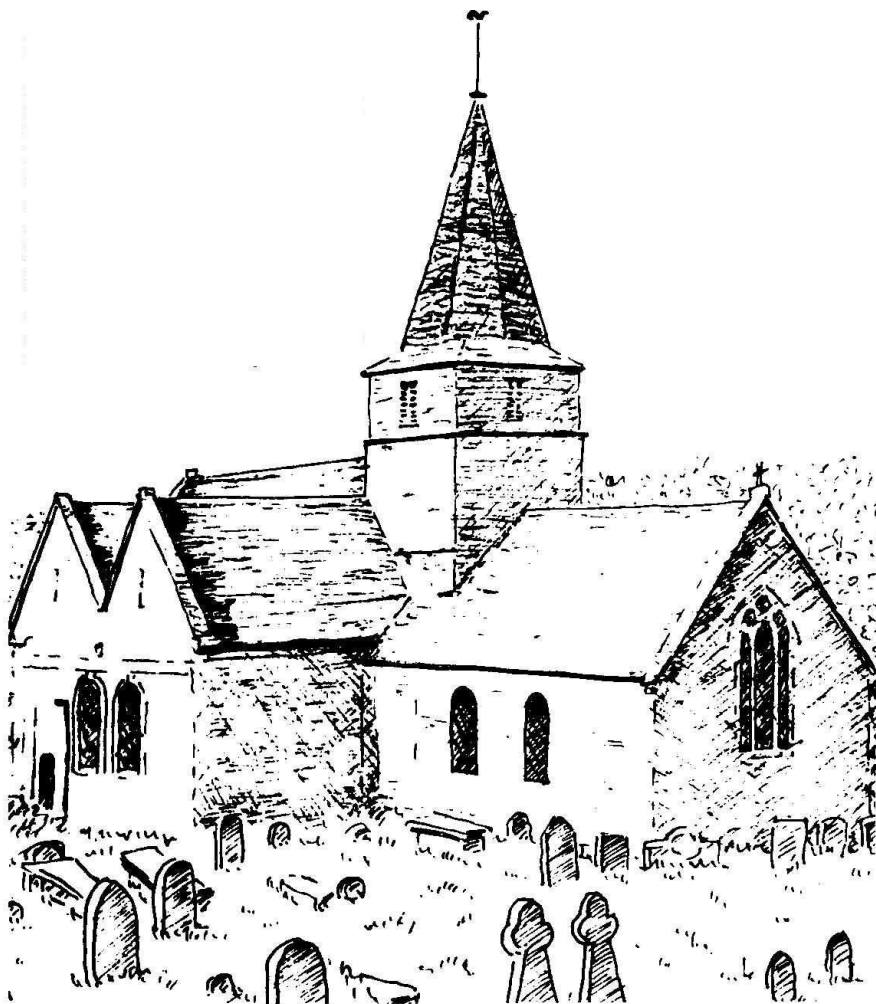


# THE WATERSHED MAGAZINE



February 2024

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762861

**St Kenelm's**

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**Rotas**

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**Treasurer PCC**

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760300

**Flowers**

Pam Thorogood

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**RODMARTON AND TARLTON (Chapel of Ease)**

**Church Wardens**

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For those with access to the internet the following links will take you to our website pages:

For the calendar: <http://thamesheadchurches.org.uk/calendar/>

For an outline of all our Sunday services: <http://www.thamesheadchurches.org.uk/services/>

*The Thameshead Benefice*

*St. Matthew, Coates: All Saints, Kemble: St. Michael and All Angels, Poole Keynes: St. Kenelm, Sapperton with St. Luke, Frampton Mansell: St. Peter, Rodmarton with St. Osmund, Tarlton: All Saints, Somerford Keynes with All Saints, Shorncliffe*

Dear Friends,

Candlemas (2 February) is a time when we look back at the events of Christmas and Epiphany. For many, Candlemas marks the end of the season of Christmas. December 25<sup>th</sup> seems a long time ago; the decorations were packed away weeks ago, the last of the cake has been eaten and the presents used or put away.

The story we are celebrating is found in Luke 2: 22-40, where Mary and Joseph bring the infant Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem 40 days after his birth to dedicate him to God, according to religious laws and traditions of the day.

As they brought Jesus to the Temple, they met Simeon, who had been promised “He should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord” (Luke 2:26). In his prophecy, Simeon said the child would be a light for revelation to the nations. Simeon foretold times of darkness when he talked about the “Rise and fall of many”. Luke 2:34.

