

# Challow News

~ MARCH ~

2024

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## Happy Easter

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## St. Nicholas Church

East Challow. OX12 9SH

### Parish Eucharist

Sundays - 11.00 am

### Weekday Eucharist

Thursdays - 10.00 am

(30 minute said service)

### Associate Vicar: Rev Alec Gill

07739 563894

Email: vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk

### Licensed Lay Ministers

**Sue Powditch**

01235 768141

Email: llm@valebenefice.org.uk

**Sarah Shackleton**

07587 776609

### 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

## St. Nicholas Church

### Churchwarden

Mrs Liz Belcher: 01235 763966

### Deputy Churchwarden

Dr. Jeff Penfold: 01235 763173

## Churches of the Vale Benefice

St. Johns - Grove

St. James - West Hanney

St. Nicholas - East Challow

St. James - Denchworth

### Weddings ~ Baptisms

### Blessing & Thanksgiving

For further information please contact:

### Vale Benefice Office

Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove.  
OX12 7LQ

Monday - Friday 10.00 - 12.00

**01235 771479**

Email: office@valebenefice.org



### INFORMATION

It is only Baptisms,  
Weddings, Thanksgivings  
and Funerals  
which have taken place at  
St. Nicholas Church  
which are recorded here

All Information / Details are held as Public  
Records within the Vale Benefice

## Pause for Thought

In the dim and distant past when I was taking O' levels, as they were called then, I took an O' level in 'House Craft'. It covered everything one might need to know for looking after the home. The teacher, I can't remember her name now, was a fanatic about cleanliness, and we students used to roll our eyes as she went on and on about it.

We have to bear in mind this was the time before such things as branded odour busters or easy to use antibacterial sprays – good old bleach was about the only thing you could buy. But despite her being a figure of fun to us, in retrospect I realise now that she knew a thing or two. She was a great advocate of the cleansing and antibacterial properties of sunlight and fresh air. She would wax lyrical about clothes drying on the washing line on a sunny day and the importance of throwing open the curtains to drench the room in as much sun light as possible to get rid of the germs. She also endorsed the 'Spring Clean', something that seems to have gone out of fashion – certainly in my house.

When you read this we will still be in the season of Lent, the season in the Christian Church's calendar leading up to the Cross of Good Friday and Jesus' glorious resurrection on Easter Day. The word Lent has Old English and Germanic origins; Lenten 'spring' and 'lengthening' of days. As we journey through Lent and the spring days get longer we are encouraged to contemplate the true cost of what Jesus has done for us by dying and rising to new life. We are encouraged to surrender ourselves to God's spiritual 'Spring Clean' in our life; to prayerfully re-examine our life and to say sorry for the things that stop us being the people God created us to be.

Think of this process as placing ourselves under the warm gaze of a loving parent rather than a cold searchlight, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12).

So, as we continue through Lent and celebrate Easter, let's take the opportunity to throw back the curtains as it were, and let in the cleansing, healing sunlight and receive the deep cleansing of God – the deep healing of his Son's light into the dark and raw areas of our lives.

I wish you a very Happy Easter.

### Velma Oxley

Retired church minister living in West Hanney



### INFORMATION

You can now find details of all the Services and Festivals  
on the St. Nicholas page of a "Church Near You" website

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5811/>

you can also view and download

Church Rotas, Service Information and also this issue of the Challow News

## St. Nicholas Church ~ Rotas

Date	Sides Person	Sacristan	Reader	Prayers	Organist
3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Frances & Nigel	Philip	Alan / Ruth	Philip	Ruth
10 <sup>th</sup> March	Linda & Noel	Mary	Graham	Mary	Ruth
17 <sup>th</sup> March	Liz & Jeff	Jenny	Jeff	Jenny	Graham
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Tricia & Sue	Nigel	Clare / Nigel	Paul	Graham
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Philip & Nigel	Ruth	Mary	Jeff	Graham

Date	Coffee	Flowers	Cleaning
3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Mandy	LENT	Linda / Liz
10 <sup>th</sup> March	Jan & Hillary	LENT	Linda / Liz
17 <sup>th</sup> March	Val & Barbera	LENT	Mandy
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Linda & Janet	LENT	Mandy
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Everyone	Everyone	Sue & Tricia

~ If you are unable to attend please arrange cover for your week ~

Thursday Sacristan	
7 <sup>th</sup> March	Mary
14 <sup>th</sup> March	Jenny
21 <sup>st</sup> March	Heather
28 <sup>th</sup> March	Mandy

All entries for the **April 2024**  
Issue of the Challow News  
Must be submitted by  
**15th March 2024**  
Email: [nigel.langford@me.com](mailto:nigel.langford@me.com)

St. Nicholas Church

## Coffee Morning



**10.30 - Midday**  
**Thursday 7th March**

If you would like some refreshments  
or just like to sit down and have a  
chat with friends  
you are most welcome

## St Nicholas Church 11.00 am Sunday Services Information

3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Lent 3 Purple	Rev Velma Oxley	Exodus 20: 1 - 17 * 1 Corinthians 1: 18 - 25 <i>Gospel Reading ~ John 2: 13 - 22</i>
<b>Mothering Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 11.00 am</b>	Lent 4 Purple	Rev Alec Gill	Exodus 2: 1 - 10 *1 Samuel 1: 20 - 28 2 Corinthians 1: 3 - 7 *Colossians 3: 12 - 17 <i>Gospel Reading ~ Luke 2: 33 - 35</i> *John 19: 25 - 27
17 <sup>th</sup> March	Lent 5 Purple	T B A	Jeremiah 31: 31 - 34 * Hebrews 5: 5 - 10 <i>Gospel Reading ~ John 12: 20 - 33</i>
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Palm Sunday Red	T B A	Isaiah 50: 4 - 9a * Philippians 2: 5 - 11 <i>Gospel Reading ~ Mark 11: 1 - 12</i> *John 12: 12 - 16
<b>Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 7.30 pm</b>	Holy Week Red	T B A	Isaiah 50: 4 - 9a * Hebrews 12: 1 - 3 <i>Gospel Reading ~ John 13: 21 - 32</i>
<b>Good Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 12 noon</b>	Hangings Removed	T B A	<b>Service of Reflection</b>
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Easter Day Gold / White	T B A	Isaiah 25: 6 - 9 * <b>Acts 10: 34 - 43 (MUST BE READ)</b> <i>Gospel Reading ~ John 20: 1 - 18</i> *Mark 16: 1 - 8

