

# MICKLEHAM PARISH Magazine

A community magazine for Mickleham and Westhumble



A.N. Colwell 1984

June 2025



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# Mickleham Parish Magazine

June 2025

## Mickleham Parish Magazine

A community magazine for  
Mickleham and Westhumble  
published under the auspices  
of Mickleham PCC with an  
independent editorial panel.

The magazine is published at the  
beginning of each month except  
January and August.

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Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June

send to:

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Contributions in any form  
are welcome as are good  
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submitted for publication  
depending on space.



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Mickleham Rectory

Dear friends

I wonder, what do you look forward to in June? Fine summer weather, I guess! I have checked and it is a good month for lovers of cycling (World Bicycle Day on 3<sup>rd</sup>) and fathers (Father's Day on 15<sup>th</sup>). World Bicycle Day is an opportunity to celebrate the joys and all the benefits of cycling including improving health, helping the environment, being relatively affordable and for some it seems, a chance to wear Lycra. I admit to not being a bicycle enthusiast, having ridden little since the age of ten, but I applaud those who are. Father's Day is a time to encourage dads and be grateful for ours and their care for their families. It can of course be a difficult day for those whose fathers have let them down or harmed them, or for fathers estranged from their children.

Jews will celebrate Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks, commemorating the harvest of the first fruits and the giving of the Law. Christians will celebrate Pentecost or Whit Sunday. Pentecost marks the coming of the Holy Spirit to the first disciples in Jerusalem fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus. It is sometimes called the birthday of the church, the day that a bunch of disciples, inspired by the Holy Spirit began to share the good news of Jesus and the forgiveness and salvation he offers. Christianity is built on the foundations of Judaism and Shavuot can be seen as the festival fifty days after Passover, which celebrates the forming of the Jewish nation.

This Pentecost will be especially exciting for us as a church because we have Paul, Bishop of Dorking, coming to confirm several adults and young people at our 10 am service. All were baptized either as babies or older and wish to affirm their baptism promises and commit to living as Christians and members of the Church. Bishop Paul will pray that the Holy Spirit comes upon each person being confirmed. The Holy Spirit can be described as the comforter, the advocate, the helper who gives gifts that equip Christians for serving the church and the world and who bears fruit in willing hearts. The arrival of the Holy Spirit that first Pentecost was dramatic, with wind and fire and speaking in foreign languages, and could not have been mistaken but the Holy Spirit has also been described as a dove, the dove of peace. The Spirit is sometimes called the breath or wind of God and his or maybe her presence is evident by the actions produced just as we cannot see wind but can feel, hear or see its effects. I believe that the Holy Spirit is still at work today in the world and in people, in me, gently, surprisingly and subtly. He is God and he is with his people to transform them, help and encourage them, to give them courage and peace whether that is immediately obvious or not. Peace is what I hope and pray for, this June. What about you?

God Bless

*Sandra*

The Rev'd Dr Sandra Faccini, Parish Priest

**Ascending Deeper - Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 7.45 to 9 pm at Chapel Farm**

This is a new opportunity to discuss faith in the current context and grow together as disciples. It is for anyone interested in engaging in a discussion led by an experienced facilitator, whether you attend a Bible study group regularly or not. We hope to hold three or four sessions per year on specific topics, starting with poverty in June. Numbers will be limited to up to 12 per session, refreshments will be provided and there will be a cost of £5 per person.

To register your interest or find out more please contact Sandra.


## St Michael's Church Services

10 am Sunday Services available on Zoom

Joining information for both Zoom and telephone users is available in Pews News Online each week. If you would like to join us by Zoom then contact Alison Wood for the codes or to ask her to include you on the emailing list for Pews News: [admin@micklehamchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@micklehamchurch.org.uk) / phone 01372 376443. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us for worship.

Please refer to Pews News Online for the latest information. If you missed any of the services or would like to revisit them all are available on the church YouTube channel: <https://youtube.com/channel/UCI4pbewCT91iZhcd0EjB1w>





### Bible Study

**Monday Evening Group**  
At Westhumble Chapel 7.45 - 9 pm  
Contact Amanda Wadsworth  
[aewadsworth@hotmail.com](mailto:aewadsworth@hotmail.com)

**Thursday Morning Group**  
At Westhumble Chapel 11.30 - 12.30 am  
Contact Alison Wood 01372 376443  
[adminsUPPORT@mickleham.church](mailto:adminsUPPORT@mickleham.church)  
**ALL WELCOME TO EITHER GROUP**



First Saturday of the month


### Coffee Morning

Westhumble Chapel

## Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June

Come along between 10 am and noon  
Coffee and cake £2 Free drinks for children  
Everyone welcome

For further information call Jonathan Blake 07787 126966  
This month all proceeds will go to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance charity. Please save the date and come along to support this worthwhile charity.



## Tea @3

### Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June

Host: Debbie Atkinson  
15 Cleveland Court  
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## Free trial day Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June

### Mums/Carers and Toddlers Group

## Westhumble Chapel

### 11am - 12 noon

**All welcome**

**To run second Monday of the month from September**

## Tea and Cake

at St Michael's Church

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June

### 3 pm to 5 pm





Social gatherings open to everyone

## Women's and Men's Saturday Breakfasts

9-10 am  
at The  
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[srandall55@gmail.com](mailto:srandall55@gmail.com)

**MEN'S BREAKFAST**  
4<sup>TH</sup> SATURDAY OF THE MONTH  
NEXT BREAKFAST  
**28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**  
Book with: Andy Diamond  
new email [adiamond714@gmail.com](mailto:adiamond714@gmail.com)

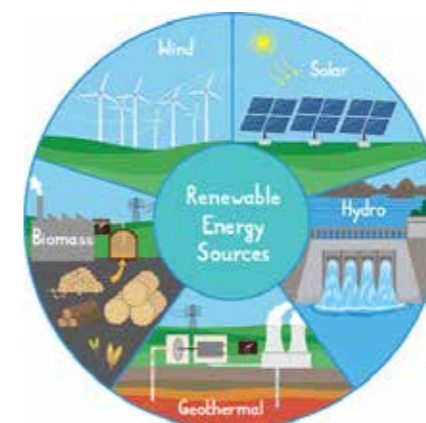
## Church Eco-Group Sustainable Lifestyle: Part 2 Energy

Last month, Part 1 dealt with food, plastics and transport. Part 2 deals with energy.

The whole issue of decarbonisation and sustainability conflicts with economic necessities at present. There is also a perceived insignificance of individual/local efforts when weighed against the apparent unconcern of large nation states but **'...transformation at a personal/local level lays the foundation for change at a national/international level'**. (On church eco-check list.)

Tips on day-to-day energy saving in the household can be found widely online, turning the thermostat down, switching off lights when not in use, replacing your light bulbs with LED, sharing baths etc. However, a more substantive issue is the (potentially complex) process of changing to a 'Green Energy Tariff'.

We are pleased to report that St Michael's Church and Westhumble Chapel are now supplied with wholly renewable energy tariffs. Indeed, our gas supply is entirely from a biogas supply (from gas generated exclusively from degradation of biomass in the UK). Our electricity is from a tariff which draws from wind and solar energy generated from plants/facilities based again in the UK.



This is too limited a space to provide specific advice on all the variables to consider in changing to a 'renewable tariff'. In any case, such matters are ever changing. The church advice is to exclude nuclear supply, 'although it is carbon neutral at point of use... this is based in part, on its long-term non-renewability i.e. nuclear waste'. Many tariffs, which are said to be

carbon-free, use nuclear as a base supply. Having said that, local nuclear power generation may still have a future, needing less in the way of pylon infrastructure and having less impact on the landscape.