Our world is indeed a dark place at times – we only need to read the newspaper or watch the News programmes on TV to read about war, famine, abuse, murder and the “inner thoughts of many” (Luke 2:35) have been revealed. But - Candlemas is also a time when we look forward.

At the beginning of February we begin to come out of a dark winter and look towards the brighter spring and longer periods of daylight. The earliest civilisations would have been aware of this and in pre-Christian times there would have been ceremonies to encourage the sun to increase in power and bring back the sunlight that they craved. These rituals would almost certainly have included the lighting fires and tapers of light.

Although we know that sunlight is necessary for growth, we also know that we do not need to light fires in order for Spring and Summer to come round again.

The blessing of candles at Candlemas dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, and to a time when candles and oil lamps were the only source of light available during the dark hours. From the start Christians used candles for the practical purpose of providing light in places like the Catacombs, where they met in secret to pray and celebrate the Eucharist. Soon candles came to represent the Light of Christ, and were used at baptism and confirmation to symbolise the Christian turning from the darkness of sin to the redeeming Light of Jesus.

As we remember that Jesus is the light of the world, we should also remember that He said, “You are the **light of the world**” (**Matthew 5:14** )

We are the light of the world, not the light of the church. That means we must get beyond the church walls and take the light out to where it is dark. In our dark world, we can shine out as lights by showing kindness and compassion to others and yourself, by looking for opportunities to be more like Jesus, to lift others up, and to do the right thing.

As we look forward to Lent – Ash Wednesday is on 14 February - let's consider how we can be lights in the world and shine brightly in this dark world.

With love and prayers,  
Liz (Reader)

## **SPORTILY**

Sportily is back up and running again post-Christmas. Luke is back in the Thameshead schools leading ActiveRE, after-school clubs and dressing up for Open the Book.

Sportily Youth Club in Kemble had its first session on 22 January and will be running from the Kemble Village Hall every 2nd and 4th Monday during term time. It is a safe, fun and interactive space for school children between Yrs 4-9.

The Couch to 5km at The Tavern also started in January and will last 10 weeks. Expect to see some more runners out on the roads soon!

Contact Luke if you have any ideas or would like to find out more about any of the above at [luke.campbell@sportily.org.uk](mailto:luke.campbell@sportily.org.uk) or go to [sportily.org.uk/thameshead](http://sportily.org.uk/thameshead).

## **JOB VACANCY -BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR**

The Thameshead Benefice is seeking to appoint a part time administrator to provide administrative support to our group of six parishes. Candidates will need good computer skills, especially Office 365 and be able to manage the website. Good communication skills are also important. Training will be available, customised to the successful candidate. The successful candidate should be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Benefice. Initially the post will for 12 hours per week.

A job description and application form are available on website <https://www.thamesheadchurches.org.uk/> . If you would like an informal conversation about the role please contact George Collins 07831 682410



## FORTHCOMING SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE

### 4 February

### Second Sunday before Lent

10.00	Kemble Church	Communion (streamed) + Children's
10.00	Poole Keynes	Holy Communion
11.00	Somerford Keynes	Holy Communion
11.00	Sapperton	Holy Communion
11.00	Rodmarton	Holy Communion for Candlemass

### 11 February

### Sunday before Lent

9.30	Coates	Holy Communion
10.00	Kemble	Morning Source all age (streamed)
11.00	Rodmarton	Morning Prayer

### 18 February

### First Sunday in Lent

10.00	Kemble	Ecumenical (streamed)
10.00	Poole Keynes	Morning Prayer
11.00	Somerford Keynes	Morning Prayer
11.00	Rodmarton	Morning Prayer
11.00	Frampton Mansell	Morning Prayer

### 25 February

### Second Sunday in Lent

8.00	Tarlton	Holy Communion BCP
10.00	Poole Keynes	Benefice Service

### 3 March

### Third Sunday in Lent

10.00	Kemble Church	Communion (streamed) + Children's
10.00	Poole Keynes	Holy Communion
11.00	Somerford Keynes	Holy Communion
11.00	Frampton Mansell	Holy Communion
11.00	Rodmarton	Morning Prayer

## NEWS FROM COATES

### **The Future of St Matthew's Church Coates**

A chance to have your say about what you *need* and *want* from your village Church.

Whether you are a regular churchgoer or you just value the presence of the Church for special occasions, we would like to hear from you.



