

HighworthLINK

May 2026



BEHIND THE SCENES

Money and Relationships | Market History | Girls' Football
Environment | Arts and Literature Festival | Westrop School

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Dear Reader

As the flowers bloom and the days grow longer, May brings a fresh sense of energy to Highworth and our much-loved neighbours.

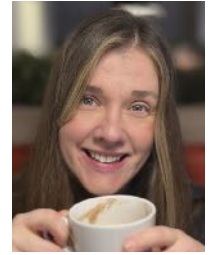
This month promises a vibrant tapestry of events, from lively May Day festivities filling the Market Square and High Street with colour, to inspiring stories and events from our schools and churches. Our Feature Article this month from our town clerk, Deanne Rose, provides unique insights into the heart of our community, while local sports teams and clubs gear up for an action-packed season. And don't forget to check out our local gardening groups to make sure you're keeping on top of all those important horticultural bits and bobs. As my favourite TV gardener says, 'Here are your jobs for the weekend!' It's the perfect time for you gardening enthusiasts to get outdoors, tending to beds and borders, planting new seeds, and enjoying the beauty of nature as gardens burst into life.

Of course, May also marks exam season for many of our young people. As nerves begin to build, we wish all students the very best. Whether you're sitting


GCSEs, A-levels, or university finals, remember to take some time for yourself and enjoy the sunshine whenever you can.

This issue also showcases remarkable art and music, celebrates the achievements of our amazing children and youth, and highlights important conversations around climate and sustainability. Whether you're joining in the celebrations, cultivating your own patch of earth, or discovering something new, this edition of Highworth's LINK Magazine is your guide to everything happening in this wonderful area.

And if you see me out and about in the sunshine, feel free to hop over and say hello!




Lachael




Visit Highworth

MEET the MAKER

Saturday 9 May
Free - 11am to 1pm
Don Webster
wood turner





Email: info@visithighworth.co.uk | WEB: visithighworth.co.uk
VHL shop open Tues - Fri 10am to 3pm and Sat 9am to 2pm



Highworth Camera Club Club presents

"Arctic Adventures"

A talk by well known photographer
Jack Lodge
Light, landscape and wildlife combine to create some of the most challenging and rewarding photographic opportunities on Earth



Tues. 9th June 2026 7.30 pm
Highworth Community Centre
141, The Dormers, Highworth, TN6 7PQ
£5 payable on the door for non members

Front cover image: Big Thank You Award winners Phil Goodey and Peter Williams - further details on page 6

Learn from the Birds

Here we are in May: late spring with summer to look forward to.

Hoping for warm sunny days with enough rain to keep things green. Looking forward to the arrival of the last of the summer migrant birds, usually the swifts. Wondering if the nest boxes recently installed in the tower at St. Leonard's will help their numbers to increase. Remembering the years gone by when we had a competition with a local farmer: Which would be the first – the swallows to nest in his barn or the house martins to nest under our eaves?

We are enjoying the songs of the summer migrants already here. Did you know that **Sunday 3 May** is International Dawn Chorus Day when we are invited to get up early and open our windows to listen or even to go for a walk? Why not try it!

Thinking of the amazing journeys undertaken by some



birds reminds me of the geese that have now left our shores to fly thousands of miles to nest on Arctic tundra. They leave us for the summer and fly together in their characteristic V-formation.

We can learn so much from the birds of the air, especially the geese, as even the strongest rest and take turns, working hardest at the front as they help each other and protect the old, the young and the weakest at the rear of their formation. This

enables them to make much longer journeys together than they could alone.

Perhaps there is a message here for us; Jesus taught us to care for each other and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

Enjoy the birds and, hopefully, a summer with plenty of sunshine.

*Liz Hillman, Churchwarden
St. Leonard's Church, Stanton Fitzwarren*

Learn, Laugh, Live with u3a

No longer working full-time? Then the u3a could be for you.

If you want to meet new people and pursue new interests you could do no better than join our friendly vibrant community. Together, we enjoy over 130 activity and interest groups spanning a wide variety of subjects: the arts, sciences, crafts, sports, music, history, literature, games, quizzes, languages, technology and more. We also hold talks and events where everyone can come together, share ideas, and enjoy a chat over a cup of tea.

Groups usually meet in local community centres or sometimes in members' homes. The size of each group depends on the activity and the space required.

Swindon u3a is part of a nationwide movement, independent of political or religious ties. It is run by members, for members, and funded through subscriptions. Membership costs just £10 a year, plus a small fee for each group you join, mainly to cover venue hire.

Every group is led by a volunteer, and we're always open to new ideas for activities.

Gill runs a bridge group, a poetry group, and a reading group. She says, 'Joining a u3a group can be life-changing

– some of the things it can offer are obvious while others are unexpected. For instance, if you were to join my poetry or bridge groups you are obviously going to learn more about reading and understanding poetry or how to play bridge. But there's much more than that: you also make friends, have fun, exchange information and ideas and have something to look forward to and plan for. What's more, it's a great feeling to be learning something and really enjoying it. Oh, and there's usually tea and biscuits during the session! Really being in a u3a group is like having another branch of your family.'

To learn more about the u3a and all the activities it offers visit www.swindonu3a.org.uk, or telephone the office on Mondays between 10am and noon on 07345 162117 or 07823 722812. Leave a message when the office is closed.

The logo for u3a, consisting of the lowercase letters 'u3a' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Catwalk for Creation

This fantastic event will be hosted by St. Michael's Church Highworth as part of Great Big Green Week – the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change.

Fast fashion is driving a culture of overconsumption that is having significant environmental and ethical consequences. This informal evening explores the issues of an escalating clothing industry and suggests practical solutions through interactive stalls, video clips and fashion shows.

Interactive stalls, hosted by local groups and individuals, will demonstrate creative ways to mend and re-purpose clothes. Highworth charity shops will answer your questions about donating used clothing, and two fashion shows will showcase how attractive and affordable second hand outfits can be.

The evening will be staged on **Thursday 11 June** from 7pm to 9pm and will be best experienced if you come



from the beginning. No booking or tickets are required, although donations will be welcome on the door for ongoing Ecochurch projects. Refreshments will be available throughout the evening. Everyone is welcome.

For further information email: office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk.

My Unforgettable Trip to Cambodia

Escaping the cold, grey British winter for sunshine is always appealing, but my trip to Cambodia in November 2025 was far more than a break in the sun.

I travelled with my husband, Will, and our friends Claire, Matt and Kathryn from Highworth Community Church to visit other friends who work with some of Phnom Penh's most vulnerable people, helping to prevent human trafficking and exploitation. In such an atmosphere, the trust we witnessed between the community and the mission team was both striking and beautiful.

Rather than arriving as tourists, we stepped into their weekly rhythm of outreach. By a place called the Riverside, we laid out tarpaulins, unpacked toys, and held skipping ropes for the street children before the



To: Will Pearse, Jo Pearse, Kathryn Ford, Claire Titcombe and Matt Ford

team shared songs and Bible stories with them.

We did the same in the Railway Slum, where families live in makeshift shelters (in the shadow of Bentley and Lamborghini dealerships no less!) and visited families to pray with them. Hearing the good news that God loves them brought hope and joy!

The most sobering moments came during our visit to the red light district. Many of the young women there had been lured from rural areas with promises of good wages, only to find themselves trapped in systems of control and exploitation. The mission team works tirelessly to befriend and support them, offering dignity, practical help and alternative paths forward.

Another day, we learned that two of the team had intervened to prevent the sale of a baby; it was almost impossible to comprehend, underlining the vital importance of their work.

As Heidi Baker says, 'Love looks like something.' In Phnom Penh, it looks like toys and skipping ropes, listening ears, courageous compassion and the love of Jesus. And yes – the people are friendly, the food is wonderful and God is at work.

If you want to know more go to www.tmwuk.org.

