

# Stoke Poges *News*



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## CAROLS ON THE GREEN

SATURDAY 25TH  
NOVEMBER 2023

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Issue 227 | Winter 2023



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From the editor

# Season's greetings

Welcome to this winter's *Stoke Poges News*.

As you can see from the contents list opposite, this is a bumper issue packed with news of all the great things that are happening in our village and nearby. I hope you enjoy reading it!

We are approaching a season of celebration, but there can be many reasons why Christmas is a difficult time for some. Please remember to look out for each other throughout the winter months.

Wishing you all a safe and magical Christmas and New Year.

## **Rich Huckle**

Editor

Spring issue No 228 – all material to the editor by no later than Friday 26th January 2024.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or Stoke Poges Parish Council.

All dates included are provided by contributors and should be verified with them.

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Editor: spneditorsp@gmail.com

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### On the cover

*Carols on the Green*  
(see page 4)



# CAROLS ON THE GREEN

Stoke Poges Parish Council

## Join us for Carols on the Green

**Everyone is welcome to this annual event, taking place on Saturday 25th November at The Village Centre Car Park on Rogers Lane.**

Work started on *Carols on the Green* back in June – so much preparation goes on in the background when organising a public event, which is only possible with help and support of volunteers. If you would like to help in any way please get in touch – it's a brilliant opportunity to get to know other villagers.

We are very happy to have received confirmation from Santa's reindeer that they are able to visit us again this year.

Our Christmas market will have an array of craft stalls which is a great way to support local businesses (see opposite).

The Rock Choir will entertain us with Christmas songs and lead some carol singing – song sheets will be provided so you can join in!

The Village Social Club will be open offering a full bar – they accept card and cash payments.

During the evening, Santa will lead his procession round the village. The route is as follows:

Village Hall – Service Road/Bells Hill junction – Pennylets Green – Hazell Way/ Pennylets Green junction – Hazell Way/ Duffield Lane – Rogers Lane – Village Hall.

### Event timings

6pm – Event opens, Santa's grotto open for 0-5 year olds

6.45pm – Grotto closes, Santa's procession leaves for the children to follow

7.15pm – Procession returns, Santa's grotto open for 5-10 year olds

7.30pm – Carol singing

8pm – Event ends

## Christmas market stalls

Mulled wine

Santa's Grotto

Scouts: Barbecue

Rainbow Pre-school: Lucky dip

St Andrew's Church: Nativity photo booth

Rambler Kitchen: Jams, chutneys and cakes

Birds & Bling: Cakes and Christmas treats

Milkshakes UK: Milkshakes, churros and waffles

Chunky Dory Jewellery: Silver jewellery

Kempster Cupcakes

Love is All You Need: Pictures

Creations by a Butterfly: Personalised gifts

Furr Baby Bakery: Dog treats

Function Junction: Balloons

Bakin with Caitlin: Christmas gingerbread

Personalised by Kelly: Gifts

Eddie Beekeeper: Honey, soaps and candles

...plus more to be confirmed!

All proceeds from stall charges, mulled wine and the grotto will be donated to Stoke Poges Friday Club. This project is a collaboration between the Parish Council, The Good Neighbour Scheme and St Andrew's Church. It is a much needed monthly event where many of our residents that are isolated can meet and make friends. Lunch and company are provided. Since lockdown, we have learnt that this is a vital project to ensure that we are looking out for each other.

We will be circulating during the evening with collection buckets and your donations will be appreciated for such a worthy cause.



# An update from our Parish Council

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## **Flooding and the pond at Bell's Hill Rec**

The ongoing flooding issue has been addressed by working with Highways at Buckinghamshire Council and taking advice from consultants.

The willow trees that were growing on the section of the pond owned by the Parish Council have regrettably been removed. Investigations have shown that these trees have caused irreparable damage to the drains to the extent that they now need replacing.

Keeping the trees would have meant that the new drainage system would get damaged again, so to avoid this and to ensure the safety of residents the decision was made. Ongoing damage to the car park will also need to be addressed. We ask that you bear with us over the coming months while work takes place.

## **A vision for Stoke Poges**

A working party of parish councillors and volunteers have continued to progress our neighbourhood plan. It has taken three years of work to get to draft stage, and the consultation phase ended in October. During the consultation, a draft of the plan was available on the Parish Council website and in the Parish Office so that villagers could read it and provide their feedback.

The team also reached out to land owners and engaged with them to discuss our vision where requested.

All feedback will now be assessed and alterations made to the draft as appropriate. We will then seek to take the final version to a referendum to be adopted. Once the plan is

adopted it becomes a legal document with policies that sit alongside local and national planning policies.

The Parish Council is often asked who paid for the neighbourhood plan and how it has been funded. We used several grants made available from The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). These enabled us to work with consultants who provided advice and technical support. The Parish Council ensured that blocks of work coincided with grant funding cycles to take full advantage of such funding.

More information will follow. Please keep an eye on our noticeboards, website and social media.

## **Keeping our village clean and tidy**

The Parish Council arranges four community litter picks throughout the year. The dates for 2024 are:

- Saturday 2nd March, 10am - 12 noon;
- Saturday 11th May, 10am - 12 noon;
- Saturday 13th July, 10am - 12 noon;
- Saturday 7th September, 10am - 12 noon.

We very much encourage villagers and accompanied children to attend our organised events as it is an opportunity to meet neighbours and do something community minded. Thank you to all of you who do your bit to help.

## **Stoke Poges Friday Club**

Friday Club was set up as a spin-off to the Store Cupboard project which operated

during lockdown. The isolation experienced from some residents didn't go away just because lockdown was lifted. As a community, it's important that we look out for one another – especially those who are less able. The Parish Council is very proud to have been involved in setting up this initiative which is run by volunteers, and we continue to work alongside The Good Neighbour Scheme at St Andrew's Church.

The Parish Council recognises that projects such as this are a vital lifeline for some residents and contribute greatly to village life.

Thank you to all involved.

### **Please be considerate when parking**

With the increase in cars per household there is a lack of space on our roads. With this in mind, some thought and consideration is required when parking.

Please do not park on pavements or grass verges. Sometimes parking on the road forces cars to slow down which is something many would welcome. Blocking the pavement has led to accidents happening.

Our local PCSOs will issue penalty notices for vehicles parked on pavements, and in some cases will have the vehicle towed away.

Last year, a number of vehicles became stuck and had to be rescued as a result of parking on the soft verges on Bells Hill. Just thinking about the impact and damage done to our village may help us all work together to keep the village safe. We have zig zags and yellow lines for a reason – safety is paramount.

 *Saera Carter BEM*  
Vice-chairman, Stoke Poges Parish Council

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■ Please check the Parish Council noticeboards and website for further updates. Contact details for the Parish Clerk are on page 46.

## **Parish Chairman's letter**

### **The Parish Council has published its draft neighbourhood plan for Stoke Poges**

A small team of volunteers has been working diligently on putting it together over the past few years. The document's purpose is to enable new building in the parish that does not cause harm to what is already here. It is available for you to read on the Parish Council website. When you read the plan, you will no doubt appreciate how much good work has gone into it, in particular, the sections on footpaths and historic buildings. Thanks to those of you who submitted comments during the consultation period.

It's very pleasing to see so many villagers out and about with a black plastic sack and a litter pick, tidying up our roads when they have some time available. Feel free to join them! When I have picked litter on Bells Hill Green and the path to Rogers Lane, I have noticed so many sweet wrappers on the ground. If you have any suggestions for how we can persuade people to take their litter home with them, please get in touch!

You may have noticed that the Christmas lights around the Village Centre car park have been installed ready for the switch-on, in time for our annual *Carols on the Green*, taking place on Saturday 25th November. It's always a fun event, enjoyed by villagers of all ages, so please come along. I would like to wish you a merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.

 *Ralph Bagge*  
Chairman, Stoke Poges Parish Council

# What is a parish council?

A parish council is a corporate body, the lowest tier of local government and a legal entity for delivering local services.

