

Village Life

The community magazine
for Aston Clinton, Buckland
and Drayton Beauchamp
No.85 February / March 2026





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Website: www.acvillagelife.co.uk

PRODUCTION TEAM

Editor: Barbara Muston

Tel: 07970 642992

Co-editors:

Fiona Skeggs, Lindy Butters & Jill Wallis

Email: Editor@acvillagelife.co.uk

Advertising Manager:

Nigel Brown Tel: 07710 565143

Email: Advertising@acvillagelife.co.uk

Distribution Organiser:

Richard Vincent Tel: 07769 033794

Email: vlidistribution@outlook.com

Treasurer: Rod King

Secretary: James Adam

Editorial Consultant: Louise Rolfe

Graphic Designer: Victoria Dicken

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Bucks HP22 5JD

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The Editor is always pleased to receive local news of people, clubs and events.

Village Life

The bi-monthly community news magazine for
Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp

Despite the call of a new year, editing this particular issue of Village Life can be quite reflective. There are all the round-ups of sporting seasons well-played, Christmas events enjoyed and money raised, but this year, there's more

Thanks to the work of Craig Revie and Neil Baldwin, all issues of Village Life are now available on our website (page 7), which means we can look back even further. I've been doing just that, and it's been fascinating. I've learnt so much about our villages and the people within them, the many changes over the years, and the constants that we value. In these uncertain times, it is reassuring to see the things that stand the test of time and, perhaps most importantly, remind us that we are part of a strong and caring community.

Nowhere is this more evident than through the many clubs, groups and societies we are fortunate to have. With such a strong presence, it's easy to forget the armies of volunteers who have supported them over the years and continue to do so, ensuring they are still accessible and enjoyed today. As you will read in some of the reports, the need for volunteers is ever-present, so Jane Gardiner's experience in 'Why Volunteer?' (page 6) is timely and shows what's possible.

Looking forward, celebrations are definitely in the air this year. Both the Horticultural Society and the Beaver Scouts are planning special events to mark impressive anniversaries (pages 36 and 17), and Aston Clinton Colts are probably still celebrating, having recently achieved FA accreditation (page 18)! Congratulations to all.

The weather may be dreary and some activities on hold for now, but there's still plenty of encouragement to get outdoors and enjoy nature. From the small and surprisingly colourful treasures to be found at our local BBOWT nature reserves, to the snowdrop walks and garden tasks set by the Horticultural Society. Indeed, for the fortunate pupils of Aston Clinton school, outdoor play is as essential to the curriculum as classroom learning – see OPAL on page 10.

So, with the prospect of longer days and better weather, get cricket bats oiled, dancing shoes polished, and diaries out to start planning what you'll do, join or volunteer for this year. *Enjoy!* **Lindy Butters**

Aston Clinton Baptist Church



One of the greatest of Jesus' miracles was the raising of Lazarus from the dead. However, not everyone was best pleased ...

To the Chief Priest

Dear Sir,

I write to draw your attention to a most regrettable incident that occurred within two miles of your jurisdiction.

My colleagues and I had been engaged, as custom dictates, to attend a particular household in pursuit of our occupation.

Given the household was well-to-do, a considerable delegation duly arrived and commenced their work.

All was well until the fourth day whereupon one Jesus of Nazareth appeared, by all accounts rather belatedly, and interrupted due process. It appears our clients had requested his attendance some days prior in the expectation that he could keep their brother from dying, but he had been delayed in attending.

As I say, all was proceeding well with the mourning with our focus on the clients at home, having concluded matters at the tomb some days before. Jesus' arrival provoked strong emotions in our clients – one believing he could turn death on its head, the other reduced to tears at his feet. Before we knew it, everyone was back at the tomb site and the entrance stone was being removed.

Expecting a stench, I withdrew to a safe distance but still managed to observe the reanimated corpse of Lazarus staggering into the light to be met by our now former clients with joy.

I have to say in the strongest terms possible this sort of thing cannot be allowed to continue. It is unseemly and confusing to have the dead resuscitated, I ask you where will it lead? Who will want to mourn if in one minute they have a body on their hands, the next a brother in their arms. More to the point, and I hesitate to be so mercenary, what of our profession – we'll be out of work!

As the head of religious affairs, I look to you to deal appropriately with this resuscitating Rabbi before another unfortunate incident occurs.

Yours in anticipation,

Rebekka

Chief Mourner in Residence - COWWS

The Confederation of Wailing Women
(Jerusalem branch)

Rev'd Nick Harris

Rhubarb Café

Rhubarb Café is open every Monday at St Michael's church 2pm – 4pm. We serve homemade cake, gluten free options, pots of tea and freshly brewed coffee. Everything is reasonably priced at £2.00 per item and all money raised is going towards a new kitchen at church.

This year, thanks to a grant from the ACPC, we are offering takeaway soup every Monday. It is £3.00 for a mug of homemade soup and a bread roll. We have reusable soup mugs that can be borrowed for a small deposit (returned to you when you bring the mug back).

The café is always friendly – we would love to see you. If you haven't been before or want to come with a group of friends or family, you are all welcome. We also have a children's corner which is full of toys, colouring, stickers and books.

Natalie Fieldhouse

St Michael and All Angels Aston Clinton, All Saints' Buckland and St Mary's Drayton Beauchamp

On this page you will find the regular church services and community events that happen within our three churches.

REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

St Michael's, Aston Clinton	9.15am Family Eucharist every Sunday 6pm Evensong every Sunday
All Saints', Buckland	8am Holy Communion every Sunday 10am Midweek Communion every Wednesday 11am Messy Sunday every 2nd Sunday 11am Sung Eucharist every 3rd Sunday

MONTHLY SERVICES

Sunday, February 1, 4.30pm	Service for Candlemas at St Mary's
Sunday, March 1, 11.00am	Holy Communion at St Mary's

WEDDINGS & BAPTISMS

You can hold your wedding at any of our wonderful churches. Baptisms every 3rd Sunday 11.30am at St Michael's church and 1.30pm at All Saints' church, time tbc for St Mary's church. Please contact *Natalie Fieldhouse*.

OPENING TIMES

St Michael's and All Saints' are open daily 9am to 4pm and St Mary's is open every Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm for private prayer.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rev Sally Bottomer 01296 632488,
Rev Jane Nash 07562 672481,
Natalie Fieldhouse, Benefice Administrator
01296 632488 email all on: Benefice3@gmail.com

Facebook: *Aston Clinton Benefice with Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp*

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com search for: St Michael's, Aston Clinton, All Saints' or St Mary's

Benefice Website: www.ac-buck-db-churches.org



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Gentle Stretch Class at St Michael's

Monday 10 – 11am, £5.00 per person

Rhubarb Café at St Michael's

Monday 2 – 4pm (Closed Bank Holidays)

St Michael's Little Angels Toddler Group

Thursday 9.30 – 11am

Aston Bridge Club at St Michael's

Friday 2 – 4.30pm

Coffee & Produce Stall at All Saints'

homemade cakes, bacon rolls &
preloved books on the
1st Saturday every month 10 – 11.45am

Repair Café at St Michael's

bring along your broken items on the
2nd Saturday every month 9 – 12 noon.
Refreshments available.

Why Volunteer?

I first began volunteering in my 20s. Our cat, Bart, had gone missing, and every evening after work, my husband and I would go out searching for him. During one such search, we met Brian, a volunteer with the Cat's Protection League. He offered us advice, support, and even helped look for Bart.

After two long weeks, Bart finally came home, hungry and covered in ticks. We went to thank Brian, who asked if we'd ever considered volunteering. Before we knew it, we were spending the next three years trapping stray cats and kittens across West London to get them veterinary treatment or find them new homes.

In my 30s, after moving to Aston Clinton, becoming pregnant and not knowing many people in the area, I joined the NCT and began attending their mother and baby meetings. When they announced they needed a new treasurer, I volunteered, much to my husband's surprise, who thought I was mad to take on the role with a new baby! But I managed to convince him it would be a good experience and look great on my CV when I returned to work.

By my 40s, with two young children, I found myself volunteering again. At the Beaver Scouts AGM, the leader announced they needed a parent to step up or risk the group closing. My boys loved Beavers, wanting other children to have the same experience, I offered to help, and that was the start of another chapter of volunteering.

