

The Three Villages Magazine

COVERING GREAT AMWELL, ST MARGARETS AND STANSTEAD ABBOTTS



Building Community in Print and Online
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Issue 12

December 2024

IN THIS ISSUE...

- Find out all about our amazing cover artists from local schools!
- Learn more about an award-winning charity: SPACE Hertfordshire
- Discover what's on over Christmas at The 3 Churches Benefice

Price: £1.00



Advent & Christmas 2024

Advent Carols



Sunday 1st December
4pm at St James,
Stanstead Abbots

Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th December
2–6pm at St Mary the Virgin,
St Margarets



Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 15th December
6.30pm at St John the Baptist,
Great Amwell



Sunday 22nd December
6.30pm at St Andrew,
Stanstead Abbots

The Christmas Journey

The Nativity Story Reimagined

Tuesday 24th December
3pm at St Margarets
Train Station
Ending at St Andrew,
Stanstead Abbots



Christmas Eve Midnight

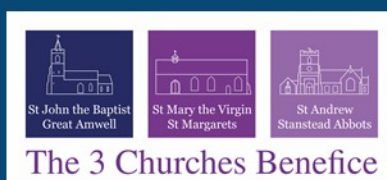
Holy Communion



Tuesday 24th December
11.30pm at St John the Baptist,
Great Amwell

Christmas Day Service

Wednesday 25th December
10.30am at St Andrew,
Stanstead Abbots





The Three Villages Magazine

COVERING GREAT AMWELL, ST MARGARETS AND STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

Issue 12

December 2024

From the Editor...



Cover shows Schools
Christmas Art
Competition Winners

Welcome to the December Issue! The Three Villages Magazine is a joint venture between the three Parish Councils of Great Amwell, St Margarets and Stanstead Abbots, and The 3 Churches Benefice. It is intended as a community resource that is accessible to everyone. The online and print formats provide a platform to share local news and information, showcase local talent and support local businesses.

In this issue, along with our regular features, we also have a Charity Focus on SPACE Hertfordshire, the latest update on the

Neighbourhood Plan, the next instalment of our Local Historic Faces & Places series and another peak into what goes on at The Maltings!

In a change to our usual photographic cover, this issue features the winning entries to our Schools Christmas Art Competition. We think you'll agree it looks great. Find out more about the competition on page 3. If you would like to enter a photograph for the next cover, please send your images to threevillagesmagazine@gmail.com. We are looking for seasonal images of the local area.

Do you have an interesting story or an upcoming event to promote? We would love to hear from you! Looking ahead to next year, the approximate deadlines for submissions are: 6th January (March Issue), 3rd April (June Issue), 3rd July (September Issue) and 3rd October (December Issue). Alternatively, we can also promote your upcoming event/share your news on our News & Events blog. Please do get in touch!

Continued thanks are offered to Willowthorpe Care Home, our generous sponsors. We have also been kindly supported by grants from East Herts Council and Stanstead Abbots Parish Council.

Please do check out our website (www.thethreevillages.com), subscribe to our News & Events blog for all live events and important up-to-date news, and follow us on Facebook.

Thank you for your continued support.

Anna Bond, Editor

THE THREE VILLAGES COMMITTEE

Anna Bond	Rosemary Imroth
Julia Davies	Clare Maynard
Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest	Lyn Paddon

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The Three Villages Magazine

FROM THE VICAR

*Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright...
'round yon Virgin mother and child!
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace....*



CALM
and
BRIGHT



I wonder if your December is looking calm and bright at the moment? Over the last few years, the number of things that have become attached to Christmas has increased exponentially! You could start with Prince Albert and his tradition of Christmas trees, or the Victorians who discovered the joy of Christmas cards, or Clement Clarke Moore's poem that begins 'Twas the night before Christmas...' and brought Father Christmas into the top spot in advertising everywhere! There are so many traditions that have been collected as, Christmas after Christmas, we have tried to celebrate harder and better than last year!

I wonder what new traditions you have adopted over the years? In the last few years I have started sending email Christmas cards with a donation to the Holy Trinity Night Shelter instead. Of course that has meant giving up sending traditional Christmas cards. I wonder if you have given up some traditions, because quite frankly there's not enough time or room to keep everything and still have room for new ones! Was it a good letting go, or do you miss the old traditions?



There is so much to look forward to in this season, and despite loving the old things (Advent Carols at St James, Carols by Candlelight, Midnight Mass, for starters), I also love the new things. Last year we had our first Benefice Christmas Tree Festival and welcomed 130 people over the weekend to the ancient church of St Mary's. We're all geared up for this year with the new addition of a Christmas Gift Tree for children whose families who may be struggling this Christmas. Please do come along!

In all the things we love about Christmas, old and new, sometimes the most important thing is to go back to the basics, back to the beginning. Christmas is all about the birth of the baby Jesus, the Light of the World. Where does he feature in your Christmas? I wonder whether he has been pushed out, left off the list, or never really seemed that relevant. But if he is part of Christmas, or might be, and you want to explore that, then do join us this Christmas. Our biggest Christmas service isn't in church, it's on the High Street. It starts at St Margarets train station at 3pm on Christmas Eve. We tell the story of the arrival of the baby Jesus, singing carols and walking along the High Street, visiting the inns to see if they have any room! Last year we had 175 people celebrating with us, not including those in the pub who got visited by carol singers! And this year we really are expecting the donkey to join us!



*Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light,
Radiant beams from the holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth...*

Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest
Priest in Charge, The 3 Churches Benefice




St John the Baptist
Great Amwell


St Mary the Virgin
St Margarets


St Andrew
Stanstead Abbots

The 3 Churches Benefice

SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS ART COMPETITION

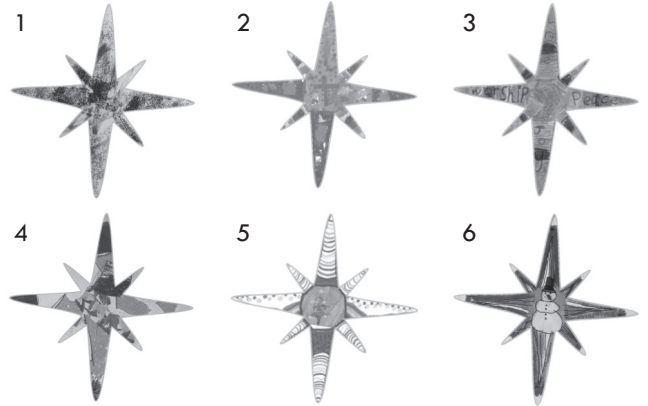
Our cover this issue proudly displays the winners of our Schools Christmas Art Competition. After the success of our Christmas art competition last year, we once again asked the schools if they would like to take part in a 'Christmas Star Competition'. The students who took part didn't let us down! The creativity of the designs made it really hard to pick the winners, but we offer congratulations to...

WINNERS (in school order)

1. Yoela (Year 7, age 11), Amwell View School
2. Yusuf (Year 3, age 7), St Andrew's Primary School
3. Kennedy (Year 2, age 6), St John the Baptist Primary School

RUNNERS UP (in school order)

4. Noah (Year 5, age 9), Amwell View School
5. Harriet (Year 4, age 8), St Andrew's Primary School
6. Alesya (Year 4, age 8), St John the Baptist Primary School



The winning designs will feature on The Three Villages tree at the upcoming Christmas Tree Festival held in St Mary's Church on Hoddesdon Road (see below for the details).

Do keep your eyes open for these special stars as we hope to use them, along with all the other stars that were entered into the competition, to decorate Stanstead Abbots high street! Why not see how many you can spot.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the competition. You did yourselves and your schools proud!



The 3 Churches Benefice



Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th December 2024
2-6pm

St Mary's Church
Hoddesdon Road, St Margarets, SG12 8EG

Come and see the beautiful trees decorated by local groups,
organisations and businesses

FREE ENTRY

Festive fun for all the family!



Seasonal Refreshments



Raffle



Any proceeds will go towards the work and upkeep of the church

The Three Villages Magazine

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Great Amwell Parish Council

The project to provide four new bus shelters (two on both sides of the A1170 within the parish) has now been completed (in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and Van Hage Garden Centre). The picture (right) shows the shelter opposite the garden centre.