Parish councils have been granted powers by Parliament to receive money via the precept. Our activities fall into three main categories: representing the local community, delivering services to meet local needs, and improving quality of life and community wellbeing. Parish councils have small budgets and don't have the means to run public services such as highways, social care or education – in our case, these are the remit of Buckinghamshire Council. We will from time to time apply for grant funding for specific projects.

Parish councils also have a duty to ensure that all the rules for the administration of the council are followed. They must:

- appoint a chairman of the council;
- appoint officers as appropriate for carrying out its functions;
- appoint a responsible financial officer (RFO) to manage the council's financial affairs;
- appoint an independent and competent internal auditor;
- hold a minimum number of four meetings per year, one of which must be the Annual Meeting of the Council.

These rules are set out in law to guide the council and together these rules make up the standing orders as formally agreed by the council.





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## What does Stoke Poges Parish Council do?

We have 12 elected members and we are not politically affiliated to a party. We are all volunteers that give our time to the things listed below. We endeavour to listen and are tasked with making lawful decisions on how to spend the precept for the good of the village.

- We have a responsibility to manage our two recreational areas to ensure there is adequate equipment and that it is maintained and looked after.
- We provide allotments that are managed.
- We have a community pavilion which ensures that our uniformed groups, football team and other community projects have a space to use.
- We look after our village green and look at ways to enhance the area including the flowers on the railings and hanging baskets, plus the war memorial.
- We have installed benches at various locations.
- We decide on events and services which contribute to community cohesion, for example the *Carols on the Green*, jubilee events and similar.
- We exercise our responsibility and have a consultative role on behalf of local people on planning applications.
- We have provided Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs which we regularly move around the village to encourage speeding traffic to slow down.
- We have provided equipment for our Community Speedwatch team so they can monitor speeding traffic and share this information with Thames Valley Police.
- We provide and maintain bus shelters.
- We organise regular litter picks.
- We originally set up The Good Neighbour Scheme.
- We work collaboratively with other services to start up and support the Village Store Cupboard (during lockdown) and, since lockdown, The Friday Club.
- We installed the walking path in Bells Hill Recreation Ground.
- We are putting together a neighbourhood plan to help steer what future development might look like to ensure a balanced demographic moving forward.
- We produce *Stoke Poges News*. This quarterly magazine is hand-delivered to all households in the parish to ensure that information is readily available and to keep villagers fully-informed. We also communicate via our village noticeboards, social media and our website, which is regularly updated with announcements and details of Parish Council meetings.

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■ *The four Parish Council noticeboards are located outside the Clerk's Office, at the front of the Village Centre on Rogers Lane, at Tubwell Stores on the corner of Tubwell Road and Wexham Street, and on Bells Hill Green opposite the Co-op.*

[www.stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk)

# Taking a look at the history of Stoke Poges

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**One of the aims of our society is the study of all matters relating to the history of Stoke Poges.**

By popular request, in this issue of *Stoke Poges News* we begin to tell the early recorded history of the parish. The story is largely based on a copy of the history published in the village's church magazine of 1894 by the vicar of Stoke Poges, Reverend Vernon Blake.

## Annual luncheon

Our annual luncheon was held at the South Buckinghamshire Golf Course clubhouse where Julian Hunt, the President of the Bucks Archaeological Society, gave an interesting talk about the work of the society and his remarkable amount of historical research about Bucks.



## Join us for a Christmas magic show from the music hall era

The most fun of the year is yet to come with our Christmas social event in the Village Hall on the evening of Thursday 14th December.

A gold star member of the Inner Magic Circle, Roy Davenport is an award-winning, fourth-generation professional magician, following in the footsteps of his great-grandfather, Lewis Davenport. He has performed on TV and worked as a consultant in magic on many TV programmes and films.

Roy will show us some very old family magic, so prepare to be delighted and amazed! And watch out for his sleight-of-hand!

Non-members are welcome to join us for £10 – booking details can be found below.

Keep an eye on our website, Facebook group and notices around the village for the comprehensive programme for next year. Highlights are expected to be a coach trip to Stowe House with a guided tour, and a talk about the fire and restoration of Windsor Castle.

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■ **Music Hall Magic** takes place on Thursday 14th December at 7pm. Places are limited so it is essential to book in advance by contacting Maggie on 07478 309 044 or [tpssevents@outlook.com](mailto:tpssevents@outlook.com)

[www.e-voice.org.uk/stoke-poges-society](http://www.e-voice.org.uk/stoke-poges-society)

## History of Stoke Poges: Part One

**The name “Stoke” implies great antiquity, being derived from “Stoches” – an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “place”.**

There are no fewer than 60 Stokes in England. Probably in each instance, the name was given to the first considerable house or mansion erected in a wild district, which vassals (those holding land from the King) would naturally designate the “Place”.

Through a series of small changes and over time, the title given to the house would be given to the estate and would become the name of its possessors with the prefix “de” – for example Hugh de Stoke and Robert de Stoke.

The first description of Stoke is found in the Domesday Book of 1086, but there is little doubt it ranked as a manor in the days of Edward the Confessor (c.1003 – 1066).



Edward the Confessor depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry

Sired or Siret, a vassal of Earl Harold, held both Stoke and the neighbouring manor of Ditton at the time of the Norman Invasion (1066). After the Conquest they were given by William I (with 84 other Lordships, 14 of which were in Buckinghamshire) to William Fitz-Ansculf, one of the great Norman barons. He held them as tenant “in capite”, that is, directly from the crown, having no superior apart from the King.

There is no evidence that Fitz-Ansculf lived in Stoke. Both Stoke and Ditton were held by a sub-tenant named Walter. The tenantry in 1086 consisted of 10 villeins, 3 bordars and 4 bondsmen – just 17 men, and if one adds women and children then the total population was perhaps around 50 to 60. The villeins were holders of land and tillers of the ground, and not removable at the mere will of their lord. The bordars attended on the mansion. The bondsmen were chattels or slaves; they performed the serf work on the manor.

The Domesday Book informs us that three pounds was the net value of the property. Each of these pounds is supposed to denote a pound’s weight of silver.

By the marriage of Beatrix, daughter of William Fitz-Ansculf, the tenancy “in capite” of Stoke passed to the Paganells, another powerful family who held many manors in Buckinghamshire, yet lived in Dudley Castle.

Although they did not reside here, it is almost certain from the term “dominium” being used in the Domesday Book that there was a residence in Stoke Poges, probably the home of the Saxon lord, afterwards occupied by the Norman sub-tenant.

The name of “de Stoke” in connection with the property first occurs in 1106, when Hugh de Stoke granted tithes of both Stoke



Part of a panorama of London by Claes Jansz Visscher, 1616, showing the large church in the foreground: St Mary Overy, now Southwark Cathedral

and Ditton to the Priory of St Mary Overy ('over-the-river', the oldest crossing of the river Thames in London), at Southwark. It is better known nowadays as Southwark Cathedral.

The period when Stoke became a parish and the date of its first church is uncertain. No mention of a church or priest is made in the Domesday Book, proving that no very large or noted religious building was standing in Stoke or Ditton in 1086.

However, in an episcopal charter bearing a date some 20 years after, Hugh de Stoke, his wife and brother join with the Priest of Stoke in giving the Church, with all the tithes of Stoke and Ditton, to the Priory of St. Mary Overy forever, proving beyond doubt that a regularly, endowed Church served by its own priest was at that time in existence in Stoke. There is nothing in the charter to suggest that the church handed over to the priory was a new one, only just built and endowed, and it is therefore reasonable to suppose that it may have existed for some years. We may cherish the belief that on the current St Giles's church site once stood a Christian church, probably in Saxon times (c.410-1066).

