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December/January 2023

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## The Season of Waiting

Waiting can be difficult, frustrating and patience trying! Waiting seemingly becomes increasingly more challenging as one gets older, be it as an adult or a child. We want things to happen immediately; whether it's an appointment, visitation of a carer, the eagerness of a child to celebrate a birthday, or receiving gifts for Christmas. Waiting with expectation may often engender feelings of anxiety and stress which we are medically informed can be detrimental to one's health.

Yet the month of December enables us to re-engage with the season of waiting; i.e. Advent. During this time of year we focus on the waiting period before Christmas – a time for remembering and reflecting on the birth of Jesus, revealing God's love for the world. And as such, we wait in expectant hope. Ancient writers remind us that Advent recalls three comings of Christ among us: His coming in the past as a human infant; His coming now through His risen presence in us and among us and His coming in glory at the end of time.

Despite how tiresome waiting may seem, it can also be exciting and delightfully joyous, preparatory and insightful, and reassuring and uplifting as we anticipate the possible outcome

whilst hoping for the best. Therefore, our experience of eager-longing during Advent culminates in the celebration of the promised Messiah's birth at Christmas. As we wait again during this season, may we exercise hopefulness, humility and patience.

*Rev. Shirlyn Toppin  
Highworth Methodist Church*

### Christmas Meet Greet Eat at St Michael's Church

**We meet every month on the fourth Tuesday from 10.30am for a chat, board games, crafts and a hot meal. We simply ask for a donation of whatever you can afford towards the hot meal.**

Our December meet will be a week earlier on **Tuesday 20 December** and will be a delicious Christmas feast once again. Places are limited to 35 so if you would like to join us please book your place via the Church Office by Sunday 11 December. Email the office at [office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk) or telephone 01793 762702.

## LINK magazine

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Opinions expressed or implied in any contributions are not necessarily those of the editor or management committee.

No responsibility can be accepted for any error of fact in the magazine or website. Please inform the editor of any errors so they can be rectified.

#### Contributions:

May be published in the magazine and/or the web. Make clear any limitations you have about what, how and when we may publish your contribution.

Email is preferred; otherwise deliver to The Lighthouse Bookshop.

Make sure you are writing for a general audience, not just your own organisation. News stories should not

exceed 150 words. If it's too long we will ask you to cut it. Articles may be longer but get in touch first to save the annoyance of a rejection. Photographs and advertising artwork should be clear, with good contrast. JPEG electronic format is preferred but we can scan from good quality prints. Make sure any people in photos agree that the photo can be published in the magazine and web. Get parent's consent in the case of minors.

We reserve the right to edit contributions and to not publish any contribution or advertisement that is either unsuitable for our format or is inconsistent with our editorial policy.

#### Deadlines:

1st of the month before publication – news, articles, advertising, what's on and letters.

## Welcome from the Editor



My son was mortified to see that, in the last week of October when we were visiting a local supermarket, there were already shelves of Christmas stock. I have no doubt it had probably been there for a couple of weeks and we'd just not seen it, but did I mention it was OCTOBER? There they were, selection boxes and tinsel cuddled up with glow-in-the-dark teeth and pumpkin LED lights.

Now if you're one of those people who goes all out for Christmas from October, good for you. You crack on. And call me a Bah-Humbug if you like, but I'm very much one for the magic of Christmas in December. December – a time when

you're encouraged to roast your chestnuts and toss a yule log on the fire. A time when you can fa-la-la-lah to your heart's content and no one really minds.

As you'd expect, the town is filled with festivities as we sledge into December and January with this edition of LINK magazine. I truly do feel there's something for everyone if you'll take the time to don your legwarmers and have a look around. And if you see me fa-la-la-lahing, remember you can always join in!

Happy Christmas to you all from your LINK magazine team, and thanks for all your support.

*Lesley*

## Launch of Highworth Wellbeing Walks

On 13 October, 20 people stepped out for the first Highworth Wellbeing Walk. It was a beautiful autumn day and there was much chatter as we set forth.

After the walk we had refreshments and more chat at the Rose and Crown.

If you would like to join us, come along to **The Rec car park at 2pm on any Thursday afternoon**. There's no need to book. All you need is to be able to walk for an hour at a steady pace and to wear good walking shoes. We regret that dogs



are not permitted on our walks (assistance dogs are permitted where the walk is on suitable terrain).

For further information contact Lesley at [lesley.muir@outlook.com](mailto:lesley.muir@outlook.com).

*Lesley Muir and Carole Clegg*





# Highworth Community Larder

Since our first article in the October copy of LINK, we have been offered premises by Westrop School. This is an ideal venue as it is used by many families in Highworth, has a car park nearby, and is close to the doctors' surgery and shops. Many thanks to Cindy Acres, Head of Westrop, for all her support.

We have looked at how different larders are run and hope to partner with the environmental charity, Hubbub, following the example of the Swindon Community Fridge, based at Gorse Hill Baptist Church. Hubbub supports community larder projects, giving advice and putting groups in contact with organisations with surplus food. Some local suppliers have also expressed a

willingness to supply us with any surplus they may have.

The Larder will be open to all and, while there will be no charge, visitors will be limited to five items to ensure a fair distribution. We do not yet have an opening date, but hope to be able to announce this shortly.

A number of people have offered their help with the project. Our thanks to all of them. If there is anyone else who would be interested in getting involved do please contact me on (01793) 762322 or [suemorison@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:suemorison@yahoo.co.uk)

*Susan Morison*

## Eastrop Infant School and Nursery

Recently, Eastrop Infant School and Nursery held their annual Global Awareness week – a week during which children learn about different countries and cultures.

The children were enthusiastic and really enjoyed finding out about countries such as Japan, India, United Arab Emirates and Australia, as well as



learning some key phrases in different languages and trying some foods from different cultures too.

Many children were fascinated to learn the meaning behind the colours in the UAE flag. They found out that red means courage, green means happiness,

love, and success, white means peace, and black means strength. They also learned about the national dress and had a go at trying some on. The girls wore the abaya, the women's dress, and the hijab, the head dress. The boys tried on the kandura, the white gown, and the keffiyeh, the head dress.

Pupils were very creative and also enjoyed making their own Japanese koi carp and cherry blossom.

Children learning about India found out all about rangoli and Diwali. They even made their own rangoli using coloured rice.



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People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES)

### Hedgehog Tip

Please continue to leave food and water out for visiting hedgehogs. Their hibernation is triggered at five degrees centigrade, so if it remains mild they will still be hunting for food. Support feeding is a vital resource to them at this time.



## Ask AMS

### Tax rules for Christmas parties

It's that time of year when most employers arrange a Christmas Party for their staff. The rules around tax relief for Christmas parties are fairly generous so long as the party is open to all employees and not just directors/management.

- Party costs (including travel etc.) are fully tax deductible if they are no more than £150 (inc. VAT) per head (including guests).
- Be careful. If, say, £200/head is spent, then the Employer will need to pay PAYE and National Insurance on the total party cost of £200/head – not just on the excess £50/head.
- The £150 is an annual limit so would cover a Summer Party and a Christmas Party in the same tax year. But, if the costs of multiple parties exceed £150/head, then an Employer could use the £150/head limit to cover the most expensive party, and only pay PAYE/NI on the other one.

**Peter Bromiley ACA**

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## Café Church at Highworth Methodist Church

Café Church is church with a difference. Seated round tables instead of sitting in rows, we drink coffee or tea, eat biscuits, and enjoy worship that is relaxed and informal. It is still a service; we sing a few songs, hear a bit of a talk, say some prayers, but there will be film clips, discussion and sometimes drama as well. It is a new way to explore faith and big life questions.

Here at Highworth Methodist Church we hold our Café Church services on the **first Sunday every other month**. The church is open and serving coffee from 10am with the service starting at 10:30am. There is no charge for refreshments and

there will be something to do at the tables when you arrive, like a quiz, craft or something to discuss. Or if you prefer, you can just have a chat and make some new friends.

Some of our Café Church themes in the past have been 'Life is a Rollercoaster', 'This is Me', and 'Where's the Love?' covering topics such as how to cope with the ups and downs of life, accepting those who are different from ourselves, and why is there so much suffering in the world?

Our next Café Church services are on **4 December and 5 February**. Come and give Café Church a try.

## Faringdon & District U3a

Anne-Marie Prestidge will talk about the Samaritans at our December meeting in the Corn Exchange on Thursday 8 December, starting at 2.30pm. Anne-Marie has been a listening volunteer with the Samaritans for 18 years. Her talk will cover how and why Rev. Chad Varah founded the organisation in 1953, and how it has evolved into the 24/7 service it is today.

