

Westcott Village

Magazine

January 2025



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Westcott has a population of over 2,000 and this is the only magazine written specifically for the Westcott area by the people of Westcott. It is hand delivered, free of charge, to every household and further copies are available at the church, local shops, pub and doctor's surgery.



If you have any articles, photos, letters, etc that you think we may like to feature in the next issue, please email the Editor on:

editor@westcottmag.com

But please note, publication will always be subject to space and at the discretion of the Editor.

Copy deadline for
February issue:
8th January 2025

This magazine, published by the Church in Westcott, is printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited paper from a sustainable source. The views expressed are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Church, Editor or Westcott residents.

Cover photo - Snow by Fiona Humphrey

FROM THE EDITOR



I hope you all had a peaceful Christmas and have a happy and healthy New Year making the most of lots of local outings, which you have found in the magazine over the next few months!

The sports club needs some more trustees to join the team, see page 53 for details if you feel you need a new challenge in 2025. A New Year is a great time to take up a new role.

Dorking Halls is screening various operas and musicals during January if you have missed going for your culture fix, along with a couple of live concerts too.

Don't forget the Westcott Coffee Morning doesn't happen in January but do rejoin them in February for caffeine, books, jigsaws and fun.

Happy 2025!

Cath
editor@westcott.mag.com



10th Birthday Party!

10

Save the date!

WESTfest

2015-2025

Sunday
22 June
2025

westfestsurrey@gmail.com
[@westfestsurrey](https://www.instagram.com/westfestsurrey)

A festive graphic for a 10th birthday party. It features a blue birthday cake with lit candles, a banner with colorful triangles, and the text '10th Birthday Party!' and a large '10'. To the right, it says 'Save the date!' followed by 'WESTfest 2015-2025' and 'Sunday 22 June 2025'. At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'westfestsurrey@gmail.com' and '@westfestsurrey'.

...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



SPIRITUAL BUT NOT RELIGIOUS? SO AM !!

One of the common narratives in the popular media is one of constant secularisation and declining religious attendance in Britain. Everything from the Census to the British Social Attitudes Survey points to people being less inclined to affiliate with an organised religion. Speaking to many people, perhaps you are one of them, there is a sense that 'organised religion' is not for them. And yet they are convinced that matter is not all that matters. That there is more to life than atoms, avocados and apartments. They as humans have some sort of spiritual nature. Hence the term 'Spiritual but not Religious' (SBNR).



To be honest, I completely get it. I have grown up in the culture where the oxygen I breathed was a postmodernism which was suspicious of specific truth claims and distrustful of institutions. Public scandal after public scandal has decimated trust in institutions which were previously broadly seen as being a flawed yet significant force for good. For many 'religion' equates to narrow ideas, ritualistic gestures and institutionalised deities. Spirituality as a term is gloriously free from institutional hang ups and the concept of restriction which swirl around the term religion. If this definition stands, then I am most certainly SBNR. So is Jesus.

“SPIRITUALITY AS A TERM IS GLORIOUSLY FREE FROM INSTITUTIONAL HANG UPS AND THE CONCEPT OF RESTRICTION WHICH SWIRLS AROUND THE TERM RELIGION.”

If you are a spiritual person, my request to you is that you don't

rule out 'the church' as place of spiritual encounter. The bible word for church has nothing to do with religion or buildings but is just the word for a gathering of ordinary people. My spiritual encounters have come amid mountain top gales and while sat in silence on a sofa – but they also take place in the community called church gathering in the name of Jesus.

For those of you on your spiritual quest, especially for whom church is a dead religious word, I would add this. I have sat by Buddhist stupas in

...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

the Himalayas and read the Tao Te Ching by foreign flowing streams and contemplated the Way contained therein. I have embraced silence in the dappled forest and entered sacred spaces rich with incense. I have gaped in wonder at great Mosques and wandered through abandoned temples claimed back by the forest. But in no place, or thing, or book, or practice, have I encountered the spiritual reality of the cosmos as I have when praying in the name of Jesus. Sometimes alone. Sometimes with others. Sometimes even amid a dusty old church building. An awesome Spirituality that echoes back to the beginning of it all and will be there at the end.



**“MORE IMPORTANTLY
DON'T RULE OUT JESUS.
HE MAY JUST BE THE
VERY THING YOU HAVE
BEEN LOOKING FOR ALL
ALONG.”**

You don't have to agree with me – I would love to hear of and learn from your spiritual or religious experiences – but please don't rule out church, and more importantly don't rule out Jesus. He may just be the very thing you have been looking for all along.

Rev'd Tim



SUNDAY SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY



8.30am Book of Common Prayer Communion, A warm welcome in our beautiful, traditional service.

10.15am Friendly, relaxed service, using Common Worship and a range of music styles. This service is also livestreamed on Zoom.



For 10:15am Zoom service connection, please scan this QR code, or visit the Online Services page of thechurchinwestcott.org.uk and follow the link.

The church is open every day, 9am-4pm for private prayer & reflection

DATE	THEME	8:30AM	10:15AM
5th Jan	Epiphany	Book of Common Prayer Communion	All Age Worship
12th Jan	Baptism of Christ	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club
19th Jan	Wedding at Cana	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club
26th Jan	Jesus' Manifesto	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Communion with Sunday Club



MARKING LIFE EVENTS

All who live in Westcott or have a connection here are very welcome to have christenings, funerals, weddings in Holy Trinity. Contact vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk for more information.

