

VillageView

WATERMEAD'S FREE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Winter 2022 Vol.29 Issue 4

**Watermead
Christmas Fair**
Saturday 3rd December
Village Hall, 11am - 5pm

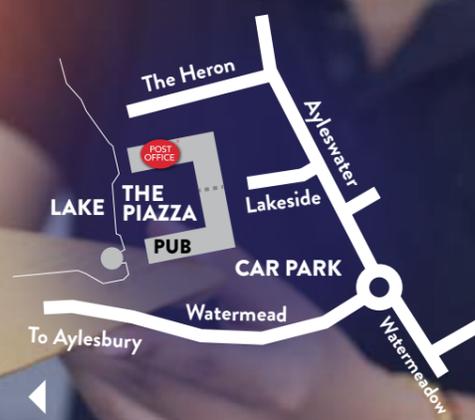
**Christmas Carol
Concert**
Saturday 10th December
from 6pm at the Piazza



News from Watermead Parish Council & more!
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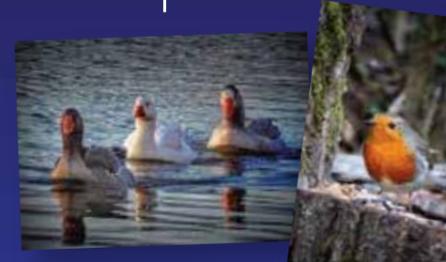
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Parish Chairman's News

Writing this on firework night I am amazed it's nearly Christmas! This year has been momentous for us in the United Kingdom with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations closely followed by the loss of HM the Late Queen. I am sure we all felt an enormous sense of loss but also pride in the wonderful ceremonial and genuinely affectionate send-off we gave the Queen. As we welcome King Charles III and the new Carolean age we wish him well for his reign and look forward to the spectacle of his coronation in May 2023.

Our thoughts are also with those displaced from Ukraine who have been welcomed with open arms. They will not be able to enjoy a family Christmas in most cases and we hope that any Ukrainians living in Watermead feel welcome and that you will join us in our traditional Christmas events. Our Christmas Craft Fair is being held, once again, on Saturday 3rd December. The hall has been fully booked with a variety of stalls for a while and Dot Toler is, once again, providing the snack lunches. On Saturday 10th December we will be holding our traditional Carol Concert in the Piazza with a visit from Father Christmas guaranteed – he had such fun here last year he couldn't resist another invitation from our children

who have, of course, all been good this year. The parish council lost two of its members this summer with the resignations of Eric Rose and Stuart MacKay. Eric had served twice on the council, with a particular interest in land matters, and responsibility for the now annual photographic competition, much enjoyed by those taking part and those of us who just enjoyed the photographs. Stuart undertook the survey of local businesses for our neighbourhood plan and also took over advertising management for Village View which I'm pleased to say he continues to look after, to great effect. Please tell advertisers you found them in the View if you contact them. All councillors would like to thank Eric and Stuart for their service, on behalf of our parishioners who don't always realise how much work is undertaken. Thank you both. Having two casual vacancies we have been fortunate to fill them both with qualified and keen new councillors. The first to stand was Dan Forder. Dan used to be a Trustee of Boxmoor Trust and, having moved to Watermead, felt he now had time to contribute his knowledge of nature and wildlife. He is a talented photographer and is already getting up to speed with the Neighbourhood Plan and contributing to the next stages. Ashley

Bond is known to many, a long-standing friend of Watermead, who through his membership of the former Aylesbury Vale District Council and now Buckinghamshire Council has assisted over many years with grants, practical help and advice. He has worked closely with his colleagues Diana Blamires and Peter Cooper but obviously to be a councillor in the parish you need to be qualified, as Ashley is. We know we will continue to have his support and help and warmly welcome both Dan and Ashley as colleagues. The drought of summer and long spell of hot weather made our land look very ragged and it is interesting how quickly everything has turned green. The trees, at last, seem to realise that autumn is upon us. The new walkway, completed in late summer, is now fully in place and is proving very popular with residents and visitors. The fully accessible walk with a pram, wheelchair or any mobility issue is fantastic. We are so grateful to our funders without whom we would not have been able to afford this project. The next stage is to solve the problem of the area by Robin's bench which is underwater when the lake is high making the area almost inaccessible. The Environment Agency did not agree our original plans and, with costs rising,



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

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Vice Chairman:
Cllr Adrian Schwab
T: 338118
adrian.schwab@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Cllr Dan Forder
T: 07565 804579
dan.forder@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Cllr Ashley Bond
T: 07976 729567
ashley.bond@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Cllr Mary Singleton
& Editor of the Village View
T: 428569
mary.singleton@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Cllr Mick Morgan
T: 07821 403784
mick.morgan@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Cllr Irina Schwab
T: 338118
irinaschwablegal@gmail.com



Parish Clerk and Halls Manager:
Noreen Shardlow
T: 395211 or 792137
(Call weekdays 10am to 2pm)
noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk



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

the work will have to be done once a suitable design is to hand and we are able to obtain more funding, but it is firmly on the list. The Neighbourhood Plan is progressing, as reported elsewhere in the magazine. If you see an advert for exhibition and consultation sessions do please attend if you can; it's really important to have everyone's view. This plan is for the future generations in Watermead and we must get it right. The next questionnaire will be circulated, and available online within the next months after which a draft plan can be drawn up for public consultation. If you have any questions, or would like to join the Neighbourhood Plan team, please do get in touch with Noreen Shardlow.

Our annual Christmas Lights competition will be running this year – please let's see how bright and sparkly we can make ourselves look – the lights are enjoyed by residents and visitors and several people have told me that they drive round to show the children the lights as a very welcome free outing. In these difficult times it's wonderful to share a bit of magic and fun.

The Roman Park Trust has found numbers of families needing help with food increasing over recent months. It is feared that this will only get worse with the cost of living, fuel and mortgages going up. If you can offer some food, tinned meats/beans/vegetables/soup and dried foods such as pasta/ rice and pasta sauces, your donations will be helping those most in need throughout the area. You can leave donations at Watermead News or outside the Village Hall. Thank you.

The Film Night on the Balloon Meadow, which was postponed due to the mourning of HM the Late Queen, was well attended and surplus funds raised were donated to Roman Park Trust.

It only remains to offer the parish council's warmest seasonal greetings and wishes. We hope to see you at the Christmas events and don't forget to bring your Village View to the carol concert (and a torch!) for the carols. Enjoy the Christmas lights and the warmest of season's greetings.

Cllr Sue Severn, Chairman



WATERMEAD CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 3rd December 2022
Village Hall, The Piazza 11am - 5pm

An arrangement of traditional and quirky gifts - there's a unique Christmas gift for everyone!

Plus 'Name the Bear'

Refreshments available too!

and don't forget:

WATERMEAD CAROL CONCERT
Saturday 10th December 2022 from 6pm

An introduction to our new councillors

Dan Forder

I feel honoured to be a Councillor of Watermead Parish Council - a place I'm very passionate about and privileged to call home. Thank you very much to those of you who supported me and made my nomination possible. I'm really looking forward to getting stuck in 'doing my bit' for our close-knit community and driving positive



change for our future. Here's a little bit about me and some experience I have that should come in handy...

I'm Dan Forder, 37, and have lived in Watermead for 3 years. You may have seen me wandering around the lakes surveying and photographing the wildlife almost every day. I'm that guy with the beard, camera and baseball cap! Nature is my greatest passion and I have a very real obsession

with wildlife, biodiversity, the environment and conservation. On my less wild side, I'm a BSc in Design and Technology including Automotive and Civil Engineering. For the past 14 years I've been a project manager in a range of industries including home interiors, print and display, medical devices, and currently IT, marketing and communications for financial services. Outside of work, My 'championing' local nature to inspire residents of Hemel Hempstead and Bovingdon to care for their environment led to being elected as Trustee for the local heritage and environment charity, 'The Box Moor Trust'. I served for 5 years helping to manage almost 500 acres of common land for the benefit of local people and wildlife,

running projects to improve the local environment, creating and maintaining habitats, whilst also making it accessible to the public and providing opportunities such as outdoor education.

I aim to use the experience and skills I've gained from the above for the benefit of Watermead Parish, both those who live and work here, and visitors to this little oasis we call home. I vow to do my best for this unique and beautiful area and its residents, and to protect its character, environment and, of course, wildlife.

