Stoke Poges *News*



Issue 239 | **Winter 2026**

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From the editor

The season of giving

It seems to have been a busy autumn in our village, and Stoke Poges has lots of festive activities to tempt you out of the house this winter too.

Charities and voluntary organisations are almost always on the lookout for more people to support them. In this issue, BucksVision, the Royal British Legion and South Bucks RDA are just some of those asking for your help. Offering a little bit of time can make a huge difference, and it would be a very special gift, gratefully received.

If you can, please spare a thought for any lonely neighbours over the festive period. Loneliness is a terrible thing, and a cup of tea and a chat can really go a long way to brightening someone's day.

Have a fantastic Christmas!

Rich Huckle
Editor

Spring issue No 240 – all material to the editor by no later than Friday 29th January.

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

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Editor: spn@stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk

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On the cover

Carols on the Green (see page 10)

News and information from the Parish Council

Development in Stoke Poges

The government has set a target of 95,000 homes to be delivered in Buckinghamshire. This lays open opportunities for land owners to put forward speculative planning applications or proposals.

The Parish Council is working extremely hard behind the scenes to ensure our voices are heard, and we would like to reassure you that we will do our best. When or if the Parish Council is contacted directly or an actual planning application is received, we will then use that opportunity to reply, always bearing in mind that we are committed to protecting our Green Belt and ensuring that development is suitable for its location. However, the final decision will be made by either Buckinghamshire Council, the planning inspectorate or possibly even the Secretary of State.

You'll find some recent planning application updates on page 8 of this issue of *Stoke Poges News*. We will endeavour to keep residents updated as information becomes available in each case.

Get weekly updates, straight into your inbox

Keep up to date with what's happening in the village by signing up for *Stoke Poges Newsflash*, the weekly news and information email from the Parish Council.

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsflash

Please sign up to our weekly Newsflash email updates to receive the latest information on planning issues and other activities in our village.

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsflash

Stoke Green and Stoke Park conservation areas

As previously reported, we agreed with Buckinghamshire Council to review the Stoke Green and Stoke Park conservation areas, with the hope we can increase cover to areas that are potentially under threat.

There was nothing to be added for the Stoke Green Conservation Area, but three additions at the rear of Duffield House have been identified for the Stoke Park Conservation Area. The next stage is the statutory consultation process, and we will notify you of the relevant dates for this once we have them.

Stoke Poges Country Park

We are told that work is almost complete. The Parish Council has been contacted by the Head Ranger who would like to engage with us on finer details. We will share more information as we receive it.

Allotments

In Stoke Poges we are very fortunate to have allotments, since some of our neighbouring parishes do not. If you are interested in having an allotment plot or half plot, please contact the Parish Clerk – contact details are on page 50.

Parish Chair's Letter

As winter approaches and we start to think about the festive period, the Parish Council is busy making preparations for our village's annual Christmas event.

Many of you will have seen the Christmas lights along Bells Hill and in the trees on the village green. This year, we have added more lights to additional trees so that we have a fuller display. We hope they bring enjoyment to the village and add to the festive feel. This year's Carols on the Green is on Saturday 28th November, from 6-8pm at the Village Centre. We hope you will join us.

Back in November, we met on the village green to mark Remembrance Day. This is a secular occasion, open to persons of all faiths or none.

Planning still continues to be a major issue and threat to our village – in fact, the Parish Council is spending most of its time on such issues. We are reviewing our conservation areas to ensure that we get maximum protection where we can. It takes a lot of effort to keep up with changes in legislation and determine the impact for us at a local level, but we are committed to working hard for our village.

I had the pleasure to accept an invitation to a presentation by the Right Honourable the Lady Mayor of the City of London and Caroline Haines, Chair of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the Corporation of London. We had a tour of Burnham Beeches where we heard about the important conservation work taking place, both there and at Stoke Common. It was sad to see that some ancient trees have been lost this summer with the hot weather. However, planting is taking place to ensure that trees will flourish for many years to come. It was especially interesting to hear that a new fungus has been discovered at Burnham Beeches, and an near-extinct snail spotted on Stoke Common. The Parish Council is building a positive, collaborative relationship with the Corporation of London to ensure that we are working together to understand how any future possible development could affect Stoke Common.

At this point I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their time and commitment this year. We should be 11 councillors, but are working as 7, which puts a tremendous strain on our time and resources. If anyone is interested in helping the Parish Council or would like to know more, please do contact us for an informal chat about what might be involved.

On a sad note, resident Jason Harris, who was co-opted onto the Planning Committee in 2014, has had to step down. Jason has always been consistent in his approach and support on planning matters. He has been a positive addition to our committee and will be very much missed. Jason: thank you for all you have done for Stoke Poges – we wish you well.

Please read on to see what our village has to offer over the winter months. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Cllr Saera Carter BEM
Chair, Stoke Poges Parish Council

Stoke Poges Community Hub

This community group was launched in December last year, in conjunction with the Parish Council, Threeways Surgery and NHS Buckinghamshire. It takes place in the Club Room at Stoke Poges Village Centre, from 10.30am to 12 noon on the third Thursday of each month.

We host workshops and share information around health and wellbeing. Subjects covered so far include:

- information for carers from Carers Bucks;
- scam awareness;
- home security and fire alarms;
- Thames Valley Heartbeat and the use of defibrillators;
- cancer awareness and a Macmillan coffee morning raising £200.

We provide refreshments, so please pop in for a cuppa and a biscuit. We hope this community group will support residents and help to provide beneficial information.

Communication

One of the comments the Parish Council sometimes receives is that residents say they did not know about something or an event. In an ever-changing world where we are constantly bombarded with information, the Parish Council has various means of communication. We have four notice boards, a website, a Facebook page, this quarterly publication and a weekly Newsflash email.

Last year, we decided that an email news bulletin would the quickest and most direct way to reach villagers. Our Newsflash email service has been up and running for 15 months now, so please sign up if you haven't already done so. We do our best to share information with you as quickly as possible.

The information we include each week is dependent on local organisations supplying us with what they would like to share. If you wish to send us information please email *newsflash@stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk*

We have four noticeboards in the village. They are located:

- outside the Parish Clerk's Office in the lobby inside the Village Centre;
- outside the Village Centre on Rogers Lane;
- on Bells Hill Green;
- at Tubwell Stores on Tubwell Road.

Our Facebook page is simply called Stoke Poges Parish Council. Please note that we do not use this as a forum to discuss information, only to share it.

If you wish to contact the Parish Council, please do so by email to *theclerk@stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk* or by calling 01753 644 803.

Ongoing roadworks in the area

Residents will be aware of the ongoing disruptive roadworks in and around Stoke Poges.

These works form part of major infrastructure improvements to support data centres located on the Slough Trading Estate, and include the construction of a new substation on the borders of Uxbridge and Iver. As a result, extensive works have been taking place across the local road network, including in the Ivers and parts of Fulmer (Alderbourne), with cabling running beneath railway lines and the M25.

To clarify, these works gain permission from Buckinghamshire Council with no pre-consultation with the Parish Council. The Parish Council fully recognises the inconvenience these works are causing to our

community, particularly given the already challenging condition of some of our local roads. Further disruption is expected. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.

OCU is the company undertaking this work on behalf of SSE. The Parish Council has maintained communications with OCU so that we can understand and share information in a timely way. At our latest meeting, we were made aware that some of the proposed road closures have not been approved by Buckinghamshire Council, so OCU have had to propose alternative routes for agreement.