There is no mention in the Domesday Book nor in the writings of the Victorian vicar about earlier human habitation a lot further back in time. There certainly was a community, because in Stoke Park there is an ancient Bronze Age burial mound (the only ancient monument listed by Historic England in Stoke Poges). There is also another ancient burial mound on the South Bucks Golf Course between the 16th and 17th holes, a few metres outside Stoke Poges Parish, where many golf balls have been lost on the steep inclines.

Furthermore, Buckinghamshire Council Heritage Records have information from the 'London Museum' of a Bronze Age chisel (called a palstave) having been found in Stoke Common. Also arising from those records is the find in a gravel pit in Duffield Lane of an axe head, dated to the lower Palaeolithic to middle Palaeolithic - 500000 BC to 40001 BC).

In the early 12th century there was Hugh de Stoke. Then Sir Roger de Stoke held the manor in the later 12th century; and into the 13th century, Richard de Stoke.

The development of Stoke Poges in the 14th century and the story of the de Molyns family will be covered in the next issue of *Stoke Poges News*.

● Harvey Whittam  
Chairman, *The Stoke Poges Society*



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Visit our [website](http://www.stokepogesharities.uk) for more information & to download a form

# Volunteer drivers needed for Good Neighbour Scheme

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**The Good Neighbour Scheme has been running for over 12 years now. Most of our “jobs” are driving clients to medical or dental appointments, but we can do other things for people in emergencies.**

We also put on a tea party or outing twice a year and we transport people who need a lift to the monthly Friday Club. We have done nearly 600 “jobs” since we began, excluding Friday Club lifts and the tea parties. This also excludes all the shopping and prescription collection we did over lockdown, but we then had a new set of volunteers for that time.

Some of us have been volunteers since the start and wonder when we shall become clients! Others have come and gone as lives have changed over the years. We are beginning to find it difficult to find volunteers for all the requests we get.

Some new volunteers would be very welcome. You don't have to make a regular commitment. We send out an email to all volunteer drivers when we get a request and you take the “job” if it is convenient for you. We get a DBS check for you and we give you an ID card. You get car expenses for any lift you give – this does not affect your car insurance as car expenses do not count as payment.

If you think you could help, please get in touch.

I would like to hand over the running of the scheme in the near future, so if anyone has a small amount of spare time and good organisation and/or management skills,

please let me know. Someone newly retired would be ideal.

If anyone reading this would like to register as a client, please contact the email or phone number below.

I'd also like to remind all residents in our caring village to keep an eye on your older neighbours, especially during the colder months. An offer to do a little shopping on a cold icy day may be very welcome, or checking that their heating is working ok. Remember also that some older people can feel very lonely over Christmas.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

 *Sue Lynch, Chairperson,  
Stoke Poges Good Neighbour Scheme*

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■ *To volunteer or register as a client, please contact the Stoke Poges Good Neighbour Scheme by emailing [spgns@outlook.com](mailto:spgns@outlook.com) or calling 07591 350159.*



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# School new starters grow in confidence

**We have had an activity-packed first half term, with many learning opportunities for everyone to enjoy.**

Our new starters have settled into school life and we have seen their confidence grow and flourish over the past six weeks. We are very pleased to welcome all of our new families.

Two years ago, our school launched the 'Junior Challenge', a bronze, silver and gold award scheme that gives children in Years 4, 5 and 6 the opportunity to learn some new skills and participate in voluntary work and physical activities.

Last year, as part of the challenge, the children took part in a sponsored walkathon to raise money for The Trussell Trust and SHOC (Slough Homeless Our Concern). We are delighted to announce that the children raised a total of £3,997.50 for these fantastic charities and are very proud of this incredible achievement. We are now excited to get

started on the gold award this year.

Our Year 6 Boys' Football Team kicked off the new year by winning all of their games at the ESFA U11 qualifying tournament and qualified for the finals which took place in October. Here, the boys played fantastically well, winning 2-0 and making them the ESFA U11 District Champions! The team will now progress to the county finals.

## Starting school in September 2024?

We look forward to welcoming you soon. To see our whole school in action, please come along to our Prospective Parent Open Morning on Tuesday 28th November, 9.30am – 11.30am.

- Find out more about the open morning by calling 01753 643319 or visiting [www.stokepoges.school](http://www.stokepoges.school)

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# Learning key skills and making memories

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**Scouting is an amazing experience for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14½.**

We start with Beavers and move onto Cubs before finishing in Scouts. During their time in Scouting, children will learn key life and survival skills to aid their future lives.

I started off in Beavers when I was 6 and I have made many friends as well as many memories and learnt a number of skills.

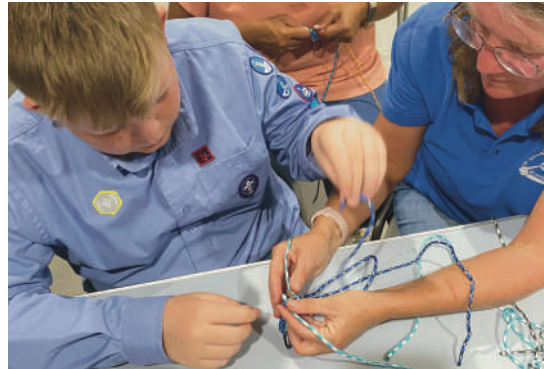
Scouting is a friendly, fun place that is very inclusive. Lately in Scouts we have done canoeing on the Jubilee river, fun activities at Paccar (an outdoor adventure activity centre in Chalfont St Peter with climbing walls, abseiling and axe throwing), paintballing, orienteering skills and hiking, making fires, knife skills and so much more. I have been on camps and even up in a small plane!

Overall, Scouting is a great place to make friends as well as memories.

 **Eddie Harris**  
(age 13)

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■ *If you would like to join Stoke Poges Air Scouts, you can get in touch by emailing [membership.stokepogesscouts@gmail.com](mailto:membership.stokepogesscouts@gmail.com)*





## Stoke Poges Village Centre

# At the heart of the village

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## **Stoke Poges Village Hall opened its doors to the community in 1913 and has been at the heart of village life ever since.**

The hall has been added to over the years and now includes a number of meeting rooms, forming what we now call the Village Centre. We are home to the Village Social Club and the Parish Council office. Many of our villagers start their relationship with the Village Centre at an early age, as Sunshine Corner Pre-school and Stoke Poges Out of School Care are also based with us.

A large number of the organisations you read about in the pages of *Stoke Poges News* hold their meetings or events at the centre. We hope you will join us over the festive season at some of their special events, not least *Carols on the Green*. Our stage will be well-used in December, with The Stoke Poges Players' panto (see page 24) and the spectacular evening of magic at The Stoke Poges Society's Christmas social (details on page 10).

For the young to the old, there's plenty of activities to get involved in – martial arts, badminton, ballet, photography, amateur dramatics and acrobatics! Why not make a New Year's resolution and find something new to be part of? Details can be found on our website.

### **Hire the hall for your celebration**

Did you know that the village hall is available to hire for private events, such as family celebrations?

There are special weekend rates for children's parties, plus there is a discount for Stoke Poges residents. Have a look at our website for further information.

- 
- *You can find hiring information and further details about the clubs, societies and other organisations that are based at the Village Centre by visiting [www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk](http://www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk)*

## Stoke Poges Village Social Club

**The Social Club is a not-for-profit organisation based in a large, welcoming space at the rear of the Village Centre.**

Annual membership, due every January, costs just £10 for adults. The membership fee is a condition of our license, contributes to the running of the club and helps to keep our prices as low as possible. For existing members, your membership cards for 2024 will be ready for collection when you pay in the New Year!

The bar has beer, lager, cider and Guinness on tap, plus a good choice of wine, spirits, soft drinks and snacks. We have a book swap area and a selection of board games –

ideal for relaxing on the sofa in our cosy corner.

Community events and fundraisers are often organized by the club – check the noticeboards and social media to see what's planned, but do get in touch if you want to organize something yourself.

We'll also be open during *Carols on the Green* on Saturday 25th November, so come and say hello if you've not ventured inside before!