The Parish Council has funds available to award community grants. If any organisation wishes to apply for grant support for a community project/event then please contact the authority to obtain an application form: clerk@greatamwellparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The Parish Council has few statutory powers. Its focus is on representing local views to the principal authorities (Herts County Council and East Herts District Council), particularly on development control matters (e.g. planning applications and instances where it considers a breach of planning control may have occurred). It is also the case that parishioners can make representations directly.

On issues such as litter picking, anti-social behaviour and refuse collection, please contact East Herts District Council (<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/contactusform>).

Your local District Councillors are: Peter Boylan (peter.boyland@eastherts.gov.uk) and Joseph Dumont (joseph.dumont@eastherts.gov.uk). Your local County Councillor is Jonathan Kaye (jonathan.kaye@hertfordshire.gov.uk).

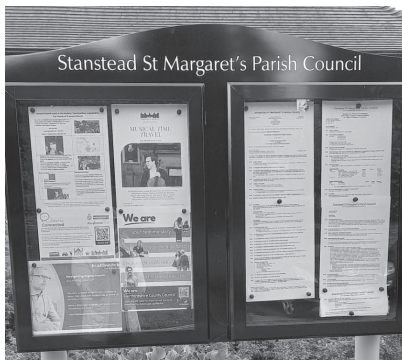
Great Amwell Parish Council meets every second Thursday in each month (except in August) in the Parish Hall, Hillside Lane at 8.00pm. The Annual meetings of the Parish and Parish Council in May commence at 7.30pm.

Jeff Hughes

St Margarets Parish Council

Councillors of both St Margarets and Stanstead Abbots met with the newly appointed MP, Lewis Cocking, in October to discuss issues that parishioners have raised. He is setting up office and will be shortly holding surgeries in the area. Further details of these will follow.

Our Councillors also approved the Draft Neighbourhood Plan for submission to East Herts District Council as we move towards Regulation 16. You can read more about the plan at: <https://www.stansteadabbotsneighbourhoodplan.uk>.



Following requests from residents, our new D-Day commemorative bench was installed at the Hoddesdon Road bus stop opposite St Mary's church. (You can read more about this on page 11). We also have purchased a new noticeboard, which is now in situ on Hoddesdon Road, outside the Nigel Copping Community Building.

We provided a grant to the 1st Stanstead Abbots Brownies to help towards travel for a trip they were attending in November, so we hope the Brownies had a fun day out. If you want to apply for a grant, you can find out more on our website <https://www.stansteadstmargaretsparishcouncil.gov.uk/the-parish-council/grants/>.

Our work continues with EHDC/HCC to address the flooding issues in our parish and residents are urged to continue to report problematic areas with Hertfordshire County Council so they can build up a record of the most seriously affected areas.

Christina Whellams

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Stanstead Abbotts Parish Council

Volunteers Needed

The Parish Council would love to hold more community voluntary events in the village, but we need more volunteers to make this happen. Our group of volunteers is slowly growing and we would love it to grow even more. If you would like to add your name to the volunteering email distribution list please email clerk@stansteadabbottsparishcouncil.gov.uk. Volunteering in your local community can bring many benefits, such as helping you meet new friends, improving your self-esteem and providing you with a sense of community.



Christmas Lights

December isn't too far away, and the Parish Council is busy organising the Christmas lights that will be switched on on 2nd December. The Christmas lights cost around £6500 a year, which is one of the council's biggest single expenditure items in the annual budget. Other large cost items include the CCTV, which is around £6000 a year to maintain, and the maintenance of the High Street playground. All these high-cost items help contribute to the village being a safe and welcoming place to live, and the Parish Council work hard every year to ensure that they have enough money to provide all these services. The Parish Council would like to wish all residents a peaceful Christmas period and a very Happy New Year.



Sarah Neighbour

FREE HOME DECARBONISATION PLAN AND UP TO £3,000 IN GRANT FUNDING

For a limited time, East Herts Council is offering free home decarbonisation plans** worth £250, and access to further match funding to subsidise low carbon measures for your home.

A total of 50 plans are on offer on a first come first served basis from September 2024. Upon completion of a plan, further funding of up to £2,000 or £3,000 is available to put towards installation of solar panels or an air source heat pump, respectively.



If you have been considering installing solar or an air source heat pump and perhaps have existing plans or are saving towards installing them, this is a fantastic opportunity to make those plans a reality while understanding the full energy saving picture for your home.

For further information and how to apply visit www.superhomes.org.uk/beds-herts or call 01908 699991 (option 2).



Once in receipt of a plan, East Herts will match fund the installation cost, provided all works are complete, invoiced and evidenced before March 31st 2025.

** Surveys are conducted by a qualified Retrofit Consultant endorsed or directly employed by the National Energy Foundation (NEF). Bespoke Home Energy Retrofit Options (HERO) plans are produced providing independent advice on retrofit measures.

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THE LOCAL JOURNEY OF WINTER BARLEY

The English countryside, particularly in the East, is a tapestry of picturesque landscapes and fertile grain fields. Beyond their beauty, these fields are the heart of a thriving agricultural industry, producing some of the finest crops in the world. One such crop, essential to our daily lives, is winter barley.

Cultivating winter barley

Winter barley, as the name suggests, is cultivated through the winter months. It's a hardy grain that is typically 'drilled' in September and produces high-quality yields and robust husks, ideal for the malting process, prized by maltsters and our brewing partners alike. British barley, in particular, is renowned globally, certified as AUKM (Assured UK Malt) by the Maltsters Association of Great Britain. For over 200 years, we have been sourcing and roasting barley to create a range of specialty malts used in the brewing process. Our commitment to local sourcing is unwavering; almost all the barley we use is grown within 30 miles of our maltings.



Winter barley drilling

A local partnership: Great Munden Farm, Ware

This journey begins with our farmers. One such partner is Ben Pledger of Great Munden Farm in Ware, a family run farm since the 1950s. Ben has been the Farm Manager for over three years, bringing with him eight years of experience as an ergonomist at the farm. They produce approximately 800 tonnes of winter barley annually, in addition to a range of other crops, including wheat, oilseed rape, winter beans and spring barley.



Great Munden Farm, Dane End

The growing season: care and maintenance



Ben Pledger (Great Munden Farm)

Throughout the growing season, meticulous care is essential to ensure the crop's success. Ben tends to the barley, ensuring it receives the necessary nutrients and protection from pests and diseases. 'When drilling winter barley, we work at a rate of about 5 hectares an hour, completing an average field in approximately 2 hours,' he explains. 'That might sound fast, but the process doesn't stop at a single field; it's an early start to ensure all the winter barley is drilled in a single day across the farm.'

The timing is crucial. 'Winter barley must be sown in late September,' Ben emphasises. 'Delaying it into October can significantly reduce yields. The soil moisture needs to be just right, not too wet or dry. Wind is also a critical factor, as we must apply weed spray before drilling. If it's too windy, we simply can't spray, as it will get blown away, so it's a delicate balance of all weather conditions.'

The seed must be drilled at the correct depth too, with a margin of only 8 millimetres to work with. Maintaining and calibrating equipment from field to field is crucial, as soil conditions can vary. 'We drill the barley into the soil at a depth of between 32 and 40 millimetres,' Ben explains. 'Any deviation can make a big difference! If it's too deep, the crop won't establish and grow. If it's too shallow, birds can peck it out, or the grain can come into contact with herbicide, damaging the crop.'

Through the winter to the harvest

Now that our barley has been drilled in, our partners at Great Munden Farm can take a breath. In the heart of winter, our barley, carefully drilled is steadily maturing. Although the work may not be over, this period between drilling and harvest is critical. Ben and the team will be meticulously monitoring the crop, assessing growth, pest control and soil health throughout the seasons to ensure healthy growth through the spring, and preparing our barley for our July harvest. This cycle of growth and renewal is a testament to the dedication and expertise of our local farmers over centuries. Their commitment to the quality of their crops is essential to the production of our hand-crafted malts from field to glass.