Cllr Dan Forder

Ashley Bond

I am a retired farmer from Whitchurch and I have been both a District Councillor and on the unitary council for the last 20 years. I have attended every Watermead Parish Council meeting in the last eight years, helping out at times with the shortage of councillors on a temporary basis. I qualify to be a Parish Councillor as I own property in Watermead and I look forward to having more involvement in council matters here.



Cllr Ashley Bond

Pre-school music classes from 3 months to 5yrs

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Classes run for 35 or 45 minutes (depending on age group) during which time there will be many songs – some well known, some new to you and some which are exclusive to Jo Jingles. You and your child can enjoy a mixture of recorded music and unaccompanied voice, which enables me to give your children my whole attention, therefore encouraging them to take part and have fun and helping the adults to enjoy it too. Your child will be able to experience playing percussion instruments twice during the class, be involved in various kinds of music and movement and benefit from visuals and "hands on" props. Numbers are restricted (maximum of 15) to enable us to make the most of the time we have, and to work in a safe and happy environment.

Local classes are currently running in Watermead Village Hall on Tuesdays 1.30 - 2.15pm Mixed ages (Walking +), and 2.30 - 3.05pm Baby class (3mths – Walking).

So, if you think you'd like to join us, come along and join in the fun with Jo Jingles. As numbers are restricted, places need to be booked in advance. There is a special start-up offer currently available of your first 3 classes for £15. For more information, contact Debbie Bird on 01296 625599 or mobile: 07851 041204 or email jo-jingles-aylesbury@hotmail.com

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What's on ...around Watermead

December

3rd Watermead Christmas Fair Village Hall, 11am to 5pm
 7th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn
 10th Watermead Carol Concert The Piazza, 6pm

January

4th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn
 19th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

February

1st Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn
 16th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

March

1st Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn
 16th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

April

5th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn
 9th Easter Sunday Village Hall, 7:30pm
 20th Watermead Parish Council Meeting

Our regulars in the Village Hall...

Parish Council
 3rd Thursday of the month
 (excluding August & December)
 Public meeting - 7.30pm
 Council meeting - 8pm

Footsteps Pre-School
 Monday - Friday 7.30am to 2pm
 Closes 12.30pm Tuesdays
 07743 871369
 watermead@footsteps-nursery.co.uk

Crafty Chicks
 Scrapbooking/card
 making any craft of
 your choice
 4th Friday of the month
 from 6.30pm
 Contact Kate 07952 477702
 kate@boltweb.net

**Aylesbury & District
 Philatelic Society**
 Second Wednesday of the month
 7.30 - 10pm
 Peter Barnes 612913

Kumon Maths
 Monday & Thursday
 2.30 - 6pm
 Susan Jones 747469

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

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

Bring Your Own Crafts Afternoon
 Every Wednesday 2.30-5.30pm
 Judith Muston
 Noreen 01296 395211

Inkstampshare Paper Craft Class
 07952 477702
 kate@boltweb.net
 Inkstampshare.ink

12th Aylesbury
 (1st Buckingham Park Cubs)
 Tuesday
 buckpark.cubs@12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk

View from Westminster



The end of the year is always a time for reflection. As autumn turns to winter and the festive season draws near, one thing we can all agree on is that we have seen much change since I last wrote for Village View. Our new Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, has pledged to bring stability back to the government after a tumultuous period and I feel sure that we would all welcome a period of calm. As

a country we face many serious challenges, not least with the rise in the cost of living – much of it caused by Russia's illegal and inhumane invasion of Ukraine. The government has made a significant contribution to assist people through these difficult times, including a £400 grant and an energy price guarantee. There are other national and local schemes to help people who are struggling to cope and I am always happy to signpost people to sources of assistance.

It's vitally important for me to hear the opinions of my constituents, and I was pleased to have the opportunity to speak to many residents of Watermead when I distributed a questionnaire about local and national issues. As ever, if you want to express your views or require any assistance please contact my office at rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk.

As a Member of Parliament much of my time is necessarily spent dealing with national and international policies. But nothing beats spending time in the constituency, and a recent highlight was accompanying your local Buckinghamshire councillors, Ashley

Bond and Diana Blamires, on a walk of Watermead's new lakeside path and bridge. This is a fantastic local amenity – even on a damp day it proved immensely popular with local residents walking their dogs, jogging or taking their children for a stroll. I would like to convey special thanks to Watermead Parish Council and the Community Board for providing the funding to improve the route around the lake for residents.

As this is the final edition of Village View for 2022, may I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Robert Butler MP

A
 STAR
 SHINES
 BRIGHT IN THE
 FAR, FAR EAST. AS
 WE CELEBRATE WITH A
 CHRISTMAS FEAST. TREES
 GLOWING WITH CANDLES AND THE
 FESTIVE LIGHTS. CHANGING THE COLD
 AND DARKNESS OF NIGHTS. IN A STABLE BARE
 JESUS WAS BORN. ENTERING THE WORLD, A BABE
 FORLORN. OVER 2,000 YEARS SINCE HE CAME TO EARTH.
 BUT STILL WE CELEBRATE OF HIS BIRTH. OUR SAVIOUR, OUR
 LORD, THE SON OF GOD. WE FOLLOW THE PATH WHICH HE HAS TROD.
 HIS TEACHINGS AND HIS WORDS SO TRUE. ALL WAS
 MEANT
 FOR ME
 AND YOU.
 MERRY CHRISTMAS

B Harris

Are you looking for a venue? Watermead Village Hall is the ideal venue for young children's birthday parties, meetings and christenings, etc. Or are you an organisation looking for a regular venue? If so, to book the Village Hall or the Bandstand please contact Noreen Shardlow on 01296 395211 / 792137

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 Editor Mary Singleton Tel: 428569 mary.singleton@watermead-pc.gov.uk
 Assistant Editor Carolynne Mckee Tel: 435096 carolynnecmckee@btinternet.com
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**PUBLICATION
 DATES
 2023**

**SPRING
 4th March**

**SUMMER
 3rd June**

**AUTUMN
 2nd September**

**WINTER
 25th November**

Christmas Quiz



1. If you are born on Christmas Day what is your star sign?
2. What colour are mistletoe berries?
3. In which year was the first Christmas card sent: 1743, 1843, 1943?
4. Which ocean can Christmas Island be found in?
5. Which one of Santa's reindeer has the same name as the god of love?
6. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Spanish?
7. What is the name of the period leading up to Christmas?
8. Which Angel visited Mary?
9. December 26th marks which Saint's Day?
10. What is Scrooge's first name?
11. Which plant, beginning with P, is associated with Christmas?
12. What gifts did the three Wise Men give to Jesus on his birthday?
13. What is the name for the shortest day of the year?
14. Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
15. Which pantomime does Buttons appear in?
16. What is traditionally hidden in a Christmas pudding?
17. What sweet snack is typically left out for Santa?
18. What is the name of a female turkey?
19. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas Tree?
20. Which relatively new tradition was started by stay-at-home mum, Carol Aebersold?

Answers on page 10



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Easy Christmas recipes

EASY MULLED WINE

Serves 6

Ingredients:

750ml bottle of red wine
1 sliced clementine
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
3 dried figs
4 cloves
3 black peppercorns
50ml brandy

Method:

1. Pour the red wine into a large saucepan. Add the clementine, cinnamon stick, star anise, dried figs, cloves and black peppercorns. Heat very gently until simmering, then turn off the heat.
2. Fish out the whole spices and peppercorns with a spoon, then stir in the brandy. Ladle into mugs or heatproof glasses to serve. You could drop in a slice of clementine to each.