- 
- *To find out more about joining, pop into the Social Club and chat to the team or email [spvcmembership@gmail.com](mailto:spvcmembership@gmail.com)*

## Stoke Poges Village Centre

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[www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk](http://www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk)

07565 116075



## Girlguiding Stoke Poges

# Growing the women of the future

**Girlguiding in Stoke Poges is thriving, with weekly meetings for girls from 4 to 18, where we help all girls know they can do anything.**



### Rainbows (ages 4-7)

Rainbows have adventures and fun with friends. In September we enjoyed a Mermaid Sleepover, which was a first residential experience for 13 girls. This term we are exploring how we can change the world we live in and have been out and about recycling soft plastics, completing acts of kindness and fundraising for *Children in Need*.



Summer term was packed with activities including a campfire, tunnelling, parachute games, a reptile ramble with one of the rangers on Stoke Common, a coronation cream tea with home-made scones and walking to the Thomas Gray Memorial. Please make an early enquiry if you have a little girl who would like to join us!

### Brownies (ages 7-10)



Brownies has been a hive of activity since the cosy month of September – exploring the enchanting world of hedgehogs with Bea, “The Hedgehog Lady” and showcasing our creativity, from decorating biscuits to creating woodland-themed bags.

We enjoy local walks and recently ended up at Farnham Common Chip Shop, which is becoming a termly treat. Every week is a new adventure; from the mystery of torch walks to the colourful world of crafts, together with games and fun. We love a party and our

talent shows celebrate our aspiring young performers. If you're looking for a place where your daughter can learn and make new friendships, our waiting list is open. Let the Brownie adventure begin!

**Guides (ages 10-14)  
and Rangers (ages 14-18)**

Guides and Rangers meet on Wednesdays from 7pm until 8.30pm. Each term is full of well-balanced activities, generally with a backdrop of giggles and laughter. In the summer we enjoyed a bat walk at Burnham Beeches, a water fight and sports day evening, plus a giant 3G swing and campfire.

This term we are focused on self-care and mindfulness. We made and taste-tested unusual smoothies, did a yoga session with meditation, and enjoyed hand and foot massages – all in one night! We have been debating, lobbying and discussing the judicial system and enjoyed a session about friendship, communication and loyalty, culminating with making friendship bracelets.

This unit is run by two young women who have recently completed their guiding journey, so meetings are high energy, fun and very current.

Girlguiding provides a safe environment for all girls to learn confidence, responsibility and independence. Whether your child wants to join Rainbows, Brownies, Guides or Rangers, start their Girlguiding journey by registering online. We always love to hear from new volunteers too, so volunteer with us and share everything that's awesome about you with the women of the future.

■ Register online at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus)

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# Pre-school gets off to an amazing start

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**What an amazing start we have had to this academic year! We welcomed lots of new children to our Sunshine family, as well as welcoming back some familiar faces.**

At Sunshine Corner we aim to plan lots of exciting activities and give our children a range of different experiences to help enhance their learning.

Our topic for the first half of the autumn term has been 'All About Me'. The children enjoyed making pizza in 'My Favourite Food' week as well as an exciting trip to Costa coffee in the village. We had a teddy bear's picnic in 'My Favourite Toys' week, when the children wore their pyjamas to nursery and brought in their favourite teddy/cuddly toy and favourite book too. We also had a multicultural party as part of 'Celebrating Me'. We danced to music, ate food and played games, all from different cultures.



The children had great fun and we have had lots of talk from them about what we have been doing. Take a look at what they said...

Child D (2 years) – “Wearing pyjamas for the teddy bear party was the best”

Child J (3 years) – “I liked going to Costa, they have cakes and gingerbread men”

Child A (3 years) – “I love pizza! Cheese pizza is my favourite”

Child V (4 years) – “I have a pretty dress for the party”



---

■ Based at the Village Centre on Rogers Lane, Sunshine Corner Pre-school is open 9am – 3.30pm and offers both full-day and 3 hour sessions. We welcome children from age 2 years to school age. If you need more information or would like to visit for a look around, please call 01753 644300 or email [info@sunshinecornerpreschool.co.uk](mailto:info@sunshinecornerpreschool.co.uk)

There is also a Baby and Toddler group every Thursday, 9.15am – 11.30am in the Village Hall. All families are welcome, with only a small fee of £2.50 per family.



Royal British Legion

# Thank you for your support

## Volunteers began preparing the collection boxes for this year's Poppy Appeal at the start of October.

Collections took place at the Beaconsfield Motorway Service Station and at Black Park runs, as well as in Stoke Poges and Farnham Common villages. Thank you for all your support and generosity – we will update you soon on our totals and the national figures.

Our AGM will take place on Wednesday 29th November in Farnham Common Village Hall at 7.30pm – please do come along as we will have some drinks, nibbles and social time once the agenda items are completed.

- For further information, please contact Chris or Manesh at the Royal British Legion:

Chris Leister-Crow, Poppy Appeal organiser  
07942 016072  
chrisleistercrow@aol.com

Manesh Patel, Chairman  
07919 216820  
manesh.k.patel@gsk.com

Stoke Poges Players

# Panto paints the town green

## Stoke Poges Players have been busy getting ready for the return of another family-friendly pantomime.

We've been building inventions for the wizard, painting the town green, searching for food for a hungry Toto and looking for the ruby slippers.

That's all because this year we will be asking you to follow us down the yellow brick road to the Emerald City to help save Dorothy from the Wicked Witch of the West, in this year's pantomime *The Wicked Witches of Oz* by Peter Nuttall.

### Showtimes

Thursday 30th November, 7.30pm

Friday 1st December, 7.30pm

Saturday 2nd December, 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Sunday 3rd December, 2.30pm

- Tickets are available from [www.stokepogesplayers.org](http://www.stokepogesplayers.org) for all five performances of **The Wicked Witches of Oz** at Stoke Poges Village Hall, including both matinees. Book now before they sell out!

You can follow the Stoke Poges Players on social media (Facebook and Instagram) to keep up-to-date with exciting news and developments. Also, say hello to the team at Carols on the Green where you'll find them advertising the show.





STOKE POGES PLAYERS



Present an Amateur Production of,  
A PANTOMIME,

# THE WICKED WITCHES OF OZ

WRITTEN BY PETER NUTTALL



## WHEN:

Thursday 30th Nov 2023 at 7.30pm, Friday 1st Dec 2023 at 7.30pm,  
Saturday 2nd Dec at 2.30pm & 7.30pm, Sunday 3rd Dec 2023 at 2.30pm

## WHERE:

The Village Hall, Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges, SL2 4LP

## TICKETS:

Adult £10, Concession (Under 15 & 60+) £8, Group of 4 (1-2 Adults) £30.

For more information and to purchase tickets please visit our website  
[Stokepogesplayers.org](http://Stokepogesplayers.org)



## Stoke Park

# Stoke Park in the community

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**Established in October 2021, The Stoke Park Community Outreach programme's primary objective is to support and collaborate with local charitable organisations.**

The programme works with specific projects that support, engage and have a positive impact and lasting benefit within the local community and provide opportunities to help enrich the lives of young people through education, sport, culture and the arts.

Stoke Park provides support for projects by local charities, clubs and societies, community groups or regional branches of national charities whose projects target residents or areas within Buckinghamshire and Berkshire. Projects that will deliver a positive and lasting benefit to the community and that can demonstrate clear objectives, measurable outcomes and impacts will be considered.

Stoke Park also supports many local community events.

Here are some examples of the work Stoke Park's Community Outreach programme has delivered so far in Stoke Poges and beyond.

### Local initiatives and Christmas campaign

- Last year, Stoke Park delivered 1,250 Christmas gifts to children in need and sick children throughout Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, working with various charities and hospitals to distribute them. The team is gearing up for 2023 and will be increasing the donation to 1,500 gifts – please get in touch if you know of a local cause which could benefit from this.
- Donated to Slough Foodbank, which covers South Bucks, in December 2021, 2022 and again in 2023.
- Platinum sponsor of the Gerrards Cross Fun Run which supported 3 charities.
- Made a donation towards the Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society's Annual Show, of which Stoke Park is a proud patron (2022/2023).

