

Soberton & Newtown

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

February - March 2025



Focus on Soberton Players!
See pages 8 and 9



Cover design: Jonty Sherwill

www.sobertonchurch.org.uk
www.newtownchurch.org.uk

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

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Priest in charge of Meon Valley Parishes

The Reverend Andy Davis

revd.andydavis@gmail.com

07709 919602

Curate of Soberton, Newtown and Hambledon

The Reverend Liz Quinn

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 April / May magazine to
gill.highcroft@btinternet.com
NEXT COPY DATE - 17th March 2025 (17:00)

**The Benefice of
Soberton,
Newtown &
Hambledon**

Services

**February 2025
March 2025**

*Holy Communion or Morning
Prayer is celebrated every
Wednesday at 0930 at
Hambledon with a short
service of reflection at 1715.*

*Subject to change,
sometimes at short notice*

February

2 nd	0800	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1000	Farewell Service for Canon David Isaac	Shedfield
	1030	Short Family Service	Hambledon
9 th	1100	Holy Communion and Sunday Club	Soberton
	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
16 th	0930	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1100	Morning Worship	Soberton
	1100	Service of the Word	Hambledon
	1830	Taize	Hambledon
23 rd	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1800	Holy Communion	Soberton
26 th	0930	Holy Communion	Soberton

March

2 nd	0800	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	0930	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1030	Short Family Service	Hambledon
5 th		Ash Wednesday	
	0930	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1900	Holy Communion and ashes	Corhampton
9 th	1100	Holy Communion and Sunday Club	Soberton
	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
16 th	0930	Holy Communion	Newtown
	1100	Morning Worship	Soberton
	1100	Service of the Word	Hambledon
	1830	Evensong	Hambledon
23 rd	1100	Holy Communion	Hambledon
	1800	Holy Communion	Soberton
26 th	0930	Holy Communion	Soberton
30 th		Mothering Sunday	
	1000	Family Communion	Newtown
	1100	Family Service	Hambledon

From the Church Registers of Holy Trinity Newtown and St Peter's Soberton

Maisie Lingard	(Soberton)	Baptism Dec 8 th
John Humphrey Parker	(Soberton)	Funeral- Dec 14 Thanksgiving service- Dec 15
Alan Jones	(Newtown)	Funeral and Interment of Ashes Jan 21 st
William Harris	(Soberton)	Celebration of Life Friday Jan 31 st

Foreword ... from Revd Andy

Complex Ankle Fracture

As some of you will know, I have been off work since July 2024, after sustaining a complex ankle fracture. I was doing some gardening and caught my foot in the "V" of a branch that was laying on the ground, covered by leaves. I tumbled, and my ankle was badly broken. My life was changed in a split second. Two weeks later, the ankle was surgically mended – in a four hour operation - with the help of three pieces of metal and fifteen screws. I just wanted to share three reflections about this whole experience.

Thank God for the NHS.

The National Health Service faces many challenges and difficulties, but we are so lucky to live in a country where we can access health care when we need it. Within an hour of sustaining my injury, I was being attended to by seven or eight health care professionals in Q.A. hospital's A&E, and early that same evening I was in theatre, under the care of another dedicated team (all missing England playing in the Euros final!) having an external frame fitted. After another two weeks in hospital, I was operated on by a highly experienced foot and ankle surgeon, who also happens to be the President of the National Orthopedic Association. What would two weeks in hospital and two complex operations have cost if I had been living in a country without a free health service?

Never take the every day for granted

For ten weeks, I could only move about using one foot, with the help of crutches. I couldn't carry a cup of tea; or have anything approaching a full night's sleep; or get into a bath; or go out for a

walk. Four things that I wouldn't have thought twice about before the accident. Suddenly, they were precious experiences that I longed for with a deep yearning. The saying "count your blessings" took on an deep resonance. We are so very lucky to have what we (ironically) call "every day experiences".

God loves us for who we are, not what we do

I have found it so hard to be unable to go about my usual ministry: taking of services, etc. Clearly for some people, my priestly duties are what define me, because the only questions that some people ask are: "when do you think you will be back?" or "can we assume you will be able to do so and so the month after next?" or "any news yet on when you might be back to work?" I have found it impossible to escape the guilt of not being able to do what I normally do, and of others having to cover "my" duties for you. But I am also joyfully aware that the Lord does not love me for my ministry (just as well!) He loves me.....as me. I have had to learn afresh that who I am (as God's creation and his beloved child) is more important than what I do. As one Franciscan writer puts it, "God created us to be human be-ings, not human do-ings". Or as another spiritual writer says, "It is hard for us to grasp this profound truth: we do not have to "do" anything, because God could not possibly love us any more than he does at this precise moment."

With love,
Andy

The Revd Andy Davis

Priest-in-Charge, Meon Valley Parishes

PiNS update

Thank you so much to all of you who donated to the PiNS Christmas card this year - we raised £815, up on last year! Considering the current financial climate, it was gratifying that so many Newtown and Soberton residents found it in their hearts to donate.

Of the £815 raised, some has been earmarked to pay for the repair of the broken fingerpost in Hambledon Lane and, probably, the repainting of more fingerposts when the weather improves.

Thank you all, again, for your generous donations.

If you would like to get involved with PiNS and any of our projects, please contact jane.masterman@icloud.com.



News From the Pews (of St Peter's)

Christmas Crackers

Rarely has St Peter's been so filled for the Christmas Services – and certainly this was us all "getting back to normal" after the horrid Covid interlude. The traditional 9 lessons and carols on 15th December set the tone with new readers as well as established participants. Then on Christmas Eve it was standing room only for the traditional crib service. During the afternoon volunteers had been preparing our smaller children for their part and they performed immaculately (Hollywood look out!). For many the highlight was the procession of the kings (there may have been more than 3!) following a fast-moving "donkey" who circled the church at least 4 times on route to the crib.

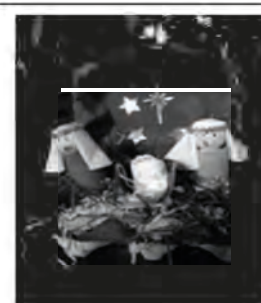
The final service was a well-attended midnight communion conducted by Rev James Percival (a Naval Chaplain).

Throughout the period the church flowers and decorations looked lovely so thanks are due to all who prepared and participated in this glorious celebration of the Nativity.

Craft Workshop

This was a wonderful event held just before Christmas, 21 children, with support from 21 adults gathered to make an array of decorations, cards, gifts and biscuits at St Peter's. Two hours of crafting was followed by lunch; hot dogs for children and homemade soup plus mulled wine & mince pies for the helpers.

Just before lunch the smoke alarms sounded, something had burnt in the kitchen, so we called the number on the alarm which is linked to the local fire station. However, the Droxford fire fighters were already on their way! They checked that everything was ok and then, to the children's delight, allowed them to visit the fire engine with its lights flashing. An exciting addition to the morning!



A crib made by our young artists

Thanks to all involved in this most successful day – with an unplanned surprise for the young - and to Rev Liz who led a warm and inclusive concluding service for the children.

John Parker RIP

On 29th November Hampshire lost one of its most well-known characters. John was the youngest son of "The Guvnor" (Tom Parker) and throughout his long life he dedicated himself to farming and its advancement. A staunch supporter of St Peter's among his many altruistic roles he was at one stage Chair of the Grassland Research Institute, Chair of the Farmers Club in London and Chair then President of Fareham & Hampshire Farmers Club. The church was deservedly packed by locals and the farming community for his Thanksgiving service on 14th December: Over his 94 years John touched many, many lives.

Messy Church

Hopefully local families will have received details of this new programme designed to appeal to children of all ages. See page 13 for more information, but future dates for your diary are: 22nd March at Holy Trinity, Newtown, and 17th May back at St Peter's. If you have a youngster, do feel free to give it a try.

Happy New Year to all our readers.

Louise & Anthony



TWO IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

NEWTOWN CHURCH FETE

Saturday 24th May 2025

at MEONWOOD 2pm

*Fete to be opened by The Venerable Kathryn Percival,
Archdeacon of the Meon*

If you are new to the village and would like to help at the fete, or would like to get involved in 2025 for the first time, we would be delighted to hear from you!

Fete Planning Meeting

Tuesday 11th February 7:30pm at Meonwood

Open to everyone -- all new, bright ideas welcomed!

Please contact any of the Fete team or join us on 11th February!

John Barfoot	07974 232296	johnbarfoot1962@gmail.com
Stuart Doherty		stuartdoherty4@gmail.com
Gill Gray	07711 058760	gill.highcroft@btinternet.com
Matt Rees		matthewjrees@hotmail.com
Sue Wells	01329 834130	sjwells@meonwood.co.uk
Mike Guy		mike.j.guy@btinternet.com

Soberton & Newtown Ladies' Group

For the December meeting, a good number of us enjoyed wine tasting which set us up nicely for the festive season. Our New Year commenced with a very convivial Party, which proved a great opportunity for everyone to catch up.

