

# Soberton & Newtown

PARISH MAGAZINE For all the community, delivered FREE to over 700 households

August - September 2025



Pond dipping at Chapel Road Soberton Heath  
Read more about this village pond on page 7

Photos: Jonty Sherwill

[www.sobertonchurch.org.uk](http://www.sobertonchurch.org.uk)  
[www.newtownchurch.org.uk](http://www.newtownchurch.org.uk)

Front cover design: Jonty Sherwill



## **St. Peter's, Soberton and Holy Trinity, Newtown.**

**For details of CHURCH SERVICES, please refer to page 4**

For any enquiries, please contact the following

### **Benefice of Soberton, Newtown and Hambledon**

The Reverend Liz Quinn

Associate Priest in the Meon Valley Parishes.

Particular focus on the Benefice of Soberton, Newtown and Hambledon.

revliz7@icloud.com

07518 247637

### **Our Lady Queen of the Apostles, Roman Catholic Church**

St. Martin's Street, Bishop's Waltham, SO32 1DN

Father Mario Toma 02380 612430

Parish Office 02380 273882

6.00 pm Saturday (First Mass of Sunday)

9.30 am Sunday

There are Sunday evening services in Winchester and in Fareham.

For further information, please contact Anthony McEwen 01489 877448

### **The Methodist Circuit.** Services in the area are as follows:-

Shirrell Heath 10.30 am & 6.00 pm

Waltham Chase 10.30 am

Bishops Waltham 10.30 am

Swanmore 10.30 am & 6.00 pm

Hambledon 11.00 am & 6.00 pm

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**Please e-mail copy for the October / November magazine to  
gill.highcroft@btinternet.com**

***NEXT COPY DATE - 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 (17:00)***

## The Benefice of Soberton, Newtown & Hambledon

### Services

**August 2025  
September 2025**

*Holy Communion is celebrated in Hambledon on Wednesdays at 09.30 and on the 4th Wednesday in Soberton before Coffee and Cake.*

*Subject to change,  
sometimes at short notice*

### August

3 <sup>rd</sup>	0800	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1000	Holy Communion (CW Thanksgiving)	Newtown
	1030	Service of the Word	Hambledon

10 <sup>th</sup>	1100	Holy Communion (Sunday Club)	Soberton
	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon

17 <sup>th</sup>	1000	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1100	Morning Worship	Soberton
	1100	Service of the Word	Hambledon

24 <sup>th</sup>	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1800	Holy Communion	Soberton

27 <sup>th</sup>	0930	Holy Communion	Soberton
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31 <sup>st</sup>	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
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### September

7 <sup>th</sup>	0800	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1000	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1030	Short Family Service for Creationtide	Hambledon

14 <sup>th</sup>	1100	Holy Communion (Sunday Club)	Soberton
	1100	Churchyard Holy Communion	Hambledon

21 <sup>st</sup>	1000	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1100	Pets Service	Soberton
	1100	Harvest Festival	Hambledon
	1830	Evensong for Creationtide/Harvest	Hambledon

24 <sup>th</sup>	0930	Holy Communion	Soberton
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28 <sup>th</sup>	1100	Pets Service	Hambledon
	1800	Holy Communion	Soberton



## Messy Church is back!

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September  
St Peter's, Soberton  
3pm – 5pm**

**More details on Soberton Echo  
nearer the time – don't miss out!**

**Fun for all the family!**



## POP IN FOR COFFEE AND CAKE

*at ST PETER'S CHURCH ROOM,  
SOBERTON*

**POP IN FOR COFFEE & CAKE ON THE 2<sup>nd</sup> &  
4<sup>th</sup> WEDNESDAY EACH MONTH  
10am – noon**

**MEET FRIENDS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND  
HAVE A CHAT**



## ***Licensing of Rev Liz Quinn – a very welcome announcement!***

Reverend Liz was licensed as an Associate Priest for the Meon Valley Parishes (but especially for Hambledon, Soberton and Newtown) at a wonderful service by Bishop Johnston on 16th June at St Barnabas at Swanmore. She was licensed with Rev Jill Kingston and Rev Emma Andersen (Rev Jill for the Bridge Benefice and Rev Emma for Barn Church). It was a very joyous occasion with a beautiful combined choir. A big thank you to all of you who came and supported us on this very special occasion.

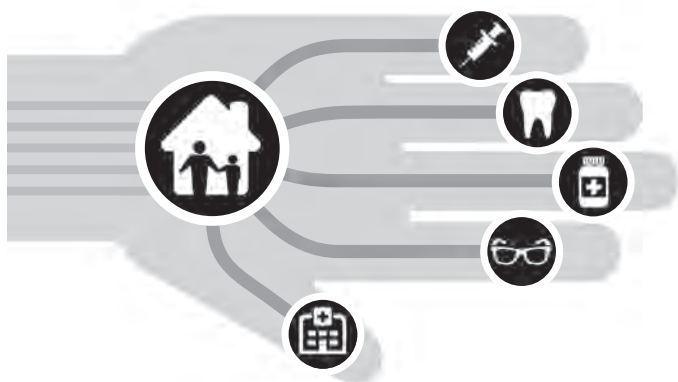
We also said goodbye to Rev Andy Davis on his retirement. We are now in the process of the recruiting process for a new Priest in Charge for the Meon Valley Parishes.

Liz, Jill and Emma have known each other for some time during training and curacy and will make a very strong team!!



*Photographs: Roger Palmer*

## **Need Transport to Medical Appointments?**



### SOBERTON AND NEWTOWN **Good Neighbours Group**

We are here to drive local people, of all ages, to hospitals, GP surgeries, dentists, opticians and other health practitioners.

Our friendly volunteer drivers use their own cars, are all DBS checked and fully insured.

*A donation towards fuel costs is requested.*

For more information, call:

Kate Harvey on 07843 496 852 or Kate Chesters on 07710 716 664



[www.soberton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.soberton-pc.gov.uk)

### **CAN YOU HELP US?**

If you would like to *join* our driving team, we would love to hear from you. All our volunteer drivers decide which journeys they can offer, and are reimbursed for their mileage.

A BIG 'THANK YOU' from

## THE ST PETER'S CHURCH FLOWER TEAM

This year the Church Flower Team was kindly invited to take a stand at The Village Fete to raise money for the Flower Fund. The proceeds help buy flowers for the main festivals at Christmas, Easter & Harvest as well as for other significant occasions. British Flowers and sustainability were the theme. Some of the flowers were purchased from a British Grower with the majority coming from people's gardens in the village.

Our thanks are extended to all those who made it possible; **Sue Smith** and **Wendy Pragnell** for providing us with a stand with enough shade to protect the flowers from the bright sunshine; **Anne & Ben Stoneham** who gave us permission to pick from their extensive Cutting Garden; **Gilly Hill** with her beautiful walled Garden and **Alison Willis** for her amazing hydrangeas. Not forgetting our own Sandra who lovingly grows flowers and foliage that she regularly harvests for the church for weddings and festivals throughout the year. And finally, to those members of the Flower Team who helped us both before and on the day



Our approach to flower arranging in the church is having to change. 'Oasis' the Floral foam used in most flower displays has become a serious environmental problem contributing to the growing issue of microplastic pollution. In January 2020 The Royal Horticultural Society announced it was banning the product and since 2023 it hasn't been used in RHS shows. This means that designers, including those at The Chelsea Flower Show have had to find alternative methods to create their displays. The Church of England is also coming under pressure to ban the use of floral foam however this is yet to happen. As the pressure mounts it may well be only a matter of time?

So, what does this mean for church flower arrangers? There are several sustainable alternatives such as chicken wire moulded inside a container to hold stems in place, 'kenzans' floral frogs (metal devices with spikes) or a grid of waterproof tape on top of a vase.

The use of floral foam has not been banned, and professional floral designers and amateurs can still use it but we believe we need to make changes. We appreciate that this might be more difficult for some than others. But even if some of us adopt the sustainable approach it will help make a difference. St Peter & St Paul's at Hambledon have already moved away from the use of floral foam in their displays and we believe we should follow their lead.

If you are interested in flower arranging and have time to spare, then do please come along and join us. Simply contact either Sandra or me. We look forward to welcoming you to the team and to making a difference.

Thank you all again sincerely

**Pauline Walters & Sandra Glen**

**[pauline.walters11@btinternet.com](mailto:pauline.walters11@btinternet.com) or [sandra.glen@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sandra.glen@yahoo.co.uk)**

*Please see pages 16 and 17 for some more thoughts on flowers and arranging in a lovely article from Sarah Barclay, including an 'interview' with, and advice from Sandra!*





## Ups and downs of our Village Pond

Few childhood memories match the magic of pond dipping – peering into a net to discover the fascinating creatures trawled from the depths. You only have to look at this magazine's cover to see the spell cast on young and old alike at our recent annual pond survey.

But there are important scientific reasons for pond dipping, too. Every year we use the family pond dip to check on the bio-diversity of the pond which provides vital clues to water quality and the natural balance of species.

Alarming events such as the algae which made the pond a “no go” area in 2024 and the fish deaths earlier this year have quite rightly caused concern, but they are part of a pattern of natural reactions to climate and increase in fish population and require careful management.

Ponds can dry up through extreme heat – as Soberton Pond did in the hot summer of 1976 when locals rescued and rehomed some of the aquatic life – or can clog up with invasive vegetation and disappear, as almost happened in 1998 when farmer Danny Bower towed a massive raft of parrot feather weed out of the pond with a Land Rover. Local residents followed up with a clearing operation (see left).



The near extinction of the pond on that occasion was the trigger for the formation of the Soberton and Newtown Conservation Group which has worked with the Parish Council ever since to manage the pond with regular clearance of invasive weed and surveys of its wildlife.

We were relieved that our 2025 survey in June revealed a healthy diversity and increased numbers of certain invertebrates – most likely due to the reduced fish numbers.

And that is why we discourage people from introducing Goldfish and Carp to the pond. They have voracious appetites and prey on the young of the pond's natural inhabitants such as dragonflies, beetles, river snails and Caddis flies.

We also ask that the No Fishing sign is respected as lost equipment poses a hazard to wildlife and people working in the water and scattering bread to attract fish upsets the water's nutrient balance.

We all enjoy the pond and its natural beauty and are grateful to residents who keep us posted about any concerns. It is a precious resource and would soon disappear without all our efforts and vigilance.

## Come and join us

We would love to welcome you to the rest of our summer programme. Details on Soberton Echo Facebook nearer the time or email [phil.bergin@btinternet](mailto:phil.bergin@btinternet) for more information.

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 9am – opening of moth traps in a nature-friendly garden in Station Road, Soberton. Families welcome.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm – Bat Discovery Walk with the Hampshire Bat Group starting on Soberton Village Green. Families welcome.

***Please see the front cover for photos of the SoberNewts Pond Dip on 14<sup>th</sup> June!***

## Newtown Church Fete 2025

**To all those who gave generously of donations, prizes, their talents, their time and their goodwill ... a big thank you from the Fete Team!**

Saje UPVC Ltd \* Southern Structures \* Holmcote Estates \* Byrne Runciman Estate Agents \* Steve & Ruth Scott \* Meon Valley Lions Club \* Meon Valley Butchers \* The Bold Forester \* McCarthy's Fruit & Veg \* Hemings Home Hardware \* Neals Nursery \* Mud Island \* Garsons \* The Marnhams \* Hampshire Flower Barn \* Gaudion's Hairdressing \* Imogen and Douglas Lyndon-Skeggs \* Meon Springs \* Fareham Live \* Southwick Revival \* The Shoe, Exton \* Krishna's @ The Roebuck Inn \* Lord Ben Stoneham \* John & Nahoko Haskins \* Jeremy Martin \* Exton Park Vineyard \* Quob Park Estate \* Angus McCullough \* Dr Richard Osmond \* Barry Proctor \* Ros Summers Cakes \* Birch Tree Yoga \* Lillie Rose Beauty \* Pages of Wickham \* Pirate Pasties \* Sainsbury's Broadcut \* Barfoots Farms \* 3rd Portchester Scouts \* Soberton Strummers \* RBL Victory Brass Band \* Droxford Fire Crew \* Soberton Newtown Infant School \* Sing and Tonic \* Soul Band \* The classic / interesting car owners \* The Victory Dog Training Club \* Hugo & Hannah Makin for parking \* Pump House Auctions \* Boarhunt Garage, Darren Gamblin, David Cleeve & John Haskins for providing transport \* The Earles and James Diamond for photography and fete film \* St John's Ambulance \* ACSO Gary McCulloch & CSO Sarah \* All our fabulous helpers! \*

**And a very special thank you!**

**The fete team want to say a BIG thank you to the Newtown Church Fete Organiser. John Barfoot, who is hanging up his boots after 20 years, yes 20 years! John has taken the fete from strength to strength and provided a fantastic day out for 1000's of visitors over the years! John – thanks from us all, organisers and helpers alike!**



**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!**

**Newtown Church Fete 2026**

**Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Same time, same place!**

**See you there!**



# Newtown Church Fete 2025 ... a real family day out

There's something timeless about a summer fete, and Newtown's was no exception - a cheerful mix of tradition, community, and just the right amount of chaos! The sun kindly made an appearance (if a little shy at times), and from the moment the gates opened - and the children from the Meon Valley Federation welcomed us with their dancing, the Newtown Church Fete was a buzz of high spirits, laughter and activity.