MIDWEEK PRAYER & WORSHIP

Wednesdays

10am

Communion at St John's



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All are welcome

Join a Life Group

*Small groups of people who meet online or in person
every 2 weeks to chat and pray about life & faith.*

Life groups:

- explore ways we can bring God's love, justice and joy into our relationships with other people and creation, into our leisure and into our work
- give you an opportunity to explore the Bible and consider what it says
- use worship, simple contemplation and prayer to help us encounter God

Contact Tim Armstrong at vicar@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk for more information

BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS SHARING LIFE



thechurchinwestcott.org.uk

THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



Westcott's baby & toddler group

COOKIE CLUB

snacks
crafts
games
music
friendship
fun

parents
grandparents
guardians...
all welcome!

St John's Hall, Westcott
9-11am every Thursday during term time
£2 voluntary donation

The poster features a central yellow circle with the text 'COOKIE CLUB' in large, bold, red letters. Above the circle, the text 'Westcott's baby & toddler group' is written in a blue, curved font. To the left of the circle, a list of activities is written in red, slanted text. To the right, a list of welcome participants is written in red, slanted text. Below the circle, the location and time are listed in blue text. At the bottom, a row of colorful illustrations shows children playing with toys like blocks, a toy car, and a train.



Holy Trinity Westcott presents

FOREST CHURCH

Look out for dates throughout the year to
join us outside!

The poster is a vibrant illustration of a forest scene. It features a large tree on the right, a bird perched on a branch with pink blossoms on the left, and a squirrel in the bottom right corner. The text is overlaid on the scene, with 'FOREST CHURCH' in large, bold, black letters. The background is filled with green foliage, flowers, and butterflies.

THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

The Church in Westcott is part of the Westcott Good Neighbour Scheme and we are always here for a chat, prayer, pastoral need.

Debt advice: Paul Stacey (paulstacey88@gmail.com)

Holy Trinity Pastoral Assistants: Mark Shakespeare (01306 888010), Ali Mabley (alimabley.htw@gmail.com)

For help, or more information, please contact
Tim Armstrong, Vicar: vicar@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk
or visit thechurchinwestcott.org.uk



FLOODLIGHTING

Many thanks to Yasmin and Freddie George, who have sponsored January's floodlighting in memory of their son Freddie (Little Freddie) and their Grandpa Freddie Harry George, who passed away in the summer of 2018 aged 98.

If you would like to sponsor the floodlighting, please contact Sarah Massey at admin@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk. (Suggested donation of £75 to Westcott Church Funds.)

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SURREY HILLS ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Fire Brigade Visit

Reception spent a lovely morning with our local Fire Brigade.



A Visit from an Antarctic Explorer!

Year 3 had an Antarctic explorer come in and tell them all about what Antarctica is really like. Our visitor had been on a special trip to the Antarctica with Prince Harry in 2013, where they trekked to the South Pole

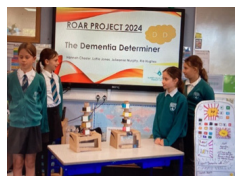


to raise money for charity. The children got to ask our visitor questions, learn about how you can keep warm and even try on some of his special clothing! Hedgehogs developed their existing understanding about Antarctica through having all of their questions answered by someone who has actually been there. It helped us to make comparisons with recent polar expeditions and the expeditions that Ernest Shackleton made with his crew all those years ago!



ROAR Project

We are so proud of the children in Year 5 and 6 for their amazing inventions as part of the ROAR2024 competition. The project aim was to formulate a 'world changing idea', build a prototype of their invention, present their pitch to a panel of external judges including their branding and jingle. The judges from Cranleigh Lions were very impressed with the originality and diversity of the projects and had a tough time deciding on the winners and runners up.



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SURREY HILLS ALL SAINTS SCHOOL (cont.)

Year 6 Winners: *The Dementia Determiner* – An app to help dementia sufferers cope with everyday life (pictures on previous page).



Year 6 Runners up: *Leafy, the garden carer* - A device to help around the garden with planting, mowing and watering.

Year 5/6 Boys Football Tournament

Well done to the Surrey Hills Year 5/6 boys team for taking part in the Football Tournament. We are all incredibly proud of you!



Nature Garden. We are committed to caring for our insect population and providing attractive habitats for them. We chose to have our photo taken on a day when the winter sun was shining but very low in the sky!

Christingle

During Advent, we celebrated Christingle with the children of Surrey Hills. All children made a Christingle which was kindly donated by Holy Trinity Church whose volunteers helped to create these representations of the world. The whole school then came together to light their Christingles, sharing an awe and



wonder moment of light in the darkness.

Eco Council

Members of our school Eco-Council have worked together at lunchtimes to build a Bee House for the



It was truly magical and reflected the start of the Christmas story, finishing with the beautiful singing of *Away in a Manger*. The team at Surrey Hills would like to thank everyone who made this service possible and brought joy to our children.

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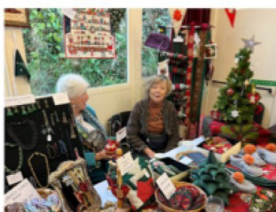
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Dorking Local History Group

The DLHG continues its popular programme of both live and Zoom talks on a fascinating range of topics. These are free to members, but non-members are welcome. Upcoming dates include:

- **Rocking Surrey!** Surrey may not be a place you'd think of for great rock music, but it's produced bands like the Stranglers and the Jam and has links with many other leading names as Neil Mach explores. Ready to rock? Live talk, Monday 6th January, at Crossways Community Baptist Church, Junction Road, Dorking RH4 3HB, 7.15 for 7.30pm, £2 at the door for non-members.
- **William de Warenne – The First Earl of Surrey:** Zoom talk by author Sharon Bennett Connolly about one of William the Conqueror's sidekicks who was given an Earldom and great lands, including a castle in Reigate, for his services in 1066 and beyond. Monday 20th January, 7.30pm, <https://www.meet-up.com/Surrey-History-Meetup/>.