\*Denotes alternative Reading



## Challows Royal British Legion

### Opening Hours

Monday - Friday 7.00 pm - Close

Saturday - 12.00 am - 12.00 pm

Sunday 12.00 am - 10.30 pm



## Sunday Night Bingo

(Eyes down at 8.00pm)



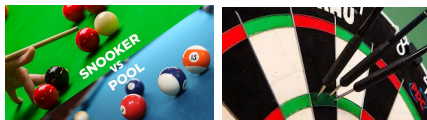
## Monday Night Poker



## Challows afternoon Club

meet monthly on every 3rd  
Thursday from 2.00 pm

**SKY SPORTS**  
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Come along and view all that  
the Club has to offer

Socialise over a drink from  
the Bar or a game of Darts,  
Snooker or Pool

## Ukey Dukes

16th March ~ 7.30 pm

Tickets £10.00

~ Non Members welcome ~

### Entertainment Dates 2024

20th April - Locarno Beat

18th May - Move It

22nd June - Blue Dayz

13th July - Fraud Squad

10th August - Miss Brodie

14th September - Mr Rock n Roll

5th October - Music Box

9th November - Aaron Cook

**£10.00 ~ Cash on the door**

### Planning an Event or Party

our Main Hall with kitchen facilities

are available to Hire

**01235 763430**



### Happy Birthday Barbie

It was 65 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1959 that the Barbie doll was first launched at the International Toy Fair in New York City. So, 9<sup>th</sup> March is Barbie's official birthday.

Here are some things you may not know about the doll:

Barbie is arguably the world's most popular doll. In fact, more than 100 are sold every minute.

Barbie is 11-inches (29cm) tall and made of plastic. She has dubious origins, for she was modelled on a curvaceous doll in Germany called Lilli, who had originated as a highly risqué cartoon character in the West German newspaper *Bild Zeitung*.

Barbie was designed by Jack Ryan, an engineer who worked on guided missile systems used by the US military. He developed her iconic twisting waist and bendable knee joints that clicked.

In 1959 Barbie was 'born' in Southern California, the brainchild of Ruth Handler, who had co-founded the Mattel toy company with her husband in 1945. She wanted an adult doll that would inspire girls in the same way action figures of firefighters and soldiers encourage boys.

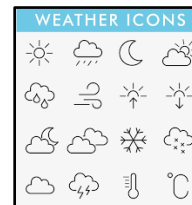
In 1961 Mattel launched Barbie's boyfriend, Ken. (The Handler's children were named Barbara and Ken.) In 1980, Barbie was given an African American incarnation and a Latino incarnation.

The original Barbie had impossible body proportions. If she had been human, she would have been 5 feet 9 inches tall and weigh 110 pounds. Her bust, waist, and hip measurements would be 36, 18, and 38 inches respectively. Her neck wouldn't be able to support her head, and her tiny ankles and feet would make walking impossible.

Barbie's first 'job' was as a fashion model. Since then, the doll has had more than 250 careers. These include being a surgeon, serving in the military, and even being an astronaut.

Barbie has been positioned as the 'ultimate American girl', but she has never been manufactured in the United States, to avoid higher labour costs. More than a billion Barbie dolls have been sold since 1959.

To celebrate, the Design Museum in London is holding an exhibition this summer, to tell the story of "one of the most recognisable brands on the planet."



### What do you think of the

### Weather Forecasts?

It seems there is some turbulence between the Met Office and the Royal Meteorological Society.

The Royal Meteorological Society has objected to the recent "deluge" of cautionary statements that the Met Office put out concerning the recent storms. It says that "probably not a day went by" during one week of bad weather, "without a weather warning." It fears that too many warnings will risk making people "complacent".

The Met Office, backed by a Cabinet Officer minister, Alex Burghart, disagreed. Responding to an urgent question in the House of Commons, he said:

"The forecasting capabilities of our experts in the Met Office and the accuracy and speed at which they can warn and inform the public of incoming severe weather events does, with no doubt, save lives and protect our homes and businesses."

What do you think? Is the Met Office playing Nanny, or getting it right?



### World Water Day, 22<sup>nd</sup> March

World Water Day became a UN observance day in 1993.

It wants to focus attention on the global water crisis, and raise awareness of the 2.2 billion people still living without access to safe water. It hopes to inspire action to tackle the water and sanitation crisis.

This year, World Water Day 2024 will focus on the theme, 'Leveraging Water for Peace'.



Well here we are welcoming March in already...

It has been lovely seeing the snowdrops appearing. I enjoy walking with Meg my dog, and seeing the crocuses, primroses and daffodils gradually fighting their way through in gardens, and along the hedgerows and verges. Bluebells will be next to cheer us up I hope. While walking with Meg down the side of the canal I often hear a woodpecker but very rarely see one in action. Well I did today, so I was really very pleased, unfortunately the sun was in the wrong place to see what the colour was, but it's little head was really hammering a branch. Apparently it's part of their courtship ritual.

February and March time is also frogspawn time. As kids we would go over to the ponds or ditches, around Hanney with jam jars, and collect frogspawn, then take it home and watch the spawn develop, the black dot turned into a tadpole eating its way out of the jelly, and gradually very slowly the legs would appear and the tail would disappear, leaving tiny perfect little frogs. Then it was back to the pond with them. Fascinating stuff nature.

I must say that I was very disappointed to see the removal of the Air Ambulance Clothes Bank. To me it seemed an asset, as both a way of recycling unwanted clothes and supporting an important cause, and also a reflection on the charitable nature of the people of East Challow who used it, and then a new black replacement one materialised in the parish council car park, so thank you on behalf of all of us who use this method of recycling.

The Service of Memories back in January was beautiful, and gave many people a chance to be united in prayer, light a candle and remember loved ones who have passed away either recently or longer ago. It was led by Alec and was well attended, it was a very moving service.

We also had a "bit of do" to say goodbye to our vicar John Durant and Sally his wife, with the other parishes in the Benefice at Grove. It was a wonderful evening with food, speeches and a quiz. I'm sure John can leave now, knowing how much he was appreciated in the ten years he was with us.

