

Westcott Village Magazine

October 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

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

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8th October 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



Well, the year rolls on regardless of what we think about it doing so, and here we are in October, with autumn leaves, probably more rain, and the clocks going back on 26th, at which point we are plunged into darkness for the winter. It's not quite that bad but I do find that the evenings start to draw in very quickly after the clocks change and I miss sitting in the garden with a book in the twilight.

But we have some cultural opportunities to get involved with in order to cheer you up this month. The Leith Hill Music Festival is holding a Come & Sing Day on 11th for anyone wishing to join in with choral singing, ending with an informal concert in the evening, (more details on page 46) while Brockham Choral Society are looking for new singers for their

Christmas concert in December with rehearsals starting now, see page 36 for more information if you'd like to get involved and exercise your lungs.

The Dorking Group of Artists' Exhibition is on from 10th-12th October at Denbies if you'd prefer to admire others' efforts rather than do it yourself, see page 32 for all the details.

The Open Morning for Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School is on 21st October, get along and see it if you have children looking to start school next September. (Contact details on page 15). Also don't miss the Village Coffee Morning as it's on 1st this month.

Keep warm, and don't forget to change those clocks!

Cath
editor@westcottmag.com

Thank You!



It has been noted with gratitude that the following people voluntarily trim, cut and generally look after the area at the bottom of St John's Road by the stream for the benefit of walkers both with and without dogs. They are Daniel (Dudley), Andy, Guinness Mick and Polly. This is much appreciated by the many people who use these footpaths.

...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



WHAT IF?

I wonder if you've ever prayed. Even if you don't believe in any deity, I imagine you might have uttered an OMG ('Oh my god') or a 'God help us' at some point in your life. Maybe you've tried praying and given up if you found it boring or thought it wasn't achieving anything. Or perhaps, in a moment of desperation, you've found yourself calling out to God as a last resort. Yet whether or not you have prayed, I'd hazard a guess that someone somewhere has prayed for you.

Recent statistics from the Pew Research Center* revealed that people in the UK are less likely to pray every day than those living anywhere else – or at least, in the 102 countries surveyed.



**“YET WHETHER OR NOT
YOU HAVE PRAYED, I'D
HAZARD A GUESS THAT
SOMEONE SOMEWHERE
HAS PRAYED FOR YOU.”**

According to their figures, fewer than 10% of us Brits pray daily, though who can say if people answered the question with hand on heart, or if there were others (like me) who recognise the value of daily prayer but couldn't honestly say they always do it? Statistics may not tell the whole story.

Prayer can, of course, take many forms. I grew up with the “hands together and eyes closed” variety – helpful for eliminating distractions but certainly not the only way. Since childhood, I've come to recognise that prayer can be a few words offered up silently amidst a conversation, hands open to release a heavy burden, the beating of fists in moments of despair or anger.

...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

Prayer can be listening. It can be beautiful words read or spoken, the simplest sentence, or a cry of the heart when there are no words. I believe God hears, even welcomes, it all. And the Bible includes countless examples of people praying to express every emotion under the sun: joy, wonder, gratitude, fear, grief, confusion, doubt and more.

Although I don't profess to understand prayer, I'm quite sure it is worthwhile. In his poem *Morte d'Arthur*, Tennyson writes: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of". And a wise person once suggested to me that we'll never know what might have happened if people hadn't prayed. Somehow, I believe, God chooses to use prayer as a means to change the world for the better. That change might be for a person or situation I pray for, or it might be a change in me – or even both. I find that prayer restores my perspective, enables me to refocus on what matters most. It helps to recalibrate my life, lightens the load, provides clarity and inspiration. I need reminding that it isn't all about my efforts to achieve, improve or put the world to rights. Prayer encourages me to reach out beyond myself and my limited vision to a God who sees the whole picture, and can do far more than I could ever ask or imagine.



If you've been to the village Hub recently, you might have noticed a wooden box on the wall by the main door. It's there for anyone who'd value prayer for a person or situation they're concerned about. Any requests are treated confidentially and prayed for by a few people from our village church. So if you've got something on your mind and you're open to the possibility that prayer might make a difference, why not ask someone else to pray... or even try it yourself?

Heather Shakespeare

* <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/08/09/where-is-the-most-religious-place-in-the-world/>

SUNDAY SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY



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

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

DATE	8:30AM	10:15AM
5th Oct	Book of Common Prayer Communion	No Service (Weekend Away)
12th Oct	Book of Common Prayer Communion	20-20-20 Service with Breakfast
19th Oct	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club
26th Oct	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club



MIDWEEK PRAYER & WORSHIP

Wednesdays

10am

Communion at St John's



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SHARING
LIFE

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@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk
or visit thechurchinwestcott.org.uk

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Death:

7th August 2024

Peter Edward Brown (81)

2nd April 2025

Rosemary May Brown (80)

23rd July 2025

Elizabeth Mary Crook (88)



FLOODLIGHTING

If you'd like to sponsor the church floodlighting for October, or any other month, please contact Sarah Massey at admin@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk. (Suggested donation of £75 to Westcott Church Funds.)

THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

UPDATE FROM ST JOHN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE

There's a real sense of momentum at St John's Community Centre. With new leadership and exciting developments underway, it's a good time to catch up with Simon Mabley (new Centre Manager) and Jon Mears (Co-Director of the Community Interest Company behind Westcott Village Hub).

"There's a lot going on," Simon says, "thanks to generous, big-hearted people who share their time and skills — people who love the building, community garden and village and want them to thrive."

That spirit of community is central to everything at St John's. "The Village Hub started during the pandemic as a way to get fruit and veg to people," Jon explains. "It became a community store, then a café hosting the community fridge, with the later addition of a refill station — and now it also supports local micro-businesses selling local crafts."

Officially operating from October 2024, the Westcott Village Hub is now a Community Interest Company (CIC). Its' aims include running a café and community shop, supporting the Community Garden and Fridge, helping other groups grow, maintaining the building, and creating paid and volunteer roles.



"We've been in close contact with Mole Valley Planners" Simon explains, "and we're grateful to Councillor Magesh and the WVA for their support with that in particular."

The Hub is constantly evolving and this summer, the café served over

150 free children's meals and welcomed 400+ visitors to the Community Fridge. "The café and shop are our core, but their use might adapt depending on what the community needs," Jon adds. "We'd love to be open for parents on their way back from the morning school run — it's just about funding."

THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



Meanwhile, there's a lot happening in the community garden, and the chapel space is also still very active, with regular activities like Midweek Communion, Cookie club and Yoga, as well as being a great space to hire. "It's such a great facility", says Simon, "which is all down to the incredible work of previous managers Tim Way and Tony Astor."

Simon sees how naturally everything connects. "People wander between spaces — the garden produces surplus for the café, families stop in and discover the Cookie Club. It's all organically community-led."

Support from the 100 Club and Surrey County Councillor Hazel Watson (who funded the coffee machine and refurbished kitchen), have also been invaluable.

Beyond café life, the Hub team also offers practical support — staff are trained in 'Advice First Aid' to help signpost people to services. Ultimately, St John's is shaped by the people who use it. "It's not about a building," says Jon, "but about vision, energy, and working together."

Rev Hannah Mayo,
Curate at Holy Trinity Westcott

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SURREY HILLS ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

A big thank you FASH for organising the skipping workshop. Reception children and staff had a fab time.



Year 1 & 2 were then really lucky to have a visit from Gooley Stuey who gave us a fabulous interactive learning experience all about bubbles! We got to blow bubbles, create giant bubbles as well as conduct our own scientific experiments and make sherbet to take home! Thank you so much to FASH, whose fundraising allowed us to experience these activities!



Year 3 have been immersing themselves in their ancient Egyptian topic! We were lucky enough to have two workshops. The first workshop focussed on ancient Egyptian makeup, clothing and everyday items. We got to see close up real artefacts that were over

5000 years old! Our second workshop was a hands-on mummification lesson where we went through step by step the different processes of mummification.



The afternoon was then spent practising our hieroglyphic writing and making our very own Pharaoh masks. We had the best day deepening our already brilliant

Egyptian knowledge!



Year 4 had a fantastic May workshop experience with thanks to Portals to the Past

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for providing and FASH for paying. We played some traditional Maya games such as Pok-ta-pok and Bul, which were so very exhilarating.



We had a look at what types of weapons they used and how they would have hunted. After that we also had a go at hunting our own animals! We ended the workshop by recreating the Creation Story which was filled with lots and lots of gods who wanted to play tricks on people. Oh, and I suppose it's worth mentioning that Miss Nowak was sacrificed for her heart.

Rocksteady concert

All of our rock stars

performed with confidence and demonstrated their fantastic musical skills! They have all worked so



hard across the year to learn new songs and have shown excellent teamwork and stage presence. We are so incredibly proud of you all! Letters have gone out for you to sign your child up for the following year if they would like to join the amazing bands we already have.

Our Open Morning for new pupils is on 21st October with the Head's talk from 9.30am. See next page for more details.

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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:

- **Members' Night:** Several members give short presentations. Non-members are welcome to attend. Come along and be surprised! Monday 6th October at Crossways Community Baptist Church, Junction Road, Dorking RH4 3HB, 7.15 for 7.30pm, £2 at the door for non-members.
- **Anne of Cleves: Flanders Mare or Beloved of Bletchingley?:** Zoom talk by Bob Evans. Anne had connections with Surrey, including at Bletchingley Palace. She was the fourth wife of Henry VIII, but this talk shows how she became a strong, independent and extremely rich woman. Tuesday 21st October, 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>

Notice of Loss - Murray Stephen

Murray died on July 28th, aged 76, a year after his diagnosis of bladder cancer. He faced the relentless treatments and pain stoically to the very end. Margaret, Catriona, Kirsty and Robert would like to thank all the people who supported us over this time, and also to express our sincere gratitude for all the cards, letters and flowers we received - too many to acknowledge individually.

