

# HighworthLINK

HIGHWORTH'S COMMUNITY MAGAZINE BROUGHT TO YOU WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE CHURCHES OF HIGHWORTH



March 2025

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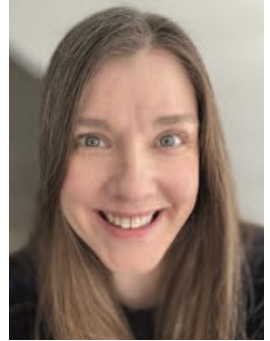
*We can't wait to welcome you!*

## Dear Reader

As I write, I'm sat in one of our cosy Highworth coffee shops feeling grateful for a decaf cappuccino and the radiator near my feet. It's one of those surprisingly cold days that seem to knock the wind out of us. Snow is forecast for the afternoon and long time readers will know that I'm very much a cold weather person, but even I have to admit it's a bit nippy today.

This month's issue of LINK Magazine has plenty to warm the heart (if not the toes). Read about partnership projects: the restoration of a memorial bench (page 5); Warneford School and Highworth Community Church bringing their resources together (page 12), and Highworth Town Council making a

donation to Westrop Primary School (page 18). Be inspired by the various clubs and activities in the town and surrounding areas, from sports to arts, gardening to parent and toddler groups, scarecrows to dancing, praying to twinning. No one could ever say that Highworth is boring! Market towns such as ours can perhaps appear a little quiet, but scratch the surface and you'll



find there's something for everyone. It just takes inclination and a willingness to join in.

As I drain the last dregs of this delicious coffee and drag myself away from this free heat, I encourage you (as I always do) to find some courage within yourself and try something new. Broaden your mind, your friendship circle, and your skill set. Our communities have so much on offer and I know full well they'd love to make room for you. Consider this your warm invitation!

*Rachael*

## Today is Alive

*Yesterday has gone  
No more to return.  
Today is alive,  
But of tomorrow  
We have yet to learn.*

*David Holden*



### CHARITY QUIZ AND PLOUGHMAN'S

A fund-raising Quiz with a Ploughman's Supper of bread, cheese, p ate, celery, tomatoes, pickles, chutney & butter followed by a selection of delicious home-made desserts

**FRIDAY 7 MARCH 2025**  
**Supermarine Football Club**  
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**6.30pm for a prompt 7pm start**

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**Ken Winslow**  
Email: [rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com](mailto:rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com)  
Phone: 07710 228697



An event organised jointly by the Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown and the Inner Wheel Club of North Wiltshire. All the proceeds will go to the MND Association (Reg charity No. 294354) which focuses on improving access to care, research and campaigning for people living with Motor Neurone Disease. The North Wiltshire Group of the MND Association is run entirely by volunteers all of whom are passionate about providing emotional, practical and financial support to families affected by the disease within the SN postcodes.

Front Cover image: Boys from Oak Class at Southfield Junior School (see article on page 24)

## Do You Pray?

**Prayer. Something nearly everyone does at some point. Football fans clasp their hands and whisper hopes for an equaliser; harassed shoppers cry out for a parking space on a busy Saturday in town; parents voice their hopes that their child's driving test will result in a pass, and in those hardest, most painful moments of life we ask for a miracle.**



Some years ago I visited a famous tiny chapel on the west coast of Wales and spent a couple of hours in prayer. I literally just sat, remained silent, waited, and was present. It was one of the most gloriously full and transformational moments of my life.

Prayer can be a radical declaration against the full-throttle busyness of modern existence.

Prayer can be a place we discover more and remember we are part of something far greater than ourselves. In prayer we can find hope, enter into peace and, at the very least, stop the relentless march of the 'to do' list... and just be.

Blessings.

*Matt Ford, Leader of Highworth Community Church*

However, prayer, at its heart is so much more than a cry in the darkest moments or a shopping list to whatever's out there of personal wants or needs. At its core, prayer is about stopping. About being. About rest. It is time given to connect with that which is bigger than you, allowing yourself to be present and in so doing discover more than your immediate perspective.

## Rotary's Young Musician Competition in Highworth



*The Junior Section from 2024's competition*

**The Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown's Young Musician of the Year 2025 Competition is taking place in Highworth on Saturday 22 March.**

The competition is in two parts: a Junior Section for entrants aged up to 14 years, and a Senior Section for those aged over 14. The young musicians have all been put forward by their schools' music teachers. There is no entry fee as the Rotary Club covers all the overheads.

The young performers will be judged by an accomplished adjudicator and every one of them will receive a certificate of achievement in recognition of

reaching the level of accomplishment needed to enter the Rotary competition.

Members of the public are more than welcome to come and watch; there is no charge. You are assured an afternoon of brilliant entertainment given by some very talented and promising youngsters.

The competition will be held in St Michael's Church, Highworth, starting at 1pm. Refreshments will be available during an interval.

For further information contact Terry Williams on 01793 762669.

*Ken Winslow*

## Highworth Shed Completes Memorial Renovation

A huge thank you to the Highworth Community Shed for restoring a little known bench down Parson's Lane in Hannington. The bench had been there for years, but was almost completely covered by brambles when it became a regular stopping point for my late wife Caroline and her friend Becky on their weekly walks.

For anyone who walks the 'Hannington Loop', you will have noticed that over the last six years it has undergone a transformation as it has been adopted by Caroline's friends. Over the years it has been repainted, had ribbons attached, and a plaque added remembering Caroline. However, it was starting to deteriorate and this is where Highworth Community Shed leapt into action.

The bench disappeared after Christmas and has been completely refurbished and returned to its position in Parson's Lane and will hopefully be



Caroline Storey



John Storey with Russell Dobbs who completed the restoration

enjoyed by everyone who passes by. I'm sure everyone who walks that walk will be pleased to see it restored so beautifully.

Many thanks to all involved in the restoration.

John Storey



You are invited to take part in an  
**Open Photographic  
Exhibition April 2025**  
in the Barn at Stanton Park



The theme this year is

### "The Natural World"

Entries accepted as an A4 photographic print please, plus your name & contact details (email preferably).

Submissions can be handed into the Barn Café between 10am - 3pm,

Saturdays and Sundays from Feb 1<sup>st</sup> or posted to

284 Marlborough Road, Swindon SN3 1NR

Closing date for entries: 31<sup>st</sup> March

## Lechlade Talks

We would like to invite you to join us for our upcoming talks at Lechlade Memorial Hall.

On **Monday 17 March**, 7:30pm, we have Dr. Hugh Pihlens with us who will present 'Littlecote Roman Villa'. The Roman Villa is one of the great treasures of Britain. First discovered in the early 18th century, then covered, forgotten, and abandoned, 250 years later it was rediscovered. A team of archaeologists worked for 13 years exploring and restoring it, and visitors can now enjoy it.

Littlecote is an unusual villa as it covers the whole of the Roman occupation and houses one of the finest and largest mosaics in Britain.

Mike Bottomley will be with us on **Monday 14 April**, 7:30pm, with his talk 'Queen Katherine Parr - Gloucestershire's Queen'. This will be an integrated live presentation of the extraordinary life of Katherine Parr, the sixth and last wife of King Henry VII.

Mike will use music, readings, and video to recreate the atmosphere and intrigues of the Tudor Court to tell the largely unknown story of the queen and her journey from obscurity to the heart of English history, before her final resting place at Sudeley Castle. Katherine's life story resonates through the ages.

Ros Godden

## Lechlade Gardening Club

On Wednesday 12 March, Rebecca Brain will be speaking about 'Growing and Caring for Wild Flowers in the Garden'. Rebecca is a keen ecologist and runs a small plant nursery.

Our usual meetings are held on the **second Wednesday of the month** at 7:30pm in the New Memorial Hall Lechlade where there is ample parking. Membership is £5 per person per annum, after which it is £2 to attend each meeting, or £3 for visitors who are always most welcome. Membership also entitles you to 10% off plants at Burford and Bampton Garden Centres if plants are not already discounted. Current membership cards have to be shown at the checkouts.

For further information please contact 01367 252286 or any member of the committee.

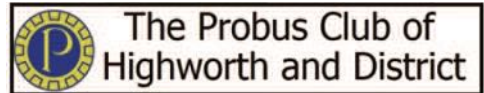
*Barbara McNaught*

## Highworth and District Probus Club

We welcome all retired and professional business men to our schedule of talks. Upcoming this month we have Nick Baxter joining us on 4 March with his talk 'Wiltshire Churches' and on 18 March we will hear from Colin Thompson on 'Consumer's Rights to Repairs'.