During our discussions with OCU we talked about community payback, as we feel that our village has been inconvenienced by these compulsory works. We know that litter is of great irritation to villagers, so we agreed that while roads are closed OCU would support the South Bucks Wombles to safely litter pick and they have supplied PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and road safety training for their members. They are also helping us to marshal the procession for Carols on the Green on 28th November – they will assist with supplying staff for the rolling road closure and any associated signage needed. We are grateful that OCU have offered to support our event and thank them.

The Parish Council will continue to keep residents informed via the weekly Newsflash and on our website as further updates become available.

Fireworks in public spaces

There has been much discussion around the legalities of fireworks that have been set off in our recreational areas.

In the UK, it is illegal to set off fireworks in a public place, including public parks, streets and other open spaces, without permission.

Here's how the law breaks down:

- Fireworks Regulations 2004 (under the Fireworks Act 2003) – these regulations make it an offence to set off fireworks in a public place. Public places include parks, pavements, roads, beaches and other areas accessible to the public.

- You may only set off fireworks on private property (e.g. your own garden or land) with the landowner's permission.

- Breaking this law can result in a fine of up to £5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 6 months, and you can also get an on-the-spot fine of £90.

If you want to use fireworks in a public park, you must get written permission from the local council or landowner, and often you'll need to meet safety requirements or obtain an event licence.

If someone is setting off fireworks in a public park (or any other public place) without permission, the police can be called, because it's a criminal offence under the Fireworks Act 2003 and the Fireworks Regulations 2004.

Police officers can attend and confiscate the fireworks and may issue a fixed penalty notice.

If the incident is serious (for example, dangerous behaviour, injury risk, or disturbance), they can arrest the individuals and press charges, which can lead to a fine of up to £5,000 or up to 6 months in prison.

In some areas, the local council's community safety or antisocial behaviour team may also get involved, especially if there are repeat issues.

Members of the public can and should call the police (non-emergency number 101) if fireworks are being set off illegally or dangerously in a park. If there's immediate danger, call 999.

Planning updates

Please note that the statuses and planning decisions shown here were correct at the time of writing. Please check Buckinghamshire Council's planning portal for the latest information.

https://publicaccess.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/online-applications

The Parish Council regularly publishes updates on our website and in our weekly Newsflash emails.

Pinewood Nurseries

A decision is pending on an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the Pinewood Nurseries site on Wexham Street, comprising:

- demolition of existing buildings and structures. Preparatory works, and the formation of vehicular and pedestrian access from Wexham Street;
- the provision of flexible commercial floorspace comprising of:

  - either up to 16,000sqm of B2 / B8 floorspace across multiple units,
  - or up to 40,500sqm of sui generis data centre use, up to 5,000sqm of associated energy centre and up to 650sqm sub-station.

Land at Templewood Lane

We are awaiting the decision on a proposal for a residential development comprising 18 dwellings served by two vehicular accesses, together with parking, amenity and open space.

Sefton Business Park

As previously mentioned, Sefton Business Park has been sold and two outline applications have been submitted for a total of 373 dwellings. These are still pending a decision.

The planning agent tells us that there will be a third application for a data centre under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) regime. We are yet to see this application but will keep you updated.

Pioneer Secondary Academy

This application was for change of use of a first floor room from educational use to private hire celebration events use for a temporary period of six months. The application was withdrawn – we may see it again.

Magnolia Farm

Two applications for permission in principle for the erection of a total of 12 dwellings on this site at the south of Bells Hill have been approved.

The developer subsequently made contact with a possible proposal for another 150 houses. We are awaiting this planning application.

Land at Farthing Green Lane

An application for permission in principle for the erection of 9 dwellings has been approved.

Farnham Park Playing Fields and South Buckinghamshire Golf Course

- Demolition of the existing changing block and removal of tennis courts at Farnham Park Playing Fields.
- Development comprising enhanced community sports facilities and a community sports hub building including changing facilities and associated ancillary uses such as café and office uses.
- Floodlit 3G football pitch, floodlit padel courts, walking route, landscaping and associated works.
- Change of use of part of South Buckinghamshire Golf Course to a football training facility. Development comprising football pitches, a performance centre building, indoor training pitch, spectator seating, maintenance facilities, parking, cycle parking, access roads, service and delivery areas, alterations to the existing access arrangements, public right of way and permissive path works.
- Drainage and attenuation features, floodlighting, landscaping, boundary treatments and associated works.
- Reconfiguration and development of the remainder of the golf course to provide a revised golf course layout including a practice range and academy course.

The Parish Council decided to work alongside planning and traffic consultants to look at the many impacts this application will have on our village and surrounding roads. Visit our website to find out more.

Land at Plough Lane

A decision is yet to be made on an outline planning application for up to 50 residential dwellings, associated layout and access together with car parking to be determined with scale, appearance, and landscaping reserved.

Wexham Golf Club

We are awaiting a decision on two outline planning applications for Wexham Golf Club, totaling up to 680–700 homes across both parcels of land.

- Wexham Grange: Land west of Wexham Street, outline application for up to 230 new homes.
- Gallions Park: Land east of Wexham Street, outline application for up to 450 new homes.

The Parish Council decided to work alongside planning and traffic consultants to look at the many impacts these proposals will have on our village and surrounding roads. We submitted our report, which is available on the Parish Council website.

Get weekly updates, straight into your inbox

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www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsflash

SATURDAY 28TH NOVEMBER
STOKE POGES VILLAGE CENTRE
6PM – 8PM

CAROLS ON THE GREEN

MARKET STALLS

CHOIR & CAROL SINGING

BARBECUE, BAR & MULLED WINE

SANTA'S GROTTO & REINDEER
PLUS VILLAGE PROCESSION



Kick off the festivities with Carols on the Green

Stoke Poges will once again start the festive season with Carols on the Green, organised by the Parish Council.

The event will take place on Saturday 28th November from 6pm to 8pm at The Village Centre on Rogers Lane, and will be held under two giant marquees in the car park – so although the event is outside it is under cover. As well as the traditional procession we have a Christmas market offering an array of festive goodies and food, with some new stalls this year.

This annual event is a great way to start the festive season and is a long-standing tradition bringing our village together, so please do come and join us.

Raising money for a good cause

Each year, the Parish Council chooses a local charity or not-for-profit organisation to benefit from the grotto and mulled wine takings, and this year these will be donated to Rainbow Pre-school on Duffield Lane.

Recognition and special thanks to The Rose & Crown public house for donating the mulled wine. Their generosity is greatly appreciated.

In addition to the procession and stalls, Santa will be bringing some of his real-life reindeer to meet villagers, and the Social Club bar will be open all evening. Food will be available from the Scouts' famous barbecue and Chef Stevie's Caribbean Kitchen will be serving Caribbean curry and patties.

The procession starts at 6.45pm and is fully marshalled. The route from the Village Centre is as follows:

- right onto Rogers Lane;
- right onto Duffield Lane;
- right onto Bunby Road;
- left onto Pennylets Green;
- left onto Hazell Way;
- left onto Duffield Lane;
- left onto Rogers Lane;
- return to Village Centre.

Event timings

Timings for the event are:

6pm – Event opens, grotto for 0 to 4 year-olds, stalls open

6.45pm – Grotto closes and procession leaves

7.15pm – Procession returns and grotto reopens for 5 to 10 year-olds

7.30pm – Carol singing

8pm – Event closes, but the bar stays open!

Stalls will remain open throughout the whole event.