Still in my 40s, I saw a post on Facebook asking for someone who could check the Youth Club's accounts. I offered to help again, unaware that word would spread – soon other local charities and organisations were asking for their accounts to be checked too!



In our 50s, my husband decided he wanted to go back to volunteering. His job involves long, unsociable hours, so finding the right opportunity was tricky. He registered on a council website that matches volunteers with organisations and listed his skills — mainly fixing things. The site suggested the Marlow Repair Café where he began volunteering once a month, repairing electrical items alongside a great team. Enjoying the work but not the long drive, he thought about finding one closer to home or even starting his own.

With encouragement from Reverend Sally, Aston Clinton Repair Café was born in January 2020. With help from some wonderful volunteers, including his parents, our son Theo and me, the Café has been a great success. It raises much-needed funds for the church and for Brain Tumour Research, in memory of our son, Ollie.

There's nothing quite like the joy of seeing someone's face when a much-loved item is fixed, or the pride on a young person's face when they achieve something new. And those unexpected thank-you cards and gifts left on your doorstep – they make it all worthwhile.

So, if you're looking to make friends, boost your CV, give back to a community that's helped you, or simply fill some spare time, why not give volunteering a try? It could be once a year, monthly, weekly or as and when you can manage it. There are plenty of wonderful organisations in our village that would love your help.

On a personal note – Aston Clinton Scout Group is looking for Cub Leaders, as the pack faces closure without new volunteers. Also, if you're good with your hands, the Repair Café would love to hear from anyone interested in repairing things! For more information contact [Scouts ac.gsl@yahoo.com](mailto:Scouts.ac.gsl@yahoo.com); Repair Café acrepaircafe@gmail.com.

Jane Gardiner

Village Life Online

Thanks to the sterling efforts of Craig Revie and Neil Baldwin, all issues of **Village Life** – from its start in 2011 – are now available on our website at www.acvillagelife.co.uk.

Spanning 14 years and 85 issues, it is a real celebration of life and the people within our villages. Just make sure you leave plenty of time to take a look – you'll be hooked!

Local stories by local people

REGULAR EVENTS AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH

All services are live-streamed and available for viewing via catch up on the church YouTube channel. Follow the links on the website: www.ACBC.church

Sunday morning worship 10.45am – 12 noon.
The Junior Church caters for children dropped off by parents/carers; pick up from the church.

Monthly afternoon service 'Oasis' - first Wednesday of each month 2 – 3pm in the hall with familiar older hymns, companionship and a short reflection.

Various **Homegroups** meet regularly for Bible study, fellowship and prayer.

Lunch is served in the hall every Wednesday 12.45 – 1.30pm.

The Craft Club runs on alternate Wednesday mornings 10.30 – 12.30pm.

All-sorts after school club with craft, games etc; weekly on Wednesdays during term time 3.30 – 5pm in the hall.

Noah's Ark Baby & Tots runs Tuesdays during term time 9.30 – 11.00am.

The Foodbank is most active on Friday morning (preparing parcels) and Saturday mornings (delivering parcels).

Men's Full English Breakfast every first Saturday of the month 9 – 10am
Numbers are currently limited to 20.
Booking is required.

A **bereavement group** meets alternate Wednesday mornings from 11.30 – 12.30pm.

Youth group meeting weekly on Fridays 7 – 9pm during term time.

The hall is available for private hire.
Please see website or call for more details
01296 631824 or **07972 770361**

Aston Clinton Parish Council

The close of another year gave us a welcome opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved across the parish and, most importantly, to say a heartfelt thank you to the many volunteers, organisations and residents who support our community throughout the year.

The festive season got off to a wonderful start on November 28, with the annual Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on outside the Red Kite Pavilion. The event was made extra special thanks to the talented children from Aston Clinton School who filled the park with festive cheer as they sang a selection of much-loved Christmas songs.



Village Life is funded with support from
Aston Clinton Parish Council

Santa also made a very welcome return to Aston Clinton over the weekend of December 13 and 14, delighting residents young and old as his float toured the village. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, an impressive £1,574.88 was raised. We would like to thank everyone who came out to say hello and donated so generously. A special thank you to Dayla Drinks for once again providing Santa's transport, to Sam for driving, and to the Scouts and their leaders who enthusiastically collected along the route. The money raised will be shared equally between Aston Clinton Scouts, Rennie Grove Hospice and the Chilterns Neuro Centre.

Another achievement worth celebrating comes from our fantastic allotment holders. During the 2025 growing season, they donated an amazing 175kg of fresh fruit and vegetables to the Aylesbury Vineyard Storehouse. This represents a very respectable proportion of all allotment donations made across Buckinghamshire, and we are delighted that this initiative will be repeated in 2026.

Looking ahead, please save the date for the Aston Clinton Family Festival, which will take place in the park on Saturday, June 13. More details will be shared nearer the time.

Finally, residents are always very welcome to attend our public parish council meetings. Full council usually meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 6.30pm. Committee meeting dates can be found on our website and noticeboards. These meetings are a great way to see what the parish council is working on and to raise any questions or concerns you may have.

Aston Clinton Parish Council
01296 631269

www.astonclinton-pc.gov.uk

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU START GROWING YOUR OWN FOOD IN 2026!



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Resident of Aston
Clinton or Buckland
Or live within 3 miles
of Parish Boundary

£25
Yearly
Tenancy

JOIN ASTON CLINTON PARK'S ALLOTMENTS WAITING LIST AND GROW YOUR OWN FRUIT & VEG



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1 Plot
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Visit our website www.astonclinton-pc.gov.uk
or email admin@astonclinton.org





Aston Clinton School

Head Teacher: Mrs Carol Macdonald



Outdoor Play and Learning

“Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity”

– Kay Redfield Jamison
Author and clinical psychologist



The Importance of Outdoor Play

Many parents and grandparents recall outdoor play as a central, unstructured part of their childhood, often using simple, natural materials and enjoying a sense of freedom and independence. Today, with our busy lives, children don't get to play outside anywhere near as much as we, our parents or grandparents did. Children spend more time

on digital devices – a trend that became even more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic, where restrictions further limited outdoor and social play. This shift has highlighted the need for a healthy balance between outdoor activities and screen time.

Research shows that outdoor play supports physical and emotional health, social skills, creativity, and confidence. The UN's Rights of the Child Article 31 recognises play as a fundamental right for every child, essential for healthy development, wellbeing and happiness. At Aston Clinton School, we are committed to providing a positive and enriching play environment that supports every aspect of a child's development.

Introducing the OPAL Programme

Research further shows that children spend 20% of their school time playing – equivalent to 1.4 years of their attendance. To make sure this time and our fantastic school grounds are used to their full potential, Aston Clinton School has adopted the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) philosophy. OPAL aims to make outdoor play a meaningful, enjoyable and integral part of school life, supporting children's wellbeing and development. The programme offers practical guidance to help schools create engaging and accessible outdoor spaces to all children. It recognises play as a key element of learning.

The Impact of OPAL

Since introducing OPAL, playtimes at Aston Clinton School have been transformed.

Outdoor areas now offer a wide range of activities, promoting the development of key skills through imaginative, constructive, social, explorative, physical, and quiet play.

Children are encouraged to explore, invent, and collaborate in ways that suit their interests and abilities. They are taking greater responsibility for their play environment, fostering a sense of ownership and care for the school grounds and resources.

Involvement in Transforming Playtime

The transformation of playtimes at Aston Clinton School has been a collaborative effort involving children, staff, Governors, ACSA (our Parent Group Association), parents and the local and wider community. All have played a significant role in supporting the school's vision, for which we are grateful. Together, we're all helping our children grow into confident and caring individuals.

A Balanced Approach to Education

At Aston Clinton School, outdoor play is not viewed in isolation but as part of a broader commitment to learning beyond the classroom. The OPAL programme is integrated alongside curriculum-based outdoor learning and Forest School activities, ensuring outdoor experiences are a consistent and meaningful part of every child's education.

Through the OPAL approach, our children experience happy and meaningful play that nurtures a positive attitude towards learning in the classroom. We take pride in offering every child the opportunity to flourish at the very heart of our village community. At our school, outdoor play is more than just an activity, it's a foundation for lifelong learning and happiness.

Elaine Breslin, OPAL Lead

B Discover Bucks Museum

The SAXONS: *Three lives.*

Three burials. Three extraordinary stories.