We meet at The Cold Harbour in Blunsdon on **alternate Tuesdays** at 10:30am, and welcome retired professional and business men with no upper age limit. We also welcome visitors as guests at any of our meetings. Learn more about us by visiting our website: [www.highworthprobus.co.uk](http://www.highworthprobus.co.uk).

*George North*



Come and meet  
**Jesus**  
Everyone is welcome

Sunday Gathering 10:30am  
Warneford School Hall SN6 7BZ  
or join our livestream



**Highworth Community Church**



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[www.highworthcommunitychurch.org](http://www.highworthcommunitychurch.org)

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**FLARE PATH**  
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Directed by Gill Brain



7:30pm, Wed 12 - Sat 15 March

Tickets £14, Concessions £12  
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The Arts Centre, Devizes Road, Swindon SN1 4BJ

This amateur production of 'Flare Path' is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd, on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. [www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)

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*Time to Thrive*



## New Scarecrow Trail for 2025

Each spring, it has become tradition for Highworth to be filled with a variety of ingenious and imaginative scarecrows. It's a magical time and fun for everyone.

Organised by the 1st Highworth Scouts, the annual Scarecrow Trail will be running during the school holidays from **Saturday 5 April through to and including Monday 21 April**, with all scarecrows on display between the hours of 10am to 5pm daily. The theme of this year's trail is Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes.

More details of the trail will be available next month, but for now we are looking for people to make and present scarecrows outside their homes and places of work. If you're interested in making a scarecrow, please complete the form found on the fundraising page of our group website ([www.highworthscouts.org.uk](http://www.highworthscouts.org.uk)) and email any queries to [scarecrow@highworthscouts.org.uk](mailto:scarecrow@highworthscouts.org.uk).

Submissions should be titles of Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes, and not characters. *Please note that the closing date for entries is the 15 March.* Scarecrows are not confirmed until you have received an email from the organisers as we work hard to avoid duplications across the trail. With this in mind, we would recommend that



you do not commence work on your scarecrow before receiving the confirmation email.

Scarecrow Trail booklets will be available from Tuesday 1 April at a cost of £3 and can be purchased from Allen and Harris, The Saracen's Head, and Visit Highworth, with all funds raised going to support the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts of 1st Highworth Scouts.

Please return your completed trail booklets to Allen and Harris by Tuesday 22 April, remembering to include your vote for your favourite scarecrow and you could be in with a chance to win a prize kindly donated by local businesses.

### ADVERTORIAL

## Home Care Services Tailored to Your Needs

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We recognise the individuality of each person's care requirements and aim to alleviate concerns for both individuals and their families. Walfinch's dedicated team ensures a less daunting experience in arranging care, prioritising a deep understanding of your needs to



create a bespoke care package that is just right for you. The branch is run by Sarah Stanbrook who brings a wealth of experience to the role with a personal touch, having cared for a close family member herself.

Walfinch is all about enabling people to live their lives to the fullest, in fact we want you to thrive. As a result we are running seated exercises classes **every Tuesday from 4 March** in Highworth Community Centre. Whether you want to come along to a class or are looking for care, get in touch for a friendly chat with Sarah today on 01793 380777, or email [sarah.stanbrook@walfinch.com](mailto:sarah.stanbrook@walfinch.com).

## Let's Dance!

Let's Dance! is a great free initiative, spearheaded by Angela Rippon of TV news programming and Strictly fame, to get the nation dancing more.

Across the UK, on **Sunday 2 March**, dance teachers, community groups, and charities are coming together to invite people who don't normally do regular exercise to try out a suitable dance-related activity. Whatever your current level of fitness, age, or experience, we want you to try something new for free! Dancing is a great way to exercise, improve your strength and balance, meet new people, and have fun. You're guaranteed to feel better, physically, socially and mentally, after every session.



Locally a group of dance instructors will be coordinating the event at Shrivenham Memorial Hall from 10am to 4pm on **Sunday 2 March**, with free sessions of about 45 minutes ranging from Baby Ballet, Zumba/Zumba Gold, Line Dancing, Fit Steps, African Dance, and Ballroom. All ages catered for – just try it out for fun!

Want to get back into dancing, but not quite sure? Have some questions about how it works locally? Come and talk to the instructors and try a free class, followed by some tea/coffee and cake.

For more information contact [lets.dance.in.shrivenham@btinternet.com](mailto:lets.dance.in.shrivenham@btinternet.com)

A poster for a 'DOLLY PARTON TRIBUTE' event. At the top left is the logo for 'WRAG BARN GOLF CLUB WILTSHIRE EST. 1980'. The main text reads 'DOLLY PARTON TRIBUTE' in large, dark blue letters. Below this, it says 'FRIDAY 11TH APRIL 8PM - MIDNIGHT E20PP'. At the bottom, there is a QR code and a photo of a woman playing an acoustic guitar. The background is maroon with musical notes and a treble clef.

WRAG BARN GOLF CLUB WILTSHIRE EST. 1980

# DOLLY PARTON TRIBUTE

FRIDAY 11TH APRIL  
8PM - MIDNIGHT  
E20PP

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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK SCAN:

A poster for a 'Coffee Morning' event. At the top is the logo for 'Highworth Methodist Church'. The main text reads 'Coffee Morning' in large, bold letters. Below this, it says 'In aid of Friends of Angel's Orphanage' and 'Take Time to Enjoy and have Fun!'. There is an illustration of a coffee cup. The text continues: 'Coffee/Tea and Homemade Cakes AND Dee's tasty marmalades & jams to buy!!'. Below this, it says 'We always put the 'fun' into FUNdraising!!!'. The event is on '10.30am - 12pm Saturday 8th March 2025' at 'Highworth Methodist Church SN6 7HG'. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'FRIENDS OF ANGEL'S ORPHANAGE' and a small paragraph of text.

Highworth Methodist Church

# Coffee Morning

In aid of Friends of Angel's Orphanage

Take Time to Enjoy and have Fun!



Coffee/Tea and Homemade Cakes

AND Dee's tasty marmalades & jams to buy!!

We always put the 'fun' into FUNdraising!!!

10.30am - 12pm  
Saturday 8th March 2025  
Highworth Methodist Church SN6 7HG

In aid of:  FRIENDS OF ANGEL'S ORPHANAGE  
*every little helps, every penny counts!*

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

## Farewell from Gregory's Books

It's with a certain amount of sadness we must say goodbye to Gregory's Books... for now. What started as the germ of an idea between two friends one rainy afternoon became a beautiful venture.

Honouring book and game fanatic Greg Smith, who sadly passed away last year, was always at the forefront of our minds, and whilst Gregory's Books did just that we have been delighted to raise over £600 for local community initiatives, as well as provide a charming space for people to visit. £600 from 50 pence books – that's a lot of books!

Steve and Sonya Martin generously allowed us to use their building, a former physiotherapist clinic at 13 High Street, Highworth. We have discovered all sorts of secrets in that space, including the trapdoor to the cellar and the tiny window in the original door that allowed Albert Smith to peep through from his cosy fireplace to see customers coming into his sweetshop and hardware shop. Still boasting the old wooden beams and open fireplace, the building has looked after us well as we've welcomed many, many people to come and experience its quirks and history whilst also choosing from our selection of second hand books. We've hosted storytelling events for grown-ups and children alike, as well as a book signing session and a sci-fi day, all under the glow of fairy lights and flickering candles. And we've been delighted to provide a home for the Yarny Ninjas to display their amazing post box toppers. All in all, it's been wonderful.

Gregory's Books was only ever meant to be a pop-up shop, temporary but nonetheless sincere. Now it's time to take down our lights, pack away the remaining books, and leave number 13. We'll forever be grateful for the warm hugs it has given us and the beautiful people who've entered the doors. If you've been one of them, thank you for your kindness, generosity, and friendship. You've demonstrated the very heart of this community.

*Rachael Laing Smith and Keith Smith  
(Albert's namesakes)*



*Albert Smith outside 13 High Street,  
Highworth, circa 1912*

### Arts and Crafts with Swindon u3a

**Are you feeling creative? Do you want to share your interest with new friends in a relaxed, supportive group? Well the u3a could be for you. We have twenty different groups to inspire you to take up a new art or craft, or pursue an existing one.**

Choose from groups such as: dressmaking; crochet and knitting, embroidery and needlework, and quilt making; painting; flower arranging; beading and card making; cartonnage; upholstery; paper crafts and scrapbooking, or various types of photography.