For now, there are two important things:

- Any switch to a 'green' supply puts more pressure on the energy companies to provide more of 'what the customer wants'.
- As our church has found, switching to green tariffs is no more expensive than a 'standard' supply.

**In other words, there is no reason not to switch.**

There are so many tariffs, from so many companies and with variability in 'green' performance. Customer service and cost are clearly decision-making factors, but the environmental issues which might be relevant include:

### Offsetting

Many tariffs, including some of the better ones, rely on 'offsetting'. This means that the supply mix includes non-renewables (i.e. fossil fuels) and the resulting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are 'offset' by investment in carbon reduction schemes elsewhere. These could include carbon credits, perhaps for tree planting in South America, or massive solar power schemes in Africa. The verification of such schemes is sometimes questionable. They should be backed up by 'guarantees' in the form of RGGO's for gas or REGO's for electricity. These are certificates that provide assurance that their energy is properly matched with renewable energy supplied by others. In themselves, these certificates do not show that supply companies are producing or stimulating renewable supply. They can simply buy the

certificates. This position is gradually being improved though, largely by customer demand for verification.

### Gas

Look at biogas supply, from animal, food and other degradable waste. Some companies do supply 100% biogas (e.g. 100Green and Green Energy), but if not, at least go for 10% renewable gas. Also, be sure of the 'renewable' credibility (offsetting) of the remainder, as above.

### Electricity

Getting a 100% renewable tariff for electricity is no longer hard to find. Most companies will have one or more. Some are backed up by offsetting, others are supported by investment in energy projects worldwide, or in a growing number of cases, the companies' own wind/solar/hydro schemes in the UK. The latter are more easily verified and promote local investment and are thus preferable.

It is not the Eco-Group's role to advise on specific suppliers, and you will have your own personal priorities. The Which Guide 'What's the Difference between Green Energy Suppliers January 2025' is available if you Google it. The Which 'Top 3' for 2024 were Ecotricity, Good Energy and Octopus Energy. For comparison, the recommended suppliers from the Church of England included all of these, and additionally: Gas: Crown Gas/Power, Green Energy, SSE (100% Green Gas tariff). Electricity: in addition to the above, Opus, Octopus, Green Journey.

For information, St Michael's has opted for Crown for gas and SSE for Electricity. Do not take the church's word as gospel. The main message to get across here is that any move toward 'green tariffs' sends the right message and that the cost of such a switch should not be significant in monetary terms.

St Michael's Eco Group

Our neighbours need our help. Thank you to all those that so diligently and generously donate food or money to the foodbank each week. Unfortunately, the need continues to grow but our contributions are falling. So please if you can help, even if it is only occasionally, then it would be greatly appreciated. Watch out for video coming soon to show more about the foodbank and why it is sadly needed.

Kelvin Pritchard, St Michael's Community Group.

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## Pope Francis

17<sup>th</sup> December 1936 - 21<sup>st</sup> April 2025

Pope Francis sadly died on 21<sup>st</sup> April after 12 years in the role. Like many Christians around the world, I admired and respected him as a godly man of prayer, humility, sincerity and compassion. He was from Argentina and was the first Pope from Latin America, who knew relative poverty and brought a different perspective.

He took the name Francis at his election, which had not been used by any previous Pope and indicated his desire to lead a church 'which is poor and for the poor'. I am not sure he achieved that but he began a process that I hope will continue.

Francis has been described by some as the people's Pope and certainly was someone who engaged well with people, could be very informal and generous with his time. He demonstrated great

compassion and care for the poor, the prisoner, the refugee and the outsider. He abandoned some of the pomp of his office including choosing humbler accommodation and attire and focusing on mercy not judgment.

His gentler approach to those who have been divorced, those who are in same sex marriages and to women in leadership was welcome but for some did not go far enough as he trod a fine line between upholding the church doctrine and wanting to welcome anyone. He raised hopes of a more inclusive church and appointed a more diverse group of cardinals than his predecessors. His response to world events was generally

measured but compassionate, desiring mercy and peace. He strongly advocated for negotiation to bring peace in Ukraine and described Israel's attacks on Gaza as cruelty.

We wait to see how the changes he instigated are developed as we welcome Pope Leo XIV.

May Pope Francis rest in peace.

Sandra Faccini



## Easter Flowers at St Michael's Church

The flower arranging team created many beautiful displays for Easter at St Michael's. Here is a selection of them.



## VE Day Service and Picnic



On 4<sup>th</sup> May we held a service to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day in a church decorated with flags and bunting. It was a special occasion for the village with three clergy and around 90 people, aged from 4 to 90+ enthusiastically gathered to give thanks for and celebrate victory, the end of the terrible Second World War and the years of relative peace which have followed.

We heard from Elizabeth Moughton and Anne Mathieson about their wartime and VE day experiences, we reflected on what it means to be peacemakers, and we prayed for peace in Europe using

paper white doves on which everyone wrote a short prayer. Everyone signed a paper dove too and these were placed on the war memorial as recognition of the cost of war and our gratitude for the sacrifices made.

The celebrations continued with a fun picnic, which because of the cold weather was held in the garden and conservatory of St Michael's Lodge, with thanks to David and Angela.

Sandra Faccini

Church photo by Stephanie Randall  
Picnic photos by David Ireland



## Bellringing for VE Day

There was nationwide bellringing to celebrate VE Day, so if you were in the vicinity of Mickleham Church at

6.30 pm that day (8<sup>th</sup> May) you would have been delighted to hear that our community joined in. Some may think that ringing the bells is simply a matter of pushing a button: nay, not so, we are still manual. We have a version of Ellacombe apparatus which is a mechanism for chiming by striking stationary bells with external hammers. These are connected by a rope to a fixed frame; when in use the ropes are taut and pulling one towards the player will strike the hammer against the bell. The system was devised in 1821 by Rev'd Henry Thomas Ellacombe of Gloucestershire, who created the system so churches did not have to tolerate the behaviour of what he thought were unruly bellringers!

In our church gallery there is a keyboard with a lever for each bell, six in our case, and these are pushed down continuously in sequence to

create the mellifluous sound. To ring the bells for the requisite fifteen minutes is hard work, so we must thank Wendy Wyatt and Celia Lyons (whose birthday it was) who 'rang' the bells for us all to enjoy. Well done ladies.

Stephanie Randall



## A Place of Safety Dorking Museum's Summer Exhibition

People of Dorking and the surrounding villages have given generous support to those in need on many occasions. Sometimes demands on scarce resources have given rise to conflict or there have been clashes of culture between residents and incomers.

A Place of Safety tells the stories of the various groups of refugees who have found refuge in the town and their experiences. It starts with the eminent group of émigrés fleeing the French Revolution in 1792 and taking up residence in Juniper Hall on the

slopes of Box Hill. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, came those fleeing the Kaiser's army in 1914, Nazi oppression in the late 1930s, and the Blitz in 1940. The work of the Dorking Refugee Committee, in which Ralph Vaughan Williams was a leading voice, is featured. The story continues in the present century with refugees from war and persecution in the Middle East.