It is a common misconception that the Samaritans was set up only to support people who had decided to end their lives prematurely. The organisation is much more than this and Anne-Marie will present some surprising statistics relating to the demographics of the incidents of suicide and the reasons why people reach the point where they believe that this is their only option. She will also discuss what it takes to become a volunteer, the personal qualities that a potential volunteer should possess and how they are trained to uphold the ethos of the organisation.

After this fascinating talk refreshments will be available to everyone, but we do ask that non-members pay £1.50 as a contribution.

All attendees are required to be in good health and up to date with all their Covid vaccinations. If in doubt, please stay at home.

## Highworth Historical Society

We have no talk in December. However on 25 January John Stooke's talk is entitled 'Frank and Ernest: The life and art of Frank Ernest Quinton.'

This is the story of a Swindon artist. He captured life at war when he served in the Royal Artillery, and went on to paint scenic postcards for Salmon & Co. He also painted murals for the 'Dome of Discovery' at the 1951 Festival of Britain.

Someone who has already heard him speak says that there is a spectacular finale 'which causes gasps and giggles'. John has published a book of his paintings and also a set of four limited edition prints. These will be available at our meeting. All profits go to support the Motor Neuron Disease charity.

Visitors are always welcome at our talks, for a charge of £3 at the door. Join us at St. Michael's Hall, Lechlade Road. Doors open 7pm for a 7.30 pm start. Coffee and tea are available and we always hold a raffle.

If you need more information then phone Chris on 01793 764811.

We're also delighted to let you know that our new book is now on sale: 'Highworth Through Time: A Light-Hearted Journey through Our Town's Rich Past'. Available from Visit Highworth, Highworth Library and Lighthouse Bookshop, priced £9. You can also pick up a copy at any of our meetings. It would make an ideal little Christmas present and is a good introduction to the town for newcomers.

## Friendship Fridays

Our Friday morning coffee drop-in started in June and we are open to all across the community, whether living alone, with dementia or just wanting to meet up with others. Let's connect!

We have grown a regular group now of 12 to 18 friends who love to get together each week for coffee, a chat and catch up, themed creative crafts and quizzes, word searches and crosswords. We have great fun playing picture bingo around the table and winning lovely treat prizes. We have created a fun horse racing table game, adding our own forfeits, and it brings out the fun and competitive side that lurks in all of us! We play games like Rummikub Word and Numbers to keep our brains alert too! Colouring and card making, flower arrangements, autumn crafts, and basket



weaving are some of the lovely creative things we've made together as we connect and chat and make new friends. We have a fun sing-along on the third Friday of the month too!

Come and join us every Friday at the Highworth Council Room, 10am to 12 noon – we'd love to see you there!

Thanks to our weekly welcoming volunteer team who, with the support of Highworth Town Council, Home Instead, and our new community partners at the Coventry Building Society, make Fridays happen.

Drop in for as little or as long as you like! You'd be so very welcome! For more details contact Ruth on 07970 543423, or email [forgetmenot.highworth@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.highworth@gmail.com).

## Highworth Town Council New Neighbourhood Plan (NP2)



The Neighbourhood Plan Committee are pleased to announce that further grant funding has been secured for a specialist to look at developing design codes for the

updated plan. Design codes shape how development should look, depending on the location within the town. The process identifies character areas and then parameters for developers to follow. For example, it will determine what materials must be used.

The steering group spent the afternoon with the consultants, taking them around the town and the committee are awaiting a draft of their findings. The specialists are particularly focusing on the sites proposed by Swindon Borough Council in their local plan review for development in Highworth, so should the sites

come forward then Highworth will have the opportunity to have some control of what is approved. We will keep you updated on the findings when they become available.

The committee have summarised four of the five workshops and the results will be published in the near future. We will let you know more details on this shortly.

There is still lots of work to do and we will be engaging with you again soon. In the meantime good progress is being made on this key document.

*Highworth Town Council  
Neighbourhood Plan Committee*



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## Highworth Camera Club Competition



*Robin in Evening Sun: Neil George*

October saw judge Sandy Watson pronounce his verdict on four competitions: the open and set subjects for August and September. As usual, we had a number of constructive comments with the aim of improving standards of our photography. You can see a couple of the winning entries here.

If you live in the Highworth area and are interested in cameras and photography, we meet on the second Tuesday of the month at

## Highworth Camera Club Exhibition Success

Highworth Camera Club staged their first exhibition in three years at the Council Room in October. We welcomed over a hundred visitors to see 150 photos that have been submitted as competition entries over the year. One visitor described it as 'a feast for the eyes'. It was great to be able to meet



*Coffee Catch Up: Pauline Godwin*

the Community Centre. Please check out our webpage, [www.highworthcameraclub.com](http://www.highworthcameraclub.com), or find us on Facebook for more information about the Club.

*Kevin O'Donoghue*



*We made an error in our November issue of LINK. The photograph included with the Highworth Historical Society's article should have been placed with the Highworth Camera Club piece. The photograph itself, of Eaton Hastings Church, belongs to Pauline Godwin and is the winning entry for the Club's 5K trophy. Many apologies, Pauline.*



*Aliens at Salisbury*

with everyone to discuss the pictures and photography in general. Several visitors were interested in attending Camera Club and perhaps joining, making it even more worthwhile. On the left is the winning *Print Of The Year*.

If you are interested in photography, new members are always welcome. We meet at Highworth Community Centre in The Dormers on the **second Tuesday of each month**, starting at 7.30pm.

Look forward to seeing you there!





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*We would be very interested if you have skills in human resources, marketing, publicity or fundraising... but please do get in touch whatever your background.*

To find out more contact us on:

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## Highworth Produce and Craft Show 2022

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's show! We had over 75 entries this year and raised over £600 from the café, entries and raffle. Even though the weather had been so hot during the summer we still had a fantastic array of exhibits. We had a mix of attendees ranging from old favourites to new faces, and plenty more coming to check out the standard for their entries next year!

We had superb support from so many local people who came and helped out to set up and support on the day and we can't thank you enough for giving us your time to ensure the show was the success you all made it.

We asked for your feedback and we had plenty. The committee will endeavour to take your suggestions on board and incorporate this into our planning for our 2023 show. If you enjoyed the day and would like to help out again next year, or take part earlier in the year in the planning stages, then do get in touch.

Looking forward to seeing you all again in September 2023!

April Thrush

Facebook  
@highworthproduceshow

Contact us:  
[aprilthrush@hotmail.com](mailto:aprilthrush@hotmail.com)



Overall Show Winner:

Susanna Winters

2nd Prize: April Thrush

3rd Prize : Sue Hooper

Star Baker: Barbara Ash

Pre School / Reception Winner:

Stanley Winter

Years 1-2 Winner: Lily John

Years 3-6 Winner: Oliver Johnson



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## Christmas at Visit Highworth

We love Christmas time at Visit Highworth, so we are very happy that Santa is coming to visit us in the centre! Santa and his helpers will be in his grotto on Saturday 3 December from 10am to listen to your Christmas wishes. He will also have a small gift and a Christmas craft for you to take home. To book please contact the centre on 01793 764440, email [info@visithighworth.co.uk](mailto:info@visithighworth.co.uk) or pop in.

At Visit Highworth we are so lucky to be able to stock such incredible artists and makers from the local area. We have such a wide and diverse selection of crafts you can't help but find the perfect gift for Christmas. We have artworks, pottery, jewellery, handmade soaps, hand creams, candles, as well as leather goods, books, Christmas decorations, the Highworth Calendar, and much more. Call in to take a look.

Finally, a big THANK YOU to everyone who has supported us in 2022, from our shareholders and supporters to all the visitors to the centre. We have enjoyed two craft fairs, Meet the Maker Sessions with our wonderful artists, and who could forget Storytime with Neil Griffiths. We have found out all about fossils, made bats for Halloween, seen how pottery is thrown, and had a go at the community mosaic. Paint and Prosecco evenings were also a great hit! It was a privilege to be able to hold an exhibition in remembrance of local artist Ian Miller, and to work with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery for the 'Local Legacies' ceramic exhibition. We welcomed groups from RAF Fairford, Shrivenham Defence Academy, as well as groups from history societies and the WI to take our guided tour of Highworth and share with them our amazing town. 2022 has been a fantastic year so roll on 2023 – we have even more planned for next year!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone from us all at Visit Highworth!