The u3a is for people no longer in full-time employment. To learn more about it and all the other activities it offers visit [www.swindonu3a.org.uk](http://www.swindonu3a.org.uk), telephone the office on 01793 614629 between 10am and noon on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or visit our Facebook page.

## Synergistic Collaboration

**'I love it when a plan comes together!' So declares 80s icon Hannibal Smith, leader of the A-Team. Well, I think we all love it and I for one love it even more when you discover someone else has a plan and you get to join in.**

That's what happened to us at Highworth Community Church. We have been holding Sunday services at Warneford School for over nine years now, making use of their great facilities right on our doorstep. Our gatherings are in the school hall where anything from 100 to 170 people come together, from all ages and backgrounds, joined by their belief in a creator God who loves them. We even have lots of people come who are just investigating faith or giving faith a go. The hall understandably looks like a school hall and I wondered late last summer if we could collaborate with the school to make the hall more of an event-style venue which would better suit our needs, the needs of the community, and the school's needs for their events. So I contacted James Hanson.

I had connected with James in 2023 and was seriously impressed with his passion for performing arts and his dedication to the students (he's Head of Music at Warneford School). As with so many of our fantastic local teachers, despite years of change, new targets, another set of acronyms to learn, and pressure from Ofsted, James steps up because he really cares and truly believes in what he's doing.

What followed was one of those dream conversations (at least for me) because he already had a plan and I loved it. You can read below what James has been doing.



This collaboration sees an ongoing sharing of resources, in terms of things like lights and speakers, and also skills – from carpentry to streaming. So do go and see the next production at Warneford and feel free to join us any Sunday, 10:30am, as Highworth Community Church.

*Matt Ford,  
Leader of Highworth Community Church*



When I started as Head of Music at Warneford School in 2016 it was always my vision to transform the performance space (the school hall and stage) into a well-equipped, state-of-the-art performing arts facility. Fast forward nine years and it's almost complete, although there's still a little bit more to do!

Throughout this time, over £18,000 has been raised through charitable and personal donations. We've been able to remove all the old outdated theatrical installations and replace them with state-of-the-art sound and lighting, front of house controls, and new theatrical drapes. Many of you in Highworth will have experienced a school music concert or a musical theatre production on the stage in this time and may well have seen the changes developing first hand.

The latest chapter in the theatrical renovations would not have been possible without Highworth Community Church directly donating money towards the new sound system and facilitating a bid to the Freke Norton Trust to finish purchasing and installing the final fixtures for the digital lighting, including the lighting desk and bespoke front of house show control console. The collaboration between Warneford School and Highworth Community Church is mutually beneficial and community-driven from both sides. Warneford School music department would like to thank HCC for their generosity and help in continuing to achieve the vision of the performance space. We are excited to see what community benefits the collaboration will bring in the future.

*James Hanson,  
Head of Music at Warneford School*



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



## My Personal Journey with Christmas Shoeboxes

Back in 1996 I first read about 'Love in a Box' Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes going to needy children in Eastern Europe. The project was started in 1990 by Dave Cooke from Wrexham when he saw on TV the appalling suffering of children in Romanian orphanages.

Our westernised Christmas is so very far removed from the true meaning of Christmas, and so this seemed to me an ideal way to redress the balance. With the support of a small group of friends from Highworth Community Church I sent out letters to local schools, churches, and the community of Highworth through LINK magazine.

The following Christmas, having no idea what to expect, I was delighted to receive approximately 200 shoeboxes filled with gifts! A small team got together and we delivered the boxes to Melksham Warehouse where the boxes were checked and packed before being sent overseas to an expanding need revealed in Eastern Europe. A small group of us from Highworth got involved in Melksham Warehouse on a regular basis.

In time, we set up a satellite centre in The Rec where boxes could be dropped off any time of day. We gathered a small team of volunteers to check and pack the boxes ready to go to the warehouse. We also



received many beautiful hand-knitted items such as jumpers, blankets, mitts and hats – these were exciting times!

The project continued to go from strength to strength and in time around 2,000 boxes were sent overseas each year from Highworth and the surrounding area, which is an amazing number of individually packed

boxes going to children who otherwise would not receive any gift at Christmas.

In 2004 I joined with a national team from Samaritan's Purse who had taken on the running of the project from Dave Cooke. I went to Azerbaijan and was shocked to see the conditions of some of the orphanages

there, and it was an honour to give out gifts to children of all ages in such need.

Following on from this visit Geoff Sowden, vicar of Highworth at that time, suggested running a Harvest Appeal across the town to raise funds to send overseas to help with the upgrade of one of these orphanages. Geoff and I did many joint presentations to churches in the local area and the astonishing sum of almost £4,000 was raised! This money went towards both the upgrading work on the orphanage, and paying for support workers and volunteers who would work with the children to teach them basic skills, such as toothbrushing.

In more recent years my practical involvement in running the campaign was less but I have continued to always pack two shoeboxes each year. It has been my joy throughout many years to gather lovely gifts for the children who would receive them.

Change has come of course and the boxes are now still gathered throughout the UK and then checked and packed in large central locations across the country.

I don't know what 2025 will hold but I hope I can still continue to donate Christmas boxes to the project.

Phyllis Reid



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## Bargains Galore at Wiltshire Bobby Van Fashion Event

The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust is getting ready for its first sustainable fashion event of the year, where shoppers can find a huge range of nearly new designer clothes, jewellery, and accessories at bargain prices.

The Bag A Bargain event, at Wellington Farm Barn near Calne, is open from 2pm to 8pm on **Wednesday 5 March**, where tickets are just £7, and from 9am to noon on **Thursday 6 March**, where entry is free.

Organisers are still appealing for good quality clothes for the sale. Anyone wanting to donate items can contact them via email at [jennie@wbvt.org](mailto:jennie@wbvt.org) or [susanna@wbvt.org](mailto:susanna@wbvt.org).



Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust Director Jennie Shaw said, "Spring is just around the corner and our sale is a wonderful opportunity to refresh your wardrobe, with rail after rail of exquisite nearly new designer clothes and jewellery. It's a perfect excuse to clear out those wardrobes and make room for a brand new you. We have some fabulous clothes and some wonderful bargains; come and find the perfect outfit for the races, a wedding, or something that just makes you feel good."

Tickets can be booked at [www.wiltshirebobbyvan.org.uk/future-events](http://www.wiltshirebobbyvan.org.uk/future-events). To find out more about the work of the charity visit [www.wiltshirebobbyvan.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirebobbyvan.org.uk).



# BAG A BARGAIN

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## Trees and Treats at Westrop Primary School

### A Very Big Thank You

Westrop Primary and Nursery School would like to thank Highworth Town Council and Highworth's wider community for donating their used Christmas trees to the school for the children to use during their forest school sessions. The children enjoyed making dens with the branches as well as using the branches to make amazing creations in the mud kitchen.

*Sarah Osbourne, Forest School Leader*

### A Treat for Grandparents

On a dull Tuesday afternoon in January, grandparents of Key Stage 2 children were invited to the Westrop Primary School hall where they were treated to tea, coffee, and cake! Once seated with their grandchild they were entertained by the younger school choir.

The Key Stage 1 choir had only formed two weeks prior to the tea party but managed to perform six songs from memory. For the final song, the choir were joined by some of the older choir members as they wished the audience 'A Great Day' in harmony.

*Sam Humphreys, Choir Leader*



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## From the Rector's Pen

Welcome to March, the one that comes after the shortest month. Why is February the shortest, and why does it change its length every four years?



As someone who was born in February, I am always surprised at how quickly it passes. I blame the Roman king (not emperor) Numa Pompilius (you might like to look him up) who instigated the Roman Calendar and all sorts of other strange things.

I was thinking about what's good about this season as we transition from winter to spring, and I Googled 'Christian events near me'. Google found something that both intrigued and appalled me: 'OH MY GOD ITS THE CHURCH' featuring 'SexyJesuscansaveUrSoul'. Perhaps not quite what I was looking for.

I am not going to go on a rant about modern culture, but I do suggest that we reflect, as we journey towards Easter, on how we keep our focus on what is good and wholesome. Are the things that build up our faith rooted in ancient traditions or can we find something of God as we look to the future? Is there hope in our changing world? God is faithful and just; he is not threatened by people who take his name in vain, but we need to continuously turn our eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his beauty and grace.