Our Parish Council is working hard to get our two missing litter bins replaced, for this I for one will be very grateful, as they are desperately needed. It's apparently no easy task convincing the litter bin powers that be, that bins are needed. So we thank you for your efforts on this point and hopefully they will be replaced soon.



On March 10<sup>th</sup> it is Mothering Sunday which is halfway through Lent. We can remember Mary the mother of Jesus, Mother Church, and mother figures everywhere present and past. This is a day for thoroughly pampering all mums. I recall as a child presenting my own mum with flowers and making her numerous cups of tea and generally trying to spoil her. It was quite easy as I had two brothers and a sister to share the job with. We always went to Church in the morning and visited Grandparents in the afternoon. At Saint Nicholas we give mothers a posy of flowers to mark the occasion and as always everyone is welcome.



The 19<sup>th</sup> March is the feast of Saint Joseph of Nazareth the earthly father of Jesus. Very little is known about him other than that he was a good man and a hard working carpenter who trusted in God. In a dream he was told by an angel, to marry Mary, his betrothed even though she was pregnant. He knew the child was not his, but trusted the Lord. He took on the child as his own. He cared for and kept Mary and Jesus safe after the birth, and their escape from Herod. Such an important man with very little mention.

Holy week starts on Palm Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March, the services and where they are being held is published in this issue and will be on the Church Notice board.



Easter Day is on 31<sup>st</sup> March and we will be decorating the Church on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>, you are welcome to come and help, or to donate flowers or arrangements. We would love to see you.

*That's all for now, so as always, stay safe for yourself and others.*



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## Monthly Draw February Results

£50 - N° 144 - Mr & Mrs Mann

£20 - N° 02 - Mr & Mrs P. Penfold

£10 - N° 130 - Mr G. Handley

~


### Would you like to join?

For further information please contact

**Tricia Shand - 01235 764222**



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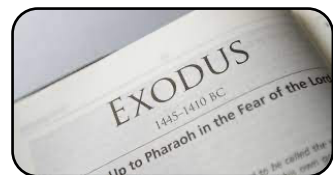
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www.progressivephysiotherapy.co.uk



Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham continues his new series - *What's the Big Idea?*

### **An Introduction to the Books of the Bible**



This month we are looking at Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament. Its name means departure, reminding us that Israel's flight out of slavery in Egypt is the major focus of the book.

Exodus is a book of two halves! The first part (chapters 1-19 & 32-34) is the story of an oppressed people who are delivered from slavery into a life of freedom. The second half (chapters 20-31 & 35-40) consists of detailed instructions about the life and worship of God's people. The book introduces us to their *salvation* or deliverance, as *story*. God's promises to Abraham are fulfilled as the people journey to the Promised Land. He also renews His covenant with them at Sinai, expressed in the Ten Commandments (20: 1-17).

At the heart of Exodus is the person of God Himself. In chapter 3 God reveals His name as YHWH or '*I am who I am*' (3:14) to Moses. This is the name by which God is known throughout the Old Testament, expressed in the title '*the LORD*'. To know God's name is to know Him, as well as His character ie His justice, truthfulness, mercy, faithfulness and holiness. He is the God who controls history, delivering the people out of Egypt, while the death of the Passover lamb points us to Jesus' death on the cross (1 Corinthians 5:7).

God's promises of help remain true for us today: '*Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today*' Exodus 14:13.

*'This Exodus story continues to be a major means that God uses to draw men and women in trouble out of the mess of history into the kingdom of salvation.'* (Eugene Peterson).

### **Worldwide Persecution of Christians on the increase**

More than 365 million Christians worldwide now face persecution and discrimination for their faith.

Entire Christian communities face extinction in some parts of the world. Those in sub-Saharan Africa are especially at risk, because of increasingly authoritarian regimes and violence.

So warns the latest global study of persecution.

The World Watch List 2024 is compiled by the charity Open Doors. It rates the top 50 countries where it is most dangerous to be a Christian. This year, something new has emerged: the countries listed have not changed since 2023, and there are no new countries to the list, but the level of violence experienced by Christians globally has grown exponentially in just this past year.

Open Doors reports a *sevenfold* increase in reported attacks on churches, Christian schools, and Christian hospitals. In 2022 there were 2,110 such attacks. In 2023 it was 14,766.

Attacks on the homes of Christians have also soared – by 371 per cent.

A staggering *one in seven* Christians worldwide now faces a high level of persecution and discrimination.

This is the 30<sup>th</sup> year that the World Watch List has been compiled and published. The countries are scored by various factors: pressure levels in private life, family life, community life, and national life, and on church communities, as well as violence levels. This year's list covers the period between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

The chief executive of Open Doors UK, Henrietta Blyth, says that Christian minorities in East and West Africa face an existential threat from jihadists and autocratic regimes. Jihadists are viciously attacking Christians across sub-Saharan Africa: Somalia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali, to name just some countries.

In Nigeria, things have got particularly bad, where Islamist extremism is threatening many Christian communities. In fact, the murder of Christians in Nigeria accounts for a staggering *82 per cent of ALL Christians killed for their faith worldwide*. Last year 4118 such murders were recorded, though many more were never even reported.

Open Doors has praised UK government efforts to become a global leader in standing up for the freedom of religion and belief, but it urges that the position of the Prime Minister's special envoy, currently held by Fiona Bruce MP, should be turned into a permanent, statutory post.



### **This Mothering Sunday, could you give the Gift of Dignity?**

The Mothers' Union has launched '**Make A Mother's Day**', its annual Mothering Sunday fundraising campaign. It hopes to raise funds to support the MU's global community projects, which "transform lives every day."

The MU says: "**We know how important mothers, caregivers and grandmothers are, and how much they do to help their children, families and communities thrive, often unnoticed and without thanks.**"

And so, for Mothering Sunday (10th March) the MU is asking people to buy a 'Gift of Dignity', to help empower women in developing countries to transform their lives, and to reach their full potential.

"When buying these life-changing gifts, you will receive a card that explains your gift along with a Mothering Sunday greetings card, which you can give to a loved one. You are also able to give a gift in memory of someone special."

