



The Three Villages Magazine

COVERING GREAT AMWELL, ST MARGARETS AND STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

Building Community in Print and Online
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Issue 16

December 2025

IN THIS ISSUE...

- Find out all about our Schools Christmas Art Competition winners!
- Discover the new series focusing on our fascinating local history
- Read about the amazing work of ALFS in our Charity Focus

**NOW
FREE!**

COME AND CELEBRATE THE **JOY** OF CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

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

Including...

Carols amidst the Christmas Trees

Sunday 7th December at 5pm



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Sunday 14th December
6.30pm at St John the Baptist,
Great Amwell



Sunday 21st December
6.30pm at St Andrew,
Stanstead Abbots

THE CHRISTMAS JOURNEY

The Nativity Story Reimagined



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

CHRISTMAS EVE MIDNIGHT HOLY COMMUNION

Wednesday 24th December
11.30pm at St Andrew,
Stanstead Abbots



CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Thursday 25th December
10.30am at St John the Baptist,
Great Amwell



JOY



The Three Villages Magazine

COVERING GREAT AMWELL, ST MARGARETS AND STANSTEAD ABBOTTS

Issue 16

December 2025

From the Editor...



Cover: Winning entries from the Schools Christmas Art Competition

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, we take a look at the important work of local charity, ALFS; we find out all about local business Heavenly Hair; we have the first in our new series, 'Glimpses into our Past' and lots more!

In a change to our usual photographic cover, this issue features the winning entries to our Schools Christmas Art Competition. We had some amazing entries. Find out about our competition winners 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 deadline for submissions are: 5th 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 French & Jupps, Stanstead Abbots Parish Council, Great Amwell Parish Council and St Margarets 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 TEAM

Jim Aitken-Ballard	Rosemary Imroth
Anna Bond	Clare Maynard
Julia Davies	Mandy McCarthy
Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest	Lyn Paddon

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The Three Villages Magazine

FROM THE VICAR



Building community is one of the main aims of our magazine, but it's difficult sometimes to work out how to do it. Communities are not like buildings; you don't just put in planning permission, find a builder and get started. Communities are more complicated because they're made up of individuals, families, friends, neighbours, schools, that chap we see at the club, people you meet while walking the dog, the list goes on... After five years here, I have also come to appreciate the complex interweaving of relationships between all the different people I know. You suddenly realise that Fred is Phyllis's second cousin's wife's brother!

One of the things that I love about our community is that people care for one another, and that this is evident in the stories I see and hear: stories of love-in-action every day. I thought it would be really good to give a shout out for some of the people I know about who have that love-in-action neighbourliness. Of course the danger of doing this is that there are lots of people doing wonderful things and I might miss a few thousand at least. But if you're worried about that, keep reading...

My first shout out is for Margaret, who I first met just after we had arrived in the village. Her love-in-action is that she tidies and sweeps, trims and plants along the side of our road. She keeps the pavement clear, the planters filled and the place looking spit spot! She brings joy through her gift to her neighbours and she's been doing it for years. Thank you, Margaret.



My second shout out is to Jamie whose love-in-action had him fitting locks on the house of a vulnerable family in record time and with huge generosity. I know how appreciated it was, and how it made the family feel safe, loved and cared for by the community. Thank you, Jamie.

My third shout out... well actually I'm not going to put in a third. There were so many people I could include. I could mention our Foodbank Hub volunteers: from our manager to our volunteer drivers. I could send a cheer for the Make Lunch team. I could thank our local councillors and the folk who volunteer for the parish halls. I could lift a mug for Coffee & Coping and raise a cheer for the Armchair Singers.



But who would you shout out for? Who do you know that helps to build our community? Maybe you know someone who goes above and beyond. This time of year is a great opportunity to say thank you, to tell them that they lighten your darkness, bring you joy and that you want to acknowledge their love-in-action!

Maybe you'd even like to tell us your story about how they have spread the joy? Send us an email because we'd love to shout out about our community and how we are building it together!



Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest
Vicar of The 3 Churches Benefice



SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS ART COMPETITION WINNERS

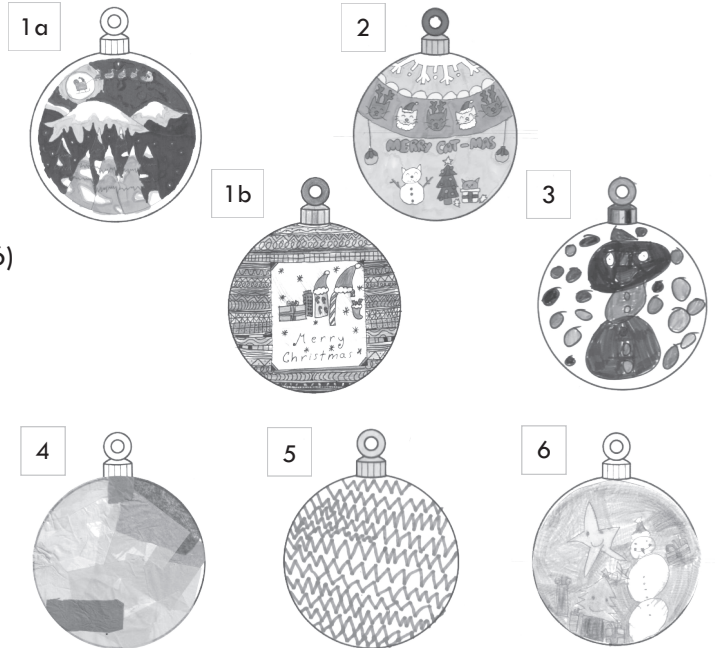
We invited our local schools to take part in a Christmas Art Competition to design a bauble. We were, once again, amazed by the entries and really struggled to pick our winners! So much so that we had to pick a joint winner for St Andrew's Primary School. Thank you to everyone who took part and for helping make our cover look so lovely. You can see the winning entries on our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival (see below).

