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*A helping hand to shape your land*

# Challow News



*December 2021*

*January 2022*

EDITION

# St. Nicholas Church, East Challow.

OX12 9SH

(Vale Benefice)

## Parish Eucharist

Sundays: 11.15am

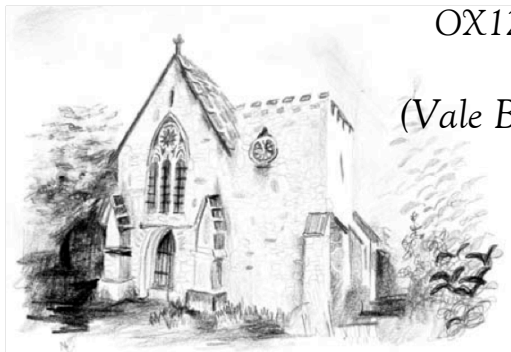
11.00 am From Jan 2022

## Family Service

Temporarily Suspended

## Weekday Eucharist

Thursdays 10am



## Vicar: Rev John Durant

The Vicarage, Main Street, Grove. OX12 7LQ

01235 766484

Email: vicar@valebenefice.org.uk

## Associate Vicar: Rev Alec Gill

07739 563894

Email: vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk

## Curate: Rev Chris Ashton

Email: curatechris@valebenefice.org.uk

## Licensed Lay Minister: Sue Powditch

Email: llm@valebenefice.org.uk

## Benefice Office: Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove. OX12 7LQ

Open: Mon - Fri 10.00 - 12.00

Tel: 01235 771479

Email: office@valebenefice.org.uk

## Churchwardens

Mrs Ruth Pepler: 01235 762197

Mrs Liz Belcher: 01235 763966

## Pastoral Support

To help our Vicars Revd John Durant and Revd Alec Gill in the pastoral support of the village, Liz Belcher will be acting as the local contact within the village for those who are in need of a home visit, home communion or other support that we as a church may be able to provide.

If we can help, please contact Liz on 01235 763966

## Parish Council Vacancy

A vacancy has arisen for a Parish Councillor. If you are interested in joining the Parish Council please contact the Chairman c/o the Clerk for more information.

## Parish Council Meetings

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 7.30pm

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm

All Villagers are invited to attend Parish Council meetings as observers.

## Parish Councillors

Vanessa Bosley: (Chair) 01235 764068

Frances Webb (Vice Chair) 01235 765176

Sarah Parker, Trevor Hayes, Paul Barrow, Iris Game

## Clerk to East Challow Parish Council

e-mail: [eastchallowclerk@gmail.com](mailto:eastchallowclerk@gmail.com)

## Solutions

S	D	R	E	H		D	E	D	I	O	V	A
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## Advertising

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[nigel.langford@me.com](mailto:nigel.langford@me.com)

Please Quote:

1 - MTH

## PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meeting takes place in the Village Hall at 7.30pm  
on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

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

### ***Season's Greetings!***

The Parish Councillors send their best wishes to all residents for a very  
Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

### ***Many Thanks***

The Parish Council would like to thank all those who have helped during the  
year to keep the Village running in so many ways that often go un noticed,  
they are too numerous to mention individually – **we thank them all.**

### **CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR WASTE COLLECTIONS**

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day	Which Bin
<b>Mon 27th Dec</b>	<b>Wed 29th Dec</b>	<b>Black &amp; Food</b>
<b>Mon 3rd Jan</b>	<b>Thu 6th Jan</b>	<b>Green &amp; Food</b>
<b>Mon 10th Jan</b>	<b>Wed 12th Jan</b>	<b>Black &amp; Food</b>
<b>Mon 17th Jan</b>	<b>Tue 18th Jan</b>	<b>Green &amp; Food + Brown [Garden]</b>

### **Christmas Tree Recycling Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

Please take your old Christmas Tree to the East Challow  
Village Hall car park for recycling.

Trees left after this date will not be recycled.

### ***East Challow Neighbourhood Plan***

Please try and make time to have a look, it's available on the Parish  
Council website and hard copies will continue to be located in  
St. Nicholas Church and the Cricket Club during December.

(access times for the Cricket Club copy are Wednesday - Friday 2 - 4pm)

**We welcome your comments**

## VICAR'S LETTER - A PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

Dear Friends

I like celebrating Christmas.