Joanna Pearse

Lechlade Gardening Club

On Wednesday 13 May, we have a representative from Waterperry Gardens coming to tell us about the seasonal jobs that make up the behind the scenes work in the gardens there. Always fascinating to see what the gardeners who keep gardens in the public eye have to do to keep them looking good. A must for all those members who are having their gardens open on 6 June!

Also in May, on **Saturday 16 May**, the Gardening Club is having a Bring and Buy Plant Sale in the afternoon, from 2pm to 5pm, at the Memorial Hall. Teas will be served by the WI. Do remember this when you are pricking out your seedlings, potting up cuttings and dividing your herbaceous plants, and please label what you bring. Or just come to buy; we keep prices very reasonable so there will be a lot of bargains.

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 entitles you to 10% off plants at Burford and Bampton Garden Centres (if plants are not already discounted). Current

membership cards must be shown at the checkouts.

For further information, please contact 01367 253309 or 01367 252286, or see member of the committee.

Save the Date for the Lechlade Show

Join us on **Saturday 5 September** for the Lechlade Annual Flower and Produce Show.

The highlight of September sociability, the zenith of the gardening calendar, a real chance to show other skills and hobbies that you might have been doing during the year.

Pick up a free booklet at the Post Office, library, Cutler and Cashin, The Trout, GP's waiting room and more. All the information is inside, or look at it online: www.lechladegardeningclub.org.uk.

There is something for everyone, all ages and all interests. There are lots of cups to be won and there's always a good raffle as well as tea!

The closing date for your entry form is **Tuesday 1 September**.

Barbara McNaught

Letters for the Editor

Hi Rachael,

I've just enjoyed a beautiful morning sipping a cup of coffee and enjoying your magazine in peace, which is a rarity as the mum of a toddler – pure heaven!

I'm originally from Ireland but I've been living in Highworth for a few years now and feel so lucky to be here. The community spirit and positivity here, celebrated in your magazine, is a tonic.

I especially enjoyed the Feature Article on autism in April's magazine. Thank you for that! As a teacher and an aunt of a little gal with autism, I so appreciated it.

All the best and many thanks again for doing what you do!

Jenny Glennon

A Big Thank You

It was with honour and delight that Rev. Phil Goodey and Peter Williams, both volunteer directors of LINK Magazine, received a Big Thank You Award from the Big Highworth Community Foundation on behalf of the magazine's volunteers who work tirelessly each month to bring you news from your local community.

We have a team of almost 100 volunteers, many of whom have worked with the magazine for decades.

To our volunteers: This award demonstrates appreciation for all that you give with your time, energy and enthusiasm.

You make a difference!



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How to Preserve Your Relationship During Money Struggles

Kathryn Ford is a local money coach from a Highworth church helping people in Highworth and the surrounding area out of financial difficulties through Christians Against Poverty (CAP), and here she shares with us some of the recognised dangers for your relationships when you're experiencing money difficulties.

Money is commonly identified as one of the main reasons for conflict within relationships and can sadly be a reason why couples may separate. We're offering some small actions you can take today to help prevent friction and foster a healthier and stronger relationship to weather those financial storms.

Learn your differences. What do you do when you want to save but your partner likes to spend? A gentle way to open up a conversation could be through suggesting you take an online quiz: www.capuk.org/money-personality-quiz. These can help you identify your different attitudes toward money, describe the strengths and challenges of each, and offer tips on how to best manage your money traits.

Talk about solutions. Couples often argue over money worries because there's been a lack of communication

over household finances. By having regular conversations about where you're at financially as a couple, you can begin to consider different solutions to the problem.

Share responsibility. In many relationships, one partner may hold more responsibility or control over the household finances.



Kathryn Ford

It can create problems if the power over your shared finances leans too far towards one person. For relationships where one partner is always making financial decisions, can you come up with a system where each person has an equal say?

Get support. For a range of reasons, many couples facing spiralling debts may wait to seek free debt advice, but putting off seeking free help can often result in the problem getting even worse. It's important to know that support is available and there are several free debt advice organisations. Visit www.capuk.org/help to find out more about the help we offer, or you can call 0800 328 0006 to book a free home appointment with one of the local team.

Kathryn Ford, Highworth CAP Centre Manager



Highworth Produce Show

If you fancy helping us plan the 2026 show, we will be meeting on the last Tuesday of every month, 7:30pm to 8:30pm at The Highworth.

Everyone is welcome. We are in need of volunteers so come along to lend your support.



Highworth & District Probus Club

We meet at The Cold Harbour in Blunsdon on alternate

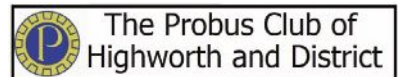
Tuesdays at 10:30am

and welcome retired professional and business men with no upper age limit. We welcome visitors as guests at any of our meetings.

Our presentation on **Tuesday 26 May** is *What Does it Mean to be Safe?* by Brian Rudge, and on **Tuesday 9 June** Les Hatcher will be talking about *Rocket Launchers*. Please note there is no meeting at The Cold Harbour on **Tuesday 12 May**.

For further information please email info@highworthprobus.co.uk or visit our website at www.highworthprobus1.wordpress.com

George North



Behind the Scenes

Deanne Rose, Town Clerk

When you arrive at a Highworth event, whether it's May Day, the annual fireworks display or the Christmas lights switch-on, it can feel effortless. The music is playing, the Square is full, and everything just works. But behind that moment are months and months of planning, coordination, and a real sense of pride in creating something for the community.

Every event begins as an idea; sometimes it's about continuing a long-standing tradition, like May Day. Other times, it's about marking a moment in national history, such as the King's Coronation, or D-Day and VE Day commemorations. There are always lots of discussions along the way about themes, ideas and how to make each event feel fresh while still keeping what people love.

Events in the High Street follow a similar rhythm. It starts around 6am, often with that immediate waking thought: 'Has anyone left their car in the Square?!' From there, it's the arrival of stallholders, carefully fitting everyone into place, gazebos being erected, sound systems tested, and a constant stream of checks to make sure everything is ready.

The team are on site throughout, with Claire, who leads on organising our events, right there alongside them, making sure everything comes together as it should.

And those ideas really do come to life, from large-scale commemorations to themed celebrations, each event has its own story – watching the life-size replica Spitfire being carefully assembled on the High Street is one of those moments. Seeing it come together piece by piece, knowing it started as an idea, and then watching the community gather around it is something that stays with you.

What really makes these events work is the people behind them. We have an incredible number of

volunteers who give up their time to help, and we simply couldn't do it without them. I am extremely grateful for everything they do.

From helping with road closures, supporting the PA system and manning the HTC tent, to things like the tea party in the Square for our nursing home residents and helping school children take part in the history and education sessions. It all shows just how special our community is.

Looking ahead, those conversations continue. For example, did you know next year's May Day theme is ABBA? It's a brilliant link to celebrating 50 years of the ABBA fan club



Deanne (Town Clerk) and Claire (Assistant Town Clerk)



Christmas Light Switch-on 2025



Mayor Julie at the May Day Festival 2025



Local children dance round the maypole

that was once based right here on our High Street. Just another example of how Highworth's history and character shape what we do.

My favourite event moment is the Christmas lights switch-on. The Square begins to fill, families gather, people chat, there's a sense of anticipation building, and then suddenly, it's there! That moment where everything comes together: children looking for Santa, and the High Street and Market Square light up.

Standing there, seeing the Square full of people all sharing that moment, is just magical – it's what makes it all worthwhile.

Because in the end, these aren't just events, they're moments that bring people together to celebrate our town and keep our traditions alive.