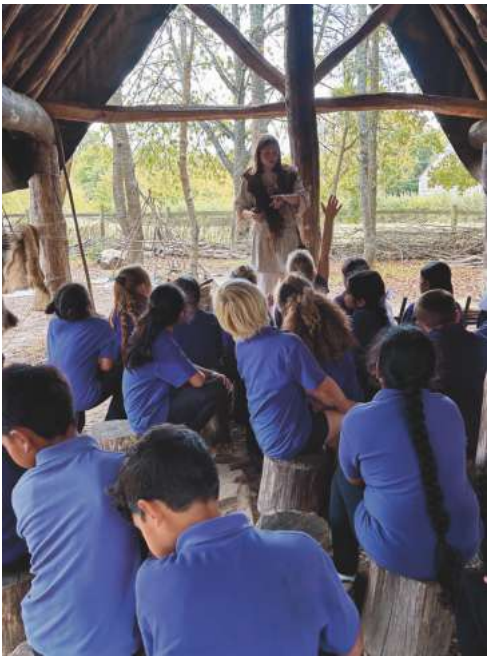
■ *Carols on the Green is free to enter and takes place in the car park of Stoke Poges Village Centre, Rogers Lane, on Saturday 28th November from 6pm to 8pm.*

Hunting, gathering and learning

We have enjoyed a fantastic and activity-filled first half term at The Stoke Poges School, with many exciting learning opportunities.

Our new Reception children have settled into school life brilliantly, and it has been wonderful to see their confidence grow over the past six weeks. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new families.

One of the highlights of the term was the introduction of our Year 6 children to their Reception buddies. The older children spent time reading, drawing, playing and getting to know their younger partners. It was lovely to see Year 6 acting as such positive role models and forming new friendships with the youngest members of our school community.



Year 3 enjoyed a memorable visit to the Chiltern Open Air Museum as part of their history learning. Immersed in Stone Age life, the children experienced what it might have been like to live as hunters and gatherers, building shelters and learning how fire was made. They also explored an Iron Age roundhouse, gaining an insight into daily life in prehistoric Britain.

Back at school, the children created their own Stone Age-inspired cave art using charcoal and paints made from natural materials such as berries, grass and petals. Their creativity and enthusiasm were impressive.

Meanwhile, Year 2 took part in a 'Scootability' session on the playground, learning important scooter safety skills in a fun and engaging way. The session was filled with smiles, confidence-building activities and even a few impressive scooter tricks.

We were delighted to welcome Danny Wallace – filmmaker, comedian, writer, actor, and presenter – to speak to the children about his wonderful new book, *Henry Tudor*,







sharing insights into the story. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to meet Danny and have their books signed, leaving them inspired and excited to continue exploring the wonderful world of books.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our 9th Annual Fireworks Night on 3rd November. It was a wonderful, family-friendly evening, and it was lovely to see so many familiar faces, as well as some new ones. The event was a great success, creating lasting memories for all who attended while raising valuable funds for the school.



Looking for a Reception or Year 3 place in September 2027?

Please call us on 01753 643319 or visit *www.stokepoges.school* and we will be happy to book an appointment for you. We look forward to welcoming you.



Stoke Poges Players

Pantomime season has officially arrived. Oh yes, it has!

Winter brings Christmas songs, mugs of hot chocolate, blankets in front of the fire and, most importantly, pantomimes!

The Stoke Poges Players are absolutely thrilled to be flying off to Neverland with a magical production of Peter Pan-tomime by Vincent Vinnie!

Join the Darling children and Peter Pan on an unforgettable journey, where they get swept up in a hilarious feud between the Lost Children and Captain Hook's pirate crew.

Packed with toe-tapping songs, side-splitting jokes and a touch of fairy dust, it's festive fun for all ages – even those who refuse to grow up!

Dressing up is highly encouraged, so pick your side – will you be a Pirate, a Lost Boy or a Fairy? Showtimes are Friday 4th December at 7.30pm, Saturday 5th December at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, and Sunday 6th December at 2.30pm, all at Stoke Poges Village Hall on Rogers Lane.

The panto is in two acts, each of 45 minutes, plus a 15-minute interval with refreshments and raffle. Tickets are £12 for adults, £10 for concessions, £38 for a family (a group of 4, maximum 2 adults). There's still time to grab a seat – book online now at *stokepogesplayers.org/tickets*

Limited tickets may also available on the door or via the box office by calling 07887 733 044.

Want to join the fun in 2027?

After we wrap up, our cast and crew will take a festive break before returning in 2027 with a brand-new season of entertainment.

If your New Year's resolution involves trying something new, come join our theatre family! We are looking for volunteers for acting, set and prop painting, and backstage crew. No experience is necessary. Drop us a line at *stoke.poges.players@gmail.com* or send us a DM on Facebook or Instagram.

A peek behind the scenes

A huge amount of work is involved in staging our annual panto. Don't forget to follow our social accounts for live rehearsal updates and more behind-the-scenes sneak peeks on Instagram and Facebook!

@stoke.poges.players







A tale of two connected villages

The Parish Council maintains ties with a sleepy village called Étricourt-Manancourt, located in the Somme in northern France.

Ten years ago, it was brought to our attention that the connection between us is an interesting piece of Anglo-French history, dating back more than 100 years to the aftermath of the First World War. Documents and letters were discovered that confirmed that Stoke Poges helped to rebuild Étricourt-Manancourt after the village was devastated during the war.



In 1921, Dorothy Allhusen of Stoke Court organised fundraising for Étricourt-Manancourt, which had suffered extensive wartime destruction. Historical records show that communities including Stoke Poges, Wexham, Langley and Fulmer contributed to the reconstruction fund. In 1922, Dorothy Allhusen sent a cheque for the sum of £53 to the French mayor. French historical accounts also credit Stoke Poges with contributing 12,000 francs towards restoring the village's drinking water supply.

Back in October 2016, members of the Parish Council were invited to a service of remembrance in Étricourt-Manancourt where the village unveiled a commemorative sculpture marking the conclusion of WWI. Councillors and guests had an extremely moving tour of the local war graves, as well as a visit to the water tower that still serves them today.



In recognition of our connection to them, they renamed their main village square 'Place du 11 Novembre Stoke Poges', which is a great honour. To this day, we remember our friends in France by sending them a wreath for remembrance day each year.







Rooms for hire at Stoke Poges Village Centre

We have a range of spaces ideal for events such as meetings, classes, celebrations, performances and children's parties.

Special party rates are available, with additional discounts for Stoke Poges residents and Social Club members.

Find out more at

www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk

Registered charity number 300336

A community that remembers

For the Farnhams & Stoke Poges Branch of the Royal British Legion, Remembrance is both a solemn occasion and a reminder of the strength of our local community.

Each November, our villages come together to remember those who gave their lives in the service of our country, and to show our continuing support for serving personnel, veterans and their families.

Our Remembrance programme this year included the parade in Hedgerley and the presence of our branch standard at the Remembrance service at St Mary's Church, Farnham Royal. These local traditions give us a valuable opportunity to pause, reflect and pay tribute to generations who have served and sacrificed for the freedoms we enjoy today.

Thank you to our Poppy Appeal volunteers

A tremendous amount of work takes place behind the scenes of the annual Poppy Appeal. This autumn, our volunteers have been supporting the rota of collections at Beaconsfield service station, generously giving their time to greet members of the public and collect donations. Our Saturday collections have also been arranged in Farnham Common High Street and at Bells Hill in Stoke Poges.

To everyone who took a shift, helped organise the rotas, welcomed collectors or contributed to the appeal: thank you. Whether you gave an hour, a day or a donation, your support makes a real difference. We are particularly grateful to Chris Leister-Crow, our Poppy Appeal Organiser, for her dedication and hard work.

In 2025, our local Poppy Appeal raised £35,965, an excellent total made possible by the generosity of residents and the commitment of our volunteers. Last year's effort involved 42 volunteers and 221 rota slots across 20 days of collections at the service station. We are immensely grateful for that support and hope to build on it in the years ahead.

