

# Westcott Village

Magazine

March 2025



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Westcott has a population of over 2,000 and this is the only magazine written specifically for the Westcott area by the people of Westcott. It is hand delivered, free of charge, to every household and further copies are available at the church, local shops, pub and doctor's surgery.



If you have any articles, photos, letters, etc that you think we may like to feature in the next issue, please email the Editor on:

[editor@westcottmag.com](mailto:editor@westcottmag.com)

But please note, publication will always be subject to space and at the discretion of the Editor.

Copy deadline for

**April** issue:

**8th March 2025**

This magazine, published by the Church in Westcott, is printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited paper from a sustainable source. The views expressed are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Church, Editor or Westcott residents.

## FROM THE EDITOR

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This month I'm hoping Spring might actually become sprung! The clocks go forwards on 30th, which is also Mothers' Day, which somehow feels a bit

unfair! More flowers are appearing round and about, and the sun has shown itself this week as I write this, all of which fills me with hope that longer, warmer days are on the way.

The village coffee morning is on 5th this month with the usual coffee and cakes, and also books and jigsaws, so not only is it good to be able to catch up with friends, you can stretch your mind when you get home with a new book or puzzle!

There are lots of music events at the Dorking Halls throughout the month, (see p43 for details), and Dorking Museum still has the Lego House exhibition running, so get down there this month if you're a fan. There are also Lego models of local landmarks, it might inspire you to have a go yourself when you get home, either in Lego or something else crafty!

Please send in pictures of any creations you've come up with and I'll put them in next month's magazine for all to admire.

**Cath**  
**editor@westcottmag.com**

### Dance 2B Fit

Brighten your week and join us at our Exercise for Health class where you will be warmly welcomed.

We dance, gently, to favourite tunes, toning and stretching our upper bodies, knees, hips and brains! We puff a lot! Laugh a lot! And generally feel better for spending an hour in each others' company.

Please come and try a taster class with us at Westcott Village Hall on Tuesday mornings 10.30 to 11.30 a.m.

To find out more contact Diane 07799580906

# ...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

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## SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES AMID GEOPOLITICAL CHAOS

In the sixth century the Roman Empire was rapidly disintegrating. There was constant war throughout the provinces which once represented the economic and military domination of Rome. Ordinary people, as is so often the case in chaotic times, paid the price as their lives were turned upside-down by conflict, famine and invasion. Amidst this uncertainty a young man named Benedict left his native Nursia in Umbria to attend school in Rome. He was repulsed by many of the practices there as he observed how the strong preyed on the weak and rejected the heart of Christianity. So he upped sticks and left. Not to a comfortable place in the suburbs but to live off-grid in prayerful solitude in a cave, 30 miles east of Rome. Others were drawn to his life of simplicity and holiness and eventually, with reluctance, he established twelve monastic communities in the area.

Benedict wrote a simple set of instructions for how they were to live together and love one another amidst the uncertainties and dangers of the age. He sought to write 'nothing harsh, nothing burdensome' – people had enough troubles without heaping unrealistic expectations on them. He instructed those who came not to 'be daunted immediately by fear and run away from the road that leads to salvation.' Through the communities which sprung up from this movement, much that is good and precious was preserved at a time of chaos – not least many works of literature, philosophy and art. Perhaps even more significant however was the preservation of Jesus' outrageous claim that rule purely by might is not right, and that the meek will indeed inherit the earth. A conviction

“GENERATIONS  
OF IMPERFECT BUT  
LOVING COMMUNITIES  
WELCOMING OUTSIDERS  
TO ENCOUNTER GOD'S  
GRACE LEFT THEIR MARK  
ON THE WORLD.”

remained that lives of prayer, worship and dependence on God make the ultimate difference, rather than a pragmatic dependence on whichever local war chief is currently on top. Generations of imperfect but loving communities welcoming outsiders to encounter God's grace left their mark on the world. Whatever your own beliefs, our culture and world view still owes much to those who courageously took a stand as

## ...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

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communities of prayer and hope in times of great darkness and fear. I would love to tell you the even more compelling story of our own nation – how in the seventh century a young man called Aidan boldly went out from the Christian community on the island of Iona in Scotland to speak life and hope to the violent Anglo-Saxon peoples who had come over the sea and taken the Kingdom of Northumbria. How through patient love he introduced them to God's love and sowed the seeds which would slowly turn the tide on a culture of violence and power as the centuries went by. Or the story of the community set up at Finkenwalde by German Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer to equip Christian Pastors to actively resist the evils of Nazism through

action – but also through prayer, contemplation of Scripture, and living in a loving community built around the teachings of Jesus. Bonhoeffer knew the potential cost of taking a stand – he was assassinated on the orders of Hitler in the final stages of the war. I would love to tell you of these communities and more, but I am already pushing my word count. So for those who would like to be involved in meaningful community here in Westcott, I will simply leave you with some of Bonhoeffer's words of wisdom: "The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community."

Every blessing,  
Tim

# SUNDAY SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY



**8.30am** Book of Common Prayer Communion, A warm welcome in our beautiful, traditional service.

**10.15am** Friendly, relaxed service, using Common Worship and a range of music styles. This service is also livestreamed on Zoom.



**For 10:15am Zoom service connection**, please scan this QR code, or visit the Online Services page of [thechurchinwestcott.org.uk](http://thechurchinwestcott.org.uk) and follow the link.