- Sponsored the Stoke Poges Fete in 2022 and 2023.
- Funded a promotional video for Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens.
- Provided funding for a cabinet at St Andrew's Church in Stoke Poges to house a defibrillator from Thames Valley Heartbeat.
- Sponsored Gerrards Cross Picnic in the Park – a huge community event celebrating the coronation of King Charles III.

### Supporting education

- Made a donation towards equipping the new STEAM cabin (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts and Maths) at the Stoke Poges School.
- Provided funding for a new app which allows schools to self-deliver Action4Youth's brilliant Inspiration Programme, and therefore deliver the programme to many more schools throughout Buckinghamshire. Also funded two Buckinghamshire schools which hadn't the resources to self-fund this programme into the curriculum.



- Sponsored the reception at Action4Youth's Big Night Out which celebrated inspiring and amazing people from the youth community in Buckinghamshire.

### Community funds

- Launched Stoke Park in the Community Fund, via Heart of Bucks and Berkshire Community Foundation – charities and community groups are able to apply for grants of up to £5,000.

Examples of charities and causes supported through the fund so far include The Baby Bank, Farnham Common School, Head2Head Sensory Theatre, The Stoke Poges Singers, Stoke Poges Rainbows, Children Heard and Seen, Family Friends, Re:Charge R&R, Thames Hospice, Upton Court Educational Trust and Beat Routes.

- Stoke Park also awarded a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award (via Berkshire Community Donation) to the charity Together as One (Aik Saath). This £10,000 grant funded their Global Grub campaign, which was also supported by HRH The Prince of Wales. It taught children how to cook and provided a meal each day during holidays when free school meals were not available.

### Sports for development

- Stoke Park is helping 20 local athletes at grassroots level through SportsAid, supporting future Olympians and Paralympians, whilst also working on inclusivity and activation programmes to help inspire local children and families into sport.

Alongside SportsAid and LEAP, they are a partner of The School Games – an inclusive sports programme which will reach 20,000 children throughout Buckinghamshire, encouraging children of all abilities not just to compete, but also to participate.

## Reliance Foundation ESA Cup and Stoke Park grants – ‘The Boodles’ tennis

One of the Reliance Foundation’s (Stoke Park parent company) key initiatives is the Education and Sports for All (ESA) programme. This is driven by the vision of the foundation’s chairperson, Mrs Nita Ambani, to empower every child in India through the power of education and sport. The ESA programme has so far touched the lives of over 22 million children, especially from marginalised backgrounds.

Through Stoke Park’s community outreach initiatives, the ESA programme is committed to supporting causes which have a positive impact within the local community.

The award of the Reliance Foundation ESA Cup was presented on each of the five days of *The Boodles* tennis event to the winner of the first match, and a charity grant from Stoke Park given to a different local charity on each day. The charities supported during this year’s event were Action4Youth, South Bucks Riding for the Disabled Association, Together as One, Slough Foodbank and Sport in Mind.



The Stoke Park team delivering Christmas gifts to the Children’s Ward at Wexham Park Hospital

Overseeing the outreach programme is Stoke Park’s Director of Communications, Nick Downie, who commented “Stoke Park are very proud to be a part of the Stoke Poges community and we have set about an extensive community outreach programme, much bigger than we have done before. I have worked at Stoke Park for nearly 14 years and am really excited to be having this opportunity to help support. This outreach programme is there to bring lasting benefit to the local community and we are always looking for opportunities to be considered, so please do get in touch with us.”



Stoke Park Directors PJ Singh and Saji Varghese at the Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society’s Annual Summer Show, with Maureen Barton, Jon Homan and Ruth Rooley

■ You can contact the Stoke Park Community Outreach Programme by emailing [social@stokepark.com](mailto:social@stokepark.com)

[www.stokepark.com/community-outreach](http://www.stokepark.com/community-outreach)

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# The latest from Buckinghamshire Council


The long-promised repairs to Stoke Road and Wexham Street were due to take place with overnight closures during the last two weeks of October. The work requires dry, frost-free weather and may have to be postponed if the weather is unsuitable.

Apparently, one consequence of the war in Ukraine has been an interruption in the supply of the tar products used to make road resurfacing compounds. This has led to extreme inflation in the cost of road repair materials.

All the damage caused by last winter's extreme weather has been logged and prioritised for repair based on the severity of the defects. The Council is committed to working through the repairs this year. If the pothole in your road hasn't been fixed yet it is because the crews are working on roads that are in worse condition.





Following the lockdowns, commuting to work has not returned to pre-Covid levels. This means that the Council's car parking income has not recovered, which creates a budget pressure that adds to the inflation pressures. The Council is working through some changes to car park hours and rates, which affect the north of the county.

The Council is also now progressing its plans to consolidate its estate. Staff who work at the King George V office in Amersham are being consulted on the closure of the building. The Capswood building at Tatling End will be handed back to its owner when the lease expires next year.

 *Ralph Bagge*

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# Please watch your speed

**The Community Speedwatch team has recently been spending some time on West End Lane.**

The Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) tells us that speeding is a problem there – between 4pm and 5pm there is nearly always at least one car doing nearer to 50mph. In two hour-long sessions, we filmed 66 drivers way over the 30mph limit. We were close to our previous record of 63mph with a highest speed of 61! There was also a 53 and many over 40s.

Being part of the speedwatch team only requires you to spend the occasional hour at the roadside. Once the equipment is set up, there is nothing more to do but chat to your fellow operative. It's a pleasant way to spend an hour!



■ To find out more or join the team to help make the roads in Stoke Poges safer, please contact Anne Frank via the Parish Clerk.

[theclerk@stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:theclerk@stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk)

01753 644803

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891 London Road  
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32 Gregories Road  
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Head Office  
Flackwell Heath  
24 White Pit Lane  
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38 Oak End Way  
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## St Giles' Bell Ringers

# Ding dong! Merrily on high

---

**Bell ringing is a centuries-old tradition that is not only a lovely way of making music but also a cherished part of communities around the world.**

Earlier this year, you may have come across 'Ring for The King' – a national appeal for new bellringers in advance of the coronation in May. The UK faces a national shortage of church bell ringers, and at Stoke Poges we are no different. We currently have only five regular ringers in our 'band' and would love to encourage more to take up this fascinating and ancient pastime.

### Ringling at St Giles' Church

At St Giles Church, we have eight bells in the bell tower, from the highest in pitch (called the treble) to the heaviest bell, with the lowest pitch, (called the tenor).

We ring for evensong services at St Giles' on alternate Sunday evenings and we have a practice evening every Wednesday from

8-9pm. As we are so few at the moment, we are helped out at our practice sessions by more experienced ringers from other towers.

We also ring for special services (Remembrance Sunday, Christmas and Easter in particular) and for special occasions and weddings. You may have heard us ringing at the time of the late Queen Elizabeth's funeral in September 2022 and subsequently for the coronation of King Charles III in May of this year.

### You don't have to be musical to ring bells

You don't have to be musical to ring bells – you just need a sense of rhythm and the ability to count to eight! It also doesn't require any strength. Once the bell is swinging it moves under its own momentum.

The physical act of ringing involves swinging a bell in a controlled manner to make a harmonious and rhythmic sound.

Each bell is attached to a wheel and the movement is controlled by the ringer pulling



ropes from the ringing chamber which lies directly under the belfry.

Ringing is a highly social pastime and involves a great deal of teamwork. It does take a little patience and perseverance to learn to control the bell, so that you can ring in time with the other bells, and, in time, learn to ring different 'methods', in which the bells are rung in different sequences. Once mastered, the possibilities are limitless. As ringers improve, it is possible to ring more and more complex methods to create a more interesting sound.

