

MARSTON SICCA

PARISH NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2024

EDITORS NOTES

This month we have the Christmas bingo on Friday 6th December and the Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 14th. All information for times etc are inside.

Thanks to all our fantastic volunteers who work so hard throughout the year in various capacities throughout the village. We have many different organisations including The Parish Council, all the volunteer's that keep us shoppin' in The Poppin, the village hall committee, church committee, shoebox ladies, and the volunteers who run all the village clubs.

Next newsletter is the February 2025 edition, so please email your articles to editor@uberdoodle.com by Monday January 20th.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful 2025.
Mistletoe kisses. **Simon**



REPORT FROM YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLOR



There is always a lot to report about District Council business, so I am choosing just a few of the more relevant topics for this newsletter.

Health and well-being is high on the District Council Agenda.
A Community Outreach Officer has been taken on by Everyone Active. The new job is to support community based activities for everyone, from elderly residents to youngsters and those living with health conditions such as dementia. If you have any ideas for new activities please let me know.

At the Climate Panel meeting on 5th November, we heard about the Climate Assembly held in early September. It was well received and we have opportunities to make this a regular event and explain more about slowing climate change and adaptation. I have taken a small step in making more trips by bicycle rather than by car. I am using one of the E Cargo bikes that are available from SDC for local organisations and small businesses. If you are interested, please get in touch and I can tell you about the free trial scheme.

A recent survey of residents suggests that the District Council could do more to explain what is going on. Understandably not everyone looks at the website or wants e mails, so we are going to bring back The View magazine twice a year. We already have the regular E News and Parish and Partners Briefing. If you would like more information about these please get in touch.

I have been appointed Parish Champion for the west of the district. It covers around 50 Parish Councils and I'm looking forward to hearing about the issues they face. I regularly attend your Parish Council at the Village Hall and you are very fortunate in having a dedicated group of Councillors who volunteer their time for the community. Often there are very few residents attending which is a shame in my opinion.

Meetings are usually every third Monday and it would be great to see more local people taking an interest and adding their views to the public session in the meeting. Your Parish Council covers Long Marston Village and significant parts of Meon Vale and the new Shackleton Village at the old Airfield.

Traffic and congestion is always a hot topic of conversation and nowhere more than in Stratford Town Centre and the Long Marston Ward, especially as there are so many new houses being built. Warwickshire Highways attended Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st November to answer questions about roadworks and speeding traffic through villages. The questions are in the minutes and the meeting is available to watch on the SDC YouTube Channel. There were two questions from your Parish Council about congestion on Binton Bridge at Welford and the WCC Policy on Vehicle Activated Signs. I gave out the formal written answers at the last Parish Council meeting.

Rail Live was far less of a problem in 2024 as traffic management was significantly improved. They are already planning the next event for 18th and 19th June 2025 which might be worth noting in your diary.

On 6th November SDC Leader Susan Juned signed the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge. This recognises the obligations and sacrifices made by our Armed Forces (serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and their families). It ensures their contributions are remembered and they are supported in Organisation, Housing and Allowances and Employment. Full details of the pledge can be found in the Cabinet Meeting papers of 4th November.

As you read this the Christmas Festivities are fast approaching and plans for family time will be well underway for many. Please spare a thought for those living alone and if you can share a few minutes to pop round over Christmas it could make a big difference to lonely neighbours in your community.

Best wishes for the festive holidays and the New Year.

Stuart Keighley
District Councillor.



Long Marston Village Hall

Friday Dec. 6th

Doors open 7.00 pm

Eyes down 7.30 pm

Good Seasonal prizes!

Licensed Bar, snacks,
And RAFFLE!

Families welcome.

Please come and support us!

FESTIVE CHEERS FROM THE POPPIN SHOP!