WINNERS

- 1a. Florence, St Andrew's Primary School (Age 9, Year 4)
- 1b. Jack, St Andrew's Primary School (Age 9, Year 5)
- 2. Freya, St John the Baptist Primary School (Age 11, Year 6)
- 3. Brogan, Amwell View School (Age 14, Tonwell 2)

RUNNERS-UP

- 4. Axel, St Andrew's Primary School (Age 3, Nursery)
- 5. Logan, Amwell View School (Age 12, Class 2)
- 6. Albie, St John the Baptist Primary School (Age 7, Year 2)



The 3 Churches Benefice



Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th December 2025

2-6pm

St Mary's Church

Hoddesdon Road, St Margarets, SG12 8EG

'Carols amidst the Christmas Trees'

5pm on Sunday 7th

NEW!

FREE ENTRY

Festive fun for all the family!

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

Kids' activities

Teddy
Tombola

Refreshments

Craft
stalls

Raffle



The Three Villages Magazine

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Great Amwell Parish Council

Since the last magazine article, Great Amwell Parish Council has:

- * Made representation to the local County Councillor (Steven Watson) regarding flooding in Station Road. Despite a resident reporting the issue to the Highways Authority, works to clear the road gulley etc. have either not been undertaken or need to be undertaken more frequently. Councillor Watson was requested to raise this matter with the relevant service (or contractor) at his Authority. The Parish Council also sought a detailed explanation of why flooding was still occurring and information on action proposed to alleviate/address the problem. No meaningful response has been received at the time of writing this article; and
- * Approved a contractor to undertake cleaning and repair/maintenance works to the War Memorial in Lower Road; the works were scheduled to commence on 6 October 2025.

Parishioners may be interested to learn that East Herts District Council recognises that community groups, including schools, Scout and Guide groups, adult organisations such as WI and Rotary Clubs, and annual organised community clean ups add a huge amount of value to looking after and improving the local environment. If you are part of a community group, school or are organising a community 'tidy up', the District Council has litter picking equipment available to loan, free of charge, to community groups on request. This equipment is available to borrow on a first come, first served basis. It requires a completed equipment booking form and a minimum of two weeks' notice before an event to organise equipment. To hire equipment, please see its Community Litter Picking Form page (<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/bins-waste-recycling/street-cleaning-and-litter/community-litter-picking-form>).

Great Amwell Parish Council meets every second Thursday in each month (except in August) in the Parish Hall, Hillside Lane at 8.00pm.

Jeff Hughes

St Margarets Parish Council

St Margarets Parish Council provides an update on concerns about smells from Rye Common Field. After investigation by the Environmental Agency, it was confirmed that only compost made from organic matter is being used, with no human waste involved. The resulting odour is a normal part of soil enrichment. Reports of compost sprayed onto nearby buildings were also investigated and found to be unsubstantiated. We appreciate residents' understanding and encourage anyone with further concerns to contact us.

We also awarded the charity, Coffee & Coping, a grant to support their work providing safe community spaces where people can connect over tea or coffee and address loneliness or other challenges they may face. Learn more at <https://www.coffeeandcoping.org>.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Parish Council then please contact the Clerk on 07422 582172 or at clerk@stansteadstmargaretsparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Christina Whellams

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE THREE VILLAGES: WE'RE NOW ON INSTAGRAM!

Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, our Instagram page is designed to bring us all a little closer.

Follow us today!

You can find us at @thethreevillages | <https://www.instagram.com/thethreevillages/>



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Stanstead Abbotts Parish Council

Parish Councillor Julia Witting is committed in her role as Parish Councillor to try to engage the Environment Agency and Hertfordshire County Council into actioning measures that mitigate the flood risk to residents' homes in Stanstead Abbotts. Cllr Witting recently met with local MP Lewis Cocking to explain the concerns residents have around flooding and asked for his help in putting pressure on the organisations involved to act. Lewis Cocking MP said on social media:

'Flooding is a huge concern for people in Stanstead Abbotts and across Broxbourne. I visited Stanstead Abbotts to see the poorly maintained drains for myself, and the risk they pose to nearby houses. Thanks to Parish Councillor Julia Witting for showing me around and sharing the views of residents. Back in Parliament, I secured a meeting with the Minister for Flooding at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to demand improvements at the Environment Agency and a better approach to prevention.'

Following their meeting, Lewis Cocking MP wrote to the Area Director at the Environment Agency detailing residents concerns and received a detailed response. The Environment Agency have now acted and carried out some proper maintenance work on the drain in Roydon Road. There is still more work to be done, and Cllr Witting is continuing to engage with Lewis Cocking MP to urge the Environment Agency to remove the silt in the underground pipes, clear the Himalayan Balsam in the ditch in Marsh Lane and commit to an ongoing maintenance programme to prevent future flooding in the area.

Sarah Neighbour



LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Residents may have heard about plans to reform local government in Hertfordshire. Now, a key decision has been made: the county's 11 council leaders have officially ruled out the option of creating a single unitary authority for the whole of Hertfordshire.

This means we won't see all services merged under one county-wide council. Local leaders agreed that a single authority would be too large and distant from the diverse communities it serves, including smaller villages like ours. The decision comes after months of discussions and feedback, and reflects a commitment to keeping local democracy accessible and responsive.

However, the conversation about reorganisation is far from over. Councils are still considering other options, including two, three, or four smaller unitary authorities. These models would replace the current two-tier system – where Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council share responsibilities – with new single councils handling everything from schools to waste collection.

Local voices will be vital as these decisions are made. At the time of writing, the final set of proposals is expected to be submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025. In the meantime, residents are encouraged to follow updates, attend community consultations and make their views known. See East Herts District Council: www.eastherts.gov.uk and Hertfordshire County Council: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk.

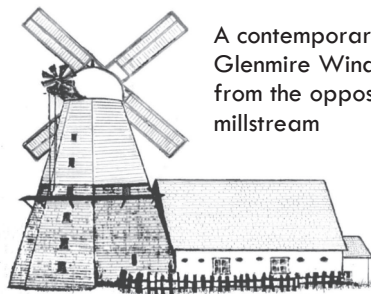
For the three villages, the key concern will be ensuring that any changes protect local services and preserve the strong sense of community we value. While the structure of local government may evolve, the goal remains the same: delivering effective, responsive services close to the people they serve.