*The church is open every day, 9am-4pm for private prayer & reflection*

DATE	THEME	8:30AM	10:15AM
2nd March	The Transfiguration	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club
9th March	Lent 1	Book of Common Prayer Communion	All Age Morning Worship
16th March	Lent 2	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club
23rd March	Lent 3	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion
30th March	Lent 4	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club



## MARKING LIFE EVENTS

All who live in Westcott or have a connection here are very welcome to have christenings, funerals, weddings in Holy Trinity. Contact [vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk](mailto:vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk) for more information.

# MIDWEEK PRAYER & WORSHIP

Wednesdays

10am

Communion at St John's

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## Ash Wednesday Services at Holy Trinity



9am - A Short Reflective Service

10am - Communion at St John's

7.30pm - Ash Wednesday Service with Communion



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# LENT IN THE PUB

*8pm Mondays from March - Easter*

JOIN US AT HOLY TRINITY FOR OUR  
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3.15 - 5 pm



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# THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

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The Church in Westcott is part of the Westcott Good Neighbour Scheme and we are always here for a chat, prayer, pastoral need.

**Debt advice:** Paul Stacey (paulstacey88@gmail.com)

**Holy Trinity Pastoral Assistants:** Mark Shakespeare (01306 888010), Ali Mabley (alimabley.htw@gmail.com)

For help, or more information, please contact  
Tim Armstrong, Vicar: vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk  
or visit [thechurchinwestcott.org.uk](http://thechurchinwestcott.org.uk)



## Floodlighting

If you'd like to sponsor the church  
floodlighting for March,  
or any other month,  
please contact Sarah Massey at  
[admin@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk](mailto:admin@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk).  
(Suggested donation of £75 to Westcott  
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# SURREY HILLS ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Bees

Bees have been learning all about special places. One of their special places is a church and they have been learning all about events that take place in a church.



This week their focus has been on weddings. The children spent a lovely afternoon designing wedding hats, colouring doilies for the wedding cake competition and making beautiful bouquets for the wedding party.



A massive thank you to Marion at Abinger Farm shop for donating compost to our Nature Garden. The children in Bees and Butterflies classes were quick to get to work, planting daffodils and tulips for the garden. They also planted a daffodil to take care of at home! We will also be using



the compost to enrich our soil for our fruit and vegetable growing, as well as for the traditional giant sunflowers.

## Year 6

Year 6 have been working on Mechanical Systems in Design and Technology. Their challenge was to create a mechanism using gears and pulleys to pick up everyday items from the classroom floor to table height. There was a lot of experimentation and testing to see



how the gears and pulleys work as well as thinking about applications for larger scale projects!

James Croft  
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# SURREY HILLS ALL SAINTS SCHOOL (cont.)

## New Deputy Head



Hello, my name is Kathryn Saunderson and I am the new Deputy Head at Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School. I joined the school in January, just in time for the snow and

ice but thankfully the welcome I have received from the school community has been much warmer and friendlier!

Before I joined Surrey Hills All Saints, I had worked as Assistant Head across an infant and junior school in Horsham

for just over seven years. It has been a busy six weeks getting to the know the children and staff as well as working with Mrs Fyson on understanding the school's journey and how I will be able to support its continued journey and growth. I have been enjoying getting to know about the community of Westcott which stretches beyond the school gates and I hope that as the year progresses I can get to know village life even more through the various events I have been told are held every year.

**Mrs Fyson**



## March Update

The Westcott Baby Meals team catered last month for the family of Wulf Brown who arrived as a special Christmas delivery on 25th December 2024! Thanks to all the Cooks for delivering a range of delicious dinners, from an Indian selection to cassoulet!

### Can you help us?

As a Cook you sign up when it suits you, and then buy, cook and deliver a meal directly to the recipient family. There is no obligation or commitment and it's a wonderful community initiative to be part of.

### Can we help you?

If you live in Westcott and you're expecting or have recently had a baby and would like help with (free!) meals for the family for a couple of weeks, or if you need meals during a challenging time, please contact: Anna: 07710 425487 [annakemkers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:annakemkers@hotmail.co.uk)

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## Dorking Local History Group

The DLHG continues its popular programme of both live and Zoom talks on a fascinating range of topics. These are free to members, but non-members are welcome. Upcoming dates include:

- **Women at War: Those wonderful women in their flying machines:** These wonderful women included three ladies from Surrey! Live talk by Jim Barnes. Monday 3rd March at Crossways Community Baptist Church, Junction Road, Dorking RH4 3HB, 7.15 for 7.30pm, £2 at the door for non-members.
- **Box Hill's School for Secret Agents:** Zoom talk by Paul McCue about Bellasis, a top-secret training centre for agents of the Special Operations Executive, including men sent on Operation Anthropoid, in which a top SS man was assassinated in Prague. Monday 17th March, 7.30pm, <https://www.meet-up.com/Surrey-History-Meetup/>.

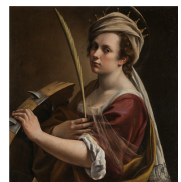
For further details of talks and other activities – or to join DLHG – go to <https://dlhg.org.uk>



## Tuesday 11th March 10.30am

### Convent, Courts and Collections Women Artists of the 16th and 17th centuries

“Why have there been no great women artists?” This question was asked in 1971 by art historian Linda Nochlin in her famous essay, yet it still feels unanswered today. In her lecture, Antonia Gatward Cevizli looks at the obstacles female artists faced of that period – their background and their gender - and how they managed to overcome these issues.