March 28 – November 1, 2026

The SAXONS is a major new exhibition opening on Saturday, March 28 at Discover Bucks Museum exploring Buckinghamshire's Saxon past through extraordinary archaeological discoveries.

Step into early medieval life as you encounter the Princely Burial at Taplow, the Warlord of Marlow, and artefacts from graves uncovered at the Wendover Saxon Cemetery — many on display for the first time.

With immersive displays, life-like Saxon characters, and hands-on experiences for families, this exhibition brings Saxon history vividly to life.



For opening times, tickets and booking, visit discoverbucksmuseum.org

Discover Bucks Museum, Church Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2QP

A Festive Triumph for Aston Clinton School Association (ACSA)

The Aston Clinton School Association (ACSA) rounded off the autumn term in spectacular style with a Christmas Fair that truly captured the magic of the season. Families and villagers turned out in force to enjoy a wonderfully festive afternoon, complete with a real reindeer delighting children and adults alike, and a giant snow globe that quickly became the must-visit attraction for festive photos.



Alongside the headline attractions, there were stalls, games and seasonal treats, creating a warm community atmosphere and a memorable start to the Christmas celebrations.

Behind the sparkle and fun lies an impressive achievement. Over the course of the autumn term, the PTA events raised £12,000, an outstanding total which will go directly towards supporting the

school and enriching the children's experiences. These funds help provide extra resources, activities and opportunities that make a real difference to everyday school life.

ACSA is already looking ahead to the new year, kicking things off with an exciting silent disco for the children. With plenty more events and initiatives planned for 2026, the coming year promises to be another busy and successful one.

The success of the Christmas Fair, and the term as a whole, is a testament to the dedication of the ACSA volunteers and the generosity of parents, carers, local businesses and the wider community. Aston Clinton School is fortunate to have such enthusiastic support, and the PTA's hard work continues to bring lasting benefits to all the children.

ACSA plays a vital role in supporting the school through fundraising and community events. Parents and carers are warmly encouraged to get involved — whether by joining the committee, volunteering at events, or simply lending a hand behind the scenes. Every bit of help makes a real difference to the school and its children.

For more information or to get involved, parents and carers can email astonclintonschoolassociation@gmail.com or visit ACSA's social media pages. Together, the community can keep making Aston Clinton School a brighter place to learn and grow.

Don't forget that we also partner with: **Michael Antony** estate agents, who donate £100 for every house they sell that has a connection with the school. If you are thinking of selling, contact them on **01442 89117** to arrange your no obligation valuation and don't forget to mention ACSA. **Goodie Two Shoes**, for every pair of shoes sold they will donate £5 to ACSA - take a look at www.goodietwoshoes.co.uk. **PF Financial**, gives free mortgage advice and will donate £100 to the school for every referral made by any parent of a child currently enrolled. Visit www.pffinancial.co.uk.

Laura Kyrke-Smith MP

Looking ahead in 2026:

Serving Aston Clinton and our villages



I hope Village Life readers have had a very happy and healthy start to 2026. As your MP, I'm looking forward to serving you and all residents across Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp this year. By the time you receive this, I'll have had the chance to chat to lots of you at the 'meet and greet' event I'm hosting at St Michael and All Angels Church, which I'm looking forward to.

I've been really enjoying continuing to meet the many talented and determined people who make up our communities across Aston Clinton, Aylesbury and other villages.

Recently, I visited Estone Grange to see first-hand the fantastic work being done to make the estate nature-friendly. The community has achieved biodiversity net gain by protecting wildflower meadows, hedges, ponds and watercourses, showing that new housing can coexist with wildlife. The Wild Estone Grange group has installed information boards to highlight local habitats and wildlife corridors, from deer, foxes and badgers to ponds full of frogs and toads. It's a brilliant example of residents taking action to protect nature while ensuring your community thrives.

I was also delighted to present my recent Community Champion awards to Jake Crane at Aylesbury Foodbank for his dedicated

volunteer work supporting families in need, and to Amy Scullard, for her work organising a perinatal mental health support group for local parents. If you know someone in Aston Clinton, Buckland or Drayton Beauchamp making a real difference in your community, I encourage you to nominate them for a future Community Champion award via my website.

In February, I am welcoming my latest cohort of young people to my 'Your Voice, Your Future' work experience programme. It gives local students aged 16 and over the chance to learn about government and politics, including a day in Westminster, and I always learn a lot from working with them. Applications for the summer programme in July will open soon via my website, and I welcome applications from young people in your three villages.

In local news, I welcomed the Government's announcement that Buckinghamshire Council will benefit from an above-inflation increase in funding over this Parliament. This funding recognises the challenges of delivering services in our area, and I hope it will be used to protect vital services and support our communities.

On the state of our roads, which many people raise with me, I'm pleased that the Buckinghamshire lane rental scheme has been approved by the Government, allowing the Council to charge companies doing road works and helping to reduce the delays and frustrations.

On a national level, I continue to raise the issues that matter to constituents in Parliament, including reducing driving test waiting times and improving our bus services. I welcome the Government's Animal Welfare Strategy, which will see important changes, from banning caged hens to curbing low welfare dog breeding.

I look forward to continuing to work with you throughout 2026, and as always, I welcome your feedback and am here to support you in any way I can. *Laura Kyrke-Smith MP*

Why, what and where at Estone Grange

It is well known now that biodiversity, nature restoration and rewilding are key elements to combating climate change and habitat loss. The 2016 planning consent for Estone Grange included a Land Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) to ensure that green spaces benefitted wildlife as well as the people who live locally. It is, though, rare that LEMPs such as this are carried out once the development is complete. More often than not, a contractor will be in place whose remit is to cut the grass and hedges with little thought other than to complete the job as cheaply and quickly as possible.

Estone Grange Management Company and the Wild Estone Grange group have been supported by the WildBelt project, which has enabled teams of volunteers from the Chiltern Society together with some residents to treat sensitive areas carefully. One or two people queried why some areas were left, scrub uncut, and the plants in and around the big pond allowed to become a dense mass, and a request was made to have an explanation. Maybe there could be interpretation boards?

This was a good idea but not something the management company could support financially so funding was sought before boards could be commissioned. Amanda Carrol from Studio Beam was so impressed with the nature on our doorstep that she led the design process and the result is three clear, informative and attractive panels. The sturdy oak frames were made by the Lindengate Charity and were installed by Chiltern Society volunteers in October.

The management company is grateful to Aston Clinton Parish Council, Buckinghamshire Community Boards, the Chiltern Society, Bellway, Neil Douglas, and Laxton Properties for making the financial contributions towards the project.



Understandably, the development was perceived as a threat to the village. But while things will never be the same, Wild Estone Grange, inspired by BBOWT, has successfully managed to incorporate nature at the heart of the estate. With two public footpaths it has become a village asset; a place for wildlife and people.

To find out more about nature restoration or to get involved: <https://chilternsociety.org.uk/community-wildbelt/> WILD ESTONE GRANGE Facebook.

Katy Todd

The Astonian: A Window into Village Life in the 1970s

The Astonian was launched in 1972 as a 'Quarterly Journal of Aston Clinton', offering a fascinating snapshot of village life during the 1970s. Produced at a time of social change and local pride, the magazine combined contemporary reporting with reflections on Aston Clinton's rich past.

The first three editions featured a serialised version of 'Aston Clinton Through the Ages' by A. J. Copps. This detailed local history traces the story of the village from the early Britons, along the Upper Icknield Way, through to medieval times, including the first recorded rector and vicar, and even an earthquake recorded in the 13th century.

Beyond history, The Astonian captured the everyday life and notable moments of the time. Articles covered topics such as the National Film Archive, the beginnings of the village pre-school playgroup, and the visit of Princess Anne during celebrations marking the late Queen's Silver Jubilee — events that many residents will still remember.

The village archive currently holds twelve issues of The Astonian, published between 1972 and 1979. It is not yet known whether these represent the complete run of the journal, and we would welcome hearing from anyone who may have additional copies or memories connected with the magazine.

As part of the ongoing work of the Aston Clinton Village Archive Group, these magazines – along with A. J. Copps' history have now been digitised. They are available to view on a temporary website at the link below: <https://sites.google.com/view/astonclintonarchive/new-material-online/the-astonian-journal>

We hope this resource will both preserve an important piece of Aston Clinton's heritage and encourage further contributions from the community.