The Three Villages Magazine

GLIMPSES INTO OUR PAST: GLENMIRE WINDMILL

The September issue of *The Three Villages Magazine* carried the last article in our Local Historic Faces & Places series. Now we are opening up a new series entitled 'Glimpses into our Past'. Making use of the Stanstead Abbotts Local History (SALHS) media archive, we hope to open up some of the fascinating features and treasures that are tucked away there. We'll start with the huge windmill that once graced Glenmire Terrace.

Stanstead Abbotts once had a very large windmill situated alongside the millstream in the area now called Glenmire Terrace. The windmill was built by a successful local businessman by the name of Richard Hunt, sometime between 1877 and 1887. Richard Hunt was then at the height of his business success with plenty of money to spare to build such a large and expensive windmill.



A contemporary drawing of the Glenmire Windmill as viewed from the opposite bank of the millstream

© Stuart Moyle

The large smock mill was some 70 feet tall, hexagonal in plan with four lower brick-built stories and three wooden ones above. On top of this was placed the rotary cap carrying four huge double shuttered sails and a large fantail. Next to it was built a long storage building and adjacent to it a barge wharf on the millstream. This windmill was the second largest of all types of windmills to be built in Hertfordshire and could be seen from some distance away, towering over the houses in the village.

The windmill was built at a time when many watermills and windmills were becoming redundant and abandoned, being displaced by newer steam powered mills. It is also of note that the Glenmire site was down in the shelter of the valley away from the stronger winds on the nearby higher ground. This is because Richard Hunt did not build his windmill to be a viable business concern, but as part of a rather expensive personal hobby. He no doubt drew in help to operate the mill from among the workmen in his other businesses when required. He was undoubtedly remembering with fondness his youth when his parents operated a windmill at Much Hadham. He also seemed interested in leaving a significant physical legacy of a technology he must have felt was soon to be lost forever.

Once retired from business, Richard Hunt moved to a large house in Much Hadham where he was to build an even larger windmill close to the railway station. He sold off most of his local properties in an auction held at the (now disappeared) Pied Bull in Stanstead Abbotts during the spring of 1891. The windmill did not sell at the auction, but was sold privately along with the Glenmire field in the November of the same year. The windmill and storage building were soon dismantled and on their site was erected the still existing row of Glenmire cottages sited alongside the millstream. The Millers Lane end of the terrace is named 'Windmill Cottage'. Confusingly at the other end of the cottages the 18th century boathouse, now repurposed, has been known incorrectly for many years as the 'Old Windmill'. Sadly, neither of Richard Hunt's magnificent windmills survived intact into the twentieth century.

More on this Glenmire Windmill, its builder and adjacent buildings can be found on our Stanstead Abbotts Local History website (<https://salhs.co.uk>). Look for the articles entitled 'Richard Hunt' and the 'Glenmire Terrace'.

Bob Hunt

(No relation! But founder member and past Chair of Stanstead Abbotts Local History Society. And if you are not sure where Glenmire Terrace is, its right next to the village dry cleaners on the High Street)

Stanstead Abbotts Local History Society

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Check out the SALHS website

salhs.co.uk

CHARITY IN FOCUS: ALFS

Giving every animal a second chance

As financial pressures continue to bite across the country, one Hertfordshire-based charity is working tirelessly to ensure that vulnerable pets and their owners do not fall through the cracks. ALFS (Animal Larder, Food and Shelter) has become an indispensable local support, and lately it has seen a marked increase in cats coming in for rehoming.

Founded in 2019 by Hertford resident Tina Banks, ALFS began with a simple premise: no family should ever have to choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pets. What began as a pet food bank has since expanded into comprehensive support – offering food, bedding, toys and essential treatments. The charity also helps with fostering and rehoming for animals whose owners are no longer able to care for them.

Right now, ALFS is seeing an increase in the number of cats coming in, and fosterers are in short supply. Many cats arrive underweight, unneutered, pregnant, or in need of urgent veterinary care. The charity ensures that each cat is thoroughly checked, vaccinated, dewormed, defleaed and neutered when possible before being placed for adoption.

JIM'S STORY: FROM FEAR TO FAMILY

One of ALFS's recent success stories is Jim, a young male cat who came into their care in July after being rescued from a hoarding environment. Though initially timid and hiding under the sofa, Jim was given space, patience and essential veterinary care – neutering, microchipping, vaccinations – thanks to the support of ALFS's vet partners.

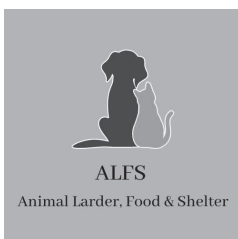
Now renamed Tiger, he's settled into his loving home in Ware, where he's flourishing: *'His little scared face tugged my heart and now, a month later, he is settled contentedly with us in his new home, gaining confidence every day, discovering playing and is doing really well.'* (Lynne, Tiger's new owner)

Tiger has grown in confidence, loves curling up on laps and even plays with the grandchildren during visits. A gentle reminder that many rescued cats respond beautifully to love and stability.



The challenge ALFS is confronting reflects a broader national trend. Cats Protection saw a 34% increase in reported abandonment cases in the first seven months of 2024 compared with the same period in 2023. A Guardian article from December 2024 described animal shelters across the UK being overwhelmed by the number of abandoned pet cats. The rise in abandonment puts enormous pressure on smaller, grassroots charities like ALFS, which depend on community donations and volunteer energy.

With demand rising, ALFS is calling on the community more than ever. You can help by donating food, funds or time; by fostering cats in your home; or by considering adoption.



To find out more follow @alfsherts on Facebook. If you are able to make a donation, bank details are as follows:

Account Name: ALFS Herts

Sort Code: 55-50-44

Account Number: 72569522

Or you can use PayPal link: paypal.me/alfsherts

Every little bit helps this important local charity continue its mission. Thank you to everyone in the community who continues to support ALFS – your generosity helps save lives, one paw at a time.