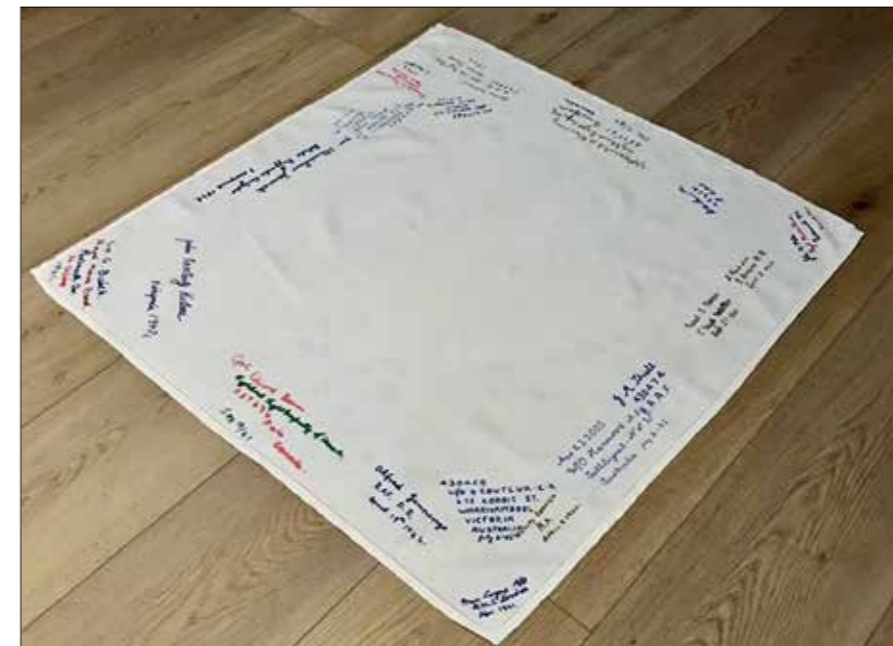
The treasures on show include the Dorking Nursery Scrapbook from the 1940s, showing the experiences of those bombed out of their homes, and four beautifully detailed dolls, made by

Mickleham and Westhumble WI in the 1970s and representing the high-profile French émigrés of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Dorking Museum, 62 West Street. Open Thursdays 1 to 4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10 am to 4 pm, free entry. [www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk](http://www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk) 01306 876591.

David Burton



The space available here for these photos does not do justice to the level of detail on the dolls. Please go and see them to appreciate the work that has gone into them.



Anne Matieson's memories of a wartime childhood featured in the VE Day Service on 4<sup>th</sup> May. Her parents belonged to a hospitality group for visits for servicemen on their weekend leave. They were all asked to sign a tablecloth and her mother embroidered their signatures and country in red, white and blue. This has been saved for posterity and is shown above.



This photograph provoked interest on the village WhatsApp as people tried to identify everyone. We think they are from left: Richard Bloomfield, Raj Mathur, Lindsay Bloomfield, Stephanie Randall, Mo Chisman, Simon Taylor, Jane Batt, Elizabeth Watson, unknown, Linda Boyle, Lalage Grundy, Fiona Taylor, Julie Mathur, Phil Randles.

The dolls included in the current Dorking Museum exhibition were made by the Mickleham and Westhumble WI in the early 1970s as part of an exhibition entitled 'Our Green and Pleasant Land'. The backdrop was a felt collage of Mickleham's flora, fauna and notable buildings. The display included four dolls: Madame de Staël, Talleyrand, Fanny Burney and Lord Nelson. Ben's mother, Patricia Tatham made Madame de Staël and worked on the others as well. Betty Colwell designed the whole exhibition. A few years later when I asked Betty's husband, Colly to design the cover for a new parish magazine we both remembered the WI display. Colly's distinctive cover has been used for the last forty years.

Sue Tatham

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## Mickleham Parish Council Annual Report 2024 - 2025

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> and last report I shall write as Chair of the Parish Council. I handover to a new Chair at the Annual General Meeting, which follows this meeting. It has been a great privilege to be the Chair during these past ten years with all the challenges that events like Covid and ever decreasing funding have presented.

However, overall we have been able to make progress on many issues, thanks to the efforts made by our County Councillor Hazel Watson and serving District Councillors Leah Mursaleen-Plank and Chris Budleigh, and a committed group of councillors ably supported by our Parish Clerk, Feena Graham.

During the past year, the parish council has continued to support community initiatives and has assisted the organisers of the village fête in July with some much-needed funding. The council was also well represented at the annual Service of Remembrance at St Michael's Church in November when the Chair preached, Councillor Dennis read one of the lessons and Councillor Wilson laid a wreath on the Council's behalf.

The playground facilities remain in very good order thanks to the continuing commitment of two of its trustees, Sarah Parfitt and Carolyn Moore. They remain well supported by an enthusiastic committee who keep the equipment and surrounding area safe and well maintained. The community remains indebted to them for providing such a well-used area for our children.

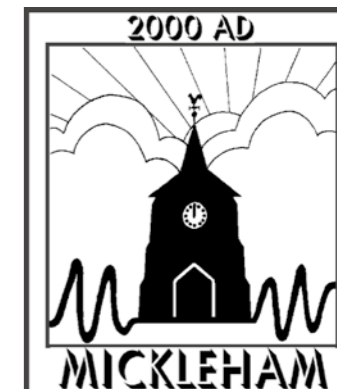
Traffic on the Old London Road continues to provide a challenge to those who live close to it. The introduction of a Wednesday meet at Rykas for motor bikers has created yet more noise and nuisance from a minority of users. Discussion has taken place with Mole Valley District Council about the introduction of a noise camera in the area, but this is proving difficult largely because of the costs involved. However, there is still the possibility of a trial period if the

funding can be found. The suggestion of an ASBO in the area surrounding Rykas has been proposed by both Westhumble Residents Association and Mickleham Parish Council but has yet to receive support from Mole Valley District Council. The new owner of Rykas attended the March meeting of the Parish Council and assured councillors of his concern to work in harmony with the neighbours in that part of the community. He provided his contact details should there be further issues that he or his team might be able to address.

Meanwhile the Community Speed Watch Team, now strengthened by four new members, is ably coordinated by Angela Ireland and continues to hold regular sessions on the Old London Road. There are signs that it is having an impact on speeding motorists, although it remains very difficult to read the number plates on many motorbikes, particularly when they travel at speed. The new 20 mph speed limit has been introduced from the exit from the A24 onto the Old London Road at the Box Hill School end of the village as far as Mickleham Hall driveway and appears to be having a further impact on motorists' speeds.

The junction with Swanworth Lane and the Old London Road remains a problem. A notice has been installed to discourage motorists from parking on the double yellow lines at the end of Swanworth Lane. Also, a temporary mirror has been mounted opposite the junction in the hope that this may further assist motorists endeavouring to enter the Old London Road from the lane.

Norbury Park continues to be a regular feature on the council's agenda. The tenants living in the Surrey County Council properties remain in their homes for the present, thanks to the particular efforts of Councillor Dennis although their longer-term prospects remain very uncertain. Nick Bullen has also been served notice on his agricultural tenancy of Swanworth



Farm and an appeal against the eviction notice and a measured proposal for his future tenancy has now been submitted, thanks to the incredible efforts of a group led by Kirsten Johnson. Mark Frost's efforts to control the spread of *Neospora* which has severely affected his grazing herd have been supported. Suitable fencing is to be installed in an effort to prevent dogs fouling in the grazing area.

The council has conducted a Housing Needs Survey with the assistance of Surrey Community Action. All households were delivered a copy of the survey by parish councillors and the response of 35% has been a great encouragement to all concerned. The results of the survey should be published shortly. It is hoped that they will be of use in future debates about any proposed small building development in our community, assisting those either seeking to downsize or to purchase homes as first-time buyers.

The assets of the council have been maintained and where appropriate repaired or improved. Councillor Emma Flynn has agreed to supervise the parish noticeboards, ensuring information is both up-to-date and relevant.