For further details of talks and other activities – or to join DLHG – go to <https://dlhg.org.uk>

Calling all Artists!



Following the success of the 2023 Arts Week at St James' Church in Shere, the week of June 9-15, 2025 will once again celebrate the interaction of words, music, art and faith.

A programme of readings, concerts, music and arts activities is planned and once again the church will be filled with wonderful works of art by local artists. With only 6 months to go, we are inviting artists and craftspeople to register their interest by February 23rd.

There is no entrance fee, and works in 2D & 3D are welcome in this week-long exhibition.

Please get in touch for more details:

artsweek@parishofshere.com

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Tuesday 14th January 10.30am

The Astonishing Master Mozart Comes to London - Graham Griffiths



This presentation tells of the Mozart family's visit to London (1764-65) when the 8-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus befriended George III and became the subject of medical research. Dr Griffiths illustrates his talk with music, explanations and performances of Mozart's witty and precocious miniatures. Music by Mozart's son, Franz Xaver (also known as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Jr), brings the morning to an emotional conclusion.

The talk will take place in the Martineau Hall, Dorking Halls at 10:30am with coffee available from 9:30am. Visitors are welcome for a fee of £7.50 but please contact Linda Packham on 07960 995707 (email - ljpacman@gmail.com) to book.

For more information and details of the forthcoming programme, visit www.theartsocietydorking.org.uk

Image courtesy of The Arts Society website

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WESTCOTT VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING



The Village Hall



*As we will not be meeting in January,
please come and join us on*

Wednesday February 5th 2025



10.30am - 12.00 midday



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Jigsaws and Books £1.00 each

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WESTCOTT HISTORY GROUP

The River Mole – Its history, personalities and present-day problems



There have been several local lectures concerning the history of the river and the current efforts to measure and control pollution. The

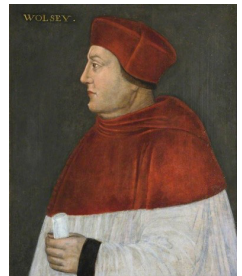
lecture by Prof Richard Selly explained how part of the flat plate of Wealden Clay underlain by chalk was uplifted to form the North Downs, from which the clay was eroded leaving the chalk exposed. The North Downs were in fact the southern edge of the last ice age.

A map from 1762 was the first to show the course of the River Mole above ground from its source in Baldhorns Copse, south of Rusper. It has a catchment area of some 48 square miles and runs through Gatwick to Brockham and Dorking, where it collects the Pipp Brook at Pixham, and flows north through the North Downs Gap between Ranmore Common and Box Hill. It continues past Cobham, Leatherhead and Esher to enter the Thames at East Molesey near Hampton Court, having run some 80 km in all. Much of the route lies on impermeable Wealden clay south of the North Downs and London Clay north of the

Downs which is the reason why the river responds rapidly to heavy rainfall.

Between Brockham and Leatherhead the river bed changes to permeable chalk and the increased gradient allows the water table to drop below the river bed. Aerial photos show a line of green patches in the fields between Pixham and Mickleham which are the relict holes where the underground water comes to the surface (circled red on map). River water from Mickleham Bends follows an underground course coming up in Fetcham Ponds, which have never been known to dry up. This was described in Brayley's History of Surrey in 1868.

In medieval times the numerous place names ending in 'ham' were probably small farming communities which had survived since the Iron Age in this area. The Domesday Book lists some 20 mills on the river between Reigate and Cobham. A manor house was built in 1331 on a mound beside the River Mole at Esher, attributed to Bishop John Stratford (1323 – 1333). This was the site where Esher Palace was later built by the Bishopric of Winchester and occupied by Cardinal Wolsey in 1519. Cardinal Wolsey (1473-1530) lived here beside the River Mole while he



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built Hampton Court Palace which was only 3 miles away on the River Thames. Wolsey entered the service of Henry

VII in 1507 aged 34 and continued with Henry VIII in 1509 as an Almoner with a seat in the Privy Council. He was made the Catholic Archbishop of York in 1514 and a Cardinal by Pope Leo X in 1515. He was the King's adviser and Chancellor for many years and was particularly involved in foreign affairs. But he failed to arrange an annulment of the King's marriage to Catherine of Aragon so that he could marry Ann Boleyn. Wolsey was stripped of his government offices and his property but was permitted to remain Archbishop of York and sent to Cawood Castle in Yorkshire. It was here, while boarding a river barge, that he hit his head on a beam and died at Leicester on 29th November 1530. He was buried in Leicester Abbey.

In 1884 the Leatherhead District Water Company was created and drilled a hole 200ft deep and began distributing water to houses in the area as the population grew. From this time onwards similar developments took place in Dorking and the surrounding area. With population growth there was an increase in transport, public utilities including sewage treatment

plants, agriculture and other small industries. The Water Company and the Environmental Agency were not able to keep up with the degradation in quality of the river water. After an excessive spillage of 2180 hours of sewage in 2020, a group of volunteers set up a small charity called 'RiverMoleRiverWatch' to organise a system of regular river water sampling at specific sites on the river (www.rivermoleriverwatch.org.uk). The aims are:

1. to co-ordinate the efforts of concerned local citizens
2. regularly test water quality in the river and its tributaries
3. monitor the state of the river
4. work with everyone who can improve the situation
5. hold to account those who have responsibility for water quality, in particular the local water treatment companies, and Thames Water and the Environment Agency
6. campaign to press for action to improve the situation by lobbying politicians, companies and organisations

They plan to achieve these aims by engaging with communities, custodians, polluters and regulators and by sharing information with the various groups like Thames Water, Gatwick Airport and other industries and agricultural farms etc. RMRW has been collecting data since May 2023. To streamline data collecting

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they developed a mobile survey app. Volunteers record water quality, test measurements and observations at their river test sites. They also record river flow level, weather and known pollution discharges from Sewage Treatment Works. There are some 30 test sites. Collected data is aggregated and analysed to give a comprehensive overview of the river condition which can be portrayed on a chart. Typical data recorded for August are:

Total catchment for August (average ppm) Phosphate 0.96, Nitrate 25.1, Ammonia 0.27 with a running mean of Phosphate 0.76, Nitrate 25.9, Ammonia 0.27.