Now is the time to make your voice heard and help shape the future of St Matthew's

*Everyone welcome to  
Coates Village Hall*

**On Thursday 22 February at 7pm**

(Please call Alison 07941 377383 if you need a lift to the above)

*With cheese, wine and chocolate.*

**Alternatively**, send your thoughts and comments to [stmatthewscoates@gmail.com](mailto:stmatthewscoates@gmail.com) by 29 February.

### **Coffee, Cake and Chat**

"Delicious sweet & savoury home bakes, gluten-free too, proper coffee, various teas & decaf at this friendly event"



**NEXT: 20 February & 19 March  
(always the 3rd Tuesday)**



10.30am to 12 noon Coates Village Hall

**Takeaway bakes from 11.45am, they go fast!**

**£4.00 Two bakes of your choice + bottomless tea/coffee**

**£1.50 Bottomless tea/coffee**

**Well behaved dogs welcome**

See our notices on the village hall notice board & Coates parish website or contact us on 770596 / 07794 678 928

## **COATES VILLAGE HALL OPEN NIGHT – 2024**

Our 2023 season closed with an exciting talk on new technologies for farming in the future. Many thanks to our speaker Kit Franklin and to all the other speakers last year who have offered their time and knowledge to inform and entertain us, free of charge. The talks resumed in January. The hall will be open on the last Thursday of the month from 7 to 9 pm, with talks starting at 7.30 pm. Come and meet friends and neighbours. Hot drinks and biscuits are available. There are no charges, but donations are welcome to help meet our expenses. Any profit will go to Village Hall funds.

### **25 January ‘One Hundred Years of the Waterpark ’ - Peter Jay**

Peter is a Lakes Trust member and volunteer with an extensive knowledge of the history of the Cotswold Waterpark, who will get us up to date on the history of the park and what is happening there now and in the future.

### **29 February ‘Cirencester Community Railway’ - Richard Gummer**

Learn about the plans to reconnect Cirencester with the railway system. This talk has been postponed from October.

### **28 March - to be arranged**

Depending on the availability of suitable speakers, after an Easter break in April, talks will continue depending on the availability of suitable speakers.

## **NEW YEAR, NEW BABY?**

Our free, weekly postnatal support group, ‘Baby and Me’, is back in Tetbury from 25 January! The group, which is for parents with babies aged up to 6 months, is a great opportunity to build your confidence as a parent, share experiences and learn more about your baby’s development. Each week we cover a different topic (such as feeding, play and communication, baby massage and sleep), in a friendly and supportive environment.

‘Baby and Me’ will be held at Christ Church, The Chipping, Tetbury, GL8 8ET on Thursdays, 10.30am – 12noon, from 25 January to 21 March. To reserve your place, please call 01285 885391 or email [groups@home-start-cotswolds.org.uk](mailto:groups@home-start-cotswolds.org.uk)



The Village Club — COATES — We are open on a Friday and Saturday evening (8pm-11pm) every week. Everyone in the village is welcome to come down, have a drink and meet new people, friends and neighbours. We have local craft ales, craft gins and a selection of fine wines and non-alcoholic drinks.

## February

Friday 2 - 6:30pm Quiz night - Bar opens at 6:30pm with quiz at 7pm

Saturday 3 - Live Sports: Six Nations Rugby England vs Italy 2:15pm

Friday 9 – Coates Village Club AGM Please come along to the meeting to see what we're all about! Get in touch if you'd like to join the committee or help with events and advertising.

We'd really like to know what you want from your club and how we can do more for the village!

Saturday 10 - Live Six Nations Rugby England vs Wales 4:45pm

Saturday 24 - Live Six Nations Rugby England vs Scotland 4:45pm

Situated within the village hall, the village club is committed to offering something for everyone in our community. The Village Club really needs the support of the whole of the community especially with younger Adults/Parents/Teenagers to offer a new perspective on what future events are organised, so come along any Friday or Saturday - we need your support. If you can help, or would like to know a bit more, please email [coatesvillageclub@gmail.com](mailto:coatesvillageclub@gmail.com)



## Coates Cinema presents: The Great Escaper <sup>12A</sup>

MICHAEL CAINE

GLENDA JACKSON



**Thursday 8  
February  
Coates  
Village  
Hall**

Admission £5  
Doors open  
7pm

For any queries contact: Simon Large 07714220558 or [simon.large@sky.com](mailto:simon.large@sky.com)



# **NEWS FROM SAPPERTON AND FRAMPTON MANSELL**

## **TALKING TO MYSELF**

I've just finished taking the Christmas decorations down. They are now packed up ready to go back in the loft and the tree is outside. The house looks very bare.