Planning applications have been reviewed and appropriate efforts have been made to ensure that proper procedures are followed by those applying for permission.

In conclusion I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for their support and commitment over the past ten years and particularly Feena Graham, who not only remains as our Parish Clerk but is also the Council's Responsible Finance Officer.

David Ireland  
MPC Chair May 2025

Gay Hoare of Givon's Grove is opening her exceptional garden on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July in aid of Butterfly Conservation.  
Look out for details in the July issue.

THE LADYBIRDS CHOIR  
DIRECTED BY HELENA TWENTYMAN

## SONGS OF THE SEA

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**S**adly, the coffee morning at Westhumble Chapel that we advertised as taking place on 10<sup>th</sup> May in aid of KSS Air Ambulance was cancelled.

Very kindly, the church coffee morning at the chapel on 7<sup>th</sup> June, organised by Jonathan Blake, has agreed to donate all it's takings to the cause. Fund raising will then continue later at The Steppings Stones pub (see advert below).

THE STEPPING STONES COUNTRY PUB PRESENTS

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Field Studies Council

Middleham Children's Playground Association

St Michael's School

## Charity Quiz Night

In aid of Mickleham Playground & Friends of St Michael's School



Raffle on the night too!

THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2025  
7.30pm to 10.00pm  
KING WILLIAM IV PUB

Quiz Tickets £12 per person  
Teams 4-6

TICKETS AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE ONLY BY EMAILING:  
[micklehamplayground@gmail.com](mailto:micklehamplayground@gmail.com)

# Mickleham Almshouses Charity

The following text is revised from an article that first appeared in May 2020.

**L**ockdown is not a great state to be in as we all recall the restrictions that accompanied the pandemic at the start of the 2020s, but way back in time impositions of that kind were a permanent way of life for some Mickleham residents. From October to March they were required to be inside their homes by 9 pm, and by 10 pm for the rest of the year. Moreover, they were expected to be 'always clean in their persons and of civil behaviour, abstaining from all uncharitable language or conduct'.

The rulebook was a forbidding proposition in the mid-1800s for the inhabitants of the Mickleham Almshouses, but it is not hard to imagine that they were only too happy to conform. When the alternative was the Poor House, it would not have been too great a hardship to shut out the world when the clock chimed nine.

Today, life in the Almshouses, a striking building standing proud a hundred yards or so up Byttom Hill and affording its residents spectacular views across Norbury Park, is a good deal more relaxed. It is home to eight residents, the latest generation to benefit from the great and the good of Mickleham circa 1864 who rallied to the cause when fire destroyed the original Almshouses building (converted from a Poor House thanks to the generosity of the lord of the manor, Sir George Talbot, Bart) and funds were needed for a replacement. Following an appeal from the parish rector and notable Victorian reformer, the Rev'd Alfred Burmester, history records that George Cubitt Esq (Denbies), John Evelyn (Wotton House) and Lady Caroline Cavendish (Camilla Lacey) all gave donations.



The original almshouses  
John Hassell 1823

## Trustee Opportunity

Do you have a few spare hours every month and would you like to give something back to your community?

Would you like to volunteer and support an important and historic almshouse charity?

Mickleham Almshouses Charity provides low-cost community housing that is held in trust for local people who are in housing need.

We are particularly looking for volunteers with various skills including knowledge of the charity sector and legislation and maintenance / electrical systems. However, please contact us if you are interested. The charity meets every ten weeks, and the role is hands-on.

Please email [trevorhaylett9@gmail.com](mailto:trevorhaylett9@gmail.com)



Today, the Almshouses are administered by The Mickleham Almshouses Charity under the leadership of well-known local resident John Banfield working alongside five other trustees. The charity, founded by a lease dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 1846, comes under the umbrella of The Almshouse Association which provides guidance and support to more than 1,600 independent almshouse charities.

The rules might have eased a bit since then but residency is no easy handout. Applicants must show a connection to Mickleham, or to the Mole Valley area, and finances are scrutinised to make sure there is a genuine need. Residents pay a weekly maintenance contribution which is similar to rent but different in law, and less than a commercial rate.

It is easy to hear the word 'almshouses' and immediately think of a group of elderly inhabitants living out their last days in a sheltered environment. Mickleham does not conform to the cliché in respect that it sets no minimum age restriction, although the joke locally is that the steepness of Byttom Hill forces those of a certain age to look to other almshouses in neighbouring parishes. Potentially those occupying the eight flats can stay a long time. One resident, who has lived there for more than 25 years, is as happy there now as the day

she moved in. 'It's a stunningly beautiful location and I love living here,' she said.

John Banfield has been Chair for longer than he cares to remember and has recently helped introduce a defined term of office for trustees to enable a regular flow of new blood and innovative ideas. 'As trustees we have to ensure the Charity Objects [the beneficiary group] are adhered to and also the demands of the Charity Commission, such as health and safety requirements, safeguarding etc,' he said.

'At Mickleham we make it clear that we do not provide a warden or nursing facilities. The residents have to demonstrate that they can live independently but at the same time we have a responsibility to make sure they are well and point them in the right direction should they need help. There's an old saying which is very apt: "We care about you, we do not care for you" but at the same time an almshouse charity is not only about housing but about providing a community.'

John, and Ian Wright who takes charge of all property concerns at the Almshouses, are both approaching the end of their trustee terms and the charity is seeking new recruits. Anybody wishing to be considered for the role of trustee should email their details to [trevor.haylett9@gmail.com](mailto:trevor.haylett9@gmail.com)

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References available upon request

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## KING WILLIAM IV

Dear friends & neighbours,  
It's been fantastic to see so many of you during our lovely spring weather, and we are  
hopeful it will continue.

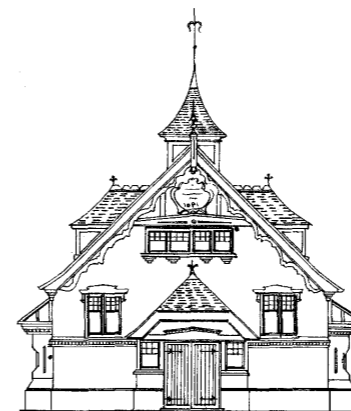
We have three important events to book up for in June:

- Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> Father's Day - early booking essential.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> Charity Quiz - see ticket info in this magazine.
- Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> late pm/eve. Our very own Ella Parfitt performing a music set not to be missed.

Thanks and see you soon,

Anne, Eamonn & Kat

Byttom Hill Mickleham 01372 372590 [www.thekingwilliamiv.com](http://www.thekingwilliamiv.com)



## Mickleham Village Hall available for hire

Hall bookings  
Table & chair hire

Deanna Darnell

07790 941 601

[bookings@micklehamvh.co.uk](mailto:bookings@micklehamvh.co.uk)

[www.micklehamvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.micklehamvillagehall.org.uk)



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Mary Banfield

01372 373912

[admin@micklehamvh.co.uk](mailto:admin@micklehamvh.co.uk)

## Community Directory

BOX HILL AND HEADLEY HEATH (National Trust) 01306 888793

Lead Ranger – Meredith Westall (Merry) [meredith.westall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:meredith.westall@nationaltrust.org.uk)

07811 088097

Friends of Box Hill – Chair Lyn Richards 01737 842889

[lyn@mra.uk.net](mailto:lyn@mra.uk.net)

BOX HILL SCHOOL

Headmistress – Hayley Robinson

01372 374814

[reception@boxhillschool.com](mailto:reception@boxhillschool.com)

