm. The speaker is a favourite, entertaining lady who delivers facts in a fun way on the History of Knitting.

All are welcome to any meeting.





# Woolton Hill & District

### 'The Darien Gap - Orchids, Terrorists and Kidnappings'

a talk by Glenn Duggan

**B**eing a fairly unadventurous person, I am in awe of those who take on extreme challenges and expeditions as part of their everyday life. Many of my family members and friends climb mountains, run marathons and go trail running, canyoning and mountain biking or cold-water swimming, but however intrepid all of these activities are, there are few that compare with botanists who travel to the most inhospitable places on earth to find undiscovered orchids and other plants. Our speaker, Glenn Duggan is one of those people. Glenn's 'orchid-hunting' expedition took him to 'The Darien Gap' between Colombia and Panama, a place renowned for extreme criminal activity related to drug trafficking, including kidnappings, and still only accessible 'on foot' or by 'Segway' along narrow tracks. An armed guard is advisable!

'The Darien Gap' is a place the size of Ireland, of remote rainforest with dense canopy, daily rainfall, extreme humidity, temperatures of a steady 30 degrees, 25 species of venomous snakes, jaquar, disease-carrying insects and spiders whose bite can



kill. Even some of the plants are poisonous! But 'orchid hunters' are undeterred as they search for previously 'undiscovered' species, of 28.000 which there are over worldwide. The most desired and searched for orchid in 'The Darien Gap' is a new member of the 'Stanhopea' family whose flowers are fragrant for only three days bees. Orchids attract have relationship with symbiotic insect and bird pollinators who are attracted to the flowers by their perfume, symmetry and colour. Each species of pollinator will only visit orchids in one species sometimes reaching the nectar is problematic. An example of this is the Morgan's Sphinx moth which has a foot-long proboscis to reach the nectar at the bottom of the flower of an orchid found in Madagascar, the Angraecum sesquipedale. The moth leaves the flower covered in pollen.

# Gardeners' Club

Orchid pollen is not really dusty but is packed into tiny parcels about the size of a sesame seed with each parcel having a self-adhesive patch to help with attachment to the stigma, the female structure which receives pollen. Orchid seeds though are like dust and disperse easily. The seeds do not carry a food store and rely on a particular species of fungus for their food. Even with a million seeds expelled from each flower, it is unlikely an individual seed will find exactly the right spot to germinate. Maybe this is why orchids so mysterious, elusive are fascinating to orchid-hunters.

But, for me, there remains a tiny question; how do orchid hunters know that they have found a new species of orchid? Increasingly the answer today lies in the genetics of the specimen. A PhD student at Kew Gardens, Leif Bersweden is doing this very thing; his research is focusing on orchid genetics.



You can find out more about his research at www.leifbersweden.com. If you are as fascinated as I am with orchids, you may be in time, on reading this article, to visit the orchid show at Kew which runs until 3rd March and focuses on orchids from Madagascar. Maybe you will see the orchid mentioned above. Alternatively, you could plan a visit to 'The Gamboa Rainforest Resort' next to the Panama Canal!

My photographs of orchids were taken in Thailand.

**Lorna Rains** 

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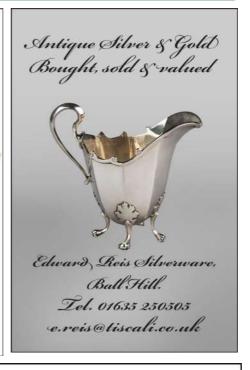
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# East Woodhay Charities

Would you like to join us as a Trustee? We are looking to appoint a co-opted trustee to the Charities. If you are interested in your local community and keen to help people please get in touch via:

### ew.charities@gmail.com

Trustees must either live or work in the civil parish of East Woodhay. We have two meetings a year, one in January and one in July and the main duties of the trustees are to consider application for grants and how best to use our funds. Our income comes from investments, there is no fund raising involved.

East Woodhay Charities is made up of two charities: 'Relief in Need and 'Relief in Sickness'. The charities exist to provide assistance to residents of the civil parish of East Woodhay, either in need or in sickness. All requests for assistance are treated sensitively and confidentially.

### **Grants available:**

- Winter fuel grants up to £200
  - We still have funds for winter fuel grants available, if you live in the Parish and are struggling with bills please apply.
- Book/technology grants for first year students of up to £100

  These grants are for students going off to college or university for the first time. The deadline for applications is the 30th June each year. Applications will be considered at the July meeting.
- General Hardship grants up to £500

These grants are for when unexpected costs arise, causing people to find themselves in very difficult circumstances. Because of the nature of these grants there is no deadline for applications. Requests will be considered either at the next scheduled meeting, or between meetings if appropriate.

### How to apply:

Please complete the grant application form so that your application can be assessed. Application forms are available from:

- East Woodhay Parish Council: www.eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk
- The secretary (Sue Wren) email: ew.charities@gmail.com or write to 83 Harwood Rise, Woolton Hill, Newbury, Berks RG20 9XZ.
- Woolton Hill Post Office and Stores
- Woolton Hill surgery

The application form is for individuals. Requests from local organisations will continue to be considered; requests should be sent to the secretary in writing or by email.