All photos courtesy of Keith Davidson Photography



Root & Branch

Spring Plant Sale

Sunday, 17th May 2026

1.00 - 3.30pm

A large range of herbs, annuals, perennials, and vegetable plants

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Late Spring Concert

A musical afternoon in aid of: **Prospect Hospice**
together making every day count



Raymond Burley

Raymond Burley is one of Britain's most experienced classical guitarists and has an extensive career of performing solo concerts, concertos, as well as on film scores, radio and television.

One Foot in the Stave

Classical guitar duo *One Foot in the Stave* perform a blend of both traditional and contemporary guitar music - peppered with their own sly sense of humour!



Stonegrey

Acoustic duo *Stonegrey* perform a unique take on contemporary and traditional songs with a sprinkle of blues and ballads thrown in for good measure!

2.30pm Saturday 30th May, 2026

St. Michaels Church, Highworth SN6 7NA

Doors open: 1.45pm

Tickets: £10 (Concs: Over 65s & under 18 - £8; under 10 - Free)

Available from Highworth Visitor Centre 7 High St, Highworth SN6 7BE

- Or on the Door (cash only please) - Tel: 07946555845 for further information.

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Summer with Highworth Community Larder

The Larder is open every Tuesday morning at Westrop School between 8am and 10am.

Our aim is to reduce food waste by collecting surplus from local supermarkets and offering it free to our community.

Since we opened in 2023, we have saved 42.7 tonnes of surplus food from going into landfill, and we now average 100 visitors a week! We never know exactly what delights will be available, but there is always bread and bananas and often extra treats in the form of flowers or chocolates.

Summer also brings lovely fresh produce from generous gardeners and allotment holders.

In September 2025, we started a new venture, a *Warm and Welcome Wednesday Café*, on the **third Wednesday of each month** in the Council Rooms with

free drinks, biscuits and cake. Now that warmer weather has arrived (hopefully!) we will be pausing the café over the summer months.

None of this would be possible without a hardworking team of volunteers who give their time to collect the surplus items and staff the larder and café. In addition, we are grateful to Westrop School and Highworth Town Council for providing rooms, without which we could not operate.

We are always looking for new volunteers, particularly those who could help with collections – petrol expenses can be reimbursed. If you feel you could help us or would like further information, please call in at the Larder or contact us for more information at: highworthcommunitylarder@gmail.com.

Christine Lutman

Chatty Cafe Scheme



**At a loose end?
Fancy a cuppa?**

The 'Chatter & Natter table' is a wonderful way of encouraging people of all ages to talk to others. During the day and time below, the table will be hosted by a friendly volunteer. Do come along and sit for a chat.

**When: Every Wednesday
11am - 12.30pm**

**Where: Oana's Cakes
20 Cricklade Road
Gorse Hill SN2 8AA**

Stay for five minutes or longer if you're enjoying chatting!

Having a chat can brighten someone's day

www.thechattycafescheme.co.uk



Join us at Visit Highworth

We are kicking off May with a Craft Fair in St. Michael's Church on Saturday 2 May from 10am to 4pm. We have around twenty crafters and artists so come in for a browse or a shop, treat yourself or someone else.



The May *Meet the Maker* is Don Webster who will be with us from 11am to 1pm on **Saturday 9 May**. Don, who has lived in Highworth for over 50 years, generally works with logs of ethically-sourced native hardwoods donated by friends, neighbours and empathetic local tree surgeons. Come in to see his work and chat to him about his inspiration.

Our final *Spring Workshop* is with Karen from Lechlade Craft Barn on **Thursday 14 May** from 7pm to 9:30pm. This Mini Lampshade Fairy Lights Bunting Workshop costs £35.

Looking ahead to June we have the Highworth Art and Literature Festival from **19 to 21 June**. Check our website for more details and we look forward to seeing you!

Iona Sadler, Chair

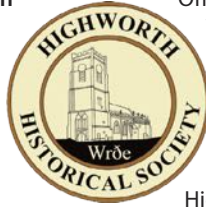
Highworth Historical Society

The Wiltshire Uprising is the title of our talk on **Wednesday 27 May**.

In 1655 there were still many Royalists who believed that Cromwell and his party could be overthrown. John Penruddock, a Wiltshire gentleman, headed a band of men who hoped to restore the Monarchy. In March 1655 they set out for Salisbury and...

Come along to our meeting at St. Michael's Church to hear what happened next!

Our speaker is Ruth Butler from the Wiltshire Record



Office. Doors open at 7pm for a 7:30pm start. Visitors are always welcome for £3 cash at the door. We hold a raffle and there are second hand books available. Newcomers to the town may be interested in buying one of our publications on the history of Highworth; these are also available for sale at Highworth Library and Visit Highworth.

If you need more information contact Chris on 01793 764811.

Chris Suter

Help Raise Funds with the Rotary Club

A firm fixture in our calendar of events is a Quiz and Ploughman's Supper with scrumptious homemade desserts. Held two months ago, it raised £1,557 which will be donated equally to The Roxi Foundation and CALM Children with Leukaemia.

Another annual event is our *Swimathon* where entrants can raise funds for a charity of their own choosing. It's free to enter and we give Amazon vouchers to the three swimmers who collect the most sponsorship. This year the main beneficiary is the Swindon-based charity, Phoenix Enterprises. Our *Swimathon* will be held at the Highworth Recreation Centre on **Sunday 17 May**. It's not too late to enter, so go to our website (see below) to get involved.

A first-time event this year will be our *Cyclothon* in aid of Limitless Swindon. Limitless Swindon is an inclusive cycling project which supports hundreds of disabled people in accessing cycling. The *Cyclothon* is on

Sunday 26 July at the Moredon Sporting Hub which is Swindon's brand new, state-of-the-art sports facility located off Akers Way. It will be open to all cycling enthusiasts of any age and any ability to enter and cycle for a great cause on the Hub's 1.2km traffic free cycling track.

For more details of all the above events, visit www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk

Rotary is one of the largest and most successful global membership and humanitarian service organisations in the world. It has 1.4 million members in over 200 countries. The Rotary Club of Swindon North & Thamesdown meets at the Blunsdon House Hotel at 6:30pm on the **first, third and fifth Mondays in the month**. To find out more visit www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk or phone Rotarians Chris (07712 078942) or Ken (07710 228697).

Ken Winslow

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Teresa Triggs



Tracey Kassulke

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Bonny Prim



Teresa Udell



Ed Hoggood



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Susie Richards



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Big Highworth Community Foundation

The Community Awards 2025/26 was a great success. Special thanks to our judges, our table, award and event sponsors, Mayor Julie Murphy, Deputy Lord Lieutenant Shirley Ludford, and performers Billy and Louie.



Congratulations to our winners:

Citizen of the Year: Keith Smith

Young Citizen of the Year: Oliver Johnson

Community Team of the Year: Blunsdon Community Shop

Volunteer of the Year: Laila Rhodes (Forget-Me-Not)

Charity of the Year: Root and Branch

Congratulations to our Big Thank You award winners:

Maggie Evans, Eval Millard, Forget-Me-Not Café, Simon Rose. Katie Martin, Sarah Whitaker, Highworth Scouts, Highworth LINK Magazine, and the Salvation Army Gloucester House.

Our area includes Highworth and nearby locations. Nominations for next year's awards open Friday 1 May. As part of the process, judges assess the quality of your writing so ensure your nomination is well written.

This year features new projects, events, fundraisers, and business sponsorships. We're celebrating our third birthday in partnership with Highworth Town Football Club in September. More details soon and business sponsorship opportunities.

We're seeking some brave tandem skydivers (£50 for a 1500ft jump, under fifteen stone; aged over thirty-five require GP clearance). We're also seeking ad hoc volunteers for our fundraisers and events – you choose



Oliver Johnson, Young Citizen of the Year

your own hours. To volunteer, email bighighworthevents@gmail.com.

Finally, follow us, volunteer, or support our journey on Facebook at 'BigHighworthCommunityFoundation', or to donate to our Community Grant Fund visit www.localgiving.org/charity/big-highworth-community-foundation.