TWO-TRAY CHRISTMAS DINNER

Prep: 1 hr, Cook: 2 hrs 30 mins – 3 hrs, Serves 6

Ingredients

For tray one

65g butter, softened, plus 1 tbsp for the gravy,
2 tsp ground mace,
small bunch of sage, leaves picked and finely chopped,
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2-3kg turkey crown
1 large onion, thickly sliced
450g sausagemeat
3 tbsp cranberry sauce, plus extra to serve
75g pitted prunes, finely chopped
8 rashers smoked streaky bacon, halved
4 tbsp port or red wine

For tray two

800g Maris Piper potatoes, halved or quartered
600g parsnips, peeled and cut lengthways into quarters
450g small carrots, trimmed and scrubbed
450g Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
150ml vegetable oil
2 tbsp plain flour, plus 2 tbsp for the gravy
4 bay leaves

Method

1. Heat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil.
2. For tray one, mash the butter, 1 tsp mace, half the sage and all the garlic with some seasoning. Use your hands to separate the turkey meat and skin to create a pocket. Spread half the spiced butter under the skin and smooth into an even layer, taking care not to pierce the skin. Rub the remaining butter over the skin and season again. Put the onion slices in your second largest roasting tin (tray one) and sit the turkey on top. Roast for 1 hr-1 hr 30 mins in the middle of the oven (1 hr for a 2kg crown, 1 hr 30 mins for a 3kg turkey crown), basting with the butter that pools in the bottom halfway through.
3. Meanwhile, for tray two, cook the potatoes in the boiling water for 8 mins, then add the parsnips and cook for another 3-5 mins until just tender. Lift both out of the pan using a slotted spoon into a wide bowl and leave them to steam-dry. Put the carrots in the pan and cook for 5 mins. Add the sprouts and cook for 2-4 mins more until just tender. Reserve a jug of the cooking water (about 500ml) and drain the carrots and sprouts. Leave to steam-dry.
4. To make the stuffing, mix the sausagemeat, cranberry sauce, prunes, and remaining mace and sage with seasoning. Mix well with your hands, then roll into 16 stuffing balls. Wrap each with a halved bacon slice and chill until needed.
5. When the turkey has had its time, baste again and add the stuffing balls around it, as far apart as possible to ensure they brown. Move to the bottom of the oven, roasting for another 30 mins. Put a shelf above for the potatoes and heat the oil in your largest shallow roasting tin (tray two) at the top of the oven for 10 mins.
6. Season the potatoes and parsnips, and sprinkle over 2 tbsp flour. Put a plate over the bowl, hold it down, and shake to toss the spuds and parsnips in the flour. Gently lower them into the hot oil, and spoon over the fat. Roast for 30 mins, turning them halfway through.
7. When the turkey has had 1 hr 30 mins (or 2 hrs for a 3kg turkey crown), check it's cooked through – a digital cooking thermometer should read 70C when inserted into the middle of the breast, and there should be no pink juices when pierced with a skewer. Remove from the tin and leave to rest along with the stuffing, covered with foil (you can warm them up in the second tray if you need to later on).
8. Turn the oven up to 220C/200C fan/gas 7 and roast the potatoes for 10 more mins until lightly golden. Toss the carrots, sprouts and bay leaves into the roast potato tray, and roast for another 30 mins while the turkey rests, until all the veg is golden and tender. Add the stuffing balls for the last 5 mins to crisp and warm through again, if you like.
9. Add the port or wine to the turkey tray with the roasted onions, and put over a low heat on the hob (or transfer to a pan if your tray isn't flameproof), scraping any bits off the bottom. Add most of the reserved cooking water and whisk everything together. Mash the 1 tbsp butter with the 2 tbsp flour to make a paste, then whisk into the gravy. Simmer for 10 mins until thickened. Season, and strain into a gravy jug.

EASY CHRISTMAS PUDDING

Prep: 2hrs 45mins – 3hrs including steaming, Serves 8-10

Ingredients

1 cup raisins
1 cup sultanas
1 cup self-raising flour
1 cup finely grated butter (about 115g/4oz)
1 cup fresh brown breadcrumbs

(from around 4 thick slices of bread)
1 cup light muscovado sugar
1 cup mixed nuts, chopped plus extra to decorate
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground mixed spice
1 cup milk
1 large egg
butter, for greasing

For the butterscotch sauce

85g butter
100g light muscovado sugar
200ml double cream
1 tsp vanilla extract

Method

1. For the pudding, empty the first six cups and the nuts, if using, into a mixing bowl with the spices, then stir in the milk and egg. Once well combined, tip into a buttered 1.5 litre pudding bowl.
2. Cover with a double layer of buttered foil, making a pleat in the centre to allow the pudding to rise. Tie the foil securely with string, then place in a steamer or large pan containing enough gently simmering water to come halfway up the sides of the bowl. Steam, covered with a lid, for 2½ hours. Check the water level during cooking, topping up if necessary. If you are preparing this pudding ahead, remove the foil, let it cool slightly, then wrap in cling film and then fresh foil. If you are serving it immediately, unwrap and invert onto a deep plate.
3. For the sauce, put everything in a pan and bring slowly to the boil, stirring. Allow to bubble away for 2-3 minutes, still stirring, until the sugar has dissolved and the sauce is pale caramel in colour and slightly thickened. Remove from the heat. Pour the sauce over the pudding and decorate with the whole mixed nuts.

All these recipes can be found on:
www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes

CHRISTMAS AT THE FIVE ELMS WEEDON FESTIVE LUNCH

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Lindengate Mental Health Charity is home to 2 Gold Award winning exhibits from RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Located across a stunning six acre wildlife garden in Wendover, Buckinghamshire, Lindengate promotes better health and wellbeing for all through nature. Providing nature based seasonal activities for schools, young people, anyone needing support with low to moderate mental health, as well as those living with dementia and memory loss and their carers.

With a dedicated team and over 200 volunteers, the six acre site is home to a Heritage Orchard, Nature Reserve, Kitchen Gardens and 2 RHS Chelsea Gold Award Winning Exhibits and is open to all to come and experience the sights and sounds of nature.

Taking pride of place in The Clare Foundation Nature Reserve, is a recently completed project, the donated Chelsea Gold Award winning, A Rewilding Britain Landscape garden designed by Urquhart & Hunt in support of Rewilding. This incredible donation has enabled Lindengate to create a new conservation pond and landscape with a purpose built hide, which is now ready for everyone to come and admire.

In addition, there is a second Chelsea Gold Award winning exhibit to be found at Lindengate. Nature – A Fragile Beauty was part of an award winning floral installation which won Gold at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2021 by the brilliantly talented, In Water Flowers' florist company based in London.

Lindengate were delighted to be awarded two prestigious awards in 2022, the first being the Queens Award for Voluntary Services. Equivalent to an MBE, this award is the highest award given to voluntary groups in the UK and is awarded for life.

Following on from this success, Lindengate were also awarded the much-coveted Green Flag Community Award, in recognition of the hard work and dedication of the team that make the green space a great space that everyone can enjoy.

Come and see for yourself – we are open:
Monday – Thursday: 10.30am – 3.30pm
Friday – Saturday: 1-4pm

Whilst entry is free, we ask that you consider a suggested donation of £5 per person, to help us to continue to support our community and environment.

Please support the Lindengate Emergency Winter Appeal, Full details of how you can donate can be found on our website: www.lindengate.org.uk



Answers to Christmas Quiz on page 07

1. Capricorn, 2. White, 3. 1843, 4. Indian Ocean, 5. Cupid, 6. Feliz Navidad, 7. Advent, 8. Gabriel, 9. Saint Stephen, 10. Ebenezer, 11. Poinsettia, 12. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, 13. Winter Solstice, 14. Isaac Newton, 15. Cinderella, 16. A silver coin (sixpence), 17. Mince pie, 18 Hen, 19. Germany, 20. Elf on the Shelf.

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A night at the movies

Due to the original date of the outdoor cinema falling within the national period of mourning for HM the late Queen, the Events Committee felt it only right to postpone. Our new date of 8th October luckily blessed us with good weather. Dry and sunny early on but it did turn chilly in the evening. Despite the cold and, sadly a generator failing during the second film, "Dirty Dancing", it was still a successful night with a good turnout.

We had live music to start from Watermead residents, Callum and Jodie, plus a friend joined them in the second act. Then the film "Encanto" which everyone enjoyed. The members of our committee all donated glow merchandise to sell. We had a variety of food vendors and, of course, bar provided by the Watermead Inn.

We don't really organise this event to raise money, more to put on a free family event but we do ask for donations on the

night for a charity of choice. This year, with the cost of living crisis and more families turning to food banks, we chose Roman Park community project. We raised £133.76 to donate to this worthwhile cause.

A huge thank you to all our sponsors without whom we couldn't put this event on and a huge thank you to all members of the committee for their hard work.