The lecture will be held at 10.30 in Martineau Hall, Dorking Halls. Coffee is available from 9:30am. Visitors are welcome for a fee of £7.50 but contact Linda Packham on 07960 995707 (email - [ljpachman@gmail.com](mailto:ljpachman@gmail.com)) to book. For more information and details of the forthcoming programme, visit [www.theartsocietydorking.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietydorking.org.uk)

Painting by Artemisia Gentileschi (National Gallery)

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## Wonderful Warblers



Chiff Chaff, courtesy RSPB

Sunny mornings are now scored by birds flexing their vocal prowess as March marks the start of the dawn chorus. Over the coming months, birds will sing to stake out territory and attract a mate. Our residents will soon be accompanied by early arriving summer visitors, ready to supplement their song.

Warblers are a group of birds which can often be difficult to distinguish on sight. They're mostly brown or olive colour in their plumage, equipped with sharp, slim beaks to aid their insect-heavy diets. These songbirds are easiest to tell apart by listening out for their springtime tunes.

Due to changing climate, small numbers of warblers are

beginning to spend winter in the UK. Most warblers, however, complete a migration from their warmer overwintering grounds in Africa. In preparation for their journey, they feed extensively and can even double in weight!

In March, listen out for the Chiffchaff's onomatopoeic "chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff" song from the treetops and the Blackcap's scratchy trills from the scrub. Toward the end of the month, the cascading melody of the Willow Warbler will join the symphony.

Facebook: RSPB Dorking and District  
 Instagram: @rspb\_dorking  
 Website: <https://group.rspb.org.uk/dorkinganddistrict/>

## Jonathan Groves



Blackcap, courtesy RSPB

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BIRTHDAY  
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# WESTfest

11.30-4 Sunday 22 June



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# INTERESTING DATES IN MARCH

You'll all know that 1st March is St David's Day and 17th is St Patrick's Day, but here are some dates in March that may have escaped your notice, or you may need reminding of!

**3-9th British Pie Week** (needs no explanation)



**4th Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Day**, so get your lemons out

**8th International Women's Day**

**14th Pi Day**, to celebrate the wonder of maths

P I A N O  
- D A Y -

**20th World Frog Day**

**20th March equinox** marking the beginning of spring (finally!)

**21st Red Nose Day**

**22nd Earth Hour** - Organised by the World Wildlife Fund, individuals, organisations and businesses are asked to turn off non-essential electric lights for one hour

**28th Wear a Hat Day** in aid of Brian Tumour awareness

**29th Piano Day**, held on 88th day of the year because there are 88 keys

**30th Mothering Sunday**

**30th the start of British Summer Time** at 1am so put your clocks forward

**29-31th the Borrowing Days**. According to Scottish folklore, the last three days of March were borrowed from April and have a reputation for being stormy



$\pi$





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# WESTCOTT HISTORY GROUP

## William Mullins and the Mayflower Expedition

The Mayflower set sail for America on 16th September 1620 with about 100 passengers and 30 crew members after several false starts involving the leaking hull of her companion ship (the Speedwell) for which they had to return to port for repairs. On board were the family of William Mullins – a prosperous shoe and boot maker from Dorking – with his wife Alice and children Joseph (15) and Priscilla (17) and his servant/apprentice Robert Carter. He had left behind two of his family from his first marriage, Sarah (22) and William (late 20's) who remained in Dorking.



The smaller ship Speedwell, which was intended to accompany the Mayflower, had come from Rotterdam to Southampton with a group of English Puritans or Separatists who had left Scrooby in Nottinghamshire some 12 years before to escape the strict enforcement of religious laws

enacted during James I reign during 1608-9. Southampton had established trading links with Virginia and Norfolk which was where they were headed. The two ships set sail on 15th August but the Speedwell started leaking and they had to stop in Dartmouth for repairs. The Dartmouth locals were suspicious of the pilgrims and obliged them to move up the river. They set off again down the English Channel but 300 miles off Lands End the Speedwell leaked again and the ships returned to Plymouth. Here the Speedwell was declared unfit to sail across the Atlantic.

Six weeks had passed, wasting valuable money and supplies. Some passengers returned to Holland, some abandoned the venture and a few joined the Mayflower. After some 64 days sailing, they spotted land at Cape Cod Hook and arrived at their destination, Plymouth Bay Harbour in Massachusetts, in the harsh winter on 19th November 1620.

William Mullins was a signatory to the Mayflower Compact which was a venture financed by the Merchant Adventurers and he had 9 shares of stock in the venture. Mullins was well established in Dorking where he is first recorded in October 1595 when he was fined 2 pence apparently for not attending the manorial court session of that year. He was elected 'tithingman' for the Eastborough

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neighbourhood. On 20th December 1612 he was named in the will of Jane Hammonds, appointing him as overseer of her estate. On 28th December 1612 Mullins bought a 'holding' from John Jetter in Dorking with 1½ acres of land between West Street and Back Street (now Church Street) for £122. He was detained on 29th August 1616 by the Lordship of the Privy Council, probably associated with the religious controversies of that time, but nothing came of it. In May 1619 Mullins sold his Dorking Mansion holdings to Ephraim Bothall for £280, apparently in preparation for his voyage on the Mayflower ship.

the 41 signatures on the Mayflower Compact. He became assistant to the Governor of the Plymouth Colony until 1636. His years of experience in Jamestown made him familiar with the hunting techniques and lifestyle of the American Indians which was very useful to the Pilgrim's leaders. In fact their first formal meeting with the Indian leaders of the Wampanoag tribe was at Hopkin's house. He took part in visits to the Indian leader Mussasoit. In the later 1630s he came up against the Plymouth authorities because he set up a tavern and allowed excessive drinking. He died in 1644.