Craig Revie, craigrevie@gmail.com

St Michael's Quiz Night

*Saturday, March 28, 7.00pm
Anthony Hall*

James and Phil have devised some great rounds to challenge and entertain you.

We are going for *'Bring your own food and drink'* this time – glasses provided – with tickets available at £10 per head. All proceeds are for the Church, going towards our project to provide an accessible toilet and host a dementia café.

So are you up to the challenge? Can your team or table wrest the cup from The Bellringers?

Book your place or table by emailing james@jamesadam.co.uk or text or call him on 07860 236904. *We look forward to seeing you.*

Guides

1st Aston Clinton



Guides have had a busy term with lots of community events taking place, including the girls writing and leading the Christingle service. They did a superb job with most taking an active role.

This term we are looking to do some 'skills for my future' activities, which include cooking, social media awareness – to share or not to share – a new Pioneering Interest badge and St Patrick's Day craft to name a few.

We always try to play a game each session, which is always popular, and the older girls normally get the opportunity to run these. Favourite games include shoe bomb, wink murder, lighthouse, zombie chairs, cross my river, parachute, monkey football and splat, with capture the flag always a must when at the park.

The step up from Brownies to Guides (10 yrs to 14) can seem daunting, with the obvious difference in age (and height!), but it's great to see the older Guides helping and leading the younger ones when they start. Our patrols are made up of mixed age groups so when we do tasks like cooking, everyone has a different level of ability. We also encourage the girls to make sure everybody is included, even if not in a friendship group outside of Guides, and to 'look out for your fellow Guides'.

We are looking forward to a new year, to new girls joining and having adventures, and we are planning a weekend residential in May!

If you are interested in having fun, making a difference, inspiring and leading girls then please follow this link www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/register-to-volunteer.

Jo & Karen

1st Aston Clinton Guides



Tring Choral Society

Tring Choral Society will be singing Vivaldi's 'Gloria' and Haydn's 'Harmoniemesse' on Saturday, March 14 at St Peter & St Paul Church, Tring. We will be joined by four fabulous soloists and our usual orchestra of professional, local musicians.

Please come and hear these glorious works. Tickets available from choir members and tringchoral.org.uk.

Beaver Scouts Celebrate 40 Years!

This year, Beaver Scouts in the UK turn 40! Since 1986, children aged 6–8 have been enjoying fun, friendship, and adventure while learning new skills through scouting.



Here in Aston Clinton, our Beaver group is believed to have started around the same time, welcoming local children for decades of memorable experiences. Last year alone our Beavers packed in a wide range of activities – from learning about healthy eating and first aid to tackling outdoor challenges like firefighting, orienteering, and climbing.

Our adventures also included some creative and community-focused projects: the Beavers built birdhouses, explored pond dipping, and



took part in a village litter pick. Indoor fun was just as popular, with sleepovers at Braid Wood and the RAF Museum, trips to the Aylesbury panto, and visits from local groups like the Aylesbury Wombles.

Other highlights included bike maintenance sessions, cricket taster activities, photography and experiment badges, and learning about animal care during a trip to Pets at Home. Seasonal celebrations were part of the mix too, including a Christingle service, and of course, Beavers still enjoy the simple joys of chip shop walks!

If you were a Beaver or a Beaver leader in the late 1980s or early 1990s, we want to hear from you. Do you have stories, memories, or photos to share? Please get in touch at ac.gsl@yahoo.com as we'd love to include your experiences as part of our anniversary reflections.

We're planning a small celebration later this year to mark this milestone and hope to involve past and present Beavers.

Here's to 40 years of adventure, learning, and fun with Beaver Scouts – past, present, and future!

Claire Walker

Aston Clinton Colts



Happy New Year from all at the Colts!

We hope 2026 brings health, happiness, and plenty of football fun to all our players, families, and supporters. We wrapped up 2025 in true Colts' style – with a brilliant turnout and loads of festive cheer at our Annual Christmas Party.

From our Saturday morning training session full of Santa hats, smiles, and muddy boots, to the evening party where the kids (and adults) let loose – fun was had by all. A cheeky Grinch was even spotted roaming the village – but couldn't spoil the joy!



A massive thank you to everyone who bought tickets and supported our Christmas Raffle. Thanks to your incredible generosity, we raised £2,000, which will go directly towards new equipment and more fun activities for our players throughout the season.

This year we were also proud to support the local Bucks Toy Appeal, helping make Christmas a little brighter for children in need. Alongside our fantastic local sponsor, Diamond Window Cleaning, we collected over 50 toys donated by our generous Colts families and supporters. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to this great local cause.



Big News: New Equipment Arriving

This month sees the arrival of our brand-new metal folding goals, the largest equipment purchase the Club has ever made. These goals are a huge step forward for the Colts, and we're especially grateful for the support of Aston Clinton Parish Council who worked closely with us to build a new storage unit at the park, ensuring we can keep the equipment safe and easily accessible. We're also adding goal trolleys to help lighten the load for our hardworking coaches, helpers, and parents moving gear to and from the pitches.

Huge Milestone: Aston Clinton Colts are now FA Accredited

We're incredibly proud to announce that Aston Clinton Colts JFC is now officially FA Accredited – a first in the club's history – a huge step forward in our mission to offer the very best grassroots football experience.

FA Accreditation is a nationally recognised quality mark for clubs meeting the highest standards in coaching, safeguarding, club management, and player development. It shows that we're committed not just to football, but to building a safe, fun, and inclusive environment for all children to learn, grow, and enjoy the game.

To achieve this status, our amazing volunteer coaches and committee members completed

extensive FA training modules, underwent safeguarding and first aid certification, and implemented robust club policies and development plans – all this on top of the time they already dedicate to sessions, matches, and admin. This recognition means we're now officially one of the best-run grassroots clubs in the area – and we're just getting started!

Finally, we'd like to give a huge thank you to our incredible local sponsors – KMS for their continued support throughout the year – and Diamond Window Cleaning for partnering with us to support the Bucks Toy Appeal. Their help plays a vital role in keeping the Colts thriving and our players smiling.

Here's to another fantastic year at Aston Clinton Colts JFC – thank you to everyone who makes this Club what it is.

The Colts Committee

Buckland and Aston Clinton Cricket Club

Although we are in the close season, there has still been plenty going on behind the scenes at the cricket club, and even more still to do ahead of our return to action in the late spring.

Having been founder members of the Four Counties Cricket League in 2001, we have taken the big decision to make a change ahead of the 2026 season. The decline in facilities and behaviour, as well as the exits of many of the longer-established clubs, made this definitely the right time to move. Our geographic position does mean we are on the edges of several competition boundaries and we are delighted to have been accepted into the Cherwell Cricket League. This competition is far larger than the FCCL, has higher standards for grounds and facilities, and we will get to visit a host of new clubs as well as some more familiar old foes. Our First XI has been

placed in Division 5, with the Second team in Division 9. We feel we can be very competitive at those levels and will be targeting promotion for both of our Senior teams in 2026.

Indoor Nets begin for the Senior squads (including any Juniors who played for Senior teams last year) on Sunday, February 1 at John Colet school, with some sessions for younger Juniors later in the spring. We have entered teams at Under 11, Under 13 and Under 15 levels again this year. The Under 13 squad is easily the thinnest of these so we would especially welcome any newcomers interested in playing for that age group.

But where we really need to recruit is among our parent volunteers. We have relied on a small band of helpers for many years and several of those have now stepped away as their youngsters are too old for Junior training. Without replacing them, we will not be able to maintain the numbers of Colts we have accommodated in recent years. Any help, especially on Friday evening training sessions or co-ordinating on match days, would be most appreciated. Prospective volunteers would not need to commit to every week, and prior cricket experience is really not important. If enough people could do a handful of sessions over the course of a summer term, that would cover the shortfall. If you think you can help, please get in touch via bucklandastonclintoncc@gmail.com.

Over the next couple of months we will be running a couple of fundraising events, in conjunction with our sponsors, at The Bull, Stoke Mandeville. We will also be hosting our Get Set Weekend (dates to be confirmed) when we ask our community to help us prepare the ground and pavilion for the new season. More details will be communicated to our existing players and parents via the usual channels and posted on our Facebook page too.