Karen Collett



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Introducing the Cubs of 12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park)

The 12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park) scout group was formed in 2016 with Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. Initially it was to serve the Buckingham Park community (hence the name), however, our catchment area quickly expanded to cover Watermead, Meadowcroft and Quarrendon due to demand. Following the covid lockdowns the cubs and scouts were unable to return to our previous venue and we were on the hunt for a new home. After being a little nomadic around various borrowed Scout Huts all over Aylesbury and doing lots of outdoors based activities, this September we were lucky enough to secure the Watermead Village Hall as our new home for the Cubs (8 to 10½ year old boys and girls). This has been wonderful for our cubs and their families as we are now back within walking or cycling distance of many of them.

The cubs have settled very well into the hall and have been running a very busy programme on Tuesday evenings. We have made kites and flown them, learnt some British Sign Language, studied money skills and planned a camp and what to pack. We also had our camp fire singing practice around the camp fire – don't worry, we used a special flame simulating light bulb, not a real fire. We had a Zumba instructor from

Reflexions Gym come and run a session for the cubs and the final week before half term we celebrated Diwali with a professional dancer and took part in other traditional activities.

We are always on the hunt for more adults to volunteer to help us run our activities. This could be coming along one evening to share something you do for work or as a hobby with the cubs, or regular help at our Tuesday evening

meetings. Volunteering can be as little or as much as you like but it is always very rewarding. Currently we have a waiting list for cubs, but please do get in touch about volunteering or for joining the waiting list.

Akela and the Cub Leader Team
12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park Cubs)
buckpark.cubs@12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk



Watermead Photography Competition results

JUDGES REPORT

This was the fifth year in which we have run this competition. Unfortunately, the number of entries has fallen from a high of over 100 to just over 40 this year. However the quality remains high and I would stress as usual that in judging there is inevitably an element of personal preference although I was not given the names of entrants before reaching a decision.

BEAUTIFUL WATERMEAD CATEGORY

The winner in this category was number 10 Damon Mitchell. His shot of a swan with a

background of the Piazza and a dramatic sky sums up the beauty of our village. For this reason, Damon is also our overall winner of the bottle of champagne. Runners up were Cleo Conway-Bence for her striking evening shot of the Watermead Inn Bandstand with reflections in the flooded lake Number 14, and Matt Presdee for his photo of a Gosling Number 1.

OPEN CATEGORY

The Winner in this category is Adele Crawley Number 3 for her nicely captured shot of two dogs. Runners up were Damon

Mitchell for his capture of the Red Arrows and Cleo Conway-Bence for her beautifully lit rural shot at sunset.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Unfortunately, there were only 2 entries in this category and I have decided not to award a prize.

Thanks to everyone who entered this year's competition.

Eric Rose, 21st September 2022

10 Overall Winner



14



3



1



Vale Countryside volunteers at Watermead

In early October the Vale Countryside Volunteers (VCV) carried out tasks on three wild flower areas on the west side of the lake at Watermead.

Plants such as purple loosestrife and meadowsweet are doing well here, providing food for insects and giving a wonderful show of colour through the spring and summer. It is important that these areas are managed to prevent invasive scrub taking over and to encourage new growth the following year.

Hawthorn, blackthorn and dogwood were coppiced and plants cut back and raked off to compost areas, to open up the soil and to remove material that would add unwanted nutrients and hinder germination. Informal paths were also widened to improve access to the water's edge in these areas.

VCV is a Wednesday group based in Aylesbury. Further information can be found at our website www.vcv.org.uk.

*Adrian Bayliss, Chair
Vale Countryside Volunteers*



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Watermead Carol Concert

Saturday 10th December 2022
6-7pm, The Piazza

Welcome by Sue Severn,
Chairman, Watermead
Parish Council.

O Come all ye Faithful,
We Three Kings,
The First Nowell

Children to gather at the
front near the band.

Children sing:
Away in a Manger

Great Horwood Silver Band
will play a tune to welcome
Father Christmas who will
distribute presents to
children.

Once in Royal David's City,
On Christmas Night All
Christians Sing,
While Shepherds Watched
their Flocks by Night,
The Holly and The Ivy

Sue Severn:
thanks and finale.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



Mulled wine and a mince pie or sausage roll.
Donations to Roman Park Community Trust.

WISHING YOU ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!



O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come all ye faithful, joyful and
triumphant,
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell...

*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,...

WE THREE KINGS

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we travel afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star:

*O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring to crown Him again:
King for ever, ceasing never,
Over us all to reign.
O star of wonder...

Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a Deity nigh:
Prayer and praising, all are raising,
Worship Him, God most high.
O star of wonder...

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
O star of wonder...

Glorious now, behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice.
Heaven sings, 'Alleluja!'
'Alleluja!' the earth replies.
O star of wonder...

THE FIRST NOWELL

The First Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds
in fields where they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!*

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell...

And by the light of that same star,
Three Wise Men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell...

This star drew nigh to the North-West;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest.,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, Nowell...

Then entered in those Wise Men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Nowell, Nowell...

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
Who hath made heaven and earth of naught,
And with His blood mankind hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell...

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.

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle-shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall:
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all His wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
In whose gentle arms He lay.
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through his own redeeming love;
For that Child, so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars His children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

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.

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.

THE HOLY AND THE IVY

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown

O, the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer
The playing of the merry organ
Sweet singing in the choir

The holly bears a blossom
As white as lily flower
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good

The holly bears a prickly
As sharp as any thorn
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas day in the morn

The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown

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 herald 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.

New Pathway from Buckingham Park to Berryfields

A few weeks ago a new pathway between Berryfields and Buckingham Park was opened, so you can now walk or cycle from Watermead to Berryfields mainly through green fields, and away from traffic. The pathway starts at the far end of Buckingham Park where there is a small ballpark. To get there, walk into Buckingham Park and follow the top path across the flood plain. Keep on following the path until it veers off to the right and goes up an incline. At the top of the incline, you will see the ballpark, and the entrance to the new pathway is on the far side of this area and is clearly marked.

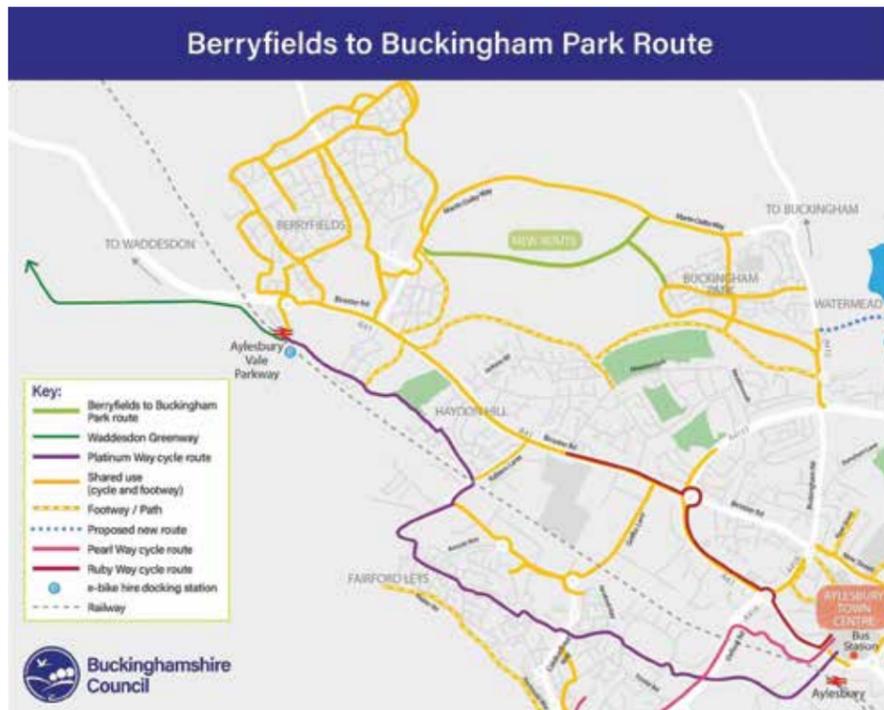
The pathway is just under two miles long and it is a very pleasant walk or cycle, going through open fields all the way down to the A41 Waddesdon Road.

If you want to go back to Watermead without retracing your tracks, follow the pathway down to the A41 and then turn left and follow the road back towards Aylesbury.

Go over the River Thames bridge and then take the first path on your left, which will lead you back behind Aylesbury Vale Dynamos Football Club pitch, and keep on following until it meets up with Jackson Road.

Do not go onto Jackson Road, but take the left-hand path away from the road and this will take you back through the Buckingham Park Flood Plain and onto Watermead.