So, we have packed away the decorations and also we have packed away 2023. It is difficult to recall what actually happened during that year. Some people will be remembering sad occasions – They may have lost loved ones and are feeling lost and alone. For others it may have been a happy exciting one – perhaps they got married or have given birth to the next generation. Mind you, new members of the family unit can make you feel older. Two new great grandchildren have put years on me!

The conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East as well as problems in Sudan and other countries will certainly be something that will be etched on many minds. Why is God letting this happen? Where is He?

And now 2024 has arrived with chaos across our country with many people have has to leave their homes by the terrible floods. And these disasters are not just in our country. Many countries have been affected by climate change. Forest fires, tsunamis, earthquakes, lightning strikes, tornadoes; the list goes on and on. We feel helpless - we feel the problem is far too big for 'little us' to be able to do anything to help. We might say again 'Why doesn't God help?'

I am an avid watcher of natural history programmes but sometimes when we see how many wonderful animals are drastically reducing in number I feel so sad. Our natural world is so wonderful surely we want to preserve it for future generations!

As we reach out into 2024 perhaps we should resolve to help our world and its people. If we could all make a decision to do 'just a little something' it could make a world of difference.

## **RBL KEMBLE AND DISTRICT WOMENS' SECTION**

We do have planned a coach trip to the Birmingham Tattoo on Sunday 11 February which we have joined forces with Cirencester and South Cerney branches. The cost is around £42 per person. If anyone would like more information then please contact me.

Pat Ayres 01285 770385 [ayrescares50@gmail.com](mailto:ayrescares50@gmail.com)

## PAT SORTON

Many of the older people in Frampton Mansell will be sad to hear that Pat Sorton died just before Christmas. The Sorton family moved here in the late 1980s. Pat became very involved in the restoration of St Luke's church, forming The Friends of St Luke's. For many years Pat helped with the running of the church. He particularly enjoyed sorting the music. At that time we had no organist and so used a tape system. If I remember rightly the choir on the tapes was Lincoln Cathedral choir – each hymn used had to be checked as Lincoln didn't always have the same verses as we did. Many will remember the BBQs in the garden of Bindles run by Pat and his mother, Linda. After Linda's death, Pat decided to move to East Anglia to live with his sister Maureen where he spent his final years helping her care of her sheep. God Bless, Pat.

## COFFEE MORNING



**10am-12pm**  
**First Wednesday**  
**of every month**

**FRAMPTON MANSELL VILLAGE HALL**

### 2024 dates

- ♥ January - 
- ♥ 7th February
- ♥ 6th March
- ♥ 3rd April

**£4.00 entry includes**  
**unlimited hot**  
**drinks and a delicious**  
**home made bake plus a**  
**raffle ticket!**



Contact: [thowes51@gmail.com](mailto:thowes51@gmail.com)  
[kayleigh@xalln.com](mailto:kayleigh@xalln.com)



## SERVICE AND COFFEE



We hold a said communion service, followed by coffee on the first Tuesday of the month. The next one will be on **Tuesday 6 February** at Woodstock in Frampton Mansell.

The service will start at 11am with coffee and a natter at 11.30am. We would love to see you for either or both. Want to know more?

**Need a lift? Phone Pepita or Paul on 760211**

# Grampton Mansell Village Choir

A fun community choir for all those who just love to sing!



7pm - 8:30pm MONDAYS  
at The Village Hall

£5 per week or £20 per month

The first session  
is FREE!

No previous experience necessary  
Open to ALL ages and voices

Be Part of it... get in touch with Lucy!

W: [www.camerondavies.me](http://www.camerondavies.me)

E: [lucy@camerondavies.me](mailto:lucy@camerondavies.me)

M: 07866 44725



## Adult Beginner Piano Lessons

It really is NEVER too late...  
Whatever your age,  
if you have ever wanted to learn to  
play piano, give it a try,  
the first lesson  
is FREE!



## Thameshead Ladies Connection #TLC

Come & Join our  
next get together  
ALL WELCOME  
Cheese & Wine

Kat

**Thursday 29 February 2024**

19:30 to 21:30pm

**Venue:**

**Kemble House, Kemble, Cirencester,  
GL7 6AD**

Interested? Want to know more?