A particular hit with the younger crowd was the fire engine from Droxford Fire Station. Lights flashed, hoses were inspected, and the shiny red engine drew admiration all day long. Just nearby, the tennis court became a hub of playful competition, with the ever-challenging "hit the rat" game and the giant dartboard testing aim and patience in equal measure.

Children darted between **hook-a-duck**, the **toy stall**, and the ever-popular **treasure trail**, clutching maps and eyes peeled for clues. Little ones were kept entertained by the **Thomas the Tank Engine ride** and the always-thrilling **BIG slide** - not to mention some dazzling **face painting** and **pottery painting**, which added colour and creativity to little hands and cheeks.

The return of the **dog agility course** and the much-loved **dog show** brought tails wagging and plenty of smiles from spectators. Our four-legged residents were out in full force - stealing hearts, applause, and possibly the odd dropped sausage from the **BBQ**.

Speaking of which - no one went hungry! The **BBQ** served up sizzling favourites all afternoon, followed by **candy floss** and **sweets for dessert**. For those with more refined tastes, there was **strawberries and cream**, crisp **prosecco**, and - in what has become a true tradition for many - the **first Pimms of the season**, enjoyed with suitable ceremony.

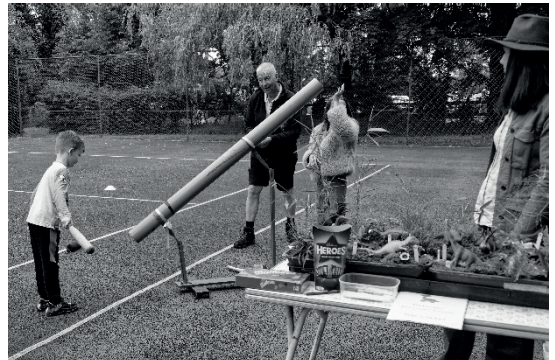
The grown-ups were also well looked after by the **beer tent**, where friendly chatter flowed as freely as the ales, and the **tea and cake stall** - a long-standing institution - was once again heaving with activity. With a table groaning under the weight of homemade cakes, scones, and biscuits, and a tireless team keeping mugs full, it remained one of the fete's most popular corners.

Rounding out the day's attractions were the **classic cars**, gleaming in the sun and drawing admiration from motoring enthusiasts and casual browsers alike, and a host of other traditional stalls - from **plants** to **bric-a-brac**, and of course, the ever-tempting **raffle**, **bottle tombola** and the **Auction of Promises**.

But as always, the real magic of the Newtown Summer Fete wasn't just in the games or the goodies - it was in the conversations, the laughter, and the shared sense of community. Seeing neighbours catching up, children playing, and visitors soaking up the spirit of the day was a heartening reminder of what makes our village so special.

**Roll on next year - when we'll return with sun hats (or umbrellas!), spare change, and maybe just a little more luck in the Grand Draw!**

*Jos, Sophia, Athena, Alexander & Penelope Lloyd*



# Guides support Chalk Streams



We see a lot in the news about how polluted our rivers are. They are full of chemicals, sewage, and agricultural run-off. Meaning 80% of the countries rivers and water ways are not in good ecological shape.

**But not here. Not the Meon - Right?**

As we all know the River Meon is a chalk stream, but did you know it is one of only (around) 200 chalk streams in the whole world. Surely you would imagine that such a precious environment would be protected? Well, legally, it's not.

Unfortunately, our beautiful River Meon is not as healthy as we would imagine. Reports have consistently shown that our precious chalk stream is suffering. A report from the Environment Agency shows that the River Meon contains higher than acceptable levels of Mercury (don't worry this isn't going to hurt you unless you are an invertebrate) and will not recover until 2063. Chemically the water quality is not good, and Biodiversity is lower than would be expected.

Even with the reintroduction of water voles along many stretches (including St Claire's), and the return of otters, our river is still not happy. But these are not problems we can solve on our own; legislation and tighter controls are needed to make sure that damage is not being done when no-one is looking.

A government report from 2022 outlines targets to get 70% rivers and water bodies back to healthy by 2030, however, they are already behind. Citing a lack of funds due to a lack of interest, we need to show the government how much we do care about our natural environment. After all, it is not just our future we are protecting, nature should be there for many generations to come to enjoy.

Did you know the environment is the number one concern for young women? (GirlGuiding Attitudes Survey) Well, we took the Guides down to the river to run a few tests of our own! The girls ran flow and clarity tests, as well as learning about the geography and history of the Meon, as part of the Chalk Stream Challenge. Oh! and we caught some Lampreys!



If you want to help to protect the Meon and our other chalk streams there a few things you can do to help. Organisations like Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust are lobbying for amendments to the Planning & Infrastructure Bill, but they need support from the public to get MPs on their side. Our new MP Danny Chambers tells us that he cares about the environment and chalk streams like the River Meon, so why not get in contact to let him know that this is important. See the Wildlife Trust website for more information:

<https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/rivers>

On a more practical note if you want to get involved, you can join SoberNewts our local conservation group, or you help with monitoring the river by taking part in The Rivers Trust's 'Big River Watch' in September (see page 7 for contact details).

**Victoria Rogers**





## **Afternoon Tea at the Guide Hut!**

Come along and enjoy  
a delicious Afternoon Tea  
with succulent sandwiches,  
scrumptious cakes,  
& stupendous scones!

Plus, craft stalls and games for all the family!

On  
Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
2pm-4pm

Tickets on the door  
or email [guidehutsoberton@gmail.com](mailto:guidehutsoberton@gmail.com)

Adults - £7.50  
Children - £5.00

The Guide Hut,  
The Recreation Ground,  
Heath Road,  
Soberton Heath,  
SO32 3QH

All profits will go towards the upkeep of the Hut.



## Local History ... Lest we Forget

The back page of the last issue showed a copy of the prisoner of war release papers of Alfred Earwaker of Soberton. Earwaker, various spellings, is a name which has echoed around the Meon Valley area for many generations. Alfred Reginald Earwaker spent most of his life in the Soberton area, son of Thomas and Alice, he was born at Midlington, in 1912 and after leaving school worked as a gardener.

Nip, as he was widely known, was already serving as a driver with the rank of Corporal in the RASC stationed at Aldershot when he married Winnie Burch grand daughter of Robert White of Chapel Road in the spring of 1939. Winnie had been born and brought up in the Paddington area of London but by time of the 1939 National Registration, when everyone had to obtain a National Registration Number, she and her widowed mother Florence were living in Chapel Road with grandfather White. Nip's release papers give his address as Rose Cottage, Chapel Road.

We understand that soon after the outbreak of WWII Nip was sent to the Pacific arena and was promoted to Sergeant. In 1942 he was captured by the Japanese in Java. He ended up in Sarawak building roads and airfields for the Japanese. During the 3 ½ years spent as a Prisoner of War in Borneo his health badly deteriorated and as a result of his treatment he went blind in later years. He received an award in 1953 when he was living in Big Tree Cottages. Later he and Winnie moved to a new bungalow between the recreation ground and the Bold Forester overlooking his beloved Meon Valley and a very short walk to support the Soberton United Football Teams. As his health deteriorated they moved into the village and then as the shops closed and other services came to an end, they moved to Bishops Waltham.

From a newspaper obituary notice of 1990: Peter Carpenter, the widower, then living in Bishops Waltham, was said to be 'from Soberton'. Unfortunately, we cannot trace a Peter although there have been several families with that surname in the parish. The article says that Peter was stationed in Singapore when the Japanese invaded and just escaped by air with just the clothes he stood up in. As a flight engineer he took part in the fight back from Ceylon, Bombay and through the Burma Campaign to recapture S.E. Asia, finally bringing out the 'Death Railway' surviving prisoners of war from Bangkok.

Gordon Harbord of Rudley Holme, Bunns Lane it is understood, received the Burma Star so he too must have served in that area. Gordon was a driver with the Royal Signals and was not discharged until January 1947.

Several local lads posted to North Africa were taken prisoner including Richard Norman Crook, known by all as Dick. He was the son of Walter Crook who was Sexton of Holy Trinity Newtown for many years. Two of Walter's sons, Alf and Len, we are told, fought in

the First World War and Dick joined the army when the Second World War broke out. He became a Lance Corporal in the Grenadier Guards and was in North Africa fighting against Rommel's African Corps. He was captured at the Battle of the Mareth Line in March 1943 which some regard as the Eighth's Army's greatest victory. The release papers record that he was uninjured and apparently he was marched up through Italy towards Germany. His first PoW camp to be mentioned was at Latria in Italy where he was forced to work in a cement factory. He was then moved to Museberg and from there to Malberg in Germany, followed by six months in Poland before returning to Germany in August 1944 where he remained until April 6th 1945. Dick returned to Newtown and gave much of his time to the church and community.

George Ernest Sutherland married Soberton girl May Elsie Matthews in 1935 and became a shopkeeper at 1 Linden Villas in the High Street. At the time of his marriage he was said to be an electric light inspector but there was not much call for one of those in the Meon Valley at that time. During WWII George served with the 4th Queens Own Hussars RAC 2nd Armoured Division. Corporal 543767 G E Sutherland was captured in Greece on the 2nd October 1941. After a short time he was moved from Greece to camps in Italy, (Barrie, Capua and Chiavari) and then in September 1943 to Lansdurf in Germany and finally to Hammelburg. On his release signed 4th May 1945 he gave his address as The Cabin, Soberton. We have been told that when he was missing and presumed dead his wife received a small pension for herself and children but the knowledge that he was alive caused her much anxiety over the money she had received and obviously spent. George died at Maybush Lodge, Soberton High Street in 1981.

John Deadman born in 1918 was christened Leslie Samuel, the son of Samuel and Miriam. East Meon born Sam was living in Miriam's village of Soberton by the 1921 census and working as a carter and ploughman for Mr. Bower at Manor Farm. They were living in West Street with their two small sons Aleck and Leslie who both attended Soberton School. We understand that Leslie, better known as John, joined the Army Medical Corps and was part of the British Expeditionary Force. He was captured in Belgium and spent 3 ½ years as a prisoner of war in Poland. He must have been exchanged or released because it is said that it was whilst he was waiting at Gosport for D-Day that he met his future wife Dorothy. Four days after D-Day he went to collect wounded Canadian soldiers from Juno Beach. Later he and Dorothy lived at Curry Cottage on School Hill.

*Much of this information is unconfirmed so if you could confirm or add to it the Local History Society would like to hear from you. It is hoped that a list of people who left the village to fight and came home could be remembered alongside those who gave their life. A.P.*



## The Rebirth of Borderlands Bakehouse



Last month saw the welcome return of our very own local bakery – Borderlands Bakehouse. Dormant in the post Covid years, chief baker and bottlwasher, Jeremy Miles has been joined by his daughter and business partner Jo, who shares his passion for crafting the best possible artisan breads and more naughty bakes.



I sat down with Jeremy after a long hot shift in the Bakehouse to find out more about his return to the ovens.

*What prompted you to start up Borderlands Bakehouse again?*

When I first started the enterprise in 2019 it was only meant to be a way of providing a bit of comfort food for friends and family during lockdown. My daughter, Jo, was furloughed at home with me and it became a bit of a passion project for both of us. We never expected it to become so popular but, as restrictions eased and both our 'day jobs' resumed we realised we couldn't sustain the time commitment long term.