It was wonderful that so many were able to come to the Celebration of his Life; thank you all so much.

Margaret Stephen

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Keep your eyes peeled for the UK's smallest bird

Weighing in at an average of just 6g – that's the equivalent of about six paperclips – Goldcrests are the UK's smallest birds. But what they lack in size, they definitely make up for in colour, with the striking flash of golden feathers on their head. These dainty birds spend most of their time flitting around the branches of trees, looking for insects, and are particularly at home amongst conifers and in mixed woodland. You could spot them in parks and gardens with large trees too. Remember to listen out for their high-pitched 'tsee-tsee' call.



Goldcrest: Image courtesy RSPB images

There are Goldcrests in the UK all year round, but autumn and winter are particularly good times to catch a glimpse of them, as their numbers are boosted by birds arriving from Scandinavia and Russia. In the past, people found it so hard to believe that tiny Goldcrests could fly across the North Sea that they thought these mini migrants must hitch a ride on the back of Woodcocks, which reach the UK at about the same time. As a result, they become known as 'Woodcock pilots'! Nowadays, thanks to ringing studies, we know that these amazing little birds can, and do, make the journey unaided. A truly impressive feat.

See more on our activities and photos or if you're interested in joining see

Facebook: RSPB Dorking and District

Instagram: @rspb_dorking

Website: <https://group.rspb.org.uk/dorkinganddistrict/>

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WESTCOTT BABY MEALS



OCTOBER UPDATE

Westcott's volunteer cooks have been busy in the last month or so! We catered for Ruby and Ben during Ruby's radiotherapy and also cooked for the family of baby Mariya who arrived in August!



CAN WE HELP YOU?

The Westcott Baby Meals service has been operating over 25 years, it's an incredible community initiative. We are delighted to help Westcott families with new babies, AND happy to help in other situations like illness or family crisis, where a few home cooked meals might make a big difference. Our fabulous Westcott Cooks buy, cook and deliver meals (for free!) when they are needed.

We also need more cooks, could you join the list? There's no commitment - just sign up to rotas as and when you can. It's a great thing to be part of!

Get in touch: Anna 07710425487
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WESTCOTT HISTORY GROUP

England's Pleasant Land

The summer months is the time when villages all over the kingdom hold their annual fetes and fairs. We here in Westcott had, a few weeks ago, our very successful Westfest and Abinger had their Medieval Fair. Although Westfest is just 10 years old the village has had a great variety of fairs on the village green over the last two centuries but perhaps none were as ambitious as the one held in July 1938, not actually in the village but at Milton Court.

At that point WW2 was some time off, Milton Court was still a private residence and the Dorking and Leith Hill District Preservation Society (Westcott History Group was not formed until 1999) were looking for a site to hold a great pageant. Although 'For Sale' signs had recently appeared, the owner, Lady Mallaby-Deeley, agreed to make Milton Court available and the

ambitious project went ahead under the title 'England's Pleasant Land'. The script was written by E M Forster of Abinger Hammer, Ralph Vaughan Williams was the musical director and Tom Harrison from Holmbury St Mary was the producer. The cast comprised local people playing the principal characters as well as providing the crowd scenes of Saxons, Normans etc. that featured in a storyline recalling the history of rural England over a period of nearly a thousand years.

The play is set in the countryside 'close to a village and to a manor house'. The action opens in Norman times showing the settling of the land at Domesday, but the main activity takes place much later when the estate land is enclosed and the peasants revolt. Eventually the Squire gets his comeuppance when 20th century death duties eventually overturn the old order and the play concludes as the scene

becomes filled with hoardings, bungalows, charabancs, petrol pumps and litter. In this way the pageant sought to rally public support to help 'preserve and enhance the charm and rural character of the Dorking district for the public benefit, and to prevent development which would injure its amenities.'





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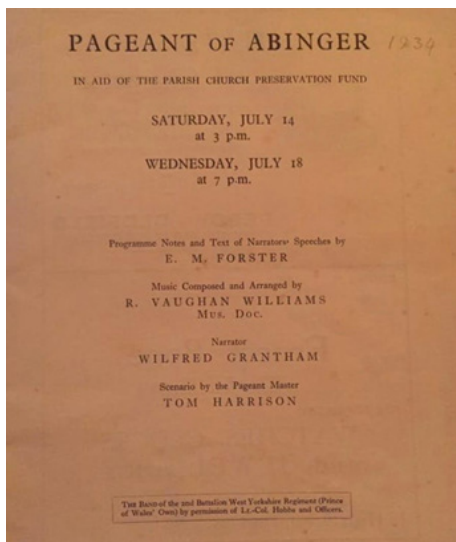
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If this message was not made sufficiently clear during the various scenes of the pageant, the narrator, or Recorder as he was called, emphasised the point at the conclusion when he declared that; *'The spirit of a country is in its hills and fields. If they die, that spirit dies with them. Its life is in your hands. Shall it die or shall it live?'*