Sue Wren, Hon Sec

# **DON'T MISS OUT - SAVE THE DATE!**



### ST MARTIN'S GUILD FETE - Monday, 27 May 2024

WEBSITE: www.eastwoodhayfete.org.uk

This year St Martin's Guild Fete will be held at Church Farm, on Monday, 27 May with parking in the field opposite the gate to Church Farm, RG20 0AL.

All the money raised is kept within the Parish. Our aim is to make as much profit as possible.

Last year the funds raised from the Fete went towards the upkeep of St Martin's Church, as well as to St Martin's School, East Woodhay Village Hall, East Woodhay Silver Band, East Woodhay W.I., the Beavers and Cubs as well as sports groups such as the Woolton Hill Argyle FC.

St Martin's Guild also bought two benches to commemorate the King's Coronation and these are positioned in East End and by St Martin's Church.

As always, this is our usual reminder and plea for help to everybody.

**Help Required** 

If you would be interested in getting involved, helping or even just providing a contribution, do contact me or any of the individual stallholders. You will be welcomed with open arms!

Below is a list of this year's stallholders and what you can donate to help them. Donations can be given to the individual stall holders, ideally at least a week before the Fete:

Cakes	Freshly baked cakes, buns, fudge	Rhona Everard	253516
Plants	When you are picking out your annuals and dividing your plants, do give us your leftovers. Sarah will also be doing advance sales from her home (Gore End House) during May	Sarah Porter	254609
Granny's Attic	Newer and vintage items - china, glass and silverware, unwanted gifts and quality items for the home. No electrical items - thank you Drop off or collection.	Anne Aston	0779 483771
Artisans	Any beautiful fabrics for our wonderful sewing team	Anne Aston	0779 483771
Raffle	Prizes including cash	Jonathan H	253367
Tombola	Bottles, bottles and more bottles	Charlotte Wilson	253573
Teas	Freshly baked cakes and biscuits	Sarah Ede	253205
Games	Manpower	Sarah L	255293
Books	Children's books and two year old paperbacks only	Jenny Sanders	254839

We will be setting up the Fete on **Sunday**, **26 May** and will welcome anyone who would like to come and put up tents and collect tables and chairs. Your help will be much appreciated.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SETTING UP TIME IS 4.00pm at Church Farm. Setting up will continue on Monday, 27 May from 10am.

Please email info@eastwoodhayfete.org.uk or call Sarah Leventhorpe (255293) if you can help.

This Fete is a community event and everyone is welcome.

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East Woodhay Society

### **Woodhay Walkers**

We have been on some great walks even though it's winter, and despite there being a lot of rain we have managed to find accessible walks away from roads.

This photo of the group was from a lovely circular walk from the Royal Oak in Ecchinswell.

The area is so beautiful and with spring now here we can experience the wonderful bright flowers of the area. This picture of snowdrops was taken in East End, on the bridleway alongside Stargroves. One of our other walks.

We now look forward to enjoying primroses, daffodils, tree blossom and newly born lambs in fields.

Just come along and join us at 10.30am on a Friday morning to enjoy the fresh air and a chat. Do remember to wear suitable footwear as it tends to be a muddier time of the year.

Please see the Woolton Hill website for more detail.

Our plans for February are as below but please email woodhaywalkers@gmail.com if you are intending to join us as there may need to be some last minute changes given weather conditions.

- d to ther
- Friday 23rd Feb is a 3.5 mile walk from Carpenters Arms Burghclere
- Friday 1st Mar is a 3 mile walk from Woolton Hill Church Hall
- Friday 8th Mar is up to 4 miles from East Woodhay Village Hall
- Friday 15th Maris a 4 miles from Woolton Hill Church Hall
- Friday 22nd Mar is up to 4 miles from Downgate Pub, Hungerford
- Friday 29th Mar is a 4 mile walk from East Woodhay Village Hall

### **Quiz in February**

Unfortunately, this was cancelled due to lack of numbers.

Mark Rand, Chair EWS

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# East Woodhay Village Hall



We are lucky to be able to enjoy a local legacy resource put in place by our predecessors in the East Woodhay community in the form of our Village Hall. The land on which East Woodhay Village Hall sits was gifted to the community in 1938 and the hall built on it shortly thereafter. Since then it has been in regular use, supported by local groups including the scouts, cubs, beavers, the WI, the flower show, short mat bowls, all sorts of yoga and pilates classes and of course has also hosted lots of wedding parties, birthday, anniversary and celebration gatherings.

Sadly its regular users are diminishing and we are in need of a long term 'renter' - those of you who know it, will recall there used to be a children's play group there for many years which provided the hall with a regular income. In more recent times, the play cafe operated from there also offering some amazing Sunday lunches, but sadly this has closed.