The Three Villages Magazine

A SOARING SUCCESS: BUILDING A FUTURE FOR OUR FLYING VISITORS

A remarkable journey quietly takes place above our heads every year. Thousands of Swifts migrate all the way from the Congo in Central Africa to breed across the UK, including Stanstead Abbots. They arrive in early May and will have left by the end of July, making their summer stay a fleeting but crucial part of their lives.

The life of a Swift isn't easy. For the first three years of their lives, they are entirely airborne. These incredible birds face mounting challenges. Climate change is causing more turbulent weather, including during their migration, and affecting food availability. In Western Europe, including the UK, the modernisation of both old and new buildings has sealed up the natural, imperfect gaps and crevices they've used for centuries to build their nests in. This architectural progress, while great for us, leaves these treasured visitors with fewer and fewer places to breed. They have declined by over 60% since the mid-1990s.



Swift in flight over Hertfordshire

This is where our local community has stepped in. Hertford and Ware Swift Groups have partnered with the fantastic Bishop's Stortford and Ware Men's Sheds to provide a lifeline for these birds. The Men's Shed, a local workshop and community hub, has already crafted some 300 Swift boxes designed to mimic the natural nesting sites that are now so scarce. These boxes are then installed in local businesses, schools and homes in the area, providing safe havens for the Swifts, including here at French & Jupps Maltings Business Centre.



Swift box installation at The Maltings Business Centre

The Hertford Swift Group, working with SE Herts RSPB, installed 20 boxes around the French & Jupps Maltings Business Centre this August, in a bid to boost the four or so pairs already nesting in the eaves of the buildings. And whilst summer may feel a long way off now, when the Swifts aren't in residence, these boxes don't go to waste. They can be used all year by House Sparrows and Tits, as well as providing homes for spiders and hibernating bumblebees during the winter, making them a really versatile means of supporting wildlife.

This inspiring partnership is part of a much larger, national effort. The Swift conservation movement shifted into a different gear in recent years, thanks not least to the efforts of Action for Swifts led by Dick Newell, and Swift Conservation founded by Edward Mayer. Boxes have been going up all over the country to help this now red-listed bird, many provided by one dedicated man, John Stimpson, in Cambridgeshire who has made over 40,000 for Swift groups in his 'retirement'. Thanks to our local Swift groups and Men's Sheds, our community is now part of a major effort to support Swifts in SE Herts and beyond. Everyone can play a role in securing a safe environment for these treasured birds.

Want to know how you can help? Here are a few ideas...

Get a Swift Box: If you own or manage a local business, school or community building, or even for your home, get in touch to find out about having a Swift box installed. They are expertly built by the Stortford Men's Shed and ready for our flying visitors. Contact Clive at: hertfordswifts@gmail.com/Facebook: @HertfordSwifts.

Join the Men's Shed: Do you enjoy woodwork or just want to contribute to a great community project? Consider joining the Stortford Men's Shed. Your skills can directly help produce more of these vital nesting boxes.

Website: www.stortfordmensshed.org.uk/Facebook: @Bishopstortfordmensshed

Mark your calendars for Swift Awareness Week in early July to learn more about Swifts and spread the word about their conservation. Let's help ensure these amazing birds continue to return to our village for generations to come.

James Marinos, Growth & Marketing Manager at French & Jupps

UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



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

Autumn term at St Andrew's has got off to a wonderful start. The children loved exploring their new classroom and settling into routines during our exciting first week in Year 1. A real highlight was our DT WOW Day, where everyone had fun designing, creating and evaluating moving levers and sliders during the 'Magnificent Mechanisms' project.

The Reception children worked together to make a delicious Harvest soup. They learnt how to use knives carefully to chop up peppers, tomatoes and broccoli, and used peelers to peel carrots and parsnips. They were very excited to taste the soup they had made together. Also for Harvest, our after school Art Club created beautiful visual representations of this special festival.

The Nursery class has also settled into school life fantastically. The children have loved exploring the mud kitchen in our garden and the playdough in the classroom. We have also begun our daily foundations for phonics sessions where we focus on a different nursery rhyme each week and take part in listening activities based on this rhyme.

In Year 3, the children have begun learning all about the human skeleton in Science. The children were shocked to learn that there are over 206 bones in the human body! As a class we explored where these different bones are and worked as a team to map some of them out on the human body.

Year 6 completed an investigation in Science to see how much blood our heart could pump in 15, 30, 45 and 60 seconds. We completed each investigation three times to find an average result. As we predicted, the longer the time, the more blood our heart pumped.

Michael Speed, Headteacher



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- * Subscribe to our **News & Events Blog**: thethreevillages.com/news-events
- * Follow/like our **Facebook page**: @TheThreeVillagesMagazine
- * Find us on **Instagram**: @thethreevillages

Online is the place to go for the latest news and information about up-coming events in the three villages of Great Amwell, St Margarets and Stanstead Abbotts.



The Three Villages Magazine

UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



St John the Baptist CE VA Primary

We have been enjoying seeing the children settling in to their new classes this term and watching them as they rise to the expectations of their new year group.

Our new Reception class have settled in so quickly and are demonstrating just how independent they can be as learners. It was lovely to see them bringing their parents to church for our Reception Welcome Service, where Rev'd Sarah presented them with a book and reminded them that this was their church as part of the St John the Baptist community.



