

White Waltham Church's
Parish Magazine
April - May 2026



See page 7 for more about our
Jungle-themed Easter Holiday Club
& page 11 for our **Easter Services**

Flight Experiences and Introductory Lessons

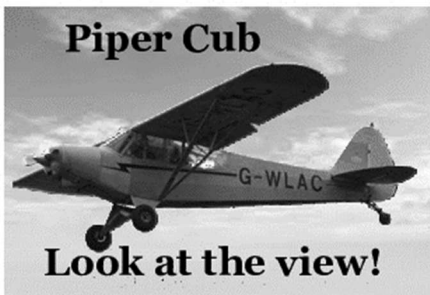
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The Vicar's Letter

The Vicarage, Waltham Road
(corner of Foliejohn Way)
Woodlands Park
Tel. 07874 399411

Dear Friends of the Parish of White Waltham and Woodlands Park,
Hello and how are you today? I ask because as I write, America has just declared war on Iran, Israel is bombing Iran and Lebanon, and Iran is responding across a range of countries, so who knows what things will look like by the time this is in your hands?

April is Easter, and we are pointed to the central truth of Christianity: that God the Son came *'not to be served but to serve and give his life for many'* (Mark chapter 10, verse 45). This speaks against the 'strong man' politics and tactics we have seen recently all over the world and the selfishness we see at home in our own country. It is vital, for our salvation, but also for our lives – lived out now together and into the next generations – to come back to this central tenet of Christianity. Love as looking to others first. Love as service. Love as God is.

Maybe it helps to come back to the simple story of the cross, recorded in Mark's short gospel for us.

Too busy for things of God? Are you thinking of coming back to them later when you have time? That was true for the soldiers, who were busy working out how to divide up the clothes as the stripped Jesus hung crucified above them. They missed out.

Think this Jesus stuff is for kids? Are you thinking that he is a historical person blown out of all proportion? Or that you have the intelligence to see that it would make a difference to your life but, deep
(continued over)

THIS MAGAZINE

Published bi-monthly, six times a year.

Delivered free to all homes in White Waltham & Woodlands Park and given to all families at White Waltham School. Freely available at church services. Also available on White Waltham Church's Facebook page and website.

**Articles for the next edition should be sent to
office@stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk**

by 4th March 2026

**Magazines are usually available on the last Sunday of the month
www.stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk**

 **White Waltham**

down, are unwilling to let it? That was true for the religious leaders who mocked Jesus and ironically got it right as they got it wrong *“He saved others, but he can’t save himself”* (Mark chapter 15 verse 31). They missed out.

Feel pressure from others? Do you fear what others would say if this Jesus stuff changed your life? That was true for Pilate who knew and stated that Jesus was innocent but had him whipped and then executed because of the peer pressure of the crowds. He missed out.

Willing to open your eyes and see? *‘... when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”’* (Mark chapter 15 verse 39). You don’t need to miss out.

Or maybe there is something else going on for you? Perhaps you realise that you are ‘not good enough’ to come to church or approach God? We need to know that church is ‘a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints’. That Jesus came to ‘seek and save the lost’, to serve ‘whoever believes’. Peter, the forgiven failure, certainly realised this eventually. He runs away and denies knowing Jesus, despite his earlier brave protestations, but is then forgiven and reunited. *‘go, tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.’* (Mark chapter 16 verse 7).

That is the wonderful, good news of God’s love in Jesus. That is why we invite you, to Easter services **see page 15** and to holiday club if you are the right age **see page 9!** It is news we need to live by, it is news we need to hope by in these scary times, it is news we need to be changed by as we see again a God who doesn’t come first to boss, but to serve us in the most sacrificial and loving way possible.

Praying for your Happy Easter, Hope-ful spring, Joy-ful.

Dave

Rev Dave Atallah

Tel: 07874 399411

office@stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk

White Waltham Church contact details

Tel: 07874 399411

Email: office@stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk

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to everyone who helps to distribute the Parish Magazines to every home,
and many of the businesses, in the Parish.