The Mothers' Union also says: "We look forward to hearing about the events, coffee mornings and church collections you hold to fundraise for our **Make A Mother's Day 2024** campaign." You can tag any posts using #MAMD24 or #MU

*The Mothers' Union has been running the '**Make A Mother's Day**' campaign since 2006, to celebrate all mothers and caregivers - how they nurture, love and help us to flourish.*

<https://mueshop.org/collections/make-a-mothers-day-2024>



## Book of the Month

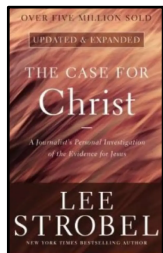
### The Case for Christ - a Journalist's Personal Investigation Of The Evidence For Jesus By Lee Strobel, Zondervan/10Publishing

Is there credible evidence that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Son of God?

Retracing his own spiritual journey from atheism to faith, Lee Strobel, former legal editor of the Chicago Tribune, cross-examines a dozen experts with doctorates from schools like Cambridge, Princeton, and Brandeis who are recognised authorities in their own fields.

Strobel challenges them with questions like, How reliable is the New Testament? Does evidence for Jesus exist outside the Bible? Is there any reason to believe the resurrection was an actual event?

Winner of the Gold Medallion Book Award and twice nominated for the Christian Book of the Year Award, Strobel's tough, point-blank questions read like a captivating, fast-paced novel. But it's not fiction. It's a riveting quest for the truth about history's most compelling figure.



The new edition includes updated material on archaeological and manuscript discoveries, and an interview with the author that tells dramatic stories about the book's impact, provides behind-the-scenes information, and responds to critiques of the book by sceptics.

## WANTED

Record Collections

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Large or Small

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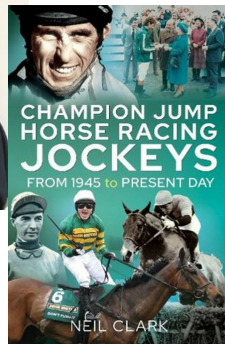
> Cash Paid <

Please Call

07789 158485 or 01235 760383



The  
**Library**  
Wantage



### Neil Clark - Author Talk

Friday 1st March - 7pm - 8pm

Come and listen to local author, Neil Clark, talk about his bestselling book, 'Champion Jump Horse Racing Jockeys'!

Please ring Wantage Library on 01235 762291 to book your free ticket!

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)



7th March



The  
**Library**  
Wantage



### Greetings Card Workshop!

Friday 15th March - 6.30pm - 8pm

Come and have a go at making some lovely greetings cards - all materials are provided!

This activity is suitable for 12yrs +  
Please ring Wantage Library on 01235 762291 to book your free ticket!

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)



## Crufts Dog Show, 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> March

Crufts has well been called the greatest dog show in the world.

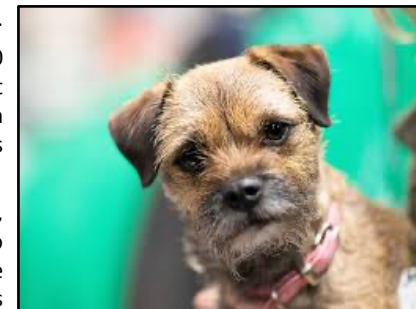
Everything about Crufts is big: last year more than 155,000 visitors flocked to the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) at Birmingham for a show that lasted four days, to see more than 24,000 dogs compete. In addition, there were numerous displays of agility, obedience, and simply fun games.

Crufts was established in 1891, and named after its founder, Charles Cruft. In 1876 a young Charles had left college with no wish to join his family's jewellery business. Instead, he became a travelling salesman for Spratts, a dog food company. This brought him into contact with large country estates and many sporting kennels.

When his next job with Spratts took Charles Cruft to Europe, he became friendly with some French dog breeders. In 1878 they invited him to organise the promotion of the canine section of the Paris Exhibition. Though Cruft was still just two years out of college, his entrepreneurial talents were already evident.

Back in England, in 1886, he took up the management of the Allied Terrier Club Show at the Royal Aquarium, Westminster. And then, in 1891 the first Cruft's show was booked into the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington. It has evolved and grown ever since.

Last year more than 200 breeds of dog were shown at Crufts. More than 83 per cent of the people who visit Crufts are dog owners themselves.



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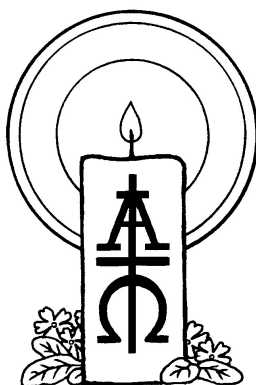
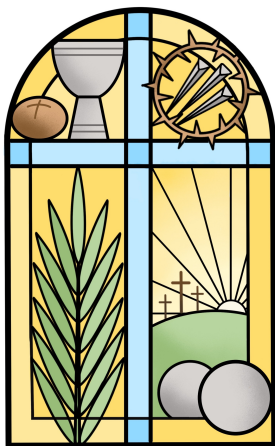
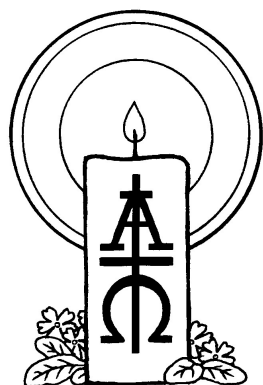






## Service Information for the Churches of the Vale Benefice

24 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Palm Sunday</b> 11.00 am	St. Nicholas – East Challow
25 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Monday</b> 7.30 pm	St. James – West Hanney
26 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Tuesday</b> 7.30 pm	St. James - Denchworth
27 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Wednesday</b> 7.30 pm	St. Nicholas – East Challow
28 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 7.30 pm	St. Johns - Grove
29 <sup>th</sup> March <b>Good Friday</b> 12 noon	St. Nicholas – East Challow
31 <sup>st</sup> March <b>Easter Day</b> 11.00 am	St. Nicholas – East Challow



## Progress on the appointment of a new vicar for the Vale Benefice

The churchwardens and the PCC are in the process of preparing the required documentation and consultation for the appointment of a new Vicar for our Benefice and Parish.

The Church of England process we have to follow is designed to ensure that we discern the best way forward and identify suitable candidates.

