

Parish News

West Meon & Warnford

January 2026

Happy New Year and Happy Walking

Whether it is because of the lengthening of the days or doing something about the tighter waistband or the dog demanding a bit more time running around I cannot be sure, but I have noticed that many of us are drawn back to a good walk in the New Year. Walking certainly helped me to be ready for surgery.

Long walks, such as pilgrimages, have played an important part in the lives of many people from a variety of faiths and, more recently, of none. I am looking forward to joining a small group of fellow Christians along one of the Camino routes to Santiago de Compostela later in the year. But 'secular pilgrimages' are becoming increasingly popular as people seek to explore who they are. For example, the British Pilgrimage Trust (www.britishpilgrimage.org/about-us) 'seek to connect people of all faiths and none to Britain's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty'.

Pilgrimage can provide an opportunity for us to renew our spiritual beliefs and reflect on our life's journey. An element of self-discovery and personal growth and emotional and spiritual healing are often reported by pilgrims. For those of us with a faith, pilgrimage can strengthen faith as we have the space to examine what we really believe to be important. On a long walk, we can catch a glimpse of the scale and beauty of the world around us.

In Christian Spirituality, we may recognise that even the most modest walks can become powerful spiritual experiences when we are truly attentive to our own surroundings, using all or any of our senses. (For an example, see www.jesuitinstitute.org/tasters/praying-with-creation).



Photo: Ballachulish by A Annabel

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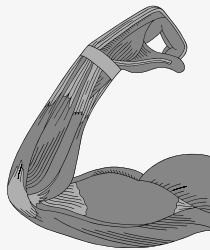
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Walking in this way can be seen as prayer without having to put anything into words. As we pay close and intentional attention to the gift of God's creation, we can sense God's love for us through that gift. This can be done in the garden or out in the wider countryside, in grand and rugged terrain or very modestly just in a garden with a beautiful sunset such as this evening's as I write.

There is a similar Buddhist exercise called a 'walking meditation'. It teaches us to appreciate the 'sacramentality' of nature – that is that nature has an outward and visible character while at the same time it can carry a deeper, sometimes hidden spiritual significance. Walking meditatively can encourage us to live in the present moment. It can reduce the sense of the world being a frenetic place and it can help us to be far more attentive to our surroundings, which lifts our spirits.

In this type of meditation, we are encouraged to walk slowly, alone or with a friend, preferably in a beautiful place. We walk as though we were the happiest person on earth. We walk, not thinking about the past or worrying about the future. We walk not trying to get from here to there. We stop our minds from darting around. We transform a walk into an experience of ourselves, with our feet taking every step in full awareness. Our breathing and stepping are in harmony. If we take the time to slow down and truly attend to what is around us, then we shall see that the 'world is charged with the grandeur of God' and there in nature 'lives the dearest freshness deep down things' (Gerard Manly Hopkins).

So, we pray, this new year:

*Dear God,
whose years never fail,
and whose mercies are new each returning day:
let the radiance of your Spirit renew our lives,
warming our hearts and giving light to our minds;
that we may pass the coming year attentive to creation
and with peace, joy and hope in our hearts Amen.*

Fr. Tony



Photo: Langdale Fell by J Annabel

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Churchyard Clearing

A big thank you for all your help this year, it has been fantastic, and the Churchyard looks its best. Your time, support and effort have been appreciated. I have had so many good comments on the Churchyard.

As we look forward to 2026 I have detailed below the dates chosen to carry on our good works. Get them in your diary now!

17th January	21st February
21st March	18th April
16th May	20th June
18th July	22nd August
19th September	17th October
21st November	12th December
Once again a big thank you and kind regards,	

Paul Wilcox

Cleaning of Thomas Lord's Grave

For many years my family and I have been regular visitors to West Meon as Chappets Farm used to be our family home where my mother and her sister were born in 1923 and 1922 respectively. Invariably, during these visits we walked through the churchyard of St John the Evangelist Church on our way to visit our own family grave. During these visits each time we saw the grave of Thomas Lord who retired to a farm close to West Meon, where he died and was buried in the churchyard. During conversations with some local residents we found that they were disappointed that there appeared to be no outside or official interest in tending it*.