### Welcoming new and visiting ringers

We are part of a larger guild of bell ringers from other towers in East Berks and South Bucks, and there are regular branch practices in other church towers as well as competitions and outings. Our ringers regularly ring at other local towers, particularly in Fulmer, Dorney and Cookham.



Bell ringers are generally a friendly bunch and are usually delighted to welcome new or visiting ringers.

Please get in touch if you would like to give it a try – we'd love to welcome you to our group.

- 
- *If you would like to find out more, to visit the tower for one of the practice sessions, or would like to learn how to ring a bell, please contact Judy Sever on 07956 598006 or Anthea Wright on 07974 773238.*



Above: In patriotic attire when ringing for The King's coronation back in May

## Stoke Poges FC starts youth section

---

**This year we started a youth section at our football club with the intention of eventually providing football to local kids from the age of 6 to 18.**

This big project for our club started in 2020, when we began to invest in our adult footballers and sent them off to gain a Level One FA coaching badge.

We now have seven FA badge coaches ranging from Level One to UEFA Level B. This is something that we will continue to invest in.

Earlier this year we started Sunday morning training sessions at Bells Hill Recreation Ground for boys and girls. These have gone well and we are now expanding to Saturday mornings. We are also looking to provide an Easter training camp in 2024.

So if you have a child aged 6 to 18 who would be interested in coming along to do some football training, please get in touch.

---

■ *To find out more about Stoke Poges FC adult and youth teams, please contact Daren on 07895 462649 or email [daren.colomb@eastberksfl.co.uk](mailto:daren.colomb@eastberksfl.co.uk)*

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### Stoke Poges & Wexham Women's Institute

## Winter at the WI

---

**The WI continues to meet at the Village Centre on the second Wednesday of each month.**

We're holding our Christmas party on December 13th, when once again we'll form teams to challenge our memories with our annual 'Guess that Celebrity' competition. We will also be having a 'Secret Santa' when members bring and exchange wrapped gifts to the value of £3.50. As ever, we'll round off the afternoon with a scrumptious tea.

Our first meeting in the new year, on January 10th, is a talk on homeopathy – an alternative treatment for the cure of diseases, which differs from conventional medicine. Some

people swear by it, but others are more sceptical.

Our following meeting will be on Valentine's Day, February 14th, when we will welcome Jane Fletcher from the Art of Giving Community Interest Company, which aims to make public spaces like NHS waiting rooms better places through a combination of framed art and words supporting mental health and wellbeing.

---

■ *The Stoke Poges & Wexham Women's Institute meets at the Village Centre on the second Wednesday of each month at 2.15pm and new members are always welcome.*

---

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# The joy of singing

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**As winter approaches, The Stoke Poges Singers have been enjoying an immersive Vivaldi experience and will round-off the year with their popular Family Carol Concert.**

*Glorious Vivaldi* included not one but two of his *Glorias*, a *Magnificat* and *Credo*. This sublime baroque music was a joy to sing and together with the Stoke Poges Chamber Orchestra was our last major concert of the year in November.

## Family Carol Concert

Saturday 9th December,  
St Andrew's Church

Christmas starts earlier each year, so why not get into the spirit and join us in singing and listening to carols and other festive music?

This is a relaxed, informal concert for the whole family and will be our final event of the year. You can enjoy a mince pie and mulled wine included in the ticket price – a modest £5 for adults – which goes towards choir funds.

---

■ For more information on these events, please visit [www.stokepogessingers.org.uk](http://www.stokepogessingers.org.uk) or email [info@stokepogessingers.org.uk](mailto:info@stokepogessingers.org.uk)

Tickets are available online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/stokepogessingers](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/stokepogessingers)

## Come and Sing

Saturday 9th March,  
St Andrew's Church

Our 'Come and Sing' days are a great way to either try out choral singing for the first time, or to enjoy a great piece of music again. And there is the legendary Stoke Poges Singers' high tea to look forward to!

This time we will work on the beautiful and lyrical *Requiem* by Fauré. This is open to everyone, with music and refreshments provided, and is an important fundraiser for the choir.

## Spring Concert

Saturday 23rd March,  
The Hub, Chalfont St Peter

Back by popular demand! Our first concert of the new year is *At the Musicals, Volume 2*. This will feature more great show tunes from musical theatre and an opportunity to include the hits that did not feature in *Volume 1* last summer.

Such was the popularity of the first concert, we have looked for a larger venue to more comfortably seat and cater for what we hope will be another bumper audience. So, we'll be trying out The Hub in Chalfont St Peter. It has a large, modern auditorium, ample space for refreshments and a free public car park adjacent. Put the date in your diary!



## Stoke Poges Church

# Christmas activities at Stoke Poges Church

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### Carols on the Green

Saturday 25th November, 6pm - 8pm  
at the Village Centre car park

Come and have your picture taken in the Nativity photo booth!

### Scratch Nativity Service

Sunday 3rd December, 11am  
at St Andrew's Church

Our Family Service zooms through the Nativity story, as told in Luke 2, with carols. Come dressed as your favourite Nativity character and join the crowd in the stable.

### Traditional Carol Service

Sunday 10th December, 6.30pm  
at St Giles' Church

Our traditional service of carols and lessons. Come and join in our choir and organ-led service to unfold the Christmas story with all of your favourite carols.

### Christmas Jumper Family Service

Sunday 17th December, 11am  
at St Andrew's Church

Dust off those Christmas jumpers and roll along to our family service for some old and new Christmas traditions.

### Wassailing

Sunday 17th December, 4pm  
at St Giles' Church

Park in the large Memorial Gardens car park on the opposite side of Church Lane from 4pm and gather at St Giles'. We'll start with our craft indoors, then we'll take a walk around the Memorial Gardens and stop for some carols along the way and then come back to St Giles' for more carols, mince pies and mulled cider.

The craft and carols will be wheelchair and buggy accessible but the walk will be dark and uneven, possibly muddy, with a few steps so bring a torch and sturdy shoes or boots.

Disabled parking only is in the driveway of the Memorial Gardens.

It would help to know how many are coming for craft supplies and catering so please let the church office know how many will be in your party by phoning or emailing.

### **Christmas Eve at St Giles' Church**

4pm – Family Carols by Candlelight

Celebrate the reason for the season! A traditional service with some family fun, carols and candles.

11.30pm – Midnight Holy Communion

Experience the magic of the hour when Christmas Eve turns into Christmas Day. Communion is available for those who would like it and everyone is welcome to come and soak up the atmosphere.

### **Christmas Day at St Giles' Church**

10am – Family Communion Service

A traditional service with some family fun; come and celebrate with us!

Our regular Sunday Services are at 9am, 11am & 6.30pm. Please check for details and venues on our website.

- 
- *All of our activities are open to everyone, regardless of their faith or church attendance. Please check our website for details or contact the church office:*

01753 642331  
office@stokpogeschurch.org

[www.stokpogeschurch.org](http://www.stokpogeschurch.org)

St Giles' Church, Church Lane, Stoke Poges SL2 4NZ

St Andrew's Church, Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges SL2 4LN

## **Vicar's letter: Dwelling in the Word...**

**In the beginning was the Word... These words are often read in church around Christmas, and for some they mean Christmas as surely as turkeys, holly wreaths and tinsel.**

That makes them some of the most well-known words in the New Testament. After all, lots more people go to church at Christmas than on a normal Sunday. But it also makes these words amongst the least understood in the Bible. The reason is simple: who's in the mood for theology at Christmas? Who's ready to think through some of the deepest truths in the universe at 11:45pm on Christmas Eve or 10am on Christmas Day? Isn't half your mind on whether your friend will like their gift, and the other half on whether you've bought enough brandy butter for all your cousins? Christmas isn't a good time to do theology.

Except that's what makes it the perfect time to do theology – especially the theology in these verses, the kind of theology we celebrate at Christmas. The verses from John's Gospel are about someone or something called "the Word", who has existed since before the beginning of time, who was with God, but who also is God. That's hard for us to get our heads around, but in the time of the original writer, it was not so unusual; other thinkers had thought about "the Word" before.