Only Priscilla Mullins survived their first winter and spring and continued to live in Plymouth. William Mullins died on 21st February 1621 followed by his wife and son soon afterwards.

There were two interesting characters among the Mayflower passengers. One was Stephen Hopkins who joined them in Southampton – the only man who had been in America before – having been shipwrecked in Bermuda in 1609. He and his wife Elizabeth joined the Mayflower in Southampton. She was one of 18 women of whom 3 were 6 months pregnant. She gave birth during the voyage and they named the boy Oceanus. On arrival in New England Stephen Hopkins was another of

The next WLHG Talk will be on 11th March 2025 with speaker Anne Sassin from the Surrey Archaeological Society about Test Pitting at Albury Park to investigate deserted medieval settlements.

As always the WLHG Committee encourages readers to propose talks and articles of interest. Contact us by email at [westcottlocalhistory@gmail.com](mailto:westcottlocalhistory@gmail.com) and for local information see our website [www.westcottlocalhistory.org](http://www.westcottlocalhistory.org)

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## **Westcott Village Hall Update Number 10 March 2025**

Our planning application to build a new village hall on Institute Road and 9 new houses on the current Hut site on Furlong Road was submitted in September 2024 and a decision from Mole Valley District Council is awaited. The Development Group and their advisors are continuing to liaise with the planning officers to ensure comments from stakeholders and our community have been properly addressed. We are hopeful that we will have some positive news to report in the next couple of months.

In the meantime the Westcott Village Hall remains in active use and is producing sufficient income through hiring of the hall to continue operating, comply with statutory guidelines and pay the usual bills. The village has been very supportive with generous contributions from many individuals and groups including Westcott Village Association, The 100 Club, Westcott Wives and Westfestivity. We would like to thank you all again for your support, it is very much appreciated.

The trustees are planning another active year of events to raise money for the project so please keep a watch for further details during the year. A couple of dates that have already been set are the annual Quiz Night on May 10th and Westcott Open Gardens event on June 15th Please keep the dates free and further information will follow.

Thank you for all your support.

**The Trustees Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO**



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## **Notice of a Meeting of the Trustees of Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO at the Westcott Village Hall on Wednesday, April 30th 2025 at 7pm**

Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO is governed by its trustees. With limited exceptions (and reflecting how modern charities are generally run) only the trustees are entitled to attend and vote at meetings. However, in the interest of transparency and good governance, the trustees have adopted a policy to declare their quarterly meeting to be held in April each year as an 'open meeting' which residents may attend as observers.

This year, the trustees' April meeting will be held in Westcott Village Hall at 7pm on Wednesday, 30th April 2025 and all residents of Westcott and the neighbourhood are warmly invited to attend as observers.

The business of the meeting will include:

- (i) a review of the CIO's report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are currently in the course of preparation;
- (ii) the appointment (or, if eligible, re-appointment) of trustees;
- (iii) an update on the planning application for the proposed new houses on the site of The Hut and the new village hall on the current site of WVH;
- (vi) such matters concerning the operations of the CIO as may arise and be appropriate for discussion in an open forum.

**Sally Hewetson**  
**Chairperson**  
**Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO**



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February has arrived and as I am writing this there is a sleet/hail storm. However there is lots of promise of brighter things to come. We have daffodils in bud at the front of the woodland and other spring bulbs popping up from the frozen ground. The birds are hungry and wait for my arrival in the mornings. It will be nice when we can turn the clocks back and start to enjoy longer days.

We are now in full swing with the planning of our Easter Egg Hunt and Family Fun Day. Do register the children asap to avoid disappointment. We are going to have a great Easter Egg Stall at extremely good prices so come to the woodland on Sunday 13th April and fill your shopping bags to help our Veterans. There will be lots to do; the Easter Egg Hunt at 12.30 followed by Egg and Spoon races. The stalls in the woodland include the Easter Egg Stall, Sweet Stall, Lucky Dip, Craft Stall, Grand Easter Raffle, games for all ages with prizes and the NAFFI will be open plus a BBQ. PLEASE DO REMEMBER TO BRING CASH as cards do not work in the woodland.

I have been busy making some new bird boxes and once Easter has come and gone we will be enjoying watching the birds feeding their young. It is always a joy to watch the young woodpeckers feeding and some of the smaller birds busy in and out of the nesting boxes. One of my great pleasures is to see the

ferns all around the woodland come to life, they almost appear to unfurl in front of my eyes!

As we go forward and into the Summer months we will be holding the 11th Annual Anniversary of our opening. This celebration will take place on Sunday 8th June and all are invited, starting at 12.30. There will be plenty of parking because we have been given permission to park in the grounds of the new Leith Hill School and we will provide a shuttle service to and from the woodland. As usual we will have lots of stalls and plenty of refreshments. One of my good mates who was in the Queen's Regiment boxing team with me sadly passed away before Christmas so there will also be a Commemoration Service for him on the 8th during the afternoon. I know that family will be coming from Germany and quite a number of his comrades will be coming to celebrate his life and plant a tree in his honour. Do put this date in your diaries.

I am at the woodland most days of the week and weekends between 10am and 2pm this time of year, much longer in the Summer. So feel free to come and visit and say hello. I look forward to your visit.

**Paul Cooling, Chairman**  
**The Quick Response Memorial Woodland**  
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If you were thinking of travelling the world you would probably have a mode of transport in mind. Let us guess – would it be long, wriggly, green and sort of slimy? No? Well that's what ours was! We all hopped aboard our ginormous green snake and slithered to the farthest corners of the world to celebrate the year of the snake.