The preservation of the countryside was of particular concern to E M Forster and to Ralph Vaughan Williams, both of whom had been associated with the Abinger Pageant in 1934 with a similar theme. In that instance the Woodman, as narrator, urged his audience to consider their responsibilities; *'Houses, houses, houses! Are these man's final triumph? Or is there another England, green and eternal which will outlast them? ...*

This land is yours, and you can make it what you will.'

The threat to the local countryside is now far greater than it was in July 1938, The Green Belt is under attack and housing developments will creep Dorking ever closer to our village. We have no obvious champion, comparable to those in the late 1930s, to rally support for the retention of traditional countryside values.

The Dorking and Leith Hill District Preservation Society was founded in 1929 in response to threats to the countryside in the wake of the break-up of large estates that saw building on many beauty spots all over England in the years between the wars. The Society gave local people a voice on matters affecting their environment and in its early days it drew attention to and campaigned against the reduction of open spaces and the threat from inappropriate development to much-loved local features. It now exists as the Dorking Society and we, Westcott Local History Group, work closely with them in many common interests.

Lots of interesting material to be found on WLHG's website www.westcotthistory.org.uk

WLHG Scribe

October is a mixed bag of awareness events, with it being National Pizza Month, National Bullying Prevention month, and Breast Cancer Awareness month among others.

2nd October is Name Your Car Day as well as National Poetry Day and the 5th is National Be Nice Day, while the 6th marks the start of National Curry Week and Libraries Week. October 8th is World Octopus Day and 10th is both World Mental Health Day and Porridge Day (may be a link there?) The 14th is National Dessert Day and the start of Baking Week, and the 21st is National Honey Day.



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Nicki Rowling

In past times Nicki would have been the wise woman of Wescott dispensing healing through her knowledge of herbs. Her present persona is also restorative, teaching somatic yoga and giving people new skills through willow weaving. Nicki's adult life is bookended by visits to an Indian Ashram. The first, when aged twenty-three, followed an invitation by Brian to join him in what was a life expanding experience. The last, a month or so ago, still with Brian, where they created their own programme of meditation and yoga. Nicki chose the fusion music of composer Nitin Sawhney to epitomise the integration of mind, body and spirit. His album *Human* is hypnotic and atmospheric.

Living in Westcott since the age of eight or nine, Nicki remembers the family buying a sofa and her racing round it to Mozart's *40th symphony*. Her Dad's classical preferences were augmented by her Mum's more popular tastes such as Neil Diamond, whose famous tracks include *Sweet Caroline*, *Beautiful Noise* and the lovely soundtrack to the film *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*.

It was that first ashram experience that opened her mind to different cultures, ways of thinking and, more importantly, ways of being. She

reflects that living in the moment opens her up to the vibrancy of colour, vitality of nature and vigour of sound. What brings her joy are dancing, riding her bike, relaxing in a hot bath and music. Her go to recording is *Madame Butterfly* by Malcolm McLaren.

A key concept in the form of the yoga she practices is pandiculation - that is the contraction and relaxation of muscles regulating tension. Nicki is the conduit that releases dysfunctional muscular holding patterns that sustain chronic pain.

She and Brian also teach willow weaving. She loves every aspect of the cycle of cutting the willow which they grow at home, preparing it for the classes by soaking and grading and, depending on the thickness and size, creating a recipe for novice weavers to complete their baskets, trugs or lazy Susans. Her approach to learning a new skill is asking "what if it was easy" as a way to re-think and find alternatives to overcome initially being daunted by something new and unfamiliar. Willow weaving she says is not exactly peaceful as the rods wrap around the side stakes. As a counter Nicki chose the meditative music of East Forest. *Prana* features five wonderful tracks offering a relaxing, somewhat melancholic journey that in the words of one reviewer 'opens up new worlds and

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DESERT ISLAND DISCS (cont.)



ideas, all through the expression of music, which transcends language barriers.'

She mused that modern life, full as it is of the vileness of some types of computer communication, the voracious appetite of profiteering capitalism and the sapping of vitality in conflict is speeding us towards chaos. Her flip side is a world of connectedness and empathy, making a difference, living by the kindnesses of small things. A verse in her choice of Style Council's *You're the best thing* sums up this philosophy.

