

HARTFORD HUNDRED WEST

THE



PARISH MAGAZINE

*Bayford, Brickendon, Essendon,
Little Berkhamsted & Ponsbourne.*

February 2026

90p



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THE PARISHES OF BAYFORD & BRICKENDON, LITTLE BERKHAMSTED, ESSENDON & WOODHILL & PONSBOURNE

RECTOR: Revd. Theresa Musiwacho,

Hartford Hundred Rectory,
1 Little Berkhamsted Lane, Little Berkhamsted, SG13 8LU.
Telephone: 01707 875940 email - hartfordhundred@outlook.com

*Communion to the sick, Notice of Banns and of Marriage by arrangement with the Minister. See p29
Please advise us of any cases of sickness so that prayers may be offered
or where they may be of any assistance.*

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AL8 7AL **01707 323742**

PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR

Cas Blackman
editor@parishmagazine.org

The Parish Magazine is also available online, free of charge.
Google 'HHW Parish Magazine'.
For the HHW web site, Google 'Hartford Hundred West'.

Dear all,

As we walk in 2026 some people may feel as though the world around them is a wilderness—unpredictable, shifting, full of both promise and uncertainty. In Scripture, Moses faced a similar landscape as he led the Israelites out of Egypt. He did not rely on perfect conditions, advanced plans, or human strength alone. Instead, he relied on one decisive reality: the presence of God. That same invitation stands before us today—to walk into the unknown with God beside us.

Moses understood something essential; progress without God's presence is just motion. When God told him to lead the people forward, Moses prayed, *"If Your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here."* Exodus 33:15. It was not the miracles, strategies, or leadership titles that defined Moses; it was his nearness to God. In 2026, with rapid change, technology, political shifts, and personal transitions, we are invited to live with that same dependence.

Walking with God's presence today means - He is present in classrooms, workplaces, hospital corridors, homes etc. Like the pillar of cloud and fire that guided Israel, God still directs hearts through prayer, Scripture, circumstances and gentle nudges of the Holy Spirit. It may not always look dramatic, but His leading is no less real.

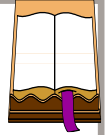
Moses also teaches us courage. He stood before waters that had not yet parted. Our "Red Seas" in 2026 might be fears about the future, broken relationships, overwhelming responsibilities or challenges etc. Sometimes challenges are not removed though His presence is with us ; but His presence transforms how we face them. The presence of God turns panic into trust and obstacles into testimonies.

When you get into God's presence through worship or prayer, when you feel you belong, all fear is gone, there is deliverance, there is intimacy and everything is bare before Him. In His presence the Spirit takes over - 1 Corinthians 2:10 " ...The Spirit searches all things even the deep things of God". When King David entered His presence (the holy of holies), he never thought of his position. He became a *child* before God – danced with all his might and he had on him what was interpreted as minimal clothes. In His presence there is fullness of joy. One comes out transformed.

Moses' journey reminds us that God's presence forms identity. Israel moved from being slaves to becoming a covenant people because God walked with them. In the same way, when we live with God's presence, our worth is no longer defined by our failures, careers, or pace of success, but by His unwavering love. May we journey with His presence as we start our Lent Journey this February 2026.

The Reverend Theresa Musiwacho

PARISH REGISTER



Name	Date	Community
Margaret Burguess	8.11.2025	Essendon
John Beatty	8.12. 2025	Essendon

February 2026 Calendar

Sunday 1st February

09,30	Parish Communion	Essendon
09,30	Family Service	Ponsbourne
11.00	Parish Communion ,	Brickendon

Sunday 8th February

09.30	Parish Communion	Bayford
11.00	Family Service	Little Berkhamsted

Sunday 15th February

09.30	Family Service	Essendon
09.30	Parish Communion	Ponsbourne
11.00	Family Service	Brickendon

Sunday 22nd February

09.30	Parish Communion	Little Berkhamsted
11.00	Family Service	Bayford

Sunday 1st March

09,30	Parish Communion	Essendon
09,30	Family Service	Ponsbourne
11.00	Parish Communion,	Brickendon

Sunday 8th March

09.30	Parish Communion	Bayford
11.00	Family Service	Little Berkhamsted

Wednesdays 9.30 : Mid week Holy Communion Service, Essendon , followed by coffee

Prayer Share

Oh mighty God, may your presence go with us in 2026 and forever guide and lead us. Give us the strength to seek you and may you reveal yourself to us. We pray in Jesus's name who is our Lord and Saviour.



Amen



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Facebook page is www.facebook.com/masterartworkshops



Bible Study The Bible study group has started again at 7pm at The Rectory in Little Berkhamsted. This year the Nicene Creed has its 1700th anniversary so we will be using this as our theme. We try to meet every two to three weeks. Each study is a separate topic so you just attend when you can manage. We are a friendly group trying to make sense of God's word and everyone is welcome.

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Garden Notes February



I am putting this together in early January, it is freezing cold outside but there are already glimmers of plant life and hope appearing - nature, as always, is amazing!. If the weather is reasonable where do we start?

February garden tasks involve preparing for spring by sowing seeds indoors (tomatoes, chillies, peppers), chitting potatoes ready for the warmer weather, dividing snowdrops, pruning summer-flowering shrubs, tidying up generally, preparing soil for planting, and planting winter-hardy options like garlic, and hands-on tasks like pruning ornamental grasses and planting first early potatoes if weather permits at the end of the month.



Plant Snowdrops 'in the green' gently splitting up bigger clumps.

Trim back winter-flowering heathers once they have finished flowering, which should encourage new growth, bushier plants and more flowers next winter.

Try taking cuttings from tender fuchsias and pelargoniums that have been overwintered indoors, they won't all 'take' but it is exciting when some do so keep them warm! When you see new shoots appearing take a stem 7-10cm. long cutting just below a leaf joint, pot them up in peat-free compost, keep them moist and new roots should develop within a few weeks!

If you are vegetable growers, prepare for the coming months by removing unwanted plants and debris from where you are planning to grow them and, if available, a mulch of well-rotted garden compost will help.

In bad weather, sit by the fire and look through your seed catalogues planning your spring and summer garden!



Happy Gardening Days ahead!
Gemander Speedwell



Bayford

St. Mary's Church

Church Cleaners -

Jane Honeyman & Linda

BAYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

To read the minutes and agendas just Google 'Bayford Parish Council' and follow the link to 'Minutes'.

Meetings.

Please check the website.

The next meeting is the Parish Assembly, 16th March, 8pm in the Memorial Hall.

Michael Wainwright , Chairman.

mikewainwright@bayfordparishcouncil.org.uk

01707 875970. www.begesford.co.uk

Bell's Wood

It seems my asking a question in the EHDC council meeting has caused some movement within EDC planning department, even though at the meeting I was interrupted quite rudely by several Councillors. The legal advice given to the Council has been published and is somewhat milder than the one we obtained, but does state that the number of mobile home should be limited.

Joan Morris. b. 27th December 1925.

On the 27th December friends and family gathered at the Farmer's Boy to celebrate Joan's 100th birthday. Joan seemed to take the event in her stride and wore a glittering tiara. Much conversation and food and drink was enjoyed.

Friends of The Baker Arms.

A revised planning application has been submitted by McM. It is not easy to tell what has changed, but we will consider the application and request a meeting with McM.

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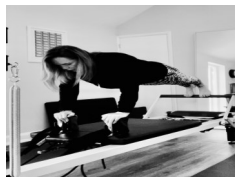
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Essendon Nature Notes

I was a little disturbed to come out in the garden the other day to find a dead wood pigeon lying on the ground with its head missing. I quickly cleared up the grisly scene before the dogs got wind of it. This requires some detective work as to the likely culprit but there is one particular name in the frame, the sparrowhawk. The bird has a reputation for this type of kill, the brains providing a rich and nutritious meal.



Female Sparrowhawk

The following day I saw a female sparrowhawk in the fields down by the river and, whilst probably not the same individual, it convinced me that there are a few around and about. It was flying fast, low and straight



between bushes, typical of its behaviour and something which our more common bird of prey, the kestrel, never does. Often your first impression is something moving quickly out of the corner of your eye, followed by a dramatic explosion of feathers as they take a small bird

and you wonder what on earth has just happened. This ambush predator can make the garden bird-table a dangerous place.

When you do get a chance to see one at rest, the sparrowhawk is an impressive bird with striking yellow eyes and talons. The female has a dark brown back and barred underparts with the male more blue-grey above and rust coloured below. The male is very much smaller and indeed we can narrow down our list of suspects as only the female would be large enough to take a stocky wood pigeon. It is helpful to be reminded that the natural world is not all beauty and loveliness and sometimes it is brutal and raw. Perhaps occasionally that untamed wildness, however it manifests itself, should increase our appreciation of the ecological equilibrium, surprising and often unsettling, but thankfully beyond our control.



Male sparrowhawk

DC



Brickendon

Chapel of Holy Cross & St. Alban

For enquiries concerning the Chapel, please contact
Virginia Haryott 01992 511575
 or email wellpondharyott@gmail.com

Services February 2026

1st February 1100 Parish Communion
 15th February 1100 Family Service
 1st March 1100 Parish Communion

Altar Flowers

Brenda Lambie
 Brenda Lambie
 Brenda Lambie
 LENT no flowers

Church Cleaning

29th January Alison Blakey
 5th February
 12th February Virginia Haryott
 19th February
 26th February Tessa Whitlow

Grateful thanks go to so many friends who help to keep our church looking so beautiful. New members would be very welcome, so please consider helping. Phone or message Virginia on 07770 944854 or email virginia.haryott@gmail.com

Parish Council Meetings

Next meeting : 26th March 2026

Parish Clerk: Laura Brooks-Payne
 Brickendon Liberty Parish Council
 PO BOX 81, Knebworth, SG3 6YZ
 Email clerk@brickendon-liberty.org.uk

Mobile 07803 906291

Minutes: Brickendon website
www.brickendon-liberty.org.uk

Tennis Courts £5 per court per hour.
 Bookings telephone 07734 715002 or
 email tony.roberts@brickendon-liberty.org.uk

Contact Janet 01992 511515

Book Club - meets first Tuesday of the
 month at 8pm, contact **Andrea**

Trendler - 01992 511588

Pilates Tuesdays 9.15 am in
 Fanshaws Room Contact

Harriet Barton, 07944 500504
or email
pilateswithharriet@hotmail.com

Brickendon Petanque Boules Club

We play at The Farmers Boy

**Please note temporary playing
 times**

Tuesday 2pm - 3.30pm
 Thursday 10am - 12 noon
 Sunday 10am - 12 noon

For further information contact our
 Club Secretary **Janet 01992 511515**

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“The story of Christmas”with Carols

Sunday 14th December 2025 –a success story

The church was decorated with help from a talented group of village knitters and it looked beautiful. It was filled to capacity for the wonderful nativity play which was a one off for Brickendon. The actors had all gone to a lot of trouble creating their costumes and they looked magnificent. We even had a beautiful baby Jesus called Roux, who slept through the whole performance! Between the scenes carols were sung and led by Brook. The congregation showed their appreciation with loud cheers and warm applause. Many thanks must go to Rachel who masterminded the whole celebration.



Hartford Hundred Knitting & Crochet Group and Knit n Natter

We were busy knitting before Christmas, we dressed a tree at the Ponsbourne Christmas Tree Festival , decorated Brickendon Church and also knitted Santas and Snowmen who were for sale in The Farmers Boy . All proceeds going to Wizzkids. We also decorated the postboxes in Brickendon, Bayford and Essendon and the bus shelters in the villages.

We meet every Tuesday morning and 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings in The Farmers Boy . For details Contact Janet 01992 511515

Cooking Ideas by Ruth Newton

Florentines

These delicious teatime treats are actually quite easy to make but still manage to look impressive! I have given suggestions for the fruit and nut mix, but feel free to use any combination that you like, particularly if you still have some dried fruit or nuts left over from Christmas. However, I rarely leave out the gorgeous red glace cherries as they really add a spark of colour. The honey in this recipe gives the Florentines a slightly softer texture, rather than a hard brittle crunch.

You will need two baking sheets and some grease-proof paper. Makes about 12.



Ingredients:

2oz/50gr butter	2oz/50gr sugar	
1 tablespoon honey	2oz/50gr plain flour	
2oz/50gr glace cherries	1oz/25gr mixed peel	1oz/25gr currants
2oz/50gr chopped pistachios and pecan nuts (or any other combination)		
4oz/100gr plain or milk chocolate (plain is traditional but you can use either)		

Method: Pre-heat the oven to 180c/G4. Lay a piece of greaseproof paper on each baking sheet. Put the butter, sugar, and honey into a saucepan and melt together slowly. Remove from the heat and tip in the flour, dried fruit and nuts. Mix well to combine. Place spoonfuls of mixture, roughly golf ball size, onto the baking sheets, leaving room for them to spread out while cooking. Bake in the oven for about 10 minutes or until just golden brown – don't let them get too dark and crispy. Remove from the oven and leave them to cool. If you find they have got a bit too lacy around the edges or lost their shape, you can gently knock the edges back into place while they are still warm. Once they have cooled, place them onto a wire rack while you melt the chocolate. Place the chocolate into a bowl over a pan of simmering water and gentle allow to melt. Once melted, place half a teaspoon of chocolate on the back of each Florentine, and using the back of the teaspoon spread the chocolate out to the edges. I like to do one thin coat and then go back and do a second layer. Once they are all covered, leave for a few minutes for the chocolate to firm up slightly, then run a fork in wavy lines through the chocolate for that traditional finish. Leave in a cool place until the chocolate has fully set, then enjoy.

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Essendon, Woodhill, Wild Hill & Woodside

St. Mary the Virgin

Flower Rota February

31st Jan Sue Rogers

7/14 Feb Pauline Alleyne

21/28 Feb Lent no flowers



Essendon's Parish Council Meeting – February 2026

Our next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 10 February 2026 at 7pm** in the Village Hall. Everyone is very welcome to attend.

The meeting's agenda will be available in advance on the Parish Council website — www.essendonparishcouncil.gov.uk — and on the village noticeboard. Minutes of all meetings can also be found on the website.

The current serving councillors are Cllr Ian Venables (Chairman), Cllr Tracey Willetts (Deputy Chair), Cllr Mike Brown, Cllr Chris Jenner, and Cllr Nigel Chalmers. If you have any comments or enquiries, please contact the Clerk, Caroline Chapple, by emailing clerk@essendonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Essendon Tennis Courts

New members welcome.

Contact : **Nicki Whitelaw 07946 300 512**

or

nicki.whitelaw@sky.com

Subscriptions 2026

£50 family, £30 individual, £15 for a junior





*Flowers in January by
Pam Worsley*

Flowers in Church

-Join our team of volunteers

The church is well known for its ministry of flowers - a feast for the senses. Throughout history flowers have been brought into places of worship.

The practice evolved from ancient symbolic uses, gaining prominence in the Middle Ages with Mary's Gardens and Gothic art, flourishing in the Victorian era for Easter and funerals, and continuing today as a form of worship, symbolising

purity, resurrection, and God's creation, though sometimes met with controversy over ritualism. Early uses involved plants

like the lily and pomegranate, while later Christian traditions adopted flowers for specific meanings, from roses for the Virgin Mary to holly for Christ's Passion.

Beautiful displays of flowers have celebrated the changing seasons, the church's festivals and activities during the year. In St Mary's Essendon they are provided and maintained by a regular team of volunteers on a rota basis and their names included in the parish magazine each month.

If you are interested in all things flower related we have a few vacant weeks in the church calendar. The team welcomes anyone who loves flowers to join as an arranger for a week or two. Don't worry—no special experience is required. We are very fortunate to have support from a few experienced members of the team who are very talented.

Or perhaps you would like to simply sponsor the church flowers to mark an anniversary, special occasion or in memory of a loved one.

For further details contact Jude on 07958 353 496 or the Revd. Theresa.



All Sorts Dementia Group
Wednesdays
10.30am to 3pm at Essendon
Village Hall

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essendonvillagehall



The village hall is available for use by village
residents and organisations. It can be hired by residents or non- residents for
events, parties, weddings and other celebrations. There is a kitchen and it has
facilities for the disabled.

Current regular events at the village hall

MONDAY Pilates 7pm-8pm Contact Keti 07718 386 195

WEDNESDAY AllSorts Dementia Day Group Contact Kelly 07557 145 484

WI 3rd Wednesday evening 7.45 Contact Lyn 07971 909 540

THURSDAY Pilates 9.30-10.30 Contact Keti 07718 386 195

FRIDAY Essendon Connect Coffee and Chat 9.30-11.30 am

Contact Cas 07831 341 886

Essendon Connect

We are open every Friday morning in the Village Hall from 9.30-11.30 for free tea, coffee, cake and lots of chat. All residents welcome. Give us a try!



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Also during February we will be offering a simple soup lunch on Tuesdays at 1230.



ESSENDON WI

the WI

INSPIRING WOMEN

Wednesday 18th February 8.00 pm

Philip McKinder is visiting the WI meeting in the village hall in February. His talk entitled "Guilty or Not Guilty" considers a 1931 murder in Liverpool. Edward Wallace, an insurance clerk, is accused of murdering his wife. Philip will explore the prosecution and defence and encourage the audience to decide the outcome of the trial.

Interested in considering joining Essendon Women's Institute? Come along as our guest in February to meet this friendly group. Please call Lyn McCash 07971 909540 for further info

Potholes

There has been a lot of discussion on the village WhatsApp about potholes—and there have been even more appearing in the colder weather.

Wherever possible take a photo and report it to the County Council Highways Department.



Pothole at the bottom of Essendon Hill



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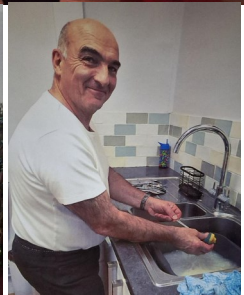
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Essendon Christmas Lunch
15th December 2025



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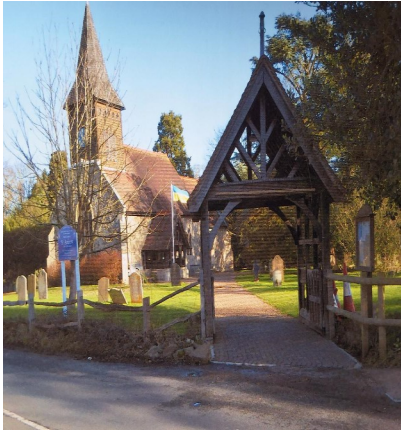
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News from Little Berkhamsted Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council is on **Wednesday 18th March 2026** at 7.30pm in the village hall. The agenda is published on the website and village noticeboard the week before the meeting and residents are welcome to send questions and comments to the clerk beforehand, clerk@littleberkhamsted.org.uk or attend the meeting and ask in person.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL GOES LIVE ON PARKING APP

East Herts Council has gone live on the National Parking Platform (NPP), giving drivers more choice over how they pay for parking.

The platform is designed to remove the frustration of having to download multiple parking apps. Drivers can choose which of the existing popular apps such as RingGo, JustPark, Appy Parking, Caura, APCOA Connect and the council's existing provider, PayByPhone, they would like to use as they will now all work in all East Herts car parks.

This means residents and visitors can use the app they already have, rather than downloading a new one when they arrive. East Herts Council has gone live on the platform alongside Welwyn Hatfield and Stevenage Councils.

COUNCIL VACANCY

We have a vacancy to become a Parish Councillor. The civil parish of Little Berkhamsted covers the village of Little Berkhamsted and the hamlets of Epping Green and Howe Green. The council comprises seven elected members and meets in the village hall at 7.30pm usually on the 3rd Wednesday of alternate months. Being a councillor is all about giving back to your community by bringing your energy, passion, and hard-working attitude. By doing this, you can make a real difference to the local community.

Please email clerk@littleberkhamsted.org.uk to register your interest and to find out more.

Little Berkhamsted Community Facilities for Hire

The Village Hall has recently been insulated and redecorated. It has disabled access and toilet, a fully equipped kitchen for any refreshment needs, a table tennis table, internet access and projector equipment.



The cricket and community pavilion has a fully equipped kitchen, bar area, changing rooms and shower facilities.

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LB Resident: £12

Non residents £17



For further details
contact: Sandie Ash
01707 875221

CALLING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Do you have a local business that could benefit from using our village facilities? Or are you looking at starting a new business and you require a venue to accommodate this? We have two fantastic facilities that are available to hire on an hourly basis.

Our Village Hall and Pavillion have both been recently renovated and provide ample space for a range of uses. Please get in touch to find out more. For enquiries or bookings, please contact Sandie Ash on 01707 875221 or clerk@littleberkhamsted.org.uk

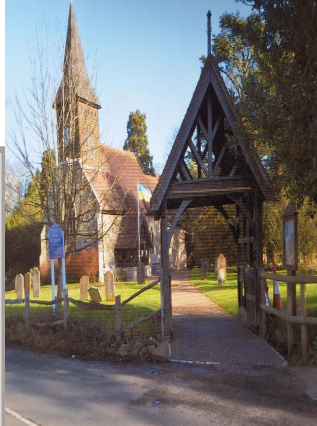
St Andrew's Church News

Date for your diary

**Friends of St. Andrew's
Pancake Supper
Shrove Tuesday 17/02/2026**



7.00 pm in
Little Berkhamsted Village Hall
£12 : OAPs £10.00 Family Ticket £25
Tel: Sandie on 01707 875221
Please bring your own cutlery, drink & glass



**Weddings, Baptisms and
other matters.**
Registration is held on
the 1st and 3rd Saturdays
of each month 10.00 to
11.30 at Little
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VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Want to see the most up to date news, events and notices happening in Little Berkhamsted? Or book our fabulous Village Hall or Pavillion? Visit www.littleberkhamsted.org.uk for the latest updates, booking of facilities and information about our community.

CLOTHES BIN

Any spare clothes? There is a clothes bin located at the entrance of the Little Berkhamsted Recreation field. If you have any spare items including clothing, shoes, bags or belts, please donate. All money received for these items will go towards the village fund .



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February Quiz ...

Brain teaser -

Answers on page 38

Answer next month.

1. How long can a non-working camel go without water? a) 10 days b) 10 weeks c) 10 months
2. In which city was the first underground train service opened?
3. What is the derivation of the £ symbol (LB) for sterling?
4. Which European capital city stands on the confluence of the Danube and Sava rivers?
5. Which USA state is known as the Garden State?
6. How much time is left in the day's play when a cricket umpire taps his watch?
7. In which decade did Cardiff become the capital city of Wales?
8. Henry VIII was buried in the St George's Chapel at Windsor next to which of his wives?
9. What is a chef's hat called?
10. In which decade were photos introduced on UK driving licences?

Brain teaser

The Danube River flows through which ten European countries:?

Answer next month.




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What's On in Newgate Street

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Table Tennis: Tuesday evenings, 7.30 - 9.30pm in the Village Hall. £1 pay and play

Tennis - Tuesday mornings, 9.30-10.30am Village Courts. Term time only. Contact 07710 507 215

Book Swap - Pre read books to buy £1 or swap 50p, in the Village Hall Post Office Tuesday & Thursday mornings.

Village Chat - WhatsApp group for people living in the village. To join the group contact 07710 507 215

Village Pub Social - 8pm the second Friday of every month in either The Crown or The Coach & Horses Pub. Come along to meet friends and make new ones. See Village Chat WhatsApp group or Village website for details.

Post Office. A small Post Office is open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the village hall.

VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS : from website

www.newgatestreet.org/ Follow the link to Hall Rental to Book

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February quiz answers : 1.10 months 2. London 3. The £ symbol is derived from the Latin word **libra**, which was the fundamental unit of weight in the Roman Empire 4 .Belgrade 5. New Jersey 6. One hour 7. 1950s (December 20, 1955) Previously there was no official capital 8. Jane Seymour 9. Toque blanche 10. 1990s -1998 on new licences. The old paper licence was abolished in 2015.

Answer to January brain teaser -

Name the 10countries whose name includes the letters TAN in that order

Afghanistan; Bhutan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgystan ; Mauritania; Pakistan; Tajikistan; Tanzania; Turkmenistan; Uzbekistan

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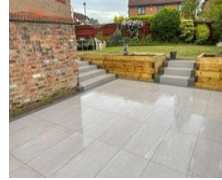
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