One Christmas while I was Chaplain to the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire  
and Wiltshire Regiment based in Hounslow I was invited by the large Fijian  
contingent to share their Christmas meal, along with the Commanding  
Officer and the Borough Mayoress. The main food was fish cooked in a milky  
sauce. I think all of us three guests, though privileged to be invited, secretly  
wanted to be home with our families.

After last year's restrictions at Christmas many of us will be trying very hard  
to find time to spend with our loved ones. Though you may, like me, find  
that due to commitments and the fact that our family live away from us, it's  
impossible.

Christmas should be a time of love since we celebrate God's love in sending  
his Son to become a human being so he might save us from all that is not  
loving. How we express that love varies – it may be among our family or with  
strangers.

During that meal with the Fijians, the Mayoress was asking me about having  
no weapon whilst there is fighting going on and said; *"If there was a war  
where would you be?"* Quick as a flash before I could answer, the CO who  
overheard, said *"He would be with me!"*. His response implied that since the  
CO thought God was with me and would protect me, if I was with the CO he  
would be protected too.

Another reason to celebrate the birth of Christ is that he is Emmanuel –God  
with us. God came to be with us to rescue us from the scares, disruption,  
pain and evil of this world.

I like celebrating Christmas because even if life sometimes throws up more  
difficulties and challenges than are pleasant, we can rejoice that the Lord  
has promised to be with us as we trust him. As P. Brooks wrote in his carol  
*O come to us abide with us our Lord Emmanuel.*

So whether you are with loved ones or not, whether you are helping others  
less fortunate than yourselves or coping by yourself with the uncertainty of  
what could happen over winter; I do hope you experience the love of God  
as you celebrate the birth of our Saviour and know his presence with you.

God bless

John Durant

# Challow Royal British Legion

## "We Need You!" ...to help keep us open!

Its been a tough 18 months for everyone  
but for small clubs like ours  
its been devastating.



As a Royal British Legion Club we actively raise funds for the Poppy Appeal and attend commemorative events such as the Remembrance. However, all fund raising goes direct to the Poppy Fund and not to the Club so we also have to raise funds to maintain and keep the Club open.

We are looking for new **Members** and **Customers**.  
You don't have to be a member to use our facilities and you  
don't need to be anything to do with the military.  
All ages, adult and child, welcome.

Just look at what we have to offer:

**Beer from £3.50 a pint**

**Large 120 person capacity hall with a manned bar**

Hire for £75 evenings, £30 daytime

Ideal for Birthdays, Weddings, Kids parties etc.

**Lounge Bar**

**2 Snooker tables, Pool table**

**Darts, Poker, Bingo, and much more!**

Upcoming Events:

**Christmas Prize Bingo, Dec 4th, 7:30**

**Father Christmas Grotto, Boxing Day**

**Live 50s, 60s Music, New Years Eve Party**

We are opening up again and we would  
love to see you.

Find us at the top of the village  
or contact us on 01235 763430

Facebook: Challow Royal British Legion

**"Pop in and have a drink with us!"**



- ¥ it is a single carriageway in each direction, with 3 dualled sections at Kingston Bagpuize, A338 junction and Cumnor
- ¥ all connecting roads join the A420 at T junctions, with no slip roads or linking carriageways
- ¥ passenger buses run on the A420 with bus stops in the carriageway
- ¥ it runs through villages requiring residents to cross constant streams of very heavy traffic with very limited protection - County Council provided 2 pedestrian islands near Fyfield last year at my insistence after ( yet another) pedestrian fatality, but there is no protection at the Coxwells. at Faringdon, at Longcot or at Watchfield
- ¥ the resulting road accidents make it the 'road from hell' stated David Johnston MP in a submission to the roads Minister in 2020
- ¥ Swindon Borough Council acknowledge its limited capacity in calling for it to be dualled

### OCC's CURENT TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC's) Local Transport Strategy 4 designates HGV traffic to use M4/A34 except for diversions, but this is not required or enforced. Residents complain frequently about the growth of freight traffic on A420. When accidents occur, all traffic including HGVs, is diverted through our villages which are not suitable for HGV traffic, especially articulated carriers which should be required to use M4/A34.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE?