The passion didn't die, and we both decided to treat ourselves to an advanced bread making course in London. It was whilst at the Dusty Knuckle that the seeds of the idea to set up business together were first planted. As I officially became an old age pensioner in April, and Jo managed to squeeze her working week into 4 days, there was a realistic possibility of getting something off the ground.



*So, what has changed since first time round?*

Well, the main thing has been a change of premises. During Covid, I was baking out of our scullery using the family oven – which was never a long term, solution. I had worked out how we could convert our garage into a functioning bakery without too much change to the overall fabric of the building. So, for the first three months after having taken the plunge, we cleared the garage, lined the walls, laid a floor and went on the hunt for equipment. A lot came from other bakeries that were either expanding or, sadly, closing down.

We opened the oven and garage doors for business at the start of June and hit our first milestone last week of successfully passing our Food Hygiene Inspection with a 5 star rating.

*And what can we expect in the coming months?*

We're deliberately starting small – we've resurrected and grown our mailing list of direct customers, we've started supplying Wilfred's café in Droxford Church with buns and pastries again, and we've already had a stall at a couple of local markets. The reaction has been incredibly positive, both from customers old and new as well as other community and retail outlets. We're still only able to bake on a couple of days a week – Fridays and Saturdays at the moment, so need to manage the expansion carefully. But we've got plenty of ideas, so watch this space!

*And how do people get in touch with you to find out what's on offer?*

We're just about to launch our updated website that will contain all the information about our range and how to order – [www.borderlandsbakehouse.co.uk](http://www.borderlandsbakehouse.co.uk) or use the QR code. Alternatively, drop us an email at [hello@borderlandsbakehouse.co.uk](mailto:hello@borderlandsbakehouse.co.uk) and we'll contact you directly.



It would be great to meet and serve yet more of the lovely people in our community.





# Thank You!



## Well Done, Soberton!

What an incredible day we had at Soberton Fete this year with countless visitors sharing their enthusiastic feedback. It was heartwarming to witness so many people enjoying themselves, reconnecting with friends, basking in the beautiful weather, and exploring the vibrant stalls and attractions that made this year's Fete truly special.

This year, we welcomed back the incredibly talented Peter Berkeley as our Master of Ceremonies! His enthusiasm and energy certainly brought the Fete to life. Thank you, Peter, for your outstanding performance. However, might we suggest it's time to retire that shirt!

The Fete opened with dance routines performed by the talented children from Meonstoke and Newtown Schools. Their hard work and dedication shone through in their performances, thank you!

The Tug-of-War was a highlight, drawing in a lively crowd that cheered passionately for their favourite team. Thank you Anthony McEwen for organising and running this event.

We were also treated to some great musical performances from the Soberton Strummers, Sing and Tonic, and the Royal British Legion Victory Brass Band. A special mention also goes to the local band 'Kings of Meon' whose performance added an extra layer of excitement to the day.

We did receive some feedback from children who were disappointed that the reptiles were not present this year (though some adults may have breathed a sigh of relief!). Fear not, reptile enthusiasts, they will return next year!

This year, we introduced a new attraction: the crockery smash stall! It was a 'smashing' success, bringing laughter to both children and adults alike!

This year, the Fete Committee was proud to support a local resident in their fundraising efforts for a trip to Nepal, aimed at supporting a poverty reduction project. While the Fete primarily raises funds for the ongoing costs of our Church, we are committed to supporting local charities, organisations, and fundraisers so please do get in touch as we may be able to help.

This year's Grand Draw and Auction of Promises featured an impressive array of prizes and promises with Eddisons Incorporating Daniells Harrison generously sponsoring the top prize of £250. The Fete Committee would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed prizes for the Grand Draw and Auction of Promises. Your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated. A special thanks is also extended to Merington Stores and Bowman Ales Ltd. for their continued generosity with sponsoring the Cake Competition and Barrow of Booze respectively. Thank you also to Weller Patrick for sponsoring all the Fete advertising boards that were erected around the village.

Soberton Fete would not have been possible without the support of our wonderful villagers, and we are very grateful to each and every one of you! Thank-you to Tom and Liz Busher for allowing us to use their meadow. We also extend our thanks to Lee and Ali Elliot, Anthony and Louise McEwen, and Jane Ward for providing their fields for car parking. A round of applause for our amazing team of "lifters and shifters," car parking marshals, and gatekeepers—you all did a fantastic job! We also would like to express our thanks to Trevor Hill, who kindly mowed the meadow not once, but twice (thank you for your patience!) to ensure everything was perfect for the Fete.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our wonderful volunteers for their incredible dedication in setting up and managing the stalls and attractions! It was lovely to welcome back familiar faces from previous years, as well as meet some new volunteers and helpers who we hope will join us again next year! We are thrilled to announce that we have raised approximately £15,000—an outstanding achievement that truly reflects your hard work and commitment to our Fete.

## THANK YOU





The White Lion plays a key role in supporting the Fete. Their sponsorship of this year's Grand Draw tickets, along with their efforts in running the BBQ, mobile bar, and organising food and drink supplies, has been invaluable. Thank you, Allan, Vicky, and your dedicated team, for your continued support!

We are also grateful to John and Julie Earle for capturing special moments of our Fete with their exceptional photography skills—thank you both for your continued support!

Soberton Fete is now on the lookout for a new Chairperson, as I prepare to pass the torch to someone ready to take the reins. This role is incredibly rewarding, especially on Fete Day, when all the hard work and planning culminate in an event where everyone has a fantastic time! Our Fete Committee is a wonderful group of dedicated people who work hard to make Soberton Fete one of the best events in the area. If you are passionate about our community and want to keep the Fete spirit alive, we would love to hear from you!

On behalf of myself and the entire Fete Committee, a heartfelt THANK YOU for your support in making Soberton Fete such a resounding success! Let's keep the spirit alive and make next year's event even more spectacular!

Wendy  
[sobertonfete@gmail.com](mailto:sobertonfete@gmail.com)

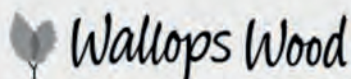
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## Golden season

If anyone was lucky enough to visit St Peter's Church, Soberton the day before the fete this year, I am sure they would have been bowled over. Not by a miracle of the spiritual kind but more a miracle of nature. Of course our parish church is always beautiful, and I am always cheered by popping in – not necessarily for a service, even cleaning it puts a spring in the step (potential volunteers take note!) But on that particular June day the church burst with an overwhelming scent. Again, not incense or other associated ecclesiastical aromas, but quite simply the most beautiful scent of local flowers, all British grown and most picked and donated from Soberton gardens. It was as if an orchestra of floral aroma had descended and every stem and petal was jostling for aromatic position.

Bucket after bucket packed haphazardly with seasonal June flowers and foliage were waiting for their moments of glory. Roses by the armful, stock, delphiniums to name a few. There was so much colour, vibrancy and beauty and luckily for these flowers, soon to be arranged into exquisite bouquets and posies by the talented Pauline and Sandra.



And the best part of it all was, not a single flower had been imported and no oasis (which is basically plastic) had been used in the arrangements. Instead, chicken wire was used for the pedestal arrangements and made for a wonderfully natural looking way of displaying cut flowers – it was as if they had just grown out of a hedge – albeit in a beautifully arranged shape!

The next day the fete stall sold donated home-made posies from local gardens as well as Sandra and Pauline's larger bouquets. They did brisk business. I was helping out on the stall and barely minutes went by without fete goers wandering up, smiling and, even if they didn't fancy buying the flowers or entering the raffle, just enjoyed the happiness that flowers can bring. The money raised will be used for the Soberton Church flower fund.

So that was June, and now we are tilting towards autumn. Days are shorter, the light different and certainly all high summer flowers are generally well and truly over. This, however, does not mean the end of enjoying locally foraged and grown flowers and foliage. Sandra has a few brilliant suggestions which follow.

*1 There are no real floristry rules – if you have beautiful flowers you have a beautiful arrangement.*

*2 Seasonal flowers always suit the light of the season. The bright acid yellows of spring just don't seem appropriate in late summer and early autumn longer, richer and softer light.*

*3 We don't need to feel gloomy about autumn flowers, this palette is particularly lovely – look at rosehips and old man's beard which are obviously not flowers but add texture, atmosphere and beauty to any arrangement. As the light dies down, muted colours look prettier.*

*4 Sandra's star flower is the hydrangea. "I really like hydrangeas and particularly when they start to fade – they can then be used through the winter in dry arrangements – always give them water – they are self drying – if you deprive them of water in the hope you are drying them yourself, they will droop. Give them time to develop.*

*5 Colours this season are the contrasts on the colour spectrum. Blue mixed with orange works especially well. September daisies, dahlias and foliage in autumnal hues are a great combination.*

*6 Most foliage is changing at this time of year, oak leaves look great and should be turning nicely. Another hedgerow favourite of Sandra's is spindle berry: the ointment pink berries on the spikey hedgerow staple. Its pinky berries look especially nice with golden leaves she says.*

*7 Consider wooded stems. One of Sandra's autumn favourites is unripe blackberries on their bramble stems and rosehips. Another she likes is firey scarlet crowcosmia. It often grows wild. Buddlia which can be found down the popular Soberton walking and riding route, the old railway line, is a good purple to mix with the oranges and golds.*

Sandra is keen to use alternatives to oasis. "Generally the church is moving away from unsustainable flower arranging and in fact the RHS have banned oasis. I have always been an organic gardener and when I researched that oasis forms micro plastics, I was keen to find alternatives that still look beautiful. I have an old book on Constant Spry and she used chicken wire and pins – so turning the clock back can often be far more sustainable. Years ago moss was a good water source. You can also use potatoes or cucumber to provide water for a short time.

So final tips on how to get the best from your flowers or foliage, once cut? According to Sandra the rules are simple.

*1 Remove all foliage from stems that falls below the water line of the container. That is where the bacteria comes from, perhaps use a bit of flower food but often a tiny unrinsed residue of bleach is enough to keep it at bay. The bleach holds the bacteria back and it is bacteria that makes water smelly and murky and most critically , prevents water uptake.*

*2 Ensure a clean cut on the stem ends.*

*3 Give the cut flowers a long cold water soak for a few hours or even overnight in a cool place before you want to arrange them.*

So happy flower and foliage foraging – and look out for Sandra and Pauline's plans for 2025. Thoughts on a flower festival in Soberton Church are already afoot. Watch this space for updates!

**Sarah Barclay**

**Author of Eden's Keepers publ Clearview Books**



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## Soberton & Newtown Local History Society

Our summer itinerary has been very successful although the weather for our two outings could not have been more different!

Mid-June saw us gather in Portchester for a guided walk of Old Portchester. The rain started as we set off and didn't stop until lunchtime when our bedraggled group rushed into the café at St Mary's Church for a dry out and warm up! The walk itself was very interesting and our guide, Ken Shaw was full of stories to keep us entertained! In July, we headed in the Meon Valley Bus to Christchurch for a day visit in the middle of a heatwave. We visited Highcliffe Castle and walked down to its nearby beach. We also visited Christchurch Priory and the former workhouse, now turned into a museum. Old stone buildings keep wonderfully cool in hot weather! A lovely summer day out!



All our events are open to any History Society member, so either come along to one of our meetings or contact our Chairman (details at the back of the magazine)

Upcoming Talks: Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm Rookesbury Hall

**History of the Meon Valley Railway** by Edwin Grimshaw

Visitors welcome £2



## Droxford Junior School

*Education, Enrichment and Enjoyment.*

This term marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my headship at Droxford Junior School; seventeen years at the school, and 25 years in education-phew! To be honest, the appetite and desire to provide the highest standards of education, enrichment and ultimately enjoyment hasn't waned. I'm always striving to add meaningful value to my three Es and this summer/autumn term will be no different. This is because we are moving to a new school status and becoming an Academy School. We will be joining Winchester University Academy Trust (UWinAT).



Moving to an ambitious, growing academy is very exciting. The prospect of greater collaborative and supportive practice for all staff including myself will enhance everyone's professional development. The schools in the Trust already are excellent like Droxford – we will be gaining outstanding guidance whilst providing support for others. This support is immediate, free and very friendly. Working closely with Winchester University is also exciting as we will gain superb pedagogical guidance from an internationally renowned institute, whose core purpose is to train teachers.