Could you help our branch?

We are also looking for a volunteer administrative assistant to support our branch team with day to day administration, correspondence, keeping records up to date and helping us organise our activities.

If you are organised and can spare some time to support the Farnhams & Stoke Poges Branch, we would be delighted to hear from you.

■ *Please contact David Moore by email to davidmoore1066@gmail.com, or speak to Chris Leister-Crow, Poppy Appeal Organiser, to find out more or offer your help.*



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Painting Decorating Association

Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society

Showcasing autumn in our gardens

The Horticultural Society's Autumn Social in October proved that there's a surprising amount to enjoy in our gardens as we approach the end of the year.

To start the evening, we were treated to an autumnal wreath making workshop led by Maureen Barton, Chair of the society. Following a demonstration of techniques with some beautiful examples, everyone chose materials from the craft table including dried flowers, seed heads, grasses and other natural materials.

It was fantastic to see so much creativity around the group, with new skills being learnt as we created our autumn wreaths to take home.

Our members were also invited to bring something along for our informal autumn show competition. There were some impressive displays of home-grown seasonal flowers, fruits and vegetables across the various categories. We were all invited to be judges for the evening as we voted for our favourites, and a 'best in show' was selected. Congratulations to the winners!

■ *The society holds a number of talks, workshops and other activities throughout the year, including an annual plant sale and the Summer Show. Visit www.hortsoc.org for more information on the society, member benefits and how to join.*











Maureen Barton receives the 'Best In Show' certificate from Vice-Chair Rich Huckle for her stunning Dahlia 'Just Married' bloom.

All around the world and back

Stoke Poges Photographic Club has started what looks like being a great season.

We held a Welcome Evening at the start of September and later that month Chris Knight treated us to an excellent talk illustrated with images from his 'Animal Portraiture' series. His stories of photographing sharks and crocodiles produced plenty of hold-your-breath moments, he certainly got up close and personal.

Our first competition of the season was for the Edwina Chown Cup, which honours our former president and longtime member. The winning image, shown below, was 'A Proper English Summer' by Kevin Day which the club has used as the front cover for our Stoke Poges Village calendar for 2027. All images for this competition are within five miles as the crow flies of the Village Centre, so other entries also feature in the calendar.



The second competition evening was the Charles Harding, when members could share twelve images in five minutes with or without commentary. The winner was Kim Jeans with a talk and images of her trip to Canada.

Our first competition when the points scored count for the Photographer of the Year was 'Wide Vista – Panorama', when Neil Griffin entered a picture of Mount Teide in Tenerife, which is the highest point in Spain. We have certainly visually been all around the world and back with some stunning images from these evenings.



The 2026-27 season has definitely started off well and we are looking forward to the rest of the season with the varied and entertaining evenings that Ken, our Programme Secretary, has put together for us.

If you are interested in photography come along to the Village Centre one Tuesday evening, 7.45pm for 8pm, and take advantage of our two-week free trial offer.

■ *Visit www.stokepogesphotoclub.co.uk for more information.*

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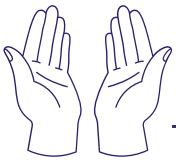
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Speeding drivers earn a home visit from the police

In the last twelve months, our Community Speedwatch volunteers have captured 363 speeding vehicles on the Parish Council's Speedwatch camera.

The images opposite show a Ford making some attempt to slow down from an alarming 68mph near the Plough on Wexham Street. It managed to get down to about 60 by the time it passed the camera, but this was not enough to avoid a home visit from the police. In the space of ten minutes on that same afternoon, another two cars were filmed at over 50mph.

We are sometimes asked by residents if we can monitor a particular road. We have a selection of sites around the village which have been approved by the police. They are currently not approving any more, so we can only use the ones we have.

We're looking forward to setting up on West End Lane again once the roadworks have gone.







■ *If you would like to volunteer to assist with Community Speedwatch activities in Stoke Poges, email theclerk@stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk and you will be put in touch with one of the Speedwatch team.*

Village Social Club gets a makeover

If you haven't visited Stoke Poges Village Social Club recently, now is the perfect time to pop in!

We've been busy refurbishing our club room to give it a new lease of life, making it an even more welcoming place to meet friends, enjoy a drink and spend time with fellow villagers.

Located in the Village Centre on Rogers Lane, the club room has been transformed with fresh paint, new flooring, comfortable new chairs and tables, and a redesigned layout that makes the most of our space. We've added stylish copper finishes to the bar, new shelving and storage, and atmospheric lighting that can be dimmed to suit the occasion.

New curtains and acoustic panelling complete the look, creating a cosy, relaxed space to settle in and unwind. We've also upgraded the sound system and TV screens, making the club even better equipped for our regular events and get-togethers.

While the room may look different, what makes the Social Club special hasn't changed. We're still a friendly, members' club offering a relaxed environment for people of all ages and backgrounds. Families, well-behaved dogs, clubs and societies are all welcome.

Membership costs just £20 per year for adults, with free membership for under-18s. Our membership model helps us keep drink prices low, while supporting our not-for-profit club and the wider Village Centre charity. Once a member, you're free to pop in as much or as little as you like.





There's always something going on, whether it's our popular Wednesday evening quiz at 8pm, darts on Mondays and Thursdays, a game of pool, or simply a quiet drink and a good chat. We have a well-stocked bar serving London Pride cask ale, lagers and cider, as well as Guinness on tap and a great range of wines. Sports fans are in for a treat too, with Sky Sports and TNT Sports on our big screens, so you can enjoy the big matches in friendly village surroundings.

Our active volunteer committee and bar team work hard to arrange events for everyone, and we're always happy to hear your ideas. The generous support of our members and the wider village community makes a real difference, with all profits going back into the Village Centre to help maintain and improve this important community building.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the club, particularly during the refurbishment. We'd love you to come and see the new look for yourself, enjoy a drink and help us make the Social Club an even more vibrant part of village life. We're open every evening from 5pm to 11pm, and from 12 noon at weekends.



■ *To find out more about membership, pop in and have a chat with the team or visit www.stoke-poges-centre.org.uk/social-club*

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Stoke Poges *Newsflash*

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsflash

Victorian Christmas and more...

We are continuing through the winter with our season of talks on a variety of historical subjects.



'Victorian Christmas' with Tim Healey

Monday 14th December, 7.30pm

Christmas in Britain was hardly celebrated early in the Victorian era, but towards the end of Victoria's reign it had become an important annual celebration. The Victorians introduced and made popular a lot of the Christmas traditions we celebrate today.

This talk was originally planned by The Stoke Poges Society, and will go ahead as they planned, free of charge to all those who were members of TSPS at its closure.

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'The Darkness Behind the Edelweiss' with Bernard Foot

Friday 8th January, 7.30pm

Ahhh, Austria – the land of oompah music, apfelstrudel, and beer, with edelweiss growing in mountains ringing to the sound of music.

But there is some dark history behind that edelweiss. The first half of the 20th century was a turbulent time that fashioned the modern world, with 60 million violent deaths, the fall of monarchies and empires, and the emergence of new superpowers. And it was little, beautiful Austria that caused all this. Yet in Britain, we never hear anything about Austria during this time.

This talk will fill in your understanding of what was going on there and then.





'Historic Iver' with Christine Isles

Friday 12th February, 7.30pm

The village of Iver in Buckinghamshire is older than you think. There is archaeological evidence of human presence in the Iver area as far back as Mesolithic times and despite the modern encroachment of motorways, heavy traffic and data centres, Iver still retains much of its old charm.

Come along and find out more about this attractive settlement as we take a pictorial stroll around the village.