IN 2021 OCC is drawing up its next Local Transport and Connectivity Strategy with a public consultation on the 'visions' due to by the end of 2021. This will be the opportunity to make clear the limits of the current A420. We should press for definite restriction of HGV traffic, except for local deliveries, requiring through traffic to use M4/A34 to reduce the dangers of the current use of this road. (This consultation will not be area specific, but will be first opportunity to state the limits of the A420 in its current state.) The final transport strategy will have to be supported by Swindon.

IN 2022 England's Economic Heartland (EEH) is planning a road corridor study in 2022 of A34/A430 as one corridor to assess the impact of traffic through this area and how best to meet the ambitions for future development by Swindon and Oxfordshire. It will be important to have established the limits of A420 for that study.

### COMMENTS (personal) ON FUTURE PLANS

After close attention to A420 for past 5 years, and representing OCC at the EEH regional meetings in that time, it's clear that the solutions lie in solving the congestion of the A34, which is the sole link road from Southampton to the Midlands

At Hinskey Hill A34 joins Oxford City's local ring road, then picks up A420 traffic at Botley, A40 and A44 traffic at Peartree, before connecting with M40 at junction 9. It becomes a near-permanent traffic jam. OCC has long identified the need to separate OxCity's local traffic from A34 strategic traffic, and until that is resolved there is no solution to A420. Highways England is working ( slowly) on plans to improve the congestion, but no proposals are likely for some time.

Swindon Borough Council's proposal to dual A420 would not solve any problem at all : it would simply carry more Swindon/Oxford traffic faster from Swindon to the A34 traffic jam at Botley roundabout. It seems unlikely to convince any transport planner.

Cllr Yvonne Constance



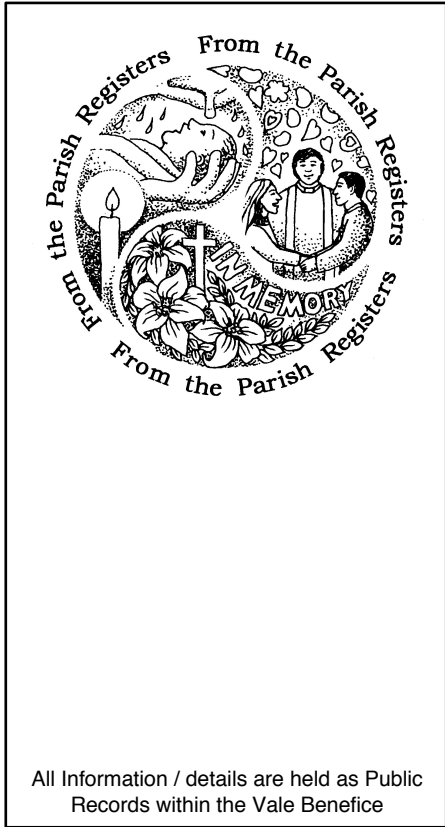
There were 2 major road-closing accidents on A420 in the last 10 days of October which remind us that this road is not fit for purpose. The recent public announcement by Swindon Borough Council about their ambition to dual the road only emphasises the fact that this road is carrying more traffic than its capacity, and it does not meet the ambitions of Swindon to develop as a freight distribution centre to serve their ambitions in the Oxford/Cambridge Arc.

Swindon's ambitions acknowledge that A420 is not currently suitable for the traffic it carries, and would certainly not meet its growing plans to become a still greater distribution centre and location for major new housing developments as part of the Arc.

In Oxfordshire we are aware that Swindon has built 1 million sq ft distribution space at Symmetry Park ( opposite the Swindon police station on A420) which is to be occupied by Amazon in near future and Go Outdoors has announced plans to move into the Park as well. The traffic impacts on the A420 are not yet understood, but it is clear that A420 through Oxfordshire will be expected to carry still more Swindon traffic. Redevelopment of the Honda site (675k sq ft) is also being planned, and Swindon has started an Environmental Impact Assessment of the suitability of the site, currently indicating that all traffic will be required to use the A419 to M4/A34. OCC officers are watching this EIA with close interest and I am urging OCC to ensure close contact with Swindon.