Without such regular income it will be hard to keep the hall going. We have a proactive and energetic new team of volunteers who are trying all sorts of new ways to gain the hall regular income. They are also applying for various grants to give the hall a refurbishment / makeover.

### What can you do to help?

Please make sure you know where this lovely hall is located within our rural area. Consider it for your own parties, gatherings, receptions.....there is also a good meeting room at the back of the



hall - ideal for those working from home who would like a change. Mention it to any of your own contacts who are looking for a venue.

We are also launching a monthly '100s-Club' lottery to provide some extra income and that will conduct a prize draw on a monthly basis. If enough members of the community join the Club, we aim to conduct the first draw at the of January.

Without more support the future of the hall is at risk - please help us in any way you can by raising its profile, telling your friends about it or come talk to us about running a small business from there. We would love to hear from you.

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# St. Martin's School



The winter term is always busy at St. Martin's school, and this year was no exception! We were delighted to finally welcome Ofsted to our school (perhaps unusual to say delighted but we had been waiting and expecting them for a long time, so it was a relief for them to visit). They really seemed to get to know our school and what we are about and we wanted to share just a few of the inspector's comments.

"Pupils at St Martin's readily articulate the pride they have in their school. Comments made by pupils, such as 'No matter who you are, you can belong here,' capture the inclusive nature of this school community. Pupils appreciate the small and friendly environment. They say that 'everyone knows each other'. Parents agree with the views of their children. They also value the nurturing and caring ethos that their children experience here"

We are pleased to report that the outcome of the inspection is that St Martin's continues to be a good school.

Our open days for September 2024 starters were in November and school applications should now have been completed but we welcome anyone who would like to come and see St Martins for themselves, and late applications can still be processed through the council.

The choir at St. Martins is a wonderful and very popular extracurricular activity which represents almost half of the school! The choir performed three times in the lead-up to Christmas which were wonderful experiences for the children. We sang at the turning-on of Newbury Christmas Lights, at the Malverley's Farm & Dining Christmas shopping event and at St Martin's church services.

Christmas term also saw our lower school put on a wonderful Nativity performance, "It's a baby!" which celebrated and retold the traditional nativity story with some very catchy songs! Our pupils love putting on a show for their parents and carers, and it's a wonderful opportunity to come together as a school. The last day of term at St. Martins is always celebrated with "Carols around the tree" where parents and carers come in to sing festive songs together before the school breaks up for Christmas. And after that, everybody is ready to head home for the Christmas holidays!

We have had a busy start to the year, and look forward to telling you all the news as we move towards Spring, Easter and then Summer!



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t is just after 9 o'clock on Monday morning and the Neighbourcare telephone line rings.

"Good Morning, Neighbourcare, How can I help?" One of our five Coordinators takes the call from Mabel\* who needs to go to an appointment at the Community Hospital the following Wednesday. Mabel lives in Highclere, is elderly, has no transport and no family living locally.

"That's fine, Mabel. How are you today? What time is your appointment? I'll put that onto our system and when I have a driver, I'll give you a call back to let you know who will pick you up and what time." The Coordinator then enters the details on to the Neighbourcare database which sends out a message listing the destination and date and time of the appointment to all of our 35 local volunteer drivers.

That morning, Henry\* opens his smart phone and looks at the list of job requests for transport that need a volunteer driver. Henry is recently retired and wants to be involved in community matters. A job to take a client from Highclere to the Community Hospital for the following Wednesday fits in with his commitments and so he responds that he would be available to do this job to the Coordinator who then forwards to him directly the details of the client and her appointment.

The Coordinator then calls Mabel. "Hello Mabel. We spoke earlier about your hospital visit on Wednesday. I have found you a driver. His name is Henry, and he will pick you up at 10.30am for your 11 o'clock appointment. He will wait at the hospital and will bring you home afterwards. There is no charge for this, but we have a scale of voluntary donations to help cover the driver's expenses. Is this all ok?"

On Wednesday morning Henry picks up Mabel. "Good morning, Mabel. How are you today? I know we're going to the Community Hospital but which department is your appointment at? Have you got your keys, so you

don't lock yourself out!?"

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At the hospital Henry points out the café where he will wait for her and ensures that Mabel is going to the right department. He also notes what she is wearing so as to be sure he won't miss her when she comes out and sits with a book and a coffee while waiting.

On the way home Henry and Mabel chat about her life and her far-flung family. Mabel says she will need to go to another appointment at the Surgery sometime next week. "That's fine," says Henry, "When you know the day and time phone as soon as you can and we will find a driver for you. That is what we are here for."

If you are, or know someone who could be, a 'Mabel' or are potentially a 'Henry' call East Woodhay and Highclere Neighbourcare on 01635 745600 or contact us through <a href="https://www.ewhneighbourcare.org.uk">www.ewhneighbourcare.org.uk</a> to see how we can help you or you can help us.

\* Names are fictitious.