Findings show that Sewage Treatment Works are the prime source of measured pollutants. Agriculture introduces significant levels of pollutants but generally lower than Sewage Treatment Works. Tests for Ecoli samples are analysed at the Zero Hub community laboratory in Guildford and these tests indicate the presence of faecal contamination from sewage works, animal waste and run-off from agricultural land. The test for Ecoli cells utilizes UV light making them fluoresce. Activities involving direct contact with contaminated water is a danger to health and is the cause of gastro-intestinal illness.

on their website showing the status of the waterways including tributaries in this catchment area from good to bad. For instance the Leigh Brook is very badly polluted but the Pipp Brook is very good until after it joins the River Mole and passes the Dorking Gap. Similar trusts doing similar activities exist for other river systems where people are concerned about the river water quality. These include the River Wey Trust which has been in existence for some time www.zerocarbondguildford.org/river-qual and the Trent River Trust in Nottinghamshire which includes the Dove, the Derwent, the Soar, the Cole and the Blithe. This is a much bigger organisation and has been going for 20 years www.trentrivertrust.org/. The RMRW is young by comparison and on its website it is inviting people to join it as a member and receive periodical news. Donations are invited to help pay for the cost of sampling.

The next WLHG Talk will be on 11th March 2025 with speaker Anne Sassin from the Surrey Archaeological Society about Test Pitting at Albury Park to investigate deserted medieval settlements. As always the WLHG Committee encourages readers to propose talks and articles of interest. Email at westcottlocalhistory@gmail.com and for local information at our website www.westcottlocalhistory.org

The RMRW creates a map every month

WLHG Scribe

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MUSIC IN DORKING



3rd at 7.30, Ukulele Orchestra at Dorking Halls, £32, 01306 881717
6th at 7.00, screening of *Miss Saigon* at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717
12th at 1.00, screening of *Phantom of the Opera* at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717
15th at 6.45, opera screening at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717
19th at 4.00, Gesualdo Six at St Martin's church, £20, 01306 740619
20th at 2.00, opera screening at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717
23rd at 7.00, screening of *Girl from the North Country* at Dorking Halls, £19.50, 01306 881717

Happy New Year! The Dorking Concertgoers are delighted to begin the new year with a concert featuring the Gesualdo Six. This group, one of Britain's leading vocal ensembles, has a very wide repertoire covering a whole range of music of different styles and periods. Their concert in St Martin's church will include music from the Renaissance and Tudor England, some folksong settings by Vaughan Williams, and some music by present-day composers. Please note the start time of 4pm.

Now that the Dorking Halls is open again, there is a concert by the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain, plus several opera and musical screenings to enjoy. The Ukulele Orchestra, now celebrating 40 years, offers wide-ranging musical fare from Abba to Tchaikovsky, revealing the amazing wealth of sounds to be obtained from these unique instruments.

Offenbach's opera *The Tales of Hoffman* can be seen twice, in a live and an encore screening from the Royal Opera House. In these tales of romance, memory and fantasy, the poet recalls the various women he has loved, to the accompaniment of much beautiful music.

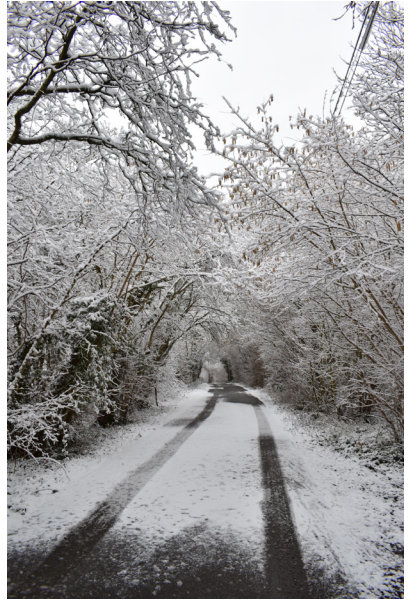
The first of the three musicals to be screened, *Miss Saigon* tells the tragic love story of a young bar girl orphaned by war who falls in love with an American GI, only for their lives to be torn apart by the fall of Saigon. *The Phantom of the Opera* is presented in a special 25th anniversary staging at the Royal Albert Hall. *Girl from the North Country* is a story of travellers meeting in a guesthouse filled with music, and it features the songs of Bob Dylan. Please support the Dorking Halls with these events before it closes again in the summer to complete the essential ceiling repairs.

Ian Codd

Winter pictures around Westcott

Some snowy pictures taken locally, if you have any other photos of Westcott you think others would enjoy please send them to me at editor@westcottmag.com and keep your eyes peeled in future issues.

