

APRIL
2025



Happy Easter

If you don't use it, you are likely to lose it!

I had the great pleasure, as I often do, of having Sunday lunch in The Swan yesterday, and was reminded that it is almost a year since it re-opened early in April last year. The day of their opening coincided with a joyful wedding in St James' which made the occasion even more memorable, and both I thought, were good omens for the social and communal life of the village, especially when aligned with the re-opening of the newly refurbished Village Hall not long afterwards, thanks in no small measure, to the generous efforts of so many volunteers from Great Horwood and Singleborough.

It is a delight to see that The Swan has gone from strength to strength in that time, and has become such a wonderful focus for the local community, as has the Village Hall, where the new facilities are much appreciated by those using them, especially the ladies (and the odd gentleman) who drop in for coffee on a Wednesday morning when the Post Office is also there, often before going over to The Swan for a lovely lunch which is lovingly prepared for them by the staff there. Increasingly these days, we hear sad stories of rural communities being on the back foot, with local amenities closing, or being run down to the

bare minimum; and whether it is the local pub, the village hall, the post office, library or, in the case of Winslow, the regular Wednesday market, it is often a case of 'use it or lose it', which is why I try to do so as often as possible in each of these cases.

It is a sad fact of life that in these straightened times, it is only the economic viability or profitability of an organisation or enterprise which matters to the 'bean counters' in head office... whether it is The Post Office, a brewery, the local bus or NHS providers, or any other sort of organisation. Social benefit, utility, and cohesion do not feature highly in the balance sheets of most businesses or organisations, but I am glad to say that for the time at least, there is still a nominal (if often unrealistic) desire in the Church of England to ensure that there is a church building in every parish, and the full range of services (baptisms, weddings, funerals etc.) in addition to regular worship and Holy Communion services made available to every community throughout the land.

I say 'for the time at least', because many rural parishes are struggling even to pay the running costs of their church buildings, which include rising insurance costs as well as other utilities, and we heard at our

continued on page 5



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Church Times

Dr Stephen O'Connor
 rector@winslowbenefice.org.uk
 www.winslowbenefice.org.uk

Church Wardens:
 Ian Lamberton 715968
 Carolyn Bayliss 715814

All services at 11.15 unless stated otherwise.

PLEASE NOTE ALL SERVICES WILL COMMENCE AT 11.15 unless otherwise stated

April Including Easter Services at St James & St Laurence

6th Holy Communion - a traditional communion service with hymns (1 hour)

13th Palm Sunday Holy Communion - as above

17th Maundy Thursday - 3pm at St Laurence Church - Benefice Communion service and stripping of the Altars followed by silent prayer

18th Good Friday - 12.00 noon at St Laurence - Holy Communion & Passion Liturgy
 - **6pm at St James** - Stations of the Cross

20th Easter Day Holy Communion - a celebration with chocolate eggs

27th Creative Communion - a more informal communion service

CHURCH KEY: April - Rita Essam - 714424



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

**PARISH OF ST JAMES,
GREAT HORWOOD & SINGLEBOROUGH**

PREPARATION OF NEW ELECTORAL ROLL

Notice is hereby given under the Church Representation Rules 2022, that a new Church Electoral Roll is being prepared. All persons who wish to have their names entered on the new Roll, whether their names are entered on the present Roll or not, are requested to apply for enrolment not later than:

Sunday the 13th day of April, 2025

The new Roll will come into operation on:

Sunday the 27th day of April, 2025

The new Roll shall be published for not less than 14 days. Under the Church Representation Rules any lay persons are entitled to have their names entered on the roll if they:

- (i) are baptised and aged 16 or over;
- (ii) have signed a form of application for enrolment; and either
- (iii) are members of the Church of England or of any Church in communion with the Church of England being resident in the parish or (not being resident in the parish) having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment or:
- (iv) are members in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity declaring themselves also to be members of the Church of England and having habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six months prior to enrolment.

Forms of application for enrolment can be obtained from the undersigned. In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, forms of application for enrolment must be returned by Sunday 13th April 2025. Any error discovered in the roll when published should at once be reported to the undersigned. Dated this day: Friday the 7th day of February, 2025

Signed:

Mrs C. Finnemore (Church Electoral Roll Officer).

