

# INKPEN AND COMBE BULLETIN

APRIL 2025



## CHURCH LETTER

**Light in the Darkness** - What are the things that really matter to you? Is it someone's kindness you remember, or their wise words when you really needed them?

My dad was in the First World War and was in the Somme. He was invalided out after a mustard gas attack, which nearly killed him. It profoundly affected who he was and the way he lived his life. He was invariably kind and thoughtful to whoever he met. He met mom between the wars, when she had been left with two young children to bring up on her own. No easy task then, never mind now. She went on to have a further two boys with him, but he treated all of us exactly the same. As we grow up, and reach our teens, we can easily discard what our moms and dads teach us, thinking we know more than them. But to be honest, as I have grown older many of my dad's wise sayings have come back to me, and I find them so useful in my day-to-day life.

When I remember him now, I realise he lived a life of thankfulness. It would have been easy, I would have thought, for him to be resentful and perhaps embittered. He was sent as a young man of seventeen onto the battlefields in France, into the living hell that was trench warfare. Yet the only comment he made, when I asked him about it, was that he felt a deep sorrow for the friends he had lost on that battlefield. He was also eternally grateful, that for a reason he didn't understand, he survived it and lived.

In the darkness he had found the light that John talks about in his gospel, when he talks about Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5 N.I. V.)

May we too live in that light and not allow the darkness that can exist in this world to overcome us. John Seabridge

## NEWS FROM ST. MICHAEL'S

### Lent is for Giving, not just for Giving up.

We would like to appeal to the generosity of parishioners to make a Gift to the Church this Lent. You might come to Church regularly or occasionally or would like to use it for Weddings, Baptisms or Funerals. You might just like to contribute to the maintenance of this beautiful, historic building at the heart of our community.

Please use either the envelope that was enclosed in the March Bulletin which can be given to your Bulletin deliverer or dropped off in the secure bucket in the Crown & Garter Café.

Better still, sign up online to the **Parish Giving Scheme** on [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk)

*Click on Find your Parish and enter Inkpen, then click on Inkpen St Michael All Angels on the map and then on Give followed by Regular Giving or One-off Gift. Your gifts are enhanced by having tax refunded through Gift Aid. Thank you.*

## CHURCH SERVICES FOR INKPEN AND COMBE

### INKPEN

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April – Compline at 6pm**

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April – Palm Sunday Family Service at 9.45am**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April - Easter Day – Holy Communion at 9.45am**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May- Compline at 6pm**

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May - Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) at 8.30**

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May - Holy Communion at 9.45**  
**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May - Benefice Rogation Family Service at West Woodhay with tractors 9.45.**

### **COMBE**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Easter Day – Holy Communion at 11.15am**

### **WEST WOODHAY**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Easter Day – Holy Communion at 11.15am**

On **6<sup>th</sup> April** there is our quiet contemplative service of **Compline** at 6pm.

**Palm Sunday is on 13<sup>th</sup> April.** This will be an outdoor service at 9.45 with Janie Grievson kindly walking her donkeys to the Church from Totterdown.

And at the **Easter Day Family service on 20<sup>th</sup> April at 9.45** there will be lots of mini eggs!

## **OUTDOOR ROGATION SERVICE**

### **HIGHWOOD FARM WEST WOODHAY, RG20 0BT**



COME AND JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL OUTDOOR SERVICE  
TO BLESS THE FIELDS, FARMS AND COUNTRYSIDE IN A TRADITION THAT  
DATES BACK CENTURIES – ALL ARE WELCOME

### **SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY - 12 NOON**

**FREE TRACTOR RIDES & OTHER ACTIVITIES  
THROUGHOUT THE AFTERNOON**

Service followed by a free lamb roast in a bun lunch  
(LIMITED NUMBERS or bring your own)

**\*\*PLACES MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE BY 17<sup>th</sup> MAY\*\***

Confirm with numbers to Revd. Annette Shannon  
revannettes@aol.co.uk or 01488 646385

Ample parking and toilets –  
- bring your own drinks - (there will be a limited bar)

## **CHURCH CONTACTS**

**Benefice Administrator:** Tamara Laing, part-time at the **Benefice Office** Email: [wbb.office.contact@gmail.com](mailto:wbb.office.contact@gmail.com) 07359 327072

**Churchwardens:**

**Inkpen:** Charlotte Bampfylde ([inkpenchurch@outlook.com](mailto:inkpenchurch@outlook.com))

**Combe:** Tina Fiertz (tel. 668529), Katherine Astor ([katherine@kirby-house.co.uk](mailto:katherine@kirby-house.co.uk)).

