

# VillageView

WATERMEAD'S *FREE* QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Winter 2017 Vol.24 Issue 4

## Christmas Carol Concert

Saturday 9th December at 6pm in the Piazza

## Christmas Fair

Saturday 2nd December

Village Hall from 11am

Watermead Front Garden Competition

Winners - Page 30



News from Watermead Parish Council & more!  
[watermead-pc.gov.uk](http://watermead-pc.gov.uk) / @watermead pc





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# Parish Chairman's News

**Welcome to the December edition of Village View; how can Christmas have arrived so soon? This time of year in Watermead always feels special, with our Christmas events to look forward to and with many being fortunate enough to spend time with family and friends over the festive season.** This year has been challenging, with many calls on our time, mainly those connected with planning. I hope that by the time you read this we will have a clearer idea of what's happening regarding the new planning application for the crematorium. We have continued, with fantastic support and encouragement from the community, to object to this application. At the time of writing we are in the process of preparing our submissions and there have been several hundred objections from those living in Watermead and beyond. A sincere thank you to everyone for encouraging and helping.

The other major planning matter which arose this year was a proposal to **build flats on the Piazza** car park. Many objections have been registered by residents. The latest situation is that the applicants have to provide more information for Highways, at present still awaited, so nothing further to report. During the summer we

did have some fun; the **May Fair** was a really successful event, enjoyed by many on a really hot day. Our May Queen was a great ambassador for Watermead, the Maypole dance was excellent, and a good time was had by all at this traditional fete.

**Our land and facilities** have been managed throughout the year to ensure they remain at their best, for the enjoyment of all. The erosion works to the bank of the large lake have made a huge difference making the lakeside path secure and keeping the Memorial Garden and Memorial safe. The grass and vegetation that were planted appear to have taken well. We hope that it will continue to hold but if not we will ensure it is re-planted in spring and protected from damage.

**Front garden competition:** Many village front gardens looked wonderful this year, full of colour, with immaculate grass or hard landscaping, as well as hanging baskets and other features. A key feature of the winning gardens is that their owners continued gardening throughout the summer, post-planting, deadheading, weeding and keeping plants in good order - no easy task when the weather is very hot and dry. I know that Irina Schwab and her team of judges had a very difficult time in choosing the winners

of each section. They are all to be congratulated and thank you for providing such lovely displays for everyone to enjoy. Please see page 30 for details on the winners.

**Christmas Lights:** This competition has grown from small beginnings and last year there were so many entries. The rules are simple: The judges walk round Watermead between Christmas and New Year choosing their favourite displays. They then draw up a shortlist and a winner is chosen. Last year's winner cannot win again the next year to give everyone a chance of winning. If you have a particular favourite please email Noreen Shardlow at Noreen.Shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk and she will let the judges know so that they are aware.

**Speeding:** Our Community Speedwatch camera (shared with Berryfields) is now up and running. You will see a number of volunteers on Watermead's roads checking speeds. More volunteers are always welcome. However little time you can spare will make a difference - even an hour a month will help us combat speeding. Brief training is given in how to set up the camera, download the data and add it to the spreadsheet - all very simple. Data from Sentinel is downloaded and sent to the Police. Speeding drivers will receive letters



Chairman:  
Cllr Sue Severn  
T: 336575  
sue.severn@watermead-pc.gov.uk

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noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Assistant Parish Clerk:  
Michelle Jackson  
T: 481554  
michelle.jackson@watermead-pc.gov.uk



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## Tea Break Quiz



1. What was the international version of the TV game show 'It's a Knockout' called?
2. During which war did the Battle of Goose Green take place?
3. By what process do plants convert sunlight into chemical energy, required for growth?
4. How many times was Sterling Moss the Formula One World Champion?
5. What was the title of J K Rowling's first adult book, released in 2012?
6. What connects Elizabeth Fry, Charles Darwin, Adam Smith and James Watt?
7. How many Prime Ministers have served under the Queen?
8. Which herb of the mint family is sometimes called wild marjoram?
9. Which TV sit-com was set on Craggy Island?
10. Perry McCarthy, Ben Collins and an unknown person have portrayed which well-known TV character?
11. Who are the only two people to have been joint winners of BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award?
12. In what year did the Titanic sink?
13. Which King was the target of the Gunpowder Plot?
14. What nationality was the WWI spy Mata Hari?
15. What tiny country is found nestled in between France and Spain?
16. What is the Otorhinolaryngology unit at the local hospital more commonly known?
17. What name is given to a sentence which contains every letter of the alphabet?
18. What animal is Snowball in George Orwell's book Animal Farm?
19. Hippophobia is the fear of which creature?
20. The song 'You'll never walk alone' comes from which musical?

Answers on page 25

...page 03

from the Police pointing out the dangers, and repeat offenders will be prosecuted. Please, for all our sakes, slow down!

Speedy (our MVAS) also moves around Watermead, recording speeding drivers and helping us understand where the problem areas are. We are keen to prevent speeding as it is extremely dangerous on our roads.

**The bollards** at the end of Lark Vale continue their chequered career. Please don't use that entrance into Lark Vale as it is dangerous and illegal. Simply because the bollards are not working does not mean it is safe, or legal, to drive through. Police monitor this junction and tell us they will prosecute.

**Crime prevention:** Over recent months a number of cars have been broken into and attempted break-ins have occurred. If you see any incident please report it to the Police on 101. It is vitally important for the security of all that reports are made to the Police; they do not monitor Facebook and they need to know in order to police the area effectively. Please also do not name anyone you suspect

of committing a crime as this will prejudice any case the police are able to bring.

**Suzanne Ackford:** I am extremely sad to report that Suzanne Ackford, wife of our Vicar, Mark Ackford, herself a licenced lay minister, died in October. Suzanne was well known to many Watermead residents who are members of the congregation at St James the Great, Bierton. She was a smiling presence on many occasions. We were very fortunate to work alongside Suzanne and her ConTACT team from 2009, when the Buckingham Park Mother and Toddler group was formed, and again later in 2013 at Berryfields. Her work with the mothers and children in Buckingham Park and Berryfields was an extremely valuable service to all new residents and this was proven by a rather extensive waiting list for the group. Suzanne always opened the group with a warm, friendly welcome and plenty of tea and coffee and gave many of the parents the confidence to take over and manage the groups. Without her hard work and determination these groups may not have been put into

place. Suzanne will be missed enormously. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mark and their children at this time.

**Lunch Club:** We are pleased to announce the launch of the Watermead Lunch Club which is an initiative through Community Impact Bucks to provide an opportunity for people to meet others and make new friends at the restaurant in the Watermead Inn. We would particularly encourage those

people who live alone to come along as there will be others in the same situation and all will be made very welcome.

The Parish Councillors wish you all the compliments of the season and every good wish for the New Year. We hope to see you at the Christmas Fair and Carol Concert at the beginning of December.

Chairman Sue Severn



## Christmas Events

**Watermead Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday 2nd December from 11am in the Village Hall** - entrance is in the Piazza between Avanti Hairdresser and the dentist. There will be a great selection of Christmas related goods for you to buy as presents for your family and friends or just to indulge yourself! Homemade jams and chutneys, cards, tree decorations, etc will all be on sale. We hope you will come along and support this event.

There'll also be the opportunity to stop at our pop up coffee shop and partake of a hot drink, cake, toasted sandwich and other snacks. Any proceeds will be donated to the Lindengate charity.

**The Christmas Carol Concert on Saturday 9th December starts at 6pm in the Piazza.** There will be mulled wine, mince pies (made by ladies from our WI) and other warming treats available as usual in exchange for a small donation towards a charity. This year our charity is Lindengate.

The carols will be played by Safe Sax returning for another year, and the service conducted by Reverend Mark Ackford. Father Christmas has promised to include our children in his busy schedule; he is expected to visit and give presents to children during the evening.

**Lindengate is a mental health charity** that offers specialised gardening activities to help those with mental health needs in their continuing recovery. Their services, known as Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH), use the healing power of nature and the outdoors to improve mental wellbeing, boost self-esteem and social inclusion and encourage long-term recovery. STH is recognised to be beneficial for a wide range of mental health needs including anxiety, depression, loneliness as well as for people with autism (ASD), dementia and head injury.

The charity operates from a 5-acre site at The Old Allotment Site, next to Wyevale Garden Centre, Aylesbury Road, Wendover, Buckinghamshire, HP22 6BD. They offer gardening, conservation, horticulture, craft and construction activities that enable users to spend time in a managed and calm environment, either singly or in small groups, reducing their isolation and working towards their recovery. [www.lindengate.org.uk](http://www.lindengate.org.uk)

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## WATERMEAD CHRISTMAS FAIR

**Saturday 2nd December 2017**  
Village Hall, The Piazza 11am - 5pm

An arrangement of traditional and quirky gifts -  
there's a unique Christmas gift for everyone!  
Plus 'Name the Dog'  
Refreshments available too

and don't forget:

**WATERMEAD CAROL CONCERT**  
Saturday 9th December 2017. From 6pm



# WATERMEAD PUB LUNCH CLUB

How would you like to go out to lunch once a month, meet friends and make new ones whilst enjoying an inexpensive but delicious lunch?

A pub lunch club is being set up at The Watermead Inn and the first lunch is to be held on Wednesday 13th December at 12.30pm. Subsequent lunches will be on the second Wednesday of every month.

There are already more than thirty Pub Lunch Clubs like this across the county organised by Community Impact Bucks and we're delighted that Kelvin and his team at the Watermead Inn have agreed to join the scheme. The Clubs are aimed at the more mature members of the community and especially those who may have been missing out on regular social contact.



A two course meal (main course and pudding) is on offer for just £8.00 to club members and it costs nothing to join. All you have to do is book in advance with the local organiser on the number shown below. If you would like to come to the monthly lunch, or know someone who might benefit from getting out and about a bit more, then please do get in touch.

Please note. In order to avoid confusion with numbers bookings can only be made through the local organiser whose contact details are given below.



## COME AND JOIN US - YOU'RE WELCOME

To book for the first lunch

please call Mary Singleton on

07986 582903



## When flying a Drone remember you're a pilot!

Concern has been expressed by some Watermead residents following drones being flown over their properties. Apart from feeling that this is an intrusion on their private lives, the constant droning noise is annoying.

According to the BBC news on 22nd July 2017 the UK government has announced plans to introduce drone registration and safety awareness courses for owners of the small unmanned aircraft. It will affect anyone who owns a drone which weighs more than 250 grams (8oz).

It was reported that the Department of Transport admitted that "the nuts and bolts still have to be ironed out". However, it said that the drone safety awareness test will involve potential flyers having to prove that they understand UK safety, security and privacy regulations. The plans also include the extension of geo-fencing, in which no-fly zones are programmed into drones using GPS co-ordinates, around areas such as prisons and airports.