Our Year 5 and 6 children headed off to PGL Liddington: 'Our trip started on Sunday at 1pm when we got on the coach. The journey was about two and a half hours. When we arrived, we went to our rooms and unpacked before going to dinner. During the trip, we did lots of activities including trapeze, canoeing, giant swing, climbing, archery and ambush. Our favourite activity was the giant swing followed by ambush. We had a fantastic time and got

home tired but happy.' (Report by Evie Godfrey and Evelyn Allen)

Year 3 attended the development day at Sele School, organised by the Hertford and Ware School Sports Partnership: 'We went to Sele School and we were put into different groups and had lots of sports we could try. We started with street snooker. We had to throw bean bags to hit targets and then spin a wheel before throwing the bean bags at numbers to get the highest score. We also did basketball and played orienteering games. We had to follow maps to find different numbers under the cones. We got quite confused on this. You had to keep the dots at the top of your map. Our favourite bit was having fun doing the activities; we had a really good time.' (Report by Ottilie Bentley-Beach and Cecily Crimauddo)



We have had a strong focus on Art, and Design and Technology this half term. In Years 1 and 2 the children have been practising their printing skills and working together to make a large mural of sea creatures. They have also learnt how to join clay to make models of sea creatures. In Years 5 and 6, they have been learning to prepare and chop vegetables, and make pastry. They then used the skills they had learnt to create their own seasonal

vegetable pasties. The pasties looked, smelt and tasted delicious. In Years 3 and 4 they have been making plaster cast reliefs of Egyptian hieroglyphs.

As well as helping the children to settle into their new groups, our Year 6 children have been out and about visiting the local secondary schools, beginning the very first steps of their transition process. Here, as our new Reception children have settled in so well, we have already begun tours of the school ready for the September 2026 intake. If you have a child who is due to start school next year, please do book a tour by contacting our office on 01920 870135 or emailing admin@sjbaptist.herts.sch.uk.



Lydia Hunt, Headteacher

UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS



Amwell View School and Specialist Sports College

Harvesting and preparing the allotment

The pupils in Amwell View School's Community Classroom have been working hard on the allotment harvesting the fruits and vegetables they have grown, which included potatoes, rhubarb and grapes. The fresh produce was then offered to staff at the main school site to purchase for a small donation. Janet Warrington, School Business Manager said 'It is amazing to be offered the fresh vegetables and fruit. I had some of the potatoes and some sticks of rhubarb. The pupils have done a brilliant job and work very hard on the allotment. We are very proud of them all.'

Class Teacher, Laura Wing said 'The pupils are now preparing the school allotment for the winter planting onions, garlic and cabbages. They are also learning how to dig using sand as an alternative material.'

Headteacher, Neil Ward said 'We are so lucky to have found this allotment, which is so close to the classroom and main school site in Stanstead Abbots. The Community Classroom curriculum comprises of areas that are important for the transition from Amwell View to life after school. Working on the allotment is great. The pupils can learn and practise their skills and take this experience with them into adulthood.'



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The Three Villages Magazine

PUZZLES

WHO AM I?

Below are clues to a famous person. Can you guess who they are?



1. I am the lead singer of a famous British rock band from the 1970s.
2. My band is best known for their hit Christmas song, which is played every year in the UK.
3. The song encourages everyone to look to the future.
4. I'm known for my distinctive, raspy voice and big curly hair.
5. My band was very popular during the 1970s glam rock era.
6. Our Christmas hit was released in 1973 and has become a classic party anthem.
7. I also wrote many of my band's songs and was famous for my energetic performances.

DINGBATS: CHRISTMAS

1. STEL

4.

XMAS

2. FIR
Here Here Here Here Here

5. P P P P P P
Our planet

3. STUN

6. PRES ENTS

FILL THE BLANKS: CHRISTMAS CAROLS

1. 'Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in heaven,
Set at God's _____ hand on high.'
2. 'Good King Wenceslas last looked out
On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep and crisp and _____.'
3. 'The holly bears a blossom,
white as the _____ flower,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
to be our sweet Saviour.'
4. 'And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and _____.'
5. 'Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence,
Their gold, and myrrh, and _____.'

6. 'What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a _____.'
7. 'Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with _____ in His wings.'
8. 'O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to _____ on earth.'
9. 'See him lying on a bed of straw,
Draughty stable with an _____ door.'
10. 'See the blazing Yule before us,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Strike the _____ and join the chorus.
Fa la la la la, la la la la.'



MEET A LOCAL: JULIA WITTING

Julia Witting and her family moved to the village in 2002, swapping city life for a community she's now deeply rooted in. Professionally, she has a busy role as Head of Supervision at the Bar Standards Board, the regulator for barristers. 'It's endlessly challenging,' she says, 'and it's made me appreciate how important access to justice and the legal system is, and the challenges posed by funding cuts. I've met so many talented and dedicated people in the course of my work.' Before that, Julia worked in audit and consultancy at PwC in London, Amsterdam and Prague, and later in internal audit and risk management within financial services. She's also held non-executive roles in the NHS, social housing and other sectors – experience that's clearly informed her calm, practical approach to community life.

Julia joined the Parish Council soon after moving to Stanstead Abbots, encouraged by a neighbour. 'I thought it would be a good way to get to know people and to get involved in village life, which it certainly has been,' she says. 'It can be hugely frustrating at times, but it is a great way to meet people and to have the chance to influence the things that matter to local people.'



One of Julia's proudest local achievements came when she helped lead the revamp of the village playground. 'It was a huge amount of work to raise funds and source volunteer labour to build it, but it was a great experience and it led to the land around it being turned into the Meadow space too, and it is now well maintained by the Parish Council.' That same project inspired another community mainstay – the Stanstead Abbots Community News Facebook group. 'It has been very tough to keep the group running smoothly at times,' Julia admits, 'but I am proud that it serves as a useful community resource.'

When she's not working or volunteering, Julia makes the most of both village and city life. 'It's a great combination of village life and access to the city,' she says. 'Locally, I enjoy access to some much underrated countryside right on our doorstep... we have an amazing network of very well-maintained and quiet footpaths in East Hertfordshire. The County Council's Countryside Management Service and its volunteers do a fantastic job of keeping our rights of way accessible. We are very lucky to have so many RSPB, Lee Valley and Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust reserves within walking distance, not to mention the river paths.'

For a relaxing evening, she heads to Taste of Raj. 'All the staff are so friendly and welcoming, the atmosphere is relaxed and we always bump into people we know, and the food is always good.' She's also proud of the area's local businesses: 'We are so lucky to have a thriving high street with a choice of shops and businesses, as well as the many large and small businesses that are in The Maltings.'