Thank you for your ongoing support – Community Together Matters.

The Big Highworth team



Root and Branch, Charity of the Year



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Open Weekend at Cotswold Farm Gardens

Join us for our open weekend on 30 and 31 May between 2pm and 5pm.

This beautiful Arts and Crafts Cotswold garden is in a stunning location, overlooking a quiet valley on descending levels with terraces designed by Norman Jewson in the 1930s. Enclosed by Cotswold stone walls and yew hedges, the garden has all year-round interest. Highlights in June include colourful herbaceous planting, roses, alpines and a magical bog garden.

£7.50 entrance fee (pre-booking available via the NGS website for the weekend or on site contactless payment). Children can enter for free with a fee paying adult. Refreshments are available in aid of the local WI and A Rocha. There will also be plants for sale.

Cotswold Farm, Duntisbourne Abbots, GL7 7JS. Find us five miles northwest of Cirencester on the A417.

To find out more visit our website: www.cotswoldfarmgardens.org.uk.



Lechlade History Society

On Monday 18 May, join us at The Memorial Hall, Lechlade, from 7pm, for a talk by Liz Davenport, *Woodchester Mansion: an Unfinished Masterpiece*.

Woodchester Mansion is the unfinished masterpiece of the young local Victorian architect Benjamin Bucknall. It stands today as evidence of both his interest in the work of the French architect Viollet-le-Duc and the quality of the craftsmanship and perfection demanded by his patron, the wealthy Catholic convert William Leigh.

The talk will explain why the building was never completed and update us on the latest conservation work that is taking place

Ros Godden

To advertise in The Highworth Link contact

advertising@highworthlink.co.uk
or visit www.highworthlink.co.uk

Paint a Picture with Words in Song

To celebrate the upcoming Highworth Arts and Literature Festival, Highworth Choral Society invites you to join them in a special, free session to create pictures in our minds with song.

Picture this: a mother seal with her baby gently sings her to sleep accompanied by the gentle movement of the waves (*The Seal Lullaby* by Eric Whitacre). Or be transported back to the majestic coronation of George II in 1727 (*Zadok The Priest* by Handel).

Bring a friend and/or family members and join us on **Monday 15 June**, from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, in St. Michael's Church, Highworth. A warm welcome awaits everyone!

To book your place please email secretary@highworthchoral.co.uk.



Support Christian Aid Week

In the crowded and noisy settlements of Nairobi, most parents wake every single day knowing they must go and earn money, otherwise their children won't eat that evening. With no formal work opportunities, heartbreakingly low pay, and no social support, it's a precarious and frightening daily struggle that no family should have to face. The aching hunger is bad enough. The relentless stress is overwhelming.

'When I wake up, I have a lot of worries. Sometimes I don't have food,' says Fridah Mora, a recently widowed grandmother determined to support her family on what little she earns. 'Now I'm responsible for everything.' With school costs, rent and water to cover, providing food for every meal is a problem that never goes away. But Fridah's faith in God and in her own ability to provide is unwavering. With tools, seeds and specialist training from Christian Aid's partner, Beacon of Hope, Fridah's now making the most of a small space in the city to grow a steady supply of fresh vegetables that she can cook for her family or sell on her market stall.

Reflecting on her new role in life, Fridah said, 'I never thought that a woman could also be a provider.' With her inner strength, unstoppable resolve, and a little help from Beacon of Hope, Fridah is overcoming

poverty to feed the youngest members of her family and protect them from the threat of malnutrition.

Christian Aid and its supporters are joining together once again during Christian Aid Week, **10 to 16 May**, to fundraise in all kinds of ways – coffee mornings, street collection and our envelopes delivered to every home in Highworth.



With seven days to make a difference, every gift, act and prayer counts. What will you do to support someone like Fridah to grow food, protect their children from hunger, and nurture hope?

£5 could buy the seeds that kickstart a family's nutritious vegetable garden.

£10 could pay for the pair of chickens that produce fertiliser for an urban farmer.

£15 could purchase the hand tools that mean an urban farmer can tend their crops.

£30 could buy the trio of cone garden planters that host hundreds of plants in a tiny city space.

Find out more about the campaign at www.caweek.org.

Peter Croton

Highworth Climate Talks

Highworth Climate Talks is having a Green Drinks social at The Highworth to discuss all things environmental. As the social will be post local elections, I'm sure we will all have plenty to talk about locally, nationally and globally in terms of recent environmental impacts. There is plenty of bad news but there are glimmers of hope too.

Bring seeds, plants or vegan recipes to swap or your current gardening tips as spring roars ahead. Come along with your good news stories and get to know our local environmentally concerned Highworth folk.

The event will take place on **Tuesday 19 May** at The Highworth, 1 Westrop, SN6 7HJ. There is some available parking to the rear.

If you want to be kept up to date and chat to others, you can join our WhatsApp chat. Call 07775 362132 for further details.



Highworth Twinning Association



Safari Lunch

Safari Lunch: a meal where each course is prepared and eaten at the home of different hosts in Highworth, finally coming together for dessert at a single venue.

Everyone welcome!

Sunday 14 June, 12 noon

Tickets: £23

From **Visit Highworth** (cash or cheque)

Limited number, last date for purchase 30 May

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Fire! Fire! at Westrop Primary School

Westrop Primary School Key Stage 1 children have loved exploring the topic of the Great Fire of London, learning how the fire spread in 1666 and how it changed the city.

To bring this to life, we were delighted to welcome Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue, who showed the children how modern firefighters tackle fires safely. The children got up close to the equipment and even had a turn using the hoses!

They compared today's firefighting methods with those from 1666, discussing how much it has improved. The topic also inspired some fantastic artwork, with children drawing and creating collages of London buildings past and present and experimenting with warm, fiery colours in their paintings.

Inspired by their learning, some children have also enjoyed family trips to London, including visiting Pudding Lane, and have spotted the many new buildings that make London the city it is today.

Mrs. Bridge, Key Stage One Lead



Westrop School go to Wembley



Westrop Primary School choir attended Voice In A Million 2026 at the Wembley Arena on 18 March and were amazing! They all sang so well and loved joining in with the stage choirs dancing.

We had a brilliant day out and the choir worked very hard learning new songs for the event. I am so proud of them!

Miss Esme Humphreys

Pennyhooks Farm Spring Plant Sale

Local residents are warmly invited to the Pennyhooks Farm Trust Spring Plant Sale on Saturday 16 May, from 10:30am to 1:30pm. Set in the beautiful countryside in Shrivenham, the event offers a relaxed way to spend a spring morning while supporting a local charity.

Visitors will be able to choose from a wide range of quality bedding plants, carefully grown and nurtured by students at Pennyhooks Farm. There will also be flower-filled planters, constructed and stencilled with spring designs by the students in the farm workshop, as well as empty planters ready for you to fill with your own seasonal planting. Other items from our shop will also be on sale such as tea towels, mugs, cards, notelets and honey.

The plant sale is also a great opportunity for people from Highworth, Shrivenham, Watchfield, Hinton Waldrist and surrounding villages to visit the farm and see its work first hand. Guests can enjoy homemade cakes and refreshments, made by the students, meet the farm animals, and take a walk around the fields and wildlife-rich



countryside. Well behaved dogs on leads are welcome, and visitors are encouraged to bring wellies if they would like to explore the farm paths.

Pennyhooks Farm Trust is a small organic farm and educational charity supporting autistic young people and adults with complex needs.

Through caring for animals, growing plants, conservation work and learning practical rural skills, students gain confidence, independence and valuable experience in a supportive environment.

The plants for sale have been grown by the students themselves, making each purchase a meaningful way to support their work and the future of the farm.

Everyone is welcome – come along, enjoy the farm and take home something lovely for your home or garden. As a working farm, we can be affected by adverse weather so please do check our website on the morning of the Plant Sale www.pennyhooks.com.