Unusually our meeting on 5th February takes place in the afternoon and in Fareham. At 2pm we will convene in Boots, Fareham for a masterclass in make-up / skin care.

On 5th March Angela Palmerton will be talking to us about Natural Gardening. Venue Rookesbury Hall, Newtown at 8pm.

New members are always welcome. Further details from

Liz Whales	01489 877712	lizwhales@aol.com
Helen Stranks	01489 878270	helen.stranks@btopenworld.com

More than Half a Century of Theatre in Soberton

Amateur Dramatics has been alive and well in our community for more than 56 years and looks set to thrive for many more.

When the current Soberton Players was established in 1985 it built on a great tradition inspired by Captain "Tony" Evans, a former Parish Council chairman, District Councillor and passionate amateur actor.

Determined to provide Soberton with a venue suitable for theatrical performances, Tony Evans led a fund-raising campaign to build Soberton Village Hall, which opened in 1968. Tony's dream of live theatre in Soberton flourished there until the Players disbanded around the time of his death in 1976.

The Thespian spirit was not quite extinguished, however, and in 1984 a group including some of the original players created a village "Son et Lumiere" historic pageant in St Peter's churchyard in support of the Church Restoration Fund. Bolstered by the success of this event, Soberton Players relaunched the following February with a home-written panto, *Cinders & Co.*



As funds and confidence grew, the group moved on to professional scripts and a regular programme of comedy, drama and panto which built a solid reputation for quality entertainment. The introduction of bar facilities and the occasional theatre supper also boosted the popularity and profitability of the shows.

By 2006, Soberton Players felt ready to tackle a full-scale musical production – the enormously successful *Oliver!*, which attracted new talent to the group and pushed its technical boundaries.

The group continues to welcome new members to the team which still includes a handful of players who were in the 1985 production. It is also proud of several former players now making their mark in the professional theatre, including Kate Potter (with the group from 2012 to 2016) who was deputy director of the recent Chichester Festival Theatre production of *Cinderella*.

Soberton Players achieved a lot in its first 40 years. The next challenge will be keeping Am Dram alive in an increasingly digital age. Judging by the look of wonder on the children's faces during *Treasure Island* recently the Players might just have cracked it!

Philomena Bergin

Research on early players provided by The History Group

Treasure Island he's behind you!

I always think the best test of a good Panto is to watch the audience. The kids got really into it, loving the slapstick and visual humour though sometimes looked bewildered when the adults suddenly erupted into uproarious laughter. This is how pantomime should work, keeping the entire audience entertained by working on two levels, this one certainly did!

Jeremy Miles made a wonderful bumbling Squire Trelawney and Long John Silver (Ken Giles) a not so dastardly pirate captain accompanied by his motley but ineffective crew (Hugh Pringle, Bob Musselwhite and, newcomer, Dave Smith).



The cast worked together beautifully, and I loved the silly interactions between the two incompetent pirates Willy and Starfish (Sharon Millmore and Rachel Rowlinson). Polly the parrot (Anne-Marie Stewart) with her extremely convincing Welsh accent was very funny too.

A little romance never goes amiss and was delivered by the love-struck couple Paula Hobbs (Jack Hawkins) and Nikki Dry (Jenny Trelawney).

Now every panto needs a Dame and Mike Flanagan was a natural and in the true spirit of panto I thought he 'pulled it off' really well...

The Wenches were great and brought a real lift to the choruses and songs all ably directed by our talented Music Director, Kate Jones.

It was a big cast so I can't mention everyone here individually, but the ladies of the WI Susan Hyland, Sharon Canning, Katie Flanagan and Shirley Tebby were great and bounced off each other really well producing some great performances and very funny moments.



The cannibal children were really good too and very well-rehearsed. It's so nice to see the youngsters doing their bit.

A big well done to all the cast and crew, please forgive me if I haven't mentioned you individually but you were all great. Finally, well done Pete Berkeley for your very competent direction and bringing the whole thing together so entertainingly.

Nigel Jones

... Soberton Players!

Villager Chris van Schaick reflects on a 15-year association with Soberton Players and what that means to him.

Sometimes I've been the leading man, sometimes a bit-part player. Sometimes I've just been the chap in Row 8 at Soberton Village Hall, laughing and cheering and clapping.

But what Soberton Players have given me above all else is a sense of wonder at the way any village am dram group – and ours in particular – helps glue a community together.

We celebrate the bricks and mortar of our cohesion – church, school, pub. Quite rightly. But the am dram group is a binding agent of special quality.

It's an emotional bank in which everyone invests. The performers are prepared to get up on stage and show a different side. The backstage crew are prepared to put in the unglamorous hours. The drinks volunteers are prepared to pour a lot of wine. The audience members are prepared to turn up.

Everyone invests a bit of themselves for the sake of something bigger. That's my definition of community.

You know it's working when a stranger stops you on a dog walk to talk about your performance.

Together, Soberton and Newton are home to 1600 people. For a community that small to have sustained the Players and their level of ambition and creativity for so long is remarkable. We've ranged from the sublime to the gor blimey. And I should know about the latter, having channelled

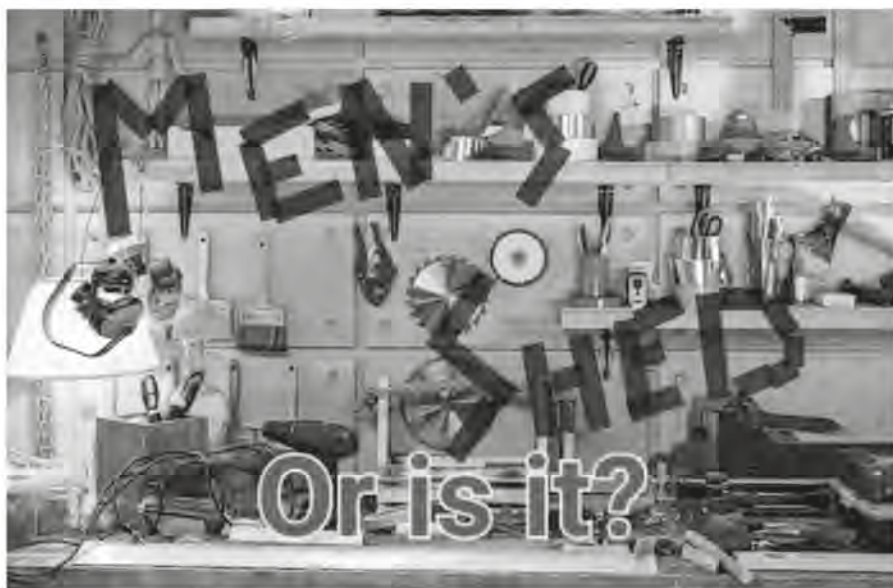
Frankie Howerd in *Up Pompeii*.
Not to mention Alfie

in *One Man, Two Guvvors* and Inspector Pratt in *Murdered To Death*.

But think of our fragmented, atomised world. And wonder that twice yearly, a group of grown-ups spend their Monday and Thursday nights rehearsing to be a bit daft in three evening shows and a matinee. The bigger result? Community togetherness.

In two cases, Dads dropping off their young children for rehearsals got roped into the cast themselves. Two signs of the torch being passed between generations. It gives me hope that years hence, when the Millennials are calling the shots, the Players will still be glueing our community together.

Soberton Players



“MEN'S SHED”

A NEW PLAY BY JANETTE EVANS
FUNNY • POIGNANT • RIVETING

20th, 21st, 22nd March 2025
7.30 p.m.

SOBERTON VILLAGE HALL

TICKETS £10 book now

Email : tickets@sobertonplayers.co.uk

Phone: 01489 878184 or 07866931487

Click QR code for online bookings





Come and celebrate
Mothering Sunday

Sunday 30th March 2025

Holy Trinity Church, Newtown

at 10 am



Collect a posy for your grown up!

Refreshments Sherry & Simnel & smartie cake

The benefice of Hambledon, Newtown and Soberton
Invite all children to join us for an

EASTER WORKSHOP

Good Friday 18th April 2025

Holy Trinity Church, Newtown
10 am - 12 noon



Make the Easter Garden * Easter crafts
Trail round the churchyard * Hotcross buns and bix

10 am Workshop opens
11.45am Act of Worship led by Revd Liz

A donation of £2 would be welcome
No need to book but if more information needed
Please contact: Sue Wells 01329 834130 / 07850 011820



The Guide Hut Committee invite you to a

Beetle Drive

Fun for all the family

Friday 7th February

6.00 – 8.00 pm



Soberton Village Hall

Tickets: £7.50

**to include a Hot Dog (with proper sausages!),
cake & a glass of wine/beer or soft drink**

Never played Beetle? It's easy and loads of fun for all ages from 4-104!

- You take turns rolling the dice to **build your own beetle!**
- Each number you roll lets you draw a different beetle part.
- Be the first to finish and shout **"Beetle!"** to win the round.
 - Lots of giggles, quick rounds, and prizes to be won!
- All the rules will be explained beforehand - no prior experience needed!