- *The society meets in St Andrew's Church Centre on Rogers Lane. The talk on Monday 14 December will be in the Main Hall, whilst the other two talks, on the second Fridays of January and February, will be in the Hastings Room. Each event is only £2 for visitors and free for members. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available after each talk.*

  For latest info, visit e-voice.org.uk/mtahs or email enquiries to sec.mtahs@yahoo.co.uk

Shakespeare, British gardens, Wembley and unusual pubs

A varied selection of talks awaits at Hedgerley Historical Society.

'Windsor and Shakespeare ' with Dr David Lewis

Wednesday 9th December, 8pm

Of Shakespeare's oeuvres, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a very important play and the only one set in an English town. It is often cited by those claiming Shakespeare was no playwright, that his works were actually penned by someone else. In this talk, Dr David Lewis is going to examine these claims in comparison with decisive evidence, Windsor's sixteenth-century layout.

And still more intriguing, Dr Lewis also looks at the several mysteries in this Windsor play. For example, why it was set in an actual but small, Windsor inn – the Garter – when the audience in distant Southwark would hardly know of the place?

'The History of British Gardens' with Lindsay Engers

Wednesday 20th January, 8pm

This talk covers the story of gardening and horticultural techniques in Britain from prehistoric times to the present day.

We will look at garden designs and their owners and designers, from tiny early enclosures to later grander landscapes and buildings. On the way, we will look at the kinds of plants that were grown and the significant cultural influences on garden styles.

Finally, we will reflect on the fantastic history of British gardens and their unique features which we can all learn from in our own garden practices.

'The Wonders of Wembley' with Dr Kathryn Ferry

Saturday 6th February, 2pm

The 1924 British Empire Exhibition has been largely forgotten, but it was a huge event that provided construction work for unemployed veterans and presented a positive image of Britain and its colonies after the devastation of World War I.

Designed to be permanent, it was hailed as the world's first concrete city and gave us the original Wembley Stadium. Across 216 acres, new design ideas rubbed shoulders with stereotyped depictions of global cultures.

This talk takes a look around the vast site which included a 50-acre amusement park, a subterranean reconstruction of Tutankhamun's tomb, a never-stop railway and electric cars.



'Unusual Pubs – Amazing Stories' with Bob Barton

Wednesday 17th February, 8pm

Over the last ten years, Bob Barton has visited at least a thousand pubs, all over Britain. It sounds like a crazy pub crawl, and in a way it has been. Bob has been on a mission, in search of unusual pubs. By 'unusual' he means an unexpected location, out-of-the-ordinary décor, wacky collections of memorabilia, incredible architecture or community connection, or simply another claimant for the title of 'this country's oldest pub'.

Among Bob's favourites, one is very local – namely, the White Horse in Hedgerley. A hostelry that goes from strength to strength despite having no handpumps, no beer cellar and no bar counter to speak of. But always great ale, cider and food – plus it is the base for a wonderful Wassail each January.



■ *All these events take place at Hedgerley Memorial Hall. For more details, please contact John Lovelock by email to jdlovelock@btinternet.com or visit the society's website at www.hedgerleyhistoricalsociety.org*

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BucksVision

Live music is a shared sensory world built entirely on sound, energy and community

BucksVision South East Division has been entertaining its members with a rich range of musical delights from choirs to musicians, and opera singers to piano players.

Many people who are blind or live with visual impairments often find barriers when they seek to participate in community events. Whether this is needing to read the lyrics at the local choir or navigating rows of an audience at a show, challenges can be presented that limit an individual's access to live functions.

The volunteers at BucksVision South East Division organise musical entertainment in safe and local venues with transport to the occasion and dedicated support onsite. These adjustments enable their blind and partially sighted members to enjoy live entertainment.

Our members have experienced the joy of singing along together in a choir, the uplifting tunes of a fantastic band at the annual summer fete and a range of wonderful singers who select songs and rhythms to get everyone tapping their toes or contemplatively reminiscing as old memories are stirred.

It was an honour to welcome the Italian tenor, Yuri Sabatini, who delivered a deeply moving performance for us. The centre of his artistry focuses on the belief that a voice can do more than impress, it can create a connection. This echoes one of the core aims of BucksVision which is to ensure that no-one in our community is socially isolated due to their sight loss.

Music is felt, heard and shared – no vision is required. So whether it is a classical symphony in a vaulted cathedral, an open-air rock festival or an am-dram group performing in a community hall, the magic of the stage remains universal and truly inclusive.

At BucksVision South East Division, we empower people with sight loss to live full, positive lives at every step of their journey. Through safe transport, dedicated sight guiding, and vibrant social events, we make it

Join the BucksVision team and make a real difference in our community

We are currently looking for volunteers to support the work of BucksVision, particularly administrators and organisers to help run things. Open roles include:

- Chairperson
- Vice-chair
- Committee members
- Fundraisers

Why volunteer with us?

- Community impact: Directly benefit local residents and shape community initiatives.
- Networking: Meet like-minded, community-focused people and build connections.
- Flexibility: Roles require approximately 10 hours per month, with flexible scheduling.

No prior formal board experience is required, just passion and reliability! Please get in touch to register your interest or to ask any questions – our contact details are below.

easy for our members to connect, share experiences, and build new skills together.

■ *Contact the local BucksVision South East Division team by email to southeastbv@gmail.com or call 01753 373 638 to find out more about our services, meetings or volunteering opportunities.*



Stoke Poges Parish Council

SPN delivery rounds available

Stoke Poges News is hand-delivered to every house in the village.

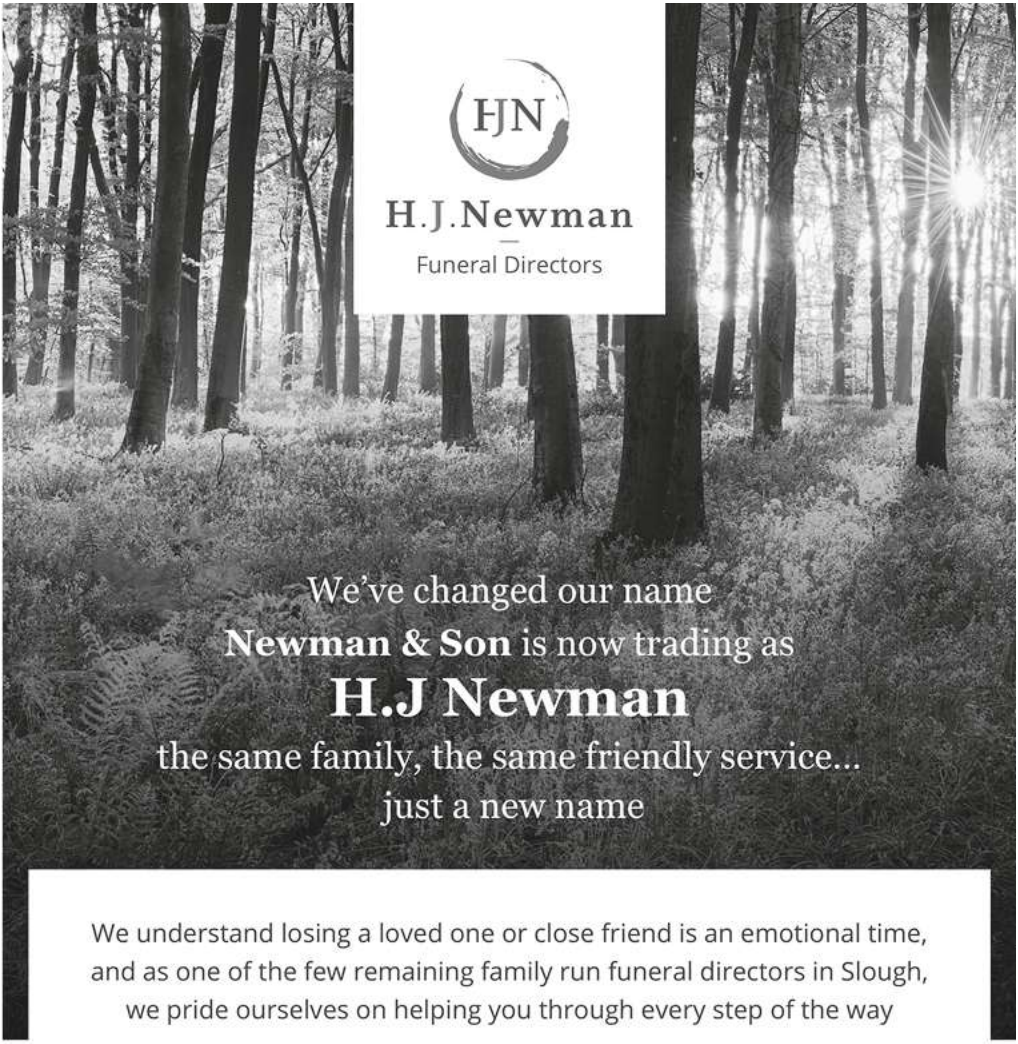
We currently have vacancies on our delivery rounds, and we're looking for some reliable people to join our team to deliver from the spring issue onwards, starting late February 2027.