During our visit in June this year my husband and I met Michael Johnson in the churchyard and in our conversation the subject of Thomas Lord's grave was raised. He welcomed our interest as he said that many people have asked him the same question regarding the grave's appearance, especially those who have visited West Meon specifically to see Thomas Lord's grave. Michael encouraged us to contact the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) at Lords. We wrote to the CEO of MCC at Lords and enclosed photographs of the Thomas Lord grave requesting that they might consider cleaning it as they already look after the grave of W G Grace. The CEO replied to us that he would have the grave inspected. The next thing we knew was that the legal counsel to the MCC contacted Michael and to our amazement the grave was restored in no time at all! We hope that everyone is happy with the end result.

Anne and Roger Jezard

* In prior years the gravestone was cleaned on an annual basis by the MCC. Specific attention was given in 1955 and 2000 when the MCC played West Meon and Warnford Cricket Club in the Thomas Lord Memorial matches. Of late however, MCC has been less keen on cleaning the grave. Thanks to Roger and Anne for their actions.

Chris Waller

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West Meon and Warnford Cricket Club season 2025

The season saw the Tigers play 21 matches, winning 12 and losing 4 with 4 draws and 1 tied game. On 14 occasions a Tigers batsman hit more than 50 runs and on 4 occasions this led to a century or more, the highest individual score being 138 runs by Harry Clarke. Captain Stuart Smith took two five wicket hauls, his best being 7 wickets for 5 runs conceded against Lynchmere. The team fielded full strength teams for every game but was ably supported by a number of ringers on occasion. Currently some 8 players are from West Meon and Warnford so the team remains fundamentally local.

Huge thanks go to Jeanette Clarke for her scoring and cakes, Andy Clarke for pitch preparation, ably supported by Richard Sturges. Mac Edwards cuts the recreation ground and is vital to ensuring the playing surface is safe. The bar is run by Rory and Mary - like teas, a vital part of any cricket afternoon. Captain Stuart Smith manages to somehow get the team organised and without his hard work there would be no cricket at all. Thanks Stuart for being so committed.

The 2026 season will see the team play a reduced fixture list with 12 matches starting on Sunday April 19th away at Steep. All matches are Sunday friendlies. The majority of matches will be at home and spectators are always welcome to a cup of tea at 3.30pm and the bar is usually open from 4pm. New players are always welcome to our small friendly club - you don't have to be an expert, just be able to get stuck in and enjoy the game. Enjoying the game and having fun is our main preoccupation along with always looking to win!

Chris Waller

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West Meon School Angels



West Meon School are all back and ready for the New Year. As always happens at primary schools, the end of the year was full of activities and events. The traditional trip to the Theatre Royal at Winchester was made by years 1 to 6. Puss in Boots was a very interactive performance that captured the imagination of the children and all our pupils had an amazing time. Back at the school, Hoglets, our reception children, enjoyed a visit from a magician; another totally absorbing display which the children thoroughly enjoyed. Our thanks go out to the Touchet Trust who supported the pantomime event by covering transport costs.

Staff changes at Primary schools are inevitable and the end of the year brought a few changes for us. Our Elsa is returning to study and left to complete a masters degree in the fields of psychology. In addition, a member from our Hedgehogs and Hoglets team is leaving to widen her horizons; we wish them both the very best in their future endeavours. Both positions have been filled by staff already known to the children, which is supporting the transition. With our new staffing arrangements comes some flexibility and we are able to offer a smaller setting for our Hoglets to thrive while meeting the KS1 curriculum with our Hedgehogs group.

Our library is now established as a place to enjoy books and the children have commented on the relaxed feel it has. School Council have been busy planning activities for the Active Playground and we have employed additional staff to enable KS2 to move to the field at lunchtimes. At West Meon we believe in supporting our learners and have a high staff to child ratio across the school.

FOWMS have again had a busy term. They organised a 'Guess the weight of the Cake' events and a 'Make your own Rules Day', both of which were a success. In addition, FOWMS had a special job in helping Santa make his rounds. They created a great grotto for the children to come and meet with the very special visitor who had a gift for every child.