For the fitter amongst you, instead of turning left into Aylesbury, turn right towards Aylesbury Parkway Station to meet up with the Waddesdon Greenway.



The entrance to this walk is between the station and the Miller and Carter pub and will take you on a two-and-a-half-mile walk to the village of Waddesdon.

This is also a lovely walk through the countryside and has the added attraction of being decorated by "yarn bombers" along its distance.

The walk comes out near the lay-by at the beginning of the village, so you still

have quite a walk if you want to visit the Manor.

Reward yourself with a coffee or a beer, and if the return is too daunting there is always the number 17 bus back to Aylesbury!!

Have fun!

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Our beautiful wildlife

As the colder weather and shorter days start to draw in, our summer visitors have mostly all left for warmer climes or, in the case of most of our insects, perished until their offspring start the yearly cycle all over again. As I write this it is the end of October and Autumn bird migration is in full swing – winter visitors from the north and east have started to pour into the UK and this year's juveniles are on the wander.

Here are a few highlights from the last month...

SHORT-EARED OWL

On the morning of 22nd of September I was extremely lucky to come across a Short-eared Owl circling low over the rough grass and woodland on the west side of the large lake, possibly having roosted or been hunting in that area. It was being harassed by some crows so was soon on its way, but this brief sighting was the first record for Watermead. I had also heard both Barn Owl and Tawny Owl during the night throughout the week. Short-eared Owls are rare in Buckinghamshire with birds in the south of Britain being either winter visitors from the scattered northern population or part of the majority of true migrants from Scandinavia.



MARSH HARRIER

Autumn being the best time to find Marsh Harriers on migration, or juveniles on the wander, I've been checking all the usual Red Kites and Buzzards passing over at this time of year, for the last three years, in hope of catching one on its way through. On 26th October I glanced up to see a large, dark bird of prey drifting over very high in strong winds. Finally I'd struck gold - it was a juvenile Marsh Harrier – another first for Watermead.

PEREGRINE FALCON

On 10th October I was alerted by the alarm calls of many small birds around the small lake – this told me that a bird of prey was nearby. I looked up expecting to see one of

our resident Sparrowhawks on the hunt but was instead greeted by a juvenile Peregrine circling overhead. It's possible this was one of the offspring of the adults that breed on County Hall in Aylesbury town.



REDWINGS

On the morning of 19th October many hundreds of Redwings headed south and west over Watermead. This was part of a mass movement of hundreds of thousands of birds that had crossed the North Sea that night. Redwings are winter visitors to Britain and will continue to pile into the UK as the cold weather starts to kick in in Scandinavia - if you're outside at night listen for their 'seeep' call they use to keep in contact with one another as they migrate overhead in the darkness.



BRAMBLING

Along with Redwings, many other bird species joined the movement south and west on 19th October, in particular many Fieldfares, Song Thrushes, Meadow Pipits, Skylarks and Chaffinches passed over Watermead. Whilst watching the movement, or 'vis-migging' (watching visible migration) in birding terms, I picked out a lone finch at distance heading south which dropped into trees near the cricket pitch – although generally Chaffinch-shaped, I could just make out a flash of white on its rump and orange wash on its breast – it was a Brambling. Bramblings are a close cousin of the Chaffinch but are generally only a winter visitor to Britain from Scandinavia and rare at Watermead,

preferring beech woodland where it feasts on beech masts.

JACK SNIFE

Also on 19th October a Jack Snipe flew south low over Watermead. Yet another solely winter visitor to our region - it seemed it may have flown up from the River Thames just north of the large lake, and there is suitable habitat there. In autumn, winter and spring I fairly regularly see Common Snipe around or flying over Watermead but this is only the second record of it's much rarer and smaller cousin, the first being one I saw on the balloon field at night last year.

KINGFISHERS

Having rather aptly bred in the bank of the large lake at Kingfisher this year, where the concrete edge has fallen away, there have been more Kingfisher sightings at Watermead this year than ever before. It still hasn't made it much easier to photograph them though!



SHOVELERS

As winter approaches we start to see an increase in additional duck species other than Mallards at Watermead with Shoveler, Teal, Wigeon, Pochard and Tufted Duck being quite regular. There has been a record number of Shovelers feeding at Watermead this autumn with 50 feeding together on the large lake on 20th October - the previous highest count being 13 in 2020. Presumably this is due to extremely low water levels and therefore vastly reduced wet area at nearby



Wilstone Reservoir, their nearest local stronghold. A Pintail also accompanied the Shovelers on 22nd September.

COMMON SCOTER

On 21st September a male Common Scoter was on the large lake. This velvety black duck with orange blob on its bill isn't as common as its name suggests – in Britain it is considered a sea duck. It mainly breeds in boreal forests in Norway returning to coastal waters of Britain and Western Europe for the winter. Although they migrate over land at night on their way north-east in the spring, their autumn migration south-west is mainly over sea and along coasts, so finding one so far inland in the autumn is rare indeed.



BLACK EAST INDIAN DUCK

You may have wondered what the black duck with the green and blue sheen is that accompanies the four white Aylesbury ducks near the jetty - this little beauty has been entertaining admirers for some weeks now. This is a Black East Indian Duck and, like the Aylesbury Ducks it associates with, is a domestic breed of Mallard, in fact the oldest breed of bantam (small Mallard breed weighing less than a kilo). This bird and the Aylesbury ducks have escaped from a wildfowl collection or farm, likely not too far from Watermead.



WILLOW EMERALD DAMSELFLIES

Although the majority of adult dragonflies and damselflies have gone by late autumn, three species can still be seen around Watermead at this time, though their numbers are dwindling day by day:

- Migrant Hawker Dragonfly - medium-sized, dark with blue and lime green

markings cruises around

- Common Darter Dragonfly - quite small, red or brown, zips away but returns to its favoured perch
- Willow Emerald Damselfly - small, delicate and elegant, metallic green, hangs from vegetation overhanging the water. It was a sad but rather beautiful sight one October afternoon as I watched two male Willow Emeralds share their last moments together, grasping one another's face, looking at each other as they met their fate, caught in the surface film of the water, never to escape.

HEDGEHOG

Last but certainly not least - on the night of 23rd September I saw a lovely Hedgehog snuffing away on the grass beside the road at Redwing – it's great to know we still have Hedgehogs at Watermead despite the drastic decline they have suffered nationally.



If you'd like to hear about sightings of interesting wildlife or rare species at Watermead as I see them, you can follow me on Twitter @DanFWildlife. Also, feel free to contact me if you have any wildlife related queries or you'd like help identifying something - I'll get back to you asap.

Have a great winter, Dan Forder



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Sally's Blog

Welcome to my almost-Christmas BLOG! It goes without saying that I have been extremely good this year and I am expecting great things in my Christmas stocking.

I've heard some humans say it's ridiculous for a dog or cat to be given presents but I can only suggest, with great respect, that they are totally deluded. We do know it's Christmas, we love being part of the family and I know that I for one always give my humans a shopping

list so that I can join in the present-giving. Dogs and cats, along with all other pets are wonderful companions, and make peoples' lives so happy. We love having caring, loving owners, and I would

say that the vast majority of my Watermead friends are lucky, with wonderful owners who go that extra mile to make us happy, so thank you all; in particular to the ones who pick up the poo and take us for lovely long walks in this beautiful place.

Enough advertising for the canines and felines I think. I thought you'd like to hear what I've been up to since last we met. The summer was very, very hot and most of us suffered very much from the

heat. I was lucky, having been clipped and bathed just before the heatwave so I could cope, with the help of fans and darkened rooms but it was very difficult. Lots of kind people and shopkeepers put out bowls of water for us, which were very welcome. I discovered eating ice cubes, frozen carrots and even a doggy frozen yoghurt, (on offer in my personal junk mail from Pets at Home... the humans always fall for it!)

My humans went on holiday in September, the first time for three years. It was a great trip for them and I went to stay with my friends at Penn Wood Stables. I love being there, with lots of other dogs, the horses and humans, who say that I am really sweet and a pleasure to have. I think it's somewhat like human children - if we can behave while we're out at least, we're on to a winner! Anyway, I had a lovely time, my humans had a lovely time, and we were all very pleased to see each other back home.