**Contact:**

Lucinda Turner 07881 825895

Aileen Shaw 07807 199602

Julie Allen 07704 892029

## TOPIC:

What Modern  
Slavery and  
Human  
Trafficking looks  
like in the UK  
with  
**FIONA  
BOOBYER**  
Justice and Care  
[www.justiceandcare.org](http://www.justiceandcare.org)

RSVP to Lucinda,  
Aileen or Julie

## **NEWS FROM RODMARTON, TARLTON, CULKERTON AND HAZLETON**

### **RODMARTON, TARLTON, CULKERTON AND HAZLETON NEWS & EVENTS**

All services are listed at the front of the magazine but please note especially:

Sunday 4 February 11am Candlemas Holy Communion at St Peter's, Rodmarton

#### **Thank you:**

Many thanks to all who helped to make the Christmas Bazaar such a successful and enjoyable event. The feedback has been terrific, which makes it all worthwhile, and we are grateful to you all for helping to raise much needed funds for the church, and thank you all.

#### **Date for the Diary:**

Saturday 2 March: Quiz Night with Lena & Hamish Corley, in aid of Rodmarton and Tarlton churches. Tickets are available now from 01285 770401 or [janemarlowe1@gmail.com](mailto:janemarlowe1@gmail.com), and so please book your tickets now, teams of six, or join a team. For further information, please see separate flier.

There are collection boxes at the Food Bank collection points in St Osmund's Tarlton & St Peter's Rodmarton

## **Rodmarton & Tarlton Quiz Night**

**Saturday 2 March 2024**

Doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm prompt start to the Quiz  
**with Lena and Hamish Corley**

Venue:

Rodmarton Village Hall

£12 entry per person

Bring your own shared supper for your table

Wine bar

Spring Raffle

Teams of six or join a team: to book please ring 01285 770401 or email:

[janemarlowe1@gmail.com](mailto:janemarlowe1@gmail.com)

*All profits are in aid of St Peter's, Rodmarton and St Osmund's, Tarlton*

## TO A SNOWDROP

By William Wordsworth

Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows, and white as they  
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend  
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,  
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, waylay  
The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed May  
Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;  
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of Spring,  
And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

Happy New Year to all our lovely Watershed readers! It's good to be back!



Everyone at Rodmarton School had lots of fun in the run up to Christmas – the nativity performance, carol concert, wreath making workshops (for both parents and pupils), panto trip, and lots more – but we have to give a big shout out to The Friends of Rodmarton School which raised an astonishing £2,285 with its 16 Days of Christmas advent raffle.

Huge thanks too to everyone who donated prizes which meant that we had a prize, sometime two, for each weekday during the school term in December. It was brilliantly organised by The Friends and, aside from it being loads of fun for the parents and school community, the children will benefit from the amazing amount raised. Thank you to all involved.

This term the children are continuing with their Rocksteady Music School rock and pop band lessons. Children in all three classes are really enjoying learning and performing the many different instruments and, later this term, we are looking forward to hearing them play in a special concert.

Pupils also continue to enjoy taking part in the Daily Mile, a global initiative to improve children's physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing by encouraging them to be active for 15 minutes a day. Children can go at their own pace – walking, jogging or even sprinting – and they really enjoy this daily activity on the school field.

And, later this month, Rodmarton's more competitive older runners will have the opportunity to compete against children from other local primary schools at two Cross Country running events – one at Westonbirt School for years 3 to 6, and another at Northleach for years 5 and 6 at which the top 10 finishers from each race will qualify for the county final later in the month. Good luck to them all.

We will be taking part in Safer Internet Day on 6 February where children will learn how to manage influence and navigate change online, while Sapling class is off to Cirencester's Corinium Museum to learn more about its topic of the Vikings.

And on Friday 23 February, pupils from Oak Class will once again be travelling to Birmingham to join more than 6,000 other primary school children to take part in Young Voices, the largest school choir in the world. Many parents are also attending and we are looking forward to hearing them perform.

Nutty <https://www.rodmartonschool.co.uk/>

01285 841284

## LONGFIELD'S ANNUAL ALE AMBLE FUNDRAISER RETURNS

**24 February, 11am – 3pm**

Here's a lovely opportunity to take a bracing walk with friends, family and four-legged buddies, whilst raising funds for your local hospice.

It's a gentle four mile circular walk, starting and finishing at Stroud Brewery, with optional refreshment breaks at the Bowbridge Arms and Crown & Sceptre along the route. Taking in the hilly Heavens around the Golden Valley, at the end of the walk, you'll be greeted with a free pint or soft drink and the chance to watch a Six Nations rugby match on the big screen. £15 for adults, £10 for children, which includes a free Longfield T shirt.