Tickets available from:

Caroline Barfoot on 07736 714565

or email guidehutsoberton@gmail.com

All proceeds to the maintenance of the Guide Hut



Granny Hedgehogs tea party at Newtown Soberton School!

You read many articles on the benefits of children interacting with the older generation and vice versa. Well, at Newtown Soberton School, just before Christmas, there was certainly a room full of very happy people, separated by generations but not separated by 'just having a good time'!

Hedgehogs class (Year R) and their amazing teacher, Mrs Butler-Harris, entertained 20+ of the more grey-haired village members to an afternoon of sheer joy! The children shared what they were learning, they sang, they were word perfect on their presentations and then the children served up the most amazing afternoon tea of yummy sandwiches and cakes without a single morsel of food falling on the floor!

We all sang carols, ably led by David Burgess, until the older villagers wended their way home, many on the new Meon Valley Community Bus (thanks Roy Munday).

A big thank you to Granny Hedgehogs who organised the event and fed us all so beautifully. Many know her as Sue Wells, but she'll always be Granny Hedgehogs to me going forward! Thank you to everyone ... the children were splendid and did the school proud!

(A few photos above ... smiling faces everywhere!)



**PLEASE COME WITH YOUR FRIENDS TO
OUR MACMILLAN COFFEE
MORNING**

AT ROOKESBURY HALL

**ON FRIDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2025
FROM 10.30 TO 12.30**

**COFFEE, TEA, SAVOURIES, BISCUITS AND CAKES.
CAKES FOR SALE.**

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS FANTASTIC CHARITY!

A Meet&Eat Initiative!

Meet & Eat

Formerly known as the Ladies Lunch Club.

On the last Friday of each month we meet at The White Lion, Soberton for a fun lunch – a starter or main meal, the choice is yours - and welcome old and new villagers from Soberton and Newtown.

We began these lunches when Allan became landlord of The White Lion to support him and the pub – and clearly this has worked!

Fine food, lovely location, convivial company!

So, please contact Sue if you wish to go on the mailing list as we do need to know numbers attending. No pressure- come when you can.

Email: sue@poppyhill.net



The Meon Valley Federation

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Amy Randell



Newtown Soberton Infant School

01329 833161

Newtownadmin@meonvalleyfederation.co.uk

Meonstoke Infant School

01489 877568

Meonstokeadmin@meonvalleyfederation.co.uk

Advert For a Co-opted Governor

We are looking for a co-opted governor to join our governing body. As a governor you will be a volunteer who makes a vital contribution to the success of the school.

School governors have three main roles.

- **Governors ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**
The governing body helps to set long-term plans for the school, decide where improvements need to be made and how to make them.
- **Governors hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.**
The governing body looks at the quality of education being offered and ensures the head is doing everything possible to improve results.
- **Governors oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.**
Governors examine budgets and spending proposals to monitor whether the school is getting value for money and ensure the money is spent in the right areas.

This role may be of interest if you have skills in finance/accounting, human resources, data or education but we invite applications from anyone who is interested in helping the federation be the best it can be. Full training is available, and governors are encouraged to attend regular training sessions, either in person or online.

We are looking for someone who can attend full governing body and committee meetings. Meetings are held in school and online, approximately 6pm to 8pm. Governors also spend time in school during the day (around two visits per term).

You must be 18 or over to apply and all governors must have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. If you would like to find out more, please email or call the school offices (details above).



What is Messy Church?

BRF's Messy Church ministry is a creative, inclusive way of being church for families which enables people to encounter Jesus in a relaxed space. It's primarily designed for people who don't already

belong to another form of church, no matter how 'messy' they feel their lives are – and it's definitely not just for children!

What will we be doing?

We'll have lots of craft activities in the Church Rooms - there'll be a chance to chat over snacks and refreshments and then we'll move into the church for a short celebration of our faith.

Who is it for?

Everyone! Please come along and see what it means to be part of a Messy Church. We welcome families of children of all ages. Messy Church is all about creativity, celebration and hospitality – so join us to bring this new approach to worship to our villages. There is no charge for Messy Church.

The Messy Church® name and logo are registered trade marks of Bible Reading Fellowship, a charity (233280) and company limited by guarantee (301324), registered in England and Wales.brf.org.uk

Church, but not as you know it!

Dates for your diary!

March 22nd – Holy Trinity, Newtown

May 17th – St Peter's, Soberton

Local History - Treasure from a Tip

Nearly a quarter of a century ago our Local History Society were the recipients of an album containing the artwork of a young lad made in the last decade of the 19th century. We were told that the scrapbook or album had been found by the son of a Basingstoke couple using their local municipal tip. The cover in itself was rather interesting and the boy suggested it was too nice to be left there. Discovering that some of the artwork related to Soberton they brought it to some friends living in School Hill and hoped that they might learn more about the young artist.

Via the parish council the album found its way to the society and it became fairly obvious that the artist, who signed his work "H. Morley" was connected with Soberton's vicar, the Rev. William Hammond Morley. There were paintings of Soberton House and stables where the Rev. Hammond had lived before the Vicarage was built. Another depicted a laden carriage with the title "Our arrival in Soberton" and one or two represented stories in the history of Soberton that he must have heard from his host.

Wilmington also featured in his art work. Through a little detective work we discovered that a curate by the name of Morley had served as curate of Wilmington and that both he and our William Morley were the sons of a vicar of Newport Pagnell. But neither could have been the artists father since we were sure that he referred to the Wilmington curate as Uncle Ned and Soberton's Rev. Morley had only had two daughters, Mary (Molly) and Violet.

The majority of the work was dated 1891 or 1892 and seemed to have connections with St Paul's School and featured school plays. Pauline Betts noted that the 'classical plays' were the type that would have been performed by the St. Paul's School then at Hammersmith. A relative of Pauline had held a post at the school and she may have seen similar productions a few decades later.

The committee felt we must inform Wilmington and St. Paul's School and as archivist I wrote to both. After a considerable time, Wilmington replied but were not interested. A fire, an arson attack, had seriously affected the church and the letter implied they had no time to check records and most had been destroyed.

The letter sent to St Paul's School asked if they had any record of a pupil called H. Morley born circa 1877/8. It also contained a photocopy of one of the paintings of a drama production. They were definitely interested but unfortunately could not establish a link and suggested contacting other St Paul's Schools. We found there had at some time been one in Southsea and that seemed a possibility. We now felt we were justified in keeping the album in Soberton.

However, a year or two ago in a talk on smuggling I used the picture of the Soberton House stables, as reputedly, the curate, who lived in Soberton House, could not understand why his horse was totally exhausted some mornings!! The resident of the house now converted from the stables was interested and asked to see the album. The problem was six years ago the archives had to be divided between several committee members. It was eventually re-located and further research was undertaken.

The starting point was the Vicar of Newport Pagnell and his family of nine. There were three further sons, one of them being John Lacy Collison Morley. The 1881 census shows John, a doctor, living in Edith Road, Fulham with his wife, daughter and a three-year old son, Harold Duke Collison Morley.

Subsequently we found that Harold had studied at the Slade School of Art, become a professional soldier and had died at the Battle of Loos in 1915. Lieut. Col. H.D. Collison Morley of the East Kent Regiment is buried in Dud Corner Cemetery, Dept. du Passe de Calais. He left a wife and at least one child, Kathleen Collison Morley. Further research by another member of the society showed that Kathleen, later Mrs. Kathleen Wood, had become a writer of children's books and she had died in Basingstoke in September 1991. Someone clearing the house had possibly not recognized the value of her father Harold's work and the album had found its way to the tip. There was also the suggestion that Dr. John Morley had been the medical practitioner used by St. Paul's School which, as he lived in nearby Edith Road, was very likely.

Rev. George Morley of Newport Pagnell and his wife had nine children, five sons and four daughters. The eldest son, George Lyddon had a career in the army and rose to the rank of Lieut. Col. His Irish wife Mabel Ingram nee Wheeler is, in the 1891 census, an authoress although no published evidence has so far been found.

The second son, John Lacey Collison went into Medicine and was the father of Harold, the artist and grandfather of Kathleen, author of children's books. However his eldest son, Lacey Collison was also the author of "Companion into Hampshire", "Shakespeare in Italy" and "Les Borgias"

Third and fourth sons, Edward and William, entered the church and the fifth son was a land agent. Perhaps Soberton's Rev William considered writing a history of Soberton, his note books show he collected a lot of material.

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We are seeking a new Lead Volunteer to head up the Unit Volunteer Team from this summer following our current Lead stepping down. Unfortunately, due to pressure of work and family, none of the current team are able to take on the lead role, which will mean the Unit will close.

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It will be a small unit of 7-9 Brownies to start, as we are not currently recruiting Brownies and seven girls will be going up to Guides in the summer.

The unit currently meets fortnightly on Monday evenings during term time, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the Soberton & Newtown Guide Hut on Soberton Recreation Ground.

You need to be over 18 and female, a team player, have 2-3 hours spare a week and enjoy new adventures through games, crafts and adventurous activities. A sense of humour is useful, and a desire to give girls new opportunities to help develop their skills for the future. This is a voluntary position and therefore unpaid.