Phil Samuels



**Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
& Oxfordshire**
Wildlife Trust

News from your local nature reserves

Can there be life, colour and warmth outdoors in the dead of winter? At Dancersend Nature reserve there certainly can! Writing this at the turn of the year, with snow covering most of the reserve and the thermometer permanently stuck below freezing, it can be hard to appreciate. But wrap up well and venture out into our woods and meadows and all three are there to be found.

The phrase ‘the dead of winter’ annoys me. In no way is nature dead during these cold winter days and just waiting for a miraculous reincarnation. There is still lots of *life* to be found, albeit less obviously active. Flowering plants may be very scarce, but every pile of leaves, fallen branch and old tree stump will be home to an amazing variety of living things, including mosses, lichens, fungi and slime moulds. Many small creatures will have slowed right down to wait winter out using a fascinating range of strategies and hiding places. This is the time to look more closely.

Some of the larger Dancersend residents are actually easier to observe in winter, not necessarily ‘in person’ but through the tracks and signs they leave in the mud and snow. An early morning walk after a sprinkling of snow will surprise you with signs of nocturnal activity involving deer, badgers, foxes, rabbits, hares and other mammals.

Colour can certainly be found in the hedgerows and woodland edge fruits – rosehips, haws and crab apples – which in turn will attract colourful birds like Redwings

as they soften after a series of frosts. Some of our specialist winter fungi species are also surprisingly colourful, especially when seen against the sombre colouring of surrounding vegetation. Our extraordinary slime moulds, like fungi but completely unrelated, may continue to produce tiny fruiting bodies well into the winter as long as it stays wet, and may have striking colours as well as other-worldly intricate structures.

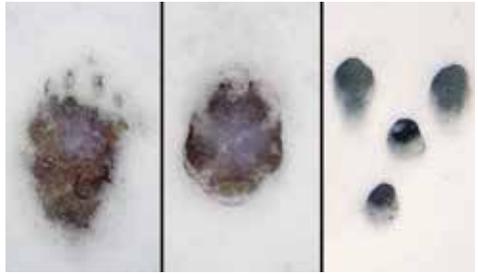
It might be more difficult to persuade you there’s *warmth* at the reserve during these cold winter days but visit when we have one of our regular volunteer work sessions and you will be convinced. Not only is there often a blazing bonfire, but there is also great friendliness, fun and team spirit. In 2025, we carried out an amazing 2,260 person-hours of conservation work and sessions involving 77 different volunteers – quite a community of mostly local wildlife-loving folk. If you are interested in trying out one of our work parties at Dancersend or another of the BBOWT reserves this year, please see www.bbowl.org.uk/volunteering-opportunities.

Events at our reserves and activities for both children and family groups at our flagship College Lake Reserve are shown on our website at www.bbowl.org.uk/events. The wildlife-themed talks organised by the local BBOWT Chilterns Group take place on the third Tuesday evening each month at Great Missenden Memorial Centre. On February 17, Chris Williams, CEO of the Royal Forestry Society will speak on ‘The Story of Forestry in the UK’ and on March 17, it will be time for another social event with a talk and a quiz. All are welcome from 7pm for refreshments with talks starting at 7.30pm.

*Mick Jones,
Volunteer Warden at Dancersend*



Left: Work party bonfire December 2025. Yellow Brain fungus with moss and lichen. Slime mould on a rotting log.
 Below: Dancersend volunteers at December 2025 work party. Badger, Fox and Rabbit tracks. Moss and lichen on fencepost. Cobalt Crust fungus. Tiny fruiting bodies of slime mould on a leaf – Mick Jones.





Let's all grow together

At Lindengate, I am reminded every day of just how powerful nature can be in helping people heal, reconnect, and grow. Our gardens are more than beautiful spaces. They are sanctuaries where volunteers, wellbeing participants and visitors come together to support their wellbeing and find peace, purpose, and a sense of belonging.

Through Social and Therapeutic Horticulture, we see people rediscover confidence, build friendships, and take those vital steps toward wellbeing, whether through planting seeds, caring for wildlife, or simply taking a quiet moment to breathe in the calm of our surroundings.

Our volunteers often tell me how rewarding it is to know they are making a real difference – not just in nurturing the gardens, but in supporting others who come through our gates. And for our visitors, time spent here often brings a renewed appreciation for the simple yet profound power of being outdoors and connecting to nature.

Social therapeutic horticulture is not just about gardening, it is about wellbeing in action. Time and again, research (and our own experience) shows that spending time in nature reduces stress, boosts mood and helps people build resilience. At Lindengate, we are privileged to see that transformation happening every single day.

As we look ahead, we continue to develop and enhance our gardens, creating new ways for people to connect with nature. I am especially excited to share that this year we will be introducing a new Water Garden – a tranquil, sensory space designed for both visitors and wellbeing service users to explore and enjoy.



The sound of moving water, the reflections, and the surrounding planting will offer a peaceful environment for relaxation, contemplation, and discovery. In addition, we will be creating a natural ecological reed bed system that channels clean water into our ponds and ditches to support wildlife and provides a sustainable water management system to prevent flooding away from the area in the education centre where a high water table and a failing soakaway exists.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who supports our work, from volunteers and donors to visitors and friends of Lindengate. Together, we really are nurturing nature alongside our objective to support people of all ages with their mental, physical and social wellbeing.

Andy Grant, General Manager



Lindengate Wellbeing and Nature Course Dates 2026

Lindengate offers a range of nature-based programmes designed to support mental health and wellbeing. From our seasonal Wellbeing programmes and courses to the Memory Pathways programme – tailored for those living with memory loss and their carers. We provide safe, nurturing environments where individuals can build resilience, rediscover purpose, and connect with others. Referrals are welcome from individuals, carers, and professionals.

Kids' Holiday Camps

back for Easter & Summer 2026



April 7-10

August 3-7

August 17-21

Based in the Garden's Community and Education Hub, our Nature Camps offer young people aged 5-12 years a fun-filled week of hands-on outdoor experiences that inspire creativity, build confidence, and encourage a love for nature. Each day costs £40 and runs from 9.00am-3.30pm. We also have early drop off available from 8.30am.

Bookings open soon, find out more information at www.lindengate.org.uk/nature-holiday-camps.

Pop up Cafés

once a month on a Saturday from
April-September – free entry



April 4 – Easter Egg hunt

May 16 – Kings Langley Choir

June 20 – Jazz Quartet

July 18 – Ukulele Band

August 15 – Family Nature Day

September 19 – Live music

The gardens and Pop Up Café will be open from 12.30pm-3.30pm.

Come and enjoy a relaxing afternoon in our six acre gardens with tea, cake and nature, all lovingly prepared and served by our amazing volunteers. For more information go to www.lindengate.org.uk/events.

9-week Wellbeing & Nature Course

Wednesdays 9.30am-12.30pm

April 8 – June 3

August 5 – October 7

October 21 – December 16

Designed for adults experiencing mild to moderate depression, anxiety, or low mood. Through seasonal nature-based activities like conservation, crafts, and mindful gardening, participants build resilience and reconnect with themselves and the world around them. For more information go to www.lindengate.org.uk/wellbeing-programmes.

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Chiltern
Society

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the latest news from the
Chiltern Society



www.chilternsociety.org.uk/Subscribe-to-our-e-newsletter/

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1			2				9	
		6				5		
	9				5			1
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				3		6	4	
			1	2		9	7	

Sudoku

All you have to do is fill in the squares so that each row, column and the nine small 3x3 squares contains the numbers 1-9.

(SOLUTION ON PAGE 34)

Buckland Parish Council

As we write this article for Village Life, the view from the Parish Office window is very grey, murky and damp. It has been the coldest week for a few years and the roads throughout the parish have been very slippery. Thank you to all the residents who have been using the salt bins to spread grit on the roads for us. Hopefully by now, when you are reading this there will be some signs of Spring!



Working with the Chiltern Society and New Trees in the Community Orchard.

Volunteers from the parish and the Chiltern Society came together again in early December to help work on the wildflower areas in the Burial Ground and the Community Orchard. BPC has been awarded grants for a new bench for the Burial Ground, along with hoses for

supplying water to the Community Orchard as well as a bug house. In the next few weeks we will also be planting another 15 trees that have been donated to the parish in the Community Orchard. Thank you to everyone involved in these projects. If you would like to know more or become involved, please get in touch with any of our councillors or with the Clerk – Jane Lewis.