Children at West Meon Primary enjoy the feeling that helping others brings. This year, we again supported Fr Tony in collecting toys for children at the Roberts Centre in Portsmouth which helps displaced children during the festive season. Our small school helped to raise money for Save the Children with our Xmas Jumper Day and we also had a Mulled Wine & Mince Pie event to show our appreciation to the large number of volunteers that help our children with reading during the term.

As we enter the New Year, heads full of new ideas and resolutions, West Meon Primary is looking forward to a term full of exciting learning opportunities and fun activities.

Applications for Reception Class places in September 2026 should be completed by 15th January 2026. We are currently supporting parents who wish to enrol their child for September 2026, please visit our website for additional information.

Julie Slamaker, Headteacher

Snowdrop Saturdays in Warnford Park

As we sit in our warm homes, listening to winter storms swirl around about, one small little flower nods its head to us, heralding the welcome arrival of spring, the humble Snowdrop!

Here in the Meon we are blessed with a wonderful display of Snowdrops in a secret garden spot on a private estate usually not open to the public. Book ahead and wander around Warnford Park's beautiful snowdrops on four Saturday afternoons this February (7th, 14th, 21st and 28th February 2026, 2–5pm).

Nestling in our valley, Warnford Park is a magnificent late 18th Century landscape park and pleasure grounds designed by Capability Brown as the setting for a country house and is the home of the Snowdrop Walk.

The walk here goes past the Church of Our Lady, Warnford, into the ruin of the 13th century manor, ambles through a woodland carpeted with snowdrops, along a path beside the magnificent gothic summer house and out to a Capability Brown designed lake. If you wish to be refreshed after your journey, wonderful tea and cakes await you in the Bell Tower of the Church, with music from the organ to entertain you.

Tickets for the Saturday opening are available on the Warnford Snowdrops website www.warnfordsnowdrops.org.uk.

Snowdrop Saturdays contribute funds to help with the running of the historic Warnford Church which has a small but loyal congregation. *Edwin Grimshaw*

Photo provided by Stephen Short

Rainfall Report for November to mid-December

We had our first frost on the 17th November followed by a few more nights when the temperature fell below zero but it has been relatively mild for the time of year.)

In the first fifteen days of November we had rain on all but two days and the second half wasn't much better with only five days when we didn't record any rain so that the month ended with 114.2 mms (4.5").

This makes the total for the year to the end of November 779.3mms (30.68", and to mid-December we have had 65.5mms (2.6").

So it looks like as if it is going to be among the driest years I have recorded but we do still have two weeks to go.

Peter Short





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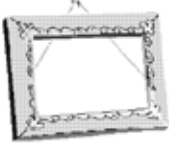
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Hampshire History Trust's Midweek Musings

Hampshire History Trust (HHT) is thrilled to announce the return of their much-loved lecture series, Midweek Musings. Running from January to July 2026, the programme promises an exciting season of talks designed to spark curiosity, celebrate Hampshire's rich history and keep heritage at the heart of the community.

Next year's series features an inspiring line-up of speakers headlined by BAFTA award winning historian, broadcaster and HHT patron Dan Snow, who will be sharing his journey to Antarctica in 2022 where he participated in the extraordinary discovery of Ernest Shackleton's long-lost ship, Endurance. Also joining the programme is Russell Gordon-Smith, former Mayor of Winchester, who will deliver a fascinating lecture exploring French Prisoners of War in Hampshire.

Over the next six months, these thought-provoking midweek sessions will delve into a wide range of topics from the history of the iconic King Alfred Buses, a beloved symbol of Winchester's transport heritage, to the daring achievements of pioneer aviator Amy Johnson.

Chair of Hampshire History Trust, Liz King, said: "We are delighted to be reviving Midweek Musings. The series continues to be a cornerstone of our mission to make history exciting and accessible. Next year's programme is our most diverse yet, and we can't wait to welcome both returning visitors and new faces."

Tickets for the first talk of the year, 'Introducing King Alfred Buses, Then and Now' by James Freeman, are now available to purchase on Hampshire History Trust's Ticketsource page www.ticketsource.com/hampshire-history-trust with discounted prices for friends of HHT.