What's new and exciting in this passage is verse 14: "the Word became flesh and lived among us." That verse says that the Word, who is God himself, became flesh.

God himself became a human being, made of bone, fat and muscle. The one who no-one can ever touch or see has suddenly become a human being, called Jesus, with ears and nose and arms and legs.

Why's that important? To be honest, we spend the other 364 days of the church's year answering that question. God becoming flesh affects everything else. It means that God cares about this physical world and everything in it. God has a fleshy body that people at the time could see and touch; therefore, God cares about things we see and touch. When we're deeply enmeshed in the needs and concerns of this physical world, that's sometimes when we're closest to God.

For many of us, Christmas is a time when we spend our energy trying to serve our friends, our families and our communities, in very practical, material ways. We give gifts, we cook meals, we visit the people we love. It can be hard to find time for God and he can seem a long way away. But the message of these verses is that that's when God is nearest: when we're serving real, physical people in real, physical ways. Because that's exactly what God did. Being busy serving others can make it harder to concentrate on these words, but perhaps easier to understand them.



So before all the Christmas mayhem takes over perhaps you'd like to spend a little bit of 'me time' at the Lighthouse Cafe. It's in the St Andrew's Centre, on Roger's Lane – just look for the big lighthouse sign swinging by the entrance.

There, Pat Hegarty and her lovely band of volunteers will serve you fresh coffee, tea and sweet treats. Happy to befriend, listen or just give you space to be. It's a little gem in the heart of our village, open Monday to Friday from 12 noon 'til 4pm. Pop in and spend a little time in a warm, friendly place that is there to serve everyone.

God bless.

 Revd Natasha Brady

*Main text by The Revd Michael Dormandy, New Testament Lecturer, Ripon College, Cuddesdon, used with permission from Pathway Magazine, Oxford Diocese.*



# Sharing stories of their Christian faith

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**Stoke Poges Men's Group often invites a guest speaker to give a talk and share something of how their Christian faith has guided and influenced them during their life.**

Our final event of the year will be a Men's Dinner at the South Buckinghamshire Golf Club (in Park Road, Stoke Poges) on Friday 24th November. The bar in the Oak Room will open at 7.15pm and our buffet-style meal will begin at 8pm. Our speaker is Colin Matthews CBE, who trained as an engineer and went on to become Chief Executive of Severn Trent Water, Chief Executive of Heathrow Airport and Chairman of Highways England. After his talk there will be a question and answer session and the evening should finish no later than 10.30pm.

The new year is not far away and we plan to kick off our 2024 events with a Curry Night on Tuesday 23rd January at the Memories of India restaurant in Farnham Common. We will commence at 7.30pm with drinks from the bar and start our two-course buffet at 8pm. Our speaker is Wayne Dixon, who has supported the schools and churches in our area for 35 years.

Wayne grew up in east London and first heard stories about Jesus at a London City Mission centre. He moved to the Slough area to further his studies and decided to stay. He took a job in Maidenhead and was invited by a local school to help them set up a Christian group. It gradually became clear this was where God was leading, and in 1988 he joined the staff of Scripture Union.

Over the past 35 years he has worked mainly in secondary schools and combined upfront talking about Jesus, RE and curriculum input and what he calls his 'Hanging Around Ministries'. This involves spending time with teenagers (and staff) in school getting alongside them, listening to their joys, hopes and fears.

Today, Wayne is employed by Christian Connections in Schools, supporting schools in the Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead area with their assemblies, lessons, Christian groups, and with large scale events and residential trips. He is married to Joyce, has a son (Chris), loves sport, music and following The Arsenal! He is an exceptional guy with a huge heart for the children he supports and he is also an entertaining speaker with many amusing and interesting stories to share.

As usual, there will be a question and answer session after the talk.

Everyone is welcome to all our events. If you use Facebook, please check us out at 'Stoke Poges Mens Group'. We are not an exclusive group but very inclusive and guys from a wide area (not just from Stoke Poges) come along.

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■ *For further information or to learn more about the Men's Group and future events, please contact:*

*Tony Shortman  
01844 350014  
tony-mavis@shortman.eclipse.co.uk*

*Nigel Lowe  
07973 349721  
nigelatsuchlowe@gmail.com*

# Connecting through the lens this winter

## As I sit down to write this article, I'm thinking of what I love about photography and why.

Photography isn't just about capturing images; I am sure you would agree, it's about preserving moments and the stories they tell. Each click of the shutter is an opportunity to freeze a piece of time (see 'Laughter Is the Best Medicine' by Kevin Day), a fragment of life, and a connection to the world around us.

When you look back over photos you've taken, it takes you back to that moment and emotion like it was yesterday. That feeling you get when you look back is why I love taking photos.

Every photograph has the potential to be a testament to an emotion, to a shared experience, or to a simple yet profound connection. A picture can bring laughter (see 'Hello Boys' by Keith Webb), tears, wonder ('Long-eared Owl' by Paul Mothersill), and empathy. It's through photography that we connect not only with our surroundings but also with the hearts and minds of those who view our images.

That moment that's captured in the stillness



'Laughter Is the Best Medicine' by Kevin Day

of a photograph is where we discover the vividness of human moments. A candid smile, the quiet intensity of a gaze, the innocence of a child's laughter – these are the moments we cherish.

At Stoke Poges Photographic Club (SPPC), we encourage our members to seek out these treasures in their photography (see 'Light at the End of the Tunnel' by Adam Lane).

By capturing these human moments, we bridge the gap between the photographer and the subject and, ultimately, between the photographer and the audience.

One of the most beautiful aspects of photography is its capacity for storytelling. It allows us to share our own experiences and perspectives, connecting our stories with the stories of others. Each photo shared is a chance to connect with an audience, fostering an understanding of different lives and experiences. The power of visual storytelling tells a thousand stories!

This winter, we'll delve into "why we take photographs" with Roger Weightman, looking



'Hello Boys' by Keith Webb



Left: 'Long-eared Owl' by Paul Mothersill

Above: 'Light at the End of the Tunnel' by Adam Lane

at the deeper motivations that drive our passion for photography.


As the crisp winter air settles in, we have the opportunity to embrace the beauty of winter. Through photography, we can capture festive gatherings, quiet moments by the fireplace to the beauty of the British landscape.

While the days grow shorter, nature never ceases to amaze us. The British countryside transforms into a winter wonderland, providing countless opportunities for stunning nature photography. Our club is excited to bring you tips and tricks for capturing "Nature Photography in the UK" by Roger Hance. From frost-kissed leaves to serene snowy scenes, you'll learn how to make the most of this season's unique photographic opportunities.

At SPPC, we're not just a club; we are a community that values these connections.

Our members come together to share their passion for photography, learn from each other, and, most importantly, connect through their shared love for capturing moments.

This winter, we invite you to think about this when you're capturing connections, human moments, and the beauty of the British landscape. Happy clicking!

 *Bushra Sheikh*

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■ *The Stoke Poges Photographic Club meets at 7.45pm on Tuesdays. If you're interested in going along, you can get in touch by email to [chair@stokepogesphotoclub.co.uk](mailto:chair@stokepogesphotoclub.co.uk) or find more information on their website.*

*[www.stokepogesphotoclub.co.uk](http://www.stokepogesphotoclub.co.uk)*

# Winter programme of local history talks

**Hedgerley Historical Society usually meets at 8pm on the third Wednesday of each month. Here are details of some upcoming talks.**

## **'Churchill's Most Secret Airfield in WW2' with Ian Griffith**

Wednesday 13th December, 8pm

This presentation is based on research carried out by Ian Griffith into the activities undertaken by the Special Duty RAF Squadrons at Tempsford. It covers the role of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in building an army of special agents and the role that RAF Tempsford played in dropping enemy agents into occupied territory.