See full report at

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-40684581](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-40684581)

According to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) code of practice:

- Don't fly drones near airports or airfields.
- Remember to stay below 400ft (120m).
- Observe your drone at all times - stay 150ft (50m) away from people and property.
- Never fly near aircraft.
- Enjoy responsibly.

Be drone aware:

- Every time you fly your drone you must follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep your drone, and the people around you, safe.
- You are responsible for each flight - legal responsibility lies with you. Failure to fly responsibly could result in criminal prosecution.
- Stay well away from aircraft, airports and airfields - if your drone endangers the safety of an aircraft it is a criminal offence and you could go to prison for five years.
- Small unmanned aircraft (irrespective of their mass)

that are being used for surveillance purposes are subject to tighter restrictions with regard to the minimum distances that you can fly near people or properties that are not under your control.

If you wish to fly within these minima, permission is required from the CAA before operations are commenced.

CAA permission is also required for all flights that are being conducted for aerial work (ie in very simple terms, you are getting paid for doing it).

It is important to remember that the operation of the aircraft must not endanger anyone or anything. The 'remote pilot' has the responsibility for satisfying him/herself that the flight can be conducted safely.

Details of UK restricted

airspace can be found at [www.skydemonlight.com](http://www.skydemonlight.com)

Careful note should be taken that the collection of images of identifiable individuals, even inadvertently, when using surveillance cameras mounted on a small unmanned surveillance aircraft, will be subject to the Data Protection Act. As this Act contains requirements concerning the collection, storage and use of such images, Small Unmanned Aircraft operators should ensure that they are complying with any such applicable requirements or exemptions. Further information about the Data Protection Act and the circumstances in which it applies can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office and website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)



## The View from Westminster

A few weeks ago, I spent Saturday afternoon at an event in Aylesbury organised by Prison Hope, a group that brings together people from different churches to try to change the lives of prisoners and support them after release.

All but a tiny handful of prisoners will be freed one day. We cannot be satisfied with a situation where nearly half of them reoffend within a year. In the end, the cost of reoffending is borne by the victims of those crimes.

Of course, those who commit crimes are responsible for their actions. Rehabilitation does not mean that we ignore the need for punishment and deterrence. It means using the time that we have people inside to maximise the chance that they will change

their attitudes when they get out.

Successful rehabilitation has to start with the prisoner wanting to make it work. There are some who, no matter what support is offered, will show no remorse and no desire to change. Others, and I met some at the Aylesbury event, have turned their lives around, helped by prison officers, chaplains, volunteer visitors and others.

Nothing can excuse crime. But we have to recognise that the problems in our prisons don't start at the gates.

A quarter of prisoners have spent time in care. Many come from homes that were at best chaotic, at worst violent and abusive. And the cycle perpetuates; nearly two thirds of prisoners' sons go on to commit crime. Most prisoners assessed

on arrival have the reading skills of an 11-year-old, and half have no qualifications at all.

When these prisoners return to society I want to see them able to get a job and to keep it. In prison they should spend as much time as possible in classrooms and workshops, not banged up in cells. I want them willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their families, keeping on the straight and narrow rather than falling back into old ways.

And I want more intensive rehabilitation to take place in the community, particularly to tackle offenders with substance misuse and mental health needs. We also need probation to work better, so we have tough community sentences that command the confidence of the

courts and the public.

All this will take time. There is no quick fix. But the success stories I've seen, locally and around the country, show it can be done.

*Rt Hon David Lidington, MP for Aylesbury, Leader of the House of Commons and Lord President of the Council.*





# What's on IN AND AROUND WATERMEAD

## December 2017

2nd	Christmas Fair	Village Hall, 11am to 5pm
7th	Watermead & Weedon WI	Village Hall, 7:30pm
9th	Christmas Carol Concert	The Piazza, 6-7pm
13th	Lunch Club	Watermead Inn, 12.30pm

## January 2018

4th	Watermead & Weedon WI	Village Hall, 7:30pm
10th	Lunch Club	Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
18th	Watermead Parish Council	Village Hall, 7:30pm
21st	Vintage Fair	Village Hall, TBC

## February 2018

1st	Watermead & Weedon WI	Village Hall, 7:30pm
14th	Lunch Club	Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
14th	Valentines Day	
15th	Watermead Parish Council	Village Hall, 7:30pm

## March 2018

1st	Watermead & Weedon WI	Village Hall, 7:30pm
4th	Stroke Association Resolution Run	Watermead. Times TBC
14th	Lunch Club	Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
15th	Watermead Parish Council	Village Hall, 7:30pm

## Village Hall

### PARISH COUNCIL

3rd Thursday of the month  
Public meeting - 7.30pm  
Council meeting - 8.00pm

### CYGNETS PRE-SCHOOL

**2.5 - 4 yrs:**  
Monday, Wednesday - Friday  
9.00am - 12.00pm  
**2.5yrs:** Tuesday 9.00 - 12.30pm,  
**3 & 4 yrs:** Tuesday  
8.30 - 12.30pm  
(Breakfast: Monday - Friday  
8.30 - 9.00am  
Lunch: Monday, Wednesday - Friday  
12.00 - 1.30pm)  
Maree Van Danzig  
maree-cygnets@hotmail.co.uk  
07563 783464

### SCRAPBOOKING/CARD MAKING ANY CRAFT OF YOUR CHOICE CRAFTY CHICKS

4th Friday of the month  
from 6.30pm  
Contact Daphne 393131

### KUMON MATHS

Monday & Thursday  
2.30 - 6pm  
Susan Jones 747469

### AYLESBURY & DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Second Wednesday of the month  
7.30 - 10.00pm  
Peter Barnes 612913

### WATERMEAD & WEEDON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

First Thursday of the month  
7.30 - 9.30pm  
Julia Morgan 487650  
julia-morgan@sky.com

### JO JINGLES

Tuesdays  
Music & Movement 1.30 - 2.15pm  
18 months upwards 2.30 - 3.05pm  
6 months to walking  
(approx 18 months)  
Debbie Bird 625599

### DRAWING FOR FUN - ART CLASSES

Every Wednesday 2.30-5.30pm  
Contact Judith Muston

### CASTIELLIDANCE SCHOOL

(for children) Monday 6 - 7.30pm  
Janet Castielli 433956  
www.luv2dance.co.uk

### YOGA

Tuesdays 6.00 - 7.00pm  
7.15 - 8.15pm  
Gale Smith 747900

Watermead Village Hall is the ideal venue for young children's birthday parties, meetings or christenings, etc. If you are an organisation looking for a regular venue, the Village Hall or the Bandstand could be the perfect place. Please contact Noreen Shardlow on 01296 395211

## Advertise in the Village View 50% discount for Watermead residents

Resident Rates - 1/4 page - £25 1/2 page - £50 full page - £100

Non-resident Rates - 1/4 page - £50 1/2 page - £100 full page - £200

Colour is extra - £30 - 1/4 £60 - 1/2 £120 - full page.

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## Read by over 1,200 homes

Creating or modifying the adverts will also be charged for separately. Please arrange advertisements at least 4 weeks prior to publication date and send to the Advertising Manager (see above). Publication dates are subject to change depending on local events at time of publication. Payment of advertising space is required in advance of publication - advertisers will be invoiced accordingly and must pay the invoice within 30 days of receipt. If you have any suggestions for content/articles please contact any member of the team above.

# Youth and pink taffeta

**L**e Grand Palais - Paris, as always. Tuesday morning during the midst of couture week Lagerfeld concocted an ostentatious display of taffeta and celebrity offspring. Models strolled around a mirrored chamber of reflection adorned with glass vases that protruded with calla lilies. Alberto Giacometti's sculpture "Spoon Woman" (Femme cuillère) served as the principal muse behind the silhouettes of Lagerfeld's latest fanfare of tweed. Lagerfeld achieved the spoon silhouette through swelled fabric at the hips and the blowing out of fabric surround the waist of skirts and dresses. He also utilised an exuberant amount of layers of taffeta, which were prevalent at all the couture shows this season, note Giambattista Valli and Christian Dior. Karl

Lagerfeld twisted the fitted preconceptions of the iconoclastic Chanel tweed suit on its head this season via the inspiration of the 1926 sculpture. Surreal yet modernist much like many of Lagerfeld's ventures with Chanel.

As for the models the luxury powerhouse that is Chanel has moved on from supermodels; nowadays Lagerfeld opts to cast someone along the likes of Kendall Jenner or Bella Hadid. Of course the contemporary Chanel classics were there, Soo Joo Park and Mariacarla Boscono, but as was Bella Hadid who promenaded through the mirrored palace in a halter necked coat dress in black chiffon belted at the waist, "Spoon Woman" made another appearance.

This season however all eyes were

on Lily-Rose Depp, the half French half American progeny of Vanessa Paradis and Johnny Depp. Without a doubt the most coveted role in the entire show is the Chanel bride and this season Mr Lagerfeld selected the 17 year old Depp to sport the show closer, the crowd pleaser if you will. Yet as the young girl walked the aisle arms linked with the 83 year old designer it begs the question, who is Chanel making this collection for?

With their couture clientele's average age of 50 and above, including Anna Wintour at every Met Gala, is having what is arguably the most important gown of the collection being worn by a 17 year old somewhat inappropriate?

Phoebe Shardlow



Examples of Couture Chanel Dresses on display at The Saatchi Gallery



Le Grand Palais



Face of Chanel "Vanessa Paradis, mother of Lily Rose Depp, exhibited at The Saatchi Gallery

# Some amazing things happen in our Village Hall

**W**atermead Village Hall offers a variety of usage and is the ideal venue for activities and social events. Whether you are planning a christening, a family or child's party, a club or social meeting, Watermead Village Hall is perfect for all your needs. Located within the Piazza of Watermead the Village Hall can accommodate 50 seated and 80 standing (9mx10m). The hall benefits from a fully fitted kitchen with servery through to the main hall, and a child safe fully enclosed rear garden. The hall also provides full disabled access and ample parking.

2017 has seen the hall used for many purposes as evidenced by these wonderful images sent to us.

Noreen Shardlow



'Baby Shower' surprise party arranged by Desiree & Ledwina



Ethan Allen's 9th birthday party



# Christmas recipes

## Potted salmon rilette

### Ingredients

100g cream cheese,  
100g crème fraîche, soured  
cream, double or whipping  
cream - or a mixture of all your  
leftovers,  
100g smoked salmon trimmings,  
half diced, plus extra to decorate  
(optional),  
2-3 tsp creamed horseradish,  
lemon wedge,  
few dill sprigs, to decorate  
(optional)  
melba toast, crackers or toasted  
rye bread, and a few leaves, to  
serve.