*Phil Goodey, Vicar of St. Michael's Church Highworth*

## Letters to the Editor

### Save Coleshill Countryside

Readers of the LINK Magazine may not know that the farmland north of Coleshill village is threatened by the construction of a 175-acre solar farm – 93,000 solar panels covering an area about the size of Highworth.

Residents of Coleshill and Buscot are understandably concerned, and whilst recognising we need green energy, we also need unspoilt countryside, farmland, rivers, and wildlife; this proposal is not sited where solar farms should be. Coleshill Parish Council has formed a focus group. See the village website for information if you would like to lend your voice: [www.coleshillvillage.co.uk](http://www.coleshillvillage.co.uk).

*Katherine Hearn, Member of Focus Group*

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**Telephone:** 01793 762897 **Email:** [nursery@westrop.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:nursery@westrop.swindon.sch.uk) **Website:** [www.westropprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.westropprimaryschool.co.uk)

## Highworth Historical Society

On Saturday 15 March we have our annual Open Day, this year to be held in the Council Room on Gilberts Lane, Highworth, between 9am and 12 noon.

We will have members present to help answer your Highworth queries, and tea and coffee available. Bill King will have his display concerning 'Dad's Army', and will be on hand to tell you about the part Highworth played. We will also have photos of the High Street 'Then and Now'.

Whilst there is no charge, a donation to the Society is always very welcome. We rent space at the Community Centre to store our archives and sometimes buy items that are part of the town's history.

'The Story of Devizes Castle' is the title of our talk on Thursday 20 March. David Dawson from the Wiltshire Museum is our speaker.

The present 'castle' is a Victorian building on the original site. The Castrum ad divisas (the castle at the boundaries) was built in 1080, and was owned by the Crown until the 17th century. It was held by the Royalists in the Civil War. I personally have a very

tenuous link with the castle as an ancestor of mine was stabbed to death in the castle gateway!

We meet in St. Michael's Church, with the talk starting at 7:30pm. Doors are open from 7pm and visitors are always welcome. The charge is £3, cash please.

Chris Suter (01793 764811)

## LENT LUNCHES

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# Save The Date...

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May  
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## Put a Spring in Your Step at Visit Highworth



The Visitor Centre has new stock in and some new local suppliers on show, so why not pop in and take a look?

As the weather becomes more spring-like, now would be a good

time to book a Town Tour and learn about the history of our beautiful town or, for those who prefer being at one with nature, you could book a Wildlife Walk. Take your camera and explore the Pentylands Country Park guided by Neil George whose photographs are on display in the Visitor Centre.

We will be running a series of workshops and Meet the Maker sessions in the Visitor Centre from March through to June, so please check our website at [www.visithighworth.co.uk](http://www.visithighworth.co.uk) or come into the Centre and pick up a leaflet for further details.

Visit Highworth is run entirely by volunteers. We are a friendly bunch, so if you have some time on your hands and want to be a part of the team promoting Highworth please call into the Centre on the High Street and have a chat with us. We would welcome new faces and new ideas and we hope to see you soon.

*Iona Sadler*

**Coffee Morning**

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(except 2nd Saturday when we meet in the church)

Children and dogs welcome.

## Highworth Climate Talks

Join us on 18 March for the Highworth Climate Talk about e-waste (electronic waste). Our speaker is Jacob Badcock who is a PhD student at UCL. Here is how Jacob describes his research:

"My research focuses on the ethics of photography in Agbogbloshie, a scrapyards and informal e-waste processing hub located in Accra, Ghana. Since 2008, Agbogbloshie has attracted the attention of photographers, pollution scientists, and environmental justice advocates concerned with the growing global e-waste crisis. Alongside other research methods, photography has portrayed Agbogbloshie as a 'hell', often exaggerating the scale and nature of e-waste pollution in the area.

The central question of my research is: How can photography document environmental crisis zones without turning them into a spectacle or enabling the repressive aims of the state? To investigate this question I draw on various photographic archives related to Agbogbloshie and the greater Accra area. These include colonial photography, activist photography, amateur photography, photovoice, medical photography, and image data produced for scientific research."

We meet at Highworth Methodist Church, SN6 7AD. Be aware there is limited parking onsite. Doors open at 7pm for refreshments and talks start at 7:30pm.

Talks are free though donations are encouraged to pay for facilities. Any further information is available from Helen Harris on 07775 362132.

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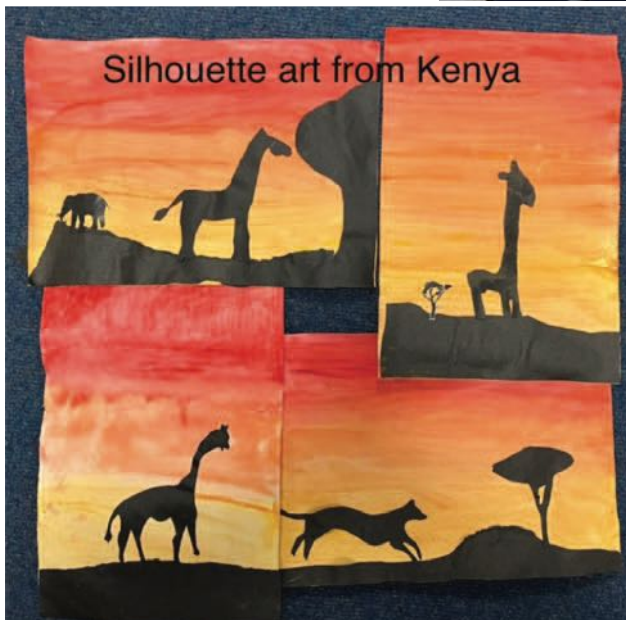
Last term, Years 3 and 4 were learning about 'Our World', and we used virtual reality (VR) headsets to travel around the world from the comfort of a classroom!

Using VR technology, we stopped off at the Empire State Building in New York, and the Harbour Bridge and Opera House in Sydney. We flew round Christ the Redeemer in Brazil, then travelled along the Great Wall of China before flying round the Eiffel Tower in Paris, making a stop at the Colosseum in Rome, and finally diving on the Great Barrier Reef. At one point a lion walked right up to us and licked our noses!

Groups of children researched and learned about Australia, India, Kenya, and Vietnam, creating some traditional artwork and a leaflet to learn about each country and encourage tourists to visit. Cherry, Sycamore, and Willow classes have worked extremely hard writing a polar bear diary and a letter to planet Earth. They have also enjoyed using the atlases and learning about different time zones.



Year 5 and 6 have been fully immersed in their fascinating Victorian topic, exploring key figures and events that shaped the era. In design and technology, the children applied their knowledge by designing and sewing waistcoats, bringing history to life through hands-on learning.



In history, they compared modern day schools with those from the Victorian era, before taking a step back in time with a trip to Sevington Victorian School. There, they experienced a true day in the life of a Victorian child, with the boys and girls segregated in typical Victorian fashion. The girls crafted lavender bags while the boys made candlesticks. Take a look at our instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/southfieldjunior/>

Additionally, their writing this term has been truly exceptional; the children have impressed us by writing persuasive letters as Isambard Kingdom Brunel, convincing local residents that the Great Western Railway was a brilliant idea. It has been a wonderful journey through history and the children's enthusiasm and creativity have truly shone!

*Mrs. Kimberly O'Sullivan*



# Civic Service Celebrations



The winter sun was shining on Sunday 2 February as dignitaries, supported by local community groups, paraded down Highworth's High Street and into St. Michael's Church to celebrate the work of volunteers in the community. The Civic Service was hosted by Rev. Phil Goodey on behalf of Mayor Julie Murphy, and Westrop School choir performed two beautiful songs under the enthusiastic leadership of Mrs. Sam Humphreys.



Photography: Nick Gardiner

## Richard Digance to Visit Highworth Once Again

Join us for an evening with Richard Digance on Saturday 26 April, 7:30pm at Highworth Community Centre, The Dormers, SN6 7PE.

Richard is a well-known composer and folk singer. He last visited Highworth in 2024 and thrilled a bumper audience with his personal charm and wit. If you have a particular favourite song you would like Richard to perform, just let us know by the end of March and we will ask him to dedicate that song to you.

A cash-only bar will be available.