My aim is to future proof this school with outstanding prospects academically and financially with greater autonomy. The legacy of this will be greater freedoms to enhance the outcomes for all our children.

Staff, governors and parents have been consulted during the period of conversion which I started formally in the spring of 2024. There has been unanimous support for this process that is ultimately happening on my terms with what we believe is the best Multi Academy Trust available.

As for the school there will be no great changes. The name and building stays the same as does the uniform. All staff remain and what we teach stays in place in terms of our curriculum. Our links with the Infants will only grow stronger in terms of support (which has certainly happened since Mrs Randell has been in place). Our admissions stays the same and all children will move on to the same secondary schools.

The conversion will be completed on October 1<sup>st</sup>. No real fanfares – just business as normal but with really efficient systems in place; lots of close support; amazing opportunities for staff development; some cost savings and an even better curriculum.

We have a very exciting future ahead as a school here at Droxford. One where all we do will only benefit all our children.

**Matthew Dampier**  
Headteacher

### ***Soberton & Newtown Ladies Group***

*We start our new programme on 3rd September at 8pm in Rookesbury Hall, Newtown. Local resident Becca Brackwell-Slade will be talking to us about Hampshire and the IOW Air Ambulance. She will focus on the service, news and updates and the benefits to us locally*

*We are a group who meet monthly for talks on a variety of topics plus social gatherings. It is a good way for ladies from both villages to connect. New members are always welcome.*

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Liz Whales (Secretary)   01489 877712                      [lizwhales@aol.com](mailto:lizwhales@aol.com)

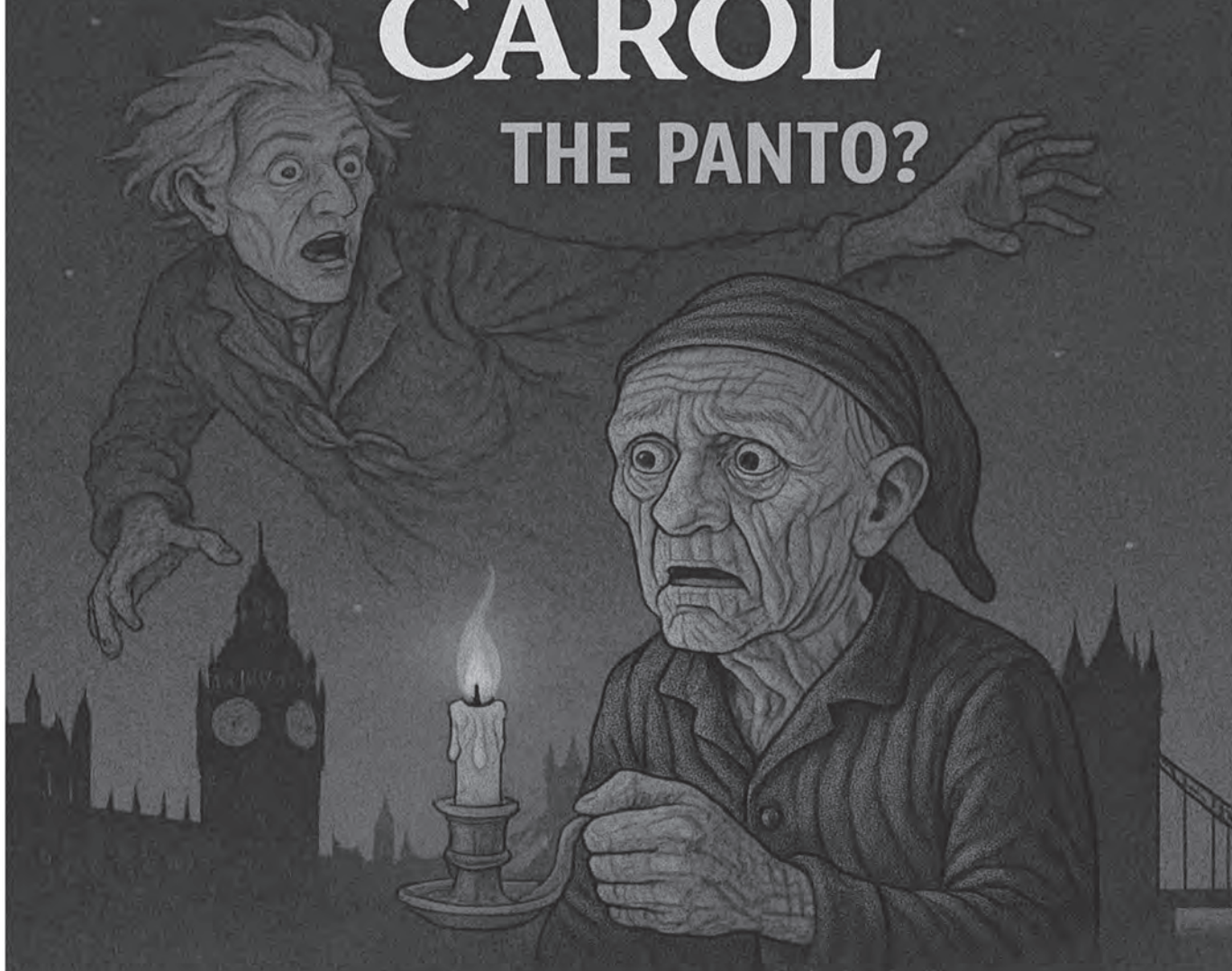




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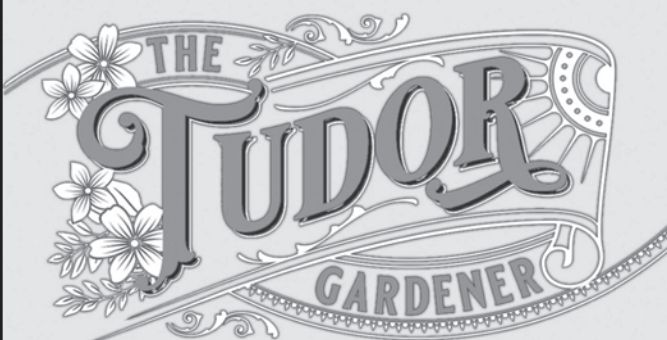
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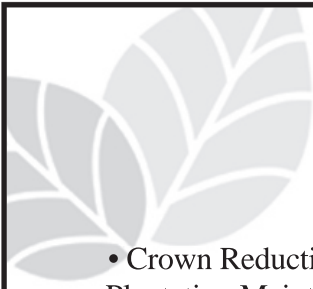
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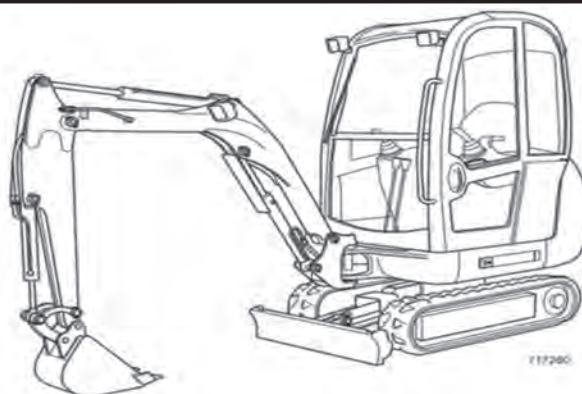
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Our vision is to bring this cherished pub back to its former glory, transforming it into a vibrant hub for the community. We plan to host events, support local businesses, and foster greater community engagement. We're working closely with our Executive Chef, Martin Dawkins, and his team to reimagine the restaurant, using fresh, locally-sourced seasonal produce, so our menus will evolve throughout the year.

Together, we can breathe new life into The Bold Forester and create a place where new memories are made. We eagerly look forward to welcoming you all and hearing your thoughts on how we can once again make this pub the cornerstone of our community once again.

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### **Celebrating a decade of Winchester Heritage Open Days**

This September marks a remarkable milestone for Winchester Heritage Open Days as the festival returns for its tenth year. Since its founding in 2016, this much-loved local tradition has grown into a ten-day celebration of our city's rich history, cultural heritage, and extraordinary architecture - all delivered free to the public by a dedicated team of volunteers and supporters.

Part of the national Heritage Open Days scheme, Winchester's festival is special in its local spirit and ambition. Over the years it has offered a dazzling variety of events, from behind-the-scenes tours of historic buildings to music, theatre, workshops, and living history. It is no exaggeration to say there is something for everyone, whether you are a lifelong resident rediscovering familiar places or a first-time visitor uncovering Winchester's secrets.

Organised and run by local charity, Hampshire History Trust, since 2020, the festival has become more than just a series of open doors. It is a community-wide invitation to connect with the stories, traditions, and places that shape our shared identity. The Trust's mission to advance Hampshire's heritage has led to other exciting projects and programmes, including the launch of the popular Hampshire HistBites podcast in 2020, and a newly established year-round series of public talks, ensuring that history remains alive, accessible, and meaningful for all.

This year's festival, taking place from 12th to 21st September, promises to be especially memorable. With architecture as its theme, visitors will be invited to look at Winchester with fresh eyes, exploring the craft, vision, and social histories embedded in its buildings. From medieval masterpieces to modern marvels, the programme will offer guided walks, expert talks, open days, activities and hands-on workshops that reveal the stories behind the walls that surround us.

At its heart, Winchester Heritage Open Days is about community. It is a testament to what can be achieved when local people come together to celebrate and share their heritage. As we mark this tenth anniversary, it is worth pausing to acknowledge the countless hours of volunteer work that have made the festival such a success, as well as the local businesses whose support has seen the festival expand to more than a hundred events annually.

Each year, Winchester Heritage Open Days reminds us that history does not simply belong to the past. It is something we shape and share in the present, ensuring it endures for future generations.

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# What's on (Village Diary)

Month	Date/day	Event / group	Time	Details
August	5 <sup>th</sup>	Stitch & Chatter	14:00	Page 51
	7 <sup>th</sup>	Bishop's Waltham Photographic Society	19:30	Page 47
	13 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup>	Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's	10:00	Page 4
	15 <sup>th</sup>	RBL - VJ Day Celebration	18:00	Page 49
	16 <sup>th</sup>	RBL - VJ Day Celebration	10:30	Page 49
	23 <sup>rd</sup>	S&N Conservation Group - opening moth traps	09:00	Page 7
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Meet&Eat	12:30	Page 51
	30 <sup>th</sup>	Bishops Waltham GIVE AND TAKE	10:30	Page 46
September	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Stitch & Chatter	14:00	Page 51
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	S&N Ladies Group	20:00	Page 18
	8 <sup>th</sup>	RBL	19:00	Page 49
	10 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup>	Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's	10:00	Page 4
	11 <sup>th</sup>	S & N Local History Society	19:30	Page 17
	11 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>	West Meon Music Festival	-	Page 47
	12 <sup>th</sup>	S&N Conservation Group - bat discovery walk	19:30	Page 7
	13 <sup>th</sup>	MESSY CHURCH	15:00	Page 4
	16 <sup>th</sup>	U3A	14:00	Page 46
	15 <sup>th</sup>	COPY DATE FOR OCTOBER / NOVEMBER	17:00	
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Meet&Eat	12:30	Page 51
	27 <sup>th</sup>	Afternoon Tea at the Guide Hut	14:00	Page 11
	27 <sup>th</sup>	Bishops Waltham GIVE AND TAKE	10:30	Page 46
Hold the date	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Autumn Plant Sale - Meon Valley Garden Club	10:00	Page 40
	8 <sup>th</sup> November	Moscow Drug Club at Rookesbury Hall	19:00	Page 17
	27 <sup>th</sup> - 29 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Soberton Players - A Christmas Carol The Panto?	-	Page 19
Regular meetings/ events	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	Stitch & Chatter	14:00	Page 51
	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	Soberton & Newtown Ladies' Group	20:00	Page 18
	2 <sup>nd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> Weds	Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's	10:00	Page 4
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	Soberton & Newtown Local History Society	19:30	Page 17
	1 <sup>st</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	Meon Valley U3A	14:00	Page 46
	Last Friday	Meet&Eat	12:30	Page 51

During the summer months, some clubs / societies break up for the holidays!

If you are in any doubt, please check before going!