### Easter - Too good to be true?

As an erstwhile Cambridge theologian, I sometimes say to friends 'I know 120 reasons not to believe what the Christian faith teaches'! It's true (even if the number is a ballpark figure!). And yet I still believe, probably with greater clarity and conviction than in my very early 30s, when I started at Cambridge. Not to saylife hasn't challenged my faith, but the heart of my faith is not only more robust than I thought, but more necessary to a healthy life than I knew when young. I look at my peer group and thank God for the overarching sense of purpose and meaning faith affords. There is often a wistfulness (if not deep regret) in folk of my age. They have lived life their way but now wonder, 'What was the point of it all?' Some change direction, thank God, and the Almighty welcomes them home. Sadly, some remain convinced to their dying day they were right not to believe. Time will tell. Or, as every gravestone should say, 'The truth will out!'

When anyone asks me about the evidence for the ultimate Christian claim Jesus 'rose again', three days after being executed by the Romans, in a foul process called 'crucifixion', a number of things come to mind. First, it wasn't the loss of blood, caused by pieces of iron being driven through a person's wrists and ankles, that killed them, but asphyxia, when they couldn't hold their body up any longer. Next, there isn't one knockdown argument to believe Jesus lived, died, and rose again; nor is there much to say to anyone who has already decided what they think! I was pleased to discover the former Oxford Professor of Philosophy, Richard Swinburne, writing in 2013, of the 'high probability that lesus rose bodily from the dead on the first Easter Day'. No one can be 100% certain, but nor can those who don't or won't believe. When I doubt the 'good news' Jesus 'conquered' our greatest enemy, death, I ask myself, 'But, if he didn't rise from the dead, why didn't the Romans (or Jews) produce his body? And, if he didn't rise, doesn't that mean the Apostles were martyred for a lie, when they taught a 'true' faith? And what of the recorded 'appearances' of Jesus after the resurrection, at different times of day, to different groups of people, indoors and outdoors; to say nothing of the experience of a 'living' Jesus by every committed Christian? And what of the empty tomb with the grave cloths 'lying apart', from where Jesus had been laid?' The great theologian Tertullian (160-240 CE) was clear, Jesus's resurrection may be implausible, that doesn't mean it isn't true. As he wrote of his own sense of Easter hope, 'Jesus turns our sunsets into dawns'. How sad for my ageing friends who face a cold sunset when Easter faith is all about a rising Son. Happy Easter!

**Chris Hancock, Associate Priest** 

# Church Services

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### **Church Services MARCH 2024**

**Welcome!** Service details are correct at time of publishing, any necessary changes will be posted on church noticeboards.

SUN 3 <sup>rd</sup>	All Together	Woolton Hill	9.30am
Lent 3	Matins	Highclere	11.00am
25.11.5	Parish Communion	East Woodhay	11.00am
	Evensong	Ashmansworth	6.00pm
SUN 10 <sup>th</sup>	Holy Communion	East Woodhay	8.00am
	Family Communion	Woolton Hill	9.30am
Mothering	Mothering Sunday Service	Ashmansworth	9.30am
Sunday	Mothering Sunday Service	East Woodhay	11.00am
	Mothering Sunday Service	Highclere	11.00am
	with BCP Communion		
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Worship	Woolton Hill	9.30am
	Holy Communion	Ashmansworth	9.30am
Lent 5	Matins	Highclere	11.00am
	Evensong	East Woodhay	6.00pm
SUN 24 <sup>th</sup>	Palm Procession from		9.45am
Palm Sunday	Highclere Cricket Ground to		
	Benefice Communion for	Highclere	10.00am
	Palm Sunday		
MON 25th	Compline	East Woodhay	8.00pm
TUES 26th	Compline	Ashmansworth	8.00pm
WEDS 27th	Compline	East Woodhay	8.00pm
THURS 28th	Holy Communion & Watch	Woolton Hill	7.30pm
Maundy			
Thursday			
FRI 29 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday Service	Crux Easton	9.30am
Good Friday	Family Service	Woolton Hill	11.00am
Cood i naay	An Hour at the Cross	Highclere	11.00am
	At the Foot of the Cross	East Woodhay	2.00pm
SUN 31st	Festival Communion	Woolton Hill	9.30am
Easter Day	Festival Communion (BCP)	Ashmansworth	9.30am
	Festival Communion `	Highclere	11.00am
	Festival Communion	East Woodhay	11.00am
	Holy Communion (ext BCP)	Crux Easton	11.00am
WED 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Prover Croup Weeks Lill	10.00 am	
WED 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Prayer Group Woolton Hill	10.00 am	

Contact number for church enquiries during the vacancy:
Benefice Office 07577 423715

**Rector:** Vacancy **Associate Priest:** Revd Professor Chris Hancock 254718 **Reader:** Suki Coe 07990 755323 **Reader Emeritus:** Rosemary Cahill 253306