There are four issues of the magazine per year, and our deliverers receive 18p for each copy delivered on their route.

If you are interested, please contact the Clerk – you'll find contact details on page 50.

■ *Did you know? There's an archive of back issues of Stoke Poges News from the last four years on the Parish Council website, where you can also download the latest issue.*

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk



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Stoke Poges Singers

The spirit of Christmas

Nothing invokes the spirit of Christmas like carol singing.

Irrespective of your particular musical taste and despite the fact that the festive season seems to start earlier and earlier in the shops, carols are a much-loved soundtrack and herald to Christmas.

It is generally a busy time of the year for choirs and singers, with competing demands to sing at concerts, church services and community events. Following our winter concert at the end of November, Stoke Poges Singers' focus turns to our annual Family Carol concert in December, as well as a couple of invitations to sing at Christmas events.

Our winter concert – 'What Sweeter Music – British Choral Classics Through the Ages' – in fact took its title from a John Rutter carol of the same name. The programme also included Christmas music from the likes of Vaughan Williams, Britten, Darke and altogether covered 500 years of choral writing from Tallis and Byrd to Jenkins and Holst. We were delighted to welcome back Andy Langley, our previous MD and now President of the society, as guest conductor for the evening. It was a great showcase and snapshot of the tradition and wealth of choral composition and singing in this country. The short piece by Errollyn Wallen, recently appointed by King Charles as Master of the King's Music, demonstrated this tradition is being maintained.

The Family Carol Concert will be held on the afternoon of Saturday 12th December in St Andrew's, Stoke Poges. This may feature one or two choir items items from the winter concert, but the emphasis is on everyone old and young joining in and enjoying singing well-known traditional carols. The festivities start at 3pm with mince pies, mulled wine and soft drinks. Tickets are £5 for adults including refreshments, with all proceeds going to choir funds.

The choir will recommence rehearsals on Thursday 7th January for our spring concert. If you make any New Year's resolutions to try something different, join a club or get a little fitter (and singing is a healthy pastime!) then why not give us a try and join us? New members are always welcome, especially so at the beginning of the new term.

■ *Visit www.stokepogessingers.org.uk for further information and details of all events and tickets.*

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Look for the star this Christmas

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Stoke Poges SL2 4NZ

Sunday 13th December
4pm Wassailing with Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens

Sunday 20th December
6.30pm Lessons & Carols

Thursday 24th December
Christmas Eve
4pm Family Carols by Candlelight
11.30pm Midnight Mass

Friday 25th December
Christmas Day
10am Family Communion

www.stokepogeschurch.org/christmas



Stoke Poges Church

Look for the star this Christmas

Above the self-proclaimed media 'stars' and things in our world that are never quite as shiny as they seem, discover the one who really shines... Jesus.

All of our events are free, unless otherwise stated, and are open to everyone, with no need to book or special dress code.

Photo booth at Carols on the Green

We started this tradition a few years ago and it's become a favourite – come and take a photo with family or friends in our Christmas photo booth alongside the stalls, singing and Santa at Carols on the Green, 6pm to 8pm on Saturday 28th November at Stoke Poges Village Centre.

Advent Sunday, 29th November

9am – Morning Prayer with Baptism at St Giles' Church

Includes traditional hymns and liturgy from books in your pew, a reading from the Bible, a sermon, prayers and today, a warm welcome to our baptism family. After the service, we catch up over coffee.

11am – Family Advent Service at St Andrew's Church

Modern worship songs, prayers and liturgy on the big screen and the same Bible reading and sermon as our 9am service. Plenty of tea, coffee and chat afterwards.

Wednesday 2nd December

7.45pm – Dedicated – prayer and worship in St Andrew's Chapel

An interactive hour of prayer on the first Wednesday of each month. We will start with refreshments at 7.45pm, then continue with worship music and prayer, using a Bible passage as a springboard to pray in small groups about topics of concern.

Sunday 6th December

9am – Holy Communion at St Giles' Church

11am – Discipleship Service at St Andrew's Church

On the first Sunday of each month we enjoy worship music, a short talk or video and small group discussion, aimed at growing our faith. The activities are suitable for all ages. Refreshments afterwards.

Sunday 13th December

11am – Family Service at St Andrew's Church

Our regular Sunday service with refreshments afterwards.

4-6pm – Wassailing at St Giles' Church

Welcome in the season! We'll start at 4pm with our crafts indoors at St Giles', then we'll take a torchlit walk around the Memorial Gardens, stop for carols at the Repton Bridge, then it's back to St Giles' for more carols, mince pies and mulled cider or apple juice.

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

Parking is in the large car park on Church Lane (opposite the entrances to the church and Memorial Gardens).

Tuesday 15th December

10am – Baby Steps Christmas Party at St Andrew's Church

Dress up and twinkle like a star with us in our mini Nativity story, songs, games and treats. £3 suggested donation.

Sunday 20th December

11am – Christmas Jumper Family Communion Service at St Andrew's Church

Our regular 11am Sunday service with added Christmas jumpers, worship songs and Holy Communion. You are welcome to come up for Communion if it's your tradition, just receive a blessing or stay seated.

6.30pm – Lessons & Carols at St Giles' Church

Our traditional carol service with organ and choir, which leads us through the Christmas events with each reading and carol.

Christmas Eve, Thursday 24th December

4pm – Family Carols by Candlelight at St Giles' Church

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

11.30pm – Midnight Mass at St Giles' Church

Enjoy the anticipation 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, Friday 25th December

10am – Family Communion Service at St Giles' Church

It's the big day! Come and celebrate Jesus' birthday with us and say farewell to Revd Natasha as this will be her last service in Stoke Poges before she moves to her new role in Gloucestershire.

Sunday 27th December

11am – Joint Service at St Andrew's Church

Venture out of the house and come join us as we roll together morning prayer and our regular family service in that twilight zone between Christmas and New Year.

Seasonal reflections with the Church of England app

The Everyday Faith app changes with each season and in December it features daily Advent reflections (1st to 23rd December) and 12 days of Christmas reflections (24th December to 6th January). Together, each reflection takes you on a journey that will help you take fresh encouragement and hope from Advent and the Christmas story into the year ahead.

Search for 'Everyday Faith' in your app store.