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Ages 6 to infinity

continued from front cover

local deanery synod just a few weeks ago from some parishes in the area which do not know how much longer they can sustain those costs without shutting their church doors for good. Such decisions can only be made by the parishes themselves, for each parish is an independent charity responsible for the upkeep of its building and for funding the ministry which is made available to their local community. The fact that some are having to consider doing this is truly saddening, but it is a realistic likelihood in some communities in coming years, especially now that the Government have decided to stop one of the very few benefits which parochial church councils (PCCs) had in maintaining their historic buildings, by removing the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme from April 2026. This allowed PCCs to claim back the VAT on repairs and refurbishments made to our historic churches, and will add tens of thousands of pounds to the cost of work already planned and budgeted for (see <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/impact/campaigns/listed-places-worship-grants-scheme> for more information on that, and the appeal against this decision). Once a church building is closed or sold off, it means that baptisms, weddings and funerals can no longer take place in those places of worship, and the things we take for granted and treasure as part of the fabric of village life, those significant life-events which mark the passing of time and in many cases, the passing of generations, will be gone forever, and never, in all likelihood, return. We are nowhere near that position in St James' yet, thanks to the generosity of so many who support our funding events and activities throughout the year, but the ageing and health profile of our congregation means that some of those activities, including our regular church services, can no longer be sustained in future without fresh blood and younger bones, and the adage 'use it or lose it' is just as appropriate to the rural Church as to any other local amenity. With the costs of ministry having to be shared by larger and larger groups of parishes in the future, it means that the frequency and availability of clergy to provide all that we have become used to in the past will be harder to provide in the future, unless our church congregations become larger and hence more viable and intergenerational, and so I invite you, if you are able, to come and experience both the solemnity and the beauty of the coming Easter season in St James', and to experience the resurrection hope and joy which Christ's death and resurrection holds out to all, irrespective of who you are, or where you come from. As we enter the joyful season of Easter later this month, our congregations and church services reflect on the triumph of life over death, and the hope that Jesus' resurrection brings to us all. It is a celebration of renewal, and a reminder of God's boundless love, grace and generosity not only for us as individuals, but for our families, our kinship groups, and our whole

community. It also provides opportunity to rejoice in the beauty of new beginnings, and to come together to celebrate all that we have, and have been blessed with by the sacrificial giving of generations long since gone, with hearts full of gratitude and joy for their foresight and commitment in providing us with such a wonderful building, and honouring their memory by ensuring its future for other generations yet to come. If you haven't been to church before, why not give it a try over Easter, and if you haven't been for a long time, then come and reconnect with God, and with others in that special way which can only be experienced with others as we celebrate the Easter mystery once more. In the meantime, I wish you and all your loved one's true peace, love, and joy this Easter season and in the days to come. Happy Easter!

Steve

THANK YOU

THANK YOU to everyone who supported the Village Quiz, on Saturday 8th March. A very enjoyable evening of quizzing, food and drink raised £1000 for the local community. We have donated £500 to the Football & Cricket Clubs towards the cost of a new Mower, £250 is going towards the maintenance of our local footpaths (new gate?) and we have £250 available to another local organisation to be decided; if your organisation is interested please contact us. Thanks again for all the help and support on the night.

Sara Walsh & David Brazier

CHURCH NEWS

Easter Lilies

For anybody wishing to have a dedicated Easter Lily in loving memory of a loved one who is no longer with you in person, there is a list left in Church to sign up to until the 10th of April.

Each lily costs £3.

Saturday 19th - We will be cleaning, polishing and flower arranging ready for Easter Sunday between 10.00 and 14.00. If you feel able to come and join us you will be very welcome! Hot drinks and Hot Cross buns of course.

Huge Thanks to our 'Churchyard Choppers' many of you will have noticed a large skip in Church Lane, once again filled to the brim with churchyard choppers!

A magnificent job clearing so much of the rampant ivy strangling the many yew trees, the improvement especially to light on the north side of church is wonderful.

We are so grateful to Stuart Birrell, Mike & Ben Hotard, Flo Hanson and Alan Biggins plus any others we failed to name for your hours of hard labour!

Focus is your voice to whole of Great Horwood and Singleborough.

Let everyone know what's happening at your club, society or event - **even people not on social media!**

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April 2025



Aylesbury Market Bus - runs every Friday and Saturday morning — from Winslow, through Gt Horwood, Little Horwood, Mursley and Swanbourne, arriving in Aylesbury just after 10am and departing 12.15pm. FREE with a bus pass, otherwise only £4.50 return. Drop offs at Sainsburys and Broadfields on request.