Tickets at £15 each are available from Joan Webb (01793 762853) or from Visit Highworth, 7 High Street, Highworth (cash only).

All funds raised in aid of British Heart Foundation.



## Highworth Flower Club

On Thursday 6 March, at 7:30pm, at Warneford School we will have a flower demonstration with Selena Denham entitled 'My Family and Other Animals'.

We hope you will join us in the school hall from 7pm when the doors open. There is plenty of parking available in the school car park.

Visitors are welcome, priced at £7. Contact Michele for more information on 07798 817249, or see our website [www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk](http://www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk).

A poster for a 'Pancake Cafe' event. It features a stack of pancakes with strawberries on top. The text reads 'PANCAKE cafe' in a stylized font, followed by 'Tuesday 4th March'. Below this is the logo for St Michael's Church Highworth, which includes a clock tower icon. At the bottom, it says 'Celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a delicious traditional pancake!'.

An advertisement for 'Domestic Appliance Repairs'. It features a globe icon with the text 'Domestic Appliance World'. The main heading is 'DOMESTIC APPLIANCE REPAIRS'. Below this, it lists services: 'We repair Washing Machines, Washer Dryers, Tumble Dryers, Dishwashers, Fridge Freezers, Ovens, Extractor Hoods and Cookers'. It also lists three bullet points: 'Fast, Reliable &amp; Friendly Services', 'Fixed Labour Fee/No Hidden Charges', and 'Over 20 Years' Experience'. At the bottom, it provides the phone number 'T: 07950 181701' and the email 'E: domesticapplianceworld@gmail.com'.

An advertisement for 'Swindon Memorials'. It features a logo with a stylized 'M' and the text 'SWINDON MEMORIALS'. Below the logo, it says 'A personalised service offering creative and beautiful memorials that reflect the uniqueness of your loved one.' At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'Unit 19, Blackworth Ind Est, Highworth, SN6 7NA', 'T: 01793 766 138 | M: 07532 032 054', 'E: info@swindonmemorials.co.uk', and the website 'www.swindonmemorials.co.uk'. The background of the advertisement shows a close-up of pink tulips.



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DODGE



## Would You Like to Paint Again?

Remember those school days of powder paint and wax crayons? Have you ever thought of giving art another go?

Perhaps you had a dabble with watercolour and have been a bit disappointed? Powder paint is ok but it is easy to make mistakes that cannot be rectified. Wax crayons are great but can be slow-going. When you tried watercolour you found this disappointing also? (Watercolour is probably the hardest medium of all.)



Well here's a thought. Lechlade Art Society is offering a morning to revisit art by trying acrylic paint. This is a water-based paint which dries to a permanent finish. The advantage of this is they can be painted over again and again so mistakes aren't so terrifying!



The Lechlade Art Society has booked the Memorial Hall for **Saturday 15 March** from 9am to 1pm. There will be a fee of £25 for the morning to cover the cost of hiring the hall and materials. Several of the Art Society will be on hand to give advice (and encouragement), and all materials will be provided – along with tea and coffee of course.

If you are interested in booking a place please email Zoe Hing at [lechladeartsociety@gmail.com](mailto:lechladeartsociety@gmail.com)

The Art Society meets each Thursday to work on projects, drink coffee, and chat.

*Margaret and Zoe Hing*

## Highworth Camera Club

We are looking forward to better weather to get out and about with our cameras, or maybe just with smartphones!

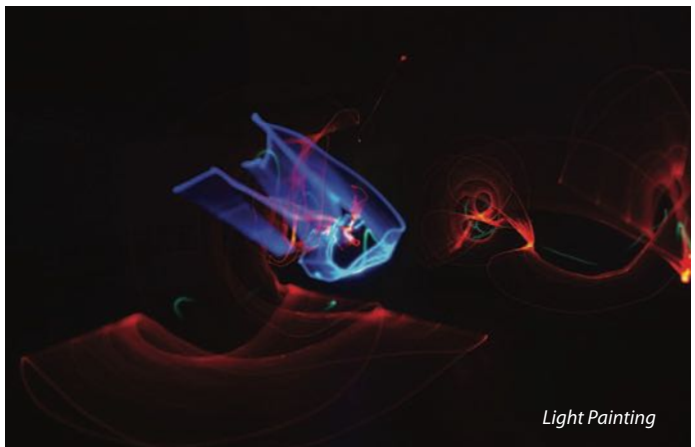
After experimenting in January with light painting and checking our cameras to sort out any queries in February, on **Tuesday 8 April** we will have a session on using smart phones for photography – it is possible to produce images as good as those from a digital camera. If you are interested you are welcome to come along.

Members of the Camera Club will be on the Podium this month (Hopefully **Saturday 22 March**, subject to the weather!), so if you would like more information about the Club do come and speak to us.

As usual our meeting will be the **second Tuesday of the month**, 7:30pm, at the Highworth Community Centre, The

Dormers. Please contact us on [highworthcamclub@gmail.com](mailto:highworthcamclub@gmail.com). You can see more of Club members images on our website at [www.highworthcameraclub.com](http://www.highworthcameraclub.com).

*Hilary Beach*



*Light Painting*

## Highworth Artists' Society

We started 2025 with a collection of paintings all completed in one colour, a challenge that followed on from our two colour challenge last year. There were some really effective paintings and some



members are carrying on with the theme as we liked the results so much.

Pictured is a painting entirely in blue, painted by our Chairwoman Lyn Armstrong. For more examples please visit our Facebook page @Highworthartistsociety, or our website [www.highworthartistsociety.com](http://www.highworthartistsociety.com).



Lyn Armstrong



Clive Eastland and 'Wave'

Our Spring Exhibition is fast approaching and we are looking forward to exhibiting from **3 to 10 May** in the Council Community Rooms as usual. The exhibition opening coincides with the May Day celebrations and there will be teas and cakes available for a donation on **Saturday 3 May**. Please visit and bring family and friends – all are welcome! Our chosen charity this year is the Highworth Forget-Me-Not café, a local group supporting those with dementia and their families.

Lastly, a mention of a very successful demonstration in pastel by popular artist Clive Eastland. As seen in the photo, Clive painted a breaking wave which appeared like magic from a sheet of grey toned paper – very inspiring!

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# The Arts Society Upper Thames

We would be pleased to welcome you as a visitor to our March lecture entitled 'Sixty Years On: Life in Britain as seen in 1960's films' with Colin Shindler.

There are four elements to this lecture. The first is a look at the emergence of the North in Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, Room at the Top, A Taste of Honey, This Sporting Life etc.. Second will be a look at Swinging Britain – Julie Christie in Darling, Michael Caine in Alfie, The Beatles in A Hard Day's Night and the James Bond movies. Third will be a look at the last days of Empire as seen in Tony Richardson's Charge of the Light Brigade, Zulu and, comically, Carry On Up the Khyber. Finally, the drastic change in the depiction of sex from Dirk Bogarde in Victim (1961) to Alan Bates and Oliver Reed famously wrestling nude in Women in Love (1969).

Colin Shindler has been lecturing on American and British social and cultural history for over 30 years. He was awarded his PhD at Cambridge University and subsequently lectured on film for their History Faculty between 1998 and 2019 exploring its relationship to modern British and American social and cultural history. He also teaches a variety of adult education courses at Madingley and Higham Hall in Cumbria and has lectured on cruises. Between 1975 and 1999 he pursued a wide-ranging career as a writer and producer in television, radio and film. He won a BAFTA award for his production of A Little Princess. His production of Young Charlie Chaplin was nominated for a US Prime Time Emmy. He wrote the screenplay for the feature film Buster and was the producer of various television dramas such as Lovejoy and Wish Me Luck.

We will meet in Lechlade Memorial Hall on **Thursday 13 March** at 2pm. Non members are welcome but please arrive by 1:50pm and pay £7.50 (cash) on arrival. Please register first at [info@tasupperthames.org.uk](mailto:info@tasupperthames.org.uk).

*Rodney Mountford*

## Highworth Community Cinema

We will be showing what could be the last film directed by Ken Loach, **The Old Oak** (cert 15). Join us on **Friday 28 March, 7:45pm**, at the **United Reformed Church on the High Street**.

The Old Oak is a film about a man who has come to the end of his tether; he has lost his family but is hanging on to his livelihood and his community by a thread. Deprivation has bred division in his local streets and in the boozer he runs in a dying pit village in County Durham. When Syrian refugees are bussed in and terraces sold to developers for a pittance, the locals are roused to malevolence. Pub landlord T.J. washes his hands of the fight, until a local community organiser and one of the refugees, a young photographer named Yara (Ebla Mari), reminds him of how the village broke bread together during the 1984 miners' strike – in another lifetime.