For programme details, booking information and other announcements, visit www.hampshirehistorytrust.com, email info@hampshirehistorytrust.com or follow HHT's social media channels.

Hampshire History Trust (HHT) organises Winchester Heritage Open Days (WHODs) every year. WHODs is a FREE 10-day festival of history and heritage in Winchester and surrounding areas.

HHT also runs a podcast channel Hampshire HistBites which offers everyone the opportunity to delve into the past and go on a journey to discover hidden heritage and hear fascinating untold tales. We talk to experts and enthusiasts who are based in Hampshire and/or who have stories to share about Hampshire's history and heritage.

The Trust also has plans to run additional community projects to encourage more people to engage with the history that surrounds them.

Mesh Kuszyk



The poster for the Midweek Musings 2026 Programme features a dark blue background with a faint image of a book. It lists six talks with their dates, venues, and speakers. At the bottom, it includes the Hampshire History Trust logo and contact information.

Date	Venue	Topic	Speaker
22/01/2026	United Church 7.30 - 9pm	Introducing King Alfred Buses, Then and Now	A talk by James Freeman
24/01/2026	Winchester College 7 - 8pm	Adventures to the Southern Hemisphere	Featuring Ed Rickard and Dan Snow
09/04/2026	ADAM Architecture 6 - 7pm	On Forged Jewels	A talk by Alison Whittaker
07/05/2026	United Church 7.30 - 9pm	On Medieval Craft	A talk by Karen Worrall
04/06/2026	ADAM Architecture 6 - 7pm	History of Holistic Medicine	A talk by Gabriela Day
02/07/2026	ADAM Architecture 6 - 7pm	French Prisoners of War	A talk by Russell Gordon-Smith

HAMPSHIRE HISTORY TRUST
Please contact info@hampshirehistorytrust.com for more information and any questions you have.
Using names as of 2025

Services in the Upper Meon Parishes

Please see our Pew Sheets and notice boards for more services and school and village events.

Each Sunday at 8 am

Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) at East Meon

4th January 2026 –Epiphany Sunday

9 am Mattins BCP- Warnford with blessing of the Plough and Seed

10.30 am Benefice Eucharist- East Meon

6th January–The Epiphany

6 pm Compline - Langrish

11th January – The Baptism of Christ and First After the Epiphany (Plough Sunday)

9 am Service of the Word – Langrish

10.30 am Benefice Eucharist - West Meon

At today's services there will be the opportunity to renew our baptismal vows

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

18th - 25th January 2026

18th January – Epiphany 2

9 am Holy Communion BCP- Warnford

10.30 am Service of the Word - East Meon

25th January – The Conversion of St Paul

10.30 am Benefice Eucharist- Langrish

10.30 am Service of the Word - West Meon

1st February – Candlemas and Septuagesima (BCP)

9 am Mattins BCP- Warnford

10.30 am Benefice Eucharist- East Meon



Blue Lamp Trust launches rebrand and new website

The Blue Lamp Trust launches an image rebrand and updated website to strengthen support for vulnerable residents across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Local charity The Blue Lamp Trust has today unveiled a full organisational rebrand and newly designed website, marking a significant step forward in accessibility, clarity, and community impact for residents across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.



The rebrand includes the introduction of clearer, more intuitive names for its two free charitable support services:

- **Safe Home** – formerly the Bobby Scheme, providing free home safety and security visits for older and vulnerable residents, and those who have been victims of crime.
- **Safe Online** – formerly the Cyber Bobby Scheme, offering free tailored digital safety guidance, scam-awareness support and online protection advice.

Chief Executive Emma Burt said:

“Our mission has always centred on protecting vulnerable people and improving safety in our communities. This rebrand gives us the tools to do that more effectively. With clearer information, improved accessibility and a modern, user-friendly design, we hope this will help us reach more people while continuing to deliver the exceptional service the Trust is known for.”