### Method

1. Put the cream cheese, the  
leftover creams, 50g salmon,  
2 tsp horseradish and a small  
squeeze of lemon juice in a  
food processor or blender.  
Whizz until smooth, then  
scrape into a mixing bowl.  
Fold in the remaining salmon,  
then taste - add another tsp  
horseradish if you like, plus  
seasoning if needed. Divide  
the mixture between 4 small  
ramekins and chill for at least  
2 hours.
2. Before serving, decorate  
the rillettes with a spiral of  
salmon or a few dill sprigs,  
if you like. Add a pot to a  
plate with a few leaves and  
some crunchy Melba toast, or  
similar, and serve.

## Roast potato, turkey, sausage & stuffing pie

### Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil or rapeseed oil,  
knob of butter,  
1 large onion, halved and sliced,  
6 sausages or 8 chipolatas  
(leftover pigs in blankets are fine  
too),  
2 tsp English mustard powder,  
50g plain flour,  
1 chicken stock cube, crumbled,  
150ml white wine  
500ml chicken stock or leftover  
gravy,  
6 stuffing balls, leftover or shop-  
bought,  
300g cooked turkey, shredded,  
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard,  
100g low-fat crème fraîche,  
small bunch parsley, chopped,  
800g leftover roast potatoes,  
20g mature cheddar, grated.

### Method

1. Heat the oil and butter in  
a large, shallow ovenproof  
casserole dish. Add the onion  
and cook for 10 mins until

- really soft. Push the onion to  
one side of the dish and add  
the sausages, browning them  
all over (skip this step if you're  
using cooked leftovers).
2. Remove the sausages from  
the dish and set aside to  
cool a little. Stir the mustard  
powder, flour and stock cube  
into the oil and butter for 1-2  
mins, then add the white wine.  
Bubble for 1 min, scraping the  
bottom of the dish to release  
any tasty bits, then add the  
stock. Stir to make a smooth  
sauce, season and bubble  
for 5 mins. Heat oven to  
200C/180C fan/gas 6.
  3. Cut the sausages and stuffing  
into bite-sized chunks, add  
to the sauce with the turkey,  
mustard, crème fraîche and  
parsley. When bubbling,  
remove from the heat.  
Crumble the potatoes in  
your hands over the top of  
the filling, so you have some  
larger and smaller chunks.  
Scatter with cheese and bake  
for 40 mins until the potatoes  
are crisp and the filling is  
bubbling around the edges.

## Cranberry, Sprout and Pecan Pilaf

### Ingredients

200g mixed basmati & wild rice,  
5 tbsp rapeseed or olive oil,  
1 large onion, finely sliced,  
thumb-sized piece ginger, peeled  
and cut into chunks,  
2 garlic cloves,  
small bunch coriander, stalks  
roughly chopped, leaves chilled  
for later,  
2 tsp ground cumin,  
2 tsp ground coriander,  
1 tsp turmeric,  
1 tsp ground cinnamon,  
½ tsp ground allspice,  
juice and zest 1 lemon,  
500g Brussels sprouts, half finely  
sliced, the rest halved through  
the stalk,  
100g pecans,  
100g fresh cranberries,  
50g dried cranberries,  
50g butter,  
natural yogurt, to serve.

### Method

1. Put the rice in a bowl, cover  
with cold water and leave  
to soak for 1 hr. Meanwhile,  
heat 2 tbsp oil in a large pan,  
add the onion and cook for  
10 mins, stirring now and  
then, until caramelised. While  
the onion cooks, whizz the  
ginger, garlic, coriander stalks,  
spices, lemon juice and zest

- to a paste in the small bowl  
of a food processor. Tip into  
the pan and fry for 5 mins  
more until aromatic. Scoop  
the paste and onion out of the  
pan and set aside, then heat 1  
tbsp more oil. Add the sliced  
sprouts and cook for 8-10  
mins, stirring, until softened.  
Add the paste back to the pan  
and cook everything together  
for 1 min more.
2. When the rice has had its  
soaking time, drain and tip  
into a pan, cover with fresh  
water and season with salt.  
Simmer for 5 mins until just  
softening, then drain.
  3. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/  
gas 6. Put the halved sprouts  
in a roasting tin with 1 tbsp  
oil and season well. Roast for  
20-25 mins, shaking the pan  
now and then, until the edges  
are starting to brown and the  
sprouts are tender.
  4. Meanwhile, mix the rice in the  
pan with the sliced sprouts,  
the onion and paste. Add the  
pecans and all the cranberries,  
season and mix well. Heat the  
butter and remaining oil in  
the pan you cooked the rice  
in, then tip in the rice mixture  
and flatten the surface. Poke  
3 steam holes in the rice with  
a wooden spoon, and turn  
the heat to almost its lowest  
setting. Cover the pan with a  
tea towel, then a lid, and cook  
for 20 mins until the rice is  
cooked through - if it is still a  
little firm to bite, re-cover and  
cook for a further 5 mins. To  
serve, tip the cooked rice onto  
a serving platter, mixing any  
crunchy bits from the bottom  
of the pan. Scatter over the  
roasted sprouts and coriander  
leaves, and serve with a pot of  
natural yogurt.

## Crunchy almond panettone French toast

### Ingredients

2 eggs,  
250ml milk,  
1 tsp ground cinnamon,  
3 clementines, 1 zested, 2 peeled  
and sliced horizontally,  
4 toast-sized slices panettone,  
about 2cm thick,  
50g flaked almonds,  
knob of butter,  
drizzle of flavourless oil, such as  
sunflower or vegetable,  
50g pomegranate seeds,  
maple syrup and Greek yogurt,  
to serve (optional).

### Method

1. In a wide, shallow bowl, whisk  
the eggs, milk, cinnamon  
and clementine zest. Add  
the sliced panettone to the  
mixture and leave to soak for  
5 mins, turning occasionally  
until all the liquid has been  
absorbed (alternatively you  
can wrap the bowl in cling film  
and chill overnight.)
2. Scatter the almonds over a  
plate and carefully dunk in the  
soaked panettone, pressing to  
help the almond flakes stick,  
then turn and stick more to  
the other side. Heat the butter  
and oil in a large frying pan  
(you may need to use two  
pans if the pieces are quite  
large.)
3. When the butter is bubbling,  
add the panettone and cook  
over a medium heat for 3-4  
mins each side until golden.  
Serve with pomegranate  
seeds, clementine slices, and  
maple syrup and yogurt, if  
you like.

## Mulled Wine

### Ingredients

2 x 75 cl bottles medium to  
full-bodied red wine (Bulgarian  
Cabernet Sauvignon is ideal),  
1 orange stuck with cloves,  
2 oranges, sliced,  
2 lemons, sliced,  
6 level tablespoons granulated  
sugar or honey,  
2 inch (5 cm) piece cinnamon  
stick,  
2 level teaspoons finely grated  
fresh root ginger or ground  
ginger,  
2 tablespoons fruit liqueur such  
as Cointreau, Grand Marnier or  
cherry brandy (optional).

### Method

Put all the ingredients in  
a saucepan with 2½ pints  
(1.5 litres) water and heat to  
simmering point, stirring until  
all the sugar has dissolved.  
Keep it barely at simmering  
point for at least 20 minutes –  
but do not boil or all the alcohol  
will evaporate. This can be made  
in advance, then re-heated just  
before the party. Serve it warm  
in half-pint mugs (in which case  
there will be 12 servings) or else  
in 24 sturdy wine glasses.

This recipe is from Delia's Happy  
Christmas

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# Netta Glover's report

## Test Alexa

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) has become the first local authority in the UK to launch a 'skill' for Amazon's voice-controlled Alexa.

The new skill enables residents who own an Alexa-enabled device to access selected information on the council and its services through simple voice commands. At the moment residents can ask for information such as: who are the political leaders of the council, council tax payment options, and what items can go in recycling bins. There is also the option to book assisted waste collections.

In the near future, AVDC plans to expand the skill's features by adding the ability for residents to report missed bins, and to check their council tax balances.

Councillor Janet Blake, Cabinet Member for Commercialisation and Business Transformation, said: *"The introduction of our Amazon skill is an exciting step forward in our strategy to make accessing our services easier and more convenient for residents. The ability to interact with us through voice-controlled Alexa will also be of significant benefit to residents with visual impairments."*

Find out more about AVDC's Alexa skill at: [www.amazon.co.uk/Aylesbury-Vale-District-Council-Self-Service/dp](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Aylesbury-Vale-District-Council-Self-Service/dp).

## Children's Services

We have a new Director of Children's Service. He is a very impressive individual who has immediately taken on the challenge of our imminent re-inspection of Children's Services by Ofsted. I am told it took him 10 months to improve his last council from poor to good in under 10 months of taking on the job. The interim director has done some excellent work so we are well on the way to getting a good report next time

## Food Waste

Residents may not be aware that their kerbside food collection is kept separate all the way to the food recycling facility. There it is processed to produce biogas - used to generate electricity - and a high-quality fertiliser used by farmers. Recycling food also saves money on disposal costs - last year more than £440,000 was spent in Bucks disposing of food that could have been recycled

## Fly Tipping

A passing motorist saw a male take a plastic bag out of his car and dump it on the ground at the side of the road. The motorist managed to get the car registration number of the offender and reported the incident to the police. Police attended and because they had the registration number were able to trace the dumper. The Magistrates imposed a fine of £784 and ordered him to

pay £600 towards prosecution costs, plus £78 in victim surcharge. The total to pay was therefore £1,462.

Since November 2003 the Waste Partnership for Buckinghamshire has secured over 610 convictions against individuals and companies for illegal dumping and related offences. This has resulted in a significant saving to the Buckinghamshire taxpayer over the period, principally through reduced removal and disposal costs.

Another one! Window fitter pays £2,700 after dumping his trade waste in Aylesbury industrial area.

If you see any dumped waste please report it as soon as possible online at [www.old.buckscc.gov.uk/fly](http://www.old.buckscc.gov.uk/fly)

## Winter Service Update

All BCC salt bins will be checked/ replenished during October/November. We have been capturing data as we visit each site plotting and recording the condition and content of each bin backed up with photographic evidence. A small number of replacements were deemed necessary this year mainly due to damage. Salt drops are no longer being carried out as this is not deemed to be environmentally good practice.

Further details regarding winter service are available on our website

[www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/road-maintenance-and-repairs/winter-maintenance/](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/road-maintenance-and-repairs/winter-maintenance/) or you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @tfbalerts.