Your help and hard work are very much appreciated!



Woodlands Park Primary and Nursery School

*A place for everyone.
Together, we are inspired to grow,
learn and achieve.*

Here at Woodlands Park School, we are enjoying the longer, brighter days and noticing the first signs of spring. This term has been super-busy, and we have seen much progress against our school improvement priorities.



This was recognised in our recent Ofsted inspection, and we will be pleased to share the Ofsted report with the community when it is published after Easter. I would like to thank all the staff, parents and governors who have worked so hard so far this year to make a difference to the children

here at Woodlands Park School.

There have been many exciting events taking place, with our Key Stage One children visiting the Gurdwara and Woolley Firs. Our Year 6 children took the train into London to visit The Imperial War Museum. They had a fantastic time and were keen to share their experiences with us when they came back to school. Children from across the school attended the Young Voices event at The O2. Wow! What an event! One for the children to remember forever. We have also had a visiting theatre company perform The Wizard of Oz to the whole school as part of our World Book Day celebrations.



Our Reception class also took a trip to Woolley Firs where – despite the cold, wet weather – the children all came back bursting with excitement. Learning through experiences and learning out of the classroom support children to consolidate and remember the knowledge that they have learnt and this is important to us here at Woodlands Park School.

Nature and the great outdoors are central to our approach here at Woodlands Park School. Our vision is to have ambition for ‘Healthy Minds and Healthy Bodies’. To support this vision in school we are also taking part in a Key Stage 2 project with the Wildlife Trust to promote the natural environment and habitats for local wildlife in our school grounds. Our Year 5 children have monthly sessions with Claire from the Wildlife Trust to work on this brilliant project. It is a fantastic opportunity for the



children to learn about wildlife in our immediate area and to contribute positively to the community and to nature.

We are about to launch our updated School Vision based around the three aims of ambition for: Personal Success, Healthy Minds and Healthy Bodies and Joyful Moments. Watch out for more information on our website soon.

If you are interested in coming to visit us here at Woodlands Park School, please contact the school office for a tour. There is also plenty of new information on our website so please take a look there if you would like to find out more about us.

We hope that everyone in the community enjoys this time of year as Spring unfolds.

Best Wishes
Mrs J Sergeant
Headteacher

01628 822350

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www.woodlandsparkschool.co.uk

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White Waltham Church Easter Holiday Club @ Woodlands Park School



Wednesday 1st & Thursday 2nd April, 9.30am-12.30pm

For treasure hunters in school years 1 to 6

And then Friday 3rd April, 10.30am-12 noon

All Age Celebration for the whole family

Registration closes end of Sunday 29th March.

Spaces are limited so please book soon.



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serving
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More info and to book in
www.stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk/holidayclub

St Mary's Flower Guild, White Waltham

In February we held our Annual General Meeting where we caught up with all our news over coffee and cake, reflected on 2025 and started to plan our activities for 2026.

Some dates for your diary:

Saturday 4th April from 9.30am – do come and join us to decorate the church for Easter.

Saturday 23rd May – a demonstration: “Planting a Hanging Basket” at 10am in The Tree House.