In December we heard from Thames Water that they had two possible locations for the new pumping station in the Buckland Road area and would be submitting plans to Buckinghamshire council in the New Year. They haven't shared the locations with us yet. Once the final location is confirmed, they plan to:

- Arrange a meeting with the parish council to provide a detailed update and hear feedback.
- Host a public drop-in session so the wider community can learn more and ask questions. However, there is no guarantee that Thames Water will hold this public consultation session in Buckland or Aston Clinton.

As soon as BPC hears anything we will let residents know via local noticeboards, our website, Facebook pages and our quarterly newsletter. At our public meeting held in 2023, we collected email addresses from residents who wanted to be updated. If you wish to be added to this list, please email your details to Clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk.

We have reported recently the many changes to the planning portal. The changes by Buckinghamshire council now seem to have been completed. However, communication with residents on planning applications is still poor and residents and parish councils are unable to view comments made by other residents. BPC continues to advertise any planning applications that are notified to it on orange sheets on the parish council

noticeboards throughout the parish. They can also be found on the BPC website.

We have also reported that ARLA decided to cancel its community meetings with local organisations and residents without notice. Discussions are still ongoing with ARLA about this. However in the meantime, Olleco invited members of BPC, Aston Clinton parish council and immediate neighbours to a meeting in December. This provided an opportunity for us to see the operations at Olleco and find out what measures are in place to ensure there are no unpleasant odours from the site. They pointed out they are not the only ones who may be causing odours in the area; there are other businesses in the nearby vicinity, including the recycling centre in College Road North.

One interesting fact they passed on – when making reports of odours from the site, it is important to give the exact time that the off-site odour is noticed so they can look back and identify if there was a process taking place that may have caused the odour release. We would encourage all residents to report these odours to the Environment Agency, who will take note. Indeed, following recent reports, they carried out a site visit and reported back to BPC that the cause of the odours was cleaning of the facility. To report any odours go to www.gov.uk/report-environmental-problem or the Environment Agency incident hotline on **0800 807060**.

If you are able, please also let BPC know and include the report number that you receive from the Environment Agency. The parish council keeps a record of all complaints made, which helps it to put its case to the Environment Agency, as well as to Arla, Olleco, or any other company involved.

Clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk.

Aston Clinton u3a



- *Are you fully retired, semi-retired or approaching retirement and thinking about how to spend your extra spare time?*
- *Perhaps you are wondering how to keep mentally and physically fit?*
- *Would you like to meet new friends and take part in events with like-minded people?*
- *Do you have a particular interest that you would like to share with others?*
- *Why not think of joining Aston Clinton u3a?*

We are a welcoming group of older people who are determined to enjoy what we call 'our third age'. To find out more, go to www.astonclintonu3asite.uk.

Please mention Village Life
when responding to our advertisers.

acvillagelife.co.uk



Christmas Dance - a wonderful mingling of Christmas jumpers with the swish of tartan.

Happiness is Scottish Country Dancing

We welcome the chance to be involved in local activities and the Christmas Tree Festival in St Michael's Church allowed us to both increase awareness of our club and participate in a wonderful community event. It's also good to embrace the culture of Scotland by celebrating Burns Night on January 25. As well as our own special event dancing to live music, we'll be teaching Aston Clinton Beavers and Cubs to 'Dance Scottish' at their Burns celebrations in January and February.

We held a very successful Christmas Dance with everyone enjoying some thrilling music from Ian Robertson's Band and getting into the Christmas spirit. We were also joined by two members from our twin club (the CadiLonians Group) in Jerez, Spain.

This twinning arrangement is flourishing, with three of our teachers having visited Jerez last year to run classes and MC dances. This bond will

be further strengthened when 13 of our dancers attend the annual Iberian Weekend in Cadiz in March – hosted this year by the CadiLonians. This event, when all Scottish country dance groups in Portugal and Spain come together for a weekend of dancing, will be attended by around 170 dancers and we're very proud to be representing our club.

For those dancers who won't be travelling to Spain, we'll be having a special themed Seville Marmalade Evening involving some appropriately named dances – 'The Duke and Duchess of Marmalade' and 'Les Ramparts de Seville'. Some award-winning marmalade made by one of our dancers will be on sale with all proceeds going to this year's charity.

So, our dancing is taking on a Spanish feel this term – but as Scottish country dancing is done all over the world the possibilities for themed evenings are endless!

This term's beginners' class has now started but if you'd like to 'Dance Scottish' and share our happiness, please check our website for further information and to book a place. You don't need to be Scottish, have a partner, experience or equipment.

*Liz Mitchell, lucyclarkscottish@gmail.com
www.lucyclarkscottish.org*



Just Hanging About ... This novelty photograph was snapped by Alan Newland by the small lake at Watermead.

Wendover Choral: A Celebration of English Music

Wendover Choral's Christmas concert on December 6 in St Mary's church, Wendover, provided a joyful and uplifting start to the festive period for all who were lucky enough to attend.



Under the leadership of its new musical director, Kenton Brigden, the choir has been transformed. Its new confidence and quality shone through in its performance of a concert programme designed to showcase Christmas music by twentieth century English composers, built around two main pieces: Elizabeth Poston's Nativity, and Gerald Finzi's In Terra Pax. The Nativity, aptly described by Kenton Brigden as a 'hidden gem', told the Christmas story with a mixture of musical styles, from the

medieval to the modern. Finzi's In Terra Pax, in contrast, painted a musical picture of the composer's own experience of the sights and sounds of rural England in winter.

Alongside some well-known modern carols – Rutter's 'Jesus Child', Stopford's haunting unaccompanied 'Lully, Lulla, Lullay' and Gardner's 'Tomorrow Shall be my Dancing Day' – as well as a few old favourites – and combining with excellent local ensemble musicians and soloists, the choir evidently enjoyed singing what was, at times, complex and challenging music. Their enjoyment was infectious. They more than met their objective: to provide a tonic for harsh and troubled times.

Wendover Choral is now practising *Haydn's Nelson Mass* and *Vivaldi's Gloria* for its *Spring concert on May 16*. Rehearsals are held at St Mary's church, Wendover from 7.45 - 9.45pm every Thursday. Come along and join the fun!
www.wendoverchoral.co.uk

Rod Ainsworth



Village People

This is a series about the people of Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp. Not just about the people who live in these villages but the people who are a part of the daily life of the villages.

Richard Peel is Chair of Buckland Old School Trust (BOST), managing Buckland Village Hall, and organises the annual Music under the Stars event.



I wanted to apply my experience to a local cause

“

Q. How long have you lived in Buckland and what brought you here?

A. We moved to Buckland in 2002. My family are passionate about horses, and we were looking for a property with land. Lower Farm seemed an idyllic oasis, but the 16th century house needed serious renovation, so we spent several months in rented accommodation.

Q. What does BOST do and what's your role?

A. Buckland Old School Trust is a charity responsible for the management and maintenance of the village hall. I chair a group of six Trustees and a hall manager who determine how best to use the hall. After nine years as a Trustee with Youth Music and a freelance

with other national charities such as the RNLI, the Thompson Foundation, who train journalists in developing countries, and ShelterBox, I wanted to apply that experience to a local cause.

Q. The Village Hall recently celebrated its 25th anniversary; what are your most memorable moments?

A. The event, called 'Buckland Blast', was created to bring the community together through a variety of activities for people of all ages. The two most memorable moments were seeing the delight at lunch of more than 30 senior citizens, who rarely meet up at the same time, and everyone on the dance floor for the final act – Soulfools.

Q. You also seem to be a bit of a local music impresario, how did that come about?

A. When I was 45 years old, we lived in Marsworth and my wife, Di, suggested we hold a music event for charity. With the occasional gap, these events have run for more than 25 years, and Saturday, June 27, will be the 19th 'Music under the Stars' in Buckland. Thanks to the musicians, who play for free, and the people who support us, we have raised thousands for local and national charities

Q. Are you involved in any other local organisations?

A. Wendover Canal Trust has had my input on Public Relations, and I am a long-term supporter of Rennie Grove Peace, advising on Communication and, as part of a small committee, organising sports dinners to raise funds for the nurses. I also help arrange an annual cricket match – Buckland Baggies v Wilstone Wasters – which is a fund raiser for local charities.