## BCC Budget

People across Buckinghamshire are being asked to help the County Council make important spending decisions about next year's budget, in a consultation launched today (Wednesday 18 October). The online consultation, which runs until Sunday 19 November, aims to get local people involved in helping to decide on which areas of the Council's work future spending should be focused.

Noel Brown, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health, said the Council's services touched the lives of everyone in the county.

*"It's only right that we should want to ask residents to tell us what's important to them, to help us decide where to focus our finite funding, and I'd urge people to take part,"* said Noel. *"Allocating our budget gets more and more difficult each year, with pressure on our vital services to vulnerable older people and children. Difficult decisions lie ahead. There are things we have to do, which mean there are more limited choices about the things we'd like to do."*

The coming year, 2018/19, will be the first in which the Government gives Buckinghamshire nothing in revenue

support grant funding, putting further pressure on the budget. The amount the Government pays the County Council has fallen rapidly in the past few years, from £60.8m four years ago, to zero next year. Along with Dorset, Buckinghamshire will be the first county to receive no revenue support grant from Whitehall.

## £250m funding bid to support housing growth

The £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund, launched by the Government in July to unlock 100,000 new homes across the country, allows councils to bid for up to £250 million.

A bid for government forward funding to support growth around Aylesbury has been approved by Buckinghamshire County Council Cabinet. This enables the County Council to be one step ahead of housing developers with infrastructure before homes are built.

County Council Leader Martin Tett said: *"When it comes to housing growth, residents always ask where the supporting infrastructure is. Money from the Housing Infrastructure Fund would give us the means to build roads, schools, health provision and the like ahead of the housing."*

The County Council Forward Fund bid focuses on Aylesbury as the largest growth area in the county, with more than 15,000 new homes expected in the next 20 years.

If it succeeds, the bid would cover transport, roads, schools, power supply upgrading, flood mitigation, waste services, cycling and walking routes, and enable the council to buy land from different owners and package it together to speed the start of house building. It would enable progress to be made on some of the outer link roads that will eventually form an orbital route around Aylesbury.

And because the Government has made an explicit connection between the Housing Infrastructure Fund and newly-announced garden towns, Aylesbury's new Garden Town status is expected to weigh in favour of a bid. Moreover, Aylesbury sits within the Oxford to Cambridge growth corridor, a current area of interest for government through the National Infrastructure Commission.

The Government says its Forward F und is intended to support schemes that make more land available for housing in high-demand areas and pay for infrastructure to support it.

The County Council's Forward Bid, has the support of district councils and Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership.

Cllr Netta Glover

# watermead cygnets pre-school

**We welcomed our new intake of children at the start of the Autumn term at the beginning of September. We are delighted that they have all settled in so well and are enjoying all of the activities.**

We managed to take advantage of the good weather we had at the end of September and early October; the children had a great time in the Cygnets garden and they took part in our Autumn walk to collect conkers, acorns and fir cones.

Our learning theme this term is "All about me". The children have been learning about themselves eg their senses, their bodies and about healthy eating. Some of the activities the children have done are painting their portrait, looking at their skin, eye and hair colour. We did a smell test of things in a pot and the children had to guess the contents. Coffee was a smell they recognised.

Families play a huge part in the early stages of a young person's life and we feel it is important the children learn all about their homes and families especially when it comes to helping Mummy and Daddy! We spent some time discussing their family members and drawing and painting them.

October always includes the Harvest Festival. We taught the children all about different types of food and the importance of ensuring that everyone has a healthy diet. Our Harvest Festival took place on Tuesday 17th October and we would like to thank everyone who donated food to the Aylesbury Vineyard Storehouse which distributes free food, clothing and furniture to families.

The Watermead Inn held a Halloween party for many children who all enjoyed the party! We would like to say a big THANK YOU to Kelvin and Nikki Wong for the donations given to us; £271 was raised. This will go towards the end of term trip to Zoomania.

We are looking forward to next term when we will be learning about the forthcoming festivals such as Guy Fawkes/bonfire night, Diwali and Christmas. The children will make rockets and firework pictures using fern leaves and spaghetti. For Diwali the children will make Diva lamps made of clay and learn about the story of Rama and Sita. Christmas activities will include making cards, bags and tree decorations as well learning songs and practising for the Christmas play.

We will also be setting the children a "Nursery Rhyme Challenge" where the children will learn 10 new rhymes to recite at our sing-off on Friday 10th November. This helps with early reading skills and, of course, language development.

Other activities taking place this term are:

- Parent's consultations on Tuesday 21st November.
- Children in Need is scheduled for 17th November when the children will dress up and will be collecting donations.
- Tuesday 15th December – trip to Zoomania
- Friday 8th December - Parent and Staff Christmas evening

- Tuesday 12th December – Christmas Play

Cygnets accepts children from 2½ years to 5 years old. We open from 8.30am to 1.30pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and from 8.30 to 12.30pm on Tuesdays for all 3 to 4 year olds. We take 2½ year olds between 9 and 12 pm.

If you would like your child to attend Cygnets, please visit us and ask to be added onto our waiting list. To avoid disappointment please call to speak with Maree on 07563 783464.

The Cygnets Team







# Watermead Carol Concert

Saturday 9th December 2017  
from 6pm, The Piazza

6 pm Welcome by Sue Severn, Chairman of Watermead Parish Council

O Come all ye Faithful

As with gladness men of old

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Children to gather near the stage - Rev Mark Ackford address

Children to sing Away in a Manger

Safe Sax Band will play a tune to welcome Father Christmas

While Shepherds watched their flocks by night

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

Good King Wenceslas

It came upon the midnight clear

God rest you merry, gentlemen

Sue Severn – thanks and finale

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MULLED WINE AND A MINCE PIE  
DONATIONS TO ‘LINDENGATE’

WISHING YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
from Watermead Parish Council

## O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
Come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem  
Come and behold Him, born the King of  
Angels  
*O come, let us adore Him*  
*O come, let us adore Him*  
*O come, let us adore Him*  
*Christ the Lord!*

God of God, Light of Light  
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God, begotten, not created  
*O come, let us adore Him,...*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above  
Glory to God in the highest  
*O come, let us adore Him,...*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this  
happy morning  
Jesus, to Thee be glory given  
Word of the Father. now in flesh appearing  
*O come, let us adore Him,...*

## AS WITH GLADNESS MEN OF OLD

As with gladness, men of old  
Did the guiding star behold  
As with joy they hailed its light  
Leading onward, beaming bright  
So, most glorious Lord, may we  
Evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped  
Saviour, to Thy lowly bed  
There to bend the knee before  
Him Whom Heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare  
At Thy cradle rude and bare;  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day  
Keep us in the narrow way;  
And, when earthly things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright,  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its Light, its Joy, its Crown,  
Thou its Sun which goes not down;  
There forever may we sing  
Alleluias to our King!

## O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless  
sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the  
years  
Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the King  
And peace to all on earth.  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
And, gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels  
keep  
Their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming  
But in this world of sin  
Where meek souls will receive  
Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.

O Hold Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel.

## AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed  
The little Lord Jesus laid down  
His sweet head  
The stars in the bright sky looked  
down where He lay  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on  
the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby  
awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying  
he makes,  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look  
down from the sky  
And stay by my side until  
morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask  
Thee to stay  
Close by me for ever, and love  
me, I pray  
Bless all the dear children in Thy  
tender care  
And fit us for heaven to live with  
Thee there.

## WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

While shepherds watched their  
flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The Angel of the Lord came down  
And glory shone around.

‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty  
dread  
Had seized their troubled minds).  
‘Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

‘To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line  
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord  
And this shall be the sign:

‘The heavenly Babe you there  
shall find  
To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in  
swaddling bands  
And in a manger laid.’

Thus spake the Seraph,  
and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
Addressed their joyful song:

‘All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;  
Goodwill henceforth from heaven  
to men  
Begin and never cease.

## ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT ALL CHRISTIANS SING

On Christmas night all  
Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring  
On Christmas night all Christians  
sing  
To hear the news the angels bring  
News of great joy, news of great  
mirth  
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should we on earth be  
so sad  
Since our Redeemer made us glad  
Then why should we on earth be  
so sad  
Since our Redeemer made us glad  
When from our sin He set us free  
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before His grace  
Then life and health come in its  
place;  
When sin departs before His grace  
Then life and health come in its  
place  
Angels and we with joy may sing  
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light  
Which made the angels sing this  
night  
All out of darkness we have light  
Which made the angels sing this  
night  
‘Glory to God and peace to men,  
Now and for evermore, Amen.

## GOOD KING WENCESLAS

Good King Wenceslas looked  
out  
On the feast of Stephen  
When the snow lay round about  
Deep and crisp and even;  
Brightly shone the moon that  
night  
Though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight  
Gathering winter fuel.

‘Hither, page, and stand by me  
If thou know'st it telling,  
Yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?  
‘Sire, he lives a good league  
hence,  
Underneath the mountain,  
Right against the forest fence  
By St Agnes' fountain’.

‘Bring me flesh and bring me  
wine  
Bring me pine logs hither;  
Thou and I will see him dine  
When we bear them thither.’  
Page and monarch, forth they  
went  
Forth they went together  
Through the rude wind's wild  
lament  
And the bitter weather.

‘Sire, the night is darker now  
And the wind blows stronger  
Fails my heart, I know not how;  
I can go no longer.’  
‘Mark my footsteps, good my  
page,  
Tread thou in them boldly  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly.’

In his master's steps he trod  
Where the snow lay dinted  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christians all, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing.  
Ye who now will bless the poor  
Shall yourselves find blessing.

## IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the  
earth,  
To touch their harps of gold;  
‘Peace on earth, goodwill to men,  
From heaven's all-gracious King!’  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies  
they come,  
With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heavenly music  
floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lonely plains  
They bend on heavenly wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

Yet, with the woes of sin and  
strife,  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angels' strain have  
rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
The man, at war with man,  
hears not  
The love-song which they bring:  
Oh, hush the noise, ye men  
of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When, with the ever circling  
years,  
Comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the  
earth  
Its ancient splendours fling,  
And the whole world send back  
the song  
Which now the angels sing!

## GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN

God rest you merry, gentlemen  
Let nothing you dismay  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born upon this day,  
To save us all from Satan's  
power  
When we were gone astray:

O, tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy  
O, tidings of comfort and joy

At Bethlehem in Judah  
The holy Babe was born;  
They laid Him in a manger  
On this most happy morn:  
At which His mother Mary  
Did neither fear nor scorn:  
O, tidings of comfort and joy ...

From God our heavenly Father  
A holy angel came;  
The shepherds saw the glory  
And heard the voice proclaim  
That Christ was born in  
Bethlehem  
And Jesus is His name:  
O, tidings of comfort and joy ...