The Trust’s technicians work across the whole of Hampshire, from cities and larger towns to rural villages and coastal communities, supporting residents from all backgrounds. Each visit is tailored, personal, and designed to help people feel safer, more confident and better protected in their everyday lives. This countywide reach ensures that vulnerable and isolated individuals receive vital support wherever they live.

The rebrand also includes a dedicated new website for the Trust’s commercial driver training arm, allowing a clear separation between charitable services and income-generating activity. The charity website remains the central hub for community safety information, referrals and support.

“This is more than a new look,” Emma added. “It represents a renewed commitment to our purpose: preventing harm, supporting independence and strengthening community safety. With this rebrand, our teams will be able to reach more residents, respond more effectively and continue making a meaningful difference across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.”

Residents, partners and community organisations are encouraged to explore the new website and make referrals where appropriate at [bluelamptrust.org.uk](https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk)

About The Blue Lamp Trust

The Blue Lamp Trust is a not-for-profit organisation operating across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, dedicated to improving the safety, security and wellbeing of vulnerable, elderly and high-risk residents.

The Trust delivers two key charitable services:

- Safe Home – formerly The Bobby Scheme – providing free home safety and security visits for vulnerable residents, including victims of

SAFE HOME

SAFE ONLINE

crime, domestic abuse, and those living alone.

- Safe Online – formerly Cyber Bobby – offering tailored digital safety guidance, scam awareness support and online protection advice for older and vulnerable people.



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To help fund these essential community services, the Trust operates a national driver training programme through its commercial trading arm, Blue Lamp Trust (Services) Ltd, delivering accredited professional training to drivers, fleets, businesses and licensing authorities across the UK.

The Trust is proudly supported by local emergency services, and its Board of Trustees includes key leaders from Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service.

Jay Jones

West Meon Community Cinema

Winter/Spring 2026. We will be kicking off the 2026 programme on...



Photo: Hyde Park Pick

Friday 9th January 7.45pm with a British comedy low budget film “The Ballad of Wallis Island”. An eccentric lottery winner who lives on a remote island dreams of getting his favourite musical duo back together. His fantasy turns into a reality when the bandmates accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island.



Photo: E. Nina Rothe

Friday, Feb 13th
– “Downton Abbey –
The Grand Finale”.
There will be two
performances – a
movie lunch and an
evening performance.
Details to follow.

Friday, March
13th. 7.45pm – “The
Choral”

Friday, April 10th.
7.45pm – “I Swear”

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The ghost of the fields



Barn owl photo © Russell Savory

If you've ever caught a glimpse of a pale, silent shape drifting over a Hampshire meadow at dusk, you may have been lucky enough to witness one of the region's most captivating residents: the barn owl.

Barn owls are perfectly engineered for life as nocturnal hunters. Their feathers are soft and velvety, specially adapted to silence the sound of their wingbeats. This allows them to float through the air almost noiselessly as they quarter the fields in search of prey. Their hearing is so acute they can pinpoint a mouse rustling beneath vegetation in complete darkness, guided by the asymmetric placement of their ears and their iconic facial disk, which funnels sound like a satellite dish.

Across Hampshire's farmland, river valleys and downland edges, barn owls favour a mosaic of rough grassland where field voles, shrews and mice live. A single pair can consume thousands of small mammals each year, making them one of nature's most effective forms of pest control. They nest in tree cavities, old barns and quiet outbuildings - hence their name - and will often return to the same nesting site year after year. When conditions are good, they may raise two broods in a single season.

With their heart-shaped faces, ink-black eyes and ghost-white plumage, barn owls possess

an almost supernatural beauty - one that has long inspired folklore across the countryside. Throughout history, barn owls have been known by many different nicknames, such as 'ghost owl', 'church owl' and 'screech owl'. But the name 'demon owl', in particular, illustrates how they were considered by some rural populations - something not so difficult to understand when you hear their piercing shrieks and hissing calls.

But despite their resilience, barn owls face mounting pressures. They have been impacted by loss of rough grass habitat where they hunt their prey, nesting sites, organochlorine pesticides such as DDT in the 1950s and 1960s and road collisions.