Pennyhooks Farm, Shrivenham SN6 8EX.

Royal Army Chaplains' Museum

Free Entry
Open Monday – Friday
13:30-17:00



Faringdon Road, Shrivenham, SN6 8EU

Prospect Hospice Launches 18th Annual Starlight Walk

Prospect Hospice is delighted to announce the launch of its annual Starlight Walk.

On **Saturday 27 June**, we invite you to join with us for a special evening of reflection, connection and celebration, all while raising vital funds for hospice care. With the choice of a 10km or 15km route, participants will be guided by twinkling lights and glowing lanterns.



Sarah, Prospect's Community and Events Fundraiser said, 'We're so excited to be launching our 18th Annual Starlight Walk! It's always such an incredible

Prospect Hospice
together making every day count

event, as people from our community come together to celebrate life, remember loved ones and support local families. We really hope that even more people will join us this year, as we light up the night for hospice care.'



South Marston Gardening Club

Come and join the South Marston Gardening Club. It's a wonderful way to unwind and enjoy a relaxed evening while meeting like-minded friends.

Each session includes refreshments and an optional raffle. Membership is just £15 per year, or you're very welcome to attend individual events for £5 on the door. We'd love to see you there!

On **Monday 11 May**, 7:30pm to 9:30pm, Ros Ford will talk about *Beyond the Garden Gate*. Ros comes to us from the National Garden Scheme (NGS), renowned for opening some of the country's most beautiful private gardens and raising millions of pounds each year for nursing and health charities.

In her talk, Ros will explore how the NGS began, how it operates today and how the money raised through garden openings is used. She will also highlight some of the wonderful Wiltshire gardens that open in support of the charity.

Find us at South Marston Village Hall, Old Vicarage Lane SN3 4SH. There is parking on Old Vicarage Lane (next to the school). For more information email angelanewton01@gmail.com or telephone 07789 068340.

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HIGHWORTH MARKET

How it all began...

Highworth received its first Market and Fairs Charter in 1206, granting a weekly Wednesday market and an annual fair on 29 September (St Michael's feast), issued by King John to Warin son of Gerold.

A second charter in 1257, granted by Henry III to Baldwin de Redvers, added another fair on 1 August (Peter ad Vincula). Market rights were valuable because they allowed owners to collect tolls. In 1686, Thomas Freke of Hannington bought these rights for £800, and by 1725 the Freke family earned about £50 a year from stall fees, livestock tolls, use of the Market House, and weighing charges.

The Freke family retained ownership until 1843, when Colonel Henry John Freke sold the rights for £300 to Highworth traders Thomas Ackling and Thomas Yeates. By 1845, the Phipps family held them. Although market towns declined in the 16th century, they revived in the late 1500s and early 1600s, often becoming centres of Puritan preaching. Highworth's market increasingly specialised in cattle.

Highworth later declined with the rise of industrial towns. The opening of the Great Western Railway works in Swindon in 1843 drew workers away, and agricultural mechanisation caused further unemployment and emigration – sometimes up to 100 people a year leaving for Swindon or overseas.

By 1926, only two markets remained, and a foot and mouth outbreak that winter ended the already weakened livestock trade.



Fairs once imposed strict rules; all other trading stopped, causing resentment among townspeople. Ale could be sold from 'bush houses' and Highworth had at least two. In 1607, the town supported 12 inns, reflecting its importance as a market centre.

Despite wider stagnation in the late 17th century, Highworth maintained its weekly market and two annual fairs. The old Market House was demolished in the early 19th century to ease traffic flow.

In 1970, the marketplace was sold to Highworth Rural District Council. A campaign in 1980, supported by 500 signatures, revived a Saturday street market, which opened on 30 May 1981.

More indepth information is available to view on our website.

www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk





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Southrop Open Gardens

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Southrop sits between Cirencester and Burford, a village of honey-coloured cottages, ancient footpaths and an unhurried rhythm of life. On **Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 May 2026** the village will open its private gardens to visitors as part of the biennial Southrop Open Gardens weekend.



Recorded in the Domesday Book and set along the gentle course of the River Leach, Southrop embodies the enduring charm of rural English life.

Every two years the village invites visitors into the living heart of this historic community. Here, gardens thread through the fabric of village life, shaped by history, shared gatherings and the people who tend them.

'Southrop Open Gardens is more than an event; it celebrates gardens, village life, and the simple pleasure of exploring a historic setting. It is a wonderful opportunity to explore gardens that are deeply woven into the life of the village,' says organiser Philip Roberts. 'Each garden reflects the character and care of the people who tend it, and the weekend offers a rare chance to step behind the garden gates of this special community.'

Each garden tells a story. Expect wisteria-draped arches, formal borders, and fragrant wildflower meadows. Highlights include Thyme's Kitchen Garden, where produce follows the rhythms of the seasons, and the village school's wildlife garden, alive with activity as children develop a connection with the natural world.

Beyond the blooms, Southrop's charm extends to its

12th-century St. Peter's Church, the village pub, and a welcoming village hall. Together, they contribute to a sense of place that has earned Southrop a reputation as one of the most picturesque villages in the UK.

Tickets, teas and raffle entries will be available from midday at Southrop Village Hall, GL7 3PB. Proceeds support village amenities, continuing the same grassroots spirit that has sustained the community for generations.

Highlights include:

- 10+ gardens open from 1pm to 5pm on both days.
- Delicious teas, plant sales and village hospitality at the Village Hall.
- Blue Badge parking and easy access from Jubilee Close.
- Registered assistance dogs welcome.

Whether you come for the flowers, the taste of village life, or simply to enjoy a leisurely afternoon outdoors, Southrop Open Gardens promises a weekend to explore, linger, and delight in the best of the Cotswolds countryside.

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Forget-Me-Not Chair Awarded Volunteer of the Year

Laila Rhodes was awarded Volunteer of the Year at the Big Highworth Awards ceremony in March. This was in recognition of her stepping up to be chair of the charity in challenging circumstances, and, in doing so, essentially ensuring the continuation of all the Forget-Me-Not activities for the last year.

The Forget-Me-Not volunteer team were also recognised and given a Big Thank You award in the Team of the Year category. We certainly wouldn't be able to do what we do without the support of such a fabulous team of volunteers – and Laila!

Kevin



Laila Rhodes (r) receives her award for Volunteer of the Year

Highworth Camera Club

After last month's *Misty Morning* photography presentation, this month we can enjoy seeing the members competition entries for the months this year. Our judges are fellow photographers visiting from Cirencester Camera Club. The entries are prints and digital images; there are no set subjects which makes for an interesting mix.

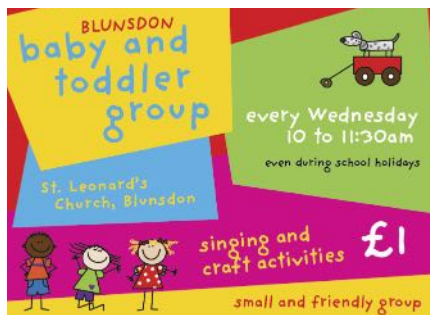
Next month the club is welcoming back Jack Lodge. We were privileged to have Jack visit us last year and talk to about his woodland photography. This time, on **Tuesday 9 June**, he is taking us on a trip to the Arctic. The club is happy to welcome visitors to this evening presentation for a small charge of £5. Jack is an

inspiring photographer with some amazing images to share do join us. Jack's work can be seen at www.jacklodge.co.uk. See our advert for more details.

Next month keep a look out for the art trail around the town. Images from the Highworth Artists' Society and the Highworth Camera Club will be displayed in shop windows. This year's theme to guess will be *Poems and Nursery Rhymes*.