If you are interested, please email: SobertonNewtownBrownies@gmail.com for more details, and/or to book a taster session with the unit.



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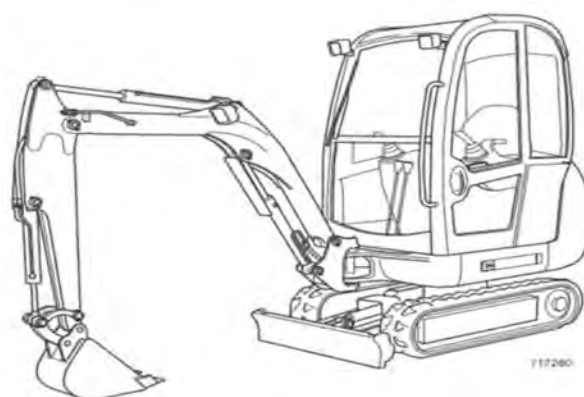
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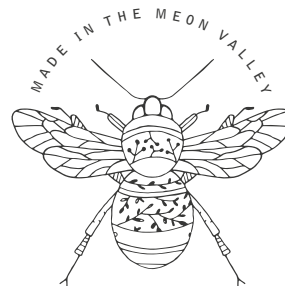
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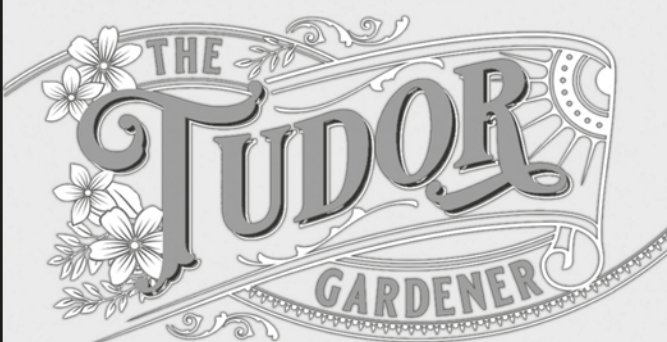
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Ordinary miracles

Snowdrops, soil and music Can spring be far behind?

Probably by the time this piece has made its way into the Parish Magazine the very first sights of spring will be in evidence. We had an unexpected rush of *Primulas* in December who met a frozen assassination in the recent very cold snap. And yet. Already the soil, if we could hear its heartbeat, is beginning to move from hard as iron slumber state to a lively universe for future glories. The evidence of this, of course, is the earliest spring flowers and that always, for me at least, means snowdrops. They are such a curious reminder of unlikely vitality. As a child I learned a poem called *Snowdrops* by Mary Vivian and I think of it every spring.

*I like to think
That, long ago,
There fell to earth
Some flakes of snow
Which loved this cold,
Grey world of ours
So much, they stayed
As snowdrop flowers.*

There is no doubt that snowdrops are one of the wonders of winter. When I was researching my last book, *Eden's Keepers*, I came upon an extraordinarily apposite and, typically of the speaker, perceptive bit of advice. Bear in mind a ninety year old woman, Nancy Tennant, spoke these words in 1987, way before the internet was a part of our everyday lives, let alone digital phones and AI, she delivered this advice to her numerous great nieces and nephews.

"You are growing up in a push-button world, a lot of your thinking will be done for you. Don't let this dull your sense of wonder. Think about the swallow who goes off to Africa for the winter and then comes back to its old nest...think about the snowdrop, when the first frost comes, you can try as hard as you like to get your fork into the ground, you won't succeed but up it comes all wibbly-wobbly with apparently no trouble at all. These are the things that matter."

Soil health, sustainable farming, regeneration and general interest in earth is a big subject now and this year and if you are pondering on having an outing that is a bit out of the ordinary, the exhibition, *SOIL A World At Our Feet* at Somerset House, London might appeal.

Artworks, artefacts as well as extraordinary facts about the most basic of earthly delights will elevate what most people disregard as ordinary into the not only extraordinary but almost magical. Of course, there is a serious side to the exhibition, it is about the health of the ground that sustains us all. The website blurb reads as follows...

"Soil is more than dirt. Soil is a secret world at our feet, an ecosystem as diverse in life as our night sky is full of stars. The billions of bacteria contained in its rhizospheres do for plants what the microbes in our stomachs do for us: sustain life. Our relationship with soil is our connection to Earth itself. Without soil, there is no us."

Of course, in the last few years, there has been a slew of books offering writing not only on facts associated with soil, but people's feelings associated with it. *Underland* by Robert McFarlane was the first that captured my interest – now there seem to be scores of them but the message is essentially the same. Good, clean muck needs care to remain good and there is a lot more going on in it that we may have thought. Closer to home, the brilliant Hampshire Gardens Trust, of which I am a happy member, are not only holding even more wonderful open gardens this year – (look at their website for details) but also, for anyone wanting to hear expert advice and opinion, they have study days. Their next is on the 19th of March at St Peter's Church, Ropley. This year the theme is the rather chilling '*Our native tree, survive, migrate or die.*' This will be a must for anyone interested in which trees to plant, what to look upon with confidence and others that might be more susceptible to disease.

But back to snowdrops and to conclude. Today, when I drove through a frosted Soberton with two panting soon to be walked dogs, *Like Snowdrops You Will Shine* played on the radio. I'd never heard it before. It was



a strange and haunting piece of classical music, I thought about Nancy's words and thought I must share them in the Parish Magazine, but then, after the walk, turned my attention to finding out a bit more about 'Like Snowdrops'.

It turned out this whimsical piece of music was created by Australian composer, Katia Beaugéais. There is quite a bit of plucking of strings and swirling of violins, it apparently was composed to represent the optimism of snowdrops. I did a bit of research and it turned out to be especially composed for people who are facing a challenging situation and first composed for the 2018 Hush Hospital Foundation and subsequently selected for the Australian Chamber Orchestra's 2019 worldwide playlist celebrating "Incredible Female Artists", ABC's "Best of Australian Classical Music", and re-released on ABC Classic's "2021 Women of Note" Vol. 3 album. If you are interested, you can find it on Spotify. It opens with the pretty sound of plucked strings warming up to a fuller orchestral sound. It is gentle but uplifting – rather like little snowdrops that we will soon see springing up all over our villages.

Happy watching, listening and if the mood takes you, adventuring further afield.

Sarah Barclay

SOIL at Somerset House runs from 23rd of January until 13th of April.

Eden's Keepers The Lives and Gardens of Humphrey Waterfield and Nancy Tennant by Sarah Barclay
Like Snowdrops by Katia Beaugéais

What's on (Village Diary)

<i>Month</i>	<i>Date/day</i>	<i>Event / group</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Details</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>4th</i>	<i>Stitch & Chatter</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 47</i>
	<i>4th and 10th</i>	<i>u3a</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 38</i>
	<i>5th</i>	<i>Soberton & Newtown Ladies Group</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
	<i>7th</i>	<i>Beetle Drive</i>	<i>18:00</i>	<i>Page 11</i>
	<i>8th</i>	<i>Opera Dudes</i>	<i>19:00</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
	<i>11th</i>	<i>Newtown Church Fete 2025 Planning Meeting</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
	<i>12th and 26th</i>	<i>Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>Page 46</i>
	<i>28th</i>	<i>Macmillan Coffee Morning, Rookesbury Hall</i>	<i>10:30</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
	<i>28th</i>	<i>Meet&Eat</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
<i>March</i>	<i>1st</i>	<i>Spring Boogie</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
	<i>4th</i>	<i>Stitch & Chatter</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 47</i>
	<i>4th and 10th</i>	<i>u3a</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 38</i>
	<i>12th and 26th</i>	<i>Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>Page 46</i>
	<i>5th</i>	<i>Soberton & Newtown Ladies Group</i>	<i>20:00</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
	<i>17th</i>	<i>COPY DATE FOR APRIL / MAY</i>	-	
	<i>17th</i>	<i>RBL</i>	<i>19:00</i>	<i>Page 38</i>
	<i>20th - 22nd</i>	<i>Men's Shed - Soberton Players</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>Page 9</i>
	<i>22nd</i>	<i>Messy Church at Holy Trinity</i>	-	<i>Page 13</i>
	<i>28th</i>	<i>Meet&Eat</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Page 12</i>
	<i>29th</i>	<i>Spring Show - Meon Valley Garden Club</i>	<i>13:30</i>	<i>Page 37</i>
	<i>30th</i>	<i>Mothering Sunday, Holy Trinity</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>Page 10</i>
<i>Hold the date</i>	<i>18th April</i>	<i>Easter Workshop at Holy Trinity</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>Page 10</i>
	<i>17th May</i>	<i>Messy Church at St Peter's</i>	-	<i>Page 13</i>
	<i>24th May</i>	<i>Newtown Church Fete 2025</i>		<i>Page 7</i>
	<i>28th June</i>	<i>Soberton Fete 2025</i>		<i>Page 15</i>
	<i>28th-31st July</i>	<i>Children's Week 2025</i>		<i>Page 15</i>

<i>Regular meetings/ events</i>	<i>1st Tuesday</i>	<i>Stitch & Chatter</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 47</i>
	<i>1st Wednesday</i>	<i>Soberton & Newtown Ladies' Group</i>	<i>20:00</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
	<i>2nd/4th Weds</i>	<i>Pop in for coffee and cake at St Peter's</i>	<i>10:00</i>	<i>Page 46</i>
	<i>3rd Monday</i>	<i>Meon Valley Investment Club</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>Page 47</i>
	<i>2nd Thursday</i>	<i>Soberton & Newtown Local History Society</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>Page 47</i>
	<i>1st/3rd Tuesday</i>	<i>Meon Valley u3a</i>	<i>14:00</i>	<i>Page 38</i>
	<i>Last Friday</i>	<i>Meet&Eat</i>	<i>Lunch!</i>	<i>Page 12</i>

Lent Course 2025 for the Meon Valley Parishes at Swanmore



All in the Family

Do come and join us to think about faith through the lens of different family relationships! We will begin with the Bible but also look at art, poetry and personal experience. Each session will happen twice to allow for maximum flexibility and will last for about 90 minutes - on Wednesday evenings in the Paterson Centre (apart from 19th March – venue tbc) from 7.30 to 9pm, and on Friday mornings from 11 am – 12.30.