James Marinos, Marketing and Sales Manager at French & Jupps

CRYSTAL CATERING: YOUR PARTNER IN EVENT PLANNING

Planning a special occasion can be a daunting task. From finding the perfect venue to curating a memorable menu, the details can quickly pile up! However, when it comes to simplifying that process, local caterer and chef, Kevin Lampard, brings a wealth of experience to the table. With over 20 years of experience in the catering industry, Kevin Lampard of Crystal Catering has perfected the art of creating delicious and affordable buffets that has been impressing guests for just as long!

Based here in The Maltings Business Centre, Stanstead Abbots, Crystal Catering offers a wide variety of cold buffet options to suit every taste. From classic sandwiches and cheese boards to Asian-inspired snacks, there's something for everyone. If you have specific dietary needs or preferences, they're always happy to accommodate.

Kevin Lampard says, 'We aim to be more than just a caterer; we want to be your partner in making your event a success. That's why we offer a personalised approach, tailoring each buffet to your specific needs and preferences. From delivery and setup, including all the necessary plates, napkins, cutlery and serving utensils, to the clean-up at the end of the day; we handle all the details so you can focus on enjoying your celebration.'

'Whether you have a specific vision in mind or need guidance, we're always ready to work with our customers to help create a bespoke menu that reflects your individual preferences,' he adds. 'We work hard to make sure that our party food is safe and enjoyable for everyone. Whether it's for a religious exception, allergies or any other reason, we'll make sure our caterers cater specifically to your needs.'

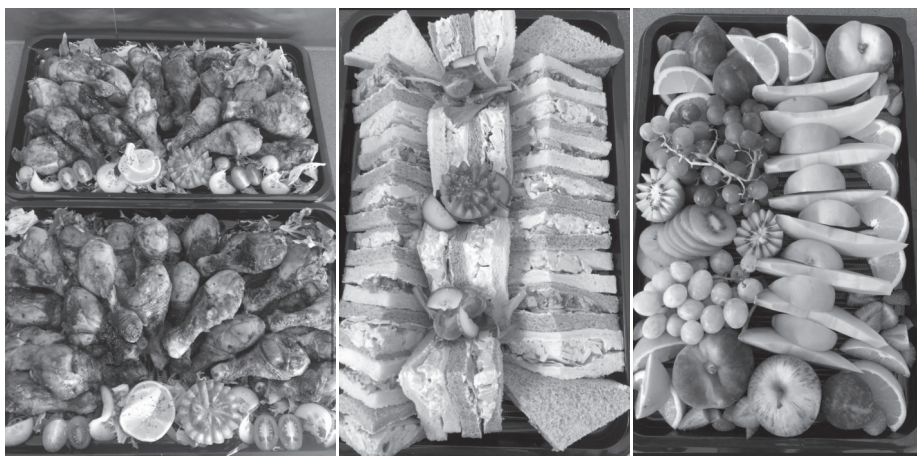
'One thing we're particularly proud of is our involvement in the local community,' Kevin shares. 'We've had the privilege of catering for various events, including weddings, charity functions, local council and charity gatherings at the Business Centre, and even lunches for NHS staff. It's always a pleasure to give back to the community where we live and work.'

With over 20 years in the industry, Kevin Lampard's passion and dedication to creating delicious food is evident in every dish. As a local business, Crystal Catering is committed to serving the community and providing exceptional service with devotion to quality and customer satisfaction reflected in their 5-star rating from East Herts Council.



Do you have an event coming up?

Why not contact Kevin Lampard at Crystal Catering to discuss your event and receive a personalised quote. You can reach them through their website or by phone.



Let Crystal Catering take the stress out of your next gathering and provide your guests with a memorable culinary experience.



Email: crystalcatering@mail.com

Tel: 07862355298

Website: www.crystal-catering.co.uk

22A, The Maltings Business Centre,
Roydon Rd, Stanstead Abbots, Ware
SG12 8HG

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CHARITY FOCUS: SPACE HERTFORDSHIRE

SPACE – Supporting neurodivergent families in Hertfordshire



At SPACE, we are passionate about creating a supportive and inclusive community for neurodivergent children, young people and their families. Based in Hertfordshire, our charity is dedicated to empowering and supporting the parents and carers of children and young people with neurodiverse conditions like autism, ADHD and dyslexia, while also providing guidance and resources for the professionals who work with them. We currently support over 10,000 local families and work tirelessly to increase understanding, reduce isolation and build confidence, not only for neurodivergent children and young people, but for the wider community as well. We do this through a range of services including 1–1 family support, peer-based support groups, training and workshops, over 30 different monthly events and activities for young people, and our Lending SPACE community hub and library.

Lending SPACE, located in the Maltings Business Centre in Stanstead Abbots, is unique in Hertfordshire. It is a free service where families can borrow a wide range of sensory and practical resources designed to support neurodivergent children and young people. The items we provide can make a big difference in helping families find what works for their child without having to make an often expensive financial investment.

From sensory equipment, such as weighted blankets and fidget toys, to communication aids and calming tools, Lending SPACE is a treasure trove of resources that can help make life a little easier. Open Monday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 9:30–12:30 Lending SPACE is a lifeline for many local families who might otherwise struggle to find or afford these specialised resources, as well as for families who are looking for somewhere to stay and play where their family is welcome and accepted. For many parents, Lending SPACE offers more than a lending library and a safe space for their children – it provides a sense of community and connection. Parents and carers are able to meet others facing similar challenges, sharing experiences, advice and support. We regularly receive feedback from families who say how much they value the friendships and networks they've developed.

We are also proud to host a number of inclusive activities and events at many locations in Hertfordshire, including our popular Lego Club in Stanstead Abbots. This club is much more than just an opportunity to build with Lego bricks – it's a chance for neurodivergent children to engage in a fun, creative and social environment while interacting with other children like them. The club is run by supportive staff who understand the needs of neurodivergent children, and the emphasis is on creating a relaxed and accepting environment where children can be themselves, make new friends, and build confidence and self-esteem.

At SPACE, we believe that every neurodivergent individual deserves to be understood, supported and celebrated, and enjoy partnering with other organisations who share a similar outlook. For example, we recently partnered with Captain Fantastic to pilot bespoke parties for children with special educational needs and disabilities with the aim of creating a fun and safe environment where every child can enjoy the magic of a party at their own pace and in their own way.

For the first time this year we organised a sponsored walk through the beautiful countryside surrounding our villages in partnership with another local charity Helping Herts. Over 35 people took part in either a fun family 5k or a circular half marathon walk starting and ending in Stanstead Abbots and we hope to have even more people walking with us in 2025!

We invite any local families or businesses interested in learning more about our services, donating, joining our walk next year or getting involved in some other way to visit our website at

www.spaceherts.org.uk or drop us a line at admin@spaceherts.org.uk. We look forward to meeting you!



Suzie Daniels, Communications and Events Manager

UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



St Andrew's Church of England (VC) Primary School

Our new academic year started off with a wonderful welcome service at St Andrew's Church for our new Reception class who were taken to the church by their Year 6 buddies. Rev'd Sarah led the service and all of the Reception class were presented with a special book from the church. It was a lovely start to the new year.

Having achieved good results throughout our school last year, we have continued the momentum for improvement and are focussing on how we best support children not achieving expected levels. Our new strategy and the planned curriculum can be found on our school website: <https://standrews323.herts.sch.uk/>.

Throughout the term we have had a number of exciting school trips, including the school choir to St Alban's Cathedral to participate in the Diocese Harvest Festival, Year 6 visit to the Walled Garden, Stanstead Bury; Year 5 to STEM Discovery Centre; Year 4 to the British Museum; and Year 3 and 4 have enjoyed a workshop led by Hertford Museum, where they became historical detectives looking for clues around mysterious objects. Our Reception class have had an exciting trip to Welwyn's Pizza Express to see how pizzas are made. All of these trips help to give our children a 'wow' moment to either consolidate or begin areas of learning.

There have also been plenty of sporting opportunities including tag rugby lessons, football matches and opportunities for our younger children to have a taste of badminton and gymnastics. We have also had a visit from the Corum Life Tent to present Personal, Social and Health sessions to the classes, and we have had Internet Safety sessions led by the 'Two Johns.' It has been a very busy term.