Doors open at 7:15pm. There's no membership fee and admission is £6 on the door. 50p for tea / coffee and biscuits. Please contact Debbie for more information at 01793 763907, [highworthfilms@gmail.com](mailto:highworthfilms@gmail.com) or see our website: [www.highworthfilms.org.uk](http://www.highworthfilms.org.uk).

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## Highworth Twinning Association

At the end of January Highworth Twinning Association (HTA) organised a 'pub' quiz at the Council Community Room. We had hoped for 40 people to attend, but we were nearer 50! The event was organised by a small committee of six.

We soon have our AGM and annual Safari Lunch in the spring whilst all the time planning for both a trip to Pontorson and a visit from Wassenberg in October – we are an active organisation. For some time now we have wanted new members to join our committee,

and as time has gone on that want has now turned into a need. Volunteers are required please.

Twinning is something different: you go abroad, you learn how life is led in France and Germany, and you see the similarities and the differences. HTA arranges an event and it's all go... then it's calm again. We don't have a regular monthly meeting and it's usually quiet from mid-October until the New Year. Might it suit you?

Please don't think you need to be a linguist and speak French and German to help – I certainly don't qualify on that score. All that's needed is a willingness to help in a team effort.

If this interests you, please contact me or a member of the committee. Telephone 07513 009044 or email [rjnppearcehta@gmail.com](mailto:rjnppearcehta@gmail.com).

*Richard Pearce, Chair HTA*



Highworth Twinning Association

### Visit to our Twin Town of Pontorson

**Thursday 29 May to**

**Monday 1 June 2025**

**£225 per person including ferry from  
Portsmouth**

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## Constance's Oat Biscuits

During lockdown my family and I did a lot of baking. One of my favourite recipes was oat biscuits as they melt in the mouth. They are super sweet and delicious. I thought you might like to have a go at making them yourself. Enjoy!

75g of plain flour

1/2 tsp of bicarbonate soda (or use self-raising flour instead of plain flour and omit the bicarb)

75g of sugar

75g of porridge oats

75g of butter

1 tbsp of honey

1. Wash your hands with soap and put on an apron.
2. Turn on the oven to 160°C (140°C fan, gas mark 4).
3. Pour the flour, bicarbonate soda, sugar, and oats into a big bowl.
4. Measure the butter into a pan and add the honey. Then heat gently until melted.
5. Add the melted ingredients to the bowl of dry ingredients and mix.
6. Shape the mixture into small balls and place onto a baking tray.
7. Cook them in the oven for about ten minutes until golden brown.
8. Finally, leave to cool down before you eat!

*Constance Davenport*

## The Bridge Centre on March Sabbatical

Around 25 years ago, The Bridge Centre opened to be as its name suggests: a bridge from Highworth Community Church to the local community. The vision was to be the hands and feet of Christ. This month, you can expect something a little different when you walk through our door. Many of the activities and sessions we usually offer will be pausing during March. Swindon Food Collective and drop-ins, help with forms, benefits, computers, and printing will all be taking a rest.

For a month, The Bridge Centre is taking a sabbatical – a time to rest and connect with the heart of God; to pray with and for our community, and to be refreshed



in God's presence. We will be open as a creative, hands-on prayer space from **Mondays to Thursdays, 10am to 12 noon, and each Wednesday from 6pm to 9pm**. Art materials and various stations will be available to help guide you, and we invite you to join our regular

team as they host the sessions. We invite you into the presence of Jesus Christ. We believe that everything we ever need is in him. We can still point you in the right direction for any practical help or support you may need, and we will still be happy to listen.

Please know we still stand with you and for you! We'll be praying for our schools, our local community, and our local council. We would love to see you, pray with you about any challenge you may be facing, and share the joys of life with you!

How we can pray for you? You can email your prayer request to [bridge@highworthcommunitychurch.org](mailto:bridge@highworthcommunitychurch.org) and one of our usual hosts will pick it up and pray for you.

Our Wednesday Bible Study will be moving to the United Reformed Church during March, and Friday's Knit and Natter Group will continue as normal here. Keep an eye out for our new look timetable, launching in April.

*Jon Hares, on behalf of The Bridge Centre*



# OBITUARY

## John Hindmarsh

John passed away peacefully at Orchid Care Home on 17 December 2024, aged 95 years, having lived at Biddle Springs, Highworth, all his life. He was a devoted husband to Noreen, and a loving father to his four children: Stephen, Martin, Susan, and Debra. He was also a proud grandfather and great grandfather, and John will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

His funeral service was held on Friday 17 January 2025. Any donations in John's memory can be made to the Blind Veterans Society c/o Hillier Funeral Service online: [www.hillierfuneralservice.co.uk/obituaries/john-hindmarsh](http://www.hillierfuneralservice.co.uk/obituaries/john-hindmarsh)



# Highworth Methodist Church



## What's on in March?

**Sunday Morning Worship @ 10.30**

- 2 Adrian German
- 9 Own Arrangement
- 16 Rev Shirlyn Toppin
- 23 Pam Mullin
- 30 Rev Marcus Torchon (Mothering Sunday)

Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> Afternoon Communion 2pm

Refreshments served

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Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>  
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**3Cs – Coffee, cake & chat**

Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup>  
2.30pm



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# 2nd Wednesday of every month 2 - 4 pm



## Lechlade Tennis Club Quiz night

Saturday 8th March  
Lechlade Memorial Hall  
7.00 for 7.30pm

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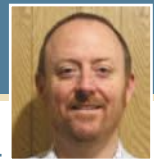
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## Wrag Barn Golf Club

Signs of spring are beginning to emerge at Wrag Barn with the appearance of snowdrops and catkins on the course, and the days are getting longer enabling more golfers to play in the afternoons. We have had the course re-measured so that men and women can compete from any tee with the appropriate handicap adjustment and for anyone only wanting to play nine holes but still maintain a handicap; both the front and back nine have been measured to facilitate this. A more recent addition has been the introduction of a measured winter course with the installation of winter tees, and together with more paths and drainage the playability of the course during the winter is much improved.



Dan Gray was delighted to get a hole-in-one on the 12th green during a Sunday Stableford competition in January. Scott Talbert was the overall winner from a field of 76 entrants with 36 points, and everyone agreed that a sunny day in winter is a wonderful opportunity to be outside.

Wrag Barn is open to members and non-members and our Spike Bar is open daily, serving food from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday (7am to 4pm at the weekend). We will be serving a three course carvery on **Sunday 30 March for Mother's Day** so bring the family, and tuck in.

For more information please visit our website at [www.wragbarn.com](http://www.wragbarn.com).

*Verity Manners*

## Highworth Town Walking Football Club

January saw Highworth organise the inaugural tournament for the Ian (Harry) Stonham Trophy. All four teams had players who were playing in their first ever tournament and it was a good-spirited, if not a tad cold, event. Everyone played each other twice and Swindon B were the eventual winners with Chippenham second, Highworth third, and Calne fourth.

If you are interested in playing social walking football, there are men's sessions held on **Thursdays and Sundays** (11am to 12pm), both outdoors at Grange Leisure Centre in Stratton on their 3G pitches, and a **Friday session** (11:30am to 12:30pm) held indoors at The Rec in Highworth. The ladies meet **Monday evenings** at New College Swindon (8:30pm to 9:30pm).

All sessions are Pay and Play, meaning men over the age of 50 and ladies over

the age of 35 are welcome to come and play. £4 Payment per Thursday and Sunday sessions and £3.20 per Friday sessions; Ladies Monday sessions are £3 per session, all payable by credit/debit card only, no cash, direct to the sports centre. For more details on the club please get in touch at [highworthwfc@outlook.com](mailto:highworthwfc@outlook.com).