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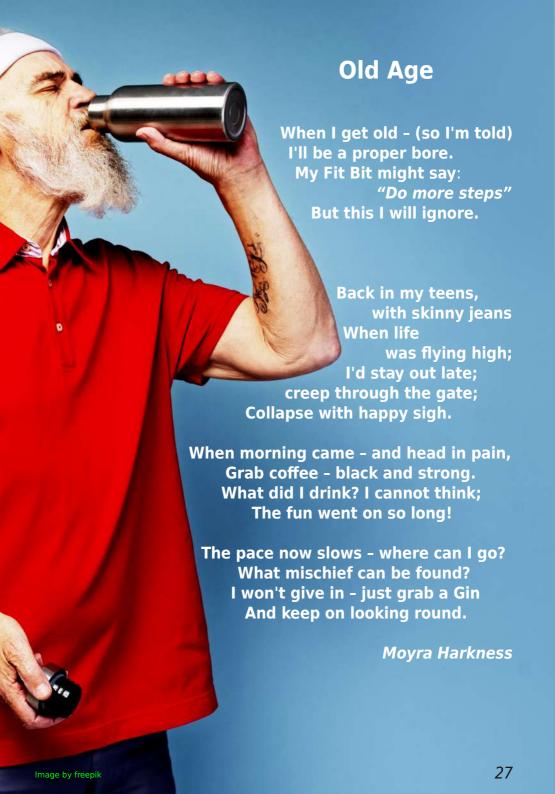


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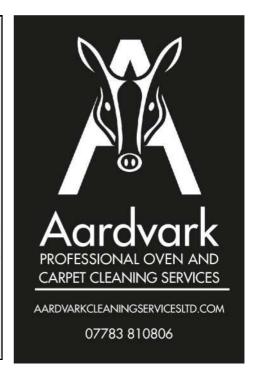
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# Finds from a Kitchen Drawer



really enjoyed reading last month's editorial reminded me of an article I wrote some time ago about the strange assortment of finds in our garden. However, not all treasures are found in outside, some hide in full view.

As any of my friends will testify, I am not a good housewife but just occasionally, I have a bit of a clear out and am amazed with what comes to light. Like many folk, we have a drawer in the kitchen where all those objects end up, you know, the

things that don't seem to have any other home so you stuff them in a drawer and forget them.

An interesting collection emerged from that drawer including an old calculator, some cable ties, a hole punch for leather, various pins, some of the safety variety and others for notice boards. There was wax for sealing envelopes, etc. and bulldogs clips, tape measures, empty film canisters and my Scout woggle.

The real finds were a 1920 shilling, which caused a bit of interest as we had certainly decimalised way before moving here and a box of paper fasteners with a price of  $1/6\frac{1}{2}$  on the bottom. In addition was a box of cord which reported to be an accessory for model boats costing 40p, so more recent than the paper fasteners or shilling. There were two dress pins, one with the heads of King Edward and Queen Alexandra and celebrating their coronation in 1902 and the other dated 1910 from College St Sunday School, Northampton.

Why any of these items ended up in my kitchen is a mystery but, as I don't have any other home for them, they have gone back in the drawer for another clear out in ten years or so.

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# Children's Mental Health Week

### The Schools of Woolton Hill shine a light on Children's Mental Health Week

with daily activities for pupils, staff and parents

Children's Mental Health Week took place between 5 to 11 February 2024, and with latest statistics from NHS Digital showing that almost a third of children are affected by mental health. the Schools of Woolton Hill has made it their mission to educate and support pupils in this area.

Every day during Children's Mental Health Week the school ran a different activity to give pupils the tools to look after their own mental health, and raise awareness about how they can help others too:

- •Monday: Everyone brought a scarf into school and were taught about feeling safe, using the object as a symbol of safety
- •**Tuesday**: A feeling of calm was the focus, with children bringing in a teddy or special object into class
- Wednesday: 'Express yourself' was the theme and pupils came into school wearing an outfit that showed off who they were
- •**Thursday**: The entire school had a full day's worth of Outdoor Learning in the new outdoor classroom, where they enjoyed interacting with nature and finding out about how being outside can help with their wellbeing.

Alongside the daily activities, parents were invited into school to take part in a Stormbreak session with their children and enjoy taking the time to sit down and play a board game together.

Stormbreak is a registered charity that focuses on improving children's mental wellbeing through physical movement. The Schools of Woolton Hill launched Stormbreak into the school in 2023, and now every day children spend 30 minutes either meditating, talking about their feelings or moving around to elevate energy and mood levels.

Davies. Head Teacher at The Schools of Woolton Hill, said: "Living in a busy modern world it's important that we teach children about prioritising their health and wellbeing. but also give them the tools to do that. It's easy to talk about mental health, but we're showing pupils how they can look after their own mental health. whether that's





through communicating with a friend, playing a game outside, or finding a quiet spot to tap into a sense of calm."

"Mental health is a huge focus for our federation, not only to support the children, but to help parents, staff and governors too."

Erin, aged 6, a pupil at The Schools of Woolton Hill, said: "I like the Stormbreak sessions

because sometimes when I'm feeling tired they help me feel more awake. My favourite sessions are when we play copycat with our friends. We take it in turns to do an action and have to copy each other."