*I might be a king and steal my
people's things*

*But I don't go for that power crazy way
All that I could rule I don't check for fools
All that I need is to be left to live my way.*

Nicki and Brian's belief in sustainable living prompted them to open Surrey's first vegetarian restaurant, Frog Island, in Abinger. Catering had been in the family. Her Mum and Dad ran the Oak Cottage tea room in Shere (now Kinghams restaurant) and she had worked in a pizzeria in Farnham. The vegetarian venture lasted three years until the children came along. Her teaching approach was honed through her home schooling of Jaz and Kieran. "*I followed the children*" she says. Kieran was interested in formula one racing so we looked at the

countries where the races took place, utilised maths to discuss size, weight, dimensions of the cars. Not deliberately flouting convention, (and not having liked formal school much herself) she wanted to offer an alternative but also gave her kids the option of returning to mainstream school. They chose not to. Playing, reading and listening to music were all part of the curriculum. The James Family Band and Sting were favourites and perhaps Sting's album *Journey and the Labyrinth* was a presentiment of where Nicki's interests are taking her next into the realms of sacred geometry.

A visit to the stunningly beautiful Chartres Cathedral allowed her to experience the labyrinth. If you haven't heard of this, the Cathedral guide says "*Neither magic sign nor physical phenomenon, the only energies found there are those that inhabit the men and women who walk through it – ready to let themselves be 'touched' by the grace of the moment. Its purpose? To lead intelligently to authentic meditation – lived both in body and mind. Those who choose to walk can open themselves, step by step, to what is beyond them.*"

Nicki has reached a stage of acceptance, hearing as well as listening and believing in being responsible for the choices she makes, rather than blaming someone else

*Dorking Group of Artists October
Exhibition 2025
Denbies Wine Estate, London Road,
Dorking, Surrey RH5 6AA*



*Open to the public: Friday 10th October, Saturday 11th October
10:00 – 17:00, Sunday 12th October 10:00 – 16:00*

The Dorking Group of Artists, one of the largest art groups in Surrey, is delighted to welcome you to our next exhibition which will be at Denbies Wine Estate in October in the Denbies Gallery and Suite.

Exhibiting members, many professionals among them, will be displaying around 200 pieces of exciting new and original art, all for sale at affordable prices. The paintings should appeal to every taste, featuring different subjects and styles and covering a wide variety of media.

There will be a large selection of unframed paintings for sale too. Come and buy your early Christmas presents - original art makes a unique and thoughtful gift. Entrance to the exhibition is free and Denbies has a good café and restaurant, runs tours of the vineyard and has an excellent shop.

So come and make a day of it!

There is plenty of free parking.

Why not consider joining us? For more information about our activities, exhibitions and how to join see www.dga.org.uk, follow us on Instagram [dorkinggroupartists](https://www.instagram.com/dorkinggroupartists), or get in touch at contact@dga.org.uk.

*Angela Hall, Chair, Dorking Group of Artists
Email: contact@dga.org.uk*

DESERT ISLAND DISCS (cont.)



for any adverse consequences. Research has shown that people who take responsibility in this way tend to be less conforming and more independent in mind, body and action. This seems resonant with her choice of book *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah* by Richard Bach and, illustrative of Nicki's sense of connectedness, it was

he who wrote *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* mentioned earlier. She would be fine on the island, not afraid but wondering, and saving her East Forest album from the waves. Of course her luxury item is a yoga mat. It would have to be.

Jennifer Brown

Westcott Gardeners' Club

Autumn Talk: Managing Your Garden Sustainably
Tuesday November 4th, 8pm, St John's Church



How can we design our gardens to work *with* the environment rather than against it?

We're delighted to welcome Helen Thomas of *Helen Thomas Design*, who will share practical ideas

for creating a more sustainable garden. Helen will cover:

- Simple design solutions to reduce environmental impact
- Effective water management strategies
- Choosing the right plants for your space

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As we write this it is our very first day back at nursery and we are super excited to be back! Big smiles a plenty as we were welcomed back to our home from home. And whilst we weren't here the fairies and unicorns had been very busy keeping the hall spick and span for us. They even had time to spruce up their fairy house with sparkly toadstools in every colour!



Change can be daunting for everybody and anybody and everyday we learn more and more about our feelings. To help us with this journey we have a very special cosy calm down corner and the ever so helpful colour monsters! We know that talking about our feelings really helps and the colour monsters have their own story to show us the way.

We welcome a wonderful new member of staff who has been working with children for over 20 years but at

the same time say a fond farewell to 2 special members of staff. Thank you for all that you've done! You know who you are!

The sun also put in an appearance today so in our usual style we were outside in our beautiful garden. Running around and blowing off cobwebs! (quite literally – Martina had a friendly spider crawling all over her!) .

We are looking forward to a huge array of fun activities with fab French lessons, first rate forest school, cooking up a storm and

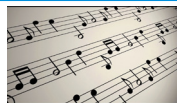
the brilliant drama llamas returning to spark our growing imaginations. Pheweeeeeee! We can't wait to get stuck in!