## CURRENT ISSUES WITH A420

This is the time to stress the limitations of the A420. There were plans to dual the road in the 2000s, but the funding went north (in Blair's time) and the road was de-trunked, removed from Highways Agency control and returned to County Council as a 'local road'. This road is clearly the shortest route between Swindon and Oxford, but quite unsuited to the traffic already carried: >>>>>>>>>>



- NEWS FROM THE PEWS -

December already.... the year has flown by and there is lots going on at St. Nicholas this month.

Last month the Service of Memories was a beautiful occasion and was attended well. We were able to remember loved ones that were lost over the last couple of years which had become even more difficult due to covid. There was coffee and cakes after, thanks to Mandy, so people were able to have a chat and a cuppa.

Our patronal festival is being celebrated on the 5<sup>th</sup>.  
St Nicholas was the bishop of Myra in the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
century he is credited with helping the needy,  
particularly children. After his death the legend of  
his gift giving over the years transformed into  
Santa Claus who of course brings presents to  
children all over the world at Christmas.

**On the 19<sup>th</sup> December we are having our  
Carol Service at 10.00 am**

and luckily we are able to resume our annual

**Christmas Eve Crib Service at 4.30 pm**

**Midnight Mass will start at 11.30 pm.**

**Christmas Day service will be at 11.15 am.**

So there is a lot going on.

Please try to join us in some of the celebrations.

***In the New year our Sunday Service will be starting slightly earlier at 11.00 am.***

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year.

Keep safe and look after each other.

Liz

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& overall  
development"**



The first few items are parish related but nevertheless important

## East Challow neighbourhood Plan – reminder



I have mentioned that we are currently undertaking the public consultation phase of our neighbourhood plan which requires feed-back from parish residents. The consultation started on November 10th and will close on December 22nd. Hard copies are located in the church (Mon-Wed 10am-4pm) and cricket club (Thurs-Sat in Nov and Wed-Fri in December, 2-4pm). It is also available on the parish council website <http://www.eastchallowpc.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

Please make sure you look at this and feed back any comments to me [paul.barrow@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:paul.barrow@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) or leave comments in the church or cricket club.

## Speeding VAS/SID

You may have seen that the speed indicator (VAS – Vehicle Activated Speed) sign outside the Old School House has been replaced free of charge by the county council. We are negotiating with them to see if we can get a bigger, flashy SID (Speed Indicator Device – see <https://www.elancity.co.uk/evolix-radar-speed-sign/>) similar to the one in East Hanney and elsewhere.

## Covid cases, masks and common sense

Levels of Covid continue to increase and in Oxfordshire (<https://phdashboard.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>) the total number of cases in the last three months (the area under the graph) is greater than during last winter! Whether or not we receive further advice from central government this winter, the county director of public health is encouraging us all to wear masks where appropriate.

Please also remember that vaccines have been effective at controlling measles and other killer diseases for decades and a vaccine was responsible for eliminating smallpox from the world. Vaccination has been shown to be effective since the days of Pasteur (1879!).

Please get yourself Covid-vaccinated if you haven't already done so.

***CLlr Dr. Paul Barrow***



## OUR XMAS, NEW YEAR AND WINTER OFFERING

Bar opening times over the Festive period will be

XMAS EVE	4pm – 10pm
XMAS DAY	11am – 2pm
BOXING DAY	11am – 3pm
MONDAY 27 <sup>th</sup>	CLOSED
TUESDAY 28 <sup>th</sup>	CLOSED
NEW YEAR'S EVE	CLOSED
NEW YEAR'S DAY	CLOSED
SUNDAY 2 <sup>nd</sup>	11am – 3pm

Bar opening times through the Winter and Spring will generally be

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	4pm – 7pm
Thursday	4pm – 7pm (10pm when Darts match is on)
Friday	4pm – 9pm
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	11am – 3pm

The clubhouse is available to hire for a range of events through the 'close season' either during the day or in the evening, and makes a superb setting for your birthday, anniversary, christening or wake.

Please contact us to discuss your function requirements, we will always look to do whatever we can to make your event a success.