Ruth Schofield:	<i>Husbands and Wives</i>	19th and 21st Mar
Kathy O'Loughlin:	<i>Mothers-in-law and Fathers-in-law</i>	26th and 28th Mar
Nick Whitehead:	<i>Parents and Children</i>	2nd and 4th April
Hazel Whitehead:	<i>Siblings</i>	9th and 11th April

Each session will stand alone so you don't have to attend all four.

You could just turn up but we might produce some preparatory material to send out and it would also help us to have an idea of numbers for refreshments etc. If you know you are coming, please email hazelwhitehead54@gmail.com

Ash Wednesday is on 5th March and there will be a service of Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes at 7.30pm

Guests ... in your garden

I write this after a festive season of hosting and being hosted. A few weeks of thinking of others, what do they want for presents, dietary requirements, alcohol wish lists (what is Sheridan's?) and are they being made to feel welcome.

On reflection, it's probably time to put some of this thought process into your garden. As we embark on a new year in the garden and plan out different plants that we might want to grow this year, is it time to think of who – or what – else uses your garden.

Your sanctuary is home to many different guests, some of those are invited and others may be less welcome. Slugs and snails are amongst those that cause the most upset amongst us keen gardeners. There is a multitude of potions and pills that claim to rid your garden of these 'pests' but really, do they ever cause enough damage to justify throwing chemicals on to the ground?

If only there was a more natural solution! I have witnessed some people putting beer traps between lettuces to lure the slimy invaders into a bubbly demise but you must be of a particular character to be wasting precious beer on a slug funeral.

If only there were a natural predator to these little, silky foes – like a hedgehog. Now as you read this it may still be too cold for our spiky friend to have emerged from their slumber, but it may be that they are already roaming around your garden, eating as many slugs as they can get their 'paws' on; they will have been asleep for months and will be starving by now. How do we encourage more hedgehogs to our gardens? I have not seen a hedgehog in over three years which is concerning as I'm in gardens all day, most days.

My personal recommendations:

- Purchase or build a hedgehog house.
- Put out some dog or cat food for them at dusk – just remember to discard it in the morning if untouched due to fly eggs.
- Create a wild hedge for them to hide in is also a good thing you can do to encourage a hedgehog into your garden.

Visit: www.hamblehedgehogs.com for more details of how to care for hedgehogs.

The time is now running out to prune your apple and pear trees and also your roses, so make this a priority on your to do list. It is also time to prune back winter flowering shrubs such as Buddleja davidii, Hydrangea paniculata and Leycesteria. It is also time for clematis groups 2 & 3 to be pruned. If you are ever in doubt, check on the RHS website.

I have saved the best to last, sowing! You can start an early sowing of sweet peas indoors, ready to be taken outside after the last frost. You can also sow hardy perennials such as echinaceas, dianthus and verbena. I would always sow at least twice as many as you actually would like. If you end up with more there will always be a grateful neighbour who would take the excess off your hands.

With all that money you save on plants, you could spend it on a second home – even if it is only just big enough for a hedgehog.

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HMS ARK ROYAL 4 (1955-1980)

On Monday 17th March, branch member Rear Admiral David Snelson CB will present **"The History of the Five Ark Royals"**. The talk will commence at 1900 in Droxford Village Hall with supper available on completion for those who book in advance. There will be a cash bar available from 1830. Non-members are very welcome to attend both talk and supper. Please contact robmunroscott@aol.com at least a week beforehand if you would like supper.

Ark Royal is one of the most famous ship names in history. The first was a 55-gun 500-ton galleon which served as Lord Howard of Effingham's flagship during the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The 2nd (and 1st *HMS*) *Ark Royal* was a merchant vessel converted into a seaplane carrier in 1914; she was renamed *HMS Pegasus* in 1934 to make way for the 3rd *HMS Ark Royal* (22,000 tons) and scrapped in 1950. Completed in 1937, *Ark Royal 3* accumulated an impressive war record while achieving fame via Nazi propaganda which falsely claimed she'd been sunk on several occasions. She succumbed to a German U-boat torpedo on 14 Nov 1941. The 4th *HMS Ark Royal* (44,000 tons) was the largest and last of the Royal Navy's conventional fixed wing carriers, laid down during the war and serving from 1955 to 1980. The 5th *HMS Ark Royal* (22,000 tons) was an Invincible Class aircraft carrier, designed to operate helicopters and Harrier 'jump' jets. Commanded by David Snelson in 2001, she served from 1985 to 2011.

David Snelson joined the Royal Navy in 1969. He was Commanding Officer of the air defence destroyer *HMS Liverpool* in 1987 and again in 1997 as Captain (D) 3rd Destroyer Squadron. He then became Director of Naval Operations and Trade in the Ministry of Defence in 1998 and Director of Naval Staff Duties in 1999 before commanding the aircraft carrier *HMS Ark Royal* in 2001. He was appointed Commander United Kingdom Maritime Forces in 2002. In March 2003, he was the Royal Navy Commander for Operation Telic, during which he led maritime operations for the invasion of Iraq from his headquarters ashore in Bahrain. He went on to be Chief of Staff (Warfare) for the Fleet in 2004 before retiring in 2006. After leaving the Navy, Admiral Snelson served as Chief Harbour Master for the Port of London Authority between 2006 and 2011. He then served as a Non-Executive Director for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Port of Milford Haven between 2011 and 2018. He was elected as an Elder Brother of the Corporation of Trinity House in 2013.



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 or 01489 877800. www.soberton.org/rblweb.

u3a
learn, laugh, live



Hello, Christmas has gone and as I write we have avoided snow so far!

Our February presentation: on 4 /2 Lyndon Palmer talking on **Anglo-Saxon Detectives**. Oh, that's me! Well, were there any Saxon detectives? They had Reeves, and Hundreds Courts, but no prisons. Perhaps I mean today's detectives? If you would like to find out, simply come along. And on 18/2 Joe Marsden will talk on **Coast watch**. Maybe you have seen or visited these coastal buildings where volunteers watch our shores?

On 4/3 we hope to have Donna Jones talking on **her job as Hampshire Police Commissioner**. She offers a very interesting and informative explanation of her job and aspirations for her police force.

On 18/3 Tony Kippenberger will talk on **Henri de Blois**. This is a new talk and should be fascinating to hear how this Bishop developed Winchester Cathedral in the 12th century.

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

Web site-: u3asites.org.uk/meon-valley

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.

Safe driving is no accident

I was surprised, indeed rather shocked, to learn that Hampshire has the fifth worst road accident figures of UK counties, which immediately poses the question, why? Presumably traffic density is a factor but perhaps the type of roads also. Sadly, accidents on rural roads are more likely to result in a death.

Of course each of us intends to drive safely and being vigilant for the things that cause accidents is the essence of 'defensive driving', but according to a psychologist interviewed on the BBC's World-at-One recently, over-confidence in our own driving skill can be a problem, and that speed limits are often seen as a target, not as a limit. Equally concerning is that if we see a serious accident it usually does not influence our own driving, the assumption being that accidents will always be someone else's fault.

While one cannot anticipate the misjudgment of another driver, by reducing our speed and thinking one step ahead for potential hazards and varying road conditions, possibly ice, leaves, gravel, potholes, it could help avoid an accident, and by adhering to village speed limits and slowing down when passing parked vehicles and delivery vans. Rule 163 of the Highway Code is prescriptive on these scenarios and well worth a fresh look, and available to read online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>

The road safety message

Years ago the BBC would broadcast public information films on various topics, most not much longer than an ITV advert, but that hardly ever happens nowadays, if at all. How odd then, or so it seemed to me, to hear a road safety message on the DAB ra-

dio station 'Mellow Magic', Vicki's preferred listening choice when she's driving. Its repertoire is nothing like Radio 3 but it does make a refreshing change to my more customary diet of Rameau and Respighi!