In our crafty corner we continued learning about the Chinese New Year and made some beautiful lanterns to hang throughout the hall. We all had the opportunity to get to grips with chopsticks both by playing with playdough and by swirling them in the sand to make all sorts of symbols.



Space has invaded the nursery this month with a fully functioning space station popping up for us to explore. We have learnt every planet name and were excited to light up some glowing stones with our colourful torches. Back on earth the weather has provided us with some super speedy hail storms where the hail has helpfully settled. One of our teachers volunteered to go out into the cold to scoop it up and bring it inside for us to get our hands

on! Tiny weeny snowballs that melted at our touch!

Spring rolls were on the menu as we carefully rolled up delicious chopped vegetables in our delicate filo pastry then cooked them to crispy perfection. For those with a sweet tooth valentine's cookies were baked and decorated with perfect pinks. And in what has now become a February tradition we made marmalade in earnest to enter the best marmalade competition in Surrey at the Kingsfisher Farm Shop!

We'd like to say a BIG thank you to the Abinger Fair Committee for our donation which we have used to buy a new picnic table for the hall garden. It's wonderfully toddler sized and can fit a lot more of us round it! We love it!



And finally a date for your diary – the Great Abinger Bake Off returns on the 23rd March from 2-4 pm at the Evelyn Hall. Be the next Paul or Prue and battle it out for Star Baker! With the Chocolate Tombola, Egg Hunt and crafts galore. Not to be missed!

If you have a child looking to start Nursery please don't hesitate to get in touch. Please call 07842 978823 or email [abingercommonnursery@gmail.com](mailto:abingercommonnursery@gmail.com) We can't wait to show you around!

**Kate Fairbrass**



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		<b>COOKIE CLUB</b> 9-11am	Curry Night 5-7pm	Community Garden 11-2pm	
	Fresh Bread & Cakes	Fresh Bread & Cakes	Sourdough & Sausage Rolls	Fresh Bread & Cakes	Fresh Bread & Cakes
	Light Meals	Light Meals	Light Meals	Light Meals	Light Meals
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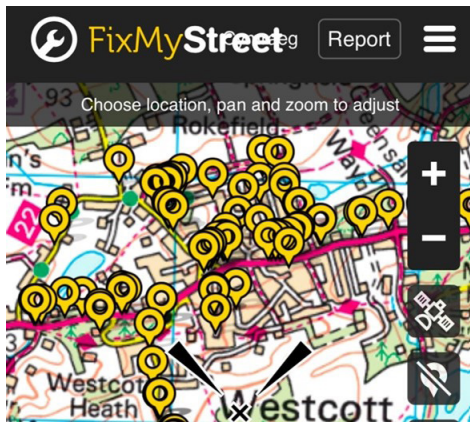


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## Highways and Transport Infrastructure Issues in Westcott

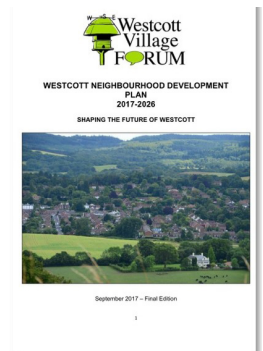
The WVA have been navigating through the blurred lines of responsibility between Mole Valley District Council and Surrey County Highways, pushing for action on the various highways and transport infrastructure concerns from the community. This has included; maintenance of roads and pavements, road safety for the school, infrastructure improvements to encourage more cycling & walking and the impact on the already congested A25 of the new housing developments. As well as putting concerns in writing (see [Westcott Highways and Transport problems Jan2025 Ltr to SCC MVDC](#)) by the time you read this article a meeting will have just taken place with all parties to discuss the key issues. Further updates to follow.



In the meantime, thank you to everyone who continues to report pot holes, overgrown pavements and other problems directly to SCC or MVDC using the Report a Problem links on our website as this continues to bring these Westcott issues towards the top of the agenda. The current map on Fix My Street shows the numerous items that have already been reported – well done Westcott for helping to keep up the pressure.

## Updating the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan

The latest meeting of the Westcott Village Forum was held on 27th February and updates were received from the three working groups looking at policy, data and community engagement. It is through discussion at the Forum that the content and overall direction of the updated WNDP is set. Copies of all the presentations and notes of the meetings can be found on the dedicated pages of the Westcott Village website <https://>





# Westcott Village Hall

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The current village hall is likely to be redeveloped within the next 1-2 years, replacing it with a modern, flexible, sustainable community facility. We will give our users at least 6 months' notice of the anticipated closure date so that everyone will have enough time to secure a replacement venue during the building period.

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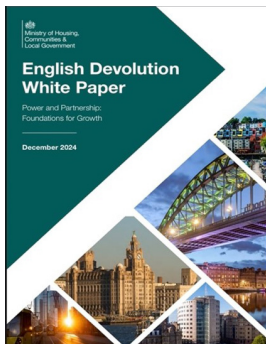


[westcottvillage.com/westcott-neighbourhood-development-plan/](http://westcottvillage.com/westcott-neighbourhood-development-plan/)

It's never too late to get involved so if you would like to volunteer for a working group or come along to a future Village Forum, please get in touch to let us know at [contact@westcottvillage.com](mailto:contact@westcottvillage.com)

could look like. We will need to stay abreast of these proposals to ensure Westcott's voice continues to be heard as part of the new structure. At the last Open Meeting, it was thought that forming a Parish Council in Westcott might be one option worthy of consideration.