*Find us at 7 High Street or at  
[www.visithighworth.co.uk](http://www.visithighworth.co.uk)*

*Helen Lacey  
Centre Manager  
T: 01793 764440*

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### EVERY CLOUD



Every Cloud Christmas Wreath Workshop  
Stanton Country Park, The Avenue, SN6 7SF  
Saturday 10th December 10.30am - 12.30pm  
Join in the fun of making your own Christmas wreath with Jeni.

Tuition, materials, tools and mince pies included in the workshop fee of £27. You are welcome to bring along greenery from your own garden/decorations if you wish. P.S. we advise you wear warm clothing!

Please book via [jhowell4@virginmedia.com](mailto:jhowell4@virginmedia.com)



(an example of a Christmas wreath, how your actual wreath will look will depend on greenery and decorations available)



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## There's a Buzz in the Warneford Library!



Bookbuzz is a reading programme from BookTrust that aims to inspire a love of reading in 11- to 13-year-olds. At Warneford School, Year 7 students had the opportunity to choose their own book to take home and keep from a list of 17 titles. Books were all carefully selected by a panel of experts to ensure quality, suitability and to encourage reading for pleasure. This has been funded by the Warneford PTA once again! Pictured are some of the recipients with their new books.

Later this term the library will be buzzing with visits from authors (Steve Cole for Years 5 and 6 students, Kereen Getten with Year 8, and the Year 7s will meet Poet Ash Dickinson). The week will also include a trip to the Wyvern Theatre to meet Ultimate Football Heroes author Matt Oldfield, and six students will participate in an inter-school Book Quiz held at the Ridgeway School.



Bookbuzz Warneford  
(Five year 7 students)



Kereen Getten



Steve Cole



## Warneford School celebrates LINK's Young Journalists

LINK's own young journalists, Sophie Nolan and Constance Davenport, have been recognised by their school for their recent promotion to LINK magazine's team. Warneford School headteacher, Andy Steele and Deb Tremblin, Warneford Library Manager, are thrilled for the girls and have invited them to help write about the Swindon Youth Literature Festival – watch this space!

See the 'Young Journalists' on page 24 for their thoughts on Christmas

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# Could you be a Town Councillor?

*'You have no authority, Jackie Weaver!'*

**Do you remember the infamous YouTube clip of a parish council meeting that goes horribly wrong? Let me assure you that it will never happen at Highworth Town Council, particularly if you can be persuaded to be an independent member of the council.**

Yes, it's that time again. On Thursday 4 May 2023 registered electors will be invited to elect 15 Town Councillors to serve for the next four years. Please consider standing as an independent councillor.

What does it involve? Briefly, local councillors have three main areas of work:

1. **Decision making:** Through attending meetings and committees elected members decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.
2. **Monitoring:** Councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.
3. **Getting involved locally:** As local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organisations. This often depends on what a councillor wants to achieve and how much time is available. The day-to-day work may include:
  - Going to meetings of local organisations and community groups
  - Going to meetings of bodies that affect the wider community, such as the police, schools and colleges or Swindon Borough Council.
  - Taking up issues on behalf of members of the public.
  - Running a surgery for residents to bring up issues.

I can explain much more if you come along to an introductory meeting at Highworth Community Centre, The Dormers on Thursday 19 January at 7.30pm.

If I have piqued your interest and you want to know more, sooner, then go to the National Association of Local Councils website at:

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections#how-to-become-a-councillor>

Or contact Keith Smith at [keithsmith35@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:keithsmith35@tiscali.co.uk) or call on 07836 382827.

I will post reminders of the meeting on various FB pages and as a poster in the High Street from early January.

*Disclaimer: The above article was written by Keith Smith as a longtime resident of Highworth and reflects his own views. It does not represent the views of Highworth Town Council, Highworth Community Partnership Group, Highworth Community Association or any other organisation to which he is associated.*

## Thursday Kitchen @ St. Michael's Church

With the long, cold months ahead, we are once again offering a free hot meal to those who would like a little support or company. Everyone, including families and those living alone are most welcome; let's share food and friendship together.

No need to book just turn up!

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## 1st Highworth Scouts Group Camp



We had over 100 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers and about 50 parents and leaders attend our recent Group Camp at the Cotswold Sailing Club. We did lots of exciting activities.

On the first day, we started to play manhunt in the dark. The seekers had torches which was fun, because we could see them but they couldn't see us. We could hide in the best places and see where the seekers were and move away. It was like we were invisible. Setting up the camp was fun with my friends. Putting up the tents was actually easier than I thought when everyone did it as a team. Sitting around the campfire with hot



chocolate and singing songs (my favourite was Ogie Ogie Ogie) was an amazing end to the first day.

When we woke up the next day the weather was very damp, so I put lots of layers on to keep warm and joined my team which was the Ravens. We had to collect the most amount of Ickys (camp currency) by doing lots of challenges; it was great fun.

Some of the challenges were: tomahawk throwing; paddle boarding; rafting; baking; water rockets, and lots of arts and crafts. My favourite activity was archery and I even got a bullseye. The food was tasty and I tried new things.

On the last day we packed up the camp and all had breakfast in the large tent. I enjoyed playing the Trading Game, and got 1000 Ickys for drawing a picture of dragons. The Ravens didn't win but we had the best time doing all the activities and making new friends.

When my mum and dad picked me up we sang God Save the King around the flagpole and renewed our promise for the first time to the new King.

I really enjoyed my camping adventure and look forward to the next one.

Josca



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## News from Westrop Medical Practice

Over the years, as well as growing in size, our workforce has also become considerably more diverse, encompassing a wide range of allied healthcare professionals. Each of these have particular skills or knowledge that can enhance patient care over and above what the more traditional doctor and nurse model would offer. Many think that we have been forced to do this due to a lack of doctors but actually the decision to embrace working alongside other healthcare professionals has service quality at its core.

We understand, however, that this can be confusing and disconcerting for patients. For years you would see a GP for any problem. For example, if you had a bad back there would only be one option – see the doctor! Now, you will be guided by the receptionists to see a physiotherapist. Or perhaps your mood is low, or you are feeling anxious, and you are advised to see one of our mental health nurses. If you are struggling with your IBS symptoms, our dietician will be offered. We also work with pharmacists who will deal with medication-related issues and minor illness, and Advanced Nurse Practitioners who can assess and treat a wide range of clinical problems. Whilst many patients are only too happy to see part of the wider team, others sometimes worry whether they would be better off seeing a GP, or that they might not be able to get the medication they need, or what if they need a fit note?

Please let me reassure you! The allied healthcare professionals we are lucky to work with are all experts in their own areas and often have experience within hospitals as well as in general practice. This gives them additional skills that allow them to help over and above what would be offered with the traditional doctor model. Many of our clinicians are prescribers, so can offer the same medication options and those that aren't can quickly and easily request a prescription when required. Likewise with fit notes. And

please also be reassured that it's very much a team effort – if the clinician you see feels you are in the wrong place, or if an opinion from a doctor is needed, this can be promptly arranged by our duty GP; as well as x-rays or any other tests which may aid diagnosis. They also often have longer appointments, which allow time for a thorough assessment.

So, returning to that patient with back pain who would have been sent to see the GP had they presented in the past, how would their care be different to how it is now? Well, when it comes to back and joint problems my options as a GP are a bit limited. Yes we can examine and assess for 'red flags' (symptoms that mean a more serious diagnosis could be underlying), we can request x-rays (although in 99% of cases these don't help), and we can issue painkillers if needed, although side effects can be problematic. Compare this to when you see a physio, someone who has years of experience purely in the management of orthopaedic problems. That extra knowledge and skill will result in a more thorough and in-depth assessment, helping you to understand better the issues you are having. A personalised exercise plan, where appropriate, can be offered, helping to actually fix the problem. If a referral is needed, or x-rays, or a fit note, these can all be arranged. So all in all a much better deal and hopefully giving the patient the best possible advice and chance of

recovery. It's the same situation when seeing any of our allied healthcare professionals.

I know in many cases I will be preaching to the converted – we were the first practice in Swindon to work alongside physios and they have long been an embedded part of our team – but for those that are yet to be convinced, please keep an open mind and let our reception team guide you to see the best professional for the problem that you have. I'm confident you will be pleasantly surprised!



## Highworth Historical Society Open Day

After a three year gap we were back and wondering if people would still be interested – they were!

A trip outside to see our collection of agricultural implements proved very popular, with Ken and Paul on hand to answer questions.

The display of Dr. Gilmore's medical instruments was presided over by his daughter. Many people spoke to her of their visits to her father, even of him helping to bring them into the world. His 'birthing bag' did cause a wince or two among female visitors.

As always our many photos were popular viewing. Often with a cry of 'that's me'. People shared their own stories and our new book sold well. Altogether a happy event which helped



people realise that they are part of the town's story.