One slight cloud on my otherwise bright horizon is that my Mum has a new job, and apparently there is a cat called Tilly who visits her office. Pictured here. (My Mum isn't mad on cats, although she loves all animals, we wouldn't have a cat of our own). I was very surprised to read on her Facebook page that Tilly had been at a meeting, sitting on a table, for an entire morning, fast asleep. I would never be

allowed to go to work with her, nor would I be allowed to sit on a table. My nose, as they say, has been put firmly out of joint. My only consolation is that I am still, quite clearly, the favourite and this Tilly hasn't appeared in our house so I suppose she will remain an occasional visitor and office cat. I have my own cat friends who visit our garden most days. They are two lovely black and white cats and since we all match we are quite friendly. They sit on the shed roof and the fence and look at me, I look at them, then I bark, then they yawn, then I go indoors! Sometimes we meet when I'm out walking and that is nice - we get a closer look at one another and I do like them very much.

I hope that I shall see lots of people over the coming months with Christmas round the corner. I hope you all stay well, as well as your humans, and that we can all enjoy Christmastime with our families and friends.

Bye for now, Love Sally



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*Based on 'Sizing up the situation' report (Housing LIN, 2014) and our Service Charge data. †On selected developments.

Archaeology in Buckinghamshire

Shakespeare wrote in 'King John' in the 1590s that England never did, nor ever shall be conquered, is not true. Just a good piece of Tudor propaganda a few years after the Spanish Armada of 1588. In 55 and 54 BCE Julius Caesar brought his armies but did not stay to conquer. In 43AD Emperor Claudius brought his legions and the Romans stayed until 410AD. Germanic peoples we call the Anglo-Saxons began to settle when the Romans left.

Then came the Danes/Vikings. William the Conqueror landed in 1066 and changed Britain forever. He confiscated lands of most Saxon owners and the feudal system was put in place.

This article looks at some of the archaeological evidence of the County's past. Evidence that is not only found on the ground, but in our built environment, much backed up by written evidence. Also, there are many finds, which though unearthed, have yet to be analysed. Although Milton Keynes is now a unitary authority, the area was part of Bucks for hundreds of years, so I have included finds from there.

In Celtic times, the Catuvellauni tribe held sway in our area. Their first-known King Tasciovanus is said to have founded Verulamium (St. Albans). At first hostile to the Romans, they became very pro-Roman, no doubt appreciating the benefits this could bring. Their territory was vast, what we now call Buckinghamshire being just a part. We have evidence of the tribe's existence from Roman writings and Bronze Age artefacts. Their hillforts pepper our landscape. The Romans saw the Celts as Barbarians. However they introduced the iron plough to Britain and had skilled craftsmen who produced beautiful metalwork. Their women had equal status with men.

At Dorton, a village and civil parish in mid-Bucks, imported wine jars, metal objects, a complete drinking cup, other metal objects and a Bronze Age mirror belonging to a lady of high status as well as pieces of two flagons from Gaul and a metal ring have been found. The mirror dated from just before the Roman conquest. It lay in a fragmented wooden box and it is decorated on the back in a typically Celtic design. Its owner had been cremated. The Bucks Iron Age started around 600BCE long before her death.

Celtic hillforts in the County include Cholesbury near Chesham, Bulstrode at Gerrard Cross, Ivinghoe Beacon, Desborough near Wavendon and Wendover.



The Rye, High Wycombe - Roman Villa excavations 1950s

Aylesbury old town was built in a Celtic hillfort. An early Iron Age skull was dug up in 1985 during excavations at the Prebendal. There is also evidence of an Anglo-Saxon ditch, medieval pits and wells, a Civil War ditch and some 18th century features. Pennies and sceatta, small silver coins from the Anglo-Saxon period, were also found. Burials of four children and of a young woman were also found. A palisade and a ditch are said to have been the boundaries of a Minster. An excavated piece of merovingian glass with a cross

on the base, probably belonged to the Minster.

The hillfort at Cholesbury near Chesham is now a scheduled monument, a multivallate structure, having more than one layer of defensive earthworks. Another multivallate hillfort is at South End Hill, Cheddington. Crop marks, photographed from the air, show a circular structure about 5 hectares in width. Coarse handmade pottery shows that occupation may have begun in the early to mid-Iron Age. 600-300BCE.

An Iron Age settlement at Coldharbour Farm, North-West of Aylesbury, shows at least three houses enclosed by a boundary ditch.

In 2015 Cotswold Archaeology excavated land east of Fenny Road, Stoke Hammond. Finds indicate the site dates from 1st-4th century AD. A single shard of pottery from the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age and a single medieval ditch were located. It is likely that the site was a farmstead as there is evidence of ridge and furrow from the medieval period.

At the Rye near High Wycombe, a Roman villa, bathhouse and a mosaic floor were exposed.

Oxford Archaeology carried out excavations at Berryfields between 2007-16 which shed light on Neolithic to post medieval human activity. A water-logged pit was found containing a whole egg. Eggs had symbolic meaning in Roman times and were associated with the god, Mithras. It was probably an offering in a funerary rite.

In 1971 Bancroft Villa was discovered during excavations prior to the Milton Keynes New Town development. It was one of eight large farming estates created 2,000 years ago. Excavations revealed an under-floor heating system, Samianware pottery - the finest of Roman pottery - a mosaic floor, tableware, a decorated limestone for gaming, silver brooches for clothes fastening, one thousand coins and decorated combs, a walled garden and a summerhouse.

In 1985, near Weston Underwood, an earthenware vessel was found. It contained 166 denarii from 1st-2nd centuries. Also found were a brass coin, human and horse bones and some fine Roman pottery, the latter now in the County Museum.

In 1897, at New Bradwell, a hoard of bronze weapons was unearthed, part of a cist burial (a stone built coffin) with nine sockeye axes, 2 spearheads, one palstave axe and a leaf-shaped sword broken into four.

A hoard was found at Little Brickhill in 1962 comprising 251 loose coins and 400 more corroded together dating from 360-365AD.

Taplow Barrow, which had been the richest Saxon Burial site before Sutton Hoo, yielded drinking horns, a harp, some glass and some gold thread from clothes. Constructed in the 7th Century AD, it contained the remains of the deceased and grave goods mostly now in the British Museum. Archaeologists say it was probably from the conversion period when England was becoming Christianised. The individual is said to have been a chieftain.

In 597AD, Pope Gregory sent August I to Christianise Britain and from the 7th century churches appeared in villages. At first they were built of wood, but a few were built of stone. All Saints at Wing, 12km to the North East of Aylesbury, is one of the oldest, if not, the oldest. It dates back to 7th or 8th century. Evidence of its origins can be seen in the crypt and there is a Saxon window. In Saxon times Wing formed part of a Royal Estate. In 966AD King Edgar granted it to his kinswoman, Aelfgifu.

In the new millennium, the TV programme 'Meet the Ancestors', an archaeological programme led by archaeologist, Julian Richards, filmed excavations going on near the Church. Bodies had been found under a Victorian building which had been demolished. It was part of the old graveyard. The face of a Saxon girl, about 12

years old, was reconstructed from her skull for the programme. Pupils from the Cottesloe School and the Primary school, next door, took part in the programme.

Hardwick, a village just north of Watermead, had a strong Anglo-Saxon presence by the time of the Norman invasion. There were three landowners named in the Domesday Book: Saewood, Oswulf and Saxi. It is believed that Saxi had the Church built. The Bell Inn was built in the 17th century.

Further North, Buckingham was the County Town until 1529 when Henry VIII, trying to impress Anne Boleyn's father, awarded Aylesbury the role. It is named after the original owner, Bucca, and was the centre of conflict between the Danes and the Saxons. Sited on a loop in the Great Ouse, it held a strong defensive position. It was vital for the Danes, who controlled it around 900AD. In 910AD, after some subterfuge by the Danes, came the invasion of Aylesbury by a Viking army under Cnut Longsword. They killed priests, raped women and killed many including children. They also used many people as slaves.

Viking weapons have been unearthed at Stone Bridge on the Bicester Road. A Viking pin was found at both Hambledon and Fingest. A mint dating from Cnut's time in Aylesbury and a hoard of coins dating to his predecessor, Ethelred, have been found. A coin of Cnut was dug up at Bierton and a huge hoard came to light near Buckingham.

Unpopular though HS2 is, it has paid for archaeology along the route. At Fleet Marston Cotswold Archaeologists found a decapitated skeleton, brooches, coins, weights and spoons, tableware and other artefacts and a Roman town.