*Graham Seeley*



## Highworth Running Club

*Hardy Perennial (noun): Should withstand low winter temperatures and come up each year for several years. If a runner had a spirit plant, it would be some type of hardy perennial. There's never a time of the year when we're not active. Through storms, seemingly endless days of single digit temperatures, and of course the obligatory precipitation that winter treats us to, runners have continued to brave the elements these past few months simply to keep fit, train for events or, in the case of some, compete in our local cross-country league. But the ravages (or challenges) of winter should now be behind us as we look forward to what spring will bring and, as a teaser, there are two exciting prospects coming up very soon!*



*Fun down Fresden Lane*

On **Wednesday 5 March** the club launches a free 'Couch to 5k' twelve-week course designed to get people up and outdoors, enjoying the challenge of building up to running five kilometres. If you are interested, please simply turn up at the Brewery Street car park in Highworth at 6:30pm where our qualified coaches will 'take you by the hand and lead you through, the streets of Highworth.' (Couldn't resist a Ralph McTell song reference.) The sessions will be run separately from the normal running group. All we ask is that you turn up wearing something with high visibility and a smile.

Later this month, on **Sunday 23 March**, runners, joggers, and plodders will gather to experience the Club's annual springtime road running event. Starting at 11am from Highworth's Warneford School, everyone wearing a race number will be sent out along Shrivensham Road, down Fresden Lane, and return to the town on Coleshill Road before enjoying the ascents of Eastrop Hill and Brewery Street, finishing on the Warneford School playing fields. The event is open to anyone aged 15 or above, and providing the race limit hasn't already been reached, entries will be taken on the day (please arrive at the school by 10:30am to register). Every finisher will receive a commemorative medal and days' worth of bragging rights. We very much look forward to meeting you.

*Jason Daniels*

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

*Photograph courtesy of Sara Cocks-McCracken*

## Highworth Town Football Club

Only two league games played in January, a thumping 6-0 win over Brimscombe & Thrupp and a 1-1 draw at second placed Mangotsfield Utd. At the beginning of February we were in fifth place in the UHLSport's Hellenic League with ten games left to play. At the time of writing we remain in the League Challenge

Cup but exited the Floodlit Cup with a narrow defeat at Mangotsfield.

Follow us on Facebook (Highworth Town Football Club), Instagram (@highworthtownfc) and X (@HighworthTownFC) with match reports on our website at [www.pitchero.com/clubs/highworthtown](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/highworthtown).

*Derek Lloyd*

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## Shrivenham Park Golf Club

Much is planned for 2025. Memberships become due at the end of this month, but search the website to find good deals and reasonable prices for all categories of membership, including Juniors.

One of the highlights so far this year was the Burns lunch. The Haggis was paraded by Chef Richard and the 'Address to the Haggis' was given by Jim Boyes (pictured). The meal began with a haggis starter, followed by a main course of beef, pork, or vegetarian option, rounded off with Eton Mess. It was great to see all the different village groups mingling – Parkies Pals, Social Putterers, village walkers, the Sunday Lunch group, as well as golfers and friends of club members; Shrivenham truly does welcome all.

The Juniors have held their annual Parents and Juniors coffee morning, explaining plans for the way ahead and elected a Junior Captain and Vice-Captain with coaching well underway. Details of our Junior Open can be found on the Empire Golf website.

The Junior coach also hopes to start up a ladies coaching session on Wednesday afternoons and details can be obtained from the golf club. The men have played competitions but unfortunately the weather has continued to be far from pleasant. Despite this, some of the scores have been amazing where the blue course has been in play. Club Manager Stuart Bentley won the January Winter League, playing off a CDH (Central Database of Handicaps) of 11 and scoring 40 Stableford points! The next Parkies Pals meetings are on **Tuesday 4 March** and **Tuesday 1 April**. The Special Parkies Pals putting competition is on **Friday 11 April** at 2pm, and on this date we are also launching the summer season for the Social Putterers. New putters are always welcome to come along. For more information please do get in touch through our website [www.shrivenhampark.co.uk](http://www.shrivenhampark.co.uk).

*Carole Lee*



*Addressing the haggis*



## Swindon and District Motorcycle Club

The S&DMCC kick-started the year off with their first event in their calendar, the Klindt Trial, held on the second Sunday of January down at the old Hannington Railway Station. The weather was seasonably perfect at the beginning with a hard, frosty start making the course quite picturesque and traversable. Throughout the morning though the frost thawed.

A bumper crop of 58 riders gathered for the briefing and then set off in search of Sections to conquer. As the morning progressed the once hard ground softened and passages through each Section became heavier going and slower to navigate. Factor in the weather's bleakness being heroically endured by the stationary Observers keeping score at each Section, the Clerk of the Course made the well-supported call to forgo the fourth and final lap of ten Sections.

So after only three laps of balance and bravery, the steel horses were loaded up and the scorecards were gathered. With fun enjoyed by all, the spoils were reserved for those incurring the least amount of penalty points (for putting a foot down) and those taking a bow were Lee Hassall, Robert Scott, Martyn Wilmore, Michael Maslin, and Adam Woodland, not forgetting the youth winners of Alfred Ovens, Thomas Plank, and Molly Hassall.

The old Hannington Railway Station saw the riders return in February for the Brian Freegard Trial (covered next month) before heading to Cirencester in April for the 45th Corinium Enduro event. If you are interested, please follow the club on Facebook or take a look at the website [www.sdmcc.org.uk](http://www.sdmcc.org.uk).

*Jason Daniels*

*Photograph courtesy of Chloe Martin*

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**01793 765408**

and leave a message

[bookings@highworthcommunitycentre.co.uk](mailto:bookings@highworthcommunitycentre.co.uk)



## News from Will Stone MP

In November last year, we all learned that the charges against the driver who killed Harry Parker would be dropped. Although this horrific incident happened on Akers Way, it shocked the whole of Swindon North. As soon as I heard the news I knew something had to be done. Meeting with Harry's family I felt their pain and need for action. After discussions with the Crown Prosecution Service and the police I was told that any chance to get Harry justice was in vain; the law as it was meant the driver wouldn't face justice.

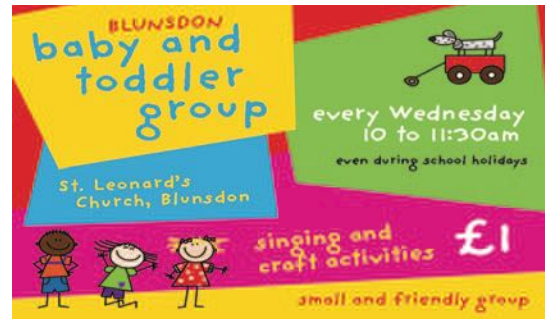


solidify his legacy. I am hopeful that the first reading of the Bill will move forward on 4 February and then move to its second reading, and I will update you on the Bill's progress as it moves through the House, as well as wider work I and this government are bringing forward for road safety.

If you'd like to engage with this issue or any other please do reach out to me via [Will.Stone.MP@Parliament.uk](mailto:Will.Stone.MP@Parliament.uk)

Therefore, I made it my mission to try and change the law so that driving without a licence which led to a death would be instantly classed as careless driving. Ability and right are, and should be, legally classified as distinct.

I am writing this before I bring the Harry Parker Bill to Parliament on the 4 February. This Bill aims to make our roads safer and hold to account those who drive unlicensed. This will not bring Harry justice, but it can



## We're having a Sabbatical in March!

*"an intentional rest or break"*



### We're resting from:

Drop-in  
Swindon Food Collective  
Surgery appointments

If you do need help during the month of March, contact Jon: 07701303760

### What we're doing:

We are opening a **creative, interactive prayer space** that everyone is welcome to come and spend time in.

This will be open:

**10am-12pm Mon-Thurs**  
**6pm-9pm Wednesdays**

### Send us your prayer requests:

**We'd love to pray for you.** Drop your requests off at The Bridge, join us in the prayer space or send us an email:

[bridge@highworthcommunitychurch.org](mailto:bridge@highworthcommunitychurch.org)



**Highworth Town Council**  
**MEDIEVAL**  
**MAY DAY EVENT**  
 Saturday 3rd May 2025  
 10am - 4pm



We have a great family day planned with the following currently scheduled:

Over 60 independent stalls,  
 The College of Chivalry is providing a Medieval Living Area, this includes, have a go Archery, a Knights Space, a Carpentry Tent, a Weaving/Spinning Demo, Calligraphy, a Barbers/Surgeons Space & Wooden Stocks, Licensed Bar & Food Outlets Live Music, May Pole, Morris Dancers & Jack in The Green

[www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)



Highworth Town Council



## ALLOTMENTS AVAILABLE

Have you ever fancied growing your own produce but you don't have the space in your garden?  
 Or maybe you don't have a garden and would like to enjoy the benefits of tending to an allotment?