Fear not, then said the angel,  
Let nothing cause you fright;  
To you is born a Saviour  
In David's town tonight,  
To free all those who trust in  
Him  
From Satan's power and might:  
O, tidings of comfort and joy ...

The shepherds at these tidings  
Rejoiced in heart and mind,  
And on the darkened hillside  
They left their flocks behind,  
And went to Bethlehem  
straightway  
This holy Child to find:  
O, tidings of comfort and joy ...

And when to Bethlehem they  
came  
Where Christ the infant lay:  
They found Him in a manger  
Where oxen feed on hay,  
And there beside her newborn  
Child  
His mother knelt to pray:  
O, tidings of comfort and joy ...

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All people in this place!  
With Christian love and  
fellowship  
Each other now embrace,  
And let this Christmas festival  
All bitterness displace:  
*O, tidings of comfort and joy ...*

## HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim  
Christ is born in Bethlehem  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.

Christ, by highest heaven adored  
Christ, the everlasting Lord  
Late in time behold Him come  
Offspring of a Virgin's womb!  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!  
Hail, the Incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to  
dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark, the heral d angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.

Hail, the Heaven-born Prince of  
Peace!  
Hail, the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Risen with healing in His wings.  
Mild, he lays His glory by  
Born that we no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth  
Born to give them second birth.  
Hark, the herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.



# Potential hazards for cats and dogs at Christmas time

**The festive season is a time for celebration, often over-indulgence, and having a house full of friends and family. In all the ensuing chaos it is important that we keep an eye on our pets and what they have access to.** There are some obvious hazards and toxins around at this time of year, but also a few you may not know about:

**Chocolate:** This includes any cakes, sweets and Christmas tree decorations. The darker the chocolate the more toxic it is.

**Sweets:** Many contain the artificial sweetener xylitol which can interfere with blood glucose levels.

**Antifreeze:** Often tastes sweet and is therefore tempting. Toxic to both dogs and cats, but has a higher fatality rate in cats.

**Alcohol:** Apart from drinks, ethanol can also be found as a component of mouthwashes and perfumes. It is very rapidly absorbed.

**Grapes and their derivatives:** Raisins, currants and sultanas can be found in plenty of festive foods including Christmas cake and mince pies. There is no correlation between the amount eaten and the severity of any symptoms. Some dogs seem more susceptible than others.

**Onions, garlic:** Can cause anaemia. Both leaves and bulbs can cause a problem.

**Macadamia nuts:** Either raw, in cakes and biscuits, or as a butter. Causes a range of symptoms which are not usually severe.

**Mouldy food:** Can contain toxins that have neurological effects. Symptoms can be severe.

**Lilies:** All parts of the plant are toxic to cats, including any pollen groomed from the fur. Can cause kidney failure if treatment is not started early.

**Painkillers:** Paracetamol is extremely toxic to cats, and prompt treatment is required. Prognosis is guarded. Other anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen can be toxic to both dogs and cats.

**Bones:** Great care must be taken with bones as they can cause tummy upsets and blockages. It is safer not to feed them at all.

Other seasonal items can cause milder symptoms that may or may not require a trip to the vet. A few examples are poinsettia (causes gut irritation but is usually self-limiting); holly (leaves and berries are irritants but severe poisoning is rare); mistletoe (low toxicity but can cause tummy upsets); glowsticks (the liquid inside has an unpleasant taste and can cause transient vomiting or frothing at the mouth).

It is also important to bear in mind that Christmas decorations and toys can sometimes be tempting to our pets and may cause blockages.

These are a few examples of potentially hazardous seasonal items, but there are many others. The Veterinary Poisons Information Service recently launched the Animal Poison Line, a telephone service for owners. If you are concerned your pet may have eaten something toxic, advisors will tell you whether or not you should contact your vet. They cannot give out veterinary advice, but for a £20 minimum charge they may be able to give peace of mind. If a vet consultation is recommended we may still need to contact them for advice on management.

The Animal Poison Line number is 01202 509000 and the website is [www.animalpoisonline.co.uk](http://www.animalpoisonline.co.uk). A happy and healthy Christmas can be enjoyed by the whole family as long as we are aware of potential hazards.

*This information is given by Anna Leach at Hampden Veterinary Hospital. For any information or advice about your pets contact: 01296 745373 or call in to see them in The Piazza or in Aylesbury.*

# Our beautiful wildlife



## Black Swan

On 21st September 2017 Vanessa Gaeta posted a video of a black swan on our lake on Facebook. While writing this article at the beginning of November it is still here. We reported in the Spring issue of Village View that a black swan had had to be rescued because it was being attacked by our resident white swans; it was taken to the swan sanctuary in Shepperton. Could he/she have returned?

Sightings of black swans have become reasonably common in the UK. They have similar habitat requirements to mute swans and are often found in the same areas. Black swans are native to Australia and are the state bird of Western Australia. They were brought to the UK as ornamental birds like peacocks and golden pheasants. Like many other captive birds, they occasionally find their way out into the wild.

They are similar in size to the closely related mute swan. They appear all black when swimming but they have white

primary wing feathers, which can be seen in flight. The bill is red with a broad white band on the tip.

Black swans were also introduced to New Zealand where a feral breeding population has become well established. The New Zealand population increased dramatically because they faced very little competition or predation. There have been occasional reports of successful breeding attempts in the UK but they have not become established. They face competition from our native swans so it is unlikely they could become as well established here as they have in New Zealand.

## Ring-necked Parakeet

Graham Howse posted this lovely photo after spotting two ring-necked parakeets in his garden in Watermead on 16th September. Gina Whittaker also saw one in her garden on the same day.

The UK's only naturalised parrot - it is large, long-tailed and green with a red beak and a pink and black ring around its face and neck. In flight it has pointed wings, a long tail and very steady, direct flight. Often found in flocks, numbering hundreds at a roost site, it can be very noisy.

Read more at [www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides)

## Be there spiders?

I have been fascinated this autumn at the number of spiders making webs in my garden - big fat ones! I think they were Orb Weaver Spiders like the one pictured here. Spiders are present in the garden all year, but are more frequently seen in late summer and autumn. This is when some of the more common species are fully grown and can be found in their webs.

Also visible in autumn is the drifting gossamer produced by dispersing baby spiders, abundant enough to be seen on plants and other objects. The process is known as ballooning. The spiders climb to high points on plants or fences and produce silk threads that act like a sail, allowing the wind to carry the tiny spiders long distances.



I found this photo of spider webs which had been posted on the All About Watermead Facebook group by Pamela Brown at the end of October - spooky as it was Halloween!

The Editor

## Ducks still need feeding in the winter

We have written on several occasions about not feeding bread, chips, etc to our ducks, swans and other wild birds as they offer little nutritional value to them and also makes it harder for them to fly and get out of the way of predators because they become too fat! Duck food is available from both the Watermead Inn and WM news. A pint-sized carton of duck food costs £1 from the Watermead Inn and you are asked to return the carton so that it can be recycled.

Sales of duck food from the Watermead Inn raised £80 in October which has been donated to the Smiles charity.



*This photo was taken in Graham Howse's garden. Another was spotted by Gina Whittaker on the same day in September.*



*Be there spiders! Photo taken by Pamela Brown*

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## Sally's blog

Sally the spaniel says she's sorry but she is taking a break for this edition because the human who helps her with her BLOG is working on the crematorium planning objections. | She will be back in the spring and wishes everyone a very happy Christmas. See you at the Christmas Fair!





# Lions Club International

**L**ions Club International is celebrating its Centenary this year. That's 100 years of making donations worldwide to the poor and needy, those hit by famine, hurricanes and floods together with health immunisation projects. Aylesbury Lions Club is part of this organisation and is about to celebrate its 40th Anniversary. It is a small friendly mixed club which is financed from members' contributions which means that all funds raised are donated to good causes. Each year The Lions Club raises over £5,000 from various fundraising activities. This money is then donated to good causes most of which are local with a small proportion being given to Lions Club International for their relief projects.

The fundraising events are good fun and are held throughout the year. Our next one is a food can collection to raise money for Christmas parcels which we distribute locally. Our community involvement is varied and we will once again be in the Market Square providing roast chestnuts as part of the town's celebrations leading up to Christmas.

We endeavour to hold a number of social events during the year and recently held a tenpin bowling evening with colleagues from Thame Lions.

We would like to recruit new members to help us maintain and hopefully increase our fundraising efforts. You can find out more by visiting our web site [www.aylesburylions.org.uk](http://www.aylesburylions.org.uk) or by calling Ron Syrratt on 01296 484492. You are also welcome to come along to one of our meetings at the Aylesbury Town Council Chamber, Church Street, Aylesbury on the first Wednesday of the month at 8pm.

Ron Syrratt, President Aylesbury Lions

# Tree of Light commemorations open to all in the community

**C**hristmas can be a very hard time for those who have lost loved ones at this time of year. It can be hard to prepare to celebrate Christmas without feeling guilty or sad, or simply missing their presence at this special time of year. The Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity Tree of Light commemorations are open to anyone in the community who is grieving for friends and family members, or for whom this time of year re-awakens past emotions, regardless of whether their loved ones were cared for by the Hospice.

*"You spend that time remembering and you can cry and grieve a bit and you feel you've honoured the relatives and now you can enjoy Christmas, which is probably hard for everybody,"* says Sue Merrison, whose husband Ron went into the Hospice just before Christmas and who died at home a few days later, cared for by the 24/7 Nightingale Team. *The Tree of Light gives you that chance: no matter how many times you go, you know that every year around Christmas you go and do the Tree of Light so you feel you've done something, by doing that you are still supporting the Hospice nurses,"* says Sue.

To support the Hospice, people can sponsor a light to honour someone special and write a dedication or tribute to them to appear in the Books of Honour which can be viewed at the Hospice in December and early January, and at the two Tree of Light events. Everyone who dedicates a light can choose to receive a personal card of acknowledgment and have their loved one's name listed in the Tree of Light commemoration in the Bucks Herald in December.

The first Tree of Light event will take place at the Head Office of Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity at Walton Lodge, Walton Street, Aylesbury, on Sunday 3rd December at 5pm. The second will take place at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Buckingham on Saturday 9th December at 4pm.