Recent finds in Wendover by HS2 archaeologists have unearthed 141 burials. This is the largest Anglo-Saxon burial ground yet found in Britain. Finds dating back to the 5th and 6th centuries AD include shields, swords, jewellery and personal hygiene items. The site also shows signs of being inhabited in the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman periods. Two of the skeletons were found with two brooches each on their collar bones which were obviously to fasten cloaks. These finds give us further insight into how our ancestors lived during what used to be called the Dark Ages especially as written sources are rather lacking from the period.

Other HS2 digs in Buckinghamshire have found two complete



Bancroft Villa found in Milton Keynes in 1971

Roman sculptures (one male and one female), a hexagonal Roman glass jug and 3000 bodies on the site of old St Mary's Church in the deserted village of Stoke Mandeville. Coins from the Roman and Elizabethan periods, parts of a medieval purse and Civil War musket balls have also been found by the owner of part of the site. Archaeologists conjecture that it was the location of a Roman mausoleum before the church was built in about 1080.

In 1086 the Domes Day Book appeared, compiled by those working for William the Conqueror. It set out all he owned in the country. Shortly after the Conquest, Buckingham and attached lands were given to the Church. There is evidence of a church in Aylesbury from Saxon times with the present building having been erected in 1200-1250.

To prove their hegemony over England, the Normans built castles - a sign to the inhabitants they were here to stay. A castle was built in Aylesbury within the Saxon fortifications and there is evidence of a structure with motte and bailey.

A castle at Buckingham, first mentioned in documents in 1164 to 64, was demolished in 1208-15. I lived in Buckingham some years ago in Well Street. The Castle Wall came up the end of the garden and a stone wall in the kitchen was possibly built from recycled stone from the castle.

Bolbec Castle in Whitchurch was erected during the Anarchy of 1146 when Stephen and Matilda were fighting over the crown. The motte and Bailey stood either side of what is now Castle Lane. Only the earthworks remain and it was levelled by Parliamentary forces in the Civil War.

In the post medieval period estates replaced peasant holdings and, although the open field system continued for some time in North Bucks, it was replaced by large scale farming in Aylesbury Vale. New estate owners built mansions, landscaped gardens and vast water features, often moving the villagers out because they spoiled the view.

Evidence of settlements still surviving can be seen in both vernacular and clerical buildings throughout the County.

In Wendover there are many medieval buildings, including Coldharbour Cottages, said to have been given to Anne Boleyn by Henry VIII. At least one private house has medieval wall paintings.

St Mary's Church in Wendover was built in the 14th century but there has been a church on the site since the 12th century. It is rather strange that it is so far from the centre of the town but it seems that the original settlement was around the Church. Wendover was granted a market in 1214 and a Royal Charter in 1464.

One of the jewels of our County, as far as medieval buildings are concerned, is old Amersham. These can be seen along the High Street, Whielden Street and elsewhere. A town was built there in Saxon Times called Agmodesham and then Eldmonesham in the Domes Day Book. It was granted a market by King John in 1200. Some of the buildings have been given new frontages at various times in the past but are probably still medieval inside, even if the evidence has been covered by more modern decoration.

More evidence of medieval settlement can be seen in a plethora of moated sites throughout the County. There are reckoned to be 6000 moated sites in England. Manor Farm near Aylesbury is one of these. There are medieval earthworks northeast of the junction between the A41 and Broughton Lane. Artefacts from the site include medieval pottery, a 13th century tile, an iron key and a coin from Mary I (1553-58). It was the site of a medieval Manor of Broughton Staveley which may have been given to Missenden Abbey in the first half of the 12th century. Grove Farm, near Ellesborough, is another moated site. It includes a sub-oval island with fishponds and the remains of a medieval dovecote, 6 metres in width, made from brick and flint.

Many villages were depopulated after the Black Death or abandoned for other reasons. Lack of people to work in the fields saw much land turned over to animal husbandry. In Quarrenden the Lee family transformed the landscape into a pastoral one. In the 18th and 19th centuries

the Vale of Aylesbury moved from open fields to farms and depopulated settlements. The growth of private parks and gardens also depopulated areas, for example Stowe, Hartwell and Mentmore whose build by the Rothschilds destroyed the Hamlet of Crafton.

With the growth of capitalism after the Industrial Revolution our County grew. There is no room here to include the many changes in the County since then but in the past two centuries we have seen much building of new homes which we do need, however, it would be nice to think that some foresighted developer and the planners might wish to emulate Watermead and so give modern people a delightful place to live.

Val Edwards

Large lake footpaths in Watermead now open

Watermead Parish Council is pleased to announce that the building work to create a new raised walkway and install new and improved paths for all residents and visitors to Watermead is now complete and the walkway is open. It is great to see the vision for this vital community facility now open. It was the single most requested item in our first neighbourhood plan questionnaire.

We are very grateful to FCC Communities Foundation and Buckinghamshire Council Community Board for their funding without which this project could not have gone ahead.

Since the new pathway has opened our Grounds Team have been on site to tidy the vegetation to create a natural walkway to the lakeside edge and the Vale Countryside Volunteers have held two working group days to enhance the area. This has created a horseshoe shaped walk from Kestrel Way down to the lake and round to the other end of the walkway.

The second phase, completing the path by the crematorium, has been postponed. The Environment Agency has not approved the plans for the bridge over "the dip" where water pours from the river into the lake, as they believe it to be too close to the River Thames. Funding is not available at present but the Parish Council will apply for funding once they have met with the Environment Agency to discuss how their objections to the bridge can be addressed. We obviously hope that the work can be carried out in the near future.

Watermead Parish Council



Before the wooden footpath was installed



As we welcomed children back to Footsteps Watermead this September, we have been doing lots of activities as part of our "All About Me" focus area to facilitate forming friendships amongst their peers as well as helping staff to really get to know our children and their families. Our expert and dedicated team help to encourage children to learn about different types of people, families, ethnicities and home situations which is a great way for children to feel safe around one another and to share their thoughts and ideas. The fun we have at Footsteps is never reserved solely for our children. And the new term is a great way for our families to come and join us to see what we get up to! So on the 3rd October we had our Autumn Stay and Play! The weather was on our side and there was plenty on offer for our parents to get involved in together. We enjoyed lots of activities inside and out as well as a cake sale for Macmillan Cancer Support and enjoyed lots of yummy treats like unicorn cupcakes and chocolate crispy cakes. We also had some incredible prizes donated for our Raffle such as tickets to Beckonscot, to animal adventures at Tiggywinkles and Bucks Goat centre, not forgetting all the sweet treats, beauty vouchers and wine too. So far we have raised £155.00!

As we moved further into October we have been celebrating the Autumn season, our amazing team for Nursery Practitioner Day, as well as having some spooktacular Halloween fun. Our Forest School

sessions have seen lots of lovely walks to feed the ducks, some seasonal planting, collecting coloured leaves, conkers and natural materials, bug hunting and practising using tools safely. We have also been supporting our Aylesbury Vineyard with our Harvest collections and they were very grateful for all of the amazing donations.

It's been a sensory sensation as we have explored touch, smell, sight, listening and tasting. We have been dressing up, singing, dancing, exploring pumpkins, and lots of ghoulishly good craft, messy play painting, printing, experimenting, drawing and using our imaginations in our role play area. We even became kings and queens for the day in our giant cardboard castle. We loved celebrating Diwali and looking at Rangoli patterns in our tuff tray – and also enjoyed our samosa snacks, of course!

We can't wait to find out more about all of our children in the second half of this term with an action packed program of activities looking at fireworks, Remembrance Day, Road Safety Week and Christmas all coming soon.

For more information about Footsteps Watermead visit www.footsteps-nursery.com/watermead

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Watermead Pub Lunch Club

The success of our Watermead Pub Lunch Club continues to attract on average about 40 people each month on the first Wednesday of the month to the Watermead Inn. They enjoy a limited menu for a very reasonable price and convivial company. It's a great opportunity to meet people and make friends. We are now looking forward to our Christmas lunch in December.

Kelvin provides us with a varied menu with a choice of three main courses including one vegetarian, and a choice of delicious desserts, or you can have a tea or coffee. Due to recent increases in food and energy prices, we have had to increase the cost of the lunch to £12, but this is still very good value.

The Club is aimed at anyone within our community especially those who may have been missing out on regular social contact. We now have a mixed group of over 60 members and everyone appears to enjoy the food and the company.