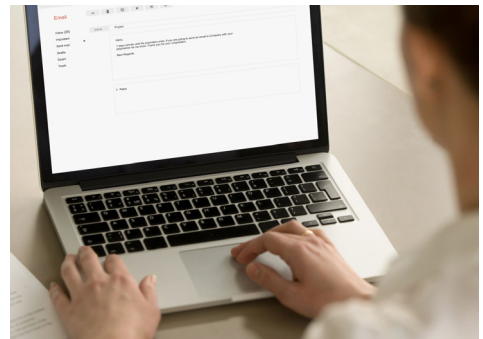
## Changes to Local Government



The UK Government published an English Devolution White Paper in December proposing a major reorganisation of Local

Government across the country in favour of unitary authorities. This would mean the existing Surrey County Council (SCC) and its eleven Borough and District Councils, one of which is Mole Valley District Council, would be abolished in favour of one, or possibly two, Mayoral Strategic Authorities for Surrey.

SCC has already indicated their desire to be in the first wave of these changes and they have already started work to understand what this



As always please do get in touch with any issues or to share your views on village life. We have current openings on the Committee so if you would like to come and join us or just come along to a few meetings to see if it is for you, please do get in touch.

### **WVA Committee**

**Jo Astor, Paul Goddard, James Leaver, Nick Lund, Magesh Ramakrishnan**  
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2nd at 3.00, Brodsky quartet at Dorking Halls, £23, 01306 740619  
3rd at 1.00, screening of Swan Lake at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717  
7th at 1.00. screening of *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717  
7th at 7.30, screening of *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717  
9th at 7.00, LHMFM *Messiah* at Dorking Halls, £20-25, 01306 881717  
15th at 7.30, Dorking Philharmonia at St Martin's church, £15  
20th at 7.15, ballet screening at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717  
24th at 2.00, ballet screening at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717

The first concert of this year's Leith Hill Music Festival takes place in March. This is a performance of Handel's *Messiah* given by a large choir of festival singers with the baroque orchestra Canzona. It will be the first concert with the new festival conductor Neil Ferris, who has been leading the singers through a series of lively and inspiring rehearsals. This will be an exciting and dramatic performance of Handel's great masterpiece. Two further festival concerts will follow in April.

The Dorking Philharmonia has a programme of Russian music, beginning with Borodin's evocative tone poem *In the steppes of central Asia*. Louis-Victor Bak will then be the soloist in Rachmaninov's ever-popular *second piano concerto* and the concert will finish with Tchaikovsky's brilliant *Symphony no.4*.

The Dorking Concertgoers present the world-famous Brodsky string quartet in the third of a three-concert series that began in February. Beginning with an arrangement of a Bach violin sonata, they will play Debussy's beautifully atmospheric string quartet and Schubert's moving *Death and the Maiden*, its title inspired by one of Schubert's finest songs.

The Surrey Philharmonic Orchestra, playing in Ashtead, has a very attractive programme, beginning with Mendelssohn's rarely-heard overture *Son and Stranger*. Gerard Flotats is the cello soloist in Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations* and a lovely *Romanze* by Richard Strauss. There are also two pieces by Delius, and the concert finishes with Saint-Saens' second symphony.

There are several screenings at the Dorking Halls this month: Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* from the Royal Ballet, and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, filmed during its UK tour.

**Ian Codd**



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## DORKING MUSEUM

The Museum features fascinating displays telling the story of Dorking from the age of the dinosaur to the modern day, special temporary exhibitions and regular family activities at the Museum and Dorking Library. Added to that, spring brings the resumption of our programmes of guided walks in the town and tours of the South Street Caves – start planning now.

### Building between the vines – the story of the Denbies LEGO house:



The Museum's current temporary exhibition tells the story of how and why a full-size house

was built of LEGO on the Denbies Wine Estate in 2009. It was the subject of one programme of a BBC television series entitled James May Toy Stories in which the presenter built large scale models from some of the country's best-loved children's toys. 2009 marked the 60th anniversary of the first LEGO bricks being produced!

The two-storey house took almost 2,000 volunteers to build over a five-week period, using over 3.3 million bricks and setting a world record for the largest LEGO house. It included furniture, furnishings, kitchen appliances, and even a shower, sink and flushing loo on the top floor – and a LEGO cat! Following completion, a housewarming

party was held, and a toast with Denbies wine – served in specially designed LEGO goblets – was enjoyed by contributors to the series and guests including Oz Clark, Tiff Needell and Jane Asher. After the party, James May stayed in the house for just one rainy night. The house itself remained in situ at Denbies for only four days. Due to its sheer size and weight, relocation to a permanent site was impractical, so it was demolished, with the bricks collected up and donated to charity.

A collection of specially designed Lego models of buildings and objects with a Dorking connection are on display, and



there are other activities for children. A LEGO Dorking Cockerel trail around the Museum, with prizes, continues for the duration of the exhibition.

### Family Activities at Dorking Library:

Saturday 1st March, 10am-1pm: 'Great Games!'

Back by popular demand, we welcome the return of the



Shrove Tuesday 'blow' football game – commemorating the historic (and infamous) game that was played on

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## DORKING MUSEUM (cont.)



Dorking High Street until it was banned in 1897. Other unseen traditional games from the Dorking Museum collection will also be available. Don't just play it, make it! Create your own skittle alley using recycled materials. With generous support from the Arts Society Dorking. Saturday 8th March, 10am-1pm: For Women's History Month, families are invited to come and find out about famous women from Dorking (aimed at 4-11 year olds). Both free events take place at Dorking Library, St. Martin's Place, and children must be accompanied.