Thank you to everyone who came. We loved meeting you.

## Return of the Kencot Ukes to the Highworth Forget-Me-Not Café

The October Forget-Me-Not Café saw the triumphant return of the Kencote Uke Group. We had a great singalong, which is always enjoyed by all our lovely café families. We were also joined by Chloe Ayres of Dressability. This is a friendly and welcoming independent charity which supports the clothing needs of individuals with disabilities and those over the age of 65.

They provide a personal, tailored and bespoke service developing practical solutions to everyday problems. Chloe was able to demonstrate some of their amazing adaptations and take several orders away for alterations, which she will return

with to the next café! You can contact Chloe for more information at [chloeayres@dressability.org.uk](mailto:chloeayres@dressability.org.uk).

We are looking forward to more great afternoons' entertainment throughout 2023 for our many café goers, and are as always grateful for our many supporters and volunteers.

For more details on the Memory Café and our other group events, or to arrange transport, please contact: [forgetmenot.highworth@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.highworth@gmail.com) or call Ruth on 07970 543423.





# Westgate are Officially Outstanding!

It was a very exciting beginning to the new school year when Westgate Nursery received recognition from OFSTED as Outstanding! Well done, Team.



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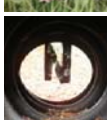
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*Gratitude always; a huge "Thank you" to our Westgate community.*

## Christian Aid at St. Michael's Church

We will be hosting a Christmas Coffee Morning in St. Michael's Church between 10am and 12 noon on Saturday 10 December, fundraising for disasters and emergencies.

In recent times we have seen national appeals for Afghanistan, the Sudan, floods in Pakistan and war in Ukraine. St. Michael's has a dedicated fund which contributes to helping the victims in all these disaster areas through the national DEC fund.

Please pencil in the date to pop in for a coffee and nibble – we would love to see you.

*Patricia Croton  
St. Michael's Christian Aid*

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# YOUNG JOURNALISTS

## Christmastime

Christmas is the best time of year for me and here's the reasons why.

Highworth celebrates it with lights and a giant Christmas tree in the Market Square. The tree, which is lit up in a ceremony during November, marks the start of the town's Christmas festivities and is attended by many locals and neighbouring villages. Though our own tree is nowhere as big, I enjoy decorating it with tinsel and baubles. Our style is always hectic as we don't have matching colours but each decoration has a meaning and history.

All the shops have decorations ready for Christmas; as well as the shops, a lot of people decorate their houses with Christmas lights and wreaths. There are some wonderful displays outside people's houses that, as a family, we like to visit and look at.

One of my important jobs on Christmas Eve is to position and sort the presents under the tree. On Christmas Day I'm in charge of handing them out to all my family. Sometimes I have a little elf helper (my sister) which adds to the festive chaos, although eventually everyone gets the right gift.

Christmas dinner of Yorkshire puddings and pigs-in-blankets is very yummy. Whilst I'm not a fan of brussel sprouts I do try one every year – you never know when your tastebuds might change!

Fingers crossed this year that there will be some snow so I can make a snowman and go sledging. That would be a Christmas miracle!

Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year.

*Constance Davenport*

## My Christmas

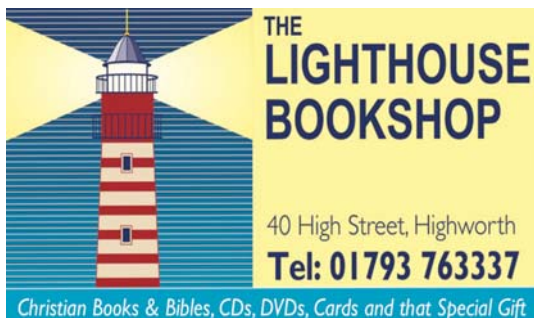
**C**osy and warm  
**H**olly and berries  
**R**eindeers and robins  
**I**ce and snow  
**S**anta and elves  
**T**insel and baubles  
**M**erry and bright  
**A**ngels and stars  
**S**pecial time of year

I love Christmas and all that I do during this time of year. Every year I wish for snow so that me and my sisters can play in it. Snow angels, sledging and snowball fights, it must be done!!! Our snowmen change size, depending how much snow there is – sometimes he comes up to my knee or he can be taller than my dad! Mum always has a pile of gloves ready for us to change over halfway through because they get so wet and cold. Last year, outside the front of my house, the roads were full with snow, but empty with cars. It was beautiful!

This year I am looking forward to visiting my family to switch presents, take funny photos, eat lots of chocolates, and have lots of fun together.

I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas and has fun!

*Sophie Nolan*



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## Message from the Mayor: It's Been a Busy Time!



As this is my first article in LINK, I wanted to take this opportunity to say how honoured I am to be Mayor of Highworth. I never imagined when I was first elected to be a Councillor that in my first term I would have this opportunity.

What a year it has been, with two poignant moments in history. Firstly, the Jubilee celebrations to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's 70th year as monarch. She was a great inspiration to me, serving the country from such a young age, always with grace and dignity. It was wonderful to celebrate with residents of all ages at the Jubilee celebrations and the lighting of the beacon is a moment I will remember forever.

Secondly, the passing of our Queen only a few months later – a shock to so many, myself included. With only two days' notice to advertise, I was surprised, but delighted, to see so many join me and other Councillors at the Podium for the Reading of the Proclamation. Delivering the reading felt such a great responsibility, but I am proud to have had the opportunity to pay respects to our late Queen and welcome King Charles III to the throne.

In the last six months I have really enjoyed meeting so many of you; those I have known for many years, having grown up in the town, and also meeting new people.

I have also been extremely busy attending events to represent Highworth, such as the Malmesbury Town Council Robing Ceremony, the civic reception at RAF Fairford, the International Air Tattoo, and the British Legion Field of Remembrance at Lydiard Park.

Officially opening places and events has been such a privilege, including the skatepark, the refurbished Budgens, and the Artists' Society Autumn Exhibition. I have also visited the Scouts

and hosted a mock council meeting with them. It has been delightful to celebrate LINK's 50th anniversary and attend Highworth and District Lions' 48th Charter Anniversary Dinner. I visited Newburgh House and Grove Hill nursing home for the Jubilee, attended St. Michael's church service for the passing of the Queen, and presented trophies and medals at Highworth Town Football Club. Added to that, I supported the schools with various activities and productions, and the Highworth Produce Show to present trophies. Not forgetting the unveiling of the mosaic at the Visitors Centre, visiting the Forget-Me-Not Café, attending the Remembrance Service at St. Michael's Church, and supporting the Community Speedwatch Team. In December, I will be attending a dinner with Highworth Twinning Association where I will meet the Mayor of Pontorson and, at the time of reading this article, you will have (hopefully) enjoyed the Christmas Light Switch-on, which I am delighted to host.

Whew!

I am delighted to announce that Highworth Town Council has been awarded Quality Council Award status under the Local Council Award Scheme. This scheme provides a framework to measure that a Council demonstrates good practices in

governance, community engagement, and council improvement. Well done to our town clerk, Deanne, and her team for the hard work needed to achieve this status.

I look forward to 2023, so please let me know if there is any support I can give by contacting my secretary at the email below. If you would like to contribute to the Mayor's chosen charity, Prospect Hospice, please email or ring Highworth Town Council Offices on 01793 762377. Thank you to those that have already contributed to this great cause.

I would like to wish everyone festive greetings and the best of health and happiness in the New Year.

*Julie Murphy*

*Mayor of Highworth*

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## Sport *Compiled by Jason Daniels*

If you have a sport story email [jcdsport12@gmail.com](mailto:jcdsport12@gmail.com)



### Highworth Canoe Club

Back in June the Highworth Canoe Club organised a night paddle along the River Thames which was timed to coincide with the week of the summer solstice. This has been a regular event in the club calendar and is a tradition; we used this event as a



fundraiser for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Our starting point at nightfall was The Red Lion in Castle Eaton and a small number of canoes and kayaks ventured downstream. The youngest in the group was seven-year-old Ezra who captained the front of the canoe with Grandad for company. A few hours later we arrived at the Trout Inn in Lechlade to complete the evening's paddle. A great time was had by everyone and we would like to thank Mark and Rhian at The Red Lion, and Penny at the Trout Inn, for their kind support with this year's event. If interested in reading more about our club and its events, please take a look at our website.