We have a vacancy for a **Foundation Governor**.

### Would you like to join our friendly and committed team of Governors?

This role is linked to St Thomas' Church in Woolton Hill, and will aid the understanding of the Christian faith and values within our Schools.

Relevant training and support will be provided.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact:

Fiona Ashworth, Foundation Governor fionaash@btconnect.com

Tel: 07980009790

Chris McGowan, Chair of Governors c.mcgowan@whjs.hants.sch.uk



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# East Woodhay Parish Council



#### **EWPC Statement on Watermill Bridge**

**F**ollowing the decision announced last week to allow the building of 270 houses at Wash Water, East Woodhay Parish Council has issued this comment:

"The Watermill Bridge development of 270 houses at Wash Water, was originally rejected by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council but the developer appealed the decision. The appeal hearing, chaired by an independent Inspector, was held in December. Unfortunately the Inspector has over turned the BDBC decision and has approved the full development.

East Woodhay Parish Council and our Ward Councillors are angered and frustrated by this decision. The Inspector has effectively driven a coach and horses through the Neighbourhood Plan and totally ignored the democratic views of the local community. The Plan only went through referendum a year ago and was supported by the community with a majority of over 90%. The decision also disregards all the detailed evidence that was given to the hearing that this was not the right place for this development. This evidence was put forward to the hearing by three parish councils (EWPC, Highclere PC and Enborne PC), BDBC, West Berks and members of the community.

This is an awful decision and will have a profound negative impact on all three parishes.

The views of the PC and Ward Councillors have been escalated to our local MP Kit Malthouse and to the Minister of Levelling Up, Michael Gove. BDBC are also reviewing the appeal decision in detail."

## LINO-PRINTING WORKSHOP

Date: 9th March Time: 10am-4pm Price: £80.00 inc. lunch & materials



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#### **East Woodhay Parish Council**

#### The Parish Field, Woolton Hill:

#### **Biodiversity Update**

This is a follow-up on the Parish Field statement in May 2021 which included:

"...the PC will retain ownership of the Parish Field and maintain it as an open protected greenspace, with no buildings, to be enjoyed by the community. We will enhance its biodiversity and will continue to let the land for agricultural use...".



To this end we are in the process of undertaking two biodiversity improvements.

The first was in the autumn where two small areas were selected to plant wildflower seeds. These seeds are a collection of native species specifically for overseeding and enriching existing meadows or grassland areas.

The 23 wildflowers contained are some of the most common in the British landscape and have been selected for their ease of establishment and competitiveness against grass and other plants. This seed mix consists of mainly perennial species plus a few annuals to establish a burst of colour from early summer.

For a complete list see <a href="https://www.wildflower.co.uk/products/wildflower-seed-mixtures/100-wildflower-seed-mixtures/lwre-restore-enrich-100.html">wildflower-seed-mixtures/lwre-restore-enrich-100.html</a>

During the year the growth of the wildflower plants will be monitored to enable decisions to be made about further planting within the field.

The second initiative is to plant 9 trees. The choice of trees has been done with sufficient variety to add character and diversity to the field without blocking views or light. The choices include rich sources of blossom and berries to help wildlife. The need to maintain key views has influenced the choices, but in time a degree of low (height) veiling will improve, rather than impede the views from and to the field.

All the trees will be at the south western end of the field with the three oaks near Church Road and the other six nearer to Trade Street.



# THE VILLAGE CAFÉ



Welcome to Spectrum's Virtual Café where friends and neighbours share their life experiences, passions, achievements and memories.

It's the start of the week at the Café – as ever, a little slow after the weekend. Most Monday afternoons though we provide tea and sustenance for a group who usually arrive around 3.00 pm, slightly tired, always happy and sometimes muddy. Today, just Dave Lawson and Chloe Elliott arrive for their cuppa and cake. The Café is almost empty so I join them for a chat.

I start the conversation: "Can I ask what exactly does your group do each Monday?" Dave replies, "of course. We belong to two volunteer groups working at The Chase: The Monday Club and The Cattle Watchers. And yes," he smiles, "The Monday Club does meet each Monday! It has done so for a long time - in fact, between us, Chloe and I have volunteered for over 25 years."



The Notice Board at The Chase tells the story of how this woodland area on the north east edge of Woolton Hill came into existence. In 1930 Sir Kenneth Swann, a noted ornithologist and Chairman of the RSPB, bought the land and set about creating a nature reserve where he could indulge his passion for the study of birds. To ensure the longevity of this wildlife haven, fourteen years later, he gifted the estate to the National Trust, an organisation which 'owns, maintains, preserves and develops woodland and wetland sites... preserving bio-diversity and habitats to encourage fauna and flora'.

He chose well and nowadays The Chase is open for us all to enjoy, thanks to the NT's 'practical management of the habitat, working with volunteers and community groups'.