We are currently refining our contribution to the Benefice Profile (description of the Benefice and parishes and the job/person specification).

If you would like to see a copy please contact Jeff Penfold (01235 763173)

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March we will be giving a short presentation immediately after the service explaining the whole process and everyone is welcome to come and listen.

**Liz Belcher & Jeff Penfold**

Church Wardens - St. Nicholas, East Challow

## Rules of living well after 60

The King is 75. Last year he did 516 engagements, and he has no intention of slowing down. Instead, he was keen to be 'back up and running' as soon as possible after his recent operation. Is he right?

***"Absolutely not – you shouldn't slow down,"*** says Sir Muir Gray, 80, former chief knowledge officer for the NHS. ***"Ageing exists as a normal biological process but until the age of 90, it has little effect on your ability to look after yourself, engage with others or get about independently. In fact, paradoxically, as we get older, we need to become more active – physically and mentally. Ageing doesn't make you feel old – disease and loss of fitness will."***

A study from the Yale School of Public Health found that people who had positive ideas about their own ageing ("I have as much pep as last year") lived for an average of 22.6 years after they first participated in the study, while the people who felt less positively about ageing, lived for just 15 years more on average.

Of course getting older does involve some loss of energy. But slowing down a bit is never something to be ashamed of, and getting enough rest is the very cornerstone of leading a good life.

Exercise is also crucial as we get older. Focus on the four Ss: stamina, strength, skill (balance) and suppleness. Maintain your stamina by brisk walking every day for 30 minutes.

When you are ill, get up again as soon as you reasonably can. Otherwise, you are at risk of 'deconditioning syndrome', a physiological decline where muscle strength can decrease dramatically if you are over 70.

Thoughtfully review of your personal life-balance. Try to find the 'sweet spot' between activity and rest. Gray advises: "If you're only doing activities, you are inevitably going to burn out. But if you only rest, you will become sedentary and you're more likely to fall ill, feel disconnected and lonely."

Finally, don't run on a hamster wheel of someone else's making.

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## 8<sup>th</sup> March - Woodbine Willie



### Bringing love with cigarettes and the Bible

Here's a 'saint' that the Church of England remembers from the 1<sup>st</sup> World War - the **Revd Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC**, or 'Woodbine Willie', as everyone knew this popular, much-loved army chaplain on the Western Front.

Studdert Kennedy (27<sup>th</sup> June 1883 – 8<sup>th</sup> March 1929) had been born in Leeds as the seventh of nine children. After reading divinity and classics at Trinity College Dublin, he'd studied for ordination at Ripon Clergy College, and served his curacy at Rugby.

By the time war broke out in 1914, Studdert Kennedy was vicar of St Paul's Worcester. He soon volunteered to go to the Western Front as a chaplain to the army. Life on the front line in the trenches was a desperate affair, but soon Studdert Kennedy had hit on a way of bringing a few moments of relief to the stressed-out soldiers: as well as good cheer he gave out copious amounts of 'Woodbines', the most popular cheap cigarette of the time.

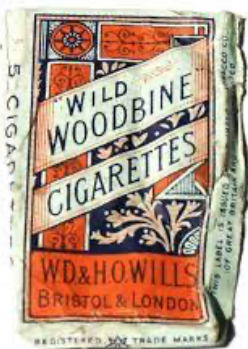
*One colleague remembered Kennedy: "he'd come down into the trenches and say prayers with the men, have a cuppa out of a dirty tin mug and tell a joke as good as any of us. He was a chain smoker and always carried a packet of Woodbine Cigarettes that he would give out in handfuls to us lads. That's how he got his nickname. He came down the trench one day to cheer us up. Had his Bible with him as usual. Well, I'd been there for weeks, unable to write home, of course, we were going over the top later that day. I asked him if he would write to my sweetheart at home, tell her I was still alive and, so far, in one piece... years later, after the war, she showed me the letter he'd sent, very nice it was. A lovely letter. My wife kept it until she died."*

Kennedy was devoted to his men, so much so that in 1917 he was awarded the Military Cross at Messines Ridge, after running into no man's land in order to help the wounded during an attack on the German frontline.

During the war, Kennedy supported the British military effort with enthusiasm, but soon after the war, he turned to Christian socialism and pacifism. He was given charge of St Edmunds in Lombard St, London, and took to writing a number of poems about his war experiences: *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* (1918) and *More Rough Rhymes* (1919). He went on to work for the Industrial Christian Fellowship, for whom he did speaking tours. It was on one of these tours that he was taken ill, and sadly died in Liverpool in 1929. He was only 46.

His compassion and generosity in the face of the horrors of the Western Front was immortalised in the song 'Absent Friends': "Woodbine Willie couldn't rest until he'd/given every bloke a final smoke/before the killing." He himself had once described his chaplain's ministry as taking

**"a box of fags in your haversack, and a great deal of love in your heart."**



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### The consequences of turning down a social invitation

77 per cent of us have accepted an invitation to an activity that we did not want to attend.

But according to recent research at West Virginia University, we may be over-estimating the anger and disappointment we will cause if we say no.

As one researcher confessed: "I was once invited to an event that I absolutely did not want to attend, but I attended anyway because I was nervous that the person who invited me would be upset if I did not, and that appears to be a common experience. Our research shows, however, that the negative ramifications of saying no, are much less severe than we expect."

The recent study found that, as long as the person who refuses the invitation provides a reasonable explanation, then any anger or disappointment is greatly reduced. That is good news to those of us who are struggling to cope with the commitments and events we already have at present. As one doctor said, "Burnout is a real thing... don't be afraid to turn down invitations here and there. But keep in mind that spending time with others is how relationships develop, so don't decline every invitation."



### Time for the Great Daffodil Appeal

The month of March brings us the Great Daffodil Appeal. This annual campaign is a fundraising initiative by the Marie Curie charity, which provides care and support to people living with terminal illnesses and their families.

The Great Daffodil Appeal says: "Right now one in four people don't get the care they need at the end of life. With your support, we can help bring end of life care and support to everyone who needs it, in their homes and in our hospices."