Book here: <https://longfield.org.uk/event/ale-amble/>



## LUNCH WITH LONGFIELD

Join Longfield for lunch at Egypt Mill in Nailsworth on 22 February. For £25pp, you'll be greeted with bubbles on arrival, followed by a delicious two-course lunch and coffee. You'll hear the latest news from Longfield and find out you can take part in fun fund raising opportunities. All proceeds to Longfield Community Hospice.

Book your place at [www.longfield.org.uk/event/egypt-mill-lunch](http://www.longfield.org.uk/event/egypt-mill-lunch) or call 01453 886868

## CIRENCESTER EATING DISORDER SUPPORT GROUP

The next meetings in Coates Village Hall are on Wednesday 7 February at 7.30pm.

Meetings are generally on the first Wednesday of the month.

Further details can be obtained from Pat in confidence on 770385 or email [ayrescares50@gmail.com](mailto:ayrescares50@gmail.com)



## KEMBLE AND EWEN WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

All welcome to the Tavern on Thursday 15 February at 3pm when we can hear all about the History of Beads with Julia Thorne.

Please come along and join with the members. The 2024 programme is out and we have lots planned!

Pat Ayres - Secretary 01285 770385



# GIVE MORE IN 2024

***Are you looking to give some of your time or make a regular donation to a charity in 2024?***



Cotswold Friends has lots of opportunities to get involved with the work we do, whether you have a few hours free every few months or can make a regular weekly commitment. We would love to have your help in supporting our work to reduce loneliness and isolation in the Cotswolds and to have you become part of our incredible community of volunteers – all 340 of them! You could help us in a variety of ways – such as volunteer driving, helping once a month at our pop-up charity shop, befriending or office admin to name just a few. Give our lovely Volunteer Manager a call on 01608 697007 or email [volunteering@cotswoldfriends.org](mailto:volunteering@cotswoldfriends.org) to have a chat about finding the right opportunity for you.

If you would prefer to support our work financially then a regular or one-off donation would be hugely appreciated and makes a big impact in our community. Please contact our fundraising team on [giving@cotswoldfriends.org](mailto:giving@cotswoldfriends.org) or by calling 01608 692812.

## PREPARING FOR THE INEVITABLE – NEW GROUP LAUNCHED AT LONGFIELD

Facing the final chapter of life can feel daunting, and many of us might prefer not to think about it.



**LONGFIELD**  
Community Hospice

Longfield Community Hospice believes that no one should face this alone, so they're launching a ten-week group session to guide people with life-limiting illnesses and their carers and families through any challenges. You'll be able to think about what's most important to you and gain reassurance that your wishes will be honoured.

Specialists will offer sessions on legal matters, such as will writing and Lasting Power of Attorney, as well as managing symptoms, funeral planning and dealing with grief. There'll also be an opportunity to gather treasured objects and create a comforting memory box.



Sessions will be held from 17 January from 10.30 to 12.30pm, with an optional lunch.

To book a place, call the Wellbeing Team on 01453 733 706 or email [wellbeing@longfield.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@longfield.org.uk)



# NOTES FROM CULKERTON

## GARDENING TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

Welcome to 2024, already with the mild wet winter early spring flowers are cheerfully making their annual returns. Snowdrops, crocus, miniature iris, primroses and hellebores at ground level. Fragrant shrubs, my favourites, Daphne 'Jacqueline Postill', winter honeysuckle, Lonicera 'Winter Beauty', Sweet Box 'Sarcococca confusa' and Cornus officinalis. This winter, vibrant orange berries of wild Iris foetidissima have persisted longer to form an eye-catching contrast to the gentle spring palette, with the exception of the soon to appear sunny yellow daffodils.

This month is the celebration of snowdrops and we are very fortunate to live in an area much favoured for these little bulbs. We are able to visit open gardens to see masses growing on large areas or collections of species and named varieties.

Winter flowers are very resilient; they are adapted to grow and wait cycles of mild or cold snaps. Periods of cold weather are very important to our deciduous trees and plants who need a rest. As gardeners of course we can take advantage of this for pruning when the sap is down in the roots for most fruit trees (not plums or cherries which need summer pruning only to avoid diseases). Mature apple trees in particular need attention now. Looking at their winter frame, first remove any dead wood making clean cuts with clean, sharp tools. Look for crossing or inward growing branches removing these to form an open shape to allow good air movement and sunlight. Cut no more than a third of the total mass, probably a lot less if trees are pruned regularly.