Saturday 27th June – a demonstration and workshop – details tbc

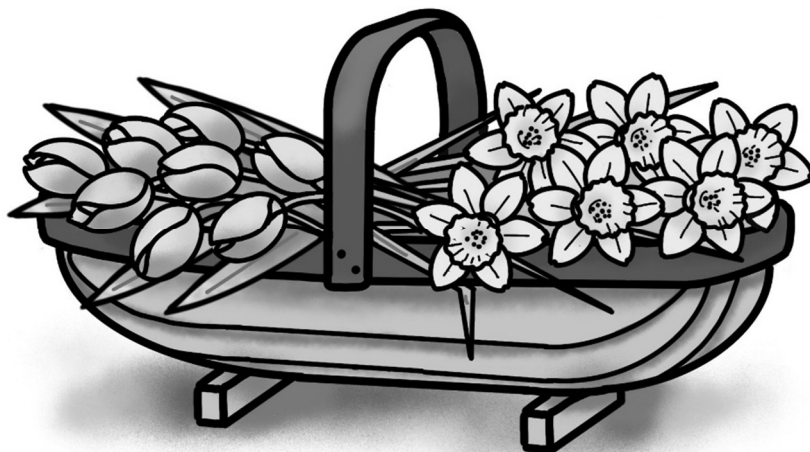
Sunday 19th July – our annual Garden Party in Carolyn's Garden, 2.30 - 4.30pm. Donations of cakes would be welcome. Contributions to the plant stall and raffle would also be very welcome.

Saturday 1st August – a garden visit to Little Marlow as part of the National Garden Scheme at 2.30pm. £12 per head to include refreshment. Contact Carolyn (number below) if you would like to join us.

There are several more activities planned for later in the year to include workshops, fund raisers, and coffee mornings. Details will be found in the next magazine or contact one of the numbers below.

Carolyn Thompson 07834 545967,
Liz Atlay 07881 785131 or Julia Hodgson 07904 999685

We look forward to seeing you!





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White Waltham Church invites you to our **Easter Services**

Maundy Thursday Meal with Communion

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Good Friday for All Ages

In Woodlands Park School at 10.30am

The Greatest Act of the Good Shepherd

A Good Friday Service suitable for everyone

Good Friday Reflective Service

In Church at 2pm

An hour at the cross

Easter Day All Age Service

In Church at 10.30am

A Shocking Good Morning

Join us for this celebration for all ages together

Everyone is welcome to services at White Waltham Church

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White Waltham Cricket Club



Est 1879 and still representing the village today!

Delighted to say the sun has made an appearance! No one is more thankful than our Groundsman, Luke, who is now able to get out and really start working on the outfield and square; see the picture opposite of its first haircut of 2026!

After last year's warm and dry summer, the outfield took a bit of punishment and we are about to embark on an outfield renovation at the end of March, so you might well see some tractors etc around.

The senior section has commenced nets and now looks forward to the first weekend of games, starting on 18th April.

Many thanks

Jonny Mahoney

WWCC Chair

For more information, or if you are interested to join/train with the club, please visit our website or contact us using one of the below options:

Website: www.whitewaltham.play-cricket.com

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HANDS

How often in football do the fans call out ‘Hand Ball!’ from their more knowledgeable position and experience of the game? We always feel we know more than the referee!

There are, of course, times in football when you can use your hands without punishment:

- to take a throw-in
- to retrieve the ball when it is out of play, so it is ‘dead’
- after a stoppage in play to place the ball for a corner, free kick goal kick, kick off or for a penalty etc.
- it is one of the privileges that goal-keepers are allowed to save shots on goal with their hands



As spectators, we use our hands to clap good play, to recognise how well a player has performed, when he is substituted and even to wave good bye to the opposing fans when their team is performing poorly and they go home early!

So how are hands used in the Bible?

- for carpentry, as Jesus worked with his father Joseph
- for waving branches, as the crowds welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday
- Jesus frequently touched people to heal them, like the blind man
- he blessed the bread and wine at the Last Supper
- but most of all, on the cross, as Jesus’ nail-pierced hands bore some of the weight of his body. His arms and hands stretched out to welcome, even the crowds & Jewish leaders who mocked him.
- when Jesus rose from death, it was Thomas the doubter, who was encouraged to touch Jesus’ hands.



Look at your hands! Why not bring them to church this Easter to find out more about Jesus?