Old Golf Course site
Swindon Road
Park Avenue

**We currently have allotments available.**

Get in touch by calling or emailing us with your name, address, telephone number, email address and your preferred allotment site.

 01793 762377
  [admin@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)



### Highworth Town Council CONSULTATION

**Have Your Say on a Proposed Permanent Traffic Order!**

Highworth Town Council is seeking your feedback on a proposed Permanent Traffic Order that will prohibit vehicles in the High Street and Sheep Street during events ONLY, meaning Highworth Town Council would no longer have to apply for individual road closures for each event.

This consultation is an opportunity to raise any concerns and discuss the Traffic Order before the official request is made to Swindon Borough Council. Your input as a resident or business owner is essential! Let's work together to ensure that Highworth remains a safe, thriving, and vibrant town.

For more information, contact Highworth Town Council at [clerk@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

Contact Us  
01793 762377




Saturday  
22nd March 2025  
Highworth Market  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Monday  
17th March 2025  
HTC Community Room  
9:00 AM - 8:00 PM



The Mayor of Highworth invites you...



**MAYORS CHARITY Event**  
 Friday 28th March 2025  
 at Wrag Barn Golf Club  
 7pm until midnight

Two Course Meal, Coffee & Mints

Music by The Rogues Band  
sponsored by Richard James Estate Agents

Highworth Lions are providing transport to Highworth at midnight (for a small donation)

Come along for a fun evening all in the aid of the Mayors Charity, Highworth Forget-Me-Not. Tickets now on sale £32 per ticket from Highworth Town Council

## News from Highworth's Mayor



It was a joy to see so many of you attending the Civic Service on Sunday 2 February. Thank you to everyone involved in making this service special.

Looking ahead, my next focus is the Mayor's Charity Event at Wrag Barn on Friday 28 March. Join me for an enjoyable evening featuring a two-course roast dinner with

two meat options, dessert, tea, coffee, and mints, all accompanied by live music from five-piece band The Rogues, all kindly sponsored by Richard James estate agents. I am also grateful to The Lions for providing the minibus for lifts back to Highworth. This evening is in support of the Highworth Forget-Me-Not charity which provides essential support to those experiencing dementia, forgetfulness, and loneliness. Tickets are available now at £32 each by calling Highworth Town Council on 01793 762377 or visiting our offices at 3 Gilbert's Lane, Highworth SN6 7FB. Remember, the dress code is entirely up to you! I hope you can join me for a fun evening in aid of this fantastic cause.

I am excited to announce that plans for May Day celebrations on Saturday 3 May are taking shape. Moreover, I am particularly excited about the VE Day celebrations on Thursday 8 May; this event promises to be truly special. Keep an eye out for more details as they develop, whether here in LINK Magazine, at the market, or on the Highworth Town Council Facebook page.

If you would like me to attend any events please don't hesitate to reach out to my secretary at [admin@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk).

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Warm regards,

*Cllr. Julie Murphy, Mayor and  
Chair of Highworth Town Council*

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## HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

### TOWN MAYOR & CHAIRMAN

**Julie Murphy**, Rosedene, Inglesham SN6 7RA  
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**Richard Williams**, 7 Park Avenue SN6 7AW  
07789 781151 [richard.williams@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:richard.williams@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk)

### SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

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

### Council Offices

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

## St. Michael's Church Highworth

The church is open daily for private prayer.

### 10:15am Sunday Service

We meet in St. Michael's Church and groups for children and youth are held during this service, with refreshments being served after the service.

The service is streamed live at [www.twitch.tv/stmichaelshighworth](http://www.twitch.tv/stmichaelshighworth) or on YouTube by searching 'St Michaels Church Highworth'.

Morning Worship is held on the **first, third and fifth Sundays of the month**. Holy Communion is held on the **second and fourth Sundays of the month**.

### 8:45am Holy Communion

On the **first and third Sunday of the month**.

### 10:15am Midweek Communion

On the **third Wednesday of each month**, from 11am. Coffee and cake will be served from 10:15am.

### Prayers

**Tuesday Prayers** from 9am.

**Friday Blessings** from 9:15am.

The **second and fourth Mondays**; see Prayer Hour in the Church Room at 7:30pm (excluding bank holidays).

### We remember those we love and miss

Rachael Cocks

### We welcome in Holy Baptism

Milo Thornton

### Praying for the roads in the town

**02 March** Cricklade Road and The Cullerns

**09 March** The Dormers and Downs View

**16 March** Eastrop and Edencroft

**23 March** The Elms and Fair View

**30 March** Fitzgerold Avenue and Folly Close

## St. Leonard's Parish Church Stanton Fitzwarren

**2 March** Morning Praise, 9:30am

**9 March** Family Service, 'Martha and Mary', 11am

**16 March** Team Service at St Margaret's Stratton, 10am

**23 March** Holy Communion, 9:30am

**30 March** Mothers' Day Team Service at South Marston, 10am

Stanton Coffee Morning will be held on **Wednesday 19 March**, from 10:15am, at Stanton House Hotel. Our speakers this month are Mark and Sheila Tubey. Everyone welcome.

The church building will be open **every Wednesday** in school term time from 10am to 4pm, or telephone Liz and Roger on 01793 762935 to organise for the building to be open for you to visit.

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



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



**10/3/25**  
**Eric Ryder**

*Remembering a dearly loved Dad and Bamp.  
Always in our hearts and thoughts.  
Janice and Pas, Louise and Chris, Pep, Amy  
and Carina xxxx*

**20/3/25**  
**Ann Berry**

*Four years have passed, time has still not stopped the  
heartache nor can it stop the tears.  
John and family xx*

*Floodlighting forms are available from St. Michael's Church office, Vicarage Lane, or the Church website at [www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk/floodlighting](http://www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk/floodlighting). Your dedication will appear in this magazine.*

*All submissions to the Church Office by **Wednesday 26 March** for the **April** publication.*

E: [office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk) • [www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk](http://www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk)

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<b>Gas</b>	<b>Emergency 0800 111999</b>
<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Emergency 105</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>Emergency 0800 3169 800</b>

### NON-EMERGENCY

<b>Police</b>	<b>Non-Emergency 101</b>
<b>NHS</b>	<b>Non-Emergency 111</b>
<b>Pest Control</b>	<b>Non-Emergency 07789 781151</b>

### BUSES

Stagecoach Swindon	01793 521415
Thamesdown Transport	01793 428400
Dial-a-Ride	01793 616050
Community Transport	01793 617828
Traveline	0871 200 2233

### COLLEGES

Cirencester College	01285 640994
New College Swindon, Queens Road Campus	01793 611470
Swindon College Campus	01793 491591

### LAW & ORDER

Crimestoppers	0800 555111
Victim Supportline	0808 16 89 111
Action Fraud	0300 123 2030

### COUNCILS

Highworth Town Council	01793 762377
Swindon Borough Council	01793 463000
Streetsmart	01793 445501

### FIRE SAFETY

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

Highworth Surgery	01793 762218
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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Home Farm Pharmacy	01793 861392
Jones Graham Pharmacy (Shrivenham)	01793 783336

### PRESCHOOL/NURSERY

Eastrop Nursery	01793 763772
Westrop Nursery	01793 762897
Westgate Nursery	
School & Crèche	01793 861268
South Marston Pre-school	01793 823379

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Eastrop Infants	01793 763772
Southfield Junior	01793 762210
Westrop Primary	01793 762897
Warneford Secondary	01793 762426

### TAXIS

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### TRAINS

National Rail Enquiries	03457 484950
Great Western Railways	03457 000125
Disabled and Assisted Travel	08001 971329

### OTHER SERVICES

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Trading Standards (business)	0207 830 6000
Trading Standards (consumers)	03454 04 05 06
Alcohol and Drug Service	01793 695405
Samaritans	01793 537373
Women's Refuge	01793 610610

## Highworth LINK magazine Published under the auspices of Highworth Churches Together.

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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 Bridge Centre, 8 Sheep Street, Highworth.

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 inconvenience of a rejection. Photographs and advertising artwork should be clear, with good contrast. JPEG electronic format is preferred. The print process requires images ideally to be 300dpi for best results. Low resolution images, that appear clear on screen, will print blurred depending on the size and resolution of the image supplied.

Make sure any people in photos agree that the photo can be published in the magazine and on the web. Get parental 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.

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1st of the month before publication – news, articles, advertising and letters.

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