Just in case you weren't aware we have wraparound options from 7.45am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and until 12.45 Friday. 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 We can't wait to meet you!



Kate Fairbrass

Brockham Choral



Brockham Choral continues rehearsals each Tuesday in October at 7.30 at St. John's C of E Primary school, Dorking, RH4 2LR. New singers in all voice parts welcomed with no audition required.

They welcome back their Musical Director, David Swinson to prepare them for their concert on December 6th in Dorking.

Music includes not only *Christus Natus Est* by Cecilia McDowell but other pieces for Choir, organ and audience.

The Martineau Brass Quintet will also be contributing to the concert as well carols from the children of St. John's School. Our outstanding accompanist Marion Lea will be there helping us with the notes.

More information at www.brockhamchoral.org

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and those who donated plants, Nick and his
gardening team who help so much during the year
and to all the visitors who came to enjoy our garden
and support the NGS and GRACE charities.*

*We welcomed nearly 250 visitors from near and far and
from babes to those special visitors who have a few more
years of experience to share! You helped to raise
over £2,000 for the NGS charities and GRACE.*

*Thank you once again
Helen, Martin and the family
Simon and Lucinda from GRACE*

*P.S. We still have a few plates and trays left by the bakers
which are in our front porch if you would
like to collect or let me know and I will drop off.*



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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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Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP)



Thank you to the Village Forum members who attended the recent Westcott Village Forum meeting on 4th September. The results of the Community Survey and Surrey Community Action Housing Needs Survey were shared. Copies of these presentations can be viewed on the WNDP pages of the Westcott Village website or by using this link <https://westcottvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/WNDP-Forum-Meeting-4-04-Sep-2025-for-publication-v3.0.pdf>

There was some super feedback and lovely words shared on

respondents' vision for the future of Westcott, as shown in the word cloud. The survey results also showed how much people value Westcott Garage, the Village Hub, Nisa Local and Westcott Food & Wine. Traffic congestion, speeding on the A25 and parking were all raised as issues and it was also clear how much respondents value Surrey Hills All Saint Primary School, the village green, Cradhurst Recreation Ground, the Village Hall, Holy Trinity Church and the Cricket Ground/Sports Club. Living in a vibrant, thriving community is clearly much appreciated.

In addition to seeing the survey results, the Forum members were given a chance to review and comment on the draft policies for the updated Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP). There is still a lot of work to do on the plan and several stages of drafting and consultation to go through before it is ultimately ready to be put to a public referendum

where everyone in the Neighbourhood Area (the village and the immediate surrounds) will be given an opportunity to vote on whether they wish the plan to be adopted. The target for the referendum is May 2026 to coincide with when the Polling Stations will be open for the local elections.



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Mole Valley launches a Community Governance Review.

A reminder that Mole Valley has launched a Community Governance Review to understand how local communities across the district are represented and whether changes are needed. They have launched a 12-week consultation and want to hear from residents, community groups, business owners and other neighbourhood groups. This first stage consultation poses a number of questions to draw out views on whether new Parish Councils should be created where they do not currently exist, such as in Westcott or whether existing Parish Councils should be merged or altered in some way. It also considers whether no changes are required and things should be left as they are.



The WVA welcomes this review as we are concerned that if Westcott remains unparished it could be more

difficult to ensure our voice is heard on local matters that are important to our community in the future. *The WVA is in favour of a new Parish Council being set up to represent Westcott and replace the WVA.* A Parish Council has statutory powers and responsibilities that the WVA as a Residents' Association does not.

Parish Councils are democratically elected and this change will require people within the village to put themselves forward for election as Parish Councillors. This first stage consultation by MVDC runs until 5pm on 17 October 2025. To find out more and take part please use this link to the Mole Valley website <https://www.molevalley.gov.uk/cgr>

We are keen for as many Westcott voices to be heard as possible. The survey only takes 10 minutes to complete online or you can send an email to cgr@molevalley.gov.uk to express your views or write to The Community Governance Review at the MVDC Offices, Pippbrook, Dorking RH4 1SJ. Paper copies of the survey can also be collected from the Pippbrook offices or Dorking Library.

WVA Committee - Jo Astor, Jane Betterton, James Croft, Paul Goddard, Nick Lund, Magesh Ramakrishnan
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DORKING MUSEUM

To the Last Man – the Dorking Home Guard:



The Museum's autumn exhibition opens on 16th October and tells the story of the men of Dorking and the villages who stepped forward to enlist in the 'People's Army' – later, the Home Guard – in 1940 to defend the nation. Facing what looked like a hopeless situation, at the time, poorly armed and equipped and often having worked a full day, then stayed alert, facing a very real threat and expecting to hold invaders at bay for a short time. They went from a poorly armed and equipped group of part-time volunteers to a trained fighting force protecting the local community and freeing up regular troops for front-line duty. The exhibition display includes uniforms, weaponry, medals, incident reports, photographs and other items of the period.