**South Street Caves tours:** One of Dorking's most popular attractions, the 17th century South Street Caves lie beneath Dorking's busy streets. Staircases, galleries, wine vaults and chambers lead down to the 'Mystery



Chamber', 50 feet below street level. Guided tours take place on the last Saturday of each month starting on Saturday 29th March at 10am, 11am, 1pm and 2pm, lasting 45 minutes. Tickets will be on sale from 1st March on [dorkingmuseum.org.uk/south-street-caves/](http://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/south-street-caves/). These sell out quickly, but private group tours from the beginning of April may also be arranged (email [caves@dorkingmuseum.org.uk](mailto:caves@dorkingmuseum.org.uk)).

**Walking in Dorking:** The Museum's popular programme of guided walks in the town centre and at Betchworth Castle and The Deepdene Trail resumes at the beginning of April. Please see [dorkingmuseum.org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/](http://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/) for scheduled walks and private group bookings.

**Get involved:** Could you spare a few hours each month to help support this valuable community resource? We are looking for new volunteers for the front desk, or who could bring their skills to a variety of other important roles with flexible working in the Museum, in the community or from home. See [dorkingmuseum.org.uk/about/volunteer-opportunities](http://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/about/volunteer-opportunities) for further details and application.

Dorking Museum, 62 West Street, Dorking RH4 1BS. Open Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. [www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk](http://www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk). 01306 876591. Visit [dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/](http://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/).

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Dorking Group of Artists' Spring Exhibition  
2025 Betchworth Village Hall, Station Rd,  
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Alan Brown

Open to the public:  
Friday May 2nd – Sunday May 4th  
10:00 – 17:00,  
Monday May 5th 10:00 – 16:00

The Dorking Group of Artists, probably the largest art group in Surrey, are delighted to be returning to Betchworth Village Hall for their popular Spring exhibition. Many of our members are professional artists, and our exhibitions have a strong reputation for artistic merit and quality of presentation. The original art in our exhibition is all for sale at affordable prices. The paintings demonstrate a wide range of different subjects, styles and media. Original art makes a unique and thoughtful gift.

Entrance to the exhibition is free and Betchworth Village Hall is opposite Knights Plant Centre where you can buy all manner of plants and also have lunches, tea and cake. For more information about our activities, exhibitions and how to join the DGA see [www.dga.org.uk](http://www.dga.org.uk), look at our Facebook page @dga4art, or get in touch at [contact@dga.org.uk](mailto:contact@dga.org.uk).

Angela Hall, Chair,  
Dorking Group of Artists  
Email: [contact@dga.org.uk](mailto:contact@dga.org.uk)



Pauline Allbeury



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## DESERT ISLAND DISCS



### Nancy Lund

The fixed points in Nancy's life are husband Nick, her kids Ellie and Max, her brother and sister and her therapy dog Shadow. These represent safe ports in her rather wiggly route of lived experiences with her only discovering her navigational compass when getting a late diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) which explained some of the turbulence she has weathered.

The disruption began when her parents split up when she was very young, but she recalls her Dad singing often and a household of eclectic musical tastes combining Led Zeppelin and AC/DC with classical and folk music. Steeleye Span's *Weaver and the Factory Maid* was a favourite. Her early schooling was not happy. Told off for chatting during story hour, being slapped by a teacher, probably for inattention, were likely as a result of symptoms of her undiagnosed ADHD. She fared little better in secondary school with her ambition of becoming a nurse quashed by career advice that she was 'too stupid'. She left at 15 without any qualifications.

She was drawn to drama and gravitated towards London's Covent Garden where she became a busker's bottler. In the past, a busker would have an assistant who passed round a hat for coins and held a bottle containing

a fly in the other hand. Keeping the fly in the bottle with the thumb of that hand proved there was no pinching of the busker's money. Nancy found the musical talent of David Bowie and his transforming persona Ziggy Stardust coincided with a break from what would now be recognised as a coercive and controlling relationship with the busker and her own reinvention of herself.

Her sister, who worked for BA, provided a ticket to Venezuela which broke the busker's stanglehold and she moved to Twickenham, taking driving jobs for a graphic designer. Another BA ticket, this time to Australia, resulted in her discovering religion and being born again to a Pentecostal Church Community. On her return to the UK she spent the next seven years as a missionary, including a stint working in Hamburg's red light district. What was absent in her life was music, with the church forbidding access to any media. Bucking against a marriage her pastor was steering her towards and her mission to Rwanda she luckily escaped both the marriage and the genocide. Nancy found herself questioning her religion and leaving the church altogether.

Feeling cut off and lost, a restorative walk in the Peak District resulted in her meeting Simon. A marriage, two children and a messy divorce followed, cramming in GCSEs, an A level and a degree in Psychology along the way.

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## DESERT ISLAND DISCS (cont.)



A drama camp re-generated her and was where she met Nick. A joyful second marriage to the accompaniment of Peter, Paul and Mary's *First time ever I saw your face*, an MSc in drama therapy, and award winning theatre work with young people followed. This, together with her love of nature epitomised in the glorious Vaughan Williams' *Lark Ascending* completed the task of soul rebuilding and a renewed spirituality. David Gray's song *Please, forgive me* continuing '...if I act a little strange, for I know not what I do' resonated with Nancy's disorganisation and meltdowns countered by Nick's sense of order and calm.

Her Dad died in 2018 and her involvement in his funeral arrangements led her to training as a celebrant and you will find her as Nancy Lund in the UK Society of Celebrants' register. Her style of working with the bereaved is to organically surface the pain of loss, finding the right tone and timbre for the service and draw on her drama and therapy skills.