The benefit of radio listening?

Music in cars has been part of my motoring experience for many years, with my father in the motor trade driving smart new Austins, Rovers, Triumphs, MGs and Jaguars, most of them with the latest generation of in-car entertainment. In the late 1960s 8-track 'Slot Stereo' was the new tech and en route to sailing every Saturday Beethoven's 5th Symphony or Chabrier's *Espagna* would be playing, and so began my passion for classical and other music.

Dad used those cars to their full potential but thankfully never crashed any, good concentration and 'road craft' were his allies, and I sometimes wonder if his love of listening to music was also part of it.

Years later BBC FM Radio would become my staple listening for the daily commute to work, Radio 4 for news, Radio 3 for classical music with its knowledgeable and unflashy presenters. In 1992 the novelty of Classic-FM arrived with shorter snippets of music, chattier presenters and those sophisticated adverts, at least before it became too popular!

The dear old 'Beeb' had to respond but it took them five years to find the right presenter for their mixed-tape 'In Tune' programme at 5pm each weekday. Sean Rafferty would soon become an institution, equally revered by musicians and listeners for his generous Irish chat, live studio performances, and the championing of new virtuosi. Then, just before Christmas after 27 years of service, like other favourite notable presenters, he was removed in a programming revamp. His final edition of *In Tune*, just a few weeks ago, was a fitting tribute, an uproarious if poignant occasion with live contributions from past protégés.

If there are any road related topics you'd like raised, then please let the magazine editor know.

3Ps' Event Report

The pre-Christmas and revised two-part 3Ps Carols and Cheer event at Rookesbury Hall was a big success, with the first part for children, with 'The Lions' bringing Father Christmas to the hall, and then followed by the usual carol singing and musical entertainment. All was directed by Tamsin Rowlinson and with guest performances from some professional musicians plus our own Jonathan Abbott and Sing & Tonic. It was a memorable evening, attended by around 20 children and 60 adult local residents.

Good though it was, this much-treasured event and the 3Ps group itself needs new impetus to make it all happen again this year, and preferably not make a financial loss as this one did. So please get in touch if you value social events like the annual Carols and Cheer or you have new ideas, and you'd like to talk about getting involved. It is always fun and pleasing to see friends enjoying themselves!

Email: jonty@sherwilldesign.com for more info

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.*

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.

For more information call:

Kate Harvey on 07843 496 852

Kate Chesters on 07710 716 664

or email: sngoodneighbours@gmail.com



www.soberton.org

SOBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's notes

*in the Newtown, Hundred Acres, Hoegate, Soberton Heath, Kingsmead,
Brockbridge and Soberton*



Co-option of New Parish Councillors

The PC announced in December that it was seeking to fill two vacancies on the Parish Council and sought interest from residents of the Parish. We had a number of qualifying applicants and the full PC will decide which two of the candidates it will invite to join the council at its February meeting. The PC will close the nomination for applicants at the end of January. The process for co-option allows for all the candidates to speak for a few minutes to the February Meeting and following this the council will hold a secret ballot with the successful two candidates being asked to join the PC for the March meeting.

Parish Council Budget and Precept 2025/26

It was agreed to set the Budget for 2025/26 at £44,530 and to set a Precept at £41,314 representing a £48.48 charge on a Band D property and approve the use of general reserves £3,216 to cover the balance of the budget. The parish precept is the contribution each and every business premises and domestic residence makes to fund the parish council through the council tax. The overall increase to the precept is 5% as the Parish Council has faced increased costs in administration and other obligations. The PC decided not to pass the full 10% increase in budget to residents as it has sufficient reserves to meet its spending commitments and supplement 5% the 25/26 budget for the next financial year.

Annual Parish Assembly 15th April 2025

The APA is a public meeting which will be held at Soberton Village Hall, 15th April starting at 7.30pm (the monthly PC meeting will commence at 7.00pm for urgent business only).

This year we have invited a series of speakers from the emergency services. Piers Rochford from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Constabulary and part of the South East Cyber Crime Unit. Piers will give a short presentation and advise us all about cyber fraud and how we can keep ourselves safe online. He will also explain the process in the event of fraud or attempted fraud. We will also have a short presentation from Rebecca Brackwell-Slade (Trustee) about the Hampshire NHS Air Ambulance and anticipate input from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue.

This meeting will be attended by our Hampshire County Councillor, District Councillors and a member of the South Downs National Park Authority. All will be

open to questions of a general nature, but it will not be possible to answer questions of a specific site/case nature. However, the relevant authority representative can make enquires on your behalf.

Email and website domain name

The parish council clerk, it's website and all parish councillors can now be contacted using @soberton-pc.gov.uk, the back page of the magazine schedules the new website and email addresses.

Recreation Ground/Children's Play area

The specialist contractor appointed to carry out works to the field of play at the Recreation Ground will commence work this spring. The work includes drainage, levelling and seeding. The children's play area (CPA) also requires considerable investment. The PC are exploring a series of options and the availability of grants to assist with the costs. The CPA is inspected regularly by third party inspectors and work will be carried out to ensure the equipment remains safe for users. This work will be carried out early in the new year. Trees and hedges around the Recreation Ground will be pruned this winter.

The PC is considering a total review of play provision at the Recreation Ground. Initial ideas are to provide for younger children to play within the recreation ground itself using new equipment (which we hope to fund through grants). The wooden equipment behind the Liberties is becoming old and will require considerable repair within the next few years. The PC is considering how repairs can be managed or if it is possible to use parts of the existing equipment.

If you have any ideas you would like to feed into this process, please send these to the Parish Clerk. A full consultation is planned in the spring, in the interim period the WCC open spaces team are to be asked to draw up ideas/options which will assist in budgeting and grant applications.

John Hyland
Chairman
chair@soberton-pc.gov.uk

www.soberton-pc.gov.uk

Challenges and Changes

As the saying often attributed to Confucius goes, 'May you live in interesting times.' This sentiment feels particularly relevant today as a wave of reforms pick-up pace to reshape the foundations of local government and planning.

The Government aims to ensure Councils can sustainably provide essential services while making elected representatives more accountable. While change is necessary, it must not come at the cost of democratic fairness or effective representation. Large-scale reforms must prioritise the voices of residents and their local Councillors who understand the unique place making challenges in Hampshire and the Winchester district.

There are currently two key areas of change underway with implications for the Meon Valley - a **New Planning Regime** and **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation**.

New Planning Regime

Planning reform centres on the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) introduced in December 2024. Key changes include:

- **Mandatory housing targets:** Winchester District must increase housing provision by 71%. 1,157 new homes from 676 homes per year.
- **Focus on affordable housing,** particularly for social rent.
- **Sustainable Development presumption:** Stronger reasons will be required to refuse planning applications.

We also await details on other Planning Regime changes, including measures to support nature recovery, reformed planning committees, and the proposed Infrastructure Act. These reforms and unknown aspects from the proposed Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation will shape how planning applications are determined in the future.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

The Government's English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, sets the stage for significant local authority reorganisation. Hampshire County Council will provide an 'expression of interest' with a proposal to join Southampton, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight to form a Strategic Combined Authority with a Mayor. This most likely

will involve merging current District Councils into unitary authorities. Whether these proposals are accepted by the Government will be known in February/March 2025. If approved, the May 2025 elections will be deferred to 2026, and reorganisation plans will be submitted in Autumn 2025.

Sustainability, Climate and Nature Recovery

Winchester City Council (WCC) has made progress in reducing its carbon emissions through energy-efficient buildings, solar power, and land management. However, its recent claims of achieving net-zero emissions by excluding Scope 3 (indirect) emissions are misleading. More work is needed to meet original climate targets.

Hampshire County Council's climate initiatives also show promise but lack clear progress data or a comprehensive plan to achieve net zero by 2050.

We're excited to share that, thanks to strong advocacy from your Councillors, Winchester City Council has agreed to develop a **Nature Improvement Plan**. This plan will focus on new initiatives to protect and improve our local environment for wildlife plus enhancing the natural beauty of our area.

Food Waste Recycling

From October 2025, WCC will introduce food waste collections for residential properties, reaching all households by April 2026. Food waste will be diverted to Anaerobic Digestion (AD) to reduce incineration and generate clean energy.

A Bright Future for the Meon Valley

As we navigate these changes we look forward to a bright future for the Meon Valley. For now, it is business as usual. Our commitment to fair representation for Meon Valley residents, sustainable growth and making our Valley a great place to live with environmental progress remains unchanged.

❄️ Wishing all Meon Valley residents a vibrant, happy and green New Year! ❄️

Cllr Malcolm Wallace MWallace@winchester.gov.uk
Cllr Danny Lee DLee@winchester.gov.uk
Cllr Suzanne White SWhite3@winchester.gov.uk



DEVOLUTION

The Government published its English Devolution White Paper on 16th December 2024 setting out a programme of devolution and Local Government reorganisation across England.