"In essence," says Chloe, "the role of The Monday Club is to maintain The Chase. As you can imagine, this is pretty physical work; for example: chopping trees, clearing streams and ditches, repairing pathways, mending fences. A vast area covering 143 acres, it is really important to prioritise our work. The animals' welfare, their safety and the safety of visitors is paramount. So that means constant checking of the animals, fencing, pathways and trees."



Chloe adds, "seasons play a role too, for example, in wet weather, with the network of streams running through the woodland, managing the flow is imperative. We work closely with the NT: each week a ranger physically works with us and helps us to prioritise."

For a number of years, cattle have been grazing freely at The Chase, studiously ignoring visitors as they walk by. The cattle were introduced to help maintain the area through conservation grazing – a strategy which provides three main benefits: the regeneration of ground flora and fungi, control of unwanted growth and habitat improvement for invertebrates and ground nesting birds.

"The cattle are a Shetland breed, owned by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and chosen for their docility," explains Dave. "Committed to conservation grazing, the Wildlife Trust provides herds of cattle to various sites throughout the county. The cattle at The Chase usually number between 3 and 10 steers."

He continues, "The Cattle Watchers are a group of around seven volunteers and between them they ensure that once a day all the cattle are counted and visually checked. It doesn't stop there though," laughs Dave, "all the fencing has to be inspected too – that is nearly 2000 posts around the two mile circumference!"



I ask Chloe if The Cattle Watchers had experienced any incidents with the cattle. "The most memorable," she tells me, "was one morning after a heavy storm. A large tree had come crashing down through part of the perimeter fence. When we arrived to deal with it – there was the whole herd of cattle just standing there, staring at the large gap. We couldn't believe they were all still there!"

It is clear that the volunteers are a pretty dedicated group. I asked Dave and Chloe what drew them to volunteering at The Chase. They both agreed that they wanted to give something back to the community. "To be able to do so locally," Dave adds, "and in such a beautiful location was really a bonus."

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Saturday 25th April - 1pm

Saturday 22nd June - 1pm

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Each tearoom at the event is for a different charity and the Market charity of the year for 2024 is Newbury Speakability.

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Chloe agrees, "I love that I can watch nature whilst doing something useful for the local community and it's great to be out and about with like-minded people. I can be digging a ditch, taking a moment out to stretch my back and there, 20ft away is a deer watching me. It's quite magical."

Dave adds, "I actually enjoy the manual work too - even repairing the boardwalk, although it is a little like painting the Forth Bridge!"



"I think it is fair to say that all of us share a passion for our working environment at The Chase," Chloe concludes. "The diverse variety of wildlife we experience is amazing, from the Little Egret watching us work on the edge of the lake, to spotting butterflies such as the Silver-Washed Fritillary, Small Copper Common Blue, and White Admiral. And don't forget," laughs Chloe, "we all think it's a great workout!"

It's time for Dave and Chloe to go and I have one final question. "What do you imagine Sir Kenneth Swann would think of the nature reserve now?" Chloe replies: "he would certainly still identify the various areas of woodland such as beech, oak, conifer and specimen trees which were planted. The number and types of birds and butterflies found there today would be particularly pleasing to him."

Dave continues, "there have, of course, been changes – the introduction of cattle, for instance. Though, back in his day 'commoning cattle' were regularly used so he would understand the benefits that cattle bring to The Chase. I think he would be very appreciative of the continuous work and commitment of the National Trust and volunteer groups. It would be clear to him that we all share and uphold his vision."

I bid them farewell and close the door at the end of another day at the Café. There's time now to sit down and reflect on their story: how the work, passion and commitment of volunteers such as The Monday Group and Cattle Watchers enables our village community to enjoy the walkways and wildlife found within The Chase. Lucky us.

If you would like to get involved with the National Trust as a volunteer, please contact nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteer.

Do you have a story you would like to share? Then please get in touch with the Café Proprietor, Hilary Hainge: hilaryhainge@gmail.com





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# Nature Sketchbook

March many-weathers is here. Although, the first month of meteorological spring, March is such an unresolved month, sometimes clinging on to freezing conditions and snow, unsure whether or when to allow the slow warm fingers of spring to get a hold.

It is nevertheless a joyful month with spring flowers ignoring the meteorological hesitancy, harnessing the sunshine to bring us verges of yellow primroses, cowslips, celandines, dandelions and narcissi/daffodils.

Where there are flowers, there are usually butterflies. In March we begin to see them emerge and arrive. Red admiral butterflies typically migrated from North Africa and are seen from spring onwards. In 2023, there was a

400% increase in their UK population. Experts suggest this may be

due to the species now overwintering here rather than migrating, as a result of warmer temperatures associated with climate change.

Many of our early spring flowers are yellow as early pollinators, mainly insects, are attracted to the colour which appears as ultra-violet blue to them.