■ *Find us at:*
www.stokepogeschurch.org
Church Office 01753 642331
office@stokepogeschurch.org

Facebook @stokepogeschurch
Instagram @stoke_poges_church

Stoke Poges Men's Group

The Men's Group welcomes everyone – it is not an exclusive group and guys of all faiths and none are very welcome. If you use Facebook, please check us out at 'Stoke Poges Men's Group'. For general information about the group and future events, please contact Tony or Nigel.

Tony Shortman
01844 350014
shortmantm@gmail.com

Nigel Lowe
07973 349721
nigelatsuchlowe@gmail.com

Stoke Poges Men's Group

Christmas will soon be upon us, and as we approach that special day, many of us will be focusing on those festive preparations. We can be tempted to forget the real reason why the world celebrates Christmas and why it is such a special time in the Christian Calendar.

Approximately 2026 years ago, Jesus was born, the son of God, celebrated by millions of Christians everywhere. Christmas is a time of giving gifts to our family and friends, but the greatest gift of all is the one that God gave us, his only son Jesus Christ! Guys in the men's group will be joyfully celebrating the birth of Jesus and looking to sharing this good news during 2027 with the various events they will be running for men in Stoke Poges and the surrounding area.

The New Year will start with a Beer & Skittles Evening on Saturday 23rd January in the main hall at St Andrew's. It's a great opportunity for lads, dads, granddads and other fellas to get together, with everyone competing for the main prize. As usual, a fish and chip supper will be provided plus a wide range of drinks (craft beers, lager, soft drinks etc.), all of which are included in the price. The first game starts at 7pm, but you can arrive any time from 6.30pm for a drink and some healthy nibbles!

Please join us for an evening of fun and relaxation, where everyone is welcome. The evening should finish at approximately 10pm.

If you would like to book places at this event, or need further information about it, please contact Tony or Nigel (contact details opposite).

Could you spare a little time to help South Bucks Riding for the Disabled?

South Bucks RDA is a charity based at the edge of Stoke Poges parish, near Fulmer.

We welcome participants with physical, sensory and learning disabilities, autism, ADHD and mental health conditions.

Riding is widely recognised as an excellent form of physical and sensory therapy. It helps to build up self-confidence, develops concentration, balance and strength and, at the same time, provides recreation, education and sport.

For some who cannot ride, just being around horses has a wellbeing benefit. We provide the opportunity for participants to take part in social activities such as 'Tea with a Pony', or bespoke interaction sessions.

We're looking for friendly, practical volunteers to help with general yard duties at our centre, particularly people who are happy to get stuck in and help with jobs such as:

- mucking out stables;
- sweeping and tidying the yard;
- field maintenance (poo picking);
- cleaning tack;
- helping us keep everything running smoothly behind the scenes.

Whether you already have experience with horses or would simply like to spend some time outdoors, meet new people and support a local charity, we'd love to hear from you.





Our volunteers play an important part in helping us provide opportunities for disabled children and adults and make a real difference to us being able to run our centre effectively.

If you're interested in finding out more, please contact our friendly team by emailing *enquiries@southbucksrda.org* or call us on 01753 662 796.

■ *Visit our website at www.southbucksrda.org*

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Sunshine Corner Pre-school

A busy autumn term at Sunshine Corner

The lovely hot summer was soon over and we welcomed children to the autumn term at Sunshine Corner.

The children all settled in really quickly and we were able to carry out lots of activities connected to our theme 'All About Me', looking at the children themselves, their families, their homes and their favourite things.

With the nice weather continuing, but luckily not so extremely hot, we were able to spend lots of time in the garden. We ended the term with a multi-cultural party where the children were invited to come in wearing traditional dress and bring some food from home for all their friends to share.

During the term, we carried out some village walks where we took a different route each time showing the children various parts of the village, encouraging them to talk about what they were seeing and promoting road safety.

The second half of the autumn term is always our busiest time, with Halloween, Bonfire Night, Diwali and the run up to Christmas.

We also always support Children In Need with lots of activities in the week leading up to the main day. This year, we held a teddy bears' picnic where the parents could make a donation and their child could dress up and bring their favourite teddy to nursery, share a picnic with their friends and listen to the story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. We set the room up to enable the children to act out the story and create artwork around the story.

Carols on the Green soon comes around, and we have a stall raising funds for the nursery. It is always lovely to see past children coming up to the stall and hearing all about what they are doing now, and for our present children and their families to come and support us.

During the last two weeks of term, The Stoke Poges School invites us to bring our children down to watch the dress rehearsal of their Key Stage 1 Christmas play. This is always exciting for the children and lovely for the staff to see how well our past children are doing.

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High Wycombe
891 London Road
Tel: 01494 472572

Marlow
21-23 Little Marlow Road
Tel: 01628 898866

Our Christmas party is on the last day of term with lots of fun and games, party food and a visit from Father Christmas, bearing gifts for all the children.

The Christmas holidays will fly by and we will soon be back in January, ready for a new term.

- *If you are interested in a space you can drop in to see us at the Village Centre between 9am to 3pm during the term, contact us on 01753 644 300, drop us a WhatsApp on 07973 671 558 or send an email to info@sunshinecornerpreschool.co.uk – we look forward to hearing from you.*

Parent, Baby and Toddler Group

Sandra returned with our Parent, Baby and Toddler Group in September. She and Michelle had lots of ideas and activities they had planned over the summer holidays – planting irises, creating autumn wreaths, making finger-painted trees, sun catchers, Diwali and firework artwork and Remembrance Day poppies, alongside lots of play activities.

They also have lots of activities ready to celebrate Christmas. Sandra and Michelle are very welcoming to anyone who comes along, always ready to offer a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit, snacks for the children and a good chat. It is a relaxed way to meet other parents, grandparents or carers with young children.

The group meets every Thursday morning during term time from 9.15am to 11.30am in the main hall at Stoke Poges Village Centre. Why not drop in to meet people and enjoy the company of others with your children?





Stoke Common

Empowering the next generation

From tracking bats at sunset to searching for reptiles, identifying wild plants and helping restore rare heathland habitats, young people across the local area have been rolling up their sleeves and getting involved in conservation.

Launched this year as a pilot for young people aged 11–17, our Junior Rangers programme offers hands-on conservation experience and the chance to make a meaningful difference for nature at Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches. Working alongside Rangers, Junior Rangers build practical skills through real projects including heathland restoration, wildlife surveys, plant identification and habitat management.

The leader of the programme, Ranger Izzy, has created it to inspire and empower young people to connect with nature and discover what goes on behind the scenes of looking after a National Nature Reserve. Rather than learning about conservation in a classroom, Junior Rangers take part in genuine projects. They discover why particular habitats or species need support, learn how Rangers monitor wildlife and then put new skills into practice. Activities have included heathland restoration, reptile surveying, plant and wildlife identification, bat monitoring, trail-camera deployment and vegetation management.

By early October, eight sessions across the two reserves had recorded 35 attendances by young people. The practical results are already impressive. Altogether, Junior Rangers helped improve approximately 2,858 square metres of valuable habitat – that's an area larger than ten tennis courts. Removing invasive or encroaching vegetation gives specialist heathland and wetland plants more space and light, while helping maintain the varied conditions needed by insects, reptiles, birds and other wildlife.

The programme has also introduced young people to ecological surveying. Junior Rangers prepared survey areas and completed four reptile surveys. They deployed five wildlife trail cameras, capturing badgers,



foxes, deer and Burnham Beeches' well-known livestock. During a mini-BioBlitz, they identified 30 species of plants, insects and other wildlife. In a bat-detective session, they learned to use detectors and completed five sunset surveys. This gave them first-hand insight into how Rangers collect evidence to inform conservation decisions.