The magazine team are delighted to welcome Jerry Lipscombe as our new treasurer!

Thank you, too, to Anthony McEwen, our outgoing treasurer!

# Road Report

Edited by Jonty Sherwill this feature aims to raise awareness about what we can each do to encourage more considerate driving with benefits for all road users whether on foot, horseback, cycle or behind the wheel or reins. The views expressed are personal and based on 50 years of driving. Friendly feedback is always welcome.

## If you ruled the roads!

If you were given the job of Secretary of State for Transport, if only for a day, what would you change? Scrap smart motorways, make black boxes and dash cams compulsory in all cars, or maybe introduce mandatory re-testing of all drivers every five years?! The options are many and varied but getting cabinet colleagues to agree would be the toughest bit, re-election of a government is far more important!

What surprises me is that with the increasing density of traffic and the growing disregard for general road safety my view of personal freedoms that we have all long treasured might be shifting.

Some of us as youngsters may have misbehaved to varying degrees but in those days before speed cameras the risk of getting pulled over by traffic police was real. They took a dim view of faulty lights or worn tyres but often as not it was a stern talking to they handed out, not a ticket, and that approach earned them the respect they needed to do their job.

But the world has changed, cars have got safer and bigger but also more powerful, and with fewer police patrols the business of keeping safe now relies on self-policing. If everyone would play their part we might begin to see a drop in the accident figures.

## Points North

Vicki and I drove to Warwickshire a couple of weekends ago to watch her 4-year-old granddaughter at a Pony Club camp with around 80 other youngsters, each dedicated to the care of their prize pony, and with great camaraderie evident amongst the kids and parents.

Unsurprisingly there was a magnificent fleet of horse-boxes, horse trailers, Range Rovers and other 4x4s, but I didn't spot many electric vehicles to boost the green credentials. Only time will tell if battery power can ever be a viable solution for towing vehicles, or will hydrogen power become the green solution.

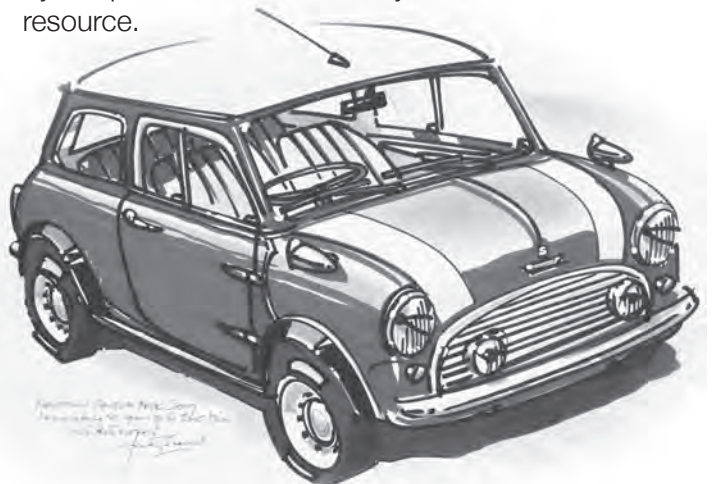
En route up there on one of the hottest days of the year I rued my decision not to recharge the air conditioning, but nonetheless with windows down it was an enjoyable drive. Something notable was the number of broken downs cars. Is that because of lack of

servicing or just basic pre-trip checks, so easily forgotten nowadays with warning lights for everything.

## Smoother motoring

While driving around in Warwickshire and also into Northamptonshire things felt a bit different to back home in the Meon Valley. Noticeable was the lower density of traffic, the generally better condition of the roads, the use of speed cameras to enforce 50mph roads in rural areas, and the excellent location signage including village gateways. The overall impression was of a more cohesive strategy for speed enforcement and driver information. Although we all share the same Highway Code different areas in the UK seem to approach road management quite a bit differently.

Local priorities and budget allocation may be part of it, or just determination to maintain high standards. Either way I'm still wondering what happened to our share of the £1.6 billion in funding to start to 'reverse a decade of decline on our roads'. The potholes and lumps and bumps on Heath Road were marked up weeks ago but soon got washed away. Traffic control lights arrived but a day later were removed with no work seemingly done. Hopefully by the time you read this it will all be sorted, but also rather frustrating is that the village gateway proposals recently submitted by the parish council are delayed because of lack of resource.



## When small was beautiful!

As a schoolboy devotee of the original Alec Issigonis designed BMC Mini, seeing one now on the open road illustrates just how much bigger and wider modern cars have become. That so many of these tiny light-weight cars have survived says much about our love of innovation and good design, and of course Paddy Hopkirk's Monte Carlo rally victory. That the power of 'Mini' as a brand name was overlooked during the British Leyland and Rover re-organisations is mostly forgotten now, but left the door open for others to create today's phenomenal success.





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# **SNUG APPEAL**

## **DNIPRO CITY HOSPITAL**

### **BURNS CENTRE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT**

## **URGENT HELP NEEDED**

Updated 14.7.25

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**Ukraine  
Relief**

This appeal has been set up by SNUG to provide an urgent, focussed support to Dnipro City Hospital, a regional medical centre that plays a crucial role in treating injured soldiers from the ongoing conflict in Donbas. Since the start of the full-scale war in 2022, the hospital has seen a dramatic increase in the number of casualties requiring specialised care, surgery, and rehabilitation of their cardiovascular system. The Burns Centre is where reconstructive surgeries are performed and where they are in desperate need of many medical supplies, including specialised skin grafting equipment, atraumatic wound dressings, hydrogel burn dressings, pain relief and even basic items such as sterile wipes.

With funds raised so far, and with the help of Ukraine Relief, we have been able to purchase 2 electrodermatomes and 5 additional attachments. The surgeons at the unit, on behalf of the entire department, sincerely thank you and SNUG for this enormous help. They never dreamed they would receive such assistance, and so quickly, and already it is making a great difference.

**The next item urgently needed is at least one pair of specialist surgical loupes (glasses), which allow surgeons to carry out detailed reconstructive surgery.**

Right now, they are quite literally 'working blind', leaving patients vulnerable to slower recovery and reduced quality of life. Without £3,500 to fund this essential support, nothing will improve.

## **We need your help:**

The most cost effective and efficient way to support the burns centre is to raise money to directly fund the equipment. Through the wonderful charity, Ukraine Relief, the items can be purchased and delivered closer to Ukraine. This means that we can get more for your money and get what is needed to help, as quickly as possible.

- Cash – in envelope labelled with donor name and ref: Dnipro Burns Centre
- Bank payment to charity account – Name: St Peters Church Soberton. Sort Code: 30-90-85. A/C No: 17032068. Ref: Dnipro Burns Centre.
- Cheques – payable to St Peters Church Soberton (Rear of cheque - Ref: Dnipro Burns Centre).

If you need more information or help with donating, please contact me. Please also text, phone or message Sam after donating so that she can record details of all donors for updates.

**Thank you to everyone who is willing to help.**

Please share this request with anyone who may be able to help by donating. I will continue to ensure that 'Money Raised' updates are given to all donors, as it is important that all involved know exactly what is being achieved with their kindness, generosity, and support.

**Sam Dunlop - SNUG (Soberton & Newtown Ukraine Group) Organiser**  
Mobile: 07720 305613 | Home: (01329) 833268 | [samandmattdunlop@btinternet.com](mailto:samandmattdunlop@btinternet.com)  
Priory Cottage, Chapel Road, Soberton Heath, Hampshire SO32 3PP

# A SNUG UPDATE



## ♥ A Massive Thank You to Soberton Parish Council

Soberton parish council's generosity and flexibility over the past three years has played a vital role in supporting SNUG. Freely allowing the flexible use of the recreation ground changing rooms for temporary storage has provided SNUG with invaluable space to receive, sort and distribute donations from our local area.

## ♥ Thanks to You!

Your generously donated items have made a real difference to people's lives, providing desperately needed support and kindness. Donations have been either distributed to local Ukrainian guests, transported to Ukraine Relief in Bournemouth, sold locally to raise funds, or donated to support other local charities and events.

Every penny donated is used by SNUG and, as we are 100% cost-neutral, every item donated is either used, sold or recycled through our extensive charity network, even down to the sale of 'rags'. Heartfelt thanks to SNUG volunteers who collect, deliver and sort all donations, especially Sue Smith, Matt Dunlop, Sue Brown, Flick & Dan Bayford and Gwen Castle.

## ♥ SNUG Appeal – Dnipro Burns Centre

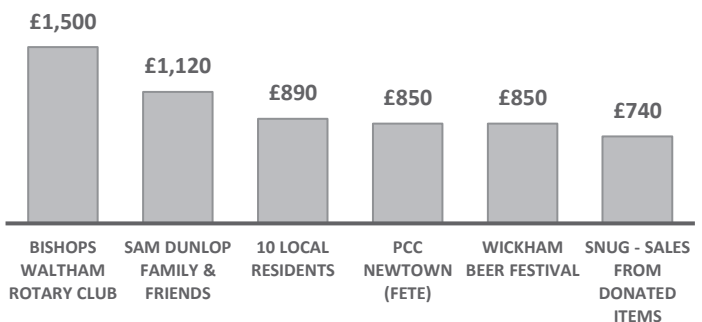
Although the war in Ukraine began in 2014, with major escalation in 2022, the suffering continues over a decade later, and the need for help is as great as ever. If anything, the situation is even graver now as the intensity of attacks continues to increase.

As you may be aware, SNUG is currently supporting the Dnipro Burns Centre. It is shocking how little of the basic materials the Burns Centre has to carry out vital medical care, let alone the specialist equipment to properly help their severely injured casualties. The human suffering is immense – not just for the casualties, but also for all the medical teams who are trying to help severely injured people with inadequate resources.

As promised, the chart shows the donations to date (13/7/25). Two electrodermatomes and blades have already been purchased. We are now aiming to help further by purchasing a specialist pair of surgical loupes (glasses), which allow surgeons to conduct detailed reconstructive surgery. They have nothing like this now, and are literally 'working blind', which reduces recovery and quality of life for patients. At a cost of £3,500 a pair, and without extra support, this situation will not change.

### Dnipro Burns Centre Donations £5,950

@ 13/7/25



## ♥ What Next for SNUG?

Going forward, all donated items of clothing, medical, health and food items will continue to be swiftly allocated, or delivered to Ukraine Relief. This will be done on a weekly basis by Sam Dunlop, who is also supporting Ukraine Relief with other tasks and projects. If you have any household items or furniture to donate, please contact Sam in advance to check suitability and discuss arrangements. Cash donations for SNUG or SNUG Project Appeals would also be greatly appreciated, as these can rapidly buy specialist equipment and supplies.

Our 'Bags of Love for Christmas' project is in the planning stage – more information to follow soon.

We would be incredibly happy to hear from anyone who would like to join the SNUG committee or help SNUG in any form. It is a fantastic way to really 'make a difference'. Please contact Sam, if you can help.

**Thank you once again for your continued support. Your generosity keeps this vital work going.**

**Sam Dunlop - SNUG (Soberton & Newtown Ukraine Group) Organiser**

Mobile: 07720 305613 | Home: (01329) 833268 | [samandmattdunlop@btinternet.com](mailto:samandmattdunlop@btinternet.com)



## ***In your garden ... make compost and eat your garden***



I've made it abundantly clear over previous articles of the importance of mulching. I currently buy a lot of my mulch in from a local producer, but I've been forced to go one step further. A good customer of mine has had a monolithic, three bay compost extravaganza built at the bottom of their garden. Each bay is large enough to fit my ample van in with ease.

I have had to dig deep into my knowledge banks and even started researching about the finer art of composting and not just about 'green' and 'browns' or the lasagna layering of materials that we are all familiar with but also maximum/minimum temperatures (I now own a compost thermometer!) volume, moisture ...the list goes on.

I turned to Charles Dowding and his new(ish) book, simply called, *Compost*. It explains it in very simplistic terms but also delves deep into the science of it all. As expected, there is a breaking point where the mass of the material collapses in on itself, removing space for oxygen and creating an anaerobic compost – smells and is wet/slimy. Turning the compost and adding brown material like woodchip will create those small spaces for oxygen to create a digester compost and the compost will return to fine health.

If you have a vegetable patch in your garden, you will be starting to reap the rewards of all your hard work with juicy raspberries and crunchy lettuce leaves which have all been spotted by and tested – for quality control purposes only of course.