As Christmas approaches we have lots of lovely festive lines for sale . Delicious hand raised pies from Fladbury pie shop with either turkey and cranberry , chicken and ham , game , pig roast and standard pork pie all available to order, ideal for Boxing Day !! . Orders must be placed by 13th December for delivery Christmas week . All 2lb pie range are only £11.80 We are stocking handmade mince pies , Christmas cake and puddings from Wests bakery .





A lovely selection of hand turned wooden carved Christmas trees , reindeer and snowman with a donation of the proceeds going to charity. Also locally handmade Christmas Gonks !

A great range of Cotswold gins and whisky , chocolates, Franks biscuits gift sets , calendars, cards, gift wrap , a good selection of winter fuel to keep those fires roaring and lots more …



Do pop in and see what's available, we even stock paracetamol for those festive hangovers !!

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas - **Helen and the Poppin team**



COME AND JOIN OUR TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS AT THE POPPIN SHOP!!

We're looking for local people to come and help us keep our community shop open, which I'm sure you'll agree is a valuable asset to the village and surrounding areas. Join our small friendly team who provide an essential service to the community.



We're looking for people to serve in the shop and re-stock the shelves. Full training and ongoing support will be given.

Becoming part of our team gives you an opportunity to

- *Meet people and make friends.*
- *Join other volunteers and their families in regular social activities.*

We're very flexible so whether you can offer a regular shift or an occasional hour we've got a slot for you!!
Please pop in and chat to one of our Volunteers or call Pauline on 01789 720393 to find out more about what's involved.

Looking forward to welcoming you to the team.

VILLAGE HALL



VILLAGE HALL DIARY

December 2024

Beavers	2nd 9th 16th	5-7 pm
Yoga	3rd 10th 17th	7-8 pm
Craft Club	4th	
Private Booking	5th 13th	
Private Booking	6th 13th 20th	10-12 am
Christmas Bingo	6th	7 pm
Parish Council	9th	7.30 pm
W.I.	11th	7.30 pm
Long Marston Ladies-Christmas meal	12th	
Christmas Bazaar	14th	pm
Private Booking	15th	
Library/Coffee morning	17th	10.30 -12 am
Private Booking	28th	

January 2025

Craft Club	7th	
Village Hall Committee	13th	7.30 pm
Library/Coffee Morning	14th	10.30-12am
W.I.	15th	7.30 pm

Other January dates yet to be confirmed



STRATFORD
SELF STORE
.CO.UK

01789 720027

- Indoor Storage Rooms
- Outside Containers
- Packing Materials

LONG MARSTON WI

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Our Meeting in November was our Annual Meeting. Diana Rippin has been re-elected as President. Treasurer's Post so tricky to fill to satisfy WFWI intricate excel accounting format and we are so grateful Lisa Blaxall is prepared to continue in that role having taken over from Jackie Johnson and moved the system into on line banking.
The Secretaries position is at present unfilled since Liz Marcuse retired.

After the formalities Fiona Barker gave us an interesting talk about the development of Tropic facial and body products all made from natural ingredients. Fiona gave a demonstration of facial skin cleansing and massage to keep wrinkles at bay!

Our next Meeting on Wednesday 11 December 7.30pm and is our Christmas Party.

The January Meeting on Wednesday 8th January 7.30pm is Christine Cluley, and her subject is Cicely Lucas – a suffragette.
Both Meetings held in the Village Hall.

Liz Marcuse

CHURCH SERVICES DECEMBER 2024

RiverVale Churches
Welford | Weston | Quinton | Admington
Long Marston | Meon Vale

St. James the Great - Long Marston

Sunday 1st	Breakfast Service at 10.30 am
Sunday 15th	Breakfast Service at 10.30am
	Communion at 12 noon
Sunday 22nd	Carol Service 6pm
Christmas Eve	Crib Service 5pm
Christmas Day	Family Communion 10.30am
Sunday 29th	Benefice Communion 10.30am

St.Swithin's - Quinton with Admington

Sunday 8th	Communion 10.30am
Sunday 15th	All in Service 10.30am
Wednesday 18th	Carols in the pub 8pm
Sunday 22nd	Communion 10.30am
	Carols and Christingles 4pm
Christmas Eve	Crib Service 3pm
	Midnight Communion 11.30pm
Christmas Day	Family Communion 10.30am

Meon Vale

Friday 20th	Neigh-Tivity 3pm, Pavilion Cafe

rivervalechurches.co.uk /RIVERVALECHURCHES

CHURCH CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday December 14th at 2:30pm
Long Marston Village Hall

Stalls, refreshments, and the drawing of our Christmas raffle

A warm welcome is extended to everyone.