Snowy scenes by
Fiona Humphrey
(right and below)



Snowy school by
Simon Coles
(right)



Westcott's "Baby Meals"

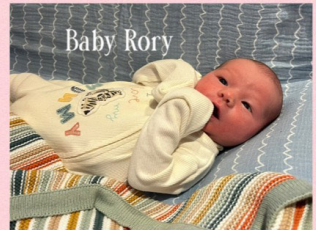
The Cooks have been busy again, we've been providing meals for baby Rory's family Emma & Rik on Guildford Road and we're about to start on meals for Benjamin and Annie on Ashley Road, who are due back from hospital with their new baby as I write this!

More Cooks needed!

In joining our Cooks list there is no obligation. When we get a request it is circulated on email, and you only sign up if & when it works for you. As a cook you buy, cook and deliver the meal directly to the family. It's a highly valued community initiative and a wonderful thing to be part of.

Can we cook for you?

If you live in Westcott and you're expecting a baby and would like help with (free!) meals for the family while you adjust, or if you could use some meals during a challenging time, please get in touch: 07710 425487 annakemkers@hotmail.co.uk



Thank you Cooks!
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you've catered for 49 rotas,
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Let us start by wishing you all a very Happy New Year! We hope you had a wonderful festive time – just like we did! Our December was crammed full of extra special experiences. Grab a cuppa and let us tell you more.



Coming in at number one (those of you who are old enough to remember Top of the Pops!) is of course the Nativity! Parents, grandparents, siblings and the like gathered together at St James's in eager anticipation of the performance of the year – and we did not disappoint! We clip clopped our way to Bethlehem with twinkly stars and cosy looking sheep for company. We knock knock knocked on the doors where we were given a resounding NO! to a place to stay until we happened across a kindly innkeeper and his wife. Finally we melted hearts with a beautiful rendition of the classic Away in a Manger.

And at number two is a visit from the local knit and natter group who came with a carefully crafted gift for us. We love how much a part of the community we are and were really excited to receive a stunning knitted advent calendar to hang up. Each day we took it in turns to see what

had been popped into each pouch – something shiny and chocolatey for all of us!



A firm number three was the Christmas cooking! What didn't we make? Just imagine being back in your grandma's kitchen with the smell of gingerbread or mince pies wafting through and you'll get the picture! We also made a really hearty leek and potato soup with the leeks harvested from our veggie patch with a big hunk of soda bread for dipping. Deeelicious!

We'd just like to say a big thank you to everyone who supplied raffle prizes or bought tickets or who came to the Quizmas (A big thanks to the Hatch for organising this super night) or Movie Night. Fundraising is such an important part of being able to enrich the children's experiences and we always appreciate all your support.

If you have a child looking to start Nursery please don't hesitate to get in touch. Please call 07842 978823 or email abingercommonnursery@gmail.com We can't wait to show you around!

Kate Fairbrass



Jon and Mum Groceries: A Thriving Not-For-Profit Community Hub

Established in 2019 at the start of the COVID pandemic, Jon and Mum Groceries began as a simple veg box delivery service for locals in need. Since then, it has blossomed into a beloved refill store and cafe, playing a vital role in fostering connections within the community.

What Jon and Mum Groceries Offers:

- Refill Store:** Reduce waste and shop sustainably for your groceries.
- Cafe:** Enjoy a relaxing atmosphere and delicious food and drinks.
- Local Crafts:** Support local artisans by purchasing their unique creations.
- Community Garden:** Spend time in nature and learn about gardening. Help out on Saturday lunchtimes and enjoy a cup of tea and cake.
- Friday BBQs:** Join the fun from 5-7pm.
- Friday Lunch:** Grab a locally-made hot sausage roll or bacon sandwich.
- Saturday/Sunday Breakfasts:** Indulge in a full English breakfast or a pastry in the garden.

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Shop/Cafe Closed	Open 12-4pm	Open 10-4pm	Open 10-7pm	Open 10-2pm	Open 10-2pm
Community Fridge 2.15pm			Curry Night 5-7pm	Community Garden 11-2pm	
		Fresh Bread & Cakes	Sourdough & Sausage Rolls		
		Light Meals	Lunches	Breakfasts	Light Meals
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Jon and Mum Groceries is more than just a store - it's a place to connect, support local businesses, and make a positive impact on the environment. Come visit us and experience the warm and welcoming atmosphere!

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Happy New Year and welcome to 2025. We hope it brings new adventures as well as small things for us all to be grateful for every day.

Firstly, looking back briefly to Christmas, we want to thank the team of volunteers who put up the Christmas Tree on the village green - Hugh Broom, Paul Goddard, Andy Gray, Tony Astor, Tim Way and Andrew Lewis, who all did a great job. It was put up a few days later than originally planned due to Storm Darragh but it was worth the wait especially when we gathered around it to sing Christmas Carols the week before Christmas. The tree was once again sponsored by the WVA, Westcott Gardeners Club and Westcott 100 Club.

West Street and to close it to all traffic. There is now a new Mole Valley Local Plan and planning applications for the two major allocated sites between Westcott and Dorking - Sondes Place Farm and Milton Court Lane - are yet to be determined. We continue to voice residents' concerns about the inadequate walking and cycling infrastructure between Westcott and Dorking. Together with an infrequent bus service these factors make our community more car dependent than it could be. These two major sites potentially add another 500 vehicles to the already congested A25 on the approach to the Dorking one way system. We believe we are at a critical point for Westcott residents being able to access essential services and transport in Dorking and we are making more noise on these topics.