[www.highworthcanoecub.co.uk](http://www.highworthcanoecub.co.uk)

Dan McNaughton

### Swindon Croquet Club

SCC completed a busy 2022 schedule which included league matches and several club tournaments. In addition, and as always, various local community groups enjoyed the club's facilities. These included: Swindon Town Football Club's Extra Time (men and ladies groups); Corinium Trefoil Guild; Cricklade Parkinson's Café; Officers and Councillors from North Swindon Parish Council; Fairford Classic Car Club, and Hillier Bereavement Group. Social Secretary, Sharon Smith, and her helpers did a superb job, providing refreshments for the various visiting

groups. Club Chairman Clive Smith said, 'This has been a very good season for what is an excellent, community-minded club. Membership is growing, the league teams have competed brilliantly, tournaments have been well-attended and the variety of groups that have experienced this intriguing sport has increased. We look forward with optimism to a successful 2023.' Play continues through the winter. Free taster sessions are always available. If you are interested, please drop us an email.



SCC with Officers and Councillors from North Swindon Parish Council

E: [swindon.croquet@outlook.com](mailto:swindon.croquet@outlook.com)  
[www.swindoncroquetclub.org.uk](http://www.swindoncroquetclub.org.uk)

Beverly Briggs

### Highworth Running Club

The last Wednesday before Christmas may, for some, fall slap-bang in the midst of the pre-Christmas panic. For others it may fall in the exultant serenity enjoyed by those who planned ahead. I find myself firmly in the former category. But for the Runners of Highworth it is an opportunity to step away from the wrapping paper and re-run of 'Elf' to enjoy the most social run in the club's calendar: Christmas Hills. Hill running is normally a discipline feared by everyone who knows what it is, but by putting the word 'Christmas' in front of it and wearing a Santa hat the session is considered fun, festive, and perfectly designed to make you feel fit ahead of your big day feast. After the final repetition of

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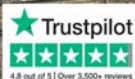
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Deck the hills

a short(ish) hill, it's not unheard of for mulled wine and a mince pie to appear – purely, of course, to aid hydration and nutritional recovery. Even if you're not a member of the Highworth Running Club you'd be welcome to come and join us. It'd be a great way to meet us; so if interested, please come and find us at the Brewery Street car park at 6.30pm on Wednesday 21 December.

[www.highworthrunningclub.co.uk](http://www.highworthrunningclub.co.uk)

Jason Daniels

## Blunsdon's Double World Medallist

Competing with the biggest ever team from the UK and Ireland, the PAA (Professional Arm-wrestling Association) UK and Ireland sent 35 athletes to Dieppe, France, to compete in the IFA (International Federation of Arm-wrestling) 2022 world championships in October. From a total of over 350 competitors from 28 nations, Alan Milne, from neighbouring Blunsdon, won a world silver and bronze medal in the senior grand master under 78kg class, fighting off stiff



Silver Medallist Alan Milne

competition from strong American and Polish teams. The competition took place over seven days at the Novick's Stadium in Dieppe on the Normandy coast, with weigh-in and different weight categories and arms being contested on different days. Having competed for over 19 years and previously placing third at the World Arm-wrestling Federation (WAF) tournament in 2013 in Poland, this was Alan's greatest achievement to date. Training is ongoing, with the British championships contested in Birmingham in November, and hopefully a gold medal at next year's World or European championships! Should you be interested in learning techniques and arm-wrestling specific training, contact Swindon Crusaders arm-wrestling on Facebook. Training is every Sunday evening from 7pm in Swindon, or general information and updates can be found at the website address below.

[www.paa-armrestling.com](http://www.paa-armrestling.com)

Jason Daniels

## Wrag Barn Golf Club

Congratulations to the Wrag Barn Juniors who celebrated a successful season of hard work and commitment by winning the Wiltshire Junior League and Wiltshire Junior Knockout Cup. They are an awesome team and the support network of Junior Organisers, the parents,



Wiltshire Cup Trophies

and coaches have witnessed some amazing achievements. Wrag Barn played three rounds on the way to winning the Wiltshire Cup. Our first match of the season was a 2-1 win over Broome which set the season up nicely; wins for James White and Riley Banks. A very tough semi-final victory over Chippenham saw Riley come from behind to grab a half, before Jarvis won the play-off hole, setting up the final against High Post to be played at neutral Marlborough. It had all the drama you would expect from a cup final. Louis went out first and played solid, winning his match on the 16th, (4&2). Next up was James White who had a ding-dong battle with Jude (Highpost) which was all fairways, greens and birdie putts. Unfortunately James lost (2&1) but

played great golf. This meant the last match was the decider. James Biggs was having his own battle giving away 13 shots, the highest of the team. After a tough front nine, James turned his match around, and as he stood on the 16th hole, he was two up. At this stage he didn't know the match was 1-1 and it was down to him. A solid three wood down the 16th and a wedge to the middle of the green followed by a single putt for a birdie secured the match (3&2) and the team win 2-1. Cool and calm under pressure. In the Wiltshire League, we played five matches and took four-and-a-half points from a maximum of five, with victories over Chippenham, Broome Manor, Manor House, Cumberwell, and a half with North Wilts. Lots of juniors had an opportunity to play in a great season with a mix of experience and some debutants. Two junior performances stood out: James White, our captain, and Jake Kavanagh won five out of five matches. So, in summary, a really outstanding performance from the squad, and of course lots of thanks to parents, helpers, the club and our pros.

[www.wragbarn.com](http://www.wragbarn.com)

*Alan Kavanagh*

## Highworth Tennis Club

On 8 October, we held the annual Highworth adult/junior tennis tournament for the first time since Covid disruptions. There was a great turnout, the weather was amazing and everyone enjoyed the fun and relaxed atmosphere. Each junior player (ages 12-18) was paired with an adult player (19+), and five doubles games, lasting 20 minutes each, were played. The winners were the team with the highest number of winning games. Winners were Noah and Jake, and the runners up were Stanley and Reg (pictured). You can visit the Highworth Tennis Club website for more information on how to hire a court or become a member of the Club.



*Stanley (left) & Reg*

[www.highworthtennis.com](http://www.highworthtennis.com)

*Hannah Mobbs*



## Highworth Town Walking Football Club

October saw four of the men's team and four of the women's team join forces to take part in the Bracknell Mixed Tournament. Rules were that three players of each gender must be on the pitch at all times. A 2-1 start against Chelsea, goals from Lisa Lane and Glyn Evans. Next Bracknell, which ended 2-2 after a controversial last-minute penalty with goals again from Lisa and Glyn. The final group game against Northampton ended 0-0 to qualify for the semi-finals. Against Melksham, neither team could find the breakthrough and the game ended 0-0, with penalties the decider. Glyn scored first, and Ali saved Melksham's; Becky missed next, and Ali saved again keeping it 1-0. Then Lisa calmly slotted away her penalty to seal a place in the final for a Bracknell rematch. Sadly they had one perfectly worked set piece to seal the win with Highworth as runners-up. The team played so well together and Lisa also picked up the 'Best Female Player of the Tournament'! If you are interested in playing competitive or social walking football, men's sessions are held on Thursdays and Sundays 11am to 12pm and ladies Sundays 10am to 11am, all at Grange Leisure in Stratton with a Friday session between 11.30am and 12.30pm at the Highworth Rec. Contact Graham Seeley for more details.

[E: highworthwfc@outlook.com](mailto:E:highworthwfc@outlook.com)

**M: 07769 703702**

*Graham Seeley*

## Swindon and District Motorcycle Club

Autumn couldn't have passed without a few sets of Bridgestone's and Pirelli's grabbing at the disused stonework of the old Hannington Railway station in October. The S&DMCC turned up 55



strong to contest the Jack Croston Trial, age ranges and motorcycles as eclectic as the sections ahead of them. On a bright, sunny morning perfect for balance and bravery, ten devilishly designed challenges asked the petrol protagonists to complete each, not once but four times in pursuit of glory. Accolades, as oft exercised, were awarded to both age and skill gradings, with Lee Hassall proving unchallengeable in the 'expert' category. Keith Wooster succeeded in the supporting A/B Class by clearing half of the ten asks without any penalties, such heights rivalled by Martyn Wilmore in the B Class and Geoffrey Maslin in the Novice Category. George Maslin rode to top spot in the introductory



'green' competition, and Joshua Martin and Zedriano McKeenin (pictured) proved the best youths of the day. In a sport that truly makes itself available to all, the club looks forward to another full year of events in 2023 and on Friday 27 January will be celebrating by way of a Dinner Dance in Wroughton. If you are interested in the competitive or social side of this revered club, then their website holds all the information you could desire.

[www.sdmcc.org.uk](http://www.sdmcc.org.uk)

Jason Daniels

Zedriano McKeenin

Photograph courtesy of Facebook



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## What is a 'Toxic relationship'?