Fear not, if you do not have access to a vegetable garden then your actual garden is full of edible delights. I'm not talking about raiding the bird table or turning your hand to insect BBQ, but the flowers themselves can be quite the delicacy:

Roses: with their delicate fragrance, roses can be used to refine desserts, jams, jellies and cocktails and make crystallised decorations.

Lavender: try lavender sugar to liven up biscuits and preserves or add the blooms to stock when making sauce for duck, lamb and chicken.

Carnations: carnations are ideal for injecting colour into salads and soups but tear the petals off rather than use the whole flower as the base is bitter. Taste-wise, expect something spicy!

Daisies: the buds make an excellent substitute for capers once preserved in vinegar.

Camomile: these flowers have a homely apple-like flavour. Mix them into fruity bakes or sprinkle them over fresh salads.

Once you have indulged in the bounty of food that your garden has provided, remember to repay it by continuing to dead head those roses to further extend their season and start to make notes of what did and didn't work this summer. Were there spaces that could be filled with a little pre-planning now?

And finally, pour a glass of something cold, find a shady spot and enjoy the beauty of your own garden.

### ***The Tudor Gardener***



**HOLD THE DATE!**

**Autumn plant sale  
October 4th  
Meon Hall 10-11.30**

# SOBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Chairman's notes

inc Newtown, Hundred Acres, Hoegate, Soberton Heath, Kingsmead,  
Brockbridge and Soberton



### Governmental Changes to Local Government

During the next few years Central Government is instigating a series of changes to the way County and District Councils will operate. As yet we do not believe this will affect Parish Councils.

There will be two key changes in relation to these proposals. First, there will be a directly elected Mayor for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Second, a series of boundary changes are to be considered in order to establish about five or six unitary authorities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Consultations on this process are being undertaken by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Winchester City Council (WCC). More detailed information can be found on the websites for HCC and WCC, see below. In outline it is likely that the Mayoral elections will take place on May 2026 with the changes being implemented in 2027. We still expect to have Parish Councillor elections in May 2026 as noted in this column in the June/July magazine. Our Clerk is happy to assist in directing residents in finding out more about the consultations outlined.

[www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent](http://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent)

<https://ourplaceourfuture.commonplace.is/>

### Soberton Recreation Ground

The Parish Council is committed to football returning to the recreation ground and work to reinstate the football pitch is underway. We will provide updates on progress through the parish website on a regular basis. In addition to the pitch itself, work will be carried out to open and clear ditches, and clear scrub and trees to assist in general drainage of the overall open space. Some repair work is being carried out on the children's play area as directed through a recent inspection of the facilities. However, this will have a limited life and consideration is being given to its total replacement in the next few years, including its location and equipment for the range of age groups.

### Hedges and Ditches

Every year the Parish Council reminds land owners of their responsibilities regarding hedges and ditches. It has been fairly dry through the spring and summer,

this makes clearing ditches simpler.

We urge everyone with watercourses crossing their land to act now. It will rain this winter and recent evidence across the globe is telling us that storms may become more intense in the future. Hedges, particularly those which line our beautiful lanes throughout the parish, do require pruning. Visibility of riders, pedestrians and cyclists is vitally important to their safety. We are a rural parish without pavements therefore whatever mode of transport you choose you will share the lane with others. Let's make our Parish safer.

### The Parish Design Statement (PDS)

A final draft of the PDS was approved at the council meeting in June and it has now been submitted to the two planning authorities which cover our parish, namely South Downs National Park (SDNP) and Winchester City Council (WCC). We are seeking their comments before commencing a consultation process with the local community and subsequently obtaining formal approval from the authorities.

### Planning

There have not been many new planning applications over the past few months. However, we are aware of an increasing number of planning breaches and the PC is in constant contact with the enforcement team based at WCC, both reporting breaches and seeking updates on ensuing actions. We would highlight that these can be complex legal cases which means that they can take a long time to resolve and it is not always possible for information to be made public. Notwithstanding these issues resolving planning breaches, we would urge residents to report any breaches they are aware of directly to WCC ([www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-enforcement/report-a-suspected-breach-of-planning-control](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-enforcement/report-a-suspected-breach-of-planning-control)) .

*John Hyland*  
Chairman  
[chair@soberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:chair@soberton-pc.gov.uk)

### Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/SobertonParishCouncil>

**Website** - [www.soberton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.soberton-pc.gov.uk)



## Where is the ‘Small is Beautiful’ and ‘Environmental Impact Analysis’?

The biggest shake-up of English local government in 50 years is gathering pace, including plans to reorganise councils in Hampshire and the Solent by 2028.

Hampshire currently has three unitary authorities, Hampshire County Council, and 11 district councils. The Government wants fewer, larger councils for greater “efficiency.” Councils must agree new boundaries by 26 September 2025. Multiple proposals can be submitted if they cover the whole area. This reorganisation will reshape local services and communities for decades — Winchester, for example, will be merged into a much larger unitary council.

Hampshire County Council is expected to have chosen its preferred unitary authorities option at a July Cabinet meeting which is likely to include two vast councils with a population of over 655,000 each. For more details on the options see [Hampshire County Council website](#). The public will have until the 17 August 2025 to make comment - engagement details to be announced.

Residents in 11 district and borough councils (which includes Winchester), including Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, will have had an opportunity to inform the choice of three alternative options in July. Both approaches claim to aim for efficient and future-proofed services. These options are likely to be smaller in size to the County proposal.

Both processes overlook two vital questions: *Is small still beautiful?* and *Will there be an environmental impact assessment?* The Government’s reorganisation criteria and principles don’t allow for these tests.

Many warn this shake-up must not sacrifice what local councils do best: democracy, community cohesion, economic development and care for the environment. The Economist E.F. Schumacher’s *Small is Beautiful* reminds us that smaller, rooted councils are more responsive and trusted, while bigger units risk detachment and loss of local identity.

Efficiency matters — but not at the cost of democracy and resilience. A robust climate and nature assessment must underpin any new council map. Worryingly, no comprehensive carbon, biodiversity or sustainability checks in England have been done for recent reorganisations. If left until after decisions are made, harm will be built in and costly to fix.

Some argue larger councils could create a Simpler, Stronger, Secure model of public service delivery. This means making services easier to find and use; better integrating services across the tiers of Local Government and with Partner organisations and better decision making. Even so, *Small is Beautiful* must be more than a slogan — community and environmental integrity must not be traded away in the quest for process and financial improvements.

It’s also concerning that data behind the preferred options for both reorganisation scoping work hasn’t been fully shared — only partial information has been released. Talking about future ‘Neighbourhood Empowerment’ without clear evidence is unhelpful for genuine public engagement.

Your Councillors will keep making the case for full transparency and balanced outcomes before any final decision is made.

## STOP PRESS

### Winchester City Council - highest scoring District Council for Climate Action.

Your Councillors have been pleased to have actively pushed for and backed the strongest action on Climate Change. This has resulted in Winchester City Council achieving 68 % overall in the Climate Emergency UK 2025 Climate Action Scorecard - an increase of 19% compared to 2023—the highest among district councils. Notable strengths were in Buildings & Heating, Planning & Land Use, and Collaboration & Engagement.

The high score shows the Council is using climate action not only to cut emissions but also to future-proof its operations, protect public money, and safeguard community well-being.

A win-win for residents, communities and the environment.

### Councillors

Malcolm Wallace	<a href="mailto:mwallace@winchester.gov.uk">mwallace@winchester.gov.uk</a> & <a href="mailto:Malcolm.Wallace@hants.gov.uk">Malcolm.Wallace@hants.gov.uk</a>
Danny Lee	<a href="mailto:dlee@winchester.gov.uk">dlee@winchester.gov.uk</a>
Suzanne White	<a href="mailto:swhite3@winchester.gov.uk">swhite3@winchester.gov.uk</a>



## Fast-Track Employment Training

The highly successful Hampshire Skills Bootcamps programme is set to run again for a third year, thanks to funding of £7 million secured by Hampshire County Council from the Department for Education (DfE) – almost double that of the previous year.

This funded, fast-track training benefits Hampshire's residents aged 19 years and over, enabling job seekers, as well as those in work to gain further training, while employers across the county can benefit from upskilling their workforce. Based on local employer demand and the skill-sets currently in short supply, the Bootcamps provide a direct path to employment upon completion, with a guaranteed job interview at the end of each course for those who are unemployed.

Over the last two years, Skills Bootcamps training has given hundreds of working adults confidence in their abilities and helped advance their careers for a more secure future for themselves and their families.



The latest round of funding will enable training to be offered to at least 1,750 learners to study across a variety of subject areas, including AI, leadership and management, teaching assistant, data analytics, and B2B sales. All courses are flexible and include a minimum of 60 hours of learning across a maximum 16-week period.

Residents in Hampshire can benefit from this learning and development training offer by simply signing up for a course and completing at least 60 hours of learning over a period of up to 16 weeks. The courses are flexible with learning planned to fit around professional and family commitments allowing people in different circumstances to gain the skills employers are looking for.

For most Skills Bootcamp courses, no previous knowledge in the subject is needed. Courses can be classroom-based, on-the-job or online and unemployed participants are guaranteed a job interview at the end of their course.

More information and guidance is available for residents and businesses online at [hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp](https://hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp), including how to find a course and how to apply.

For those who need help deciding on suitable courses, an online National Careers Service Skills Assessment is available to establish an individual's existing skills and match them to potential careers. See <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/discover-your-skills-and-career>

In 2024/25, the County Council enrolled over 1,000 learners onto the Bootcamps in project management, digital marketing, data analytics, coding, construction, early years, health and social care, hospitality, film and TV, engineering, and green skills – such as installing residential heat pumps, and electric vehicle repair and maintenance.

## Help Nature Recover across Hampshire

The public have recently been asked for their views on the Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire which sets out a series of biodiversity priorities to help reverse nature's decline. Produced in conjunction with a wide range of organisation, the draft strategy maps the most valuable existing habitat for nature, setting out proposals for creating, restoring and enhancing habitats, and suggests priorities and targets for nature's recovery. Among a broad range of suggested priorities and actions, the draft strategy includes proposals that could:

- ♣shape how future funding for farming and land management is used
- ♣help local planning authorities to understand locations important for conserving and restoring biodiversity
- ♣identify the highest priority areas for habitat creation and connectivity
- ♣provide guidance on actions on farmland and woodland to achieve nature recovery and move towards more sustainable farming practices
- ♣help guide local communities with funding applications for nature recovery projects
- ♣suggest potential measures for embedding nature into urban infrastructure, such as stormwater management



In 2021, the Environment Act required local areas to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The Government designated Hampshire County Council as the Responsible Authority for delivering the strategy for the whole of Hampshire, including the areas covered by Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils, as well as the New Forest and South Downs National Parks (that are within Hampshire). The final version of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hampshire is expected to be published by the end of this year.



## Ageing Well

While living longer is something to be celebrated and our ageing population presents opportunities, it also has implications for the economy, services and society. Knowing the size and structure of the population is fundamental for decision makers and policy makers in the UK. The latest census data confirm that the Hampshire population continues to age. There are over 300,000 people living in Hampshire who are aged 65 years and over, this equates to over one in five of our residents (22%). Hampshire's population is older than England overall where 19% of the total population are 65 years and over.

Across the geography of Hampshire districts there are distinct differences, the area of Rushmoor has a comparatively young population with 15% aged 65 years and over. The New Forest has the oldest population structure where almost one third of the population (29%) are aged 65 years or more. The number of older people is expected to continue to rise substantially, local forecasts show that the biggest increase will be in the 75 years and over population which is forecast to increase by 24% by 2028.



## Local Government Reform

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) sees the Government requiring all two-tier council areas in the country being replaced by single-tier unitary authorities which deliver all services in their area. Under the Government's plans, the 15 councils currently covering the Hampshire and the Solent area, would cease to exist by 2028 (Hampshire County Council, 11 district / borough councils, Southampton and Portsmouth unitary councils, and Isle of Wight Council), and instead be replaced by fewer unitary councils.

The County Council are working on plans to ensure that any new councils created in Hampshire and the Solent prioritise the best interests of residents and a financially strong future by taking into account the large-scale services the County Council delivers. HCC provide by value the vast majority of council services people receive across Hampshire and the Solent which support people at every stage of life. They are vital to those people who need them most, so the Council want to ensure they remain high quality, resilient, and financially sustainable through strong unitary councils that can meet future challenges.