Public Consultations and Development Pressure

2024 was a busy year for WVA. A seemingly endless flow of major planning applications and important consultations have come out of Surrey County Council and Mole Valley and we have done our very best to publicise these, whilst carefully representing the views of our residents. The most recent was for the Draft Dorking Masterplan where we hope we have been successful in getting removed a proposal to pedestrianise

Surrey County Council Rights of Way (ROWIP) Consultation

You may recall that back in March the WVA sought your views on how the existing network of footpaths, bridleways and Byways in and around Westcott could be improved and this was fed into the initial consultation. SCC have now completed their main report and they are once again seeking your views via an online survey. The survey can be found at www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-



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[and-infrastructure/rowip-24/](#). WVA will provide its summary of observations on this in the next newsletter and at the open meeting on 9th January. The consultation will close on the 9th February 2025.

WVA Open Meeting – Thursday 9th January

The Committee look forward to welcoming you to the next WVA Open Meeting on Thursday 9th January at 7.30pm in the back room of the Prince of Wales. We plan to run this as a drop-in session with a couple of short updates from the Committee at about 8.00pm. There will be the opportunity for you to bring your own suggestions and questions about village life for discussion. Our aim is an informal and relaxed get together over a glass of wine, beer or a soft drink. The Notice of Meeting and Agenda will be available for you to read in advance on the Westcott Village website. Everyone is welcome.

Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan

Thank you to everyone who attended the inaugural meeting of the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (W NDP) Village Forum on 12th

November at St. John's. The case for a new and updated Development Plan for 2026 and beyond was presented by James Leaver and Ian Dunsford. The process will be shaped by three Working Groups – Data Collection (led by Dr. Chris Smewing), Policy (led by Ian Dunsford) and Communications (led by Jo Astor).

The overall work programme is expected to take 12 to 18 months to complete and Kevin Foo has kindly volunteered to be the Programme Manager. Work will start in earnest in the new year. Over 100 people have expressed an interest in taking part in the Village Forum so far, with 42 people attending the first meeting. It's not too late if you think you might like to get involved, please see the W NDP section on our website and email us at contact@westcottvillage.com

The whole process will involve discussion and debate at the Village Forum meetings, as well as being widely consulted on throughout the village with household surveys, formal studies and information gathering. The updated plan will eventually be put to a full referendum of all village residents, with more than 50% of those voting needing to say "yes" to bring the plan into force.

We are keen to have greater

January's Full Moon

January's full moon is known as the Wolf Moon in some European cultures, due to the evocative calls of wolves as they search for food in the depths of winter. Wolves were hunted to extinction in the UK 250 years ago, being Britain's last apex predator to go extinct.

Other names for January's full moon include the Moon After Yule, Old Moon and Ice Moon.

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representation on the forum from residents with younger families so it is planned to re-run the presentation for parents at the Surrey Hills All Saints School before the Celebration Assembly on Friday 7th February (see

below for more details).

As always please do get in touch with any issues or to share your views on village life and we look forward to seeing some of you on 9th January at the Open Meeting.



WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

WVA Committee
Jo Astor, Paul Goddard, James Leaver, Nick Lund, Magesh Ramakrishnan contact@westcottvillage.com



COMMUNITY CONNECT #1 ... for PARENTS

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Tea & Coffee 1:45pm (bring your own mug if possible)

School Celebration Assembly 2:50pm

Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) and Village Forum

Information and Invitation to Parents living in Westcott or with Children at Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School.

By kind permission of Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School, members from the WVA Village Forum team will give a summary overview of what the WNDP is, timelines and extend invitation to parents. There will be opportunity for Q & A and informal time over refreshments & registration from 1:45pm.

Westcott Village Association wishes to enable parents and our future generations of young people to be informed and participate in the Village Forum which was launched November 2024.

This is our collective opportunity to shape the future of our village and facilities.

So we can anticipate numbers (limited to ~60), please simply email our WVA Communications Lead JO ASTOR contact@westcottvillage.com if you intend to come together with your Postcode.



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DORKING MUSEUM

The team at Dorking Museum wishes all the best for 2025 to all readers and to the supporters and friends of the Museum. The Museum will reopen after the break on 2nd January 2025.

Building between the vines – the story of the Denbies Lego house



The Museum's current temporary exhibition brings to life the story of when, back in 2009, James May built a full-size Lego house between the vines of the Denbies Wine Estate. The house was part of a BBC television series entitled *James May Toy Stories*, in which he took some of the country's best-loved children's toys and built large scale models from them. May did not want a Lego copy of a regular house and a very bold, uncompromising modern design was chosen. The two-storey house took almost 2,000 volunteers to build over a five-week period, using over 3.3 million bricks and setting a world record for the largest Lego house.

Not just the shell of a house, the

Lego house included furniture, furnishings, kitchen appliances, even a



shower, sink and flushing loo on the top floor. After the opening party, May stayed in the house for one rainy September night. The house remained at Denbies for four days before being demolished, with the bricks collected up and donated to charity.

The exhibition tells how and why it was built. A collection of specially designed Lego models of buildings and objects with a Dorking connection are on display, and there are other activities for children. A Lego Dorking Cockerel trail around the museum, with prizes, will run alongside the exhibition from January 11th.

Family Activities at Dorking Library

The first museum family activity of the new year is Dorking's Fabulous Creatures at Dorking Library, St. Martin's Walk on Saturday 11th January, 10am to 1pm. Families are invited to celebrate the most wonderful animals from Dorking's history – an elephant parade (see next page), a local dinosaur, peregrine falcon, Dorking cockerel – by helping to create a colourful collage to go on the library wall. All materials will be provided free,

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DORKING MUSEUM (cont.)



with grateful thanks to the Arts Society Dorking.