A keen reader, Julia enjoys novels and investigative writing in equal measure. 'I enjoy reading Rachel Joyce novels as her characters have such depth... I also admire people like Catherine Belton, who faced considerable personal risk in writing about the Putin regime.' An interest in investigative journalism follows into Julia's viewing too as she enjoys great docu-dramas, like *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*, which really make an impact and tell the untold stories we should know more about.

For anyone considering getting more involved in the community, she has some great advice: 'There is lots of research about the personal benefits of volunteering and I would encourage anyone to get involved in whatever community initiative that interests them. We have many volunteer groups in the villages that help to keep this a special place to live. If anyone is interested in setting up a new initiative, the Parish Council can provide small grants to help get them started.'

The Three Villages Magazine

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.

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

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 Louise Huggett at stmargaretsbury@outlook.com or 07958 636388.

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).

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 at 12–1.30pm & 5–6.30pm and Friday at 12–1.30pm in The Ashlea Room, Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall.

Hope in Action: a group concentrating on addiction in all forms, for concerned family members as well as addicts. Meeting in The Ashlea Room, Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall, from 5–6.30pm.

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

This term, we've been learning all about safety – from first aid to fire safety! The Brownies spent two weeks practising vital first aid skills, including learning how to do CPR and use a defibrillator. We even found out where our local defibrillators are in the village. We also enjoyed a fascinating visit to the fire station, where we learnt how to keep ourselves and our homes safe.



Adventure called when we headed to Tolmers Activity Centre in Cuffley for caving and rock climbing, and we did our bit for the environment with a litter-picking session in the woods.

There's still lots to look forward to – a sleepover at the Natural History Museum in late November and a festive trip to the panto in December.



Girlguiding

Our Brownies love trying new things and making memories together, but we need more adult volunteers to keep the fun going. Whether you can help regularly or just occasionally, your time makes a huge difference. No experience is needed – just enthusiasm and a smile! If you think this might appeal to you, do get in touch with me.

Helen Payne, Leader (01920 462676)

COME AND JOIN TEDDY CLUB!

Teddy Club relaunched in September and it's been wonderful seeing so many little ones (and their grown-ups!) enjoying our friendly Thursday morning sessions at The Wilshire Hall, Cappell Lane.

If you haven't popped in yet, why not come along and see what we're all about? Teddy Club runs every Thursday from 9am to 11am, and it's the perfect place for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers to play, explore and make new friends.

Each week is full of fun activities, from crafts, songs and story time to plenty of toys and space to play. It's also a great chance for parents and carers to catch up over a cuppa while the children have fun.

Each session costs just £2, making it an affordable and cheerful way to start your Thursday mornings. And don't forget the toast is just £1 for two slices – always a hit with our hungry teddies.



Everyone is welcome. Whether you're a regular or it's your first time, you'll find a warm smile waiting for you. So grab your little one (and their favourite teddy) and come along to join the fun. We'd love to see you soon!

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SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS TREES: THE WALLED GARDEN'S ECO-FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVE

This Christmas, why not decorate sustainably with a little help from The Walled Garden at Stanstead Bury Farm? Nestled within our three villages, The Walled Garden has been home to vegetable growing families for over 300 years. Today, they continue their eco-friendly mission by offering an innovative and planet-friendly solution for the festive season: rental, rooted Christmas trees.



Unlike traditional cut trees or plastic alternatives, these potted trees can be enjoyed in your home over the holidays and then returned to The Walled Garden, where they are replanted and cared for until the next year. Each tree comes with full care instructions, and delivery and collection are handled for you, making it a hassle-free and environmentally responsible choice.

This sustainable tree-rental service supports The Walled Garden's commitment to community, conservation and tradition. It's perfect for families who want to celebrate the season while reducing their environmental impact.

To find out more or reserve your tree, contact The Walled Garden...

Email: ginitrower@btinternet.com

Website: www.thewalledgardenherts.com

Facebook: [@walledgardenstansteadabbotts](https://www.facebook.com/walledgardenstansteadabbotts)

THE
WALLED GARDEN

Celebrate the season sustainably – and let your Christmas tree grow with you year after year!

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE BROXBOURNE AND EAST HERTS

Boost your digital confidence with FREE support in Stanstead Abbots!

Are you looking to improve your digital skills in a friendly and welcoming environment? The Community Alliance – Broxbourne & East Herts is offering a fantastic opportunity to do just that with their Digital Skills Group in Stanstead Abbots.

This free, volunteer-led group is perfect for anyone who wants to get to grips with using a computer, tablet or smartphone. Whether you're new to technology or just want to build your confidence, their Digital Champions will help you learn how to:

- Navigate your devices with ease
- Shop online safely
- Access virtual appointments
- Stay connected with friends and family



Community Alliance
BROXBOURNE & EAST HERTS

Sessions take place monthly on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:00pm at the Nigel Copping Community Building (SG12 8GA).

The last date for the year is 10th December, but the 2026 dates will be released soon. For more information, contact sarahc@communityalliancebeh.org.uk.

Booking is essential! Call 0300 123 1034 to reserve your place.

Just bring your charged device and start your journey toward becoming more digitally confident!

Community Alliance – Broxbourne & East Herts
Nigel Copping Community Building, 88 Sanville Gardens, Stanstead Abbots, Herts SG12 8GA

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: HEAVENLY HAIR & BEAUTY

Celebrating five fabulous years

In the heart of Stanstead Abbotts High Street sits Heavenly Hair & Beauty, a friendly, modern salon that has become a go-to destination for hair, beauty and aesthetics since opening in December 2020.



Owned by Nikki Coppins, the salon offers everything from classic cuts and blow-drys to specialist blonding, hair extensions, gel and BIAB nails, facials, lashes, permanent makeup and advanced laser treatments – all under one stylish roof.

Nikki's journey is a story of passion and perseverance. 'Hair is all I know, I live it and even dream it! Becoming a salon owner is a dream come true and having an amazing group of people alongside me is even better, making our little salon family,' she says. Nikki began her career straight from school, training with Toni & Guy and L'Oréal Colour, and even entering hair competitions along the way. 'I later began to think what it would be like working for myself and pursued my goal in doing so, where it led me to finding this fabulous premises. I turned it into my very own unique & *chique* salon.'