The vision outlined by Government is that all parts of England are to be part of regional Strategic Authorities that have a **regional Mayor**. These Strategic Authorities, working in a similar way to existing Mayoral Combined Authorities will have responsibility for driving growth and shaping public services across wider regional geographies covering strategic leadership of key place shaping responsibilities such as economic regeneration and growth, strategic planning, skills and employment and strategic transport.

Hampshire County Council could be one of the local authorities to be included in the Government's **Devolution Priority Programme (DPP)**.

At the end of August 2024, an agreement was made with the Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council, to submit to Government a joint Expression of Interest (EOI) in forming a single combined authority for the collective area of the four upper tier authorities.



Inclusion on the fast-track **Priority Programme** would be the first step towards creating a Strategic Authority across the wider region incorporating the local authority areas of Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council.

At a meeting of the Full County Council on Thursday 9th January, followed by a Cabinet meeting on Friday 10th January, approval was given to request that the County Council be included in Government fast-track plans to bring devolution

to the area.

In addition to the creation of a new Strategic Authority, the Government is also expecting all areas across the country to produce local government re-organisation plans by Autumn 2025. This will create new large unitary authorities which, for Hampshire, will mean bringing together the County Council, 11 borough and district councils and small neighbouring unitary authorities into a number of new large unitary authorities.

Given that HCC has more than 1.4 million residents and the White Paper requires all unitaries to have not less than 500,000 in each unitary, it might mean some districts/boroughs transition from Hampshire into perhaps Portsmouth or Southampton [each currently have approximately 300,000 residents], although reassurance has been given by Government that every effort will be made not to split a district or borough.

I will keep you informed as things progress but be aware that devolution with elected Mayors is not an option, it is a route required by central Government for all local authorities. For more information and detail read - <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?> or the Government White Paper - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

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 {Newlands, Denmead, Southwick, Boarhunt, Wickham, Knowle, Soberton, Newtown

patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk



Can you help make a real difference for families in need?

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Who are we? We work with families throughout the Meon Valley providing much-needed food whilst also helping them to be in touch with other means of available support.

What are we looking for? We're looking for a new Chair of Trustees to guide and encourage the established leadership team. The new Chair needs to demonstrate:

- Well-developed leadership skills
- Excellent communication skills, and a
- Passion for providing support to those in need.

You should be comfortable working in a Christian environment and be an active and committed member of a local Church.

Want to know more? For further information about the role and how to apply, please scan the QR code or visit our website.

www.meonvalleyfoodbank.co.uk/new-chair

Registered Charity number: 1190417

Wickham Society Spring Programme 2025

11 March 2025: Mauritius and the Dodo – from extinction to resurrection

Dr Julian Hume, Natural History Museum, London

8 April 2025: UK Horticulture - facing up to the stresses and strains of recent years

John Gwynn, former Managing Director of A.E. Roberts

13 May 2025: Universities - have we got the balance right?

Philip Greenish, Pro-Chancellor of the University of Southampton.



Meetings are held at Wickham Community Centre starting at 7.30 pm.

Members, old and new, and occasional visitors are always welcome.

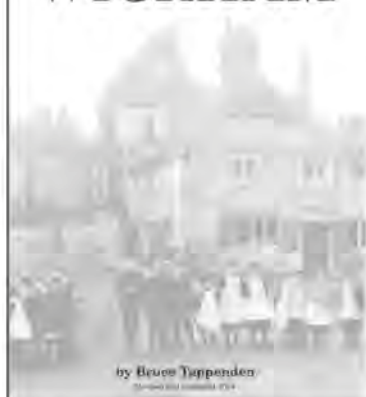
For further information please contact Wendy Greenish at wendy.greenish@gmail.com

www.wickhamsociety.org.uk

Keeping up to date with events at Welborne ... please refer to: <https://welborne.co.uk/news/latest-updates>

A History of

WICKHAM



Wickham History Society have just produced an updated edition of Bruce Tappenden's: A History of Wickham. First published in 1996 we have revised Bruce's local history text where new information has become available, added a new chapter updating to 2024, and included an improved index and brief biography and photo of Bruce, Wickham's last miller. There are a relatively few complete histories of local villages round here, although plenty of excellent selections of articles, so perhaps this will inspire someone locally too!

We'd be delighted if you were able to add the attached poster and any of this text - it is on sale at Pages and Wickham Market in Wickham Square, and at Bruce's Chesapeake Mill of course on Bridge Street. It is on sale for £9. For postal copies use the contact form on the website with address for a quote including P&P.

... and more!

Meon Valley Carers Group

For carers of someone with Dementia
Receive support, information and signposting
Meet and talk to others carers in similar situations

4th Tuesday of each month 2pm - 4pm

at The Paterson Centre, Church Road, Swanmore, SO32 2PA

The programme for these meetings is varied with speakers ranging from necessary, interesting, factual information to more lighthearted subjects.

Built into the group meetings are arts and crafts, musical afternoons and games suitable for those living with Dementia.



You will be given a warm welcome!



Tea coffee and biscuits provided

Free parking in the car park opposite the Paterson Centre

If you are not already registered with us, please contact our Referrals and Enquiries Team

Telephone: 01264 332297 (select option 3)
or email enquiries@andovermind.org.uk



St Barnabas, Swanmore

Saturday 5th April: Concert in the Church.

Come and join an entertaining evening of popular songs from the accomplished and talented Hampshire Police Male Voice Choir at their Spring Concert featuring soprano soloist Veronica Folkard.

The Choir have an extensive repertoire covering all genre of music so be prepared to be amazed by their sea shanties, folk songs and show stoppers from current and classic shows.

There will be a bar serving refreshments before the performance and during the interval when coffee and tea will also be available. Free parking in the village car park across the road from the Church.

Doors and bar open from 7pm, concert starts at 7:30pm. Tickets: £10 each, free for under 16s available from John Sharpe (01489 892750) or Sarah Woodman (07771 801579) or events@stbarnabas.org.uk or <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-barnabas-church-swanmore>

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025

Friday 7th March at 2pm

Church of St John the Baptist, Shedfield

The World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical Christian organisation whose motto is informed Prayer and Prayerful Action. Communities of women from over 170 countries annually and simultaneously join across the globe to share their issues & aspirations.

This year the Christian women of the Cook Islands have compiled the service, reflecting some of the geographical, political and social challenges they negotiate in their daily lives. It will travel across over 120 countries beginning in Samoa before returning there 38 hours later.

Please join us for this enlightening service, followed by afternoon tea.

We look forward to seeing you all then.



Home-Start Hampshire supporting families in The Meon Valley

Home-Start Hampshire can offer support to anybody that has at least one child aged 0-11 years, or is expecting a baby

We support families for a variety of reasons:

- They may be feeling isolated in their community, have no family nearby or be struggling to make friends
 - They may be finding it hard to cope because of their own or their child's illness or disability
 - They may be struggling with the emotional and physical demands of having several young children
- They may have complex needs that can impact on the children's well-being, e.g. domestic abuse, debt, drug or alcohol misuse, poor living environment, etc

Who can make a request for support?

Anybody can make a request for support to their local Home-Start Hampshire office as long as the family being referred has agreed to the request being made. Families are also able to request support themselves by making a self-referral.

To make a referral please email familysupport@hshants.org.uk or visit our website [Referrals | Home-Start Hampshire](https://www.hshants.org.uk)

Volunteering opportunities with Home-Start Hampshire

Could you support a family with young children for 1-2 hours per week or even fortnightly? Would you like to make a difference and volunteer in your local community?

Home-Start Hampshire in The Meon Valley are currently recruiting volunteers, if you would like to learn new skills and do something rewarding please get in touch on 0330 124 2095 or email us familysupport@hshants.org.uk if you would like to know more.

Volunteering | Home-Start Hampshire



Meon Valley Community Bus Association Timetable



Meon Valley Community Bus Association

An all volunteer service

Mondays, 2 nd and 5 th Friday to FAREHAM	
0900	West Meon Thomas Lord PH
0903	Warnford Village Hall
0908	Exton The Shoe PH
0910	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0914	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0921	Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)
0925	Brockbridge The Hurdles
0930	Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0933	Webbs Green War Memorial
0936	Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond
0938	Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH
0940	Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0945	Hundred Acres
0957	Fareham Library
1002	Fareham Sainsbury's
Return:	
1200	Fareham Sainsbury's
1205	Fareham Library

3rd Friday Each Month to HEDGE END	
0900	West Meon Thomas Lord PH
0903	Warnford Village Hall
0908	Exton The Shoe PH
0910	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0914	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0921	Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)
0925	Brockbridge The Hurdles
0929	Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0933	Webbs Green War Memorial
0935	Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond
0938	Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH
0940	Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0945	Hundred Acres
1007	Hedge End Marks & Spencer
Return:	
1200	Hedge End Marks & Spencer

4 th Friday Each Month to WATERLOOVILLE	
0900	West Meon Thomas Lord PH
0903	Warnford Village Hall
0908	Exton The Shoe PH
0910	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0914	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0921	Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)
0925	Brockbridge The Hurdles
0929	Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0933	Webbs Green War Memorial
0936	Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond
0938	Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH
0940	Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0957	Waterlooville Waitrose
1005	Waterlooville Sainsbury's
Return:	
1200	Waterlooville Sainsbury's
1205	Waterlooville Waitrose

1 st Friday Each Month to WINCHESTER	
0900	Soberton Village Hall (PARK and RIDE)
0904	Brockbridge The Hurdles
0909	Droxford Square (PARK and RIDE)
0915	Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0919	Meonstoke PO & Stores
0921	Exton The Shoe PH
0926	Warnford Village Hall
0946	Winchester Broadway
0953	River Park Leisure Centre
Return:	
1155	River Park Leisure Centre
1200	Winchester Broadway

Leave	Wednesdays to PETERSFIELD	Return
0900	Soberton Village Hall (PARK and RIDE)	Petersfield Tesco 1155
0904	Brockbridge (The Hurdles)	Petersfield Sq 1200
0909	Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)	Warnford George and Falcon 1227*
0916	Meonstoke Pound Cottages	Corhampton 1224*
0921	Corhampton	Pound Cottages 1229*
0924	Warnford George and Falcon	Droxford square 1236*
0945	Petersfield Square	Brockbridge (The Hurdles) 1301*
0950	Petersfield Tesco	Soberton Village Hall 1305*
Note: Includes all request stops up to and including West lodge (Church lane)		* Drop off only and approx dependent on passenger numbers.