Nature reserves managed by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust offer great opportunities to observe barn owls in their natural habitat. Hockley Meadows in Winchester is a known hotspot for these beautiful birds, where visitors can watch them glide over the meadows and hunt in the early morning or late afternoon. Farlington Marshes near Portsmouth is a must-visit for birdwatchers, with the reserve attracting not just barn owls but also short-eared owls.

For more information visit the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust website: hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-explorer/birds/

Helen Skelton-Smith

New Year, New Fees...then it might be time to join the u3a

Would you like to learn, laugh and live? Do you have spare time that you would like to fill? Would you like to meet and make new friends? Your local Alton u3a has over 75 different activity and interest groups to choose from such as, Art and Craft, Dance and Fitness, Games, History, Literature and Music. We also have social,



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

cultural and weekend activities too. Full details are on our website at <https://alton.u3asite.uk>.

Most of our activities take place at the Alton Community Centre, and we do have some outdoor activities such as cycling and walking. Our monthly talks and coffee mornings are open to all.

New members are always welcome, and January is a great time to join because our membership fees are reduced until the end of May. Depending on what you would like to do (subject to a space being available in the group) you can join from as little as £7 up to £38. You may join online via our website or by completing a membership application form that is available from the Alton Community Centre.

You can pick up a copy of our Annual Programme from the Alton Community Centre, Alton Library, the Allen Gallery or the Curtis Museum. If you would like to find out more about a particular group, then you can contact the Group Leader via our website. For general membership enquiries, please contact the Membership Secretary at alton.u3a.members@gmail.com.

Colin Aiken

West Meon Parish Council

Parish Council Hub - Drop-in, support your community and have your say.

Location: Cuppacheeno, The Village Shop, West Meon

Time: 9am-10am

Date: Wednesday 7th January 2026

It's a casual opportunity to ask questions and meet some of your Councillors. Whilst you're visiting the wonderful amenities of the village, please pop in for a chat.

Mobile Dental Service for Vulnerable Communities

NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight has partnered with Dentaïd, the Dental Charity, to provide a mobile dental service for residents who struggle to access regular dental care. The service offers free check-ups, oral cancer screening, advice, and emergency treatments such as fillings and extractions. It supports anyone who is exempt from paying NHS dental charges or anyone facing health inequalities that make it difficult to access treatment, including:

- Families experiencing poverty
- People at risk of homelessness
- Children and new/expectant mothers in high-risk areas

Clinics operate from mobile dental units parked at community centres, public buildings, and sports facilities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Locations include Southampton, Havant, Cosham, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight. Appointments are arranged via referrals from community groups, GP practices, food banks, charities, and NHS 111, or by calling Dentaïd on 023 8001 4450. Cosmetic treatments are not included.

This initiative helps reduce pressure on existing dental services and improves access for those most in need. For more details, visit Dentaïd's website www.dentaïd.org.

Warnford Parish Meeting

Information relating to WPM can be found on its website which also details local facilities and services, village news and events. Please sign up for 'Alerts' so you will be informed of forthcoming events, planning applications in the area etc.

WPM has an email distribution list so that emails can go to parishioners (eg. relating to Parish Meetings, details of planning applications etc.) If you would like to be added to the list, please email the Clerk.

The 2026 AGM will be held on 14th May 2026, time to be confirmed.

Warnford, West Meon, Winchester, Hampshire and Parliamentary Contacts

West Meon Parish Council

Bernice Gibson-Ost, Clerk to WMPC, clerk@westmeon-pc.gov.uk

Hannah Davies, Chair WMPC

Virginia Burke, Vice Chair WMPC

Robin Gedye, WMPC

Graham Silk, WMPC

Tim Main, WMPC

Stephen Hickmore, WMPC

Sue Fowler, WMPC

Jacqueline Humphreys, WMPC

Parish website www.westmeon-pc.gov.uk

Warnford Parish Meeting

Chair: Toby Drought, warnfordchair@gmail.com 07788 715707

Clerk: Lucy Hutchinson, warnfordclerk@gmail.com 07717 296610

Parish website www.warnfordparish.gov.uk

Winchester City Councillors

Neil Bolton, nbolton@winchester.gov.uk 01962 771256

Jerry Pett, jpett@winchester.gov.uk 01489 877633

Hampshire County Councillor

Malcolm Wallace, malcolm.wallace@hants.gov.uk 07739 050224

Member of Parliament for Winchester

Dr Danny Chambers, danny.chambers.mp@parliament.uk 01962 868586



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The Curtis Museum (and Allen Gallery)