To sponsor a light in memory of someone, please call our Fundraising Team on 01296 429 975. To request a Tree of Light Form or find out more at [www.fnhospice.org.uk/tree-of-light-2017](http://www.fnhospice.org.uk/tree-of-light-2017)



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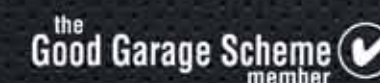
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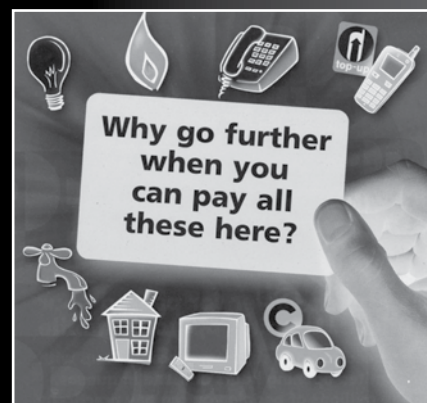
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## Watermead & Weedon WI

**This is the part of the year when a WI Secretary is required to look back over the year and report to the membership on what has happened during that year.** It always seems a rather superfluous task since most of the members were at the events, experiencing them with the Secretary and other Committee members. That said, it is sometimes interesting to remind ourselves of all that we achieve in a year and the little things that we might have forgotten.

This year, I have reminded my fellow members that once again, we have had some diverse experiences at our meetings. During our anniversary year, we have reminisced about holidays we remember; we heard about one of our members who roamed through Europe with her husband on the back of a motor scooter in the early 70's. We learnt more about where the Romans lived and worked in Bucks and what they contributed to our lives. We raised money for two very worthy charities and learned more about a healthy lifestyle to combat Diabetes. Our anniversary party in August has already been described in the Autumn issue of Village View complete with pictures. Almost all of us were able to share in that event and had a really lovely afternoon. Any excuse for a good party!

We have also managed to get out and about. We have visited Stonor House, Alexandra Palace and Wimpole Hall during the year and have had the pleasure of the company of WI members from other groups. Although two of the three outings

involved craft fairs, it is fair to say that each outing had a character of its own and involved the opportunity to see important buildings and architecture as well as seeing beautiful craft work.

A WI Committee can never rest however. We are now at the point where we put together a programme for next year. 2018 will be the year in which we celebrate 100 years of women having the vote, even though initially it was only for some women over the age of 30. WWWI will be planning something to mark that historic occasion in March, probably a talk by a woman in our local area who has made a difference. 11th to 15th June 2018 will be Healthy Living and Well Being week so we shall arrange a meeting to focus our minds on healthy living. We are working on an evening involving some aromatherapy at present. Two down and ten to go! Add in the usual summer lunch, some food tasting and at least one outing and our programme is beginning to take shape.

In the previous edition of Village View you will have heard from one of our members how she joined WI for the first time – and stayed. If you are thinking that 2018 might be the year you join WI, we meet in Watermead Village Hall on the first Thursday of each month with the exception of August when we meet for lunch in a local restaurant and, if there is an election in May, on the second Thursday as the village hall is used for voting. Visitors and prospective members are welcome at all our meetings and contact details for Committee members are available under What's On on page 08. We look forward to seeing you!

Julia Morgan

## New Year's Eve at the Watermead Inn

Come along to the Watermead Inn on Sunday 31st December 2017 and see in the New Year with live music by Ed Cusick. Doors open at 7 pm. You can pre-book tickets for £15 or buy tickets at the door for £20 which includes a glass of bubbly and a buffet which will be served from 9 pm. Alternatively you can book a table for a 'set menu' dinner by calling 01296 433123.

Ed Cusick is a professional guitarist, singer and songwriter. He has recorded many sessions and performed to audiences all around the world, touring as a solo artist, duo and trio but also featuring on guitar and vocals for many other great bands including Todd Miller and The Joe Loss Orchestra. See more at [www.edcusick.co.uk](http://www.edcusick.co.uk)

## Places to eat

**Here are some more good places to eat that have been recommended in and around Aylesbury:**

**Temple Street Wine Bar:** Open Table Diner's Choice award 2016. They boast delicious food, fine wines and excellent cocktails which are borne out by the comments made online. A good place to eat before theatre or the cinema. This place has also been recommended by our Parish Clerk, Noreen!  
7 Temple Street, Aylesbury, HP20 2RN  
[www.templestreetwinebar.co.uk](http://www.templestreetwinebar.co.uk)

**The Broad Leys:** A contemporary space with an historic atmosphere, this award winning pub and restaurant also offers boutique style accommodation. High quality food is produced using fresh ingredients from local suppliers. Highly recommended.

## Makes you think!

- If you attempt to rob a bank you won't have any trouble with rent/food bills for the next 10 years, whether or not you are successful.
- Do twins ever realize that one of them was unplanned?
- What if my dog only brings back my ball because he thinks I like throwing it?
- If poison expires, is it more poisonous or is it no longer poisonous?
- Which letter is silent in the word "Scent," the S or the C?
- Why is the letter W, in English, called double U? Shouldn't it be called double V?
- Maybe oxygen is slowly killing you and it just takes 75-100 years to fully work.
- Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.
- The word "swims" upside-down is still "swims."
- Intentionally losing a game of rock, paper, scissors is just as hard as trying to win.
- 100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars. Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.
- Your future self is watching you right now through memories.
- The doctors that told Stephen Hawking he had two years to live in 1953 are probably dead.
- If you replace "W" with "T" in "What, Where and When", you get the answer to each of them.
- Many animals probably need glasses, but nobody knows it.
- If you rip a hole in a net, there are actually fewer holes in it than there were before.
- If 2/2/22 falls on a Tuesday, we'll just call it "2's Day." (It does fall on a Tuesday that year).

8 Wendover Road, Aylesbury, HP21 9LB  
[www.thebroadleys.co.uk](http://www.thebroadleys.co.uk)

**The Crown Pub & Restaurant:** There's lots going on at The Crown and they serve excellent food too – delicious and affordable pub grub as well as Sunday roasts and seasonal specialities. Their restaurant is closed on Mondays but snacks are available in their cosy bar.  
Winslow Road, Granborough,  
Buckingham MK18 3NJ  
[www.thecrowngranborough.co.uk](http://www.thecrowngranborough.co.uk)

We are a little strapped for space in this issue so that's it for now. Please keep sharing your good experiences of eating places you have enjoyed. Contact the Editor at [mary.singleton@watermead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:mary.singleton@watermead-pc.gov.uk)



# News

## Watermead allotments



**I visited the allotment site in the company of Peter Smith on 19th August.** As many will know I have a longstanding interest in growing vegetables and in the past had had my own allotment at two different sites in Aylesbury. As a Parish Councillor I helped to set up our Watermead Allotments in 2012.

Once again I was impressed by what has been achieved given the fact that this was never an ideal piece of land for allotments and there were large numbers of longstanding weeds. The most successful plots have used plastic sheet ground cover to suppress weeds and/or raised beds to bring in improved soil. These solutions are practical rather than very beautiful and so whilst taking the overall appearance into consideration I concentrated on the variety and quality of the crops.

Last year's winners remain in good shape but I was specifically asked to exclude them from this year's judging. There were several other excellent plots and I found it very difficult to choose between them. Another major difficulty was the fact that despite it being a requirement of the tenancy many holders have not numbered their plot.

**The Winner - Plot 34 Gail Lisok (below)**

After going round several times I decided that this year's winner by the narrowest of margins was Plot 34 which has a lovely variety of healthy crops set off by two jauntily painted blue sheds.

**Runner Up - Plot 51 Katarzyna Szydio (top)**

In second place by a whisker was plot 51 which also contained a good variety of lovely clean crops.

However as I have said the choice was difficult and the second image is another example of excellent work.

*Cllr Eric Rose*

# Book

## Review

### Emily Elgar 'If you Knew Her'

**Newly-wed and newly pregnant Cassie is in Intensive Care in a Brighton hospital after a hit-and-run accident on a country lane.**

Watching her are Alice, the senior nurse in ICU, pregnant herself after many miscarriages, and Frank, an alcoholic stroke patient with Locked-In-Syndrome – he can see and hear but is as powerless as the comatose Cassie. Somebody is arrested for the hit-and-run but Alice and Frank think the police have got the wrong man and Cassie's accident was not an accident. She and her baby may still be in danger ...

This 'woman-in-peril' story inevitably calls to mind 2012's *Gone Girl*, which,

with its unlikable protagonists, made for an unsettling movie. I was also reminded of Robin Cook's *Coma* (1977), the 'granddaddy' of the medical thriller. If you knew her is written from three viewpoints (Alice and Frank in the present, Cassie in the recent past) but all three are written in the present tense, which I'm never comfortable with. There's a lot of grief and perhaps too many miscarriages, but the pace and the tension are neatly tightened. This is a promising debut which would make a nail-biting movie (I hope, for Emily's bank manager's sake, that it does!).

*David Gee*



### Vanessa Wiggins 'The Colour of Secrets'

**I returned recently from the 1950s – 1957 to 1960 to be exact. And also from 1975, but that visit was rather more brief, although more colourful but not nearly as much fun or with so many freedoms. So why, or indeed how, was all this possible? Well, I wrote a novel.**

It was never intended to be a novel. It began as a short story – a writing exercise and a way of idling away a long summer's afternoon, but without the actual idling. What it ended up as was a much longer tale, and it took rather more than an afternoon to write – almost as many years as the story itself spans in fact.

Writing a novel wasn't something I thought I'd achieve. I liked the idea of doing it, as many people do, but it's a big commitment in time and with uncertain outcomes. Also, as I discovered, it can be a rather solitary and often very frustrating experience. However, it had an unexpected side-effect. I found myself living in a world of my own imagination, one that to be brutally honest doesn't exist at all, but which felt very real indeed at the time.

It may be my age (it probably is ...), but I'd say there's nothing quite like the late 1950s; sufficiently after WWII for life to have returned to some prosperity, but also long enough ago for there still to be a tangible link to earlier, simpler times – and also for a veneer of innocence. At least that's how I recall it, but then I am a child of the 50s.

It was west London where I grew up, and where my parents came from, not Buckinghamshire at all. We lived in John Betjeman's Metroland, an area of north west London's outer suburbs, built to resemble an idea of the countryside in the town, but Aylesbury Vale was where many of my aunts and uncles lived, and my father had spent several boyhood summers in Quanton. He was the youngest of 12 and never really knew the family connection to the Vale. I daresay my grandmother had got tired of repeating it after so many offspring, but Quanton was where her family came from and relatives still lived there in the early twentieth century.

I live not far from Quanton myself now, a kind of family full-circle, and feel entirely at home in the countryside of north Buckinghamshire and its lovely hill-top villages.

A fictionalised version of Quanton and the Vale forms the setting for my story and while writing it I continually found myself seeing the world, not as it is, but as my imaginings made it. So I walked around seeing shops where there aren't shops, pubs where there are no longer pubs, footpaths and ponds where none are – and even, sometimes, actual people who don't even exist! I worried for their futures, mused at their escapades and felt sad at their misfortunes. They really did feel real, and so did the world they inhabited.