## **CHURCH SERVICES AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HUNGERFORD**

Our Lady of Lourdes, Priory Road, Hungerford RG17 0AF  
Parish Priest - Fr Zbigniew Budyn 01635 40332

**Sunday Mass** - every Sunday at 9.00am  
**Weekday Mass** - every Wednesday at 10.00am

## INKPEN PLAYING FIELD & PAVILION

**Children's parties, Group and Birthday parties** - The Inkpen pavilion is an ideal venue for a wide range of events. The Bi-fold doors open wide so that people can sit outside or wonder around on those balmy summer evenings.

The facilities provided include:

- A fully fitted kitchen with a hatchway that allows views over the main room, ideal for keeping an eye on energetic children.
- Adjoining children's play area for those special children's parties.
- Plenty of car parking.
- Wi-Fi is provided with Gigabit speeds.
- Air-conditioned main room for those hot days as well as cold ones.
- Standard toilets and a disabled toilet.
- Caters for up to 60 adults.

If you are looking to host an event locally, the Inkpen pavilion might well be the ideal place for you. For enquiries or bookings go to [impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk](http://impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk). The Inkpen Memorial Playing Field Trust (IMPFT) is a registered charity.

## THE CROWN AND GARTER

We have the usual quiz night on the last Wednesday of the month (30th) and also for Easter Sunday we are holding an Easter egg hunt for the children along with some egg decorating, a photo booth where parents can take pictures of their children on their own cameras and also a colouring competition.

We will also be extending our opening times to the following:

Breakfast - Monday - Friday will be served from 7:30 am - 10am

Saturday food will now be served all day (it will be the pub classics only between 3pm - 6pm) and

Sunday the kitchen will be open until 6pm. This takes place from Monday 31st March.

## COPY DATE

Please email [aliedesforges79@gmail.com](mailto:aliedesforges79@gmail.com) by **MAY** with all features, news and events for the March edition.

## INKPEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Another month has sped by and there is plenty of exciting news to share with you. At the beginning of March, it was World book day. At Inkpen Primary School, we took this a step further and celebrated Reading Week, which proved to be a wonderful experience for all. This year's theme was "Read your way" and we were delighted to invite parents in for our "book tasting" sessions, where parents and children sampled a variety of literature, explored different genres, and shared their favourite texts. Additionally, we engaged in a delightful range of book crafts, including sewing and pottery, which encouraged creativity, allowing students to express their interpretations of their favourite stories.

Our “Food Art” initiative provided a platform for young artists to create edible masterpieces inspired by books. Finally, we had a surprise visitor and the Muntjac children enjoyed “Tea with a Tiger”, an enchanting gathering where children enjoyed stories over a cup of tea and some delectable treats. Following closely on the heels of Reading Week, we were excited to celebrate Science Week. This year, we had the incredible opportunity to engage in a live lesson hosted on the BBC by astronaut Tim Peake, who shared his remarkable experiences in space. Furthermore, we organised our very first science fair, where students showcased their innovative projects and findings, fostering a sense of inquiry and enthusiasm for the sciences. We were amazed by the effort that clearly went into these projects, inspired by this year's theme Adapt and Change, and were so proud to see the children sharing their hard work with other children and parents. Our youngest learners were tasked with designing and making a boat that floats and enjoyed testing them at the fair. Again, we were delighted with the effort that had clearly gone into making these.




I look forward to updating you next month but in the meantime, please look out for our exciting adventures on our social media pages.



## INKPEN STITCH AND KNIT

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 2 April at 7:30 p.m. in Inkpen Village Hall. We're a group of ladies from Inkpen and a few from further afield, who have an interest in various forms of handiwork - knitting, sewing, tapestry, macrame, crochet. We occasionally have demonstrations. Past demos have included leatherwork, book covering, Japanese knot bags, ribbon wreaths, Christmas decorations and bunting. We'll be working on our own projects this month. If you would like to join us, come along. We charge £2 to cover hall costs and tea/coffee. Or, if you want any further information, ring Stephanie (07713 097609), our communications contact.

## THE VILLAGE HALL INKPEN OPEN DAY

 Date: 18th May |  Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM |  Venue: Inkpen Village Hall

On Sunday, 18th May, an Open Day will be held at Inkpen Village Hall to showcase local clubs, groups, and community activities.

This event is designed to provide both new and longstanding residents with insights into the various opportunities available within the village.