Remember that everyone is welcome at Challow, membership is not required to enjoy the facilities (although it does mean we can keep you up to date with news and events at the Club)

[www.challowcricket.co.uk](http://www.challowcricket.co.uk)  
[admin@challowcricket.co.uk](mailto:admin@challowcricket.co.uk)  
 01235 763335

## St. Nicholas - Service Information

DATE		READER	READINGS
December 5th	<i>Patronal Festival</i>	Alan or Ruth	Isaiah 61: 1-3 1 Timothy 6: 6-11 Luke 3: 1-6
December 12th	<i>Advent 2</i>	Peter	Zephaniah 3: 14-20 Philippians 4: 4-7 Luke 3: 7-18
December 19th	<i>Advent 3</i>	Carol Service ~ 10.00 am	
Christmas Eve	<i>Advent 4</i>	Crib Service ~ 4.30 pm	
Christmas Eve	<i>Midnight Mass</i>	Nigel	Isaiah 9: 2-7 Titus 2: 11-14 Luke 2: 4-20
Christmas Day	<i>Christmas Eucharist</i>	Graham	Isaiah 9: 2-7 Titus 3: 4-7 John 1: 1-14
December 26th	<i>No Service at St. Nicholas</i>		
Sunday Services will commence at 11.00 am from January 2022			
January 2nd	<i>Epiphany</i>	Alan or Ruth	Jeremiah 31: 7-14 2 Corinthians 8: 1-9 John 1: [1-9] 10-18
January 9th	<i>Epiphany 1</i>	Peter	Isaiah 43: 1-7 2 Corinthians 8: 10-15 Luke 3: 15-22
January 16th	<i>Epiphany 2</i>	Jenny or Jeff	Isaiah 62: 1-5 2 Corinthians 8: 16-25 John 2: 1-11
January 23rd	<i>Epiphany 3</i>	Graham	Nehemiah 8: 1-3 5-6 8-10 2 Corinthians 9: 1-8 Luke 4: 18-19
January 30th	<i>Epiphany 4</i>	Mary	Ezekiel 43: 27-44.4 2 Corinthians 9: 9-15 Luke 2: 22-40

### 200 Club

We wish all members of the 200 club a  
Peacefull & Joyous Christmas.

We would also like to **Thank You** for your continued support

# Bonny's Taxi

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Airports, Sea Ports and Railway Stations  
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## THANK YOU

To all our Advertisers and Supporters of the Challow News and especially to **The Loyal Band of Volunteers** who deliver this newsletter through the letter boxes of everyone's home throughout the parish of East Challow each month.



*Happy Christmas*



## St. Nicholas Church 200 Club - Monthly Draw

### November Results

£50 - N° 21 - Mrs H. Smith  
£20 - N° 41 - Mrs Sam Swift  
£10 - N° 17 - Mrs C. Cannings

### We are looking for more members ~ Would you like to join?

Subscriptions to the 200 Club contribute towards the £20,000 which is required annually to keep our village Church open, in good repair and available for all who wish to use it.

**The 200 Club is a monthly draw with 3 prizes each month - £50, £20 and £10  
There is an additional prize of £100 in December.**

The draw takes place on the first Sunday of every month, during coffee after morning service. The cost is £2 per number per month, which can be paid monthly, 6 monthly or annually, and can be paid for by Cash or Standing Order.

**If you would like to join the 200 Club, please contact Tricia Shand  
Email: [the.shandies@btinternet.com](mailto:the.shandies@btinternet.com)  
Telephone: 01235 764222**

## > Community Notice Board <

### WANTAGE SILVER BAND

**Christmas Supper Concert  
Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

East Challow Village Hall

Arrive 7pm for 7.30pm

### Music with a Christmas Theme

Supper - included in Ticket Price  
Licensed Bar Available

> > **All Tickets £12** < <

Tickets Available

**01235 - 770378**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Colin Moss, 28 Hedge Hill Rd, East Challow

**01235 765206**

Regent Bookshop, Regent Arcade, Wantage.