Here are some ways to participate:

- **Purchase a Daffodil Pin:** And wear it as a symbol of support.
- **Organise or Attend Fundraising Events:** Many events, such as charity walks, bake sales, and concerts, are organised to raise funds during the appeal.
- **Donate Online:** Visit the Marie Curie website to make a donation online, which goes directly to providing care for those in need.
- **Volunteer Your Time:** to help with various activities during the appeal.
- **Spread Awareness:** Use social media to encourage others to get involved and donate.

The Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal was established to honour the memory of Marie Curie, a pioneering scientist known for her work on radioactivity, as well as her dedication to providing care to those with cancer. The daffodil, a symbol of renewal and hope, was chosen to represent the campaign's message of support and care for individuals with terminal illnesses.

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil>



## OUR WINTER OFFERING

Bar opening times through this period will generally be

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	4pm – 8pm
Thursday	4pm – 8pm (10pm when Darts match is on)
Friday	4pm – 8pm
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.

If you would like to join the club as a member it's just £20 for the year, you can do so via our website.

We also require bar staff to cover some of our bar openings both during the weekday evenings and occasional outside events when the clubhouse has been hired on weekend evenings.

For full details and rate of pay please e-mail us in first instance.

**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



## East Challow Village Hall Update.

The Village Hall has been busy with regular bookings and parties this month. The highlight for me being the pop-up dog photographic studio which was very popular and fully booked. We are looking to run it again soon.

Thank you to the members of the Committee as we find our feet and introduce new booking agreements and hall maintenance improvements. We are also looking to review the legal standing of this community asset to be in line with modern guidelines. If anyone has experience with charity administration or company secretariat that could help with that project, please get in touch as we could do with a proof reader.

As with all older buildings, we are finding unexpected issues cropping up that require immediate attention and a big "Thank you" to Nigel Scaysbrook of N&N Plumbing and Heating of Abingdon who sorted out the header tank valves for us in an emergency situation this month.

If you are a local tradesperson with skills that may be useful to help with the Hall please do let us know as we aim to use local suppliers where possible.

As I write this, we are planning and preparing for the children's Valentine disco, Village Hall Open Day and Waste and Recycling Talk for February and March events include the Easter event on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2.00-4.00 pm which sounds like fun with an Easter Egg Hunt (indoors if weather is bad) egg decorating and a bring your own picnic so please keep an eye on and "like" the new Facebook page to keep up to date with details.

The new page has our sketch logo for a profile picture and the letters ECVH included in the title: East Challow Village Hall – ECVH

We have had some excellent suggestions for future activities and regular clubs, these include:

Film club, Gardening Club, Singing Group, Games Night/Club, WI Group, Local History, Repair Café, Pub night, Bingo!

Could you help us with any of those or maybe you have better suggestions? Everyone is welcome to come to the next Village Hall meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March at the Hall. Refreshments and chat from 7.00 pm meeting starts at 7.30 pm prompt.

If you have never even been to the hall, now is your chance! Did you know we have one of the best sprung floors in the area? Should we spend £4,000 getting the floor refurbished? It is your facility, why not come down and meet us, have your say and see if you can get involved in some way?

Perhaps you could volunteer for future working parties to tidy up the car park or do some painting.... It's not all about meetings and accounts, sometimes we actually have fun!

**Chair – Kiera Bentley - 07799 414600**

**Booking enquiries - Ruth Caplen 07827 042978**

## - Cornerstone News -

### Cornerstone News – February & March 2024

#### Staffing

We were sad to say goodbye to Layla Jackman at the beginning of February, Layla has been with us 4 years and having started working just Saturdays, we have been very grateful for her taking on almost full-time hours in the last 6 months and seeing her grow in confidence and skill. She will be greatly missed and we wish her well in her new role with Thames Valley Police.

We are excited that our new Kitchen manger will be joining us on 26<sup>th</sup> February, I am sure she will receive a warm welcome from all our staff, volunteers and customers.

**We will still be looking for an additional part time cook and will be advertising shortly.**



#### Volunteers

We are still in need of more people to help on the counter and the dishwasher, particularly on Saturdays – if that is something you could help with, we'd love to hear from you.

It would be good to have some young people take on this role and in the past, we have had youngsters doing their DoF awards join us so again if you know anyone who might be interested in this then do let them know.

#### Free breakfasts

We are providing free breakfasts again during half term. Many people have already generously donated to support this initiative and volunteers have signed up to extra shifts, so thank you for all your support, I know the people who benefit are always very thankful.

#### In the Bookshop

##### Lent

Ash Wednesday is on 14<sup>th</sup> February, and we have a number of Lent study books on the shelves or if there is a specific book you want which we don't have in stock we can order it for you.

**Valentines Day – 14<sup>th</sup> February**

**Mothering Sunday – 10<sup>th</sup> March**

**Easter Sunday - 31<sup>st</sup> March**

Here are some important dates for your diary, we have appropriate cards for these and many other occasions in the shop, many at very reasonable prices. Do come and browse.

#### Monthly hot meal special

We serve a special hot meal on the last Wednesday of the month at 12.30pm we do not plan the menu very far ahead, so do ask us nearer the time if you are interested and do book in advance so that we know how many to cater for. The next dates are: 28<sup>th</sup> February, 27<sup>th</sup> March, 24<sup>th</sup> April

#### Make and Bake for Under 5s

Since we restarted in January there has been a good group of regulars coming but there are space for more, so do pass on the details to anyone you know with a toddler; it's 9.30am every Tuesday and just £2 still. There will be no session on 13<sup>th</sup> February as it is half-term.

#### Prayer breakfasts

Our monthly prayer breakfasts continue, on the second Saturday of each month. The next ones will be on **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> March** at 8.30am. I look forward to you joining us for croissants, tea, coffee, prayer and fellowship.

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### Where is the most generous place in the UK?

The fundraising website GoFundMe has praised the British public, as recent figures show that it receives a donation every second of every day.

The generosity of the British can even be broken down into regions.

Last year Manchester was the most generous place in the UK, with 43,135 donations, while Liverpool (36,739), Brighton (19,641), Lisburn (11,122) and Saint Albans (10,474) came in second, third, fourth and fifth respectively.

This past year, many British donors have given to the victims of conflicts and natural disasters, from Ukraine to Syria, Turkey to Morocco, not forgetting those impacted by the various storms that battered the UK itself.