Something for everyone

Dorking Museum attracts many visitors every year, often from other parts of the globe or of the UK. Our guided local walks and tours of the South Street Caves are very popular in the season. Yet, well established as it is within the local community, some of our local visitors are discovering the museum for the first time, or maybe rediscovering it. Apart from the changing temporary exhibitions, the remainder of the gallery is regularly refreshed and new exhibits added, depicting facets of local history and life from prehistoric times to the modern day.

Our visitor survey shows an overall rating of 4.8 out of 5, and nearly all say that they would return. This is backed up by many of the comments they add: *“The experience was excellent. The staff was very friendly and welcoming with lots of knowledge about the museum. Very pleasant visit. And there were lots*

of activities around for children. This is excellent.” “A very interesting and pleasant experience.” “Everything was amazing.” “Small museum but it packs a punch!” “Fantastic resource that travels across time!” Perhaps a new year's resolution might be to come and look around (again).

Get involved

The Museum is run entirely by volunteers and receives no public funding – our friendly team was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2021. To continue the good work, we are looking for new volunteers who can spare a few hours a month at the front desk or bring skills to a variety of other roles with flexible working in the Museum, in the community or from home. There are current vacancies for a volunteer recruitment coordinator, a digital communications coordinator, assistants for family activities, school and youth visits, a walks guide, a qualified archivist and a general handyman. See dorkingmuseum.org.uk/about/volunteer-opportunities for further details.

Dorking Museum, 62 West Street, Dorking RH4 1BS. Open Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. 01306 876591. Visit dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/.

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Hear a drumming Woodpecker



A flashier woodland character to look out for is the Great Spotted Woodpecker. At this time of year, listen out for a distinctive 'drrrrr' as the birds drum on the bark of trees. Both males and females drum as a way of communicating to each other and to mark out their territories. It's not, as you might expect, to drill a nest hole or to winkle out grubs to eat.

Great Spotted Woodpeckers favour hard, dead trees as these ring with a sound that carries furthest. They've also been known to drum on telegraph poles and even drainpipes.

Let a Robin brighten your day

Robins are one of only a few birds in the UK that sing throughout the year. Take a walk in the countryside, head to your local park or into your garden

and see if you can hear one. Fluffed up against the cold and singing its heart out, a Robin can raise a smile on even the darkest of winter days. But don't be fooled by their cute and fluffy exterior. Robins are fiercely territorial and theirs is a song to warn other Robins away.



Images courtesy of RSPB

Take a look at our group photos, walks schedule and information using the options below. There is a £5 charge for non RSPB members joining the walks.

Facebook: RSPB Dorking and District
 Instagram: @rsppb_dorking
 Website: <https://group.rspb.org.uk/dorkinganddistrict/>

Jonathan Groves



Come and play **BRIDGE**

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or go to our website

www.bridgewebs.com/westcott



We had an extremely well attended Remembrance Service on November 11th. Thanks to Rev Virginia Smith and Rev Kia Pakeham for their participation and prayer, to Deacon James Snyder for his meaningful words and the Psalm read by veteran Raphael Burnette. We had a very moving poem read by Elizabeth Sands and the amazing children from St John's C of E and Surrey Hills

Schools read poems they had written and sang *The Fields of Flanders* faultlessly. They also laid poppy wreaths made in class. Thank you to Jackie Fyson, the Head of both schools, for allowing the children to be part of the service and many thanks to the teachers who brought them.

I was also thrilled to be able to make a surprise visit to see David and Judith Grundy at their new home in Norfolk. Not only was David a very popular Vicar in Holmbury and Abinger but he was also our Woodland Vicar who was a great support to QRMW. We had a great chat with David and we were so pleased to see that they have settled well into their new home and community.

November brought Storm Bert which we are very sad to advise took our ancient "magic tree". The magic tree was of interest to many, especially the children, because a branch from one of the large branches had fused itself to the main trunk. Its peculiarity was most likely the reason it succumbed to the storm. However one of the veterans, a clever woodworker, is going to make a fairy bird home for us out of one of the logs so there will still be "magic" in the woodland.

Sadly at the 11th hour we had to cancel our *Christmas at the Woodland* event which was due to take place on Saturday 7th December but Storm Darragh was on its way and warnings from the Met Office were to expect high winds, lots of rain, falling trees and branches. It was a great disappointment to all of us at QRMW; so much effort goes into these events but safety has to be our main priority. The good news is most of the families who had registered their children for the event have transferred their payment to attend our hugely popular Easter Egg Hunt on 13th April. Do put the date in your diaries now.

I wish you all a wonderful time during the festive season and a Happy Healthy New Year. Keep safe and do come and visit us at the woodland anytime. If you see my van in the car park you know I am there and the kettle will always be on.

Paul Cooling, Chairman

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Sports Club Trustees Need You

Westcott Sports Club, home to our village football and cricket teams, and a whole lot more fun besides, is looking for new trustees to join the existing dynamic team. There are only four meetings a year and each trustee has clear roles and responsibilities. If you are interested please email for an application form to wsctrustees1@gmail.com

JustGiving Appeal

The clubrooms, surrounds and grounds at Stable Meadow, Milton Street are in need of some TLC. At some stage most people in the Westcott Community will have used the facilities for cricket, football, a birthday party or for a community-based event hosted by Westcott Sports Club.

We really need your help to repair and renew the facilities. So please can we ask for a donation of any size. To find the JustGiving page search *Westcott Sports Club* and follow the link.

Thank you!



Westcott 100 Club

Our 37th quarterly and 10th annual draws were held on 9 December. The winning numbers are:



Since the scheme started in 2015, our members have won over £8,000 in prizes and we have awarded grants of over £14,000 to local good causes ranging from Holy Trinity Church, St John's Community Centre, Surrey Hills School, Westcott Village Hall and, of course, our wonderful village Christmas tree.