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet organisers, learn about local initiatives, and engage with fellow residents over refreshments. With the recent arrival of new families in Inkpen, this event serves as an excellent occasion to foster community connections and participation.



## Inkpen Village Hall - Regular Clubs & Activity



[www.inkpenvillagehall.org](http://www.inkpenvillagehall.org) email:- [inkpenvh@gmail.com](mailto:inkpenvh@gmail.com), tel:- 0756 8284750

<b>Carpet Bowls</b>	Thursdays	1.30-4.30pm	Sandy Wilson, tel: 01488 668336
<b>Darts Social Club</b>	Mondays Fortnightly	7pm	Mark, mob: 0756 828 4750
<b>Guitar Tuition</b>	Tuesdays	4-8pm	Russ Timms, mob:- 07860 830515
<b>Pilates</b>	Thursday mornings	11.45am	Caroline McCord, Mob: 07817 503546
<b>Market</b>	TBA Usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays	10-12.30pm	Christine, Mob: 07767 480777 Email: <a href="mailto:inkpenmarket@hotmail.com">inkpenmarket@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Stitch &amp; Knit</b>	1st Wed every month	7.30pm	Stephanie Pike, Mob: 07713 097609
<b>Seated Exercise</b>	Wednesdays	11.30am	Kate Wiggins, mob: 07706 357801
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Wednesdays	4pm-6pm	Linda Pateman, email: <a href="mailto:lindapateman@yahoo.co.uk">lindapateman@yahoo.co.uk</a> Mob: 07774 775599
<b>U3A Table Tennis</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays	1.30-3.30pm	Linda Pateman, details as above
<b>Yoga</b>	Tuesday Thursday	9.30am 6.30pm	Olivia Boydall, Mob: 07554 446502





## ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING

 Date: 11th April |  Time: 7:30 PM |  Venue: Inkpen Village Hall

Residents, representatives of voluntary organisations, and members of the business community are cordially invited to attend the Annual Parish Assembly.

The Chairman of the Parish Council will deliver a comprehensive report on the Council's activities over the past year. Additionally, the Chairman of the Inkpen Memorial Playing Field Trust (IMPFT) will provide an update on the Trust's work and initiatives.

The Parish Council is committed to consulting with the local community to identify infrastructure priorities. Residents and community organisations are encouraged to propose ideas that will benefit the community. An open forum will be held for discussion, and suggestions may also be submitted via email to the Parish Clerk at [clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk).

Reports will be available from District Councillors and other community organisations where appropriate, representatives are welcome to address the assembly in person.

In keeping with other local parishes, instead of reading out reports from local organisations, we invite clubs, groups, and organisations to showcase their work at the Inkpen Open Day on 18th May (details below).

Following the formal proceedings, attendees will have the opportunity to engage in further discussion while enjoying light refreshments.

## INKPEN DARTS CLUB

The Arrows team set off down the hill with excitement and a hint of nerves for our very first tournament since the club was founded just a few months ago. Our destination was Kintbury FC, where we were set to face a formidable team in what promised to be a thrilling evening of darts.

As the matches got underway, the competition was fierce. The singles games were hard-fought, with both teams matching each other point for point. By the time the doubles matches came around, everything was still to play for the overall winner would be decided in these final rounds.

With eight determined players representing Inkpen, we gathered ourselves for the crucial last stretch. A few drinks helped to steady the nerves, while the traditional pickled egg or two was said to sharpen our focus. As the final darts were thrown and the scores tallied, we could hardly believe it—we had done it! An away win, our first win, and, so far, our only win for our fledgling club.

A huge thank you to Kintbury FC and their clubhouse for hosting us; the hospitality was fantastic, and we're already looking forward to the return match.

If you'd like to give darts a try, whether you're an experienced player or, like most of us, a complete beginner, we'd love to have you join us. We meet at the village hall every other Monday at 7 pm. Full details, including upcoming dates, can be found on the village hall website. Come along and be part of the fun!

## THE INKPEN HISTORY SOCIETY

We're just coming into Spring, and people are out in their gardens taking plants out and putting in new ones. This is your golden opportunity to help us. Ideally you need a coin and a smart phone or

camera. As you disturb the soil the chances are that you will see a beetle. Please, please, please don't kill it. Take a picture of it alongside the coin to give us some idea of its size. Send the picture to [inkpen-climate@outlook.com](mailto:inkpen-climate@outlook.com).