DORKING CRICKET CLUB

Chairman – Andrew Homewood

[homewooda@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:homewooda@hotmail.co.uk)

DORKING GROUP OF ARTISTS

Exhibition Secretary – Patricia Booth

[patricia booth100@gmail.com](mailto:patricia booth100@gmail.com)

DORKING LAWN TENNIS & SQUASH CLUB

Maddy Halliwell

[madeline\\_halliwell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:madeline_halliwell@hotmail.co.uk)

DORKING RUGBY CLUB

Jim Evans

07789 176417

[jim@flintcottage.net](mailto:jim@flintcottage.net)

THE GARDEN SHED

Pauline Davis

07759 646353

[paulinedavis33@icloud.com](mailto:paulinedavis33@icloud.com)

JUNIPER HALL FIELD CENTRE

01306 734501

Head of Centre – Sarah Wyper

[enquiries.jh@field-studies-council.org](mailto:enquiries.jh@field-studies-council.org)

[s.wyper@field-studies-council.org](mailto:s.wyper@field-studies-council.org)

Friends of Juniper Hall

[friendsofjuniperhall.org](http://friendsofjuniperhall.org)

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

MICKLEHAM CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND ASSOCIATION

Secretary – Sarah Parfitt

07767 891772

[sarah@sarahparfitt.com](mailto:sarah@sarahparfitt.com)

MICKLEHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

[www.micklehamchoral.org.uk](http://www.micklehamchoral.org.uk)

THURSDAYS 8 - 10 pm – MICKLEHAM VILLAGE HALL

Conductor – Juliet Hornby

01372 373106

Secretary – Mike Benson

[secretary@micklehamchoral.org.uk](mailto:secretary@micklehamchoral.org.uk)

MICKLEHAM OLD BOX HILLIANS FOOTBALL CLUB

Secretary – John Atewell

01372 374745

MICKLEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

SEE WEBSITE FOR MEETING DATES

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

Chairman – Rev'd David Ireland

01372 379381

[rev.ireland43@btinternet.com](mailto:rev.ireland43@btinternet.com)

Parish Clerk – Feena Graham

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

MICKLEHAM PARISH MAGAZINE

Co-Editor – Charlotte Daruwalla

07933 300744

[editor@micklehammag.co.uk](mailto:editor@micklehammag.co.uk)

Co-Editor – Jan Budleigh

07780 976301

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MICKLEHAM VILLAGE HALL

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01372 362309

[davidkennington144@gmail.com](mailto:davidkennington144@gmail.com)

Bookings Manager – Deanna Darnell

07790 941601

[bookings@micklehamvh.co.uk](mailto:bookings@micklehamvh.co.uk)

# ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

*within the United Benefice  
of Leatherhead and Mickleham*

INCUMBENT — The Rev'd Will Perry 01372 372313

## PARISH PRIEST

The Rev'd Dr Sandra Faccini \* 01372 417664  
07763 488961  
parishpriest@mickleham.church  
\* Main working days: Monday, Tuesday and Sunday

## CHURCHWARDENS

Lucy Adshead 07773 294026  
cw@mickleham.church  
John Banfield 07831 606493  
acw@mickleham.church

## PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Vickie Leney 01306 884054  
safeguarding@micklehamchurch.org.uk

## PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

Alison Wood 01372 376443  
admsupport@mickleham.church

## PCC SECRETARY

Caroline Jones 07504 271376  
pccsecretary@mickleham.church

## TREASURER

Richard Siberry 01372 375303  
pcctreasurer@micklehamchurch.org.uk

## ORGANIST

David Fishwick 0208 7732420  
davidfishwick1@btinternet.com

## WEDDINGS CO-ORDINATOR

Elaine Machin 01372 724972  
weddings@micklehamchurch.org.uk

## BAPTISMS CO-ORDINATOR

Vickie Leney 01306 884054  
baptisms@mickleham.church

## FUNERALS CO-ORDINATOR

Carole Brough Fuller 01737 842918  
funerals@mickleham.church

## AUDIOVISUAL

Kelvin Pritchard 07770 280410  
av@mickleham.church

## PCC ECO GROUP

David Kennington 01372 362309  
davidkennington144@gmail.com

## WEBSITE MANAGER

Cassandra Charles Bagott info@mickleham.church

**www.mickleham.church**

*For information about services for other denominations  
see website pages.*

*Search on 'Churches Together Mole Valley'*

## Tools With a Mission

List of acceptable donations at **www.twam.co.uk**  
Including agricultural, carpentry, and mechanic's tools,  
sewing machines, haberdashery and IT equipment.

# CALENDAR

## JUNE

1	<b>Seventh SUNDAY of Easter</b>	10 am	Family Service
3	Tuesday	7 pm	Compline in church
7	Saturday	10 am to noon 1 pm 4 pm	Coffee morning at Westhumble Chapel p2 KSS AA fundraiser, Stepping Stones p10 Songs of the Sea Concert p10
8	<b>SUNDAY - Pentecost</b>	10 am	Confirmation Service with Holy Communion p1
<i>Copy deadline for July magazine</i>			
9	Monday	11 am to noon	Trial of Mums/Carers and Toddler Group, Westhumble Chapel p2
15	<b>Trinity SUNDAY</b>	10 am 2 -5 pm	Holy Communion Father's Day Garden Shed Open Gardens p18
16	Monday	3 pm 7 pm	Tea@3 p2 Garden Shed rescheduled event p18
17	Tuesday	7 pm	Compline in church
19	Thursday	7.30 - 10 pm	Quiz night for playground and school at King William p10 NGS Open Garden Ashleigh Grange p18
20	Friday	5.30 - 8 pm	Women's Breakfast at The Stepping Stones p2
21	Saturday	9 - 10 am 5.30 pm	MCS Summer Concert at village hall p17
22	<b>First SUNDAY of Pentecost</b>	8 am 10 am 2 - 5 pm late pm/ eve	BCP Holy Communion at Westhumble Chapel Holy Communion NGS Open Garden Ashleigh Grange p18 Ella Parfitt performance King William
23	Monday		BHS 'Make a Difference Week' p21
24	Tuesday	7.45 - 9 pm	Ascending Deeper session Chapel Farm p1
28	Saturday	9 - 10 am 1 - 10 pm	Men's Breakfast at the Stepping Stones p2 Festhumble at the Stepping Stones p23
29	<b>Second SUNDAY of Pentecost</b>	10 am 3 - 5 pm	Morning Worship Tea and cake at the church p2

## Dates for your diary

Sunday 6th July	Tent Worship for All Service in Rectory Garden 10 am
Wednesday 9th July	Open Garden in Givon's Grove p9
Saturday 19th July	MPC meeting in Ranmore Room
Saturday 13th September	Festival of Nature Day Juniper Hall p10
Saturday 8th November	M&WHS Autumn Show p18
	Westhumble Bonfire and Fireworks

## MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Andy Diamond	Elaine Machin
Catherine Diffey	Tim Mathieson
Caroline Jones	Beverley Mehta
Vickie Leney	Richard Siberry
Susan McGrath	Amanda Wadsworth
Paddy MacVean	

## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH COMMUNITY GROUP COMMITTEE

Mark Day	07852 117249 mickleham@hotmail.com
Denise Darling	denisedarling4@btinternet.com 07780 673372
Andy Diamond	07789 775354 adiamond714@gmail.com
Kelvin Pritchard	07770 280410 Kelvin@wan2lan.com

## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH COMMUNITY GROUP HELPING HANDS INCLUDING FOOD FOR FRIENDS

*A service for all residents of Mickleham and Westhumble*

Examples of services we offer:

- Essential shopping/collection of prescriptions
- Changing library books
- Small tasks: eg changing fuses, altering clocks etc
- Dog walking
- Visiting/befriending
- Home-cooked meals for local families going through difficult times

Requests to:

Will Dennis 07903 842674 **wdwdennis@icloud.com**  
(who can put requests onto WhatsApp)  
Mary Banfield 01372 373912 **mgbbmw@aol.com**  
Frances Presley 01306 882473 **jasempres@gmail.com**

*More helpers needed – please contact  
Frances if you can spare some time.*

## REGISTERS

### WEDDING

Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Benjamin Davis and Georgia Harding
------------------------------	---------------------------------------

### BAPTISM

Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	Francesca Douch (adult)
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### INTERMENT OF ASHES

Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Megan Felicity Tushaw
------------------------------	-----------------------

## Community Directory

Continued from page 13

MICKLEHAM & WESTHUMBLE BADMINTON CLUB  
Membership Secretary – Sarah Pritchard tinkerbell0044@hotmail.com

MICKLEHAM CRICKET CLUB  
Membership contact – Will Dennis 07903 842674  
will@micklehamhallfarm.co.uk

MICKLEHAM & WESTHUMBLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY  
Chairman – David Kennington 01372 362309  
www.surreycommunity.info/mwhs or davidkennington144@gmail.com

MICKLEHAM AND WESTHUMBLE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP  
Chairman – Ben Tatham 01306 882547  
ben@thetatham.co.uk or www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk

MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL 01306 885001  
Cllr Chris Budleigh 07801 520059

councillor.budleigh@molevalley.gov.uk

Cllr Abhiram Magesh 07765 126399

councillor.magesh@molevalley.gov.uk

Cllr Leah Mursaleen-Plank 07803 353352

councillor.mursaleen-plank@molevalley.gov.uk

THE ARTS SOCIETIES (FORMERLY NADFAS)  
Betchworth – Mary Venning 01306 883301  
Dorking – Sue Tatham 01306 882547  
Leatherhead – Beverley Mehta 01372 374304

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (A) INFANT SCHOOL 01372 373717  
info@stmichaels-dorking.surrey.sch.uk

Friends of St Michael's School – friendsofstmichaels2017@gmail.com

ST MICHAEL'S COMMUNITY NURSERY  
WEEKDAY MORNINGS – MICKLEHAM VILLAGE HALL  
Supervisor – Hilary Budd 01372 361021  
stmichaelsnursery@btinternet.com

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL 03456 009 009  
Councillor – Hazel Watson 01306 880120  
hva.watson@btinternet.com

SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST 01483 795440  
info@surreywt.org.uk

TREE WARDEN  
David Kennington 07546 952521  
davidkennington144@gmail.com

WESTHUMBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH  
Lead Co-ordinator – David Allbeury 07860 227451  
westhumble.neighbourhood.watch@gmail.com

WHATSAPP GROUP  
Neil MacKay nlpm@lineone.net

### ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

CITIZENS ADVICE  
Dorking – Lyons Court 01306 732302  
Leatherhead – Swan Mews High Street 01306 732301

CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

POLICE Non-emergencies 101

(often quicker to make online report) <https://report.police.uk/>

Neighbourhood Specialist Team – Dorking Rural East  
General enquiries molevalley@surrey.pnn.police.uk

NHS Urgent and emergency care 111

## Babysitting by local youngsters

Those listed below are at least  
14 years old.

Gracie Owen \*\*07790 900649  
Eva Lanceley \*\*07903 630567  
Ella Parfitt 07746 882175  
Bea Moore \*07444 557958  
Farah Patel 07757807246

\* Parent's mobile number

We have recently lost many of  
our sitters as they move on to  
higher education or work-life.  
We wish the best of luck to all  
of them.

Now is an ideal time to join the  
list if you were thinking about it.  
There are fewer people listed so  
the possibility of more bookings.

If you would like to add your  
name to this list please get in  
touch with

editor@micklehammag.co.uk  
No Charge

## Advertising in the Parish Magazine

Please contact  
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Small ads: a nominal fee is  
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*We are very grateful to all our  
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## MICKLEHAM CHORAL SOCIETY'S SUMMER CONCERT Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo

With the Pete Billington Trio and soloist Christopher Burrows

A performance following the Old Testament story of how God instructs

Noah to build the ark and fill it with animals.

Followed by **Let's Party** where we all let our hair down and dance.

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June**  
**Mickleham Village Hall grounds**

Picnics & bar from 5.30 pm – performance 6.30 pm

Tickets: adults £15 / children 6-12 £7.50 / 5-and-under free

Booking via Events page on: [www.micklehamchoral.org.uk](http://www.micklehamchoral.org.uk)



## Letter to the Editors

Once a year or so, there appears  
in this magazine a rant about  
bonfires. This year it was in the May  
edition. (I did check it wasn't 1<sup>st</sup> April).  
It's never signed, so we don't know who  
the bonfire hater is. Maybe it is a member  
of the 'independent editorial panel', that  
mythical organisation alluded to on page  
1 of every edition, but whose names are  
never disclosed to us.

Irrespective, here's my message to the  
bonfire hater. Bonfires are not illegal.  
They have been used by homo sapiens  
since he/she became sapiens. If you  
can think of another way of disposing  
of woody garden waste that can't be  
composted, let us know. Until then  
the rest of us will continue to have  
occasional, necessary bonfires, with  
hosepipes in place for safety reasons,  
and we will not have them during very  
dry periods, nor without firebreaks  
around them, because we are not  
completely stupid.

And if, as I assume, you have come here

from a city where fires are banned,  
maybe you should consider going back  
there, as it's obviously your natural  
habitat. Or will you be objecting next  
to the church bells, as some people do  
who move from city to village?

I'm reminded of the time that our then  
neighbours complained about our (once  
or twice a year) bonfire, because they  
were planning a barbecue the same day.  
Pots and kettles spring to mind.

Will Dennis

*Editor's comment.*

*The editorial panel, far from being mythical,  
consists of nine community minded volunteers  
who give up their time every first Wednesday  
of the month to discuss the proposed content  
of the next issue of the magazine. This is to  
provide a spread of interests and opinions and  
avoid the polarisation that could occur if one  
person has complete say.*

*Page one states '... published under  
the auspices of Mickleham PCC with an  
independent editorial panel.' No-one on the  
panel is a member of the PCC, and the panel*

*retains editorial independence, though the  
Magazine is financially accountable to the  
PCC as its accounts form part of the PCC's  
annual accounts, and are examined by the  
PCC's independent examiner.*

*The names of the panel are freely available.  
Will receives the annual magazine production  
schedule, which lists all the panel and their  
contact details. The members are Charlotte  
Daruwalla, Jan Budleigh, Sue and Ben Tatham,  
Stephanie Randall, Frances Presley, Barbara  
Jones, Angela Ireland and Karen Beck.*

*As Will states, bonfires are not illegal. The  
passage about bonfires starts by saying  
there are no laws against bonfires and  
goes on to give the latest MVDC and NT  
advice about bonfires. Both of these are  
asking for consideration of the community  
and environment. On which note, given  
the penultimate paragraph of the letter,  
the Dorking Museum exhibition 'A Place of  
Safety' may be of interest (page 7 for details).  
It is about how tolerant local residents have  
been of migrants and refugees at various  
points in history.*



## Good News!

Westhumble bonfire and fireworks night is happening on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November  
Save the date in your diary - you don't want to miss this popular event  
Dates of building weekends will be announced later in the year

# A Relative of Alexanders near Polsden Lacey



Above: Perfoliate Alexanders  
Right: Alexanders for comparison



outside Guildford where it had invaded a long length of hedge behind gardens. Last I heard, local botanists were trying to eradicate it, but it is now recorded, established in the wild in several places in England, with a concentration in London.