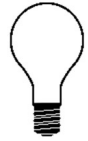
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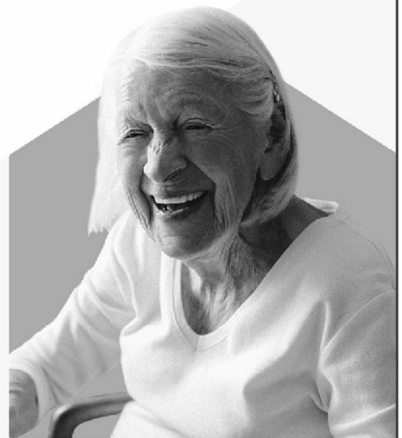
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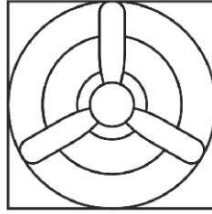


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Celebrating Pancake Day!

Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day is a favourite with our church family and friends. We have, for the past few years, put on a social event which, of course, is pancake based but also gets everyone involved in various quizzes which helps to refresh the brain cells after a sugar ‘work out’

This year’s event was as fun-filled as in previous years and our church families and friends enjoyed indulging in a sugar overload – with some healthy options thrown in for good measure.

I tend to cater for these events and am always being told there is so much choice, and too many pancakes, but from behind my kitchen counter I can tell you that everyone has a thoroughly good time, selecting their choice of fillings and even having a go at making their very own pancake – and there is very little left over! It’s a great way to get everyone involved; much fun and laughter can be heard in the room, not only from the children but the grown-ups too.

Sharing this time together is special. It’s not just about celebrating the day (and, of course, the pancakes), but also enjoying the company of friends and family, and that real sense of caring and sharing.

Carole Perkins



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We invite you to join us for our

All Age Services this Easter

at 10.30am

Good Friday 2nd April
Woodlands Park School
**‘The Greatest Act
of the Good Shepherd’**



Easter Sunday 5th April
White Waltham Church
‘A Shocking Good Morning’

Come along ready to take part
if you wish, through interactive fun,
craft, drama and story



*We carefully plan our All Age Services to provide
opportunities for active involvement and participation in a
range of ways; there is something for everyone!*

Everyone is welcome



Read this short story from the Bible...

Bible Bite

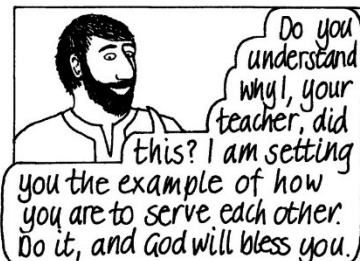
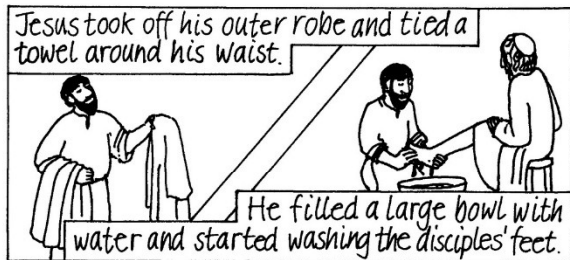
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 22:24, John 13:3-17

Jesus and his disciples were celebrating the Passover with the special meal. The disciples were bickering again.



There was a reason why no-one wanted to be the least important - the roads were mud and everyone's feet got very dirty.



...and complete this Wordsearch about it!

w	p	s	e	r	v	a	n	t	d	c	f
a	a	k	x	p	x	s	e	n	x	j	r
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k	o	w	p	e	s	e	n	a	o	f	s
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example

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Passover

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road

celebrating

feet

servant

serve

Jesus

important

least

bowl

Peter

later

robe

disciples

bath

wash

towel

understand

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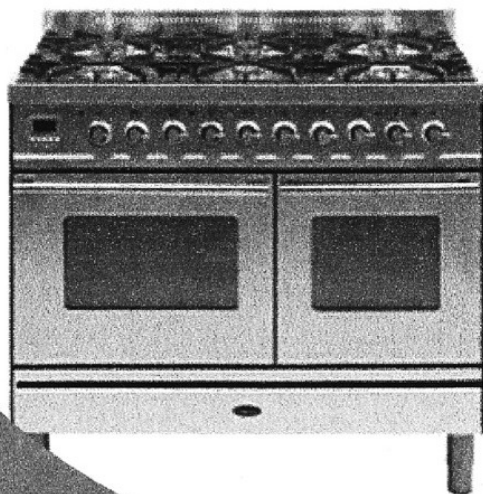
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Tales from the Bells