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.
All enquiries to : mvcba1985@gmail.com ☎07300 425305

POP IN FOR COFFEE AND CAKE

at ST PETER'S CHURCH ROOM, SOBERTON



POP IN FOR COFFEE & CAKE ON THE 2nd AND 4th WEDNESDAY IN THE MONTH
10am – NOON

MEET FRIENDS, MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND HAVE A CHAT

USEFUL INFORMATION

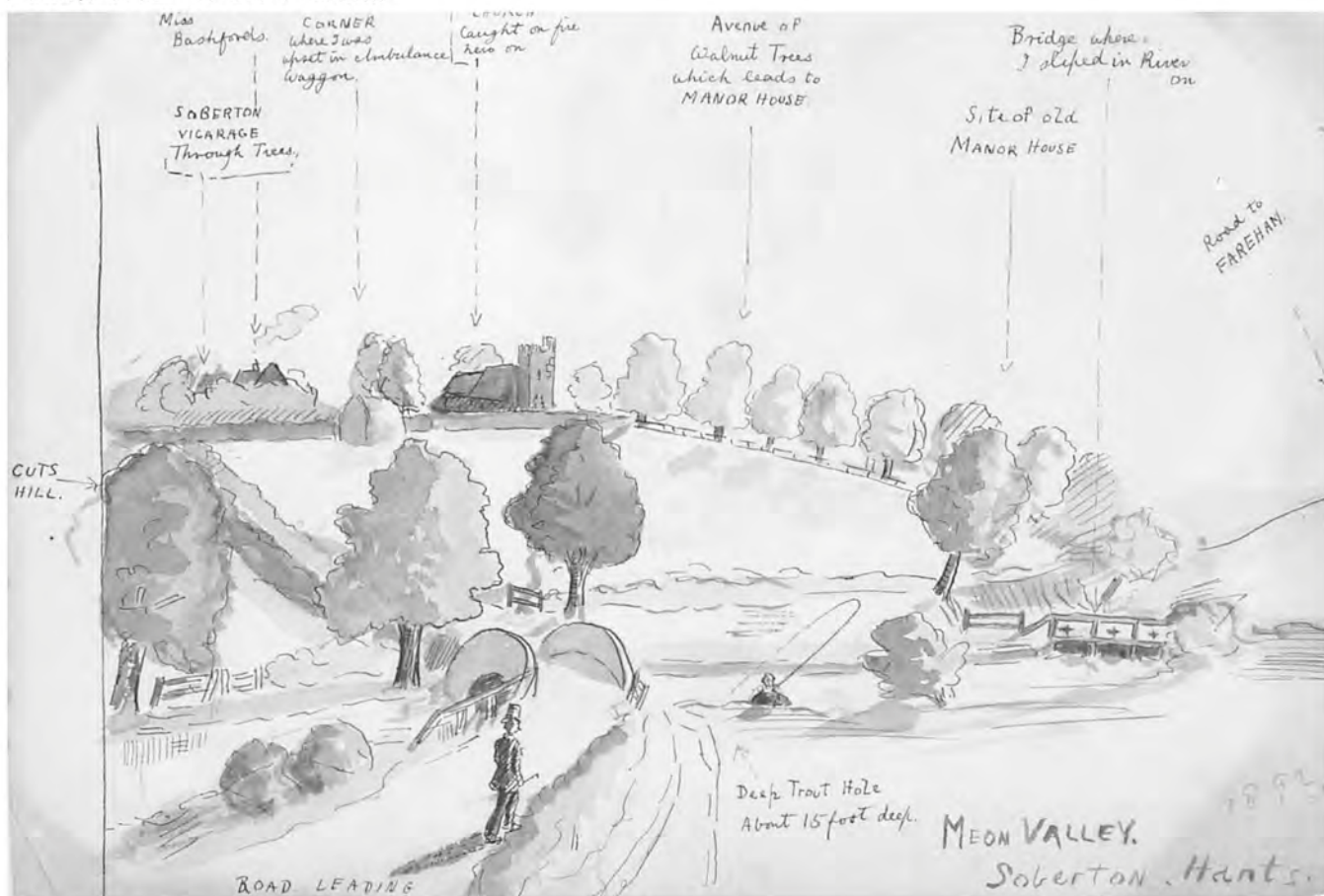
Any additions or changes, please contact the editor

USEFUL NUMBERS			LOCAL CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS		
Good Neighbours Group offers transport to medical appointments (see page 40) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Kate Harvey on 07843 496852 ❖ Kate Chesters on 07710 716664 			Brownies & Guides	Caroline Rogers	01489 877430
Doctors Surgeries	Wickham Droxford Denmead Bishops Waltham	01329 833121 01489 877588 02392 239630 01489 892288	Stitch & Chatter	Louise McEwen Sandra Henderson	01489 877448 01489 877978
CAB Adviceline		0800 144 8848	Local History	Jane Salmon	01489 878659
Meon Valley Carers Group		01264 332297 (option 3)	C.A.N.S	Suzanne White	07944 010909
Age UK Advice Line		0800 678 1602	Soberton Utd FC	Steve Norris	07853 292881
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	Soberton Players	Susan Hyland	01489 878724
LOCAL FACILITIES			Table Tennis	Pete Woodacre Adrian Hunt	01489 877768 01489 878141
Soberton Village Hall Booking	For SVH booking, please use e-mail address below <i>sobertonvillagehall@googlemail.com</i> <i>www.sobertonvillagehall.co.uk</i>		Ladies Group	Liz Whales	01489 877712
Rookesbury Hall Booking	Jenny Doney	01329 834392	Conservation Group	Phil Bergin	02392 632551
<i>Bookings@rookesburyhall.co.uk</i>			Meon Valley Investment Club	Hugh Pringle	02392 632551
Guide Hut Booking	Caroline Rogers	01489 877430	Meet&Eat	Sue Musselwhite	sue@poppyhill.net
<i>guidehutsoberton@gmail.com</i>					
CHURCHES			DISTRICT COUNCILLORS		
Newtown Church Warden	Fra Wells	01329 834130	Central Meon Valley Councillors	Malcolm Wallace Danny Lee Suzanne White	See page 42 for contact details
Soberton Church Wardens	Louise McEwen Malcolm Chapple	01489 877448 01489 877151	County Councillor	Patricia Stallard	02392 251484
PCC Secretary(N)			SOBERTON PARISH COUNCIL <i>www.soberton.org</i>		
PCC Secretary(S)	Norman Chapman	01489 877378	John Hyland Chairman	chair@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
Capt. Of Bells(S)	Caroline Rogers	01489 877430	Neil Findlay Vice-Chairman	vicechair@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
Churchyard Keeper (S)	John Lester	01489 878557	David Cleeve	Cllrcleeve@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
Church Safeguarding	Vacancy		Sam Marland	Cllrmarland@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			Paul Henderson	Cllrhenderson@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			John Russell-Smith	Cllrrussell-smith@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			Jonty Sherwill	Cllrsherwill@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			Vicki Weston	Cllrweston@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			David Buttriss	Cllrbuttriss@soberton-pc.gov.uk	
			Vacancies x 2		
			Clerk and Proper Officer	clerk@soberton-pc.gov.uk	

Please e-mail copy for the April / May magazine to
gill.highcroft@btinternet.com

NEXT COPY DATE - 17th March 2025 (17:00)

From the Archives.....



Above - 1892 drawing of the Cutts Arch entrance into Soberton, by 15 year old Harold Morley, from a sketch album discovered 25 years ago in amazing circumstances. You can read on page 14 of the magazine the story of the discovery of the album and how it came back to Soberton. It's a fascinating story and Harold was obviously a talented artist. **Below** - Sketch from 1893 titled Manor Tree Walk, showing the line of lime trees which used to run from the Church to the Manor House, with gardeners at work.



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