Q. What's your life outside your charitable and community activities

A. First thing, 'fun' jobs at the stable yard: mucking out, collecting the hay, and getting water for the horses. Then golfing at Chiltern Forest or Ivinghoe a couple of times a week is great exercise – frustrating but enjoyable; and walking is on the agenda too. I like knowing what is happening in the wider world – a longstanding interest reinforced by working for BBC News for a decade – and I travel regularly. The Greek Island of Skopelos, and Canada and Australia, where we have relatives, are favoured destinations, and we escape to

our holiday flat in Southwold when the town is quiet.

Q. You're a very busy person; what do you do to relax?

A. I am an avid reader, mostly with more than one book on the go – fiction, travel and biographies. Watching cricket here at Lord's and overseas, and live music in theatres and at Festivals are annual fixtures, whilst drumming in a local band and strumming a guitar are also relaxing pastimes.

Q. What's your favourite music?

A. I have a broad taste in music but particularly like the blues – Eric Bibb and Joe Louis Walker are favourites. Also, folk and roots; Richard Thompson and Natalie Merchant are standouts for me in this genre.

Q. What do you think makes Buckland a good place to live?

A. Despite being close to busy towns it does feel off the beaten track, helped by the No Through Road. There is a strong participatory core of villagers, but it would be gratifying to see more people embrace the community.

Q. What changes to village life (good or bad) have you noticed in recent years?

A. More families with young children is good. Increasing traffic and significant housing development close by, a double-edged sword. Accommodation is necessary but needs appropriate infrastructure, social housing, and affordable properties for young people.

Q. What, if any, changes would you like to see locally?

A. A 20mph speed limit. There are no pavements and schoolchildren, in particular, horse riders, walkers and cyclists, are at risk. ARLA and others need to show more community spirit. The Village Hall is used by more people from outside than residents, so change in that balance would be welcome. Finally, reviving a former Buckland pub would be a bonus!

If there is anyone whose contribution to village life you believe should be featured in a forthcoming issue of Village Life, please send details to editor@acvillagelife.co.uk

Interview **Barbara Muston**

Emergency

HEALTH

Aston Clinton Surgery	01296 320384	www.westongrove.com
Aston Clinton Dental Clinic	01296 323090	www.astonclintondentalclinic.co.uk
Amersham Hospital	01494 434411	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
John Radcliffe Hospital	01865 741166	www.ouh.nhs.uk/hospitals/jr/
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	01296 315000	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
Wycombe Hospital	01494 526161	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
NHS Direct	111	111.nhs.uk
Samaritans	116123	jo@samaritans.org

ENERGY SUPPLIERS

Electricity Emergency	0800 7838 838	
Gas Emergency	0800 111 999	
Water Emergency	0800 3169 800	

CRIME

Police Emergency	999	
Police non-emergency and Neighbourhood watch	101	www.thamesvalley.police.uk
Childline	0800 111	

Organisations *Any error or omission in this list should be notified to the Editor.*

EDUCATION

Aston Clinton School	01296 630276	www.astonclintonschool.co.uk
Aston Clinton Pre School	07928 309321	pre-school.acpsmanagement@gmail.com
Noah's Ark (AC Baptist Church)	01296 631824	www.acbc.church

SPORT AND LEISURE

Aston Bridge Club	01296 630552	astonbridgeclub@gmail.com
Aston Clinton Badminton Club	07958 479690	
Aston Clinton Bowls Club	07885 595447	www.astonclintonbowlsclub.org
Aston Clinton Colts Junior F.C.	07786 908219	clubsecretary@acolts.com
Aston Clinton F.C.	07930 925840	www.astonclintonfc.co.uk
Aston Park Tennis Club	01296 630826	www.astonparktennis.co.uk
Aston Wine Club	01296 630531	www.astonwineclub.co.uk
Aylesbury Green Park Sub Aqua Club	07857 868234	www.aylesburydivers.org.uk
Back to Netball	07545 033986	net4alluk@hotmail.com
Buckland & Aston Clinton Cricket Club	01296 631788	www.bacc.play-cricket.com
Colts Kickers Liam Hickey	07585 119066	
Buckland Book Group	01296 631111	brfletcher@hotmail.co.uk
Dolphin Swim School	07966 450458	dolphinswimschool2017@gmail.com
Swimezee	01296 730742	www.swimezee.co.uk

YOUTH GROUPS

Aston Clinton Guides, Brownies and Rainbows		www.girlguiding.org.uk
Aston Clinton Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers	01296 708158	
– Waiting Lists		ac.secretary@yahoo.com
– Other enquiries		ac.gsl@yahoo.com
Aston Clinton Youth Club		astonclintonyouthclub@yahoo.com

CHURCHES

St Michael and All Angels, Aston Clinton	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
All Saints, Buckland	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
Aston Clinton Baptist Church	01296 631824	www.acbc.church
Our Lady of Lourdes RC Church	01296 290545	www.ourladyoflourdes.uk

HALLS FOR HIRE

Anthony Hall	07443 976639	hallbookingonline.com/anthonyhall/
Baptist Church		lettings@acbc.church
Buckland Village Hall	07749 041434	hallandbookingsmanager@bucklandvillagehall.com
Churchill Hall		astonclintonyouthclub@yahoo.com
Red Kite Pavilion	01296 630270	nick@yourcafeinthepark.co.uk

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Aston Clinton Parish Council	01296 631269	clerk@astonclinton.org www.astonclinton.org.uk
Buckland Parish Council	01296 630962	clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk www.buckland-pc.gov.uk
Drayton Beauchamp. Parish Meeting	01296 630396	merylnodes2018@gmail.com
Buckinghamshire Council	0300 131 6000	www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk
BC Councillors	Steve Bowles	07808 531156 steve.bowles@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
	Mike Collins	01296 632039 mike.collins@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Environmental Health (fly tipping)	01296 585605	
Highways	01296 486630	www.buckscc.gov.uk
MP for Aylesbury	Laura Kyrke-Smith	laura.kyrkesmith.mp@parliament.uk

MISCELLANEOUS

All Saints Friends, Buckland	01296 630454	peter.elwin@elwins.net
Aston Clinton Ladies Group	01296 630740	
Aston Clinton U3A		www.astonclinton.u3asite.uk
Horticultural Society	01296 633376	www.astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk
Royal British Legion	01296 632039	
SSAFA Forces Help	01296 631030	
Turpins Charity	01296 630162	www.turpinscharity.org.uk
Wendover Heights Veterinary Centre	01296 623439	www.whvc.co.uk
Women's Institute	01296 706908	b.d.ac.wi@gmail.com

Aston Clinton Ladies Group

AC Ladies Group has now moved to the Baptist Church in Green End Street, Aston Clinton with meetings starting at 8.00pm.

Established for 50 years, we are a very friendly group and would like to welcome you all to join us. Tea/coffee and biscuits are served during the evening along with a raffle.

Wednesday, February 18

Philippa Radford-Hancock will be giving us a talk on The Red Cross.

Wednesday, March 18

A Flower demonstration by the wonderful Val Truby. All flower arrangements made during the evening will be raffled, with money raised on the night going to The Florence Nightingale Hospice.

Wendy Perkins

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Hidden Gems Quiz

We hope you enjoyed the first picture in this new series for Village Life. In case you have not found it yet, this bas-relief plaque of Gordon Smith can be found on the wall of the Churchill Hall, just inside the entrance to Aston Clinton park.



Gordon was something of a local celebrity in Aston Clinton by the time he died in 1972, having kept the streets of the village tidy for over 25 years. Since then, he has been further commemorated by having Gordon Smith Close, off Chapel Drive, named after him. Now that our complete Village Life archive is available online, you can read more about the story on pages 6-7 of issue 18, February/ March 2014.

Our next picture is below - any ideas? See the next issue for the answer.



Richard Vincent

Mother's Day Remembrance



Sunday 15 March
The Hampden Chapel at Chilterns Crematorium
10am - 1pm

*Join us if you would like a space to reflect and
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**Buckinghamshire
Council**

Horticultural Society

Happy anniversary year to us! In 2026 we are marking 70 years since the Society was founded with a series of fantastic talks, celebratory social events and, of course, our popular Spring and Summer shows.