After tentatively sharing my writings with friends who encouraged and cajoled, I sought out a professional editor/publisher. Finally now, my story is published, as a debut novel. I can actually call myself an author (well, sort of...!).

The novel is called 'The Colour of Secrets' and is a poignant coming-of-age story. It's set mostly in the late 1950s, a time of innocence and freedoms, but with an undercurrent of gathering disquiet, and a central mystery. It follows a group of children, from whose point of view the lives of the adults are seen, but only half-understood. The atmosphere is nostalgic, but slowly reveals the secrets and complexities of the world around the central characters.

Growing up in an English shires village in the late 1950s, Robbie Bradbury and his friends enjoy a carefree childhood. One summer, into their midst comes a wild and burdened child from London, who touches all their lives and yet remains an enigma.

Against the quiet order of their rural upbringing, the six friends slowly uncover the complexities and tragedies that underlie the seemingly calm and ordered world they inhabit.

Fifteen years later, as adults, two of the friends meet by chance and set out to track down their strange childhood playmate.

Why is it called 'The Colour of Secrets'? Well, you'll have to read it to find out!

*Vanessa Wiggins*

Available from Amazon – in paperback (£11.99) or ebook (£2.60).



# Random creature

**A**t the beginning of October something strange happened in my garden at lunchtime. I'd only hung out one article on the washing line when I was joined by a bird; slightly smaller than a pigeon and much more beautiful. It looked me directly in the eye. I said 'hello' and it started to peck at the pegs and the pillow slip on the line. I assumed it must be hungry to be pecking at things that were clearly not food. I rushed into the kitchen, where the only thing immediately available was a panettone (destined to be made into a pudding but already half eaten by me with lashings of butter). I grabbed a handful and returned to the garden. The bird was nowhere to be seen, but as soon as I held out my hand it re-appeared and landed on my arm and fed from my palm. Then it started to stuff bits of panettone into any little crevice it could find in the frame of my rotary washing line and even the pegs themselves.

I returned to the kitchen for more panettone and we went through the procedure again.

I went indoors and tried to identify the bird from my Collins Book of British Birds, but to no avail. Every time I went into the garden it would come down to me from the fence and eat out of my hand.

I logged on to the RSPB website, which has a section where you can enter characteristics of an unknown bird to identify it. My new friend was a Jay. It eats nuts. I had a packet of mixed nuts in the cupboard so I crushed them up and carried on with the hand feeding process. Anything I left on the ground went untouched.

After a while I thought 'This won't do, I've got things I should be getting on with.'

A short while later I was cleaning in my shower room when my new friend landed on the window ledge and started tapping on the window with its beak – resulting in another trip into the garden for some more hand feeding before returning to my chores.

I had put some of my washing in the tumble dryer in the garage and at some point went to bring it in. As I re-entered the conservatory with my basket of laundry there was the Jay, looking at me from the top of the piano. It hopped around from piano to lamp to window ledge and back to the piano, knocking down piles of papers in the process, while I tried to encourage it back into the garden. I picked up a tea-towel from the laundry I had just collected and threw it over the Jay to calm it and enable me to pick it up. (I must have read about that somewhere and stored it at the back of my mind in case it should ever come in useful.) I then easily returned it to the garden.

I decided to get some advice. I telephoned the RSPB and told my story to a very helpful gentleman. He assured me that this is very unusual behaviour from a Jay; it should be scared of humans. He said that if it had been taken from the wild and kept as a pet that would be unlawful, but if it was reared in captivity that's okay. He gave me some advice about its possible vulnerability and potential for feeding it. He ended up saying 'I wouldn't recommend continuing to feed it with panettone.'

A little while later my next door neighbour arrived home. She is

a diligent supporter of the local birdlife and has birdfeeders in her garden. I told her my tale and she gave me some proper bird food and a feeder as well.

I introduced the Jay to the seeds and feeder, but it wasn't interested in the feeder and continued to feed from my hand. This went on until about 5 o'clock when I was expecting a visit from a plumber (a much rarer species than a Jay) so I had to remain indoors.

On my last trip to the garden to bring the washing in it was getting dark, but the jay was still there and flew down to greet me.

I felt honoured to have had such close contact with such a beautiful creature and was sorely disappointed when he didn't appear the next day. Several people that I have told this story to have suggested that it might have been a reincarnation of somebody that I had known, but I think I prefer the RSPB man's explanation that it must have been kept as a pet.

So; did anyone lose a jay at the beginning of October – and if so did it ever find its way home again? I would love there to be a happy ending.

*Carolynne McKee*

PS Last year a fox came into my house at about 10 o'clock at night when I left the front door open while I fetched more water while watering the flower pots outside. It ran out as soon as it saw me, but stayed on my path watching me watering and looking quite forlorn. I hope I am not morphing into some sort of Dr Doolittle character.



# Father Christmas or Santa Claus?

**What name do you call the bearer of gifts in your household? And what does he look like? One must be asleep for him to deliver one's presents on Christmas Eve, so you may not realise that he has had a range of costumes over the years.**

Father Christmas is as old as Europe. Once people believed he was the god of magic, Woden, from Anglo Saxon and Germanic myth, lashing his eight legged, white steed through the darkness of northern midwinter; it was not until later that he upgraded to a team of reindeer. Father Christmas was an enormous, imposing figure in this guise, swathed in dark furs, massively bearded, dropping from the sky into the midwinter revelries dispensing peace, goodwill and, of course, presents.

It turned out, though, that Father Christmas was not necessarily as fond of cold winters as we might imagine him to be. In fact, he seemed to like to holiday in sunnier climes - Turkey, to be precise - and his name was not Woden but Nicholas.

While in Turkey in the early 4th century, Nicholas became bishop of the city of Myra, where he was much loved and well known for his care of the poor and dispossessed. He once revived some schoolboys cruelly

killed by a cannibalistic butcher, who had placed their bodies in a barrel to cure. And he famously rescued three young women from a life on the streets by giving their poverty-stricken father three bags of gold, which he used to pay their dowries. Nicholas wished to spare the father any humiliation, so he used his Santa skills to drop the three bags into the house secretly, under cover of night. Unsurprisingly, after retirement from his episcopal duties the Church made him a saint; Saint Nicholas, or 'Santa Claus' as the Dutch pronounced it.

As for his costume, in the Low Countries he is still depicted in red cope and mitre, as befits a bishop. More commonly in the rest of the world, he is bedecked in the fur-cuffed, scarlet outfit first hinted at in the 19th century by the American writer Clement Clarke Moore in his poem 'Twas the Night before Christmas'. Coca-Cola is sometimes, erroneously, given the credit for this change in Santa's look; the company did, however, make it popular worldwide.

Let us this Christmas take a leaf from Saint Nicholas' book and instead of three bags of gold let us show our generosity by dropping a few extra things into our Christmas shopping trolley for those who are less fortunate than us by supporting the

Aylesbury foodstore, the local foodbank of which St James Church is one of its local collection points. Your donations can be left in the collection box in church or when the church is closed in the collection box in the Vicarage porch.

Full information on our services during Advent and Christmas can be found on our parish website: [www.biertonhulcottchurches.org](http://www.biertonhulcottchurches.org), please come along and join us as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child and to finish at this most blessed time of the year, a quote from the man himself: 'Happy Christmas to all and to all a good night'.

*Revd Mark Ackford, Vicar of the Parish of Berton and Hulcott*

## Answers to Tea Break Quiz on page 04

1. Jeux sans Frontieres, 2. The Falklands, War, 3. Photosynthesis, 4. None, 5. The Casual Vacancy, 6. They all appear on Bank of England banknotes, 7. 13, 8. Oregano, 9. Father Ted, 10. The Stig (On Top Gear), 11. Jayne Torville and Christopher Dean, 12. 1912, 13. James I, 14. Dutch, 15. Andorra, 16. ENT dept (ear, nose and throat), 17. Pangram, 18. A pig, 19. Horses, 20. Carousel.



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Ping!

A text.  
'We're leaving now. See you in a couple of hours.'  
'See you' was just two letters. C and U. That sort of thing really irritated Gloria. Her texts had full words and proper punctuation.  
She stood in the centre of the living room and scanned it from floor to ceiling.  
'Where did you come from?' she asked a long legged spider, who had ensconced itself at the corner of the ceiling.  
'I'm sorry but you'll have to go.'  
She fetched a stool and an empty yoghurt pot to catch the spider and remove him safely to the garden.  
A couple of hours to kill. Gloria was ready now. What could she do in a couple of hours that would not make her un-ready. She wasn't one for sitting doing nothing, television or reading, she liked to be productive.  
She plumped and rearranged the cushions on the settees. She closely examined the pictures on the wall, adjusting to make sure that they were perfectly straight.  
She wandered into the kitchen – a tray with cups and saucers was set out ready. She took a tea-towel and wiped each of the already immaculate cups, making sure to replace them with the handles all facing the same way.  
Ping!  
Another text.  
'Do you want me to bring anything? We could stop at Waitrose on the way.'  
Gloria went into a slight panic at the thought of her daughter arriving with carrier bags and unloading stuff onto her kitchen counters. Angela should know better.  
Her text was brief and to the point.  
'No. All organised.'  
'Of course.' was the response.  
The written word doesn't allow for tone of voice and Gloria couldn't tell whether her daughter was being understanding or irritated.