Since submitting initial proposals to Government this Spring HCC, jointly with local authority partners, have been carefully studying all the data and evidence, weighing up the pros and cons of various potential options, and gathering early views from residents and from the people who help keep public services moving – like the Police, Fire Service, NHS, headteachers of our schools, and others across local government, as well as our own Authority, to gain real-world feedback on what LGR needs to deliver. This has helped to inform our shortlist of four options which HCC are now assessing.

The four options are listed below:

### Option 1

- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, New Forest, Rushmoor, Test Valley, Winchester
- South: Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth, Southampton
- Isle of Wight

### Option 2

- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor, Test Valley, Winchester
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth
- Isle of Wight

### Option 3

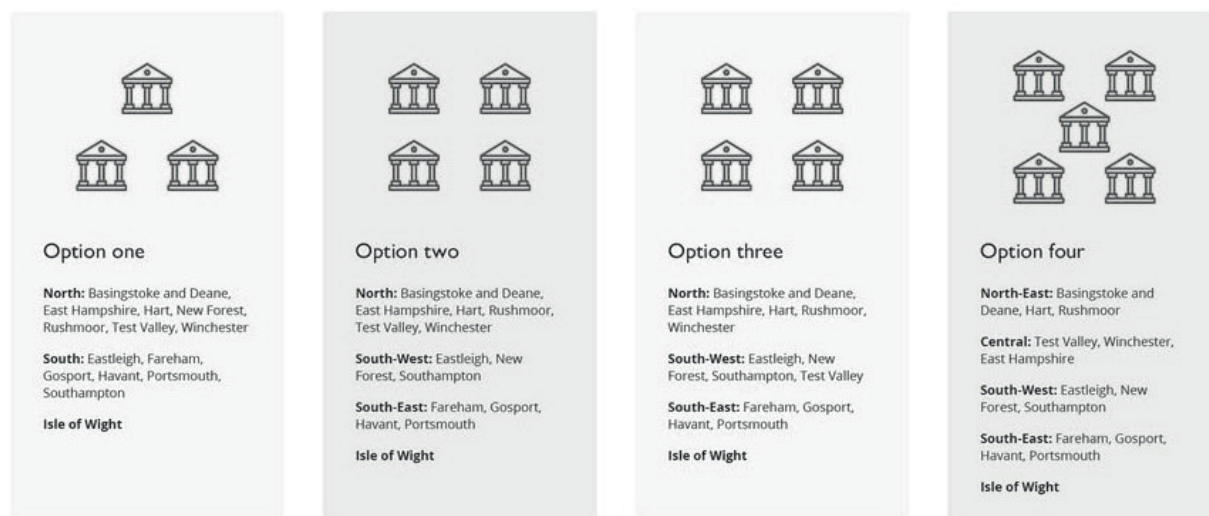
- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor, Winchester
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton, Test Valley
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth
- Isle of Wight

### Option 4

- North-East: Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor
- Central: Test Valley, Winchester, East Hampshire
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth
- Isle of Wight

HCC are now in a position to dig into the detail of four options and consider which best meets central Government criteria. Once this next stage of robust analysis has been completed, we will propose a preferred option from these

four, which will be considered by councillors. If this single option is then agreed by the County Council and Cabinet, the County Council will ask for feedback on it from residents and stakeholders later this summer. Your views will help HCC shape our final design for the future of Hampshire and Solent area councils, which will be submitted to Government this autumn, alongside other options presented by our partners. Government will consider all the proposals and carry out a formal public consultation on their agreed option for our area next year.



### More Special Needs School Places

More children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Gosport and the New Forest will access the right support closer to home, thanks to the addition of new special needs places in two local schools.

- A new Resourced Provision at Newtown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Gosport for 10 pupils aged four to 11 with Autism Spectrum Condition, to open in phases from September 2025. A Resourced Provision is a specialist environment for children with SEND within a mainstream school.
- The expansion of an existing Resourced Provision at Ashley Infant School, New Milton by eight places, providing 15 places in total for pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition and 17 places for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication needs, from September 2025 for children aged four to seven.

This follows two formal statutory consultations which were carried out on the proposals earlier this year.

### Adult Social Care Support

If you need support on any of the following -

- Support with mental health conditions
- Support for those with learning disabilities and for autistic people
- Care and support for those with vision impairment or hearing loss
- Support for adults over 65 years

Please see <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/individuals>

### Help with the Cost of Living

The ongoing struggle with the cost of living poses a significant challenge for many Hampshire residents who are having to make difficult choices regarding their household finances. Help and support is available from a number of services. This includes warm spaces in libraries to hot school meals and expert advice on reducing heating bills. We encourage everyone in Hampshire to take full advantage of these resources.

- Food and essentials
- Fuel and energy
- Money and debt
- Staying well and resilient
- Warm spaces
- Support for community organisations assisting the public

To get help visit <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/costofliving>

### And finally...

Please note, I continue to hold a Councillor Surgery on the first Saturday of every month [except August] in The Heath Room, All Saints Church, Denmead, 10.00 am – 12 noon. No appointment necessary.

**Patricia Stallard**  
**Hampshire County Councillor**  
**Winchester Southern Parishes:**

[patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk)



# Meon Valley communities – lots going on!



Hello!

The new season of Meon Valley U3A bimonthly lectures recommences in September. We offer 2 lectures for September:

**2/9 TWogether talks: Jacqueline and Brian Sutton: It started with a kiss. Life of Dylan Thomas.**

**16/9 Sohail Husain: Beyond Beliefs - The Incredible True Story of the German Refugee, the Indian Migrant and the Families Left behind.**

Both are topics new to us and hopefully you will find them so intriguing that you simply have to attend! I look forward to meeting you all again then.

We meet every first and third Tuesday at 2pm at the Wickham Community Centre during the lecture season.

Everybody is welcome. Guests will get an especially warm welcome. (Guests pay £2 to defray speaker costs.) Tea and biscuits are provided after the talk, and we always have pre-loved books for charitable sale.

Lyndon (programme organiser)

Contact-07881991763

Or [lyndonplmr@gmail.com](mailto:lyndonplmr@gmail.com)

Web site-: [u3asites.org.uk/meon-valley](http://u3asites.org.uk/meon-valley)

## Meon Valley Bowling Club

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June, we welcomed 24 teams from across Hampshire who took on the challenge of our 6th Mixed Open Rinks Tournament. A beautiful day and thoroughly enjoyed by all. The finalists were Southampton based club County, the eventual winners, and the runners up were a team made of players from Fleming Park and Parkside.



Both our ladies and men's league teams are finding the current outdoor season quite challenging. As at the end of June our league positions were:

In the Southampton & District Women's Bowling Association Rinks league we were lying in 3<sup>rd</sup> place whereas in the triples A" league our team were in the lower half of the league in 7th position. Our Mixed Triples Mixed league team were enjoying a successful run and were lying in 1st position with a healthy 6-point lead.

In The Southampton & District Bowling Association Men's league our Championship Division 3 Team were lying in the 4<sup>th</sup> position and our Combination Division 2 team were in 3<sup>rd</sup> Position of the league with our Combination Fours team lying at 2<sup>nd</sup> position in their league. We look forward to a successful second half of our outdoor season.

In addition to our league competitions, we enjoy playing friendly matches against local clubs scattered within Hampshire.

None of the above could happen without our green keeping team maintaining our excellent bowling green and our thanks go out to them, especially in the very hot weather.

For further information on our club and membership please visit our website - [meonvalleybowlingclub.chessck.co.uk](http://meonvalleybowlingclub.chessck.co.uk)

John Gray (Publicity Correspondent)



Help us to reduce waste in our town!

30th August 2025 - 10.30am to 2.30pm  
St George's Square, Bishop's Waltham



**A FREE EXCHANGE STALL**  
YOU CAN GIVE, YOU CAN TAKE,  
OR YOU CAN GIVE AND TAKE.



**Small Household Items and Entertainment**



Brought to you by  
The Bishop's Waltham Town Team

With support from



Help us to reduce waste in our town!

27th September 2025 - 10.30am to 2.30pm  
St George's Square, Bishop's Waltham



**A FREE EXCHANGE STALL**  
YOU CAN GIVE, YOU CAN TAKE,  
OR YOU CAN GIVE AND TAKE.



**Arts and Crafts Items**



Brought to you by  
The Bishop's Waltham Town Team

With support from



## Celebrating notable anniversaries

There will be some exciting anniversaries celebrated at this year's West Meon Music Festival – from well-known composers to Hampshire's own Jane Austen, with the 250th anniversary of her birth being marked with a major new work.



The festival, founded by the renowned Primrose Piano Quartet and now in its 15th year will be performing in Meon Valley churches from 11th to 14th September.

- ❖ *The opening concert on 11th September will mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Dmitri Shostakovich with a performance of his Second Piano Trio.*
- ❖ *On Friday the 12th September the attention will shift to the 150th anniversary of Maurice Ravel's birth when upcoming star, pianist Clara Siegle will be featuring some of his solo piano pieces.*
- ❖ *The Festival Finale on the afternoon of Sunday 14th September marks the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth with performances of some of her favourite works and readings from her note books and letters*

Other festival highlights include a morning of Viennese string quartets in East Meon church and a programme of early French harpsichord music at Warnford church on Saturday afternoon. All other concerts are held in West Meon church.

For full or full details of all eight festival concerts visit [www.westmeonmusic.co.uk](http://www.westmeonmusic.co.uk). Ticket prices start at £15 and are available via the festival website.

For more information contact: [enquiries@westmeonmusic.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@westmeonmusic.co.uk)



**Bishop's Waltham Photographic Society**

### Junior Photo Competition

For Age Groups:  
Up to 11 years  
and  
12-16 years

**Amazon  
Vouchers for the Winners  
Good Luck!**

**How to Enter**  
Email 1 Photo  
to [competition@bishopswalthamphotosociety.co.uk](mailto:competition@bishopswalthamphotosociety.co.uk)  
by midnight **14th September 2025**  
The email should contain your name & age, title of the image  
and the contact details of a parent/guardian



### Guest Speaker Jack Lodge: Landscape

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 7:30pm

*"Landscape photography is my way of being able to capture moments in time which tell a story that will last forever"*



Through his photography, Jack strives to capture the change of each season, documenting the ever-changing landscapes as the light and weather change - capturing the beauty surrounding us. His landscape photography ranges from the enchanting ancient woodlands in the heart of the Dorset countryside to the blue-hour streets of Venice and rolling seas of the Atlantic.

St Peter's Church Hall, Free Street, Bishop's Waltham, SO32 1EE  
Non-members are welcome (entry fee £5).

[bishopswalthamphotosociety.co.uk](http://bishopswalthamphotosociety.co.uk)



**Bishop's Waltham  
Photographic Society**



## Meon Valley Retirement Association Table Tennis Heroes

The Meon Valley Active Retirement Association (MVARA) has written before about the advantages of playing table tennis. How the sport is

- “a fantastic form of mindfulness in which players shut out their concerns, stop thinking about life and its issues and stresses and just concentrate on what they are doing”
- a great form of exercise with 1 hour of table tennis using up 300+ calories
- one that involves no physical contact and no high impact movement which can damage joints
- noted for its emphasis on movement, stretching, hand-eye co-ordination and quick reflexes
- one that “exerts a greater influence on cognitive function than any other sport”
- one that exercises every area of the brain, including the *prefrontal cortex*, which develops focus and concentration and the *basal ganglia* which control our ability to remain calm and process our emotions

And, of course it's fun! Little wonder then that table tennis is one of the most popular of the activities offered by MVARA to its members, with over 30 individuals signed up to play in its weekly sessions, enjoying the sport, the exercise and the opportunity to socialise.



But there is more. Most MVARA players are either returners to something they played at school – some over 50 years ago – or completely new to the sport, and have gone on to join locals table tennis clubs and play in local leagues.

Jeremy & Henry (left) and Andy (right) play for Soberton & Newtown Table Tennis Club in both the Portsmouth and the South-East Hants Leagues.