Prunings can be shredded and used as mulches or composted. The addition of coffee grounds to compost heaps is useful as they add nitrogen. Mix in with annual weeds and dry leaves.

This winter our old apple tree has a magnificent, beautiful layer of moss on the main trunks. This does not pose any disadvantage to the tree and will disappear when dry, hot weather makes a return later in the year. However, the moss is a great bonus for all our garden nesting birds; it has a gold standard for nest building.

Another welcome for this new year was seeing the newly emerging shoots of Broad Beans sown in open ground during early December. Now is the time to plant more beans for a succession; use some judgement for weather conditions as a warmer, dry, frost free day is best. These hardy beans can be sown into March.

## NOTES FROM CULKERTON (cont)

Other seeds to sow now depends on sheltered greenhouse or inside propagation. If this is limited just wait for warmer weather in later months. Some plants do need a longer growing season and do well as windowsill plants until frosty or cold nights have ceased. Some of you may have the luxury of heated greenhouses or grow lights and you will be far in advance of the rest of us! So, let's consider tender veg plants to start now, peppers are the seeds to sow. Hot, eye watering incendiary peppers or large bell peppers need the same cultivation. Start in heat, choose a good seed compost or sieve your own home made, add sand, fine horticultural grit or vermiculite to have it all free draining. Keep the seedlings growing on in warm environment, shielded from cold draughts.

I prefer to wait before sowing tomato seeds until March or April as depending on the weather outside, we could get a cold or warm spring. The cultivation is the same as peppers, and if we have hot summer weather both do well planted outside.

Sally Oates

### **MIDWINTER BLUES – ASSISTED BY WINNIE THE POOH**

This winter is tracking its predecessor. That may or may not be worrying, given that 2023 was a damp squib that partially redeemed itself by serving up a best-ever June.

Again, a precipitously wet autumn (426mm fell in Culkerton during 2023's three autumn months) gave way to a cold snap at the start of December (with hoar frost twinkling on the trees, as Winnie The Pooh famously puts it in *Lines Written by a Bear of Very Little Brain*).

December sogged and bogged its way to dumping 182mm on world-weary Culkerton, and January '24 started Wet, Wet, Wet.

Then, for the second year running, just as the floodings threatened to become biblical, someone switched the tap off, wisely and mercifully. Last year, this happened on January 15<sup>th</sup>, after 134mm had fallen in just fourteen days. This year, the tap got turned off ten days earlier, after 52mm. On both occasions, this happened just in time to save London from flooding.

A lengthy cold but dry spell began. Streams of rooks and 'daws flew off each rosy dawn to go work in the fields, and all seemed right with the world. Back in 2023, the dry spell lasted until March 7<sup>th</sup>, when our jet stream jumped south, ushering in an old-fashioned wet spring. We will see what happens this year...

Culkerton's road drainage system is in dire need of climate change proofing, but is up against budgetary restraints, prioritization, inertia,

## NOTES FROM CULKERTON (cont)

and everything else. In the western part of the village, nearly all the drains were put in in the wrong place, back in the 1960s apparently: all but one catches only the water that falls directly into it, as rainfall or vehicle splash. The resultant stream of surface water criss-crosses the road several times, having bypassed the long blocked-up drain by the little green chapel, before disappearing down the single effective drain – if that drain blocks up, through leaf accumulation, mud or worse, the lane will flood. Some brave soul keeps it clear. Me. The road surface is steadily breaking up. One ends up feeling like poor Pooh:

On Tuesday, when it hails and snows,  
The feeling on me grows and grows  
That hardly anybody knows  
If those are these or these are those.

Poor Pooh's existential confusion terminates:

On Thursday, when it starts to freeze  
And hoar-frost twinkles on the trees,  
How very readily one sees  
That these are whose--but whose are these?

Matthew Oates



## Village Craft Groups

10am - 12pm...



2nd Wednesday of the month at Frampton Mansell Village Hall

\*NEW\* 4th Wednesday of the month at Sapperton Village Hall \*NEW\*

Whatever your craft: Knitting - Crochet - Embroidery - Felting - Tapestry - Sewing

Whatever your skill level - From beginners to professional crafters

Do please come along with your crafting project and join us! Share ideas and knowledge, and have a chat and a laugh over a cup of tea or coffee with home-made cakes and biscuits... and hopefully make some new friends and progress on your project too!