She hadn't always been like this. The trauma of her husband's sudden death over two years ago was something that she could not control, so now she controlled everything around her. Immaculate; spot on; rigid.  
At first her children had been understanding, but over time that had waned, to be replaced with much sighing, tutting and references to OCD – even suggestions of a course of CBT. But it was her house, her life, why shouldn't she be the way she wanted. Except, in her heart she knew she didn't want to be like this.  
Ping!  
'What's the weather like at your end? Pouring rain here. Slow progress.'  
Gloria didn't want to engage in casual conversation with Angela via text. She was shortly to meet Angela's future father-in-law, Neville, for the first time, in readiness for spending Christmas with them all in a couple of weeks. She needed to concentrate on that. She needed to work out how to be 'festive' in this festive season without her husband. Something she had failed to do in the last couple of Christmases.  
Her response was brief.  
'Overcast. No rain.'  
Time dragged. There was only so much checking and re-checking that she could do.  
Ping!  
'With you in 15.'  
Gloria didn't respond. She opened the front door, checking that no vandalising cat has disarrayed the wood chips around the plants in the flower beds beside the path. She ran her forefinger along the

moulding on the front door – clean.  
Soon she heard the sound of a car engine coming up the road. Was this them? She didn't recognise it, maybe they'd come in Neville's car.  
She panicked slightly. Should she stand at the front door to greet them – or wait for them to ring the bell. She opted for open door – and there they were.  
Big hugs from Angela and Andrew. He was already part of the family and Gloria was very fond of him.  
Then she saw his dad, standing at the end of the path, waiting for his turn to be greeted.  
Gloria's stomach lurched. He was Andrew but 30 years older. Big brown eyes; dark, curly hair. He approached her with his hand outstretched. He smiled as he took her hand in his, placing the other gently on her shoulder and kissing her politely on the cheek.  
She felt a blush ascending her neck and travelling up her face. Her heart quickened.  
'What's happening?' she thought 'I never expected to feel like this ever again. I can't believe it. I fancy him!'  
'Let's go in,' she announced, grateful to be able to turn her back on them to hide her blushes.  
The bags down/coats off routine saw goodbye to the blush and Gloria breathed a sigh of relief.  
She made a welcoming cup of tea to accompany the 'getting to know you' chat. Next, the buffet lunch. It was all ready, just needed bringing to the table. Gloria stood up to go into the kitchen. Neville also stood up.  
'Do you need any help?'  
Angela quickly started to interrupt, knowing her mother would hate anyone interfering with her strict kitchen routines. But she had hardly drawn breath to speak when she heard her mother say 'Oh thank you, that would be lovely.'  
Andrew and Angela stared at each other incredulously as they heard chatter and laughter coming from the kitchen/diner. Angela moved closer to the door so she could listen.  
'They're flirting! My mum and your dad!'  
Andrew laughed. 'I don't believe it.'  
The meal confirmed the chemistry happening between their parents. Neville broke many of Gloria's house-rules, but she didn't seem to notice. She was more relaxed than she'd been for years – even leaving the table un-cleared to join the others in a stroll round the garden to admire the chiminea – an early Christmas present from Angela and Andrew.  
They divided into family pairs.  
'Andrew' Neville said hesitantly, 'Angela's mum, how would you feel if I – you know – asked her out?'  
Andrew laughed and hugged his dad.  
'I'll take that as permission then.'  
On the other side of the garden an almost identical conversation was taking place between Gloria and Angela, followed by much hugging with the addition of some moisture around the eyes.  
Their departure was prolonged, with much 'Lovely to see you'. 'Look after yourselves' and 'Mind how you go.'  
Neville hung back as Angela and Andrew moved off down the path. He gently touched Gloria's arm.  
'I'll be in touch soon.' It was almost a question.  
'Yes, that would be nice.'  
'Come on Dad' called Andrew 'We've got a long journey ahead of us.'  
Gloria shut the door.  
'Yes, so have I' she said to herself, reaching up to gently knock her favourite picture slightly askew. 'And this is the beginning – the birth of a new life.'

Carolynne McKee



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# 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

**MARTIN LUTHER (1483 – 1546) was a German theologian whose writings inspired the Protestant Reformation.**

On 31 October 1517 an insignificant Roman Catholic monk, frustrated with the corrupt practices of his colleagues in the priesthood, nailed some pieces of paper to a church door. Written in Latin and incomprehensible to the

called Theses which were there to be read, thought about, and debated. So, after nailing his theses, as he walked away from the Church he probably thought little of it, considered it an act of protest which might stop the actions of Johann Tetzel who was an “indulgence” seller in the area around Wittenberg. There is no way that he could have known that it would give rise to a revolution which touched

Life for the common people in Europe at that time was not easy. Outbreaks of the bubonic plague (Black Death) occurred from time to time, a failed harvest meant starvation, and education was in the hands of the Roman Catholic Church which meant only the wealthy could afford it.

Latin was the language of the Roman Catholic Church. People were forced to attend the church services by law which were conducted in Latin and they could not understand what was going on. Murals would often be painted on the walls and later stained glass windows were added to churches in order to entertain these poor folk during the weekly torturous services.

Improvement came for Martin's family when his father, Hans, got involved in a mining enterprise which struck copper and brought them instant wealth. They changed their surname from Ludher to Luther, moved to Mansfeld where Hans became an Elder of the city. Hans decided to invest some of his new-found wealth in paying for young Martin to be educated.

Once he had completed his schooling, Hans paid for Martin to go to the University of Erfurt. At that time, prior to specialising in a subject, the Roman Catholic Church made it a rule that a student had to study philosophy and theology. Martin completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1502 and his Master of Arts in 1504. Hans wanted Martin to go on to study Law. At that time Germany was not the united nation that we know today but rather consisted of duchies and principalities. Each had its own Court and this meant demand for lawyers was high. Martin's parents hoped that by becoming a lawyer he could provide for them in their

old age. Martin commenced studying the law but only eight weeks into the course events overwhelmed him and changed the direction of his life.

Martin was returning to the University with a friend and they were caught in a terrific thunderstorm. Lightning hit a nearby tree and his friend was thrown to the ground. Luther cried out in terror “St Anne, St Anne, save me and I will become a monk.” St Anne was the patron saint of miners. He wrote to his parents to tell them of his decision which, of course upset them very much. He joined a monastic order, becoming an Augustinian friar. He was ordained in 1507, began teaching at the University of Wittenberg and in 1512 was made a doctor of Theology. In 1510 he visited Rome on behalf of a number of Augustinian monasteries, and was appalled by the corruption he found there.

Luther became increasingly angry about the clergy selling ‘indulgences’ - promised remission from punishments for sin, either for someone still living or for one who had died and was believed to be in purgatory. On 31 October 1517, he published his ‘95 Theses’, attacking papal abuses and the sale of indulgences.

Luther had come to believe that Christians are saved through faith and not through their own efforts. This turned him against many of the major teachings of the Catholic Church. In 1519 -1520, he wrote a series of pamphlets developing his ideas - ‘On Christian Liberty’, ‘On the Freedom of a Christian Man’, ‘To the Christian Nobility’ and ‘On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church’. Thanks to the printing press, Luther's ‘95 Theses’ and his other writings spread quickly through Europe.



Woodcut of an indulgence-seller in a church from a 1521 pamphlet.

In January 1521, the Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. He was then summoned to appear at the Diet of Worms, an assembly of the Holy Roman Empire. He refused to recant and Emperor Charles V declared him an outlaw and a heretic. Luther went into hiding at Wartburg Castle.

In 1522, he returned to Wittenberg and in 1525 married Katharina von Bora, a former nun, with whom he had six children. Martin was a gifted musician. As a boy he had a good singing voice and later he wrote some hymns and tunes. He used to play the lute and sing with his wife and children in the evenings.

Luther then became involved in the controversy surrounding the Peasants War (1524 - 1526), the leaders of which had used Luther's arguments

to justify their revolt. He rejected their demands and upheld the right of the authorities to suppress the revolt, which lost him many supporters.

In 1534, Luther published a complete translation of the bible into German, underlining his belief that people should be able to read it in their own language. The translation contributed significantly to the spread and development of the German language.

Luther's influence spread across northern and eastern Europe and his fame made Wittenberg an intellectual centre. In his final years he wrote polemics against the Jews, the papacy and the Anabaptists, a radical wing of the reforming movement.

Luther died on 18 February 1546 in Eisleben.



These commemorative doors were installed at All Saints' Church, Wittenberg, on Luther's 375th birthday in 1858.

majority of people in the town of Wittenberg where he lived, he gave 95 reasons why God's forgiveness is free and neither could or should be sold by the Roman Catholic Church. His name was Martin Luther.

This might seem a strange thing to do, however, at that time it was common practice for monks to use the church door as a notice board. It was also their practice to pin up documents

all areas of people's lives in Europe; it would not just affect religion, but would go on to affect politics, censorship and civil rights.

Martin Luther was born on 10 November 1483 in Eisleben in Saxony, Germany. His parents were humble people and had been servants at times in their lives. He was named Martin in honour of St Martin who was celebrated on that day.

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# Watermead Front Garden Competition

"I almost wish we were butterflies and liv'd but three summer days - three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain." **John Keats, Bright Star: Love Letters and Poems of John Keats to Fanny Brawne.** At the time of writing this article, the bright summer days that brought us an explosion of colour and lovely floral displays in Watermead village are just a distant memory. Those who took leisurely evening walks looking at clean, tidy front gardens, turning their heads to admire a rose bush or a nicely trimmed hedge, now have their collars up, scarves round their

necks with hands in their pockets taking a brisk walk kicking the autumn leaves. I remember planning the "front garden tour" at the end of June but the photography day had to be pushed back to end of August because of wet weather and cloudy skies. Nevertheless, the local keen gardeners found time to grow and care for marvellous plants and flowers. Summer is a busy time for trimming the evergreen hedges and topiary. Many people spent their spare time edging and weeding, and we were pleasantly surprised to see that the yew hedges and domes were cut before the middle of August. This gave plenty of time

for new growth to harden off before the beginning of October. There is clear evidence that many of us are proud to present the best in our gardens. I took no less than 160 photos of beautiful gardens, arrangements, flowers and plants. The final decision has been very difficult.

**The overall winner of the competition, The Red House in The Plover, receives a garden voucher.**



(Above) We were particularly impressed by the rambling roses along Ayleswater and noticed a few beautiful species in bloom; we also saw lovely roses, hedging plants such as leylandii, well trained pyracantha, lavender and wisteria.

(Below) We loved this little front garden facing the lake. Small in size, however perfectly organized and well kept. A pleasure to look at, and probably well enjoyed by its owners. Simply superb!

**Best front garden - 9 Osprey Walk**

**(Right) Overall Winner- cottage style garden - The Red House, 1 Plover Walk**  
Our absolute favourite is this cottage style garden, with beautiful climbing clematis, overflowing hanging baskets and pretty flowering plants, all carefully trimmed and trained. The resident's skills and hard work really came through. Thank you for enchanting us with this little flowery heaven.



Thank you all who looked after their gardens this summer.  
Cllr Irina Schwarb

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# *Best Christmas Decorated House*

## COMPETITION 2017



After the success of last year's Christmas Lights Competition we have decided to run it again this year. It has been a seasonal tradition to decorate inside our homes for over a hundred years and more recently to line our streets and rooftops and fill our gardens with beautiful lights and decorations.

As Christmas approaches we hope that every Watermead resident will help to spread the message of hope, peace and joy through lights!

**RULES:** Every home within Watermead will be eligible. Judging will take place between Christmas and New Year. Winner to be announced on our notice boards and on our website on New Year's Day.

**PRIZE:** Gilded Watermead's Best Christmas Decorated House Certificate and a bottle of Champagne!

A photo of the winner's decorated house and those of the runners up (subject to their permission) will appear in the Spring issue of Village View along with their tips for success (if they have any!).