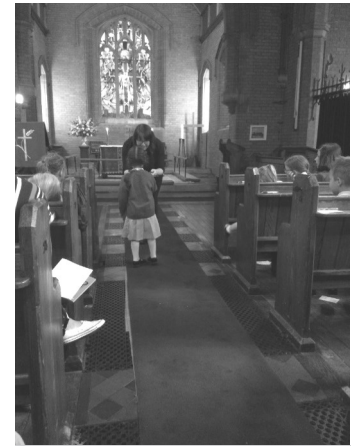


Corum Life Tent

We are now preparing for our Nativity Plays, which are always a beautiful way to end the Autumn Term.

Sadly, they will also herald the ending of my Headship of this wonderful school as I am retiring and handing over the reins to our newly appointed Headteacher, Mr Michael Speed. It has been an honour to serve as the Headteacher of St Andrew's for the past seven years. It is a very special place made more so by the calibre of the staff, children, parents/carers and wider community, and as such it will always have a special place in my heart. Thank you to everyone who has helped and supported the school over the seven years of my headship.

Helen Gillingham, Headteacher



Welcome Service at
St Andrew's Church

Warm Welcome Spaces

COFFEE MORNING

The Wilshere Hall, St Andrew's Church
9.00–11.00am
Every Monday



COMMUNITY HUB DROP-IN

St Mary's Church, St Margarets
10.30–11.30am
Every Wednesday

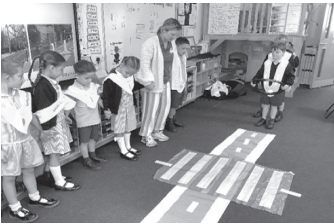
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UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



St John the Baptist CE VA Primary

We have made a busy start to the academic year here at St John's. It has been really lovely to welcome our new Reception children and their families to the school. We enjoyed a special service at St John the Baptist Church just for our new children and their families, welcoming them not only to the school but to their church. The children were all presented with a bible story book at the end of the service.



Our Year 2 children participated in a RAFT workshop to develop their road safety skills, keeping them safe while walking out and about in the villages. 'We had a road safety session in Year 2. We learnt about road signs and made them with chickpeas. We learnt how to cross the road safely and how to look and listen for cars. It was really fun,' reported Benjamin and Florence.

A group of 37 Year 5 and 6 pupils and four members of staff went on a residential trip to the Isle of Wight for a week. They spent the week based in a hotel in Sandown, traveling to various sites across the island each day. 'On Monday, we left school at 9:15am on our journey to the Isle of Wight. After a three-hour coach drive, we stopped off at the historic docks in Portsmouth. We ate our lunch and then looked round HMS victory. We saw the crow's nest, the kitchen and the cannons. We got back on the coach and drove to the ferry. When we got to the other side we drove to our hotel. On Tuesday, we looked around Whippingham Church, Osbourne House and went on the Steam Railway. On Wednesday, we drove to Amazon World and saw so many animals. Then we saw a glass-blowing demonstration. On Thursday, we looked around Carisbrooke Castle and Shanklin Chine. On Friday, we left and on the way back to school we stopped off at Fort Nelson. We arrived back at half past three. We had a great week.' Report by Finlay and Jessica.



The pupils in Key Stage 2, enjoyed an inspirational visit from the children's author Nazima Pathan, organised in partnership with The Book Nook. Nazima spoke to us about her first published book, *Dream Hunters*. She talked through how she had developed the ideas and then helped the children work together to write their own story. The children found the session very inspiring and have used the structure Nazima provided to carry on with their own work.

An inspirational start to the first five weeks of the academic year.

Lydia Hunt, Headteacher



Make Lunch Club

Looking for some festive fun for the kids?

Come along and join us at
Make Lunch Club!

WHEN?

12 to 2 pm
Monday 30th December
& Friday 3rd January

WHERE?

The Wilshere Hall
St Andrew's Church
Stanstead Abbots

To book a place, email
makelunch@3churches.net

UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



Amwell View School and Specialist Sports College

Amwell View School and Specialist Sports College celebrated Harvest Festival with their Upper School pupils on Wednesday 25th September with Senior Leader, Ellen-May Shipp leading the assembly and the Lower School pupils on the 2nd October 2024 lead by Headteacher, Neil Ward.

In preparation for the Harvest Festival Assemblies, two classes joined to have a shared snack, then they explored different fruits and vegetables. In their Art Lessons the pupils created their own designs of fruit and vegetables on paper plates, and during the assembly two classes at a time went to the front to show their creations.

RE lead Hannah said, 'Pupils enjoyed sharing their snacks with peers from different classes and creating artwork together. We sang some of our favourite Harvest songs such as Mr Scarecrow and Big, Red Combine Harvester.'

Headteacher, Neil Ward, said: 'It was wonderful to see the children celebrate this year's Harvest supported by so many family and friends. The children shared five Harvest songs and their art work, which they created with fruits and vegetables.'



Janet Warrington, School Business Manager

NEW D-DAY COMMEMORATIVE BENCH IN ST MARGARETS



As some of you may have noticed, there is a striking new bench in St Margarets!

St Margarets' Parish Council received a request from a resident asking if they could provide a bench at the bus stop opposite St Mary's Church on Hoddesdon Road. They agreed that a bench would be useful for residents, so chose a commemorative bench to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings on 6 June 1944.

Permission was sought from the Bus Infrastructure and Network Infrastructure Team within the Highways Department at Hertfordshire County Council to place the bench in its location and it was purchased from David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd

who specialise in street and park furniture. It was part funded with a £500 Locality Budget Scheme Grant awarded by Cllr Jonathan Kaye at Hertfordshire County Council and the remainder paid for by the Parish Council. Local resident Matthew King of MK Independent Ltd kindly donated materials and installed the bench.

It is really very beautiful and will give residents a place to stop and rest, while also remembering the brave souls who fought for their country and gave their lives for others.

I am sure you will all agree that this bench is a lovely and poignant addition to the village. Thanks go to the resident who suggested it and to the Parish Council for taking up the request.

The Three Villages Magazine

PUZZLES FROM QUIZMASTER TERRY COLLINS

CHRISTMAS INITIALS

Each set of initials represent the title of well-known Christmas songs, both old and new. How many can you solve?

1. JBR
2. TLDB
3. WW
4. FTONY
5. FTS



6. OLTOB
7. THATI
8. HX(WIO)
9. OCAYF
10. IBFC

WHO AM I?

Below are seven clues to a famous person. How many clues will you need to get the answer?

1. I was born in 1942.
2. I have been married four times and have nine children.
3. My daughter Laila followed in my footsteps.
4. I suffered with dyslexia.
5. I threw my gold medal in a river.
6. I changed both my name and my religion.
7. I was considered to be the best looking in my profession.



CHRISTMAS QUIZ

1. What date is St Steven's Day?
2. In Charles Dickens novel *A Christmas Carol*, what is the name of Scrooge's dead business partner?
3. London's Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is traditionally given by which country?
4. In the song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', my true love brought to me nine... what?
5. Name the original eight reindeer from the 'Twas the Night before Christmas' poem.
6. Which Christmas carol includes the lyrics 'To save us all from Satan's power, when we were gone astray'?
7. The character Jack Skellington appears in which 1993 Tim Burton film?
8. What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant?
9. In the inspirational 1946 film, *It's a Wonderful Life* what is the name of George Bailey's guardian angel?
10. What are the names of the three wise men said to have brought gifts to the baby Jesus?
11. What is New Year's Eve called in Scotland?
12. What Christmas item was invented by London baker and wedding cake specialist, Tom Smith, in 1847?
13. In what modern country is St Nicholas's birthplace and home town?
14. Who wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*?
15. From which country does the poinsettia plant originate?
16. Who is officially credited as the author of 'Auld Lang Syne'?
17. How many points does a snowflake have?
18. What is the name of the cake traditionally eaten in Italy at Christmas?
19. Which record was a Christmas number 1 in 1975 and 1991?
20. If a person was to receive all the gifts from the song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', how many gifts in total would they have?