If you would like to join us the Pub Lunch is held on the first Wednesday of the month at 12:30pm in the restaurant of the Watermead Inn. If you know someone who might benefit from getting out and about a bit more, then please do get in touch. All you have to do is book at least a week in advance by calling **Mary Singleton on 07986 582903** or text her on that number providing your email address and she will provide you with all the information you need.

This is a Community Impact Bucks initiative and bookings can only be made through the local organiser whose contact details are given above.



Book review

The last John Le Carré? SILVERVIEW

Despite its James Bond-ish title, this is very much not John Le Carré's send-up of Goldfinger. Unless he left some notes or incomplete manuscripts for somebody else to knock into shape (hopefully not), Silverview is the final novel from Mr Le Carré. A Polish émigré called Edward Avon is at the heart of the story. City high-flier Julian Lawndesley, who has retreated to an unnamed seaside village to open a bookshop, finds that Edward is a neighbour with knowledge of Julian's father's secrets. And Stewart Proctor, a middle-ranking figure in MI6, is investigating an intelligence leak that seems to point to Edward.

Proctor is a blatant clone of George Smiley, our favourite spy chief (Proctor even has a faithless wife), and there's more than one female with strong echoes of the 'Circus' archivist Connie Sachs (Beryl Reid memory played her in the TV Smileys), which makes Silverview read a bit like a pastiche of the author's most famous works. Some of the scenes of marital life recall The Naive and Sentimental Lover (my least favourite of his books); and they come with an acerbic tone reminiscent of Muriel Spark and Fay Weldon. Le Carré switches erratically between past and present tense, sometimes in the same paragraph, which many readers will surely find annoying. The book has a surprising but entirely appropriate ending.

Silverview lacks the magisterial tone of the Smiley books and some of the later polemical novels, but it does serve to remind us that this was one of the finest writers of his time, producing – like Graham Greene, with whom Le Carré was always compared –

novel after novel that illuminated the bitter betrayals of the spy-world and of the human heart. All Le Carré's books seem to convey, vividly, that sense that – against great odds – 'Look, we have come through.' RIP.

David Gee



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Watermead Garden Society

Gardening can be hard work but I always remind myself that **it's doing me good, working out muscles that occasionally do not get enough exercise. It may be hard work but the produce is a great reward. Gardening is one of those pursuits you can do simply or get completely involved in the complexities or science of the subject.** Let me give an example. Brassicas (cabbages, cauliflower, kale etc) like being planted in soil that has grown Legumes, (peas and beans) as they will benefit from the extra nitrogen in the soil as the legume roots break down. Whichever approach you use, simple or complex, a little thought will pay dividends.

I am not an expert but, looking around at the fields surrounding our parish, the farmers have already ploughed their fields and, in some cases, have sowed the next crop. The soil at this time of the year is not too wet or dry so now is the ideal time to start tidying up your garden or allotment plot and, if applicable, digging in manure or getting rid of the weeds. There are many ways to grow veg or flowers, in tubs, deep beds, open plots etc. I prefer a mix of all of these. Deep beds have gained in popularity because they are easy to maintain and they can be simply built or acquired especially if you know someone in the industry.

Manure puts goodness back into the soil and does not have to be smelly or distasteful. I learnt early on that the many stables around Aylesbury have trouble getting rid of their piles of dung and are only too happy for you to take it (for free). The stables I frequent is very near the Berton Crematorium and I always take from the well-rotted end (non-smelly, etc). I ensure I have plenty for my needs now and then I fill a compost-bin for later. You need to make sure the vegetables you are planning to plant like manure; some prefer soil that has been manured the previous year.

Next you need plants. I am lazy so I buy mine from the Garden Centres but the keen gardeners grow their own. Aylesbury

Gardening Society (on Old Stoke Road) sell seeds and other garden resources cheaply to the public. It is open on Sunday mornings (9-12) and membership is £2 annually. One great advantage of joining is that the trading arm is manned by volunteers who know their onions and all the other plants as well so can offer excellent advice.

Having bought your seeds, now is the time to be planting winter cabbages, onions, and broad beans. The advantage is that they become hardy over-wintering and you get a longer growing season. Pests will attack your plants. One way to help prevent this is to rotate the crops. So, potatoes one-year, next beans and peas followed by cabbages, then you start again. There are countless other schemes to try. For example, planting nasturtiums alongside carrots as it helps prevent carrot fly attacking. Another idea is not to rip out plants once they have produced their crop. I have had five purple-sprouting plants produce heads for over seven weeks. Or you could cut a deep cross in the stalk of a cabbage once you have cut the head; this should encourage five small heads to grow in about six weeks.

Composting is important as it gives you an excellent cheap source of great quality soil for planting out your next batch of plants. If your garden is too small, remember the Parish hires allotments to residents. If you want more gardening information, I can recommend the Royal Horticultural Society's Allotment Handbook published by Octopus Books. Finally, remember it should be fun!



Peter Smith

Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Neighbourhood Plan Team are delighted to report that **significant progress has been made over the past few months. Although the Open Day planned for the summer had to be postponed due to the sad loss of HM the Queen, the event was successfully reorganised for 1st November and held at the Watermead Inn (thank you Kelvin Wong).** We are very pleased to report that drafting of the Plan is going well with several sections now being reviewed by our 'retained' specialist in preparation for the final draft which will be shared with all key stakeholders.

The engagement of AECOM to produce the 'design code', a vital element of all Plans, has been tremendously successful and we now also have this in draft format and under review.

We are also pleased to report that one of our new Parish Councillors, Dan Forder, has generously volunteered to draft the 'wildlife and biodiversity' section of the Plan which, as you can imagine, is a hugely important element for Watermead. Those of you who know of Dan will also know he has a wealth of knowledge and skills to do this most effectively.

The Team has set itself a challenging timescale of producing the first draft of the 'full' Neighbourhood Plan by the end of the first quarter of 2023. There's a lot to be done, but it's more critical than ever that the Parish has an Approved Neighbourhood Plan in place as a matter of urgency.

Please look out for more Open Days and opportunities to engage with the Team or contact us via our Parish Clerk, Noreen Shardlow.

Mick Morgan



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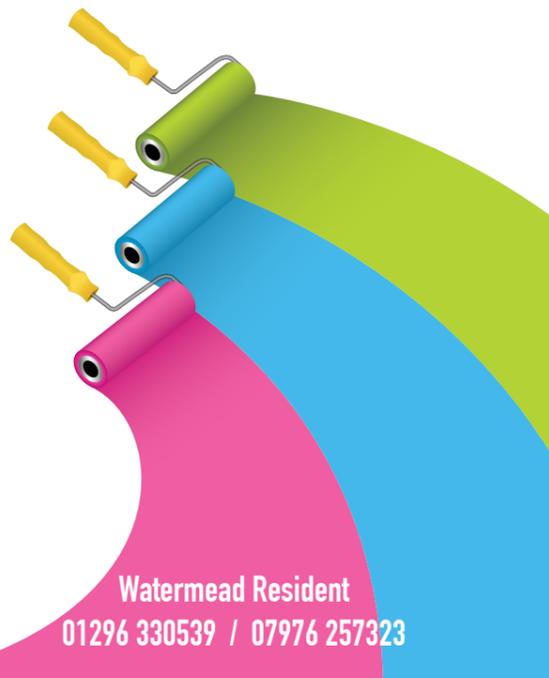
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Best Christmas

DECORATED HOUSE 2022

Join in Watermead's Christmas Lights display for a chance to win a bottle of Champagne to toast in the New Year!

For over a hundred years it has been the tradition to decorate our homes at Christmas time and this has extended to decorating the exteriors too. This includes gardens which some people fill with Christmassy and wintry scenes. It is wonderful to walk around the streets at Christmastime and to see the variety of decorations and objects that people place in their gardens.

Some people say that our Carol Concert in the Piazza (this year on Saturday 10th December) marks the beginning of Christmas for them. As Christmas approaches we hope that Watermead residents will join us to spread the message of hope, peace and joy through Christmas lights.

Every home within Watermead will be eligible. The judges will be walking all the streets of Watermead to ensure that everyone is included. However, if you wish to nominate yourself or a neighbour please send an email to the Editor, Mary Singleton at mary.singleton@watermead-pc.gov.uk. Judging will take place between Christmas and New Year. The winner will be announced on the Parish notice boards and on our website on New Year's Day.

Prize: Bottle of Champagne.

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