A Place of Safety: There is still an opportunity to see our popular summer exhibition before it closes on 11th October. It tells the stories of the various groups of refugees who have found refuge in the town over the

past two and a half centuries and their experiences – including those fleeing the French Revolution, the Kaiser's army, Nazi oppression, the Blitz and now, war and persecution in the Middle East. It features the work of the Dorking Refugee Committee and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Displays include a Dorking Nursery Scrapbook from the 1940s and dolls made by the WI in the 1970s of notable French emigres who found refuge at Juniper Hall.

Museum Family Activity at Dorking Library: Classic Table-top Games!

Learn how to play some tabletop games your grandparents used to play with your family. Held at Dorking Library, Saturday 25th October, 10am-noon. Free event, materials provided and children must be accompanied.



Walking in Dorking: The Museum's popular programme features two of our most popular guided walks: On the edge of town, a Betchworth Castle tour includes exclusive access to the Castle enclosure, the romantic

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DORKING MUSEUM (cont.)

ruin of the only remaining fortified medieval manor house in Surrey with many stories about its occupants (and King Edward I stayed there in 1294): Sunday 12th October, 2pm, from the entrance to Betchworth Park Golf Club.

In the town centre, the Blue Plaques and Statues walk tells of some of the famous people who lived or were active in Dorking, revealing a diverse range of interests and activities: Sunday 19th October, 2pm, from the Cubitt statue opposite Dorking Halls.



It is that time of year again, so a welcome opportunity to join us for a historic Halloween Ghost walk to meet the ghosts of Dorking residents past



whose spirits are said to haunt the town: the boy soldier, the murdered monk, the drunken duke and the murdered policeman. From St Martin's Churchyard, 31st October, 6pm and 7.30pm.

All walks last around 90 minutes: meeting and walk details and (necessary) advance booking at dorkingmuseum.org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/. See website for private group bookings.

South Street Caves: Our season runs until the end of October. Monthly open day and special Halloween tours are already sold out, but there may still be an opportunity to book a private tour before the end of the month: see dorkingmuseum.org.uk/south-street-caves/.

Get involved: The Museum depends on its enthusiastic team of volunteers to maintain this valuable community resource. Maybe you could spare a few hours a month, with opportunities in an interesting range of key roles with flexible working in the Museum, in the community or from home. See dorkingmuseum.org.uk/about/volunteer-opportunities for further details.

Dorking Museum. Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. 01306 876591.

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It is also the harvest moon
for 2025 and will be
the first of 3 supermoons in
a row, appearing
bigger than usual*

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MUSIC IN DORKING



1st at 6.45, opera screening at Dorking Halls, 01306 881717
5th at 2.00, opera screening at Dorking Halls, 01306 881717
4th 5th 18th - music at St Martin's church
11th at 9.30-4.30, LHMFC Come & Sing at St Martin's church, £25
18th at 5.30, Dorking Chamber Orchestra at St Martin's church, £15
22 at 7.15, opera screening at Dorking Halls, 01306 881717
25th at 7.30, Chamber Music Box at Dorking Halls, £25, 01306 740619

The new concert season gets well under way this month, with a variety of events. The Dorking Chamber Orchestra has a programme beginning and ending with Mozart – his overture to *Così fan tutte* and the *Haffner Symphony* – along with a symphony by the Frenchman Gossec and an overture by the Spaniard Arriaga.

The Dorking Concertgoers presents a concert of chamber music given by the ensemble Chamber Music Box, featuring performers on strings, flute and harp. As well as music by Haydn and Mozart, they will play a string trio by the Polish-Russian composer Weinberg, another trio by Arnold Bax, and some elegant French music by Ibert and Roussel.

The Leith Hill Music Festival is holding a Come & Sing day, led by the inspiring festival conductor Neil Ferris. Focussing on Bach's great *St John Passion*, the day will be spent working on the choruses and chorales, and it will conclude with an informal performance of the music. Book in advance through the website and arrive for registration from 9.30 on the day.

St Martin's church has three recitals this month – the Phil Hopkins Jazz Quartet (4th), The Lyons Mouth (5th) and pianist Ian Vetch (18th).

Finally there are three opera screenings at the Dorking Halls – from the Royal Opera House you can see a live screening of Puccini's *Tosca*, followed by an encore screening, and a live screening of Bellini's *La Sonnambula*.



Ian Codd



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I have to admit that the woodland has suffered a little from the long dry season this summer, but I know only too well that when the rain does come it will recover quite quickly. We do look forward to seeing the many fungi that pop up all over the woodland at this time of year. We have had quite a number of visitors during the summer months which is always lovely and gives me an opportunity to stop working and sit with them for a chat and cup of tea, so do please feel free to visit any time.