Both plants have yellow, cow parsley-like flowers but Perfoliate Alexanders is only about eighteen inches tall and rather floppy while its cousin can reach six feet and is very erect. Perfoliate has leaves clasping the stem, looking as if they are pierced by the stem and they are very yellowy green. The whole plant looks yellowish. Alexanders leaves are in threes and dark green. The whole plant looks dark green.

Seeds and plants are readily available on the internet but I read that Perfoliate Alexanders is a Schedule 9 plant, meaning it is illegal to plant or otherwise cause it to grow in the wild.

Barbara Jones

No sooner do I find Alexanders, *Smyrniolusastrum*, growing beside the Mickleham bypass (see last month's magazine) than I find its relative Perfoliate Alexanders, *Smyrniolusastrum perfoliatum*, growing in the woods immediately to the west of Polsden Lacey at grid reference TQ 131 524.

Both are native to Southern Europe and the Mediterranean. Alexanders, until recently only common along the South Coast, was brought here by the Romans. Perfoliate Alexanders was known to be in cultivation in Britain by 1596. It escaped from Kew Gardens in 1932 to become locally prolific along the Thames. I first met it on Merrow Downs



## Open Gardens at Ranmore Common Refreshments and Plant Sale

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2 to 5 pm

Admission £8 per person to visit all participating gardens

Programmes containing a list of the gardens and a map available from the plant stall opposite St Barnabas Church and at every participating garden on the day

All proceeds will go to St Barnabas Church funds and Princess Alice Hospice

www.gardenshed.club Pauline Davis 07759 646353 paulinemdavis@gmail.com

Sadly, the Garden Shed flower arranging demonstration had to be cancelled due to illness. It has been rescheduled for Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June for all those who bought tickets.

The schedule for the Mickleham & Westhumble Horticultural Society Autumn Show on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September should be included in this issue. You will need this to see what categories are included this year, for tips on how to present your exhibits and how to enter. If yours is missing please email David Kennington for a replacement.

davidkennington144@gmail.com



## NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME Garden Open For Charity

### Ashleigh Grange

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Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June

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# Mickleham & Westhumble Horticultural Society Spring Show and AGM

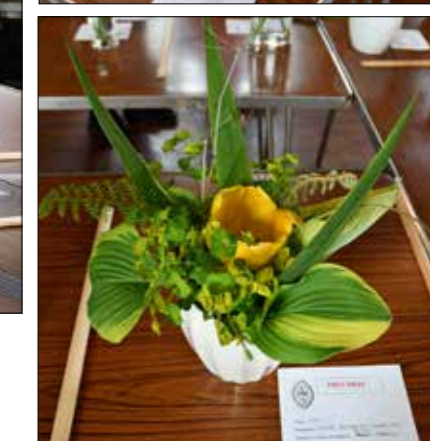


On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April, yet another fine day, the M&WHS held its biennial Spring Show along with the annual AGM at Mickleham Village Hall. By 9.45 am the hall was full of flowers and produce and the Society had a huge stand of garden plants for sale and some fine cakes to go with teas and coffees. At 10.30 am the doors opened to the public and a steady stream of visitors ensured that there

was a pleasant hum of chat and brisk sales of plants and refreshments. There was good competition in the sponge cake and marmalade sections, and it was amazing what people could find in their gardens despite one of the drier Aprils on record so far in our part of the country. The AGM then passed without any hitches.

The Society remains in good heart.

David Kennington



Photos by Judith Long  
Clockwise from top left:  
Hattie Lewis' prize-winning photograph 'Wild Spring'  
Rhubarb entries 1<sup>st</sup> Richard Siberry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ben Tatham  
Ann Sankey's prize-winning geranium

Pauline Allbeury's prize-winning arrangement 'Winter's Over'  
Victoria sponge cakes  
Co-editor Charlotte Daruwalla examining the vegetables

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## Box Hill School and Miles for Maggie's

At Box Hill School, we believe  
Education is as much about building  
character as it is about academic success.  
This belief was clearly demonstrated in  
our recent efforts to support Maggie's,  
the charity that offers vital support to  
those affected by cancer.

Our student-led initiative, 'Miles for  
Maggie's', brought together students,  
staff and families to walk, run or cycle a  
combined 865 miles - the equivalent of  
travelling from John O'Groats to Land's  
End. The event raised over £1,500.

The 'Surrey Cycle Challenge', an event  
that we know many of our wonderful  
neighbours also support, happened

on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May. While rider  
numbers were slightly lower this  
year, enthusiasm remained high,  
and we are grateful to live in such  
a beautiful part of the world to  
enjoy it.

Thank you to everyone who helped  
make these events a success!

As a side note, during the week  
of 23<sup>rd</sup> June, our students will be  
helping in the local community  
during 'Make a Difference Week'.  
Many of you have responded,  
and we look forward to contributing  
positively. If you have any ideas for next  
year, please do email them to me at,



Students taking part in a variety of  
activities to make miles for Maggie's  
[marketing@boxhillschool.com](mailto:marketing@boxhillschool.com)  
Daniella Quaglia

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Sat 7<sup>th</sup> - Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 11am-5pm daily  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> 11am - 8pm

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Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 11am-8pm

The Coach House

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pieces. The atmosphere was warm and inspiring - I'll  
definitely be back and recommending it to friends!'*

June 2024

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## Easter Snow in the French Alps

*You may have read about the apocalyptic storms in the French Alps over Easter. Annie and Will Dennis were there.*

There wasn't much snow when we arrived. It was too warm and what snow there was, was melting fast. But on the Wednesday evening it started to fall. By the time we went to bed there were some 10 cm on the ground, but that was nothing compared to what was to come.

On Thursday morning we woke up to a resort blanketed in snow, a raging blizzard, and the sound of snowploughs everywhere. Fifty cm had fallen in the night, and another 50 cm would fall over the course of Thursday. I took the dog out at about 9.30 am, passing cars that were completely encased in snow, and blocked roads (see photos). By ten, the resort was officially closed and we were locked down until 3 pm. That afternoon we put on snowshoes for a walk, and I promptly faceplanted into a snow drift. The snow was so soft and deep that I could not push myself upright and had to take off the snowshoes and crawl backwards out of the drift. Unsympathetic laughter from wife.



*Scraped window of a snowed-in car*

At this point they were avalanche bombing and every time the dog heard a bomb go off, she sat down and refused to move. Cue Annie pulling the dog's lead and screaming at it, and all the French people saying, 'poor little toutou, look at those English being horrid to her'. The French are a nation of dog lovers, even more so than the English. If you go into a restaurant with a dog in England, you will be thrown out, unless you are in Mickleham where all our pubs and restaurants are dog-friendly :). In France, the first thing the waiter will do is bring a bowl of water for the dog and some leftover chicken skins. Locals said these were the worst Easter storms in living memory. The road up to the resort was closed for 24 hours.

Trees were down everywhere, from sheer weight of snow. Several piste machines sank in the soft snow and had to be towed out, so they gave up for the night and reopened the mountain on Friday morning. Even then only some of it, as it was simply too avalanche prone.



However, by Saturday the sun had come out, the pistes were empty, we had a fantastic day's skiing, and there was enough snow to last until the end of the week. At higher levels (you can ski to 3450 m here) it was excellent, the best April snow I can remember.