With thanks to Pete Woodacre at Soberton & Newtown TTC for his patience, and support

**For details of playing table tennis at Soberton & Newtown visit [www.sobertonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.sobertonvillagehall.co.uk)**

**For details of MVARA Table Tennis contact Les Craddock [lesliecraddock@sky.com](mailto:lesliecraddock@sky.com)**

## YOUR SUCCESSFUL LOCAL LIONS CLUB: MEON VALLEY LIONS

Lions International is the World's largest volunteering service organisations with over 1.3 million members, in over 47,000 local clubs, throughout the World.

The Meon Valley Lions Club is your local Club. We raise money with our barbeques, Christmas collections, fete stalls and other charity fund-raising activities throughout the year ... July 2023 to June 2024 we raised over £30,000. This allowed us to support mainly local individuals and young people as well as the Lions International Disaster Fund; we also updated our minibus. This year so far, we have raised over £20,000 and paid out over £12,000. We ensure NO administrative costs dilute the impact of our fund-raising efforts, so what we raise goes 100% to charitable causes.

For the Club to remain successful we would like to attract new members. It's not all work, we have plenty of fun too, with everything from a trip on the Waverley paddle steamer around the Isle of Wight, to a visit to a local microbrewery as we all regularly pub nights. So if you'd like to join, giving as much or little of your time as you can commit, please get in touch. Tel: 07443 753780 / Our website: <https://www.meonvalleylionsclub.org.uk>





On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025, Captain Bill Evans Royal Navy, a Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) Inspector will be talking to us at 1900 in Droxford Village Hall. Non-members are welcome to attend. There will be a cash bar from 1830 and the talk will be followed by supper available for those that book at £17.50 per head, payable in cash on the night. Non members wishing to take supper, please email [robmunroscott@aol.com](mailto:robmunroscott@aol.com) at least a week beforehand.



MV SOLONG FOLLOWING COLLISION

Although investigations into air accidents tend to dominate the media, marine accidents are far more common. Shipping disasters have occurred throughout history, but it was not until after the inquiry into the tragic loss of 193 lives in the *Herald of Free Enterprise* that capsized at Zeebrugge on 6 March 1987 that the MAIB was formed. The MAIB is a UK government organisation authorised to investigate all maritime accidents in UK waters and those involving UK registered ships worldwide.

Investigations are limited to establishing cause, promoting awareness of risks and preventing recurrence. It may also participate in other maritime investigations where British subjects are involved or where the UK has a substantial interest. Investigations have included recent high-profile cases such as the collision between *MV Solong* and *MV Stena Immaculate* off the Humber Estuary on 10 March 2025 and the tragic loss of the 56m British Registered yacht *Bayesian* off Sicily on 19 August 2024. Prior to formation of MAIB, *ad hoc* inquiries were held under the auspices of the Department of Transport in its various former incarnations.



'BAYESIAN' SALVAGED 20 JUNE 2025

Bill Evans left school at 16 and joined the Merchant Navy as a deck officer, spending the next 8 years working worldwide in ferries and dry cargo vessels. In the 1980s, he joined the Royal Navy and, during 30 years' service, served in every type of warship, from patrol boats to aircraft carriers. His last assignment before taking up his current role was to oversee the safe operation of five military ports, three in the UK and two overseas. It was while undertaking this role that he successfully applied for the job of MAIB Inspector, starting in 2017.



The RBL Droxford & District Branch is always looking for new members, both Service and civilian, to help keep remembrance alive and support our Servicemen and women, veterans and their families. For more information or to join us, please contact the Secretary – Cdr Rob Scott RN at [robmunroscott@aol.com](mailto:robmunroscott@aol.com) or 01489 877800. [www.soberton.org/rblweb](http://www.soberton.org/rblweb).



Droxford and District Branch



**ST MARY'S & ALL SAINTS, DROXFORD**

**Friday 15 August 2025 at 1800**

**Saturday 16 August 2025 from 1030 to 1500**

- **Friday 15 August:** The Reverend Canon Anthony Hulbert will conduct a Commemorative Evensong Service to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the official ending of the Second World War in the Far East.
- **Saturday 16 August:** Do you know what life was like for those involved in the 'Forgotten War'? Come into St Mary's and All Saints Church in Droxford anytime between 1030 and 1500 to view and hear the stories and history of those who fought the Campaigns. The displays and recordings will concentrate on the British, former-British Empire and Dominion forces and civilians who took part in the fighting in South-East Asia. Viewed from the personal histories of those who were there you will discover that the conditions during the Far East campaign were very different from those during the war in Europe. Troops on both sides fought across oceans, in monsoon drenched jungles, on snow-covered hills, and in scorching tropical heat on remote islands. The surrender of Malaya and Singapore constituted arguably Britain's worst defeat of the Second World War in 1942, when approximately 9,000 British, pre-partition Indian, and Dominion troops were lost and around 130,000 taken prisoners of war. In 1944, at the battles of Kohima and Imphal, the Fourteenth Army inflicted on the Japanese Army its greatest ever defeat, a battle that was voted by the British public as Britain's greatest ever battle. Despite the magnitude of the war in the Far East, many feel their contribution has been forgotten or overlooked; please drop in and help us to put that right.
- Wilfrid's Café and Community Hub will be open as normal serving coffee, home-baked cakes, biscuits and ice cream.



[www.meonvalleybus.co.uk](http://www.meonvalleybus.co.uk)

[info@meonvalleybus.co.uk](mailto:info@meonvalleybus.co.uk)

### Timetable from July 2025

#### Mondays West Meon to Fareham

0930	West Meon Thomas Lord PH
0933	Warnford Village Hall
0938	Exton The Shoe PH
0940	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0944	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0951	Droxford Square
0955	Brockbridge The Hurdles
1000	Soberton Village Hall
1003	Webbs Green War Memorial
1006	Soberton Heath Chapel Road Pond
1008	Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH
1010	Newtown Rookesbury Hall
1015	Hundred Acres
1027	Fareham Library
1032	Fareham Station <i>Drop off only*</i>
1039	Fareham Sainsbury's

#### Return:

1230	Fareham Sainsbury's
1235	Fareham Library

#### Wednesdays Soberton to Petersfield

*Including all request stops on A32 Droxford- West Meon*

0930	Soberton Village Hall
0934	Brockbridge (The Hurdles)
0939	Droxford Square
0946	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0951	Corhampton
0954	Warnford George and Falcon
1013	Petersfield Station <i>Drop off only*</i>
1017	Petersfield Square
1022	Petersfield Tesco

#### Return:

1225	Petersfield Tesco
1230	Petersfield Square

#### Fridays Soberton to Winchester

0930	Soberton Village Hall
0934	Brockbridge The Hurdles
0939	Droxford Square
0945	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0949	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0951	Exton The Shoe PH
0956	Warnford Village Hall
1016	Winchester Broadway
1023	Winchester Station <i>Drop off only*</i>
1030	River Park Leisure Centre

#### Return

1225	River Park Leisure Centre
1230	Winchester Broadway

No service on other days or public holidays. £6 return, £3 single any journey. Bus passes accepted.

Under 16 half fare. Under 5 free. Dogs allowed subject to driver discretion.

Timings are strict, bus will not wait after scheduled time.





# USEFUL INFORMATION

Any additions or changes, please contact the editor

USEFUL NUMBERS			LOCAL CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS		
<b>Good Neighbours Group</b> <b>offers transport to medical appointments</b> (see page 5) ❖ Kate Harvey on 07843 496852 ❖ Kate Chesters on 07710 716664			<b>Brownies</b>	SobertonNewtownBrownies@gmail.com	
<b>Community Support Officer</b> Gary McCulloch ACSO			<b>Guides</b>	SobertonNewtownGuides@gmail.com	
<b>Doctors Surgeries</b>		Wickham Droxford Denmead Bishops Waltham	<b>Stitch &amp; Chatter</b>	Louise McEwen Sandra Henderson	01489 877448 01489 877978
<b>CAB Adviceline</b>		0800 144 8848	<b>Local History</b>	Lyndon Palmer	07881 991763
<b>Meon Valley Carers Group</b>		01264 332297 (option 3)	<b>Soberton Utd FC</b>	Steve Norris	07853 292881
<b>Age UK Advice Line</b>		0800 678 1602	<b>Soberton Players</b>	Susan Hyland	01489 878724
National Gas Emergency National Power Cut Helpline Portsmouth Water emergency line Southern Water emergency line BT Priority Fault Repair Scheme Home-Start		0800 111 999 105 02392 477 999 0330 303 0368 0800 800 150 0330 124 2095	<b>Table Tennis</b>	Pete Woodacre Adrian Hunt	01489 877768 01489 878141
LOCAL FACILITIES			<b>Ladies Group</b>	Liz Whales	01489 877712
<b>Soberton Village Hall Booking</b>	For SVH booking, please use e-mail address below  <a href="mailto:sobertonvillagehall@googlemail.com">sobertonvillagehall@googlemail.com</a> <a href="http://www.sobertonvillagehall.co.uk">www.sobertonvillagehall.co.uk</a>		<b>Conservation Group</b>	Phil Bergin	02392 632551
<b>Rookesbury Hall Booking</b>	Jenny Doney	01329 834392	<b>Meet&amp;Eat</b>	Sue Musselwhite	sue@poppyhill.net
<a href="mailto:Bookings@rookesburyhall.co.uk">Bookings@rookesburyhall.co.uk</a>			<b>DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</b>		
<b>Guide Hut Booking</b>	Caroline Rogers	01489 877430	<b>Central Meon Valley Councillors</b>	Malcolm Wallace Danny Lee Suzanne White	See page 42 for contact details
<a href="mailto:guidehutsoberton@gmail.com">guidehutsoberton@gmail.com</a>			<b>County Councillor</b>	Patricia Stallard	02392 251484
CHURCHES			<b>SOBERTON PARISH COUNCIL</b>		
<b>Newtown Church Warden</b>	Fra Wells	01329 834130	<a href="http://www.soberton-pc.gov.uk">www.soberton-pc.gov.uk</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/SobertonParishCouncil/">https://www.facebook.com/SobertonParishCouncil/</a>		
<b>Soberton Church Wardens</b>	Malcolm Chapple	01489 877151	<b>John Hyland Chairman</b>	chair@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>PCC Secretary(N)</b>	Malcolm Padgett	01329 834684	<b>Neil Findlay Vice-Chairman</b>	vicechair@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>PCC Secretary(S)</b>			<b>David Cleeve</b>	Cllrcleeve@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>Capt. Of Bells(S)</b>	Caroline Rogers	01489 877430	<b>Sam Marland</b>	Cllrmarland@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>Churchyard Keeper (S)</b>	John Lester	01489 878557	<b>Paul Henderson</b>	Cllrhenderson@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>Parish Safeguarding Officers</b>	St Peter's, Soberton		<b>John Russell-Smith</b>	Cllrrussell-smith@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
	Holy Trinity, Newtown Caroline Barfoot	htn.safeguarding@gmail.com	<b>Jonty Sherwill</b>	Cllrsherwill@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<b>Clerk and Proper Officer</b>			<b>Vicki Weston</b>	Cllrweston@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
<a href="mailto:clerk@soberton-pc.gov.uk">clerk@soberton-pc.gov.uk</a>			<b>David Buttriss</b>	Cllrbutriss@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			<b>Kate Buttriss</b>	Cllrkbuttriss@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			<b>Carol Williams</b>	Cllrwilliams@soberton-pc.gov.uk	

Please e-mail copy for the October / November magazine to  
[gill.highcroft@btinternet.com](mailto:gill.highcroft@btinternet.com)

**NEXT COPY DATE - 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 (17:00)**



## From the Archives.....



**Above** - Bollens Shop and Bakery at what is now Wick House in Church Rd. Newtown's 1<sup>st</sup> shop was in business by 1867 & the Post Office included by 1885. It was taken over by Isaac Bollen in 1902 & after Isaac's death in 1915, run by his wife Charlotte and son William until his death in 1942, when it closed. This photo, showing Oak View & Ivy Cottages on the right, is dated approx. 1920's. **Below** - A similar, but earlier view, judging from the clothing, from very early 20thC. Note the ubiquitous bicycle parked outside in both photos!



(from the Archives of the Soberton & Newtown Local History Society) any additional information is always welcome.  
Please contact [duncan.colinjones@btinternet.com](mailto:duncan.colinjones@btinternet.com) or [petewoodacre@gmail.com](mailto:petewoodacre@gmail.com).