Winslow Market Service 54abc - runs every Wednesday morning.

This service picks up in the surrounding villages and then into Winslow, (Swanbourne, Mursley, Great Horwood, Whaddon, Nash and The Claydons). Pick up times vary according to village. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £3.00 return.

Buckingham Bus Service – Picking up in Winslow and surrounding villages. 1 hour in town then 1 hour in Tesco, or 2 hours in Tesco. Door to door service. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £4.50 return.

Tuesday 1st April

Westcroft Shopping –

Picking up in surrounding villages. Morrisons, Boots, Aldi, etc. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £4.50 return. Ring to book.

Thursday 10th & 24th April

Asda — travel £5

Bus passes are not accepted on this trip and will cost £5.00.

Picking up in Winslow and surrounding villages

Asda Shopping with the option to drop at Stadium MK1 for M&S, Primark, Next and more. Drop off at Westcroft on request.

Monday 28th April

The Greyhound Inn, Aldbury on Tuesday 29th April, Travel £9 - Our annual Bluebell run and lunch at The Greyhound Inn in the picturesque village in Aldbury. Afterwards a stop at Tring Garden Centre.

Please contact the WDCB Coordinator for more details.

Timetables can be found online www.winslowbus.com

On notice boards outside the Town Council offices, Winslow Library or calling the
WDCB Co-Ordinator 07483 336440



Winslow & District Community Bus Needs Volunteer Drivers

The Winslow & District Community Bus relies on volunteer drivers to run all our services, excursions and hires.

We are always in need of volunteer drivers, especially at the moment! So, if you have a D1 on your licence, and have some spare time, please consider becoming a driver for your local Community Bus.

All of our scheduled routes start at around 9.00am and finish around 1.30pm. We pay out-of-pocket expenses.

We also run our own outings visiting all kinds of places, including garden centres, stately homes, shopping centres and countryside drives. The use of the bus is also available to local non-profit groups

We offer certificated training to MiDAS standard

MiDAS is the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme and is administered by the Community Transport Association. The scheme provides a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers and has been designed to enhance minibus driving standards and promote the safer operation of minibuses.

WDCB provide free training to "MiDAS" standards for all our drivers. A certificate is awarded after successful completion of the course, which is valid for four years and is recognised UK-wide. Candidates must be aged over 21 and have category 'D1' on their licence. The course is usually completed in a day, the time being divided between classroom and practical work. The latter comprises coaching and assessment of driving skills plus a briefing on the use of the minibus wheelchair lift.

For more information, or to find out other ways you can volunteer your help, please visit the
 Volunteering page on our website www.winslowbus.com or call 07483 336440.

PARISH PUMP

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 28TH APRIL 2025 – 7.30PM

The above Annual Parish Meeting is taking place at the Great Horwood and Singleborough Village Hall on the above date.

The Chairman of the Parish Council will give a report on its activities over the last year along with reports from local organisations. There will also be a brief update on the development of the new Neighbourhood Plan for Great Horwood.

This is a chance for the organisations that the Parish Council have supported and helped with funding explain to everyone how this has supported them – a great chance to share good news.

The Parish Council would like to encourage as many residents as possible to get involved and to attend this meeting.

Please come and join us.



Great Horwood
Parish Council

WELCOME PACK

If you are new to the village and have not yet received a Welcome pack, please email Cllr Gilbey with your address and one will be delivered to you johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com

INFORMATION SHARING GROUP

This is a good way of communicating useful information to villagers. If you would like to receive information first hand, such as Thames Valley Police info, roadworks updates and other ad hoc information, please contact the Clerk on clerk@greathorwoodpc.org.uk if you are interested and you can be added to the email group.

FLOWER PLANTERS

A new contractor has been secured to oversee the planting and maintenance of the planters in the village - more news to follow.

FOCUS ONLINE

Did you know that there is an online edition of Focus with every copy from February 2012?

So, if you have mislaid your copy and can't find the information you need, just log onto

<https://e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/focus-magazine/>

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th April 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

There is always a public participation period when members of the public can have their say – please feel free to attend. The Notice of the meeting is advertised on the Parish Council website and the noticeboard in the High Street.

Minutes of meetings can be found on the noticeboard and the Parish Council website.

e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/

Cllr. John Gilbey : Chairman of the Council
johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com

LITTER PICK



The next annual Litter Pick is due to take place Saturday 10th May 2025 at 11am.