A toxic relationship is usually with a partner, but it could be with a colleague, manager, family member or even a friend. Ultimately a toxic relationship is when one person asserts power, control and their will over another.

**Relationship Abuse comes in many forms: Physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial and technical.**

- Do you, or have you had, a relationship that makes you doubt your own opinions?
- Do you find yourself consistently agreeing, because it keeps the peace?
- Does your partner 'gaslight' you?
- Do your friends and family think you have a wonderful life, but do not know the psychological and emotional toll that happens behind closed doors?

If you recognise any of the above, then I am here to help you with any toxic relationship.

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**If you want the emotional pain and distress of a relationship to stop... Then call me**



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## What is Gaslighting?

**Gaslighting is often present in a toxic relationship.**

The term gaslighting has received a lot of publicity following its use by a judge in a legal case regarding coercive control. Originally the term was attributed to a movie, *Gaslight*, where the perpetrator consciously and maliciously made his wife feel she was losing her mind. Amongst other things, he moved her things saying she had, and he regularly lowered and raised the gas light whilst denying any change to ensure his wife doubted her own sanity.

For example, you could be asked the question, 'Are you having an affair?' It's a valid question if you are. But if not, nor displaying any traits that could explain the question, then it could be the gaslighter projecting blame onto you when they are the one being unfaithful. They will tell lies and then deny saying them, causing you to doubt what you know is true. You find yourself apologising for things that you know were not your fault, or begin believing that everything is your fault.

Questioning their behaviour, the gaslighter's response can be, 'It's in your head. You're crazy!' By adamantly denying something they said or did on a constant basis, and by using these types of statements, the abuser can destabilise your mental health and wellbeing and distort your perception. Once you start to believe that it is in your mind then the abuser will constantly reiterate, validating that perception.

It's not in your mind and you are certainly not crazy. Remember, if your gut says something is wrong it usually is.

There is a saying that the victor writes history; so does the abuser. The gaslighter will discredit or place any culpability onto their partner. For

example, they may not want to attend a party, but will say you are ill and they must look after you.

Have you been isolated from family and friends? They may make it uncomfortable for you by being moody every time you see your friends or family, or make derogatory remarks about them.

A gaslighter will shower you with love and affection, often love-bombing in the early part of the relationship, and later as a reward when their love becomes conditional. Manipulation will ensure you do what they want in the way they want it. Your boundaries will become weakened or even destroyed. If you try to reinstate them, you will be made to feel guilt that you have rejected the gaslighter. Control lies hidden, and gaslighting is a part of coercive control. Coercive control is a crime.

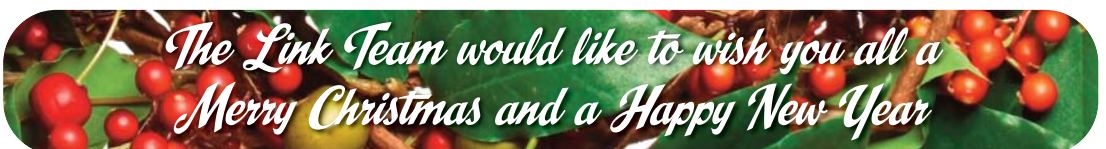
Is it ever too late to reverse the damage? Not at all! You need to decide that enough is enough, and you want the situation to change, then you are ready to stop being the victim and take responsibility to care for your own wellbeing. What follows is a process of rebuilding your confidence, self-esteem and, most importantly, belief in yourself, your instincts, and your choices. Healing takes some time, but your life and your happiness are worth it!

*Bren Hosking*  
*The Toxic Relationship Coach*  
T: 07511929020

E: [bren@toxicrelationship.co.uk](mailto:bren@toxicrelationship.co.uk)  
[www.toxicrelationship.co.uk](http://www.toxicrelationship.co.uk)

**BREN HOSKING**

*The Toxic Relationship Coach*



## Highworth Community Cinema

Highworth Community Cinema doesn't show a film in December so we will commence the spring half of the season with an Oscar and BAFTA award-winning film.

Friday 27 January

### Belfast

St Michael's Hall,  
Lechlade Road,  
SN6 7HQ. 7.45pm

Belfast, 15th August 1969. Surrounded by sporadic violence and growing danger, nine-year-old Buddy finds himself confronted with the ugly reality of sectarian conflict. And, as the suffocating stranglehold of increasing turmoil tightens around his once-peaceful working-class neighbourhood, Buddy tries his best to understand The Troubles – after all, someone must be responsible for forcing people to flee their homes. Now Buddy's family must come face-to-face with a nearly impossible, life-altering decision: stay or start packing?

98 mins Cert 12A – Doors open 7.15pm

There is no membership fee. Admission £6 on the door. 50p for tea / coffee and biscuits.

Contact details

Enquiries: 01793 763907

Email: [info@highworthfilms.org.uk](mailto:info@highworthfilms.org.uk)

[www.highworthfilms.org.uk](http://www.highworthfilms.org.uk)





## Highworth Library

Highworth Library will be closed from  
1pm on Saturday 24 December  
and will re-open on  
Tuesday 3 January at 9am

All the team here would like to wish everyone a  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
Tel: 01793 463500  
[highworthlibrary@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:highworthlibrary@swindon.gov.uk)  
[www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries)

## Greetings from Highworth Amateur Dramatics Society

Rehearsals are going well for our latest show, 'Movies can be Murder!' Lord Berrington invites you all to come and watch our performance of this murder mystery on **3 and 4 February 2023** (timings to be confirmed). Keep your eyes peeled for posters regarding tickets, and we'll look forward to seeing you at Berrington Hall (a.k.a. The Highworth Community Centre). Updates can be found on Facebook and Twitter, and you can contact us any time by email at: [hadshighworth@gmail.co.uk](mailto:hadshighworth@gmail.co.uk)

Elanor (HADS Secretary)

## YOGA at Coleshill

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## Shrivenham Park Golf Club

What have the last month's competitions captured and what other events have occurred? And what of the future for the start of 2023?

In the men's section, there has been the usual October Medal, won by Paul Warneford playing off an excellent low handicap index of 4 and scoring a nett 72. Malc Walker also finished with the same score but surrendered first place on countback. The Senior Men's Section played the Jim Howe – a competition where the entry fee and any extra donations are given to the green keeping team – and here the winner was Steve Polley who secured 36 stableford points. The October Stableford for this club section was Ryan Moore after achieving 38 Stableford points, whilst the runner-up in this competition was Gordon Gough scoring 33 points.

Adi Betterton, the club captain, held his birthday bash for members and their guests and there were many teams playing. There were two sections: the mixed pairs, and the men's pairs. It was a two-ball Stableford Texas. Everyone enjoyed the day with chips at the window after ten holes.

S. Bentley and M. Popkiss, 49 points  
J Stellwood and D. Mussard, 46 points  
T. Rolls and M. Saunders, 38 points.

### **Mixed pairs**

N. Crawford and D. Elbourn, 43 points  
G. Wiltshire and C. Lee, 43 points  
P. Shurmer and D. Shurmer, 38 points



*Shrivenham Golf Macmillan*

There were 'nearest the pin and bottle on the 18th hole' prizes as well.

Carole organised the Macmillan coffee morning and book sale and raised approximately

£120 for this worthy cause. Thanks to all who supported the morning.

**Christmas events** – will include the Ladies Lunch, the Seniors' Christmas Game and Lunch, and the

club Texas Scramble followed by the traditional stew and dumplings meal! Parkies Pals meet on 5 December, 10am until 12 noon, in the clubhouse. A charge of £3 to include cake and a hot drink.

The social group will be meeting on 9 December for our Christmas musical event when seasonal music will be provided by the local ukulele group. There will be a charge of £3 to cover hot drinks and mince pies etc. All are welcome from 10am until 12 noon in the Cuckoo's Nest room at the golf club. See you there!

Everyone is always welcome at the Park – players and non-players, members and non-members. Come and see what we can offer you now and in 2023!

Happy Christmas and happy New Year.

*Carole Lee – 0777 4348614*

*Shrivenham Golf Club – 01793 783853*

## South Marston Gardening Club

You are invited to our Social Evening and Quiz on **Monday 2 December**. We end the year with a quiz followed by 'potluck' food. Come and join us, and bring something to share. Tea and coffee will be served but feel free to bring something a little stronger!

A prize will be awarded to the winning quiz team!

South Marston Village Hall, parking available in Old Vicarage Lane, next to the school.

£3 entry fee on the door.

Refreshments included, with an optional raffle.

A warm, friendly welcome awaits you.