LONG MARSTON GARDEN CLUB



On Wednesday 30th October we visited Batsford Arboretum to view the wonderful autumn colours. We had a very knowledgeable Guide who gave us an amazing insight of where their spectacular trees originated from. We thought it would be a good idea to revisit this site next year to view the Magnolias.

Thank you for all your support and have a good Christmas and New Year. A NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY is our Annual Lunch, Friday 24th January. Menu choice will be sent out mid January.

Happy Gardening, Wiggy.
wiggytaylor@gmail.com. New members are very welcome.



SHOEBOXES

437 boxes full of goodies from Long Marston are at the Teams4U Evesham depot waiting to be transported to some of the poorest areas of Eastern Europe in time for Christmas. Volunteers will be travelling out to hand the boxes to children who have very little.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed. We were delighted to see so many children at the Shoebox packing. We had so many lovely donated things to fill the boxes with. Long Marston will have made 437 children very happy.

We are all ready collecting for 2025….remember us when you are sorting out after Christmas! Unused cards and wrapping paper are most useful along with the fronts of used cards. Discarded small toys are also welcome……please leave at The Poppin!.
Our knitters are desperate for oddments of wool and our sewers need scraps of material to turn into draw string bags of all sizes.

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL from The Shoebox Team.

ST JAMES THE GREAT

Why Christmas Needs the Birthday Boy

As the Christmas season approaches, we can't help but feel a buzz of excitement. The twinkling lights, the festive music, the delicious food—it's easy to get swept up in all the holiday fun. But amidst all the preparations, there's one thing we can sometimes overlook: the original reason for the season. It's easy to get so caught up in the shopping, the parties, the decorations, and the presents that we forget the story at the heart of it all. And no, it's not the winter solstice (though the theme of light overcoming darkness works well). Nor is it Saturnalia (that's December 17th—way too early for a Christmas dinner!). Some of you may find yourself down a historical rabbit hole, wondering about Dies Natalis Solis Invicti—the "Birth of the Unconquered Sun" (a Roman festival post-270 AD). If that's you, like me, you might need a new hobby. But, just for the record, that one's actually quite interesting.

Did you know that St. Hippolytus was already talking about Jesus' birthday on December 25th before 240 AD? And Dies Natalis Solis Invicti wasn't linked to Jesus' birthday until around 354 AD! That's pretty late in the game—long after Christians had already been celebrating Christ's birth on December 25th. So, maybe the Romans 'borrowed' from the Christian celebration, not the other way around…

Okay, I apologize for the history lesson, and I admit that history can be, as Doctor Who would say, a bit "timey-wimey." But it's interesting how people try so hard to avoid the true story at the heart of Christmas—a story that gives so many of us great memories, traditions, and of course, movies! The answer is in the name itself: CHRIST-mas. And what's more, unlike with the Romans, at Christmas, the only thing being offered as a sacrifice is the turkey.

Without Jesus, Christmas can feel a bit like one of those holidays you see in brochures—picture-perfect, but somehow a little off when it's time to celebrate. We're hopefully surrounded by the joy of family and friends, sometimes we try hard to play happy families and create that, but either way, I wonder if you ever felt that something might still be missing. The Christmas we see in the world is full of hustle and bustle. It's exciting, and you can definitely celebrate it without Jesus if you want to. After all, it's a chance to spend time with loved ones. But I wonder if, by dropping the 'Christ,' we might feel a bit shortchanged—as though we're longing for something more, and all we have left is the 'Mass,' tinsel in our ears, and leftovers for days.