Last year's Litter pick collected several large sacks of rubbish from around the roads in the village, but we could still do more...

If you could spare an hour to come and help keep your community tidy that would be really appreciated. We do not have anyone that regularly clears up the rubbish that is left during the year, so your contribution to keeping this village tidy is crucial.

A map of the village will be given to those attending and directions of where to go to first will be given – let's see if we can cover the whole village...

Litter picks will be provided, although we only have a limited amount, so first come first served. If you have a hi vi jacket, can you please bring that with you, we have some but not enough for everyone. Black heavy-duty sacks will be given out along with a map. Please can you bring your own gloves, gardening gloves are best, as thorns and sharp objects tend to tear plastic gloves.

GREAT HORWOOD & SINGLEBOROUGH WI

Talk to the hand

In the week before National Sign Language week, Marie Biswell, a qualified sign language interpreter and teacher, gave an insightful presentation to members of Great Horwood WI, about hand talking therapies. She spoke about the value sign language brings to deaf people and her role as a practitioner. Marie has been an interpreter in a vast range of settings, from helping young children express themselves and gain confidence, to assisting in criminal courts and working in TV (including Strictly Come Dancing). Members were also given a practical lesson in finger spelling so that they could sign their name and greet people. Many members took part in a competition – a design of hands in any medium – and their submissions, which they had been working on leading up to the WI meeting, were judged

on the night by Marie. The entries included paintings and drawings, a knitted hand (brings a whole new meaning to hand-knitting) and a wooden carving. First prize went to Kathy Thompson for her sculpture.

Next month's talk will be from a qualified podiatrist offering help and advice on foot health and explaining why looking after your feet is so important to wellbeing and avoiding future health problems.

Now that the winter is behind us and the buds turning into flowers, as well as many walks we have also planned a few day trips to historic houses and glorious gardens. We also have a fashion show taking place in the Village Hall in June. Details to follow in the May issue of Focus.

Great Horwood & Singleborough WI meet every second Tuesday each month in the Village Hall, with doors opening

at 7.15pm. If you'd like to join our friendly group or would like more information, please contact Ann Biggins – annieqqmk@gmail.com / 07961 960802.

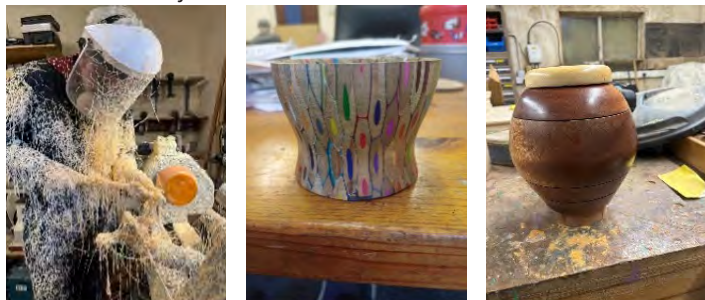


Photo shows Marie Biswell who spoke at the March Great Horwood WI meeting on hand talking therapies.

MEN IN SHEDS

Most of our best ideas take shape over a coffee or while sharing a pleasant task that involves sawdust and shavings but, like most community groups, MISW does need some structure so we do have a committee with regular meetings and (Ta-da!) an Annual General Meeting. This year our AGM is on Tuesday 8th April with tea, coffee and sweet treats from 10:30 and the formal meeting starting at 11:00. All members and supporters are invited as is anyone who would like to hear a bit more about what we get up to. Formalities will be over well within the hour leaving time for questions, a Shed Tour or more refreshments!

Woodturning has always been a popular Shed activity and one that has grown significantly over the past year or so. We now have four lathes with some great accessories and tooling. Six Shedders (in particular) now feed and share their passion and expertise twice a week at the Shed although it can be difficult to recognise growing talent beneath a mountain of shavings! Andrew's most recent project did, however, briefly raise a few eyebrows but any surprise quickly turned into respect and admiration. Andrew lost his beloved Mum just before Christmas and felt that, as a small



tribute, he would harness his growing skills at the lathe to make an urn for her ashes. It has been an honour to help and support Andrew and we're grateful to him for allowing his story to be shared here.

Getting stuck into something practical, constructive and creative helps keep us grounded and supports our mental well-being - and that's probably a big part of why Shedders turn up on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I doubt many would admit that – most likely they will say something about cake and biscuits!