Covid struck in 2020 and Nancy, Nick, Ellie and Max were at home with Shadow, (a dog trained to provide comfort and support and used by Nancy in her mental health work with children). The family gave lectures to each other and Nancy choreographed a dance for her children, videoing the performance to the music of *Blinding*

*lights* by The Weekend. Despite the unfolding tragedy of Covid deaths, this was a magical time for Nancy and a cherished time of connection with her kids.

Entering her 50s and losing several friends to cancer pulled Nancy up short and caused her to ask herself: how much time do I have left? The incredibly brave answer was to train as a paramedic and she will qualify in January 2026. As a mature student she was offered screening for learning differences through which she was diagnosed with ADHD. The disjointed pieces of inattention, restlessness and 27 different jobs fell into place with a relieved understanding of why. She is loving the training, sponging up the learning and feeling she has come full circle with her earlier nursing ambitions. *This is me* from *The Greatest Showman* says it all:

*I am brave, I am bruised  
I am who I'm meant to be, this is me  
Look out 'cause here I come  
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum  
I'm not scared to be seen  
I make no apologies, this is me'*

With the book *Papillon* in her back pocket and a blanket as her luxury item I wish this wonderful, resilient, resourceful woman well in her new career.

**Jennifer Brown**



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### **Killing Two Birds with One Stone**

Plastic pollution now blights our planet from the highest mountain to the deepest ocean trench. Last years Big Plastics Count estimated that 1.7billion pieces of plastic are being thrown away by UK households EACH WEEK! But it would be wrong to lay the blame at the doorstep of individual householders.

On the contrary, single-use disposable plastic was a deliberate strategy pushed from the plastics industry to maximise profits – they'd found that the problem with plastic products was that they were too durable, so you'd only need to buy one of a plastic item and it would last forever! Hence the idea of 'throw-away' plastic was born and gradually clever marketing and cheap pricing drove items that had previously been reusable towards more 'convenient' disposable plastic versions.

There are certainly items for which plastic has an important material use, such as for pacemakers for example, but using such a durable material for a single-use or disposable product, such as packaging, is problematic, and indeed would appear to make little sense – apart from the fact that it is an artificially cheap material – due in part to it being a byproduct of the subsidised fossil fuel industry. 99% of all

plastics are made from fossil fuels and plastic packaging accounts for nearly 40% of plastic usage.



What I hadn't really appreciated, when I first started to write this article, was the extent to which reducing plastic production is critically linked with tackling the climate crisis. Throughout their lifecycle plastics contribute to climate heating, via greenhouse gas emissions associated with the extraction of fossil fuel, manufacturing of the plastic and disposal of plastic waste. In 2019 5% of global emissions come from plastic production.

Moreover, as the world is transitioning to clean energy, fossil fuel companies are increasingly turning their attention to plastic production. ExxonMobil was estimated to be the biggest single-use plastic waste polluter worldwide in 2021. The plastic industry is becoming the fastest-growing source of global industrial greenhouse gases. If this continues, as much as 19% of world

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## GREEN WESTCOTT (cont.)



greenhouse emissions could come from the plastics lifecycle by 2040.

Countries around the world acknowledge the need for a global treaty to reduce the amount of plastics being created, in order to protect our health, the health of the earth and to tackle the climate crisis. The fifth round of negotiations for a Global Plastics Treaty in December last year ended without an agreement. The talks were literally swamped by fossil fuel and petrochemical industry lobbyists who, alongside oil-producing countries, worked to weaken the treaty, pushing waste management and recycling 'solutions', rather than tackling the issue at source, ie cutting plastic production.

The idea of recycling is often pushed by the plastics industry as a method of dealing with the problem of throw-away plastic pollution, without endangering disposable plastic production, effectively allowing the problem to continue. Plastic recycling is not a satisfactory solution for plastic

pollution for several reasons, including the fact that it is complex due to the numerous different types of plastic with differing chemical additives and recycled plastics contain chemicals hazardous to health. In fact much of our plastic waste is burned – releasing toxic fumes, often unfairly impacting deprived neighbourhoods.



Infographic from everydayplastic.org from 2024 Big Plastics Count

In addition to the above, microplastics are released during the recycling process, causing environmental harm through air and water contamination. Microplastics – which result from the breaking down of plastic waste – get everywhere and can be found in our food, water and are even finding their way into our brains, in rapidly increasing amounts! Research released in February found that data showed an increasing trend in microplastic contamination of brains from 1997 to 2024, with the equivalent of the weight of a plastic spoon of tiny plastic particles found in the brains of people who had died in 2024.



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Reducing the use of fossil fuels goes hand in hand with reducing plastic pollution. Far from being a problem of human behaviour, this is a systemic problem, so rather than look to piecemeal downstream remedies which just keep plastics circulating in ever smaller pieces, the solution is to go upstream and turn down the tap of plastic production. Tackling the issue of fossil fuel subsidies at a policy level is one of the keys to addressing the artificially 'cheap' price of fossil fuels and therefore plastics too. There are also ways we can help.

## What can we do?

- Divest from fossil fuels – make sure your money is not supporting banks,

pension and other companies, ie insurance, that are investing in, or enabling, new fossil fuel projects. See [www.makemymoneymatter.co.uk](http://www.makemymoneymatter.co.uk) and <https://global.insure-our-future.com/>

- Use alternatives to plastic wherever possible
- Beware of greenwashing claims on packaging – a 'chasing arrows' recycling logo and the word 'recyclable' printed on plastic wrappers does not always mean that it can actually be recycled

Fully referenced article at [www.greenwestcott.org/blog](http://www.greenwestcott.org/blog)

**Jakki Phillips**

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