The club meets every **second Tuesday of the month** at the Highworth Community Centre at 7:30pm. If you would like further details contact highworthcamclub@gmail.com.

Hilary Beach



Highworth Gardening Club (correction)

The April edition of Highworth's LINK Magazine had a short item on Highworth Gardening Club.

I stated that the club meets on the third Thursday in the month; my apologies, but this should have read the **third Tuesday in the month** – sorry!

Norman Jeffery, Chairman

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HIGHWORTH



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- ✓ Want to meet and make new friends?
 - ✓ Prefer to stay at home on dark evenings?
- ...Then we are just for you ✓

We are a friendly group with speakers, refreshments, raffle, luncheon club, outings and social events.

We meet on the **first Wednesday of the month** in the Council Offices in Gilberts Lane at 2.15pm.

New members are always welcome.

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Lions Looking Forward to a Magical May Day

It is so nice to have had some sunshine after too many rainy and windy days. Let's hope the sun will shine down on us all during our May Day celebrations on Saturday 2 May

We will be having our popular tombola stall again along with *Guess the Name of the Teddy*, *Find the Keys to the Safe* and a table full of free games for the children to play, kindly donated by Charles Baxter.

The Lions charity shop in Newburgh Place is thriving thanks to the ongoing commitment of our window dresser Carol Barrett, and all the volunteers who give their time freely to make our shop a pleasure to visit. Additionally, a huge thanks for the wonderful donations we have received. We are constantly amazed by the quality of goods given to us by the local community and surrounding area.

We would like to thank Simpson Cars for helping us keep our community minibus on the road. This has enabled our wonderful volunteer drivers to assist many in our community who have been in need during the last twelve months.

The Lions Club of Highworth has been particularly busy recently. Our PSA testing at Highworth



Highworth Lions at 2025 May Day

Community Centre, together with Lechlade Lions and Highworth Town Council, was a great success. Also Gloucester House in Highworth was presented with The Pride of Swindon Award 2026 for their amazing achievements nominated by Lion David Hazell, and we have also joined with Shirley Ludford at Swindon Radio 105.5 for a monthly slot with current news and forthcoming events to enjoy in the months ahead.

This month's donations and pledges:

Cubs and scout group equipment: £1,300

Root and Branch eco-friendly wheelchair path: £2,000

Lions sponsored trip to Marwell Zoo: £1,000



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Lechlade Art Society

Lechlade Art Society has started 2026 with its regular Thursday Group meetings, two Tuesday demonstrations from visiting artists, and a life drawing day.

The Thursday group meet in The Pavilion for an informal morning, mainly to work on individual projects. Members find it a great time to exchange



Cathryn Jeff

ideas, chat and find help and advice, as well as indulge in coffee and biscuits, free from the distractions of home.

The first Tuesday demonstration this year was from Cathryn Jeff of Witney. She came and explained the sponge and card techniques she uses rather than

traditional paint brushes. She produced a splendid picture of a bluebell and silver birch woodland in just an hour. All this, and for the purpose of the demonstration, she worked on her work facing the audience and with the canvas facing the audience too – her view being upside-down!

In March another local artist, Laurie Plant, came to talk about his work. Laurie brought along a huge selection of artwork and spoke about it at length, describing how he likes to be outside and work on a large scale. He uses a variety of media, mainly pencil, charcoal, pastel and watercolour wash. He then made a study of his hand holding a shell using charcoal and white pastel on a large piece of textured paper.

The Society Chair, Brian Britton, ran a popular life drawing day which was very well attended. The group spent the morning doing quick studies of different poses, and in the afternoon worked on a more detailed piece. Everyone had a brilliant time and found the session extremely valuable.



If you have a hankering to have a go at being creative or would like to find out more, you would be more than welcome to come along to The Pavilion on a **Thursday morning** between 9am and 12 noon and see what we do, or just come to one of the Tuesday meetings on the **second Tuesday of the month**, 2pm to 4pm. Visitors £5, members free. A full programme of events is on the website: www.lechladeartsociety.co.uk.



Laurie Plant

And finally we are very pleased to announce that, by kind invitation of Lord Faringdon, ten members will once again be holding an Open Studio at Buscot House. This is the third year when there will be a variety of work in progress for visitors to see. It is a great opportunity to chat to the artist, find out more and even make a purchase. It will take place over the bank holiday weekend from **Saturday 23 May to Wednesday 27 May**.

Zoe Hing



Life Drawing Class



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Mini Lampshade Fairy Lights Bunting Workshop

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Thursday 14 May
7pm to 9:30pm
£35 per person

All materials provided & no experience required.
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- All Stars and Dynamos kicks off on May 16th
- Junior nets on a Friday evening throughout the Summer with experienced Level 2 coaches
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MYTHS, MONUMENTS & MEMORY

Our 2026 exhibition explores the myths and legends woven into the Uffington White Horse landscape, from Saint George and the Dragon to the story of Weland the Smith. It highlights how this landscape and its monuments have carried significance from prehistory to the present day.

Discover how reuse in the landscape has conveyed meaning over the centuries, how beliefs have endured, and how personal, family and community events continue to enrich this story.

Open 2-5pm every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday
Monday from Easter to end of October



UFFINGTON MUSEUM, SN7 7RA



Highworth Flower Club

Thursday 7 May

Highworth Warneford School
7.30pm

Eco Chic

A flower arranging demonstration with

Denise Jones

Doors Open 7pm
Visitors welcome £7

Contact: Michele 07798 817249
[www. www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk](http://www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk)



Highworth Arts and Literary Festival

Great news: we have had such a great response to HALF that the two-day festival has been expanded from two to over seven days of interest and excitement, running from Saturday 13 June to Sunday 21 June.

An introductory art display will be available for you to view from **Saturday 13 June to Sunday 14 June** prior to the main programme: a feast for the eyes!

On **Monday 15 June** there will be a fun singalong, *Paint a Picture with Words*, hosted by Highworth Choral Society (see their advert on page 42 for more information) and a literary quiz night at The Goldfinger. Don't be alarmed – it will be great fun!

Thursday 18 June will see an open mike poetry night, followed by the main two-day festival.

We will be wrapping up the festival on the weekend of **Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 June** at the Highworth

Community Centre with a puppetry workshop for youngsters, an improv session for budding actors, a talk on writing for children, and a look at Highworth-associated literature through the ages.

Our brochure is now available and you can pick up a copy from Visit Highworth on the High Street, the library and High Street shops and businesses. You can also view it online and buy tickets at www.visithighworth.co.uk.

HALF is another great opportunity to leave the car at home and enjoy a plethora of activities right on your doorstep. We look forward to seeing you there!

Keith Smith



Pictures from HALF 2023

Great Coxwell Artweeks 2026

Great Coxwell Artists are once again looking forward to welcoming you to their exhibitions and demonstrations of craft, in the beautiful village of Great Coxwell for Artweeks 2026 (Venue 4 in the catalogue, available from several outlets).

They will be exhibiting their work in various venues in the village, from the magnificent Great Barn down to the 13th Century church of St. Giles. The village will once again be filled with art, artists and colour for two weekends, **2 to 4 May and 9 to 10 May**. Opening times are 11am to 5:30pm each day.

There will be a demonstration

of green woodworking skills up at the Great Barn, while other local artists will be exhibiting and demonstrating a range of painting, wirework, digital art, collage, ceramics, stone carving and quilting at other locations within the village.

On your way through the village, the Reading Room will be offering coffees, lunches and afternoon teas, with the most amazing homemade cakes to sample. Why not pop along and see what is on offer? There will be plenty for the whole family to see and do.

Val Hughes



Highworth Artists' Society

Our Spring Exhibition will have taken place by the time you read this, on display from 25 April to 2 May.

Apologies for any confusion about the incorrect date on the poster published in last month's LINK Magazine: a week later than the actual exhibition! More importantly, many thanks to everyone who dropped in during the exhibition – we appreciate every visitor.