MEET A LOCAL: ROB AND LINDA GIFFORD

Rob and Linda first met as teenagers at a party in Theydon Bois, but 17 years ago they moved with their son and daughter from Old Nazeing Road to Stanstead Abbots. They had often walked in the area and particularly wanted to live close to public transport so their then teenage children could travel about independently. They love the historical aspects of the village, the charm of many buildings and the friendliness of the residents who were welcoming from the moment they moved in. The house came with a shed that could be converted to a studio for Linda, plus a workshop for Rob and a suitable space upstairs for Rob to practise the drums.



Rob worked for BT and Linda was teaching art and design when they lived in Broxbourne – until the arrival of their children when unusually for that time Rob was the one who stayed at home, while Linda continued full-time teaching. Rob not only worked on his allotment, but he also studied English, Philosophy and Ecology in the evenings at this busy time. Rob's skills as a drummer led to an invitation to team-teach a drama class at Turnford College. It was a class for SEND students and Rob found that not only did he enjoy communicating with SEND students, but that his success in that role was noticed by other members of staff there who suggested more roles for him. Before long he was working there full-time teaching a variety of subjects including Citizenship, community music (which involved visiting day centres), coppicing (which meant taking students out to Broxbourne Woods) and wood turning after he had learned it himself from a colleague.

In 2000, Linda changed the course of her career from teaching to studying Business and Digital Skills at Hatfield University before becoming a full-time textile designer. There followed some years of exhibiting and selling at large craft fairs and exhibitions: items such as cushions, framed sections of designs, cards and pictures with manufacturing help from her sister, Maggie. Since retiring, she has continued in a more low-key way and many will have been to Linda's recent Open Studio, and many will have seen her stalls at other exhibitions such as the one at Courtyard Arts. Linda shows her work at the Visual Arts Exhibition at Living Crafts at Hatfield House, but she believes that what many people want now is the actual hands-on experience of making things rather than to purchase someone else's ready made products.

Rob also goes to Living Crafts where he demonstrates wood turning. Since the college was forced by government changes to stop providing training for SEND people after they had had 3 years' worth, Rob has joined a former colleague as a volunteer at Appleby Cottage. This is a smallholding run for the benefit of SEND young adults where Rob can continue his outdoor teaching and wood turning.

Rob has been able to synthesise many of his talents and skills in his voluntary work. He spends at least 4 hours a week at Ware Museum looking at what they have in store that relates to Stanstead Abbots in particular. Oddly, Rob didn't especially enjoy history at school, but he has been on the committee of the Stanstead Abbots Local History Society since it began a few years ago along with Linda. They are also both on the committee running the Stanstead Abbots Concert Society – formerly Ceilidh Society – which meets monthly between October and July in the Parish Hall. Rob has played the drums since the age of 11 and he recalls with pride a reference to him in the Guardian as 'the benchmark of folk drumming'. He still plays drums and the guitar, and he particularly enjoys playing with daughter, Beth. Linda has been learning the violin and is very interested in the collections of folk songs by Cecil Sharp. She also sings with the Hertford Choral Society, which delights audiences in East Herts.

Rob loves to see the pleasure the SEND students get from learning and making things, especially the communication through music that can reach even the deaf students. Linda loves creating, working on something until it is absolutely right, especially if there have been problems to solve along the way. If they were to be giving a dinner party they would happily invite local friends and it might well include some musical entertainment. To sum up their personalities, Rob feels he has an enquiring mind and Linda would say she pursues colour, design and patterns. What they value most about the village is the friendly people.

Julia Davies

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REGULAR CLUBS, GROUPS AND MEETINGS IN THE THREE VILLAGES

1st Stanstead Abbots Brownies: Mondays 5.45–7pm (The Wilshere Hall) for girls aged 7 to 10 years. Guider in charge: Helen Payne (01920 462676).

Great Amwell Scout Group: Squirrels: boys and girls aged 4–5 years old, Beavers: boys and girls aged 6–8 years old, Cubs: boys and girls aged 8–10½ years old, Scouts: boys and girls aged 10½–14 years old. All groups meet at Scout HQ, 142 London Road, Ware SG12 9NH. For details visit www.greatamwellscouts.org.uk or call 01920 320142.

1st Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets Scout Group: Age groups as above. All groups meet at Scout HQ, Marsh Lane, Stanstead Abbots SG12 8QT. For details visit www.stansteadabbottsscouts.org.uk or follow on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Community Hub Drop-in: Offers a safe space for anyone in the community who is in need of a listening ear or practical help. During winter months this is a Warm Welcome Space. Meets every Wednesday, 10:30–11:30am at St Mary's Church, St Margarets.

Bingo for the over 60s: Every Friday 2.30–4pm in Folly View Community Centre. New players welcome, just turn up.

Great Amwell Women's Club: Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday 7.30–10pm at the Parish Hall, Great Amwell. Club Secretary: Dulcie Fordham. Contact number for enquiries: 01920 466689 (Christine).

Herts Wheelers (Cycling Club): Weekly Sunday club rides for various abilities normally starting in Ware. Contact membership@herts-wheelers.org.uk.

The Amwell Society: Quarterly talks in the Parish Hall, Great Amwell, as well as trips, walks and activities locally. For details of membership contact William Brown on 01920 872450 (Chairman).

Stanstead Abbots Local History Society: Chairman, Rosemary James. Regular meetings for both members and non-members. For details visit: www.salhs.org.uk. For membership details email: admin@salhs.org.uk.

St Margaretsbury Tennis Club: A friendly club with social sessions on Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturday and Sunday mornings, plus a junior section, coaching available, and opportunity to play match tennis in local leagues. For details contact: secretary@stmargaretsburytennis.co.uk or come along to a social morning.

'Armchair Singers' for everyone: A chance to eat, drink, sing and quiz all in one afternoon. Fun, fun, fun. Held in the Nigel Copping Community Centre every Monday 1.30–3.30pm. Singing for health and well-being. All ages welcome. For more details please contact Gabby Hanley (07875221543).

St Margaretsbury Football Club: A Chartered Standard local football club for Youth, Ladies' and Men's football, with youth starting from 6 years upwards in non-competitive leagues, and more competitive as they move up into Under 18s', Ladies' and Men's Football. Contact: Club Secretary at <https://stmargaretsburyfc.leaguerepublic.com/contacts.html>.

Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall Table Tennis Club: A friendly club meeting on Friday afternoons from 2pm, and Thursday evenings from 7.30pm with the opportunity to play in local leagues. For further details please call 07841 583256 or email saphttc@yahoo.com – or just come along!

Carpet Bowls Club: Our Carpet Bowls club meets every Tuesday from 7pm in Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall. We are an all-inclusive sport, suitable for all ages and abilities. Our members range in age from 9 to 90. No need to bring any equipment, everything is provided. First night is free. Come along and give it a try! For more details contact Pete (Tel: 07429142525 / Email: pmcook1@hotmail.co.uk).

St Andrew's Church Card-making Group: We meet in The Wilshere Hall starting at 1pm on the first and third Tuesdays every month. The cost is £4 per session to cover materials used and two cards will be made each session. We have a break midway for refreshments, which is included in cost. New members welcome – please contact Janet Dance on 07941096834.

Just Friends: a group for widows, widowers and divorced or separated people. We meet as friends to support each other, arrange activities and share names of trusted tradespeople. Meeting every 2nd Tuesday and 4th Thursday. If interested, please contact Mary (maryhallett14@gmail.com / 07899 861297 or 01920 870527).

Bell Ringing at St John the Baptist, Great Amwell: We meet every Thursday at 7.30pm until 9.00pm. A new skill for all ages to stimulate the brain and keep you fit. Just come along or contact Frances Adams 07876 496654 / fmadams50@yahoo.co.uk.

Coffee and Coping Hertfordshire: A community support hub that aims to build community, curtail loneliness in the older generation and help support our veterans. Meeting every Wednesday 12–1.30pm & 5–6.30pm, and Friday 12–1.30pm, in The Ashlea Room at Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall.

St Margaretsbury Cricket Club: A friendly cricket club that welcomes all ages and abilities. Email info@stmcc.org.uk for more information.