For more information, visit our Facebook page @southmarstongardeningclub or contact Angela on: 07789068340

## Stanton

Every Cloud's Christmas gift shop is open every weekend in December, between 10am and 3pm with complimentary (non-alcoholic) mulled wine to keep warm in the Barn whilst browsing.

Stanton Country Park, The Avenue SN6 7SF

## Remembering Robert 'Bob' James Reynolds, 1920-2022

Many of you would have seen me supporting Bob around the Co-op on our twice weekly shopping trips from October 2020 to November 2021; choosing his favourite items, paying bills at the Post Office counter with the familiar friendly staff there and stopping for an occasional coffee afterwards in the coffee shop. Thank you to the Co-op staff for your friendly support of Bob over the years.

Unfortunately, after a fall in his home at the end of November last year, Bob went into GWH, then onto Sunflower Ward, where the staff surprised him with an amazing cake for his 101st birthday and I was delighted to be able to share that day with him, despite the face mask. The Cheriton Care Home then looked after him throughout this year, and many thanks are expressed to them too. Sadly, we couldn't get him fit enough to return to his beloved home in Highworth. In a recent readmission to GWH, and again many thanks to the lovely staff on Jupiter Ward for their support, I was privileged to be alongside Bob in his last hours and support his closest family as he very peacefully and gently said his last goodbye to this world, at the grand old age of 101 and 3/4!

On asking him his secret to living so long he patted his chest and replied, 'In your heart keep cheerfully optimistic each day!'. This is something I will never forget and a great outlook on life to keep in mind for all of us.

Bob had been a coach painter, like his family members before him, at the GWR Works in Swindon, breaking off his apprenticeship to serve



in World War II in the RAF Regiment, to then complete it, with great references to his accomplishments. On leaving GWR he then worked as a painter and decorator, never quite as fulfilling as working on the trains!

As a resident of Highworth since 1983, he was often seen on his many shopping trips. Bob loved to drive his car, driving gloves on as usual, and drove over to Wales on many occasions to spend time with friends and also on family visits to Clevedon. His home town of Chester was always in his heart

and he longed to return there one day. His ashes will now be placed back in Chester.

I followed Bob on our last journey together around Highworth on Monday 31

October as Hillier's took Bob's hearse around his neighbourhood, walking ahead of him up Turnpike Road, pausing at his former home at number 17 for the last time – as near to coming home as we could! We celebrated his life and shared memories together at Kingsdown Crematorium, Rev. John Martin conducted a lovely service, and then together afterwards in the Saracens Head.

For me it was a great privilege to get to know Bob and support him in his final years. Bob was a true 'Gem' and 'Wee' gentleman. Bob had a kind, quiet and caring nature and so I want to say, 'Thank you Bob for letting me walk alongside you to the end'.

He will be greatly missed both by myself and by those who knew him.

Ruth Coughlin





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## News from the Lions Den

We had a pleasant surprise at the beginning of November when we were presented with a cheque from the former Wine and Beer Club. A big thank you to all the former members who decided to honour the Lions Club in this way. It will be put to a good use.

November was taken over by the preparations for the Christmas activities. The sleigh has been brought up to standard with a new generator, fittings and lights, and our lovely friend, Marion Cook, was busy collating details for the Christmas Vouchers for the Elderly scheme, but we did find time to present some Trauma Teddies to the Fire Service and take some elderly people from the Grove Care Home to the town fireworks, as well as giving our help to various organisations in the town.

Details of Father Christmas' visits in the area are as follows:

- 6 December Tour of St. Michael's Avenue areas, starting around 4pm
- 8 December Tour of Turnpike and The Cullerns areas, starting around 4pm
- 15 December Tour of Blunsdon and Abbey Farm areas, starting around 4pm
- 16 December Static at the Co-op, Highworth, from 9am to around 2pm
- 16 December Tour of Tadpole Garden Village and Oakhurst areas, starting around 4pm



17 December Static on Highworth Podium from 8.30am to about 2pm

18 December Static at Asda, Orbital Centre, from 9.30am

The approximate times at locations can be obtained from our Facebook page.

Donations, which will be spread over October, November and December, include the Christmas Voucher for the Elderly scheme, the Royal British Legion Highworth Branch, Swindon Food Bank, the LCIF Pakistan Disaster Relief, Dressability, and help to a lady who was in need following a move. I am sure others will come to light during this period.

This will be my last article for the Lions Den as I am leaving Lions Clubs International and the Highworth and District Lions Club at the end of the year. I joined the Lions Club in June 1981 and during my time with the Club I have met some wonderful people and been involved in many amazing things while following the Lions motto, 'We Serve'. I have been privileged to be in such an outstanding organisation and I wish it all the best for the future. Finally, thank you to the people in the Highworth and District community for the help, co-operation and respect they have given to me over the past 41 years. Please do likewise for the present and future Lions.

*Rodney Davis*

*Highworth and District Lions Club*

*T: 0345 833 9831*

*E: [highworth@lions105sc.org](mailto:highworth@lions105sc.org)*

*[www.highworthlions.org.uk](http://www.highworthlions.org.uk)*





# Highworth Scouts Fundraising

## Christmas Post

Stamps are currently on sale in the Lighthouse Bookshop, costing 35 pence. The postbox is also there, which shows the delivery area. Could you please check this if you are unsure of the delivery area and note that we do not deliver to Lechlade and Marlborough. The bookshop's opening hours are 9am until 3pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am until 1pm Friday and Saturday. **The last day for posting is Tuesday 13 December.**

This is our biggest fundraising event. We look forward to your usual support and all the funds raised go towards scouting in Highworth.

## Beavers Coffee Morning

Our Beaver Scouts are having a coffee morning on **Saturday 3 December** in St. Michael's Church and will be delighted to see you to enjoy tea, coffee, and some homemade cakes.

## Scarecrow Trail and Annual Quiz

In 2023 we will be running the Scarecrow Trail from **Saturday 1 April until Sunday 16 April**. The theme will be 'A Moment in Time' and all enquiries should be sent to [scarecrow@highworthscouts.org.uk](mailto:scarecrow@highworthscouts.org.uk)

Our annual quiz will be on **Friday 14 April**, so save the date. Full details of both events will be in LINK magazine next year

## Poppies in St. Michael's Church

Over 2000 handmade poppies were on display in St. Michael's Church from 5 to 25 November and we hope many of you will have seen them and appreciated all the hard work that went into making them.

A huge thank you to all the individuals and groups who made poppies and supported us in the Highworth Poppy Project, with a special thank you to LINK magazine for all the publicity to make this happen.

We are so lucky to live in a community like Highworth.  
*St. Michael's Flower Guild*



## Letter to the Editor

*Walking along Shrivenham Road today, I passed cars queuing at The Fox roundabout and realised that the drivers of most vehicles were running their engines. The temporary traffic lights can mean a significant wait and idling is unnecessary. This seems to be increasingly common.*

*Think about how you can make a difference.*

*I recently saw this friendly sign when on holiday in Devon: 'ENGINES OFF PLEASE! Think about the planet and our neighbours' health. Thank You.' I would also add, 'Think about the money you're wasting on fuel'.*

*Highworth Resident*

## From our MP

**I was thrilled to hear that Every Cloud Arts and Crafts have had their long-term lease at Stanton Park confirmed.**

Every Cloud Arts and Crafts was launched in 2014 to support people experiencing mental health struggles or living with Aspergers. It harnesses the positive effects of the creative arts to support positive mental health and aid their recovery.

In 2016 the group made their home in Stanton Country Park, for which I helped secure the initial lease from Swindon Borough Council. They immediately transformed the farmhouse to open a tearoom to help fund the important work the group does, and I can confirm the coffee and cake is fantastic and very popular with walkers in Stanton Park!

The money raised by the tearoom helped the group to purchase the empty barn on the site, with the aim of turning it into an all-weather space for people to enjoy positive creative activities. This was a bit of a gamble, as the group spent all their reserves from three years fundraising, so I am delighted that this has been so successful.

The work done by Every Cloud includes: A variety of therapeutic art groups; regular social events, such as the monthly 'social afternoon' for families living with dementia; school holiday workshops for children; seasonal activities for events such as Halloween and Christmas; and special events and exhibitions such as the recent photography exhibition.

The work that Every Cloud does is very important, allowing people who have struggled with their mental health the opportunity to enjoy a calm space to relax, breathe and explore their creativity.

The new lease is excellent news for Anne Bellingham and her team, who have transformed the farmhouse, barn and surrounding areas, ensuring the group's long-term success.

If you are in the area, I would highly recommend visiting the tearoom and seeing firsthand the amazing work done by the Every Cloud team.