Maybe that "something more" is the love, hope, and peace that Jesus' story brings. His birth has inspired and brought hope to millions of people for over 2,000 years and continues to shape us today. After all, many of us will gather together, share gifts, and sing carols that retell the story. Some of us might even do that quirky thing with the oranges, sweets, and candles—good ol' Christingle! But it's more than that. His birth is a story about a God who loves His creation so much that He came to live among it and show us how to love well! Jesus is the heart of Christmas, and without Him, it's just another holiday.

So this year, why not take some time to remember the birthday boy? Come join us as we celebrate the greatest gift ever given—Jesus! We'd love for you to be part of our services and festivities throughout the season. All the dates can be found later in this magazine, and in the Christmas cards we are sending out.

We look forward to celebrating Christmas with you!

Blessings,
Rev. Jay

St James the Great
RiverVale Churches

Email: admin@rivervalechurches.co.uk
Web: www.rivervalechurches.co.uk

MEON VALE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Meon Vale Art Group
Art for Wellbeing The daytime art group will run on Wednesdays from 6 November to 4 December from 1-3pm at Meon Vale Village Hall. Ideal for beginners, all materials supplied £5

Art for All The evening art group is running on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm at Meon Vale Village Hall. Beginners and more experienced artists welcome. There are only a few places available. The cost is £8 a session which includes materials and refreshments. To book a place on either group please email meonvaleartgroup@gmail.com

Meon Vale Youth Club is open and welcomes 11-15 year olds on Monday 18 November, 9 December and 30 December at 6pm at Meon Vale Village Hall. £1 entry, tuck shop and food.

Meon Eco Group - Community Tree Planting 16 November meet at 10am outside The Pavilion
All welcome. Under 16s to be accompanied by a responsible adult. Please wear suitable footwear and bring your own spades and gloves.

Meon Vale Residents Association General Meeting the meeting planned for Thursday 28 November has been postponed to the New Year.

Pebworth Parish Council 2 December 6.30pm at Meon Vale Village Hall Open meeting to discuss the proposed improvements to the Open Space at Langate Fields, Meon Way Gardens. All welcome

Santa's Grotto on Sunday 15 December at Meon Vale Village Hall from 2pm – 4pm.
Come along and join in the fun with crafts and refreshments.





Christmas Neigh-tivity at The Pavilion on Friday 20 December from 4pm.
Cone along and start the holidays with a joyful celebration and meet the animals.

Shakespeare Lions bring Santa to Meon Vale Friday 20 December from about 5.15pm



https://www.shakespearelions.com/santa-sleigh for route along Gundulf Road, Western Heights Road to Macbeth Road

To book the Meon Vale Village Hall please email meonvalecommunity@gmail.com

The Pavilion Café opens Tuesdays – Saturdays 10am to 4pm
Come along for a relaxing chat in our community café, enjoy teas, coffees, cakes and lunches
Have you got some time to spare? We welcome volunteers to help in the café and foodshare.

Ask about our community groups
www.meonpavilion.co.uk

CONTACTS

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chairman - Ian Johnsey
Vice Chairman - Richard Whittaker
Councillor - Noel Davis
Councillor - Colin Parrott
Councillor - Bill Tempest
Councillor - Steve Barker
Councillor - Cliff Brown

District Councillor - Stuart Keighley
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THE POST OFFICE, LONG MARSTON
01789 721411

DEFIBRILLATOR
This is located outside the Poppin shop.
A 999 call giving the location will provide a code and method of use.

ST JAMES THE GREAT
Church Warden – Carol Watts 07730 419958
Church Warden – Mike Edwards 01386 644231 – 07786 484114

POLICE
999 - Emergency only
101 - Non urgent contact

SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM
www.safer-neighbourhoods.co.uk/ship

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