 White Waltham Bell Ringing

As many of you know (and for those who don't) the bells are rung to call people to worship before services and for weddings. They are also rung to celebrate the life of someone, a national celebration, the passing of a monarch, and the birth of Christ and His resurrection.

Since the last magazine, we rang for a wedding. For the first time in ages the wedding had all White Waltham ringers – we didn't have to import any from another tower. One ringer was ringing their first time for a wedding. We have also rung a quarter peal to celebrate the life of a past congregation member, Celia Blay, who passed away last year. Some past ringers, who knew Celia, joined us to ring.

As this is being written, we are practicing for the striking competition in April. This should hopefully be at Sandhurst, though they are currently having work done on their bells. More in the next edition....

If you have an interest in learning to ring, or are unsure, curious, or have just moved to the area and are looking for an activity to do, please do get in touch. If your question is, "Do I need to be strong?" the answer is 'No'. If it is, "How old do I have to be?", the youngest ringer we currently we have is 9 years old. For all your bellringing questions, do email whitewalthambells@gmail.com for the answers! And if you would like a taster session without obligation, we have an accredited teacher to train any new recruit using exercises from the Association of Ringing Teachers called Learning The Ropes. We look forward to hearing from you!

Lesley Graves, Tower Captain

EASY SU DOKU

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MEDIUM SU DOKU




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A Testimony

A journey of faith might be likened to a pilgrimage with landmarks and guideposts, hazards and moments of feeling lost, our destination being reached when we come before our maker.

I do not recall ever subscribing to atheist conclusions but must admit to being lukewarm – like those of the church in Laodicea – indifferent and preoccupied with worldly matters. I believe life might be composed of three threads – employment for financial support, at least one pastime and a faith which underpins everything. For many, the latter remains in abeyance.

I grew up with an awareness of a higher being to whom I could appeal, later finding him to be compassionate through his provision and protection. When very young, at bedtime, one of my parents would lead me in a simple prayer. This assured me of God's existence – I wasn't addressing a void. Circumstances made me aware of our mortality.

I grew up on a small housing estate in Reading. The cul de sac where we lived provided a playground for us as children. There was one evening though, when our games ceased, our attention being diverted by a group of people singing choruses on the street corner. They were from 'The Chapel on the Hill' which I could see half a mile away from my bedroom window. The message of which they sang was vital. I was transfixed and reluctant to leave, but my mother promised I could attend the Sunday School. So, my involvement began – each Sunday afternoon for several years I set out clutching a Bible and a 'Golden Bells' hymn book. At the Sunday School we studied the Bible and prayed and sang. We learnt of what Jesus had said and done. Mr Lockhead, the minister, had been a Salvation Army officer. We always enjoyed visits from some evangelists who arrived in a green campervan. They entertained whilst still teaching us.

At school, our religious upbringing wasn't neglected. Every morning there was 'assembly'; a simple devotion consisting of a hymn, a prayer and a Bible reading. In our secondary school, form masters taught scripture.

My brother Richard was five years younger than me, and joined the Sunday School later. When I was about 11, I joined the scouts and began to worship at St John's, the Parish church. My scoutmaster 'Skipper' Knight was a sidesman and something of a mentor to me. I became a Queen's scout and attended the parade at St George's Chapel in Windsor.

I wasn't baptised until I was 14. My parents had suggested I could make that decision for myself. Having been baptised, I could be confirmed. At the confirmation service, the Bishop actually appealed, after laying his hands on each of us 'Let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them' and also 'let them daily increase in the Spirit more and more'. In New Testament times this did represent an imparting of the Holy Spirit, its function being to

launch the church. Many do not consider the Spirit to be active today. Subsequently, I was permitted to receive the bread and wine at Holy Communion.