And it is attraction which brings us to the final association with March, and idiomatic mad March hares. I have seen hares in West Berkshire but not engaged in the boxing behaviour which inspired the phrase. This is a tale of unrequited ardour with male buck hares pursuing female doe hares in the hope of mating and then, it seems, taking it too far

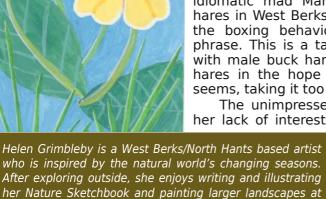
The unimpressed doe will demonstrate her lack of interest in dramatic fashion by

turning on the buck and thumping him, initiating the boxing when fur may fly!

Helen



her home studio (@burbleartstudios).



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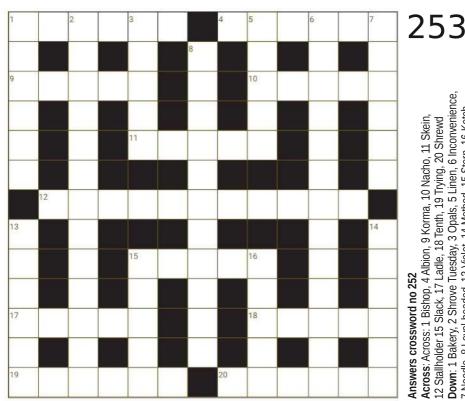
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# 12 Stallholder 15 Slack, 17 Ladle, 18 Tenth, 19 Trying, 20 Shrewd Down: 1 Bakery, 2 Shrove Tuesday, 3 Opals, 5 Linen, 6 Inconvenience, Across: Across: 1 Bishop, 4 Albion, 9 Korma, 10 Nacho, 11 Skein, Answers crossword no 252

7 Noodle, 8 Level-headed, 13 Violet, 14 Method, 15 Stern, 16 Ketch

#### Across

- 1. Type of dictionary could be carried around in this (6)
- 4. Note anger when in peril (6)
- 9. Turns out the alien had fangs (5)
- 10. Impossible to stay upright as he travels along winding lanes (5)
- 11. Badly sold, right in the middle of second chamber (5)
- 12. Only bats tie in and refuse to take any other direction (11)
- 15. March spoils ability to delight (5)
- 17. How to host a party for a plant (5)
- 18. Settle quietly in nest as there is nothing left (5)
- 19. Plain to see him limp badly inside empty store (6)
- 20. Kindly sets my test in an orderly manner (6)

#### Down

- 1. Listen, take golf strike on knee at the start of boat race (6)
- 2. Fruity girl will bloom on ship to Japan to be seen at its best (6.7)
- 3. He let woman wander around (5)
- 5. A last look round for a book of maps (5)
- 6. Quilt range Don described with extravagant language designed to impress (13)
- 7. Artisan crust I chose to look rural (6)
- 8. Could customer be canonized? Certainly David could this month. (6,5)
- 13. Could the GI's enter the boat race? (6)
- 14. Old gueen abandoned customer, as was her habit (6)
- 15. Try to get back in good books with swimming stroke (5)
- 16. Overly sentimental vegetables perhaps, especially with fish and chips (5)

# Directory of Local Organisations

Directory of Local organisacions
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Arbor Flora GroupSecretary: Diana Durkin07980 520044
Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council  Member: Graham Falconercllr.graham.falconer@basingstoke.gov.uk .253144
ChurchesEast Woodhay, St. Martin's
<b>Defibrillators</b> Schools:       St. Martin's Primary, East EndWoolton Hill Junior School         Halls:       East Woodhay Village Hall.       Woolton Hill Church Hall         Other:       Rampant Cat Public House
Doctors' Surgery Woolton Hill253324Patient Participation253306
DucklingsFiona Morgan42080
<b>East Woodhay &amp; Highclere Neighbourcare</b> 01635 745600 For transport to medical appointmentswww.ewhneighbourcare.org.uk
East Woodhay CharitiesSecretary: Susan Wren254875
East Woodhay Cricket ClubContact: Adrian Batchelor07803 519765
East Woodhay Flower & Produce Show
East Woodhay Football ClubChairman: Alan Jones254024
<b>East Woodhay Footnotes Mens Singing Group</b> Organiser: Peter Stanley
<b>East Woodhay Local History Society</b> . Secretary: Christine Dalton, 07880 628114
East Woodhay Parish Council

# Directory of Local Organisations

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Highclere Film Club	Secretary: Chris Martin253461
	Leader: Mrs. V. Burge864584
	Litterwarden@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk
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Neighbourhood Watch Woolton Hill North End	vacant
Newbury Chamber Choir	info@newburychamberchoir.co.uk
Newbury Weekly News Corr	espondant: Nicole Bentham255582
Police Beat Officer: Kieron Venn	Hampshire Constabulary101 kieron.venn@hampshire.police.uk
The Samaritans	Freephone 116 123
Park House SchoolAbs St. Martin's CE Primary School The Schools of Woolton HillSt.	www.clere.school
St. Martin's Guild www.eastwoodhayfete.org.uk	Secretary: Sarah Leventhorpe255293 cinfo@eastwoodhayfete.org.uk

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