One notable success was for victims of Storm Babet, whose homes were flooded in Chesterfield. The fundraiser, organised by a team at Lifehouse Church in the town, raised more than £92,000, from a total of 1,600 donations.

All in all, the UK was ranked as the third most generous country in the world per capita, with more than four million donations made last year.

Tim Cadogan, chief executive of GoFundMe, said the organisation has now celebrated its “billion-pound milestone” of donations raised from the UK since its inception in 2017, and he estimates a quarter of a billion pounds was raised on the platform in 2023 alone – which he said were “incredible numbers”.

### What is Maundy Thursday?

Maundy Thursday is the 5<sup>th</sup> day of Holy Week. 'Maundy' comes from the Latin word for command, 'mandare'. On this day the Church looks back to Jesus' command to His disciples that they should: "Love one another as I have loved you."

On the evening of Maundy Thursday Jesus shared the Last Supper with His disciples, before going on to the Garden of Gethsemane and being arrested. It was the last evening He had with them before His crucifixion.

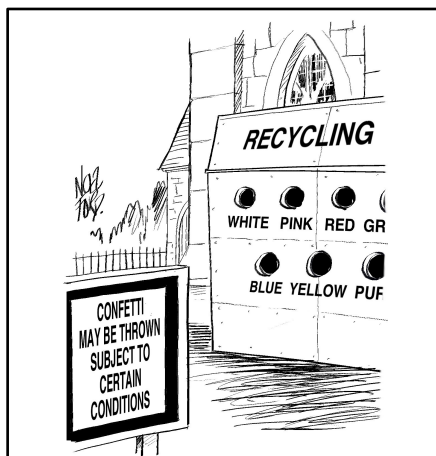
### Good Friday

#### The day the Son of God died for you

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. He was crucified at 9am in the morning, and died six hours later, at 3pm. It is the most solemn day in the Christian year and is widely marked by the removal of all decorations from churches. In Lutheran churches, the day was marked by the reading of the passion narrative in a gospel, a practice which lies behind the 'passions' composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750). Both the St Matthew Passion and the St John Passion have their origins in this observance of Good Friday.

The custom of observing a period of three hours' devotion from 12 midday to 3pm on Good Friday goes back to the 18th century. The 'Three Hours of the Cross' often take the form of an extended meditation on the 'Seven Last Words from the Cross', with periods of silence, prayer, or hymn-singing.





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### Dramatic decline of religion on TV

There is less television being devoted to religion and ethics than there used to be. A *lot* less.

The latest statistics from Ofcom, the industry regulator reveal a dramatic reduction in television programmes about 'religion and ethics' broadcast by the public-service broadcasting networks (PSBs): BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5.

Comparing 2022 with 2011, peak time hours of 'first-run' UK origination output fell by 85 per cent; while peak-time hours of 'all origin' output (that is, including bought-in material) fell by 76 per cent. Channel 4 dropped from being the most prolific network to providing no output at all; and the BBC output fell by 65 per cent.

Roger Bolton, a former BBC and ITV executive and independent producer, wrote recently in the Church Times:

"All this has happened without a peep from Ofcom or the boards of the PSBs, who are supposed to protect the public interest. There have been no peeps, either, from religious leaders. They seem to be asleep, or preoccupied with their own internal issues, unaware of this wanton destruction."

"In my opinion, television commissioners ... underestimate the power of religion and the continuing interest in it. They also seem to forget that people are moral creatures, often keen to do the right thing, but wishing to discuss and debate what that is."

(From Church Times, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024, p14)



Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

*"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field... like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."* - Matthew 13:44-46

On 14 February, the attention of millions turns towards a saint whose feast day is now inextricably linked with romantic love. It's possible that St Valentine was a church leader in the Roman Empire, who ministered to persecuted Christians and was himself martyred. Whether or not this is accurate, the truth today is that there are now over 365 million persecuted Christians around the world, almost 5,000 of whom were martyred in 2023. They pay a high price for their love and allegiance to Jesus Christ. Why?

**FREEDOM.** For those living in repressive regimes, discovering a new freedom in Christ is exhilarating. Sanaz\* from Iran says, "I was a girl with no identity. Everything was stolen from me by force." She became a Christian after encountering Jesus in a dream. "When I met Jesus, He saved me! He gave me an identity in Him. Jesus transformed my life; He gave me life!"

**LOVE.** Salhea\* encountered Jesus in a training programme run by Open Doors local partners in Asia. "I could not look into anyone's eyes," she says. "I was so afraid people would see my shame. I did not think I was of any use to anyone. I could not read, write or cook. 'Useless girl', my mother always said. Now I can embroider and make my own clothes and I am studying here to complete my basic certificate of education."

**FORGIVENESS.** Pastor Zachariah from Nigeria lost his wife when Fulani militants attacked his village. And yet he says, "I am asking God to forgive our attackers, and for them to enter the kingdom of God and not to die in their sins."

**TRUTH.** "Extremists make our ministry easier!" says Saleh\*, who started a house church network in Yemen. "Because of them, people reject and are horrified by what is being done in the name of 'religion'. They start searching for the truth and we are there to tell them about it! We are there to show them God's love and mercy." Saleh has been arrested, beaten and threatened with death. His name is on the 'wanted' list of extremists in Yemen. "We knew this would happen to us once we chose to follow Jesus. If we sit at home and do nothing, we would be safe. But what kind of a Christians would we be if weren't risking our life for others to know life?"

Behind the persecution statistics - hidden in the field - are real stories of love and life. Not just a romance. Persecuted Christians need our prayers, our gifts, our voices raised in support. And we also need to receive from them. To discover that the kingdom of God is as real and alive as a field. As thrilling and exciting as hidden treasure. As solid, and beautiful, and priceless as a pearl.

\*Name changed for security reasons

The World Watch List Top 50 and other free resources are available at [www.opendoorsuk.org](http://www.opendoorsuk.org)  
(If you need help accessing resources or the website, just ask Nick or Claire Page.)





Cllr Dr. Paul Barrow

## Report from District Councillor for March 2024

### Flooding (again)

We have had a complex few weeks. The flooding, mainly at Mellor's, is the result of absence of maintenance of culverts and some ditches by the county council and ditches and streams by landowners, in some cases going back 50 years!