We have had two themed mornings in recent weeks: a still life session where we painted (amongst other things) fruit bowls, snowdrops and daffodils. The vases and bowls were just as challenging! The second theme was collage, something we all enjoyed even if it meant a good excuse to re-read old magazines! After two hours of designing, cutting, sticking and painting here's one of our results.



Hilary Sinclair



Pen and wash workshop

Saturday May 30th 2026

9.30-12.30pm

£15 pp

Council Community Room, Gilberts Lane, Highworth SN6 7FB

Highworth Artists Society invite you to a relaxed morning to update or learn new skills in pen and watercolour wash.

No equipment required! We will have supplies available, although you can bring your own if wanted.

To book a place please contact highworthartistsociety@gmail.com

Book soon! Only 10 places available!



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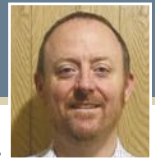
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Wrag Barn Golf Club

The season is well underway, with the new Captains and their committees organising a mix of fun and competitive golf, following the Drive-In at the beginning of March.

Following a long winter, it was wonderful to see a full turnout on the day, with teams from all sections. The winning team was a family affair, as Simon and Angie Perry, with sons Ted and Stanley, came into the clubhouse reporting birdies and an eagle to win the competition by four shots! In second place was a great mix of juniors and parents, Alan and Jake Kavanaugh with Charlie Fellows and Brian Drane. Third place went to Adam Jelley, Jamie Richards, Marcus



Richards and Jack Deane, all playing off single figure handicaps. There were a few nerves on the first tee later in the day as the Captain from each section stepped up for the Drive-In, officially marking the start of their captaincy.

Thank you, Andy Bright (Club Captain), for a delicious lunch – it was much appreciated after an early start and 18 holes of golf. We look forward to the year ahead under the additional leadership of Sue Pritchard (Lady Captain), Gary Blue, with Gary Rabey stepping in for the

Drive-In (Seniors Captain) and Ruben Chauhan Drane (Junior Captain).

Verity Manners

Highworth Town Junior Football Club

HTJFC is proud to announce the launch of its first FA Wildcats Centre, offering girls aged 5 to 11 a fun, friendly and confidence building introduction to football. The programme will begin later this year and marks a major step forward in the club's commitment to growing girls' football within the local community.

FA Wildcats sessions are designed to be inclusive, enjoyable and pressure-free, giving girls the chance to try football for the very first time or continue developing their skills in a supportive environment.

With qualified coaches and a welcoming atmosphere, the new Wildcats Centre will help more young players discover the joy of the game. This exciting

development comes at a perfect time for the club as we prepare to benefit from the brand new 3G pitch set to open next season — fingers crossed. The state-of-the-art surface will provide year-round training and playing opportunities for all age groups, including the new Wildcats

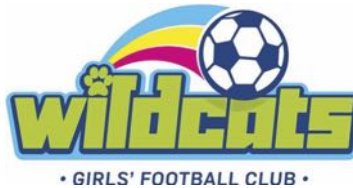
sessions. The facility will not only improve the training experience for current players but also support the club's long term ambition to expand participation and create more opportunities for all youth players in Highworth and surrounding areas.

Together, the launch of the FA Wildcats programme and the arrival of the new 3G pitch signal a bright future for Highworth Town Juniors FC, one built on inclusion, development and a passion for giving every child the chance to play.

Finally, a reminder of our upcoming events: please go to our website to book a space for our car boot sales or simply come along and have a mooch with a cuppa and a bacon sandwich.

Kelly Preston

www.highworthtownjuniorsfc.co.uk



31st May, 28th June, 26th July,
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Highworth Running Club

Sunday 22 March dawned bright and sunny, a beautiful day to go running. 132 enthusiastic athletes took advantage of the weather to take part in the 39th Highworth spring race, again over five miles, organised by Highworth Running Club.

Setting off from Warneford School, runners enjoyed the gradual downhill of the first few miles out towards Fresden before turning back towards Highworth. As they re-entered the town the runners faced the challenging climb of Eastrop Hill before the final leg back to the finish line in the school grounds and the appetising array of cakes and refreshments that awaited them.

First home in a very fast 26 minutes and 23 seconds was Ben Cole from the Swindon Harriers, followed a minute later by Matthew Jacobs of the White Horse Harriers Athletic Club. First lady was Becky Lafford from the home club in 34 minutes and 28 seconds whilst second lady was Hannah Gibbs from the Oxford



Courtesy of Adi Whittington

Tri Club who just managed to hold off Jenny Connolly from Swindon Striders after racing neck and neck up the hill. The Tom Bolter Memorial Trophy, awarded to the fastest Highworth Running Club member, was won by Corin Wiltshire who finished third overall in 30 minutes and 05 seconds.

HRC is a friendly local club for runners of all abilities, from beginners to the seasoned marathoner. Club runs take place from a variety of locations in the Highworth area every Wednesday evening and Saturday morning. The club also holds regular track training sessions on Monday evenings in Swindon.

Full race results and details of club activities can be found on the club website.

Andy Gibbs

www.highworthrunningclub.co.uk

Highworth Town Football Club

The Last Game on Grass at The Elms was played on the 28 March. A crowd of around 300 witnessed a 1-0 loss to Fairford Town in a game where Highworth missed numerous chances before a defensive error saw the visitors take all three points. We now await the start of construction on the new pitch and associated works which will provide a wonderful asset for so many.

Derek Lloyd

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Highworth Town Walking Football Club

The end of March saw five of the Highworth Over-65s squad playing for a Wiltshire team in the EuroCopa Football Tournament in Albufeira, Portugal. After a very successful first day they ended up undefeated after four wins and two draws. The second day saw them win two more games and draw one to progress to their quarter final which they won 2-1. Sadly, though, they succumbed to a 1-0 defeat in the semi-final after a very competitive game but everyone really enjoyed their European adventure.

If there is anyone wanting to join in a fun group, why not come along and give it a try? There are outdoor sessions held on **Thursdays and Sundays** (11am to 12pm), both held at Grange Leisure Centre in Stratton on their 3G pitches, and an indoor session on **Friday**



morning at the Highworth Rec (11:30am to 12:30pm). All sessions are pay and play, meaning anyone over the age of 50 is welcome to come and play. There is a £4.50 payment for Thursday and Sunday sessions, and £3.50 per Friday session, all payable by credit/debit card only, no cash, direct to the sports centre. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Graham Seeley
highworthwfc@outlook.com

Shrivenham Park Golf Club

The 2026/27 Captains Drive-In at the end of March saw Jim Boyes continue as the Club Captain, whilst Denise Shurmer returns after a gap of a couple of years as the Ladies Captain; in the Junior section we have Simieon Waqalevu and we wish them all every success.

The club year began at the start of April coinciding with our membership renewals. If you are interested in knowing more about what we get up to or our rates, please take a look at our website.

For our lady golfers, a new coaching session has begun on Wednesday mornings. Coached by Jim Boyes (also our Juniors coach) the one-hour session on our



Junior putting skills

dedicated practice area ends with a coffee and a chat. Jim caters for all levels of player from complete beginner to advanced. Please come and join us. To find out more please contact me on 07467 657964.

Our social groups also continue this year with Parkies Pals meeting on the **first Tuesday of each month** (10am to 12 noon) with the entry fee including cake, tea/coffee. The social putting group continues to meet weekly on **Fridays** (2pm to 4pm) with putters, golf balls and score cards all loaned on the day; again refreshments are included in the entry fee. To both we welcome newcomers, so if you are interested please do get touch with me.

All sections of the club have a full programme of events this year, from our Junior Bowmaker competition on **3 June** to our Junior Open on **3 August**. We also welcome societies so do please call us to make arrangements if you'd like to come to SPGC.