The Pharmacy at Grove

**On-line at: [www.wantageband.org](http://www.wantageband.org)**

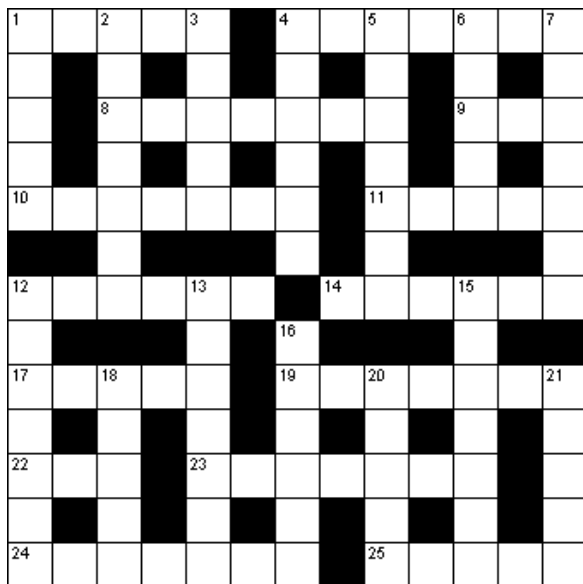
### Christmas Lights

**If everyone can have their displays up and  
illuminated for the weekend of**

**18th & 19th December**

*Together we can put our village on the map  
for some great displays again this year....*





Solutions on Page 22

### Across

1. Gem (5)
4. Shade of yellow tinged with orange (7)
8. Symetrically arranged (7)
9. Pouch (3)
10. Two-wheeled vehicle (7)
11. Publish (5)
12. Patisserie (6)
14. Syntactic category (6)
17. Wanderer (5)
19. Stone pillar (7)
22. Mesh (3)
23. Floorshow (7)
24. Stayed clear from (7)
25. Groups of cattle (5)

### Down

1. Jests (5)
2. Male witch or demon (7)
3. Source of illumination (5)
4. Remuneration (6)
5. Surreptitious (7)
6. Hazards (5)
7. Type of power (7)
12. Very rich vein of precious ore (7)
13. Made smaller (7)
15. Vagrant (7)
16. Prohibit (6)
18. Slogan (5)
20. Planet (5)
21. Praise (5)

## LISTENING

*In this world when tempos are speeding  
And folks have no time to spare  
It's now and again, Just now and again  
You'll suddenly be aware.....  
That someone is actually listening  
And wanting to hear what you say.  
They're thinking about what you are saying  
And it really will make your day.  
Oh,-most folks are polite and will stand there,  
They won't walk away-it is true  
But you watch their eyes-they're not listening  
Their thoughts are not tuned to you  
If you're one of those who will listen  
To folks who have something to say  
You're blessed with a gift-a very rare gift  
AND I hope I will meet you one day!!.*

**Margaret Haynes**

The poem above was received from David Haynes in response to reading vicar Alecs' Pause for Thought in last months edition. It reminded him of his late mothers poem on the same theme of Listening



*We don't sing carols no more...  
you 'ave to listen to 'em off me iPod!*

# ALDER'S ELECTRICAL

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📘 facebook.com/AldersElectrical

✉ brook@alderselectrical.com

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## Advertise your business in the Challow News

For more details

Contact: [nigel.langford@me.com](mailto:nigel.langford@me.com)

## Christmas Craft Fair

Friends of St Nicholas C of E Primary School are holding a Christmas Craft Fair to raise vital funds for our Village School.

**Saturday 11th December 1pm - 5pm**  
**at the Royal British Legion Club**

Stalls are £10 per table plus a raffle prize donation

If you would like a stall to sell at the event please contact  
Emma Amor [emma.amor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:emma.amor@hotmail.co.uk)

Entry to the fair will be £1 per Adult, Children free.



*Do you suffer with back, neck  
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www.progressivephysiotherapy.co.uk



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**CHALLOW NEWS**

\* \* \* \* \*

contact

nigel.langford@me.com

### **Why you should never play Fetch with sticks**

Dogs and sticks do not mix, and now vets have issued a warning about the possible dangers. Following two incidents where dogs chasing sticks impaled themselves and nearly died, the British Veterinary Association (BVA) warns that getting your dog to run with a stick can be life-threatening, and as it can lodge down their throat or puncture their soft palette or even paws.

Instead, people should use blunt toys that cannot piece flesh, such as rubber sticks, balls and frisbees.

Senior vice-president of the BVA said: "Vets frequently see dog injuries caused by sticks, ranging from cuts and scrapes in the mouth to the stick becoming lodged in their throat. I have seen cases of traumatic stick injuries that have needed extensive surgery to fix.

"We would never discourage owners from exercising or playing with their dog, but our advice is to swap sticks for dog-safe toys instead, and so avoid such easily preventable and distressing injuries."

### **Beware raw sewage**

If you are thinking of doing any wild swimming dips over the Christmas break, bear this in mind: more than half of England's major rivers are polluted with raw or partially treated sewage.