We are keen to make this year even more special by encouraging new members to join us. Whether you have a window box or a large garden, are just starting to discover the joys of growing plants or are an experienced horticulturalist, we offer something of interest to all. Membership is just £5 for the whole year and provides free entry to our monthly talks, Summer and Christmas socials, member's discount on our organised garden visits, and a regular newsletter with details of events and special offers. You can join by coming along to one of our monthly meetings or by emailing info@astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk.



We would also love to see more entrants at our annual shows. We have classes for growers, bakers, artists, crafts people and children, for novices and those with more experience. Do come along to a monthly meeting or the show entry night for help and advice if you have any questions about how or what to enter. The shows are part of the village heritage and everyone is welcome to take part, so give it a go in 2026!

Monthly Meetings

Held in the Anthony Hall on the second Wednesday of the month, starting at 7.30pm, coming up this Spring we have:

February 11 – *Monthly Talk*, 'Lindengate – Let's all Grow Together' by Andy Grant and Jacqui Greenham. The value of gardening as a support to mental health and wellbeing is now widely recognised and is at the centre of the Lindengate charity's aims.

March 11 – *Monthly Talk*, 'Daisies, Dahlias and Dendranthemas' by the very popular and knowledgeable Sandy Primrose, giving us all new ideas for what to grow in our gardens to add colour and interest.

Saturday, March 14 – 7pm – our first special 70th Anniversary event: Dinner & Entertainment with the highly talented and amusing Neil Gurney. Further details and booking www.astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk/.

Thursday, March 26 – 6pm-7.45pm – *Spring Show Entry Night, Anthony Hall* – your chance to put your entries in – committee members will be available to assist if you are uncertain which class to enter. Entries can also be made online. As part of our anniversary celebrations we will also be contacting local organisations, offering them the chance to display a vase of flowers representing their organisation. Full details will be on our website.

Saturday, March 28 – 2pm Spring Show & Plant Sale, Aston Clinton School. Enter, come along and admire the exhibits, buy plants and enjoy refreshments and chat.

April 8 – 7.30pm – *Monthly Talk*, 'Making space for Wildlife' by naturalist John Tyler, who will offer simple ways to make even a small garden more attractive to wildlife and more interesting for us, including design, choosing plants and managing your garden in a wildlife-friendly way.

Follow us on Facebook for reminders.

The start of the year is an exciting time for gardeners, seeing the Spring flowers emerge, planning what to grow, sowing seeds and visiting garden centres and open gardens to get new ideas. But what else should you be doing over the next couple of months?

Gardening Tips

February

- Divide large clumps of snowdrops and winter aconites after flowering, also congested herbaceous perennials and grasses and replant to start new colonies and share surplus with friends.
- Prune winter-blooming shrubs such as mahonia, winter jasmine and heathers once they've finished flowering.
- Cut back deciduous ornamental grasses such as Miscanthus and other perennials left for winter interest.
- Protect lily, delphinium and hosta shoots from slugs and snails before they appear with night-time hunts.
- Check and repair pergolas and arches if needed and rub down and treat wooden garden furniture when dry. Only use paints and preservatives in a well-ventilated area.

March

- Finish pruning roses early in the month and plant new roses and other shrubs and climbers.
- Sow wildflower seeds in trays or modules for your own mini-meadow and leave a few dandelions to help early bees.
- Sow tomatoes, chillies, sweet peppers and aubergines in pots indoors.
- Sow sweet peas in deep pots and keep them frost-free in a greenhouse or sunny windowsill for a colourful display and blooms for picking later in the summer.
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs in groups for a good display. Bulbs are one of the easiest and most rewarding garden plants to grow. Gladioli, lilies and Eucomis are great for adding summer interest.

- Buy young herbs to plant in containers – so much cheaper in the long-run than buying packets from a supermarket.
- Mow the lawn on a dry day if needed. For the first mow choose the highest blade setting, to avoid choking the mower with clippings. If the grass is really long and you need to trim it first, rake up the cut grass, before going over with the mower.
- Keep putting out food for garden birds, as nesting season starts.

Gardens to visit

Winter can be a great time to visit gardens to see early spring flowers with February being the best time to see snowdrops. We have re-published below a number of the gardens nearby that are renowned for their snowdrop collections including:

Thenford, near Banbury

Grown in Thenford's woodlands and churchyard for decades, snowdrops carpet the ground with a wash of white flowers each February. Expanded over the years, the collection now has over 600 species and cultivars. The garden is owned by the Heseltine family and is open on limited dates during the year, with four open days in January/February. Check the website www.thenfordarboretum.com for further information and ticket availability.

Benington Lordship, near Stevenage

Benington Lordship's grounds come alive in February with winter-flowering shrubs, hellebores and naturalised snowdrops. The Norman keep and moat create a lovely background with acer, cornus, and willow stems in various colours. A century-old planting, the snowdrop path presents a striking show of common and double snowdrop species. The centrepiece of the exhibit is an assortment of both common and unusual snowdrops. For further information and open days, see www.beningtonlordship.co.uk.

Stowe, Buckinghamshire

Designed by Capability Brown, this picture-perfect Georgian garden is swathed in snowdrops in February – so much so, the National Trust has called them 'Stowedrops'. Explore recently reinstated paths through Lamport Garden and enjoy views across the lakes and beyond. Go to the National Trust website for more information www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

Waddesdon Manor

Waddesdon has an enchanting display with its 120,000 Galanthus bulbs (not verified by the Society) – waddesdon.org.uk.

The National Garden Scheme website is a good place to find more information about other local open gardens – www.ngs.org.uk. We regularly update our Facebook group with the open gardens in Bucks and Herts. Why not join the group – just search for Aston Clinton, Buckland & Drayton Beauchamp Horticultural Society.

*Happy New Year to you all!
Your Horticultural Committee*

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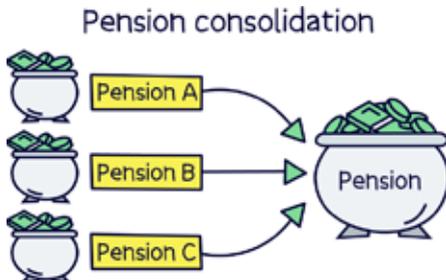
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Don't Lose Track

It's easy to forget about old pension accounts, especially if you've had multiple jobs. Consolidating reduces the chance of losing track of any of your money.

Better Options

Modern pension plans often have better investment choices or benefits than older ones. By consolidating, you might gain access to those better options.



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Simplified Inheritance

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If you are considering consolidating, it's important for every plan you have be reviewed separately and on their own merits as there could be valuable benefits on some which would be lost if transferred. We spend a lot of our time analysing plans and providing advice on pension plan consolidation, which often gives our clients very useful information on how their future looks financially. We make no charge for an initial conversation and/or meeting and there is no obligation to use us so if you have built up pensions that you are not sure how to best manage, call us for an informal chat.



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Windsor End, Beaconsfield, HP9 2SQ**

Wednesday 18th February, 10am-2pm (last entry 1:30pm)

Prestwood Village Hall, 1 Wycombe Rd, Prestwood, HP16 0NZ

Wednesday 18th Feb. (eve), 5pm-7:30pm (last entry 7pm)

**Haddenham Village Hall, Banks Park,
Haddenham, Bucks, HP17 8EE**

Thursday 19th February, 10am-2pm (last entry 1:30pm)

Wingrave Community Centre, Church St, Aylesbury, HP22 4PE

Thursday 19th Feb. (eve), 5pm-7:30pm (last entry 7pm)

The White Hill Centre, White Hill, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1AG

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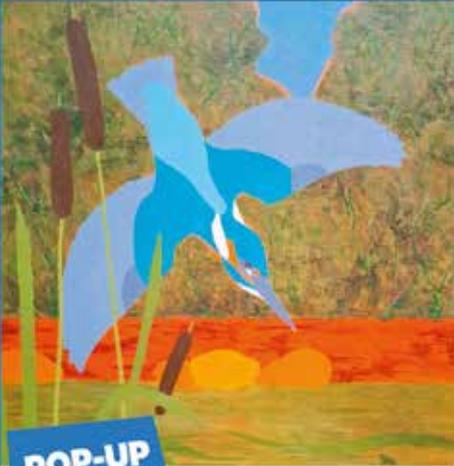
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