Whatever your penchant, you're welcome to come and visit us. Whether you're on a dog walk and fancy a quiet half an hour watching play, or just in need of refreshment, please come along and soak in the atmosphere. We'd desperately love to keep our green space dividing the two wonderful villages of Shrivenham and Watchfield so please come, enjoy the summer with us, and help us use it.

Carole Lee
www.shrivenhampark.co.uk



Magic Fest
SATURDAY 2ND MAY 2026

FANDANGOS

Join us for a day full of magic in the High Street, Highworth

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- May Pole
- Stilt Walkers
- Funfair
- Food Outlets
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- Face painting
- School Parade
- Magic Entertainment

We welcome some magic entertainment from

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News from Highworth's Mayor



As my civic year as Mayor of Highworth draws to a close, the final weeks have been both busy and immensely rewarding.

The weekend of 25 and 26 April was nonstop, supporting the important PSA testing, kindly subsidised by the Highworth Lions. One-in-eight men are diagnosed with prostate cancer; early detection is so important and saves lives. A fun charity evening was held at Wrag Barn and was extremely well attended. Along with a lively country and western event on the Sunday, it proved to be a great fundraiser. Both social events offered something different for everyone.

It has been a pleasure to bring together our community in support of the fantastic Forget-Me-Not club. My sincere thanks go to EKOM (Everyone's Kind of Music), The Roxi Foundation, Kelly Sings Country, Domino's Pizza and all those who sponsored races and generously donated auction prizes. I hope to be in a position in July to announce the total funds raised once all fundraising activities have been concluded.

Preparations are now well underway for one of the highlights of our town calendar, our much-loved May Day celebrations on **Saturday 2 May**. This year promises to be magical. There will be a special raffle where six lucky winners will enjoy a unique magical workshop. There will also be a *Make Your Own Wand* stall all in aid of charity, ensuring something for everyone to enjoy while supporting a great cause. A fun-packed day is guaranteed with the High Street jostling with stalls, the traditional maypole, stilt walkers, funfair, face painting, school parade, food outlets, bar and some great magical acts and entertainment.

As I wrap up this year, having had the honour of serving as your Mayor, I am very grateful to have represented you.

Thank you to all businesses and residents for your continued support this year. Highworth is a truly special place, defined by its unique and caring community.

Julie Murphy, Mayor

HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

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HIGHWORTH CHORAL SOCIETY 1961-2021

HIGHWORTH FORGET-ME-NOT MEMORY CAFÉ

WEDNESDAY 27TH MAY 2026, 2-4PM

Live music with **Mike Barton**

HIGHWORTH COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE DORMERS SN6 7PQ

www.highworthforgetmenot.org
info@highworthforgetmenot.org
07771853337
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PAINT A PICTURE WITH WORDS IN SONG

To celebrate the upcoming Highworth Arts and Literature Festival, Highworth Choral Society invites you to join us in a special FREE session to create pictures in our minds with song.

15. 6. 2026

7:30pm to 9:30pm
St. Michael's Church, Highworth

A warm welcome awaits everyone!

To book your place please email secretary@highworthchoral.co.uk

Highworth Methodist Church



CELEBRATE PENTECOST

Every Saturday
Coffee Morning
10.30 – 12 noon
Coffee and cake



What's on in May?

Sunday Morning Worship at 10.30am

3 Café Church – Val

10 Jenny corkett

17 Own Arrangement

24 Rev Ian Mead – Pentecost

31 Pam Mullin

Afternoon Communion Tuesday, 5th @ 2pm

Refreshments served after each service

Café Church
Sunday, May 3rd at 10.30
Are You Listening?

An informal café style service including refreshments, film clips, thoughts and songs

the famous Highworth Songsters

All Welcome

Every Friday
9.30-11.15 am

JESUS AND ME CLUB

Craft Group

Tuesday, 5th & 19th
10am-1pm

Vicarage Lane, Highworth SN6 7DG
Tel: 01793 764544
Website:
www.highworthmethodistchurch.org.uk
www.facebook.com/HighworthMethodistChurch

3Cs – Coffee, cake & Chat

Wednesday, 13th
2.30pm

ASCENSION DAY

THURSDAY 14TH MAY 2026

7PM SERVICE AT
ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

St. Leonard's Parish Church Stanton Fitzwarren

- 3 May Morning Worship, 9:30am
- 10 May Family Service, Lambs and the Good Shepherd, 11am
- 17 May Family Service: 'Fish-a picnic on the beach', 11am
- 24 May Holy Communion, 9:30am
- 31 May Team Service at St. Leonard's Stanton Fitzwarren, 10am

Join us for our Stanton Coffee Morning on **Wednesday 20 May** at Stanton House Hotel. We will meet at 10:15am for coffee and chat, and then Julia Nolan will present *Inside the Family Court*.

The church building will be open on 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 for updates.

FOR God so loved THE world that He gave HIS ONE & ONLY Son, THAT whoever believes in HIM shall NOT perish but have eternal life. John 3:16


St. Michael's Church Highworth



WHAT'S ON IN MAY?



Coffee Morning
Fourth Saturday
10am-12pm
in Church Room



Midweek
Communion
Third
Wednesday
at 11am

Sunday at 8.30am
3rd and 17th - Holy Communion (BCP)

Sunday at 10.15am
3rd, 17th and 31st - Morning Worship
10th and 24th - Holy Communion

Toddler Group
Every Monday
(term time)
10-11.30am



Prayers
Every Tuesday
at 9.30am

Prayer Hour
2nd and 4th
Monday
7.30pm in
Church Room





Saturday Drop In
Second
Saturday
10am-12pm
including
Children's
activities



Youth Group Every Tuesday
(term time) 7-8.30pm



Blessings at 9.15am
Every Friday

Vicarage Lane, Highworth, SN6 7AD
Tel: 01793 762702
Email: office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk
www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk

We remember those we love and miss

Kathleen Collier, Margaret Thurgood, Michael Ashford

We welcome in Holy Baptism

Penelope Mark, Mia Pritchard

Praying for the roads in the town

3 May The Green and Grove Hill

10 May Grove Orchard and Hammond Close,
including Cobbett Court and Styles Court)

17 May Hampton and Hanover House

24 May Highworth's schools: For all who work or
attend, and Blackworth Industrial Estate:
For all who work there

31 May Henley Drive and High Street



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



27/4/2026

Cyril Knight

21 years since you left us. Miss you every day. Talk about you
often, happy memories.

Sleep tight, love you. Lyn, Ruth, Patrick and all your family xxxx

21-24/5/2026

Eric Craigie (21 May)

Always in our thoughts.

Joan, Emma, Kate and all your family

Floodlighting forms are available from St. Michael's Church office, Vicarage Lane, or the church website at
www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk/floodlighting. Your dedication will appear in an issue of Highworth's LINK Magazine.

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USEFUL CONTACTS

LOCAL CONTACTS

EMERGENCY

Police, Fire, Ambulance	Emergency 999
Gas	Emergency 0800 111999
Electricity	Emergency 105
Water	Emergency 0800 3169 800

NON-EMERGENCY

Police	Non-Emergency 101
NHS	Non-Emergency 111
Pest Control	Non-Emergency 07789 781151

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 Drive Campus	01793 611470
North Star 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 038 2323
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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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PHARMACIES

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

PRESCHOOL/NURSERY

Eastrop Nursery	01793 763772
Westrop Nursery	01793 762897
South Marston Pre-school	01793 823379

SCHOOLS

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

TAXIS

Veezu	01793 701701
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TRAINS

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

OTHER SERVICES

Citizens Advice Bureau	08444 994114
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
Root & Branch (Mental Health Therapeutic Centre)	01793 782999

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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 200 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.

Please indicate if you are using AI for any image/photo creation. All images generated in AI will require a caption noting the fact.

Submission Deadlines:

First day of the month preceding publication.

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