This is partly because water companies have been allowed to release raw sewage into rivers and seas as part of a 'combined sewer overflow' – a legacy of Britain's Victorian drainage systems. It has allowed for rainwater and liquid waste to be combined in the same tanks.

This overflow into waterways has acted as an escape valve, stopping floods in homes and streets. The overflow option is meant only for an emergency, but in fact, it took place more than 400,000 times last year.

### **Buy them books**

Buy your children some books for Christmas. It seems that more books in your home in childhood can help stave off dementia in later life, according to a recent study.

It found that children who are exposed to the written word from a young age, form more resilience against degenerative processes which can lead to Alzheimer's.

Nurturing our brain in our early years boosts our 'cognitive reserves', as intellectually stimulating activities like reading create extra connections in the brain. That acts as a long-term buffer against cognitive decline in later life.

The study was done at the School of Public Health at the University of Haifa in

### **How many trees are enough?**

How many Christmas trees will you have this year? Last year many bored families, stuck at home during the festive season, decided to branch out and set up two or more Christmas trees – often one in a pot for the front of the house, and a bigger one inside.

It seems that two trees helped people to feel more festive. According to John Lewis and Waitrose, more than 268,000 feet of Christmas trees were purchased last Christmas – equivalent to nine times the height of Mount Everest. That takes a lot of fairy lights and baubles!

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## All entries for the February Issue of the Challow News

Must be submitted by

**15th January 2022**

Email: [nigel.langford@me.com](mailto:nigel.langford@me.com)

## TOPICAL TALK

### Dwindling wildlife in Britain

Be kind to the wildlife in your garden – what little of it remains. The UK is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries, and it may not even have enough biodiversity - variety of plant and animal life - to prevent an ecological meltdown.

That is the finding of new data by the Natural History Museum. It says that the UK has an average of only 53 per cent of its natural biodiversity left, well below the global average of 75 per cent.

Worldwide, scientists warn that the variety of plant and animal life of earth is dwindling fast. It will have a serious impact on human life: "those systems have lost enough to mean that we have to be careful about relying on them functioning in the way that we need them to."

### A new Bible for all your family

In partnership with Youth for Christ and several other family-focussed organisations, the Bible Society has created an edition of the Bible specifically designed for families.

***The Good News Bible – Family Edition* has plenty of features to help each member of the family engage with the Bible at their own pace.**

The Bible Society says: "We know that doing Bible reading as a group can be difficult, so we have designed this new Bible to be a resource that encourages families to respond creatively to the text, whilst supporting individual preferences for engaging.

**Based on the five themes of THINK, CHAT, DO, CREATE and WATCH, the Bible contains "plenty of interactions" to suit every member of a family.**

The aim is to allow families "to journey through the Bible together", and in the process come closer to God, and to each other.

Find out more at: [biblesociety.org.uk/gnbfamily](http://biblesociety.org.uk/gnbfamily)

### Be kind

Try to be kind to each other this Christmas: many of us could do with some gentle encouragement. Depression and anxiety have risen by more than a quarter since the pandemic, according to the first global estimate of Covid's impact on mental health last year. The reduced interaction of people, the increase in isolation, coupled by high infection rates, were the cause of more than 125 million extra cases of depression and anxiety disorders in 2020.

The findings, published in the Lancet, reported that globally, depressive disorders have increased by 28 per cent, and anxiety by 26 per cent.

### Plastic spending

We spent more than £4 in every £5 by using plastic last year, according to the British Retail Consortium. Debit and credit card transactions accounted for 81 per cent of all our spending, up from 78 per cent in 2019.

For the first time, we used our debit cards for more than half (54 per cent) of all our transactions. Cash accounted for 15 per cent of our total spending in retail, down from 20 per cent in 2019.

# Christmas Services at St. Nicholas

*Sunday 19th December at 10.00 am*

## *Carol Service*

Everyone is welcome to come and join in with us singing all of your favourite carols

there will also be refreshments afterwards of

Mince Pies & Mulled Wine

Tea / Coffee or Juice

Christmas Eve

4.30 pm

*Carols around the Crib*



Christmas Day

11.15 am

*Christmas Eucharist*

Christmas Eve

11.30 pm

*Midnight Mass*