If you would like to add a club, group or meeting to this list, please send details to print.threevillagesmagazine@gmail.com.

1ST STANSTEAD ABBOTTS BROWNIES

At the end of the summer term, we went away with 200 girls to Gilwell Scout Centre to celebrate 100 years of Ware Girlguiding. It was an amazing weekend! The girls did crate stacking, grass sledging and archery. We all had camp fire together and did an enormous wide game! Meanwhile, our pack went cycling, to the woods and sailing.

This term we have already visited Scotts Grotto in Ware and later on we are going away to sleep at Gulliver's Land up in Milton Keynes, where we will visit Father Christmas and do the Christmas lights trail.

If your daughter would like to join us, then please go to:
<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/> and click on 'Register your child'.

We would love to set up a Rainbow and a Guide group, but need more people to help. Have you recently come back from university, started working locally or newly retired and are looking for a something new to try? If yes, then pop in on a Monday night at The Wilshire Hall between 5.45 and 7pm and say hi! You'd be made very welcome! Or ring me on 07887 419799.

Helen Payne, Leader



STANSTEAD ABBOTTS SCOUT GROUP

Our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts have been out and about: you may have seen them in the village with poppy boxes, out for a hike down the canal or on a local knowledge expedition. We have also been engaged with our wider district, including winning the Ware and District Scout Nocturnal event, with our scouts walking 10km from 17:00–23:00 and partaking in seven bases around the local countryside!



However, we cannot do this without our wonderful volunteers who gain so much from being part of the group. Are you ready to embark on a thrilling journey of adventure, creativity and teamwork? We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our local Scout Group – Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are all after people to help shape the next generation of young adventurers! As a member of the volunteer team, you will be supporting young people aged 4–14 through unforgettable activities, fostering life skills, and, most importantly, having a fantastic time yourself while doing it.

From building dens in the woods, learning survival skills and camping under the stars, to crafting, cooking and mastering team challenges, the possibilities are endless. Our Squirrels (ages 4–6) love exploring the outdoors, while Beavers (ages 6–8) dive into fun crafts and games. Cubs (ages 8–10.5) thrive on problem-solving challenges and earning badges, and Scouts (ages 10.5–14) push their limits with hiking, climbing and adventurous expeditions.

You don't need to have previous experience – just a passion for inspiring young minds and a willingness to join in the fun! As a member of the volunteer team, you will build friendships, learn new skills and make lasting memories. Plus, you will have the chance to give back to our wonderful community in a rewarding way.



Ready to be part of our adventure? Get in touch today (info@stansteadabbottsscouts.org.uk) and help make a difference in the lives of local children! The best part? You'll have as much fun as they do!

Will Drury, Group Lead Volunteer

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POEMS BY RAY FISH



WINTER IS HERE



Autumn has gone, the winter is here.

The leaves have all fallen,

The trees are all bare.

There's digging to do and beds to clear

Before the snow starts falling here.

The winter beans have all been sown,

The Brussel sprouts are ready to eat,

The frost has made the parsnips sweet.



There's nice fat leeks and turnips too.

They'll be just right to put in the stew.



DIGGING THE GROUND



Digging the ground on a cold fresh morn

Makes the blood flow and gets you warm.

I've got in a rhythm and worked up a sweat,

I'll pop down the street and put on a bet.

Now it's time to have a brew,

Then I can dig and feel like new.

Now the diggings all done and manure all spread

It's time for some beer, then off home to bed.



by Ray Fish



RECIPE: STAINED GLASS BISCUITS

This is a really simple and magical biscuit recipe! It worked really well with my kids. They loved the transformation! Hang them on your tree to see the lights shine through.

INGREDIENTS

150g butter, softened

100g muscovado sugar

1 large egg

250g self-raising flour, plus extra for flouring

1 pinch of salt

1 tbsp mixed spice

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 pack boiled coloured sweets



METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4 and line a baking tray with grease-proof paper.
2. Whisk together the butter and sugar in a large bowl. Once lightened and creamy add the egg and mix thoroughly.
3. Sift in the flour then add salt, mixed spice and vanilla extract. Mix with a wooden spoon until you reach a biscuit dough consistency.
4. Turn the dough onto a floured work surface and roll out to about 1 cm thick. Cut out biscuit shapes (such as stars or Christmas trees) and place onto the lined baking tray (you may need more than one tray, or to cook in batches).
5. Using a smaller cutter or a small knife cut out the centre of each biscuit. Place a boiled sweet into the hole (cut in half if your hole is very small) and place in the preheated oven to cook for 15 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp with the sweet melted.
6. As soon as the biscuits are baked and while they are still warm, use a straw to poke a hole out of the top of each biscuit. Be careful not to make this hole too near the edge of the biscuit. Once the melted sweets have hardened, transfer to a wire rack to cool. Thread a length of string, ribbon or florist's wire through the hole and they are ready for hanging up.

Anna Bond [Source: BBC Food]

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: REDHOUSE TYRE SPECIALISTS

Neil Cooper is employed by Redhouse Tyre Specialists and he will provide you with any necessary repairs to tyres or new tyres very promptly. If you decide to buy a tyre from Neil, you will find him very happy to converse about the current state of roads, drivers, servicing of cars and local planning!



Redhouse Tyres came to Stanstead Abbots approximately 5 years ago after their former landlord in Ware became keen to see the site developed. Redhouse Tyres took over the site previously used by the motor cycle business owned by D.C. Butler. The premises were ideal for motorbikes and as Neil says they're less convenient for cars. With no shop-front on the High Street, Neil has had A-boards and large signs made up by Universal signs in St Margarets to make people aware that he is in Glenmire Terrace. Beyond that he isn't keen on advertising, believing that if he does a good job and charges a fair price, his customers will keep coming back.

Neil chose a different career path from the one that his parents had in mind. After studying Physics, Maths and Further Maths A-levels at Broxbourne School, Neil joined the construction team building the A10; he followed that with Wulfrath Way in Ware. Having settled on a career selling tyres he has enjoyed long-standing relationships with customers. Neil learned as a young employee not to let customers annoy him too much: after coming close to losing his temper with somebody his boss summoned him. Fearing the worst, Neil was amazed to be told by this gentleman in his brown suit that when customers annoyed him he needed to remain calm and adopt the attitude that the customer was always right. He went on to say that one day, Neil might feel about a situation that the offending client was so maddeningly wrong that he deserved a really good smack on the jaw. 'You should go ahead and give it to him – but make sure it's the worst situation you're ever going to come across because that will be the one and only time you'll do it.'



Neil doesn't have great plans for the future of the business as he is approaching retirement, but he thinks his boss will keep it going. He will possibly spend time with a long-term friend of his who he supports providing many vehicles adapted for stunt driving, appearing in movies such as *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, and TV series *Line of Duty* and *Casualty*.

If you'd like to contact Redhouse Tyre Specialists, please phone 01920 463356.

Julia Davies

ANNE ROBSON HELPLINE

If you or someone close to you is dying, you can talk to us.

At the Anne Robson Trust we aim to be there to listen to anyone who faces dying or the imminent death of someone they care about. We know that facing the end of life can leave you feeling isolated and alone.

Being able to access support is so important. Gaining knowledge of what may happen towards the end of life and being prepared helps both the person dying and their loved ones to feel a sense of control.

Call us on **0808 801 0688** – we have time to talk. Calls are free and confidential.

Visit www.annerobsontrust.org.uk/helpline-service to find out more.



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THE STANSTEAD ABBOTTS AND ST MARGARETS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE



The Neighbourhood Plan, which has been put together by volunteers over the last six years, finally reached the pre-submission consultation stage otherwise known as Regulation 14. Responses received during the consultation period were considered and responded to, and in some cases led to adjustments being made. Three potential sites were removed leaving only the Netherfield Lane site and the Chapelfields garage sites. These were partly the result of changes to rules regarding flood zone 3 and partly as the Lea Valley Park were not entirely happy about the South Street site.

There are lists of community assets, green spaces and favourite views that need to be protected. There is much about conservation of both our heritage and the natural environment. There is a section on business, another on the riverside and another on transport.