The salon's journey hasn't been without its challenges. Nikki signed the lease during the second lockdown and spent four weeks renovating before opening for the first time on 12th December 2020. 'We were open for 8 days before closing again for the third lockdown,' she recalls. 'We opened our doors again in April and have been going strong ever since.' December will mark the salon's fifth anniversary – a proud milestone for Nikki and her growing team.

That team includes a group of talented professionals, each running their own independent business within Heavenly Hair & Beauty. Katie Hill, stylist and colour technician, says, 'I thrive on making my clients' hair dreams come true.' Beth Stanley, also a stylist and colour technician, adds, 'I love helping clients feel and look their best. I enjoy all aspects of hairdressing and look forward to welcoming you all.' In the beauty rooms, Adriana Gilbey offers facials, lashes, injectables and permanent makeup. 'We work with our patients on any concerns they may have to enhance their natural beauty and give them a massive confidence boost,' she explains. Lily Cowler, owner of Nails by Lily May, says, 'I have a passion in making all your nails pretty.' Completing the team is Chrystle Georgiou, specialising in laser hair removal and skin rejuvenation. 'My mission is to create a professional, comfortable experience that delivers beautiful lasting results,' she says.

As a local resident and parent at St Andrew's Primary School, Nikki's ties to the village run deep. 'My children go to school at St Andrew's so I have a lot of connections with the school children and parents,' she says. 'We are great friends with a lot of the shops in the High Street.'



Looking to the future, Nikki is planning a major refurbishment and rebrand next year, with hopes to open another salon in the years to come. Heavenly Hair & Beauty is more than just a salon – it's a vibrant part of the community, offering expert care in a warm, welcoming space.

Heavenly Hair & Beauty

14A High Street, Stanstead Abbotts, SG12 8AB

T: 07762 228034 | E: heavenlyhairandbeauty@gmail.com

Web: www.heavenlyhairbeauty.co.uk | Insta: [@heavenly_hairr](https://www.instagram.com/heavenly_hairr)

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POEM BY HELEN PORTER

Untitled

There is nothing the matter with me
I'm as healthy as I can be
I have arthritis in both knees
And when I talk I wheeze
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in
Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to walk in the street
Sleep is denied me night after night
But every morning I'm still alright
My memory's failing, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in
The moral is this as my tale I unfold
That for you and me that are growing old
It's better to say 'I'm fine' with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape we are in
How do I know that my youth is all spent
Well, my get up and go has got up and went
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
With all the grand places my get up has bin

Age is golden, I've often heard said
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed
My ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup
My eyes on the table until I wake up
Before sleep overtakes me I say to myself
Is there anything else I could lay on the shelf
When I was young my slippers were red
I could kick my heels right over my head
When I was older my slippers were blue
But I could still dance the whole night through
Now I am old my slippers are black
I walk to the store then puff my way back
I get up each morning and dust off my wits
I pick up the paper to read the 'Obits'
If my name is still missing, I know I'm not dead
So I have a good breakfast then go back to bed

by Helen Porter
(1915–2003)

If you have a poem you would like to see published, email us at print.threevillagesmagazine@gmail.com.

RECIPE: ROCK CAKES

These rock cakes are quick to make, don't require special equipment and use common cupboard ingredients. Perfect to enjoy with a cup of tea or coffee as the weather gets colder!

INGREDIENTS

- 225g self-raising flour
- 85g caster sugar
- 100g cold butter (cubed)
- 1 tsp mixed spice or ground cinnamon (optional but seasonal)
- 100g dried fruit (e.g. raisins, sultanas, currants)
- 1 large egg (plus 1–2 tbsp milk if needed)

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Rub the butter into the flour using your fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs.
3. Stir in sugar, spice and dried fruit.
4. Beat the egg, then add to the mix. Stir to form a stiff dough. If it's too dry, add a little milk (1 tbsp at a time).
5. Spoon rough heaps of the mixture onto the tray – they should look rock-like.
6. Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden brown and firm.
7. Let them cool for about 10 mins on a wire rack. Then enjoy!
8. Store in an air-tight container for up to 5 days.



WHAT'S ON THIS CHRISTMAS

Santa's Grotto Experience

Date: Until Wednesday 24th December

Where: Van Hage Garden Centre, Great Amwell

What: A magical experience including meeting Santa, gingerbread decorating, reindeer food making and a special Christmas gift.

Entry: Tickets from £30 (various options available)

Booking (essential): <https://tinyurl.com/35ctfwcp>

Christmas Carol Hour with Hertford Pantry

Date: Thursday 4th December, 6.00–7.00pm

Where: The Green outside The Sele Community Hub

What: A festive singalong featuring The Somewhere to Sing Choir. Warm drinks and mince pies supplied. Christmas hats optional!

Entry: Free

Booking: n/a

Ware Dickensian Evening



Date: Friday 5th December, 6.30–10.30pm

Where: Ware Town Centre

What: Late-night shopping, carol singing, Victorian dress, stalls and children's festive entertainment.

Entry: Free

Booking: n/a

Christmas Paint & Dine

Date: Monday 8th December, 6.30–9.30pm

Where: The Red Lion, 1 High St, Stanstead Abbots

What: A relaxed and creative painting session led by our friendly artist – no pressure, just fun! Beautifully prepared seasonal buffet dinner curated with a homemade touch! Mulled wine & soft drinks included.

Entry: £75pp or £70 for groups (two or more) – limited tickets available

Booking (essential): bookings@paintanddine.co.uk

Christmas Spectacular Concert

Date: Saturday 13th December, 7.00–9.30pm

Where: Ware Drill Hall, Amwell End, Ware

What: A concert by Ware Brass and Opus One with festive favourites and Christmas classics.

Entry: Tickets from £16.99

Booking (essential): <https://tinyurl.com/4x4fycfz>

Artisan Christmas Craft Fair

Date: Saturday 20th December, 10.00am to 3.00pm

Where: Ware Drill Hall, Amwell End, Ware

What: A Christmas craft fair with handmade crafts, decorations, gifts and treats.