*Justin Tomlinson*



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# Christmas Services

## Anglican Church Christmas Services

### Highworth

18 December	Carol Service, 6pm
24 December	Crib Service and Christingle, 4pm
25 December	Holy Communion Service, 10.15am

### Hannington

18 December	Carol Service, 4pm
25 December	Holy Communion Service, 10.30am

### Blunsdon

18 December	Carol Service, 6pm
24 December	Holy Communion Service, 11.15am
25 December	Holy Communion Service, 10am

### Sevenhampton

21 December	Carol Service, 7pm
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### Inglesham

18 December	Carol Service, 2pm
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## Highworth Methodist Church Christmas Services

4 December	Christmas Café Church, & Gift Service in aid of CAP.
18 December	Morning Worship, 10.30am Carol Service, 4pm
25 December	Christmas Celebration, 10am

## St. Leonard's Parish Church Stanton Fitzwarren

4 December	Morning Praise, 9.30am
10 December	Help decorate the church Christmas Tree. Come along at 2pm.
11 December	Family Christingle, 11am. Enjoy a seasonal fun service, prepare for Christmas, and support the Children's Society.
17 December	Help decorate the church for Christmas, 2pm
18 December	We welcome everyone to a Team Communion Service, 10am
24 December	CHRISTMAS EVE Nativity and Carols in Church Lane, 3.30pm. Carols by Candlelight, 7pm
25 December	CHRISTMAS DAY – Team service at St Margaret's, 10am.
1 January	We are welcomed to a Team Service at South Marston, 10am
8 January	Family Service, 11am
15 January	We are welcomed to a United Service at Stratton Methodist Church, 10am
22 January	Holy Communion, 9.30am
29 January	We are welcomed to a Team Service at St Margaret's, 10am



**Christmas**

With Highworth Community Church

**Carol Service**

A joint service with our friends at St Michael's

**Sunday 18th December**

6pm at St Michael's Church

**Christmas Day**

**Sunday, 25th December**

10:30am at Highworth Community Centre

hcc

Registered Charity 1080002

Please go to [www.stantonchurch.info](http://www.stantonchurch.info) for updates.

**SANTA is visiting Stanton Fitzwarren village from 6pm on Monday 19 December.**

*Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

# OUR REPRESENTATIVES

## HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCILLORS

Council Offices, 3 Gilberts Lane, Highworth SN6 7FB  
Tel. 01793 762377 / 763511

### TOWN MAYOR & CHAIRMAN

Julie Murphy, Rosedene, Inglesham SN6 7RA  
Mob: 07803 602568 Mob: 07803 602568  
[julie.murphy@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:julie.murphy@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

### DEPUTY MAYOR & VICE-CHAIRMAN

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01793 763071 Mob: 07968 640136  
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[simon.wolfensohn@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:simon.wolfensohn@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

## SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

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01793 762807 Mob: 07773 045270

Vijay Manro, 38 The Dormers, SN6 7NZ  
07545 429367 [vmanro3@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:vmanro3@swindon.gov.uk)

Steve Weisinger, 8 Barra Close, SN6 7HX  
01793 764668 Mob: 07791 122843  
[sweisinger@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:sweisinger@swindon.gov.uk)



**Big Highworth**  
Presents our Christmas Charity Concert with James H Williams  
**Thursday 8 December 2022**  
St Michael's Church Highworth  
This is not a church event  
**7.30pm to 9.30pm**  
Doors open at 7pm  
Cash/wine bar on the night  
Concert in aid of Highworth Community Shed  
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**Friday 10th February, 2023**  
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In aid of:  **FRIENDS OF ANGEL'S ORPHANAGE**  
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Friends of Angel's Orphanage is a local charity - set up to help support their sponsored 'family' of homeless children in Nepal. All proceeds from our events goes directly to help finance the children's housing, educational and well-being needs. Charity No. 1139321.





## With thanks to all those who have sponsored the floodlighting of St Michael's Church



02/11/2022	In loving memory of Bill on his 90th birthday. Brenda, William, Sue, Kathryn and the grandchildren.	25/12/2022	In loving memory of my dearest Tom. Always in my thoughts. Phyll xxx
26/11/2022	Joyce Ryder: Remembering a dearly loved Mum and Nan on her 94th Birthday. Love from Janice & Pas, Louisa & Chris, Pep, Amy & Carina. xxxxx	25/12/2022	Cyril & Barbara Knight, thinking of you both this Christmas, missing you & will raise a glass tonight, sending hugs. Love Lyn, Ruth, Patrick & all of your family. x
13/12/2022	In Loving Memory of Roy & Sheila Johnson.	06/01/2023	Cyril Knight - sending big birthday wishes to you Dad, miss you so much. Sending birthday hugs from us all, love you, Lyn, Ruth, Patrick & all your family. x
15/12/2022	Thirteen years have passed, still the tears remain, love you forever our beautiful son Michael Page. Mum and Dad	22/12/2022	Geoff and Joyce Wright. Thinking of you both this Christmas Time. Love Pete, Denny, Geoff and Brenda.
17/12/2022	In loving memory of my dearest Tom. Always in my thoughts. Phyll xxx	31/12/2022	Gordon, Forever in our hearts, loved and missed so much. Sue, Liz, Hannah & Alex.
24/12/2022	For Graham Arrondelle - loved and missed so much.		
24/12/2022	Remembering Tim and Joan Peapell - our wonderful Mum and Dad.		

To sponsor the floodlighting, please collect a form from the Church or from the Lighthouse Bookshop, or fill in the electronic form at [www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk) If your dedication misses the copy deadline it will always appear in a later edition.

Please send all church lighting requests to St Michael's Church Office, Vicarage Lane.

### IMPORTANT SUBMISSION UPDATE:

Please note the submission to the Church Office date is changing to ensure floodlighting requests can meet the Link deadline. We now need submissions **by the last Friday of the month, 2 months prior** as any submissions must be with the Link on the 1st of the previous month with no late submissions now possible. It's hard to get that in writing so please do contact the Church Office on 01793 762702 if you need clarification.

Submission dates for 2023 are: **30th December 2022 for the February 2023 publication.**

## St. Michael's Church

The Church is open daily for private prayer.

St. Michael's recommends the continued wearing of face coverings in Church with social distancing continuing where possible. Hand sanitiser is located in the south porch for use on entering and exiting the Church.

**Please see our website for more details of what's on, including Midweek Church, Tuesday Meet Greet Eat, and our Monday Toddler Group.**

[www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk)

As a family church of many generations, we come together on the first Saturday of each month

from 10am to share time like any family. We offer a variety of activities you can join, whether it's chilling out together over coffee and the morning newspapers, crafts, challenging others to board games, or tucking into a bacon butty or pastries. All are welcome.

### We remember those who love and miss

Robert Reynolds	Robert Williams
Stephen Fitchett	Megan Bennett

### Praying for the roads in the town

04 December	Wessex Way and Westhill Close
11 December	Westrop and The Willows
18 December	Windrush and Wrde Hill

## LOCAL CONTACTS

<b>Police, Fire, Ambulance</b>	<b>Emergency</b>	<b>999</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>Non-Emergency</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>NHS</b>	<b>Non-Emergency</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Gas</b>	<b>Emergency</b>	<b>0800 111999</b>
<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Emergency</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>Emergency</b>	<b>0800 3169 800</b>
<b>Pest Control</b>	<b>Non-Emergency</b>	<b>07789 781151</b>

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Community Transport	01793 617828
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New College	0808 172 4445
Swindon College	01793 491591

### LAW & ORDER

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Victim Supportline	0808 16 89 111
Action Fraud	0300 123 2030

### COUNCILS

Highworth Town Council	01793 762377
Swindon Boro. Council	01793 463000
Streetsmart	01793 445501

### FIRE SAFETY

Home fire safety check	0800 389 7849
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### DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS

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Elm Tree Surgery, (Shrivenham)	01793 782207
Great Western Hospital	01793 604020

### LIBRARY

Highworth Library	01793 463500
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### RECREATION

Highworth Rec	01793 762602
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### PHARMACIES

Highworth Pharmacy	01793 762220
Home Farm Pharmacy	01793 861392
Jones Graham Pharmacy (Shrivenham)	01793 783336

### PRESCHOOL/NURSERY

Westrop Nursery	01793 762897
Westgate Nursery	
School & Crèche	01793 861268
South Marston Pre-school	01793 823379

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Westrop Primary	01793 762897
Highworth Warneford	01793 762426

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Trading Standards (consumers)	03454 04 05 06
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## LUNCH TOGETHER

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