The Shed is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 – 4:00

Unit 4, Station Road Ind. Estate. www.MenInShedsWinslow.org.uk

Or for more info call or message Tim Elderton 07746 194163

LIONS CLUB OF WINSLOW HITS 1000 MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE DISTRIBUTIONS

The Lions Club of Winslow, with the valuable help of our local Community First Responders has just reached a very significant milestone by handing over the 1000th bottle of our campaign.

We are now partnering with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) to pilot the use of an additional form in the bottle for people with autism, detailing how best to communicate and engage with them in a medical emergency.

Andy Crossey, Lions Club of Winslow Coordinator for Message in a Bottle commented:

“We are delighted to be participating in this pilot scheme with SCAS to further enhance the value of our Message in a Bottle. We believe the inclusion of communication and engagement needs within the bottle will bring significant benefits to an already successful project. It was a pleasure to participate in the handover of our 1000th bottle and we have the target of distributing the 2000th bottle firmly in our sights.”



The Message in a Bottle is appropriate for anyone (young or old) with a medical condition and/or taking regular medication. In short, if there is any information that would be valuable to a medical practitioner, the Lions Club Message in a Bottle is the best way to make sure it can be easily accessed if you are unable to communicate. Checking the fridge for information is a routine activity for emergency responders and the Message in a Bottle makes it easy for them to find the vital information they need. If you would like a Message in a Bottle, contact us via the website or speak to any Lion at one of our events.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED OUR BEER FESTIVAL!!!!

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GREAT HORWOOD PARISH COUNCIL



**Great Horwood
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Useful contact details

Members of the Parish Council:

Please note that councillors now have a dedicated Parish Council email address. This is in order to comply with UK Data Protection Regulations 2018. From 1 January 2021 this is now referred to as the UK GDPR. It is good policy to keep council emails separate from private emails.

John Gilbey	Chairman
01296 711915	johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com
Caroline Cousin	Vice Chairman
07903 549339	carolinecousinghpc@gmail.com
Jackie Goss	
01296 713135	jackiegossghpc@gmail.com
Jonathan Evans	
07470 298324	jjevans.ghpc@gmail.com
Thomas Lee	
07901 944996	tlee.ghpc@gmail.com
Zain Daniels	
07544 595906	zaindanielsghpc@gmail.com
Clerk to the Council	
Mrs. Sarah Biswell	
01296 715803	clerk@greathorwoodpc.org.uk
Parish Council Website	
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Great Horwood Village Hall Bookings	
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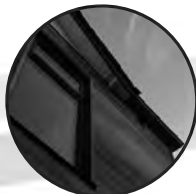
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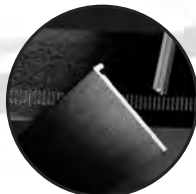
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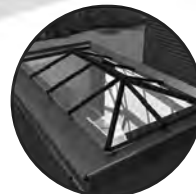
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ACCESSORIES

Editor: Russell Margerrison , David Brazier. editor@ghfocus.com
 Typing & Layout: Russell Margerrison, David Brazier, Andy Gibbs.
 Printing: Harlequin Press Ltd.
 Copy deadline: 15th of month before publication.

Distribution: June Margerrison, Ann Biggins,
 Caroline Cousin, Edwina Daymond,
 Louise Edwards, John Gilbey, Valerie Hancock,
 Duncan Hogston, Cathy Holland,
 Helen Jackman, Ian Lamberton, Gary Lee,
 Kathy Thompson, Sylvia Whitehall, Gill Wood.

Available online at: www.e-voice.org.uk/ghpc



Welcome to Winslow Bowls Club

OPEN DAY SATURDAY 26th APRIL 2025

from 11.00am until 3.00pm



Winslow Bowls Club is a friendly and social club, based right in the centre of Winslow and surrounded by the beautiful Tomkins Park and Arboretum.

The summer season will be in full swing from the middle of April until late September.

Visit us on the 26th of April to discover why our current members love to play the game. Come and enjoy the sport.

Trained coaches and Club members will be there to get you started. You can try for free and we have a selection of bowls for you to use. The only requirement is that you need to wear a pair of flat soled footwear on the green.

If you have any questions, please phone our Club Secretary Roger on 07982 244654.

Winslow Bowls Club follows guidance from Bowls England to enable those with a disability to enjoy the sport.

We have an access ramp to the green and a range of disability aids including a special wheelchair.