Beetles are our most efficient recyclers, but they are in decline thanks to the use of pesticides. We want to record the numbers, distribution and variety of beetles in our area. Please help us with this. If the decline in beetle numbers continues, then this study will enable future groups to do comparisons and chart the decline or otherwise.

We've recently done a similar survey with moths and the results are currently being collated. They will be published on our history website [history.inkpenvillage.co.uk](http://history.inkpenvillage.co.uk).

If you look on the website, on the climate change page, you will see where we have large gaps in our tree age survey. Estimating a tree's age is a relatively simple task with no special equipment needed. If you live in Inkpen and think you could help us with this, please get in touch at [enquiries@inkpenhistory.uk](mailto:enquiries@inkpenhistory.uk). Thank you.

## INKPEN POP-IN CAFÉ

Don't be a fool this April, come and try our Pop-In Cafe, at the Inkpen playing field pavilion. It's open every **first and third Thursday of the month, between 10am and 12:30pm**. Join us for a tea/coffee/hot chocolate and a piece of cake this April 3rd and 17th. Come and have a chat or just sit and contemplate.

Join residents from Kintbury, Hungerford and Inkpen. Have a game of chequers or arm wrestle (just joking). There's something for everyone. We're also here on May 1st and 15th. Make a note in your diary.

## STARGAZERS



*Courtesy Tim Burgess, Kintbury*

Lunar Eclipse 14th March 2025 –

The Stargazers met on the 21st of March to take a look at our new Seestar S50 smart telescope, and to view some of the images that we've taken so far. If you are a stargazer, someone that steps outside at night just to take a look at the awesome night sky, then come and join us. Email us at [inkpen-climate@outlook.com](mailto:inkpen-climate@outlook.com)

We've recently launched our new <http://stargazers.inkpenvillage.co.uk> website. Thank you to all those that have tried it out. Any comments are welcome. If you would like to join us and come to our meetings, you would be very welcome. Just keep an eye on the stargazers' website.

The date of the next meeting will be posted there in early June and held at the Inkpen pavilion, but regular stargazing continues relentlessly.



## **Rural life is under threat.**

The BBC described the government's latest blow to the countryside as 'Environmental scheme closure a 'shattering blow' to farmers'. The NFU president, said that it was 'another shattering blow to English farms'. The Telegraph headlined it as 'Farming subsidies halted in latest Labour attack on rural life'. Farmers weekly say "Cruellest betrayal" as Defra halts new SFI applications. So, what is it that's happening.

The Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), which pays farmers in England to manage land to protect soil, restore hedgerows and boost nature recovery, was a key part of the post-Brexit payment scheme that replaced EU subsidies. This scheme has been closed with no replacement being announced. Given that climate change is set to become an increasingly pressing problem, this is a severe blow to the countryside and farming. It will undoubtedly mean that small farms will disappear.

The Government is also set to double the number of new houses required to be built in West Berkshire in the next few years. Since West Berkshire is around 75% covered by the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, it means that the pressure on green spaces is set to intensify.

Now, West Berkshire Council has announced 'New unitary council proposed for West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse'. This will mean that we have reduced councillor representation, by around two thirds. This comes as a result of National Government requiring local councils to serve around 500,000 residents or more, which will require West Berkshire Council - which covers around 170,000 people - to merge with neighbouring councils. So, our representation is set to be reduced, hard won attempts to protect nature are under substantial threat, small farms are set to disappear and house building within the countryside is set to happen/increase.

As a positive, not all of this hasn't happened yet. Your voice counts so make it heard. Over the next week or so, there will be a consultation document launched by the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Please read it. You can make your views known by canvassing West Berkshire Council as well as your MP, Lee Dillon, and you can support the efforts of CPRE, the countryside charity.

If you don't like what is being proposed for our countryside, please make your voice heard. Don't just let this all happen to you without making your voice heard.

## **The North Wessex Downs National Landscape.**

There is a body, often referred to as the '[NWD National Landscape](#)', which is charged with doing its best to protect where you live. It works alongside BBOWT, West Berks Council and several other district councils, Natural England, Historic England and lots of other bodies, and it meets just a few times a year to try and work out what is happening to our natural green spaces, and what to do about it. It really is important to your life, but I would guess that you don't know much about it, if anything.

Do take a look at their website, <https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/>. There are events, consultations and updates. What they do is especially important given the way in which climate change is impacting the world, our world. Get to know the way in which this body works for you, the challenges it faces, both financial and legal. Considering the way in which recent governments have at best sidelined the protection of our green spaces and at worst put them