Richard and I became servers or 'acolytes'. Sometimes I carried the processional cross. We wore vestments. I found the ritual and symbolism to be meaningful.

I've had a lifelong involvement with education, first as a pupil, then as an art student, practising painting and pottery. There was some significance in me obtaining a book 'The Life of Christ in Paintings of the 11th to 15th Centuries'. Art communicates. Having gained the necessary qualification, I went on to teach, first in secondary schools, then specialising in pottery at an Adult Centre in Reading, near to where I had grown up.

At the art college I was in my element, being in the company of likeminded people. I befriended a small group of devout Methodists. I saw in their dedication, something I wanted very much. I also met there Jennifer (Jen) who would become my wife. Whilst gaining my teaching qualification, although impoverished, we married and were able to rent a cottage in Shottesbrooke Park, just outside Maidenhead. From there, I cycled daily to teach in Reading.

As well as being housed, there were outbuildings suitable for the making of pottery which it seemed I was meant to do – I have been doubtful on hearing others say such things, but everything needed to practise the craft was just coming my way. I still needed to distribute and sell my work, the difficulty being that I was unable to drive.

The problem of transport was overcome in a most surprising way. I acquired a carrier tricycle – 'stop me and buy one'. This looked like one of God's little jokes, but the timing was perfect and it was ideal for transport and display. I was able to pedal to events about 15 miles distant.

Very soon, organisers were urging me to provide a demonstration and again, God in his providence granted the wherewithal to do it and eventually a truck to carry everything. With help, I was enabled to visit events and demonstrate. A college friend lived nearby, and I attended events he'd organised and, in the winter, I sign-painted for him.

It will be seen that my experience is not one of conversion from atheist to believer, but a realization that Jesus had been active throughout my life. The 1970's saw the emergence of the Charismatic Movement within the historic churches. As a result, thousands were finding their faith re ignited, although others were cautious, but we were seeing an equipping to carry out God's work. I found my own church involvement had become important.

Everything appeared to be falling into place, but unexpectedly, I experienced a mental breakdown and had to be admitted to hospital. I asked a visitor from the church "What's gone wrong? What am I doing

here?" I was told nothing was wrong, which seemed rather lame – I was obviously quite ill. The lesson I learnt was that God had something planned for me. *'My ways are not your ways' saith the Lord. (Isaiah 55:8)*

After being discharged from hospital, I was convalescing for many months, but found a post as a pottery technician at East Berkshire College. This could be recognised as Divine providence, though a sceptic would be doubtful. I held the post for 28 years retiring at 65.

There had been other things that were wrong. We had a son Joe but the birth being difficult, Jen had developed diabetes. By then I'd parted with the tricycle, but downsized my demonstration and display, also making use of the opportunity to distribute tracts and other literature which told of the opportunity of entering God's kingdom. I added a display for this. Telling others is an important part of the church's work and perhaps most demanding. We have been commissioned by Jesus himself to carry out this task (Matthew 28:19). Our activities are determined by the weather and our health. By working at open-air events I was at the mercy of the elements. Illness too could be an inhibiting factor restricting what is possible. Psalm 42 is meaningful and among my favourites. *'...put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God'. (Ps.42 v11)*

Bob Packer

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Clerk – Carolyn Thompson 07834 545967 carolynt52@icloud.com

Shottesbrooke and White Waltham Welfare Fund

This fund was established by the Charities Commission in 1912 to help those living in the 'area of benefit' (the Civil Parishes of Shottesbrooke and White Waltham and the Ward of South Hurley).

How we can help: The Charity income may be used to help generally, or help individual people living in the 'area of benefit' who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress. It can do this by making grants of money or by providing or paying for items, services or facilities.