Ian's father-in-law Captain John Affleck, who for many years lived in Mayflower Way, Farnham Common, was a pilot in 161 Squadron flying Lysanders and Hudsons into occupied territory. His story and achievements are featured including Operation Bludgeon where his Hudson got stuck in the mud in France.

Ian Griffith worked in Sales and Marketing for ICI Paints Division for 20 years before joining The Chartered Institute of Marketing in Cookham as Marketing Director. He set up own business in 1990 to provide training, assessment and accreditation services to companies in the services sector. He is a member of Burnham Beeches Rotary Club.

## **'The Lesser-Known Grand Houses of South Bucks' with Mike Dewey**

Wednesday 17th January, 8pm

What have a heart-throb film star, an apothecary to royalty, a British Army General and a minister in a Labour government got in common? They all feature in our talk by Mike Dewey.

Mike will select three historic mansions and tell us about the people who have lived there over the centuries since they were built. These are not National Trust properties and are not generally open to the public.

Mike's career was as a materials scientist and technologist and since retiring he has developed a hobby in local and family history. He volunteers at the Bucks Free Press local newspaper, where he writes weekly articles on nostalgia.



This South Bucks mansion has stories to tell

**'The Bulstrode Brasses'  
with Richard Emerson**

Wednesday 21st February, 8pm

This talk is about the Bulstrode Memorial Brasses of St Laurence Church, Upton. These elaborate metal motifs originally adorned the graves of one of the wealthiest and most powerful families in South Bucks. It will look at the brasses themselves, at the secrets such brasses may reveal, and at the people that the Bulstrode brasses depict.

The talk will not only focus on the males but on their wives too, who often have an even more interesting story to tell. It will also explain how the brasses link Upton and Hedgerley in a seemingly unique way.

Richard Emerson is a retired freelance writer and editor who spends much of his time researching the history and heritage of St Laurence Church, Upton, the wider Upton district (much of it a conservation area), and the people who link them. Richard uses the information he gleans to write newsletters, give talks and launch the occasional heritage project.

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■ *All these talks take place at Hedgerley Memorial Hall. For more details please email John Lovelock, Secretary of Hedgerley Historical Society:*

*jdlovelock@btinternet.com*

*www.hedgerleyhistoricalsociety.org*

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# Stoke Poges Parish Council

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**Saera Carter BEM** (Vice-chairman)  
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**Steve Webster**  
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**Planning Committee**  
Chairman: Saera Carter BEM  
Vice-chairman: Mary Crocker  
Manjit Bassi, Keith Finan, Jason Harris (co-opted),  
Maggie Knox-Scott, Phil Rawlings (co-opted)

**Recreation and Environment Committee**  
Chairman: Saera Carter BEM  
Vice-chairman: Mary Crocker  
Ralph Bagge, Manjit Bassi, Geoff Cox,  
Steve Webster

**Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
Chairman: Mary Crocker  
Vice-chairman: Maggie Knox-Scott  
Ralph Bagge, Saera Carter BEM, Keith Finan,  
Nick Moore

## Parish Office

Clerk to the Parish: Julie Simmonds  
The Village Centre, Rogers Lane SL2 4LP

01753 644803

[theclerk@stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:theclerk@stokepogeparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Pavilion caretaker: 07881 388778

## Parish Council spokespersons

Allotments — Geoff Cox  
Finance and grants — Ralph Bagge  
MVAS coordination — Geoff Cox  
Highways and transport — Ralph Bagge  
Planning — Saera Carter BEM  
Youth — Saera Carter BEM  
Older people — Saera Carter BEM  
Tree warden — Alan Fox  
Flagmaster — Jim Budd  
Website — Rich Huckle

## Appointed representatives

Stoke Poges News Editor — Rich Huckle  
Stoke Poges Village Centre — Saera Carter BEM,  
Nick Moore  
Community Speedwatch — Anne Frank

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## Buckinghamshire Councillors for Stoke Poges & Wexham ward

**Ralph Bagge**  
[rbagge@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:rbagge@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

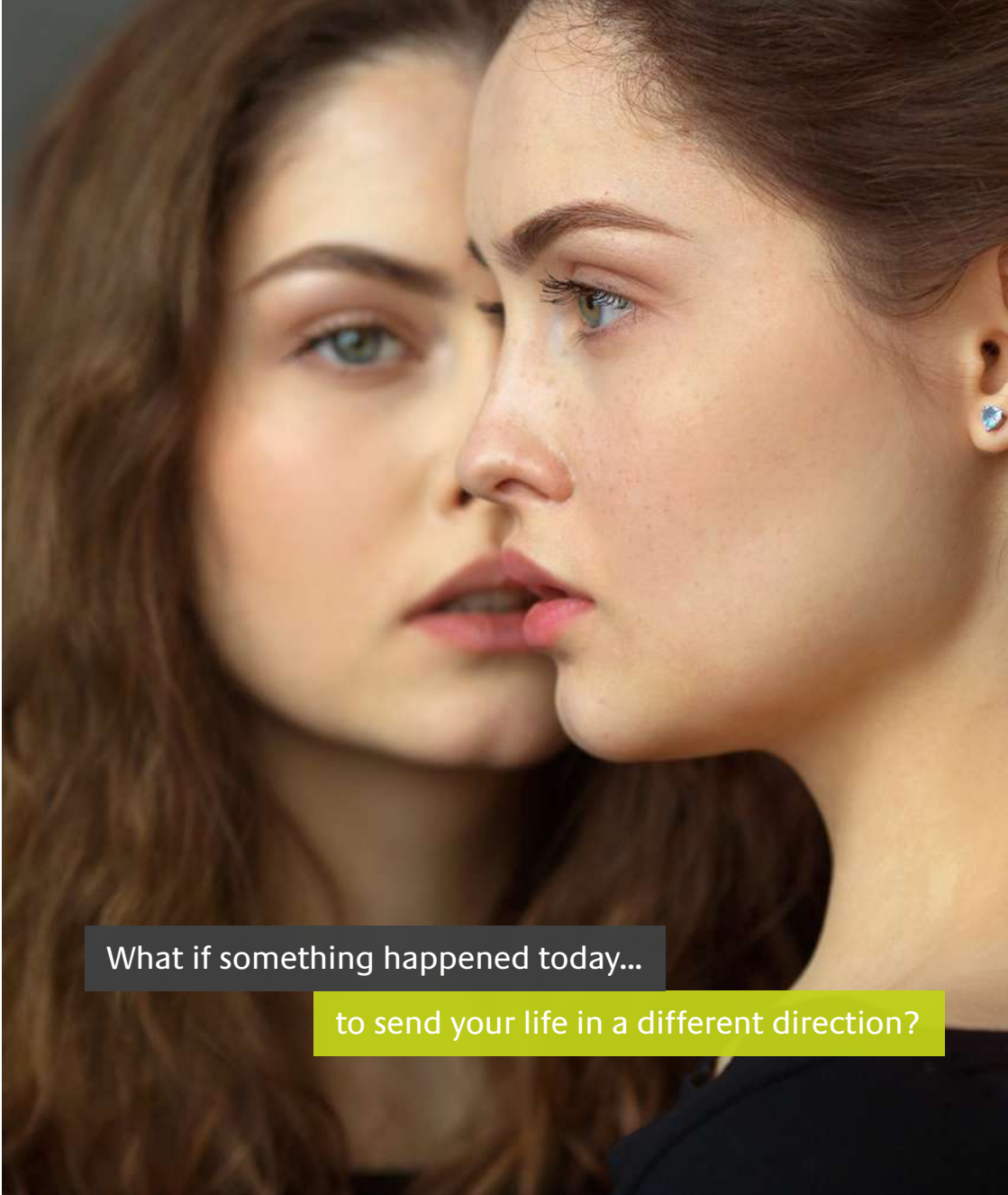
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**Thomas Hogg**  
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## Member of Parliament

**Joy Morrissey MP**  
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