For more information on joining the scheme or for the process for applying for funds (we still have funds available!) please email us at:

westcott.100.club@gmail.com

Alda Andreotti (Chair) – Edwin Harland (Treasurer) – Richard Packer (Secretary)

The Westcott 100 Club is a Small Society Lottery registered with Mole Valley DC no. 48965.



Reality check

Leaving the certainty of last year behind and heading into a new year always gives me pause for thought. Ever since I learnt in detail about global environmental issues, as part of an Open University degree completed in 2017, each passing year has clanged like a bell marking another year without proportionate action to deal with the multiple crises we face. The 2024 Global Risk Report from the World Economic Forum states the top four risks over the next ten year period as:

1. Extreme weather events
2. Critical change to Earth systems
3. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse
4. Natural resource shortages

Scientists have made it abundantly clear that in order to avert climate catastrophe we must radically reduce the burning of fossil fuels. That burning fossil fuels would lead to potentially catastrophic climate impacts was known by oil companies, such as ExxonMobil in the late 1970s and has been more widely warned about by climate scientists since the late 80s. Yet since we have known of the problem, more damage has been done to the climate – ie more CO₂ emissions have been released into the atmosphere – than in the rest of history. So the question we need to ask is:

Why have we not done what we know we needed to do?

Obviously there are many complex

reasons, which are difficult to cover in a short article. However, money, wealth and power created by the extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels and the ways in which this is tied into our economic, ecological and social systems, plays a major role.

Misinformation has played a role in the delaying of climate action, particularly in the form of greenwashing by polluting industries. Technological solutions to reducing emissions, such as carbon capture and storage, have been pushed by those whose interests it serves to maintain the status quo, deflecting attention away from more simple remedies such as decreasing energy demand. Excluding nature based methods such as reforestation, current levels of technology-based carbon dioxide removal only accounts for about one millionth of the carbon dioxide emitted from fossil fuels.

Also a factor is that many of the wealthiest countries and individuals, who are responsible for the vast majority of emissions, are not yet as severely affected by extreme weather

e v e n t s .
Therefore, it can be easier to turn a blind eye to the issues.



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GREEN WESTCOTT (cont.)

generation's time?

On our current trajectory, things are not looking good. The State of Climate 2024 report makes clear that *'The record-breaking rainfall and flooding, rapidly intensifying tropical cyclones, deadly heat, relentless drought and raging wildfires that we have seen in different parts of the world this year are unfortunately our new reality and a foretaste of our future'*. 1.5°C warming is here now, and many impacts are occurring faster than expected. Warming is accelerating towards 3°C+ (Collision Course Report, Breakthrough)

With every fraction of a degree rise the severity and frequency of dangerous heatwaves, destructive storms and other disasters increases. At 3°C, scientists say, the world could pass tipping points that would drastically change the planet's climate, such as the collapse of polar ice caps leading to a huge rise in sea levels.

How can we reduce the impacts of the climate crisis?

Looking at the reality of climate breakdown can be frightening and overwhelming. Yet we need to look clearly at it to understand what it means for us and our children and to help to focus attention on what is important. We have been distracted by money and lulled into the role of passive consumers, encouraged to rely on technological fixes to our problems, our senses dulled to the cost in human

exploitation and nature destruction that underpins the majority of our systems of material wealth creation. Philosopher Iain McGilchrist, contends that we are in the midst of a spiritual crisis. We need to move beyond a mechanistic view, recover our sense of the sacred and focus on our humanity and the fundamental human need - to love and be loved. Love has always played a key role in human survival. We need other humans in order to live. Social co-operation and the building of relationships are crucial in accomplishing many essential tasks - reproduction, learning, sharing food and other resources, seeking safety and raising children. We must reject divisive and anti-human narratives and come together to collaborate, for the love of life, to:

Reduce fossil fuels

Our lives have become very dependent on fossil fuels but there are plenty of ways to reduce the amount we use. This is not a choice, but a necessity at this point in time. We are more dependent on having a hospitable planet to provide for our basic needs - food, water, shelter.

'The extraction and burning of fossil fuels undermine all 17 Sustainable Development Goals ,





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GREEN WESTCOTT (cont.)

including jeopardising public health, fuelling conflict, exacerbating social inequalities, and threatening biodiverse ecosystems worldwide'. From a letter signed by 77 Nobel Laureates & World Leaders, 2024

Restore ecosystems

Harm to ecosystems needs to stop in order to allow natural processes to work effectively to maintain conditions favourable to life and to take up excess carbon in the atmosphere. Worryingly, climate scientists say that additional technological climate interventions may now be required to keep warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

Create resilience

We can all act to create more resilience within our local communities; sourcing

locally-produced or growing food; supporting local traders, craftspeople



and community projects; wildlife friendly gardens; building bonds – walking or using public transport means that you meet more people! Local Futures is an organisation that focuses on 'going local' as a way to restore ecological, social and spiritual wellbeing and has a website full of helpful resources.

Jakki Phillips

Fully referenced version of every article at www.greenwestcott.org

Brockham Choral

Brockham Choral start 2025 with open rehearsals on 7th & 14th January.



You will be given a very warm and friendly welcome, so come and sing with them as they start preparing for Joseph Haydn's *The Creation*. Cole Bendall, baton in hand, with Marion Lea's superb hands on the ivories will guide us through to a final performance on the 5th April.

No audition required. Rehearsals at St. John's C of E Primary School, Dorking, RH4 2LR at 7.30pm. Scores will be provided.

For further details visit www.brockhamchoral.org

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