Cost: £3 - Includes refreshments

For more information please contact...

Teresa - Frampton Mansell - Email: [thowes51@gmail.com](mailto:thowes51@gmail.com)

Jill - Sapperton - Email: [allawayjill2780@hotmail.com](mailto:allawayjill2780@hotmail.com)





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## CLOSING DATE FOR THE MARCH MAGAZINE

Contributions should be sent by e-mail to the Watershed magazine at [watershedmag@gmail.com](mailto:watershedmag@gmail.com). Articles should be in Arial font at 11 point with **formatting kept as simple as possible**. The editor reserves the right to edit any articles. **Articles should be submitted by 12 February at the latest for inclusion in the next month's issue.**

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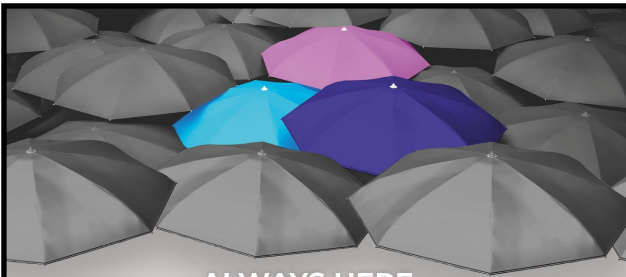
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## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Watershed Treasurer	Janet Loines	841578

### COATES

Coates Parish Council Chair	Robbie Whitfield	07872 027100
Coates Parish Council Clerk	Alan Moorcroft	641375
Coates Village Club secretary	Tara Davidson	07948 966957
Coates Coffee, Cake & Chat	PJ	770596
Coates Tree Warden	Simon Large	07714 220558
Coates Village Hall	Bookings	07818 192587
Coates Neighbourhood Watch	John Dobson	07808 095553
Coates Snow Warden	Peter Tugwell	770314/07860 718209

### FRAMPTON MANSELL

Frampton Mansell Village Hall	Bookings	07710 878987
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### RODMARTON

Rodmarton & Tarlton PC Chair	Mark Grimes	770289
Rodmarton & Tarlton PC Clerk	Susan Hare	ex-dir
Rodmarton School	Matthew Smith	841284
Rodmarton Village Hall	Jasper Biddulph	770230

### SAPPERTON

Parish Council Chair	Sarah Osborn Smith	07836 512538
Sapperton and FM PC Clerk	Barbara (Babs) Maloney	760276
Sapperton Snow Warden	Mark Franklin	760226
Sapperton Village Hall	Bookings	07771 006848
Sapperton School	Matt Blacker	760325

### OTHERS

Watershed RDA	Kathy Mottershead	07979 853907
Cirencester Eating Disorder Support Group	Pat Ayres	770385

### Cotswold District Councillors

Ermin Ward	Julia Judd	07853 383874
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Kemble Ward	Mike McKeown	<a href="mailto:mike.mckeown@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.mckeown@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
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Gloucestershire County Councillor	Stephen Hirst	01666 504213
Member of Parliament	Geoffrey Clifton-Brown	01452 371630
Cirencester Hospital		0300 421 6200
Tetbury Hospital		01666 502336
Police non emergency (24hrs)		101

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### DECEMBER

Friday 1		RBL Christmas Dinner at The Thames Head
Friday 1	6.30pm	Quiz Night in Coates Village Club
Saturday 2	2.30pm	Rodmarton Christmas Bazaar
Tuesday 5	11am	Service & Coffee in Frampton Mansell
Wednesday 6	7.30pm	BEAT meeting in Coates Village Hall
Thursday 7		Wreath Making Rodmarton School
Saturday 9	2pm & 5pm	Wreath Making Sapperton School
Wednesday 13	10am	Village Craft Group in Frampton Mansell Village Hall
Thursday 14		Christmas Cake Decorating at Rodmarton School
Saturday 16		Christmas Squares in Coates Village Club
Tuesday 19	10.30am	Coffee, Cake and Chat Coates Village Hall

### JANUARY

Tuesday 2	11am	Service & Coffee in Frampton Mansell
Wednesday 3	7.30pm	BEAT meeting in Coates Village Hall
Friday 5	6.30pm	Quiz Night in Coates Village Club
Wednesday 13	10am	Village Craft Group in Frampton Mansell Village Hall
Thursday 10	7pm	Coates Cinema <i>The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry</i>
Tuesday 16	10.30am	Coffee, Cake and Chat Coates Village Hall