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A letter of support will be required from a Social Worker, a Vicar/Priest, a Head Teacher, or another official body.

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For further information on the areas covered and eligibility, please write to: Clerk to the Trustees, Carolyn Thompson, Spire View, Waltham Road, White Waltham, SL6 3SG or email: carolynt52@icloud.com for an application form

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News from your Borough Councillors



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Spring Awakenings in our Beautiful Corner of England

As the icy grip of winter thaws and the first gentle warmth of spring begins to stir, our community embraces the shifting season with renewed energy and hope. The frost-dusted mornings and cosy fireside evenings are now fond memories, and the children — fresh from the thrill of half-term adventures — are turning their thoughts to Easter and the vibrant life it brings. Soon, colourful daffodils will line our lanes, and the sweet scent of blossom and fresh-cut grass will fill the air. Whether you're preparing for garden gatherings or simply enjoying a sunny stroll through wildflower meadows, there's something magical about spring in our part of England.



For those interested in local matters, you might enjoy watching some of the council's meetings online. A good place to start is the **Maidenhead Development Management Committee – Planning Committee**, which can be accessed via the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead website:

- Visit **www.rbwm.gov.uk**
- Select **Council and Democracy**
- Navigate to **Council Meetings**
- Choose the meeting you're interested in
- Click on **Agenda and Draft Minutes**
- Then click on **Media – Watch the meeting here**

It's a great way to stay informed and engaged with the decisions shaping our community perhaps while sipping a hot chocolate by the fire!

RBWM Council tax update

As the final proposals for the 2026/27 financial year are prepared for approval, our community faces the coming months with a new set of local priorities. The previous year's 8.99% increase and the £6 million in savings

achieved are now part of the borough's fiscal history, and residents, having participated in the recent budget consultation, are looking toward April 2026 and the changes it brings.

The Government has granted the Royal Borough "additional flexibility" to raise council tax by 7.49% this year, an increase that includes a 2.5% Adult Social Care precept to support the borough's most vulnerable. While this rise is intended to help address a £51 million budget gap and fund over £14 million in targeted investment for social care and housing, it marks a significant step in the council's ongoing financial recovery plan.

Whether you are considering the impact of the additional £2 per week for an average Band D property or noting the planned investments in our parks and community assets, there's a clear focus on the future of our part of England. Despite the upcoming changes, local tax rates are projected to remain among the lowest in Berkshire, continuing a long-standing characteristic of our borough's financial landscape.

Updated new buses

Brand new buses are on the road from this week on select routes. Improvements include a smart air system, audio and visual location announcements, USB charging and free on-board Wi-Fi. The new low-emission vehicles are also better for the environment, in line with the council's cleaner, greener, safer vision for the borough. The new Thames Valley vehicles will replace the following bus routes: 1, 7, 16, **227 and 228**.

You also may be interested in:

Get moving at the Desborough Suite with Leisure Focus!

Have you signed up for the health, wellbeing and fitness classes in our Desborough Suite? The sessions, which will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, are hosted by Leisure Focus' well-loved fitness practitioners. Activity will expand in the coming months to offer a more enhanced fitness programme and the opportunity for greater daytime community use. To book your place, visit <https://www.leisurefocus.org.uk/>

Community Spotlight

To see details on community events and volunteering opportunities in the borough, visit <https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/community-spotlight>

Do you have an upcoming not-for-profit community event or appeal for volunteers you'd like to add to the page? Send a short summary including key dates and a link to communications@rbwm.gov.uk

Please do email us if we can help in anyway.

Our best wishes

George and Maureen,

George Blundell and Maureen Hunt

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Sunday Services at White Waltham Church
are at 10.30am *with activities for children every Sunday*

Services are in person and live via Zoom from the church building:
<http://www.stmaryswhitewaltham.org.uk/zoom>

N.B. you can join us in one click on our website's main page


Services for All Ages

at 10.30am

Good Friday at Woodlands Park School
Easter Day at White Waltham Church

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