The plan will shortly be submitted to East Herts Council following the go-ahead from the three parish councils involved. When the district council is satisfied that the Steering Group has met its obligations it will organise the Regulation 16 Consultation, which tests whether it meets the Basic Conditions and is in fact capable of becoming a legal document. Responses may again be made by residents.

Following this second formal consultation the draft plan will be looked at by a planning inspector. Once this inspector has approved the Plan the final stage will be the Referendum. All those on the electoral register who live within the designated area – that is the whole of St Margarets, Stanstead Abbots and those parts of Great Amwell that are part of the main settlement area – will be able to vote in favour of adopting the plan or not in favour. If more than half of those who vote in the Referendum approve of the plan and it is consequently adopted, it would be extremely difficult for any development to occur before 2033 that is not set out in the plan.

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect the villages from more development than that 10% imposed on us by East Herts Council and to contain it, so that there won't be opportunities for developers to chip away at the green belt outside the settlement areas and create coalescence with neighbouring towns.

The Plan is available to look at on the website: www.stansteadabbotsneighbourhoodplan.uk.

Julia Davies, Chairman of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Draft Neighbourhood Plan

VOLUNTEER AT EHAAT'S STEVENAGE CHARITY SHOP

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is looking for dedicated volunteers to join their team at the recently opened charity shop in Stevenage, which has been welcoming the community since July. They need enthusiastic individuals to help support this vital life-saving service.



EHAAT's charity shops are essential in raising funds to keep their helicopters flying, providing critical care across Hertfordshire, Essex, and surrounding areas. As a shop volunteer, you'll assist with tasks like sorting donations, pricing items, serving customers and creating vibrant displays. It's a great way to develop retail skills, meet new people and make a meaningful impact on your local community.

Whether you can volunteer a few hours a week or more regularly, they'd love to hear from you. No experience is necessary – just a positive attitude and a willingness to help! To learn more about becoming a volunteer at the Stevenage shop, visit ehaat.org/volunteer or stop by the shop to chat with the team. Your time could help save lives!

Location: 14 The Forum, Stevenage, SG1 1EH **Tel:** 01438 579 408
Opening Times: Monday–Saturday 09:00–17:00 & Sunday 10:00–16:00



LOCAL HISTORIC FACES & PLACES: THE ATKINS

Now here's a nice story; the late Richard Atkins used to tell how one morning in 1888 his granddad, Sydney Herbert Atkins, set off from north London for a canter on his horse, but he came across a problem. Having arrived on his journey at the Stanstead Abbots toll bridge over the River Lea, he found that he didn't have the cash (two copper coins) to pay the fee to cross. A passing villager coming upon Sydney's dilemma offered to pay the toll for him. This act of generosity so impressed Sydney that he decided he would like to set up home amid such gracious folk! This he did in the early 1890s and thus began the Atkins dynastic influence on our village's history. For instance, where would we be without our marvellous village pharmacy? Or, if you live in South Street, who built your home and when? And how about the various nurseries that kept the village going in vegetables and plants?

Sydney Atkins was in the fortunate position of being able to borrow from his father-in-law and with this capital he commenced a considerable building programme in what we now know as South Street. He opened a chemist's shop at the top of South Street in the early 1890s, which remains in the same location today under alternative management and ownership. Very interestingly, apart from being a chemist, Mr Sidney Atkins also supplied household coal and probably coke from his back yard, as well as running a small market garden of sorts on the land behind the shop.

Even more significantly, just after 1900, he built a row of terraced houses on the right-hand side of South Street (numbers 1 to 33). Because of their quality build they were considered by residents of the Street to be superior to those older terraced houses on the opposite side of the road! (And, incidentally, you can still see along these houses the sight of the former lock-up that was used to 'host' rowdy tourists who'd drunk too much while crowding the river banks at holiday times!)

The Atkins houses were, when built, connected to the sewer but in 1938 when piped water was brought to the village only one cold tap over the kitchen sink was provided. This meant the outside toilets required a bucket full of water to flush the pan usually acquired from the outside hand pump rather than the new tap.



The Chemist, 1906



South Street circa 1900



Sydney & Alice Atkins



Alfred 'Cecil' Atkins

Mr Sidney Atkins was involved at various points with other enterprises in the area, notably with the St Margarets' Gas Company in Amwell Lane. Additionally, the extended Atkins family also branched out into the nursery trade and there are still signs of that enterprise in Marsh Lane together with the family house.

One sad note to conclude on: the family, like many others, sent off their young men to the First World War. One of them, Alfred 'Cecil' Atkins, lost his life at the age of 19 and is buried in a War Grave at Rouen. His death is commemorated by a plaque in St Andrew's Church.

Bob Hunt

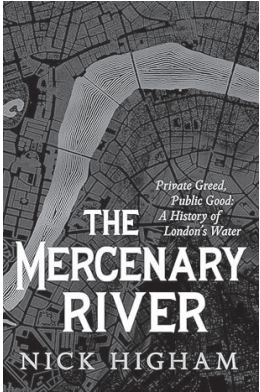
(with the help of Sara Atkins and Stuart Moye)

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BOOKS ABOUT THE NEW RIVER



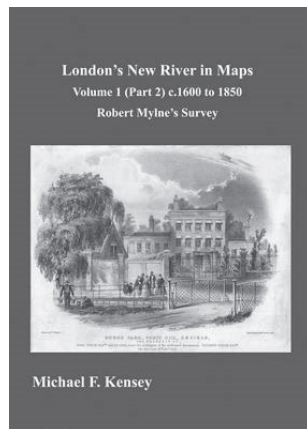
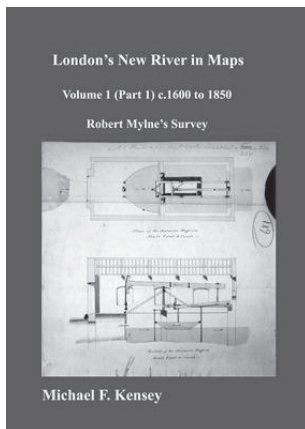
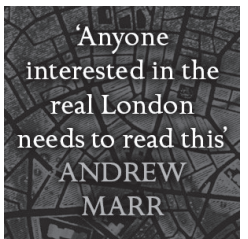
The Stanstead Abbots Local History Society (SALHS) recently heard a talk by the former BBC Journalist, Nick Higham, based on his new book *The Mercenary River: Private Greed, Public Good: A History of London's Water* (published by Headline in 2022). Nick noted in his talk that the New River was neither new, nor a river, but it is still functioning more than 400 years after it was first opened in 1613. The purpose of the river, which is really a canal, was to bring water from the Amwell and Chadwell Springs in Hertfordshire (it now comes mainly from the River Lea) to meet the needs of the capital.



The scheme was masterminded by Hugh Myddleton, statues of whom can be found at Islington Green and elsewhere. Myddleton established the New River Company, which was probably the first permanent joint stock company. He persuaded King James I to become a 50% shareholder, which helped to prevent landowners from complaining about the loss of their land. Charles I later sold the shares back to Myddleton, which was a big mistake as the New River Company turned out to be one of the most profitable companies in British history. Robert Mylne and his son William Chadwell Mylne were Chief Engineers for the New River for 97 years between them.

Demand for water continued to increase in London and further pumping stations, initially powered by steam and later by diesel power, were built to accommodate the need. Other water

companies sprung up but none were as successful as the New River Company. In 1854, Dr John Snow, a pioneering anaesthetist and epidemiologist, was able to pinpoint the origin of cholera to the handle of a water pump in Soho. After this date, companies taking their water from the Thames were forced to move their intakes upstream from the city and clean and purify the water. In 1903 the Metropolitan Water Board was established and took over the powers of the New River Company. In 1974 control passed to the Thames Water Authority, which was subsequently re-privatised in 1989 as Thames Water. Today it is possible to follow a 28-mile walking path alongside the river to its original conclusion in Islington. Nick's book is very informative and fills in many gaps in our knowledge of the New River. It is available to purchase from Amazon and other booksellers including Waterstones.