Nobody died in Tignes, but elsewhere people did. One man was killed in Val Thorens, by snow falling off a building as he went for a walk. That's why we were locked down in Tignes. Just down the road in La Rosière a man died skiing off piste

without a transceiver. You do wonder about people's stupidity sometimes.

I have nothing but praise for the French emergency services. When you consider that a centimetre of snow closes the UK down, these people really know what they're doing. They worked themselves into the ground for two days and nights just so people could enjoy their holiday. Tell that to Southwest Trains.

Then on the Monday, Pope Francis died. Perhaps the apocalyptic weather was a sign.

Will Dennis

## FESTHUMBLE

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## The Magic of Mud

Whatever the season, the mud kitchen is always popular. A mud kitchen is a wonderful addition to any outdoor play area, offering a wealth of benefits for children's development and well-being. It provides a space for creativity, sensory exploration, and social interaction, all while encouraging a love for the outdoors. Although, admittedly from an adult's perspective, it is easier to clean up mud mayhem in the warmer months, and proximity to a hose pipe is an added luxury!

We were very kindly gifted our current mud kitchen, made by a friend of the nursery from re-purposed furniture and offcuts. If you have children or visiting grandchildren, we certainly advocate having a mud kitchen area in the garden. You don't need to spend any money to create a fabulous set-up. Our previous one, which eventually rotted away, was made from an old potting table. We also have a cable drum 'table', an old microwave balanced on milk crates, and a broken tea urn for water. We are rarely short of offers of no-longer-nonstick saucepans and keep a regular look out for items on freecycle to kit out the area.

As well as weighing, measuring,

developing pouring skills, mixing and testing, engaging with mud, water, sand and other natural materials allows children to explore different textures, smells and even sounds. At nursery we try to offer variety and enhancements to mud kitchen play by introducing seasonal natural-world gatherings such as leaves, currently willow catkins, or adding jars of out-of-date herbs and spices.

Sensory play is crucial for developing fine and gross motor skills, as well as for enhancing cognitive development. The tactile experience of mixing, pouring and shaping materials in a mud kitchen is both soothing and stimulating. The sessions can be silent or abundant with chatter. We like to use metal and wooden containers and utensils to enhance the sensory experience, such as the 'ting' of different metals or, particularly in winter, how varied materials respond to the cold.

Earlier this term we added some flowerheads. Two children spent almost the whole morning deeply involved in their creation of perfumes. There was lots of collaboration and discussion about what needed to be added, smelling their creations and expanding



on ideas. The play also incorporated other learning. While engrossed in their play, the children shared their thoughts on twelve guests at the dinner party, which refers to the story telling of The Last Supper at Easter.

Hilary Budd

Perfumed petals



Tankard of tea



Ugh! It's black



Mermaid food

## Excerpts from the National School Archives

Jenny Hudlass, Head of St Michael's School 1985 - 2003, kept a school log book. This practice dated from when there was a National School on Byttom Hill and heads were expected to keep a daily or weekly log. Entries give a fascinating insight into school and village life in the 1800s onwards. She has sent in a selection from notes she made and we will include one or two whenever we have space. The following

extracts struck a chord given the recent experience of lockdowns.

19<sup>th</sup> July 1869: Measles epidemic. School closed for a week on account of measles.

25<sup>th</sup> July 1869: closed for another week A great deal of sickness still prevalent. It has been decided to commence the Harvest holidays forthwith. School closed for 4 weeks.

7<sup>th</sup> January 1871: In consequence of an

outbreak of scarlet fever, it is thought advisable to close the school for another week. School closed all week, Ruth Graham died on the 13<sup>th</sup> January. School finally reopened on the 30<sup>th</sup> January. The fever has now abated.

On a smaller scale than COVID locally but happening in other schools up and down the country, perhaps leads one to think, '...there is nothing new under the sun.' Ecclesiastes 1:9

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The Stepping Stones  
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Also items may be brought to Coffee Mornings at Westhumble Chapel and St Michael's Church on Sunday mornings

To make monetary donations go to: <https://dorkingarea.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

CHECK THE COMMUNITY WHATSAPP EACH WEEK FOR ITEMS CURRENTLY IN SHORT SUPPLY



All schools, sadly, are facing the challenge of declining pupil numbers owing to a falling birth rate. As a small school we are proactively exploring innovative strategies to ensure we continue to grow and thrive. The collaboration with Newdigate Infant School as a federation has given us many benefits. These include children learning and socialising together on joint school trips, continued professional development opportunities for teachers and shared expertise across both schools.

We are now looking at 'what next?' for our small school. While exploring the possibilities, we began to examine more closely the option of offering 'flexi-schooling' to families who currently choose to home educate their children or are considering this option. It is a bold offer and one that could reshape how some children experience education, providing a much needed 'third solution'.

In recent years we have seen a marked change in children's needs and learning styles. Some children thrive best when given opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting. Our new flexi-schooling option officially recognises this, giving families the chance to combine the structure of school life with the freedom and personalisation of home education. We hope to foster a genuine love of learning in our children and build the resilience and skills needed for future success by offering this combination.

There has been a sharp rise in home education across the UK. Department



Children enjoying forest school, one of the many opportunities provided

## Flexi-schooling

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for Education figures show 111,700 children recorded as electively home educated by autumn 2024, up from an estimated 92,000 the previous year. While home schooling offers many benefits, it can present challenges such as social isolation and curriculum gaps. Flexi-schooling provides a middle ground, offering the freedom of home-learning combined with the consistency of school attendance, supporting both educational and social development.

According to The Children's Society, mental health remains a pressing concern, with one in eight young people now experiencing mental health difficulties and with stress and anxiety levels rising among school-aged children.

Flexi-schooling addresses this. It offers a gentler, more balanced approach, reducing pressure and allowing children to engage in learning at a pace and style that suits them, nurturing both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing.

The flexi-schooling approach already offered in other parts of the country, has shown that providing children the chance to attend school part-time has enabled them to return to the school environment. They are often then able to progress to full-time attendance.

St Michael's will officially offer the 'flexi-schooling' option from September 2025, alongside their full-time education spaces.

Nicola Cleather

## Where's Harry?

You will have heard of *Where's Wally*. Well this is '*Where's Harry*?', the difference being Harry is always very visible (he loves to pose) but where is he? Look at the clues in the photos to identify all the local landmarks. There is one wild card, which still has enough clues to identify the spot. We hope you enjoy it, but if you prefer a different sort of puzzle, why not have a go at creating ones you would like to see and send them in to the editor email. We will be very pleased to receive them.



*Solution*  
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to vineyard,  
Nichol's  
Field, Wild  
About Coffee,  
Footbridge over  
River Mole,  
Tower Bridge,  
top of Burford  
Spur on Box  
Hill, viewpoint  
near Norbury  
House above  
Druid's Grove,  
Denbies.

Photo by Eve Cheng



Red Arrows over Leatherhead on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May. Due to fly over Mickleham at 1.52 pm, they were diverted at the very last minute due to a heavy downpour. The rain appeared on the television coverage of the event minutes later. Did they make the flyover at the palace by the skin of their teeth?

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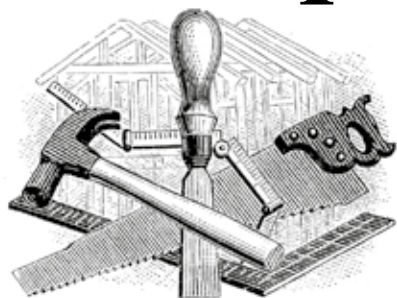
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