Entry: Free

Booking: n/a



December cupcake decorating with Sweet Designs by Jennie



Tuesday 9th December, 7pm – Festive Food (6 spaces)

Wednesday 10th December, 7pm – Christmas Wreath (6 spaces)

Thursday 11th December, 7pm – Winter's Night (5 spaces)

Monday 15th December, 7pm – Christmas Bouquet (1 space)

Tuesday 16th December, 7pm – North Pole (5 spaces)

Wednesday 17th December, 7pm – Christmas Characters (6 spaces)



Come along and decorate a beautiful set of cupcakes that are yours to take home and enjoy! All ingredients and equipment are provided, along with an apron to wear on the day, and hot and cold refreshments, so you only need to bring yourself and your willingness to have fun. Spaces are £45 per person, other than the bouquet class, which is £50 and the wreath class, which is £55.



If you would like to book onto any of these classes or have any questions please message me (sweetdesignsbyjennie@yahoo.com).

Sweet Designs by Jennie

- ◇ 5* Food Hygiene rating
- ◇ Fully registered & insured
- ◇ Level 2 Food Hygiene certified



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THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

The Hundred Parishes Society is a registered charity whose purpose is to raise awareness of an area of 450 square miles of northeast Hertfordshire, northwest Essex and southern Cambridgeshire, which is mainly rural and characterised by its rich and diverse heritage. Its website – www.hundredparishes.org.uk – has brief introductions to each of the hundred or so administrative parishes that make up the area, as well as lots of downloadable walk routes and articles covering many subjects from a local perspective. The extreme southwest of the area includes Stanstead Abbots and Great Amwell.

Recently, I was privileged to watch two bats flying around my garden. They were so quick and acrobatic it was difficult to keep them in view. Bats and their roosts are legally protected so must not be disturbed. Bats are mammals, giving birth to live young. It reminded me of how lucky we are in The Hundred Parishes to have so many wild mammals in our mainly rural area.

There are several kinds of deer locally, mostly Fallow, Roe or Muntjac. Larger herds are usually Fallow deer, which have 'palmate' antlers, shaped like the palm of a hand. The smaller Roe deer may be seen in smaller groups – they have a white rump and no visible tail. Muntjac are smaller still and tend to be solitary; they have horns and tusks – downward-pointing canine teeth.

Out enjoying our latest walk, number 188, my wife and I surprised two hares who disappeared at great speed when they spotted us. They can run up to 45mph over short distances.

We regularly see foxes in our garden, usually courtesy of our inexpensive night vision camera. In the spring, we enjoyed watching the young cubs playing. Foxes seem to be a more common sight now, even during daylight, and regularly venture into built up areas. The camera occasionally spots a badger; he is usually looking for peanuts.

Anyone lucky enough to see hedgehogs in their garden should look after them as their numbers are in decline. They are nocturnal, so at dusk we should put out a shallow bowl of fresh water (not milk as it is bad for their digestion) and perhaps some dog or cat food. They may repay you by eating slugs and insects although our experience has been that they prefer commercial hedgehog food like Spike's Dinner.

Enjoy them all.

Ken McDonald, Secretary

[images courtesy of The Hundred Parishes Society]



Pipistrelle bat



Fallow deer



Muntjac deer



Hare



Fox



Badger



Hedgehog

DIRECTORY OF USEFUL NUMBERS

THE 3 CHURCHES BENEFICE

Vicar

Rev'd Dr Sarah Forrest 01920 870009/07488 914972

Lay Ministers

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

Churchwardens: Mr Peter Melrose 01920 422092

Mr John Woodward 07942 674994

Organist: Mrs Lynne Griffiths 01920 460668

PCC Secretary: Mrs Michele Ross 07783 443332

Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Michele Ross 07783 443332

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 Gerald King 07710 872218

Stanstead Abbots Parish Hall:

Mr Andrew Day 07588 016148

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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07792 838564 or 01920 421799 (home)

email: neil@farrellyplumbing.co.uk

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High Street, Stanstead Abbots

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& Midweek Events

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- The Wilshere Hall, St Andrew's Church, Stanstead Abbots
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PUZZLE PAGE ANSWERS (from page 12)

WHO AM I?

Noddy Holder (from Slade)

DINGBATS: CHRISTMAS

1. Tinsel [t in sel]
2. Presents under the tree
3. Mixed nuts
4. White Christmas
5. Peace on earth
6. Opening presents

FILL THE BLANKS: CHRISTMAS CAROLS

1. Right (from *Once in Royal David's City*)
2. Even (from *Good King Wenceslas*)
3. Lily (from *The Holly and the Ivy*)
4. Slow (from *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*)
5. Frankincense (from *The First Nowell*)
6. Lamb (from *In the Bleak Midwinter*)
7. Healing (from *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*)
8. Men (from *O Little Town of Bethlehem*)
9. Open (from *Calypso Carol*)
10. Harp (from *Deck the Halls*)



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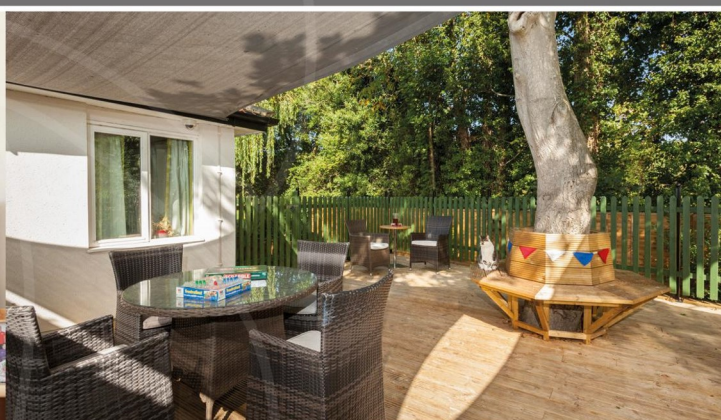
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