We are now beginning to plan the two events that will take place at the woodland before the end of the year. The first one is our annual Remembrance Service which always takes place on the actual day, 11th day of the 11th month to which everyone is invited. We have had a class of children from one local school join us for the last few years but this year two schools are bringing children from year 6 and their contribution is so appreciated by myself and all of the Veterans.

We gather around the Monument at the woodland at 10.45 to commence the Service. Our local clergy will be attending and lead the prayers. After the Service we welcome you all to join us for a cup of tea or coffee in our Visitors Centre.

The event after that is our family *Christmas at the Woodland* on Saturday 6th December when the children enjoy a treasure hunt followed by a visit to Father Christmas in his grotto and receive a gift. There's always lots of stalls to buy things and have fun plus a grand raffle. The BBQ will be on the go and hot drinks served from the NAFFI.

Children do need to be registered for this event so that we know how many and appropriate presents are obtained for Father Christmas's sack. The cost is only £8 per child for which they receive a goody bag after the treasure hunt and a nice gift from Father Christmas. All proceeds from this event go to assist Veterans in times of difficulty. Do contact Debbie by email or phone to register debbiehornblow@yahoo.co.uk or call on 07778873806.

Of course the woodland is open 24/7, come and visit anytime and if you see my vehicle in the car park then you know the kettle will be on!

I look forward to seeing you.

Paul Cooling
Chairman

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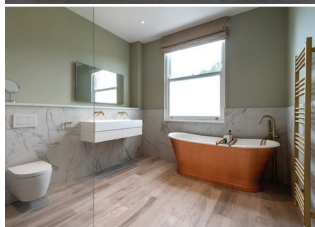
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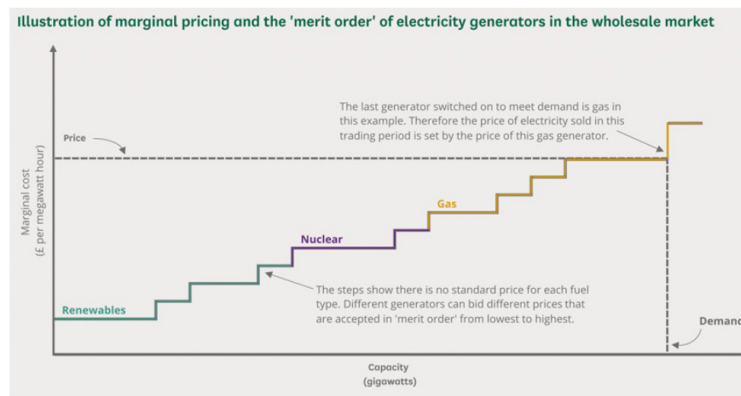
The Cost of Energy

2025 has seen the hottest spring and summer on record, with the Met Office declaring that another summer as hot or hotter is now 70 times more likely due to the climate crisis - largely caused by greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels for energy. As we move into the autumn months, thoughts turn to keeping our homes warm during the winter. The cost of electricity bills continues to be an issue of concern to the majority of the population, with prices three times higher than before the global energy crisis (triggered in 2022 by Russia cutting natural gas supplies to Europe due to their opposition to the Russian invasion of Ukraine).



Spoiler alert.... it is not due to 'green levies' or net zero policies. The continued high cost of our energy bills is largely due to the UK's continued reliance on gas-fired power stations to produce electricity. The UK operates a system whereby it ranks electricity generating technologies from the cheapest to the most expensive and calls upon them, in order of cost, to meet demand.

What is the reason for continued high electricity prices?



Source: *House of Commons Library*

As renewables, being generated from the wind and sun (free), are the cheapest source, these are called upon first. Although renewable energy supply is increasing, there is not enough yet available to satisfy our demand and so more expensive

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High gas prices have caused most of the rise in household electricity bills since before the global energy crisis

Change since pre-crisis levels, £



Source: Carbon Brief analysis of Ofgem data

CarbonBrief
HELPING TO CLIMATE

Changes in domestic electricity price cap components between summer 2021 and the second quarter of 2025, £. Source: Carbon Brief analysis of Ofgem data.

energy sources are needed. In every half-hour period the most expensive source of energy called upon to meet demand determines the electricity price - and for 98% of the time this is gas.

A new report published by Greenpeace shows how households and businesses could be saved over £5 billion a year on energy bills by 2028 through energy system reforms that would assign gas plants as a strategic reserve, rather than be part of the wholesale market, thus ending gas-fired power stations 'unfair profiteering' and

lowering bills. Reducing the cost of electricity bills would in turn help with decarbonization by boosting the uptake of cleaner electric technologies, such as heat pumps, by making them

cheaper to run.

Reducing demand

It is rarely acknowledged that, in order to enable the decarbonization of the energy system, there is also a need to reduce demand for energy and decrease consumption. Energy efficiency is key, both in industry and in our homes.

'The greenest energy is the energy we don't use.' (World Economic Forum)

Jakki Phillips

green WESTCOTT



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