I have posted much of this long and sad story on my Facebook page but we are told that no work can be done on the under-road culvert carrying Childrey Brook and water from Cornhill Lane until water levels went down, for Health & Safety reasons! This has been delayed more than once by erratic but heavy rainfall. At one point the discharge from the canal was blocked by the county council to facilitate inspection of the culvert and ditches but the canal water level rose and threatened the two bungalows on Cornhill Lane so the blockage had to be removed by the council resulting in a small tidal wave which flooded the A417 again for a few hours. The complicated drainage system at Mellor's will be resolved but how quickly is anyone's guess. There is also a drainage system of pipe and overgrown ditch running south of the A417 and west of Silver Lane which is currently being dug out. I think we will have traffic lights there for a good few weeks yet! ☹️

I have been in touch with many of the companies at Mellor's and on the W&G Estate. Thank goodness things are returning to normal but many thousands of pounds have been lost and I have advised that they claim for lost income.

In addition to the A417 at Mellor's, I would also like the drainage system on the A417 at Haynes looked at again because this also still floods despite the work done on it a few years ago.

You probably also know that we are not the only ones suffering. The back road into Letcombe Regis (at Bablake's Farm) was also blocked with a flood and the completely blocked drains on Court Hill there means that heavy rain ends up in the garage of The Mill!

### County Health Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

At the recent HOSC meeting in Oxford we reviewed the improvements in the South and Central Ambulance Service (SCAS). Response times have improved although the number of Category 1 and 2 (Life-threatening and emergency) cases have increased to an unprecedented 70%. Issues of patient and staff safety and infection control have also improved.

We also reviewed improvements to responses at the JR to patient incidents (bed sores, patient falls etc).

The county Public Health Team is now developing a strategy to improve health issues resulting from long-term climate change. I will report on this when the report is published.

### County Council Highways visit

We had a visit to this ward from County Councillor Andrew Gant, who has responsibility for Highways, to look at our road surfaces and drainage which we know are in very poor condition. He pointed out to us that they have less than 50% of the money that they need just for routine maintenance. I have no idea whether the county council could shift money around within their budget but central government certainly has less money than they would like and continue to cut contributions to local government mainly because the UK is £30-40 billion p.a. poorer than we used to be. Unfortunately, I don't see Highways issues improving over the next few years. It is very worrying and we will keep on to the county about this. Poor roads contribute to a poorer local economy and accidents. The only very small bright light in this darkness is that they have upgraded FixMyStreet which should be more responsive – we are told.

### Childrey Way and School Children

Although, not specifically a village issue, we have heard (bizarrely, via the Wantage Herald!) that, despite the fact that Childrey Way has been resurfaced, the spare-seats scheme which allowed Childrey school children to access bus transport to KAs is to be discontinued. We are trying to get facts. I do wonder whether OCC have looked at the new No. 68 Community Bus that supplies our villages, and can drop children off in time for school (just about), and think that this is enough. Something is going on at the County Council about this but I am not sure what. More when I hear anything.

### Hedge Planting

The Challows and Childrey Hedgerow Group has completed planting 500m of mixed-species hedge along Silver Lane (Whitelands Rd) between West Challow and the B4507. Many thanks are due to East Challow Parish Council and Yvonne Constance, our county councillor, who contributed to our costs.

We will carry on with more sessions next winter. If you are interested in getting involved watch out for notices on the village Facebook pages next autumn.

### Recycling talk – reminder

I will put out reminders on Facebook nearer the date but please remember that we have a talk by Clara-Legallais-Moha, the Vale recycling officer, at 7pm on February 26<sup>th</sup> in our Village Hall.

### Cllr Dr. Paul Barrow

If you have any issues/problems please feel free to contact me

[Paul.barrow@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.barrow@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

Mob: 07557 953862

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Cllr-Dr-Paul-Barrow-104943001583284>

Instagram: [Dr Paul Barrow](#)



# EAST CHALLOW ~ PARISH COUNCIL

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

## Parking...

Please park responsibly around the village. Please avoid parking on corners as it impairs visibility. Parking on the pavement causes problems for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Parking on grass verges restricts the ground maintenance contractor from cutting the grass. Parking on narrow roads can lead to congestion with cars and lorries having difficulty in passing each other.

## Dog Fouling...

PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG

Dog fouling is becoming a problem again throughout the Village. This is unpleasant for all and it spreads diseases which can cause illness and even blindness.

The person in charge of the dog which is fouling a footpath, highway, verge or other open space to which the public have access to, is responsible for cleaning it up.

Thank you to everyone who puts their dog poo in bags.

Please put the bags in the bins provided.



## Waste & Recycling Information

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day	Which Bin
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March		Black + Food
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March		Green + Food + Brown
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March		Black + Food
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March		Green + Food + Brown
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Black + Food



*Please ensure your Waste & Recycling Bins are placed on the kerbside before **06.00 am** to ensure your bins are emptied*

Please return your bins to your property ASAP after collection to ensure they are not blown onto the road causing an obstruction or damage to other vehicles

**Please take any Large Waste Items to the Recycling Centre at Stanford in the Vale**

## The Next Parish Council Meeting

will take place in the Village Hall on

**Wednesday 13th March at 7.30pm**

All villagers are invited to attend Parish Council meetings as observers and there is a 10 minute public discussion time early in the meeting when you can raise any matter you wish with the council.

The minutes of each meeting are available on the website.



## Parish Councillors

*Paul Barrow, Vanessa Bosley,  
Ian Crump, Andy Gregson,  
Trevor Hayes, Bryan Miller,  
Frances Webb*

Clerk to the council - Jane Smith  
[clerk@eastchallowpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@eastchallowpc.co.uk)

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<b>123</b>	Speaking clock	
<b>105</b>	National power cut service	

Calls to 999, 111, 112 and 105 are free to call from all networks. Calls to 101 cost 10p. Calls to 123 may vary in cost: check with your provider for details. 105 is available to callers in Great Britain.

## Parish Council Website

<https://www.eastchallowpc.co.uk/>

The minutes of all the Council Meetings can be found here

<https://www.eastchallowpc.co.uk/the-parish-council/minutes-and-agenda/>

Archived copies of the Challow News can be found here

<https://www.eastchallowpc.co.uk/local-information/challow-news/>

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