Those who would like to know even more about the New River may wish to consult *London's New River in Maps*, the first volume of which was published by Michael F. Kensey in 2012 (in two parts). It is the first in a planned series of three or four volumes, and an excellent source of reference for anyone intending to research the history of the New River, or today walk and explore its present or earlier courses. This volume was a labour of love by its author and goes into great detail about the history of the New River. It contains a plethora of attractive photographs and maps tracing every aspect of the building and development of the New River. Copies of this book are available from SALHS (email admin@salhs.co.uk).

David Davies

A note from the Editor...

The Stanstead Abbots Local History Society has been meeting since 2012, holding regular open meetings with talks by prominent people and historians. Their website is a treasure trove of historical information about Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets, including an almost complete history from the iron age, amazing photographs, personal stories and shared experiences. I would encourage you all to check it out (<https://salhs.co.uk>) and consider becoming a member.

DIRECTORY OF USEFUL NUMBERS

THE 3 CHURCHES BENEFICE

Priest in Charge

Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870115/07488 914972

Lay Ministers

Mrs Elizabeth Goldsmith 01920 422065

Mrs Lynne Griffiths 01920 460668

Mrs Rachel Melrose 01920 422092

Great Amwell with St Margarets

Churchwardens: Mr Richard and

Mrs Margaret Mellor 01920 460474

Assistant Churchwardens: Mr Martin and

Mrs Sue Vaughan 01920 877779

Mr Bryan Brace 01992 447845

Organists: Mrs Jill Hall 01279 842328

Mrs Lynda Harrington 01992 422398

PCC Secretary: Mr Richard Mellor 01920 460474

Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Lyn Paddon 01920 487717

St John the Baptist, Great Amwell

Treasurer: Mr Richard Mellor 01920 460474

Baptism enquiries: Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870115

Wedding enquiries: Mrs Alex Richardson 01920 871391

St Mary the Virgin, St Margarets

Primary contact: Mrs Lyn Paddon 01920 487717

Treasurer: Mrs Lyn Paddon 01920 487717

Baptism enquiries: Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870115

Wedding enquiries: Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870115

Stanstead Abbots

Churchwarden: Mr Peter Melrose 01920 422092

Organist: Mrs Lynne Griffiths 01920 460668

PCC Secretary: Mrs Michele Ross 01992 302279

Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Michele Ross 01992 302279

St Andrew, Stanstead Abbots

Treasurer: Mr Edward Trower 07919 003949

Baptism enquiries: Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870115

Wedding enquiries: Mrs Lynne Griffiths 01920 460668

PARISH COUNCILS

Stanstead Abbots

Parish Council Clerk: Ms Sarah Neighbour 07943 602877

Great Amwell

Parish Council Clerk: Mr Jeff Hughes 07736 172533

Stanstead St Margarets

Parish Council Clerk: Ms Christina Whellams 07422 582172

SCHOOLS

Amwell View School and Specialist Sports College,
Stanstead Abbots 01920 870027

St Andrew's C of E (VC) Primary School,
Stanstead Abbots 01920 870097

St John the Baptist CE VA Primary School,
Great Amwell 01920 870135

CHURCH/PARISH HALLS

Great Amwell Parish Hall:

Mr Daniel Pollard 01920 877845

Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall:

Mrs Vicky Burt 07703 402790

The Wilshere Hall, St Andrew's Church:

Ms Maureen Freeman 01920 870632

NATIONAL & LOCAL HELPLINES

Police non-emergency number 101

NHS Telephone Advice Service 111

24-hour National Domestic Abuse Hotline 0808 2000 247

Herts Domestic Abuse Hotline 08088 088 088

Samaritans (Freephone) 116 123

The Three Churches Foodbank Hub 07487 350918

East Herts Citizens Advice Service 03444 111 444

CAP (Christians Against Poverty) 0800 328 0006

Anne Robson Helpline: Time to Talk 0808 801 0688

If you would like to add a number to this directory, please email print.threevillagesmagazine@gmail.com.

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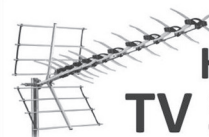
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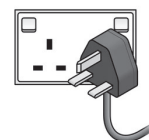
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Here for you this Christmas

For most people, Christmas and
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and great fun. We get to have
a well-earned break from work,
spend time with our family and
loved ones, overindulge in food
and drink, exchange gifts and
create long-lasting memories.
Sounds perfect doesn't it?

Unfortunately, this is not the
case for everyone. For many,
the holiday period can be an
incredibly anxious time – and
sadly, this can lead people to
really fear it. Increased stress
and financial pressures, excess
alcohol, too many parties, family

arguments and being forced to
spend time with people we may
not choose to be with, can all
translate into an increased risk
of domestic abuse.

Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline
is here for you if things do
escalate in your life. We offer
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Monday to Friday: 9am–9pm
Weekends: 9am–4pm

Confidential email: kim@mailpurple.org



Registered charity number: 1154899



A Charity Christmas Film Night • 6th December

Stanstead Abbotts' Parish Hall

Doors open from 4.30pm. Tickets only £5

For kids (with a free hotdog): **5pm • The Polar Express**

For adults: **7.30pm • It's a Wonderful Life**

Help us spread the importance of building community
and combat loneliness.

Book tickets: <https://coffeeandcoping.bigcartel.com>



Christmas Walk • 22nd December

Join us for a get-together to celebrate community, the
outdoors and Christmas. We will be leading a gentle
3.5 mile walk around Stanstead Abbotts, incorporating
Amwell Nature Reserve and the canal.

There will be a shorter route for those that prefer it.

We are raising awareness of our charity and the
importance of tackling loneliness through community.

Feel free to dress up in something Christmassy!

For more information, email
admin@coffeeandcoping.org



The Three Villages Magazine 'Future Plans' Survey 2024

This issue marks the conclusion of three full years of The Three Villages in print and online! We are taking this opportunity to reassess how we can best share, showcase and support our three villages in future publications.

Please help us by completing the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TGSCB9W> or scan the QR code (right).



If you aren't online, please do complete this paper version and post to 53 Lawrence Avenue, Stanstead Abbots, Herts. SG12 8TY or email your answers to threevillagesmagazine@gmail.com by 14th December.

'FUTURE PLANS' SURVEY

1. Do you purchase the print magazine?

Every issue / Regularly / Occasionally / Rarely or never

2. Have you subscribed to our News & Events blog online?

Yes / No – wasn't aware of it / No – not interested / No – don't have access to the internet

3. Do you read/subscribe to e-newsletters in general?

Yes / No

4. How would you prefer to receive local news & information?

In print (newsletter/magazine) / Digitally (email/e-newsletter/blog) / Both in print & online

5. What features of the print magazine would you like to see continue?

Schools updates / Puzzle Page / Clubs & Societies News / Parish Council news /

Business Spotlight / Meet a Local / From the Vicar / Charity Focus / Competitions /

Local History articles / Recipe / Poems / Directory of useful phone numbers / Business adverts /

Other (please specify)

6. Would you like/be able to volunteer as part of The Three Villages Team?

Yes / No / Maybe

7. Do you have any other comments or concerns (please specify)

Thank you for your time. We really appreciate your help and support.

The Three Villages Team

PUZZLE ANSWERS (from Page 12)

WHO AM I? Muhammed Ali

CHRISTMAS INITIALS

1. Jingle Bell Rock
2. The Little Drummer Boy
3. Winter Wonderland
4. Fairy Tale of New York
5. Frosty the Snowman
6. O Little Town of Bethlehem
7. The Holly and the Ivy
8. Happy Xmas (War is Over)
9. O Come All Ye Faithful
10. I Believe in Father Christmas

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

1. 26th December
2. Jacob Marley
3. Norway
4. Ladies Dancing
5. Comet, Cupid, Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner & Blitzen (Dunder & Blixem)
6. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
7. The Nightmare before Christmas
8. White
9. Clarence (Oddbody)
10. Balthasar, Melchior & Caspar (or Gaspar)

11. Hogmanay
12. The Christmas Cracker
13. Turkey
14. Dr Seuss
15. Mexico
16. Robert Burns
17. Six
18. Panettone
19. Bohemian Rhapsody
20. 364



THE WALLED GARDEN

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