No two Junior Ranger sessions are the same. One visit might involve searching for signs of reptiles at Stoke Common, while another could focus on clearing birch, identifying wildflowers, building bat boxes or recording species.

The programme is also flexible enough to respond to real conditions in the landscape. During hot, dry weather, for example, plant identification became more difficult because vegetation was under stress. Rangers used this as an opportunity to discuss drought, wildfire risk and the effects of climate change. Practical challenges therefore become valuable learning moments, showing that conservation work requires observation, adaptability and most importantly, teamwork.



But the impact goes far beyond the practical work completed on the ground. Young people join for many reasons: some love animals or enjoy being outdoors, while others are completing Duke of Edinburgh volunteering, seeking work experience or exploring environmental careers. Through each session, they build confidence, teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills while meeting others with similar interests.

Feedback from young people and families has been extremely positive. One parent described how their son "felt so involved in conservation and management of the area" and loved learning about the plants and wildlife they encountered during a habitat restoration session.

Another said the programme had given their child opportunities to learn new skills, meet new people and become part of the local community. One family praised the inclusive approach that enabled a young person with additional needs to remain focused, engaged and fully involved.

Young people themselves reported learning new skills, feeling a sense of achievement, having fun outdoors and becoming part of a community. One Junior Ranger commented: "I loved it! It's a 10-out-of-10."

Could your child be a Junior Ranger?

At a time when nature loss and climate change can feel overwhelming, Junior Rangers offers something hopeful and practical: the chance to become part of the solution. Young people are not simply watching conservation happen, they are restoring habitats, gathering wildlife data and discovering the difference they can make together.

Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches welcome interest from young people aged 11–17 who would like to join future activities. No previous experience is needed, only curiosity about nature and a willingness to learn.

Please contact Ranger Izzy by email to *burnham.beeches@cityoflondon.gov.uk* to find out more about upcoming sessions and how to join the programme.

Stoke Poges & Wexham Women's Institute

Making new friends over tea and cake

Members of our WI will meet for a Christmas party on 9th December.

We will have a quiz and Secret Santa. Our Christmas card swap proved very popular last year, so we are repeating it as it saves the cost of postage.

We are looking forward to the new year and have compiled another programme of speakers and outings that we think our members will enjoy. At all our meetings, we provide plenty of time for our members to socialise over tea and cakes and make new friends.

On January 13th we'll be discussing and voting on this year's WI resolutions. Information about the resolutions appears in the magazines we receive throughout the year, and we are encouraged to support the ones we feel strongly about. All WIs do this and the results are debated at the NFWI's Annual General Meeting in the summer. Also in January, we have a talk by Mandy Chapman entitled 'A Bicycle Made for Two'.

On February 10th, Mike Payne will return to tell us what he has discovered about Downton Abbey's connection with Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. He impressed us with his history of Pinewood Studios when he was our guest speaker last March.

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

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Planning Committee
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Manjit Bassi, Saera Carter BEM, Mary Crocker, Keith Finan, John Harwood, Kim Pritchard, Rod Wilson

HR Committee
Chair: John Harwood
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Saera Carter BEM

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Pavilion caretaker: 07881 388 778

Parish Council website

For details of all council meetings, services and initiatives, announcements, village information and events calendar.

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk

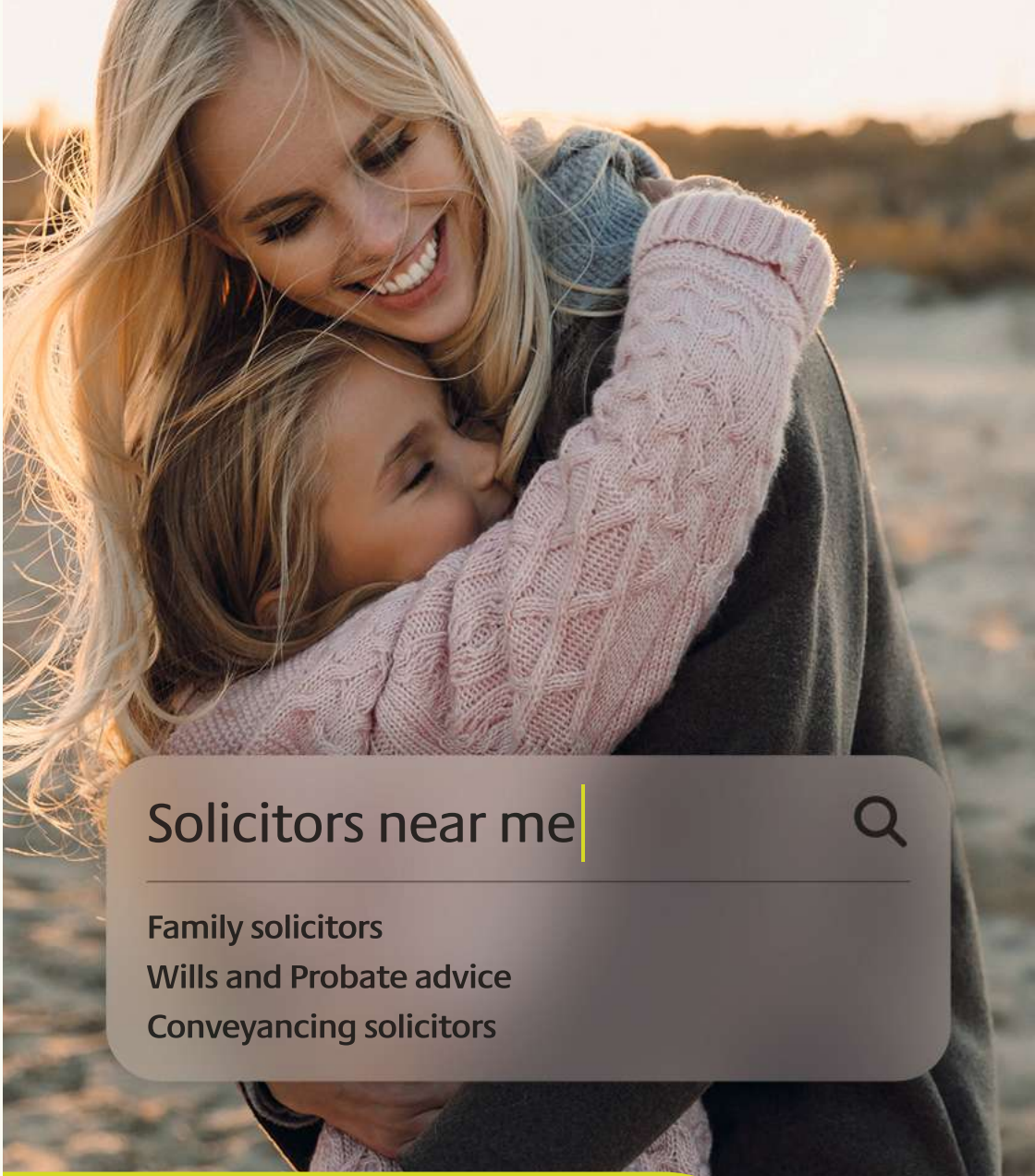
Stoke Poges Newsflash

Sign up for news and information by email.

www.stokepogesparishcouncil.gov.uk/newsflash

Parish Council spokespersons
Allotments – Rich Huckle
Planning – Saera Carter BEM
Flagmaster – Jim Budd
Website – Rich Huckle
MVAS coordination – Vacancy,
Keith Finan *ad interim*

Appointed representatives
Stoke Poges News Editor – Rich Huckle
Stoke Poges Village Centre – Manjit Bassi, Kim Pritchard
Community Speedwatch – Anne Frank



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