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am–4.30pm www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum

Rediscovering the Allen Gallery

Alton's Allen Gallery is an intimate setting for one of the nation's most outstanding collections of ceramics. Since autumn 2022, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Hampshire Cultural Trust has been working to rediscover the Allen Gallery, building partnerships with local organisations, hosting workshops, talks, films and undertaking auditing and research to tell the stories of the objects on display. The Gallery closed at the end of 2025

for a major refurbishment and is expected to reopen in early 2027. When it returns, visitors will find revitalised galleries, a welcoming community

space, and fresh ways to experience our nationally and internationally important ceramics collection. During the closure, the community programme will continue to run from the nearby Curtis Museum.



Packing up at the Allen Gallery - several thousand items go into store until the re-opening.

Upcoming events for January and February include:

Curtis Craft Club, Thursday 3rd January 2026: seasonal crafts at the Curtis Museum, drop in 11am-3pm, £2 per child (run every school holiday, ask for a stamp card and get your fifth session free).

Stepping Stones Young People's Programme, Saturday 14th February - Saturday 21st March, 10.30-12.30pm. Regular free Saturday workshop supporting wellbeing for young people aged 11 to 14. Spaces need to be booked in advance. Please visit the website for details - <https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum>

Sewing workshop for adults (age 16+) with local artist and maker Sachiko Mason, Saturday 21st February, 11am-1pm. Stitch a beautiful toile de jouy style fabric bag, inspired by the Allen Gallery Collection. Book online at <https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum>

Talks - Change of Venue. The Friends of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery have a full programme of talks during 2026. Starting in February, (no talk in January), Friends talks will be held in Room 7 of the Alton Community Centre, Amery Street, Alton GU34 1HN. Alton Community Centre is located on one side of the car park in Amery Street (sat nav GU34 1HN). <https://www.altoncomcen.org.uk>, telephone number 01420 85057. The first talk takes place on Thursday 12th February when Tony Cross will speak about Aspects of Alton's History. Doors open at 7 for 7.30pm start. Donations welcome from Guests.

Trails are always on hand in the Curtis - please ask at Reception for the latest.

Jill Line



Hampshire Farmers' Market Sunday 4th January - The Square, Petersfield

Join us at Petersfield Farmers' Market in the Square on the first Sunday of every month from 10am to 2pm.

Packed with local produce from Hampshire, these monthly markets are a feast for the senses. Wander through rows of colourful stalls filled with freshly baked bread, award-winning cheeses, homemade chutneys, craft gins, jams, and honey straight from the hive. You'll also find delicious meat, fish, fruit, and vegetables grown on Hampshire farms, all bursting with flavour and proudly sustainable. Every visit supports local businesses and reduces food miles. The friendly stallholders are always ready to share tips, tastings, and stories about their craft. Subsequent weekends in Alton, Winchester, Whiteley, Emsworth, Alresford and Winchester again.

Wednesday 7th January Parish Council Hub

9-10am Cuppacheeno, The Village Shop, West Meon.

Friday 9th January West Meon Community Cinema

"The Ballad of Wallis Island" 7.30 for 7.45pm
West Meon Village Hall.

Saturdays 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th February Snowdrops 2-5pm Warnford Park.

Friday 13th February West Meon Community Cinema

"Downton Abbey – The Grand Finale" lunch and evening performances West Meon Village Hall.

Care Group Co-ordinator Virginia de Cosson 829362

Parish Directory

Rector:

Fr. Tony Forrest, The Vicarage, Church Street, East Meon 642 115 (usual working Sun to Wed)

Verger for West Meon: Michael Johnson 829 105

Churchwarden for Warnford: Andrew Sellick 07973 344 906 Stephen Short 829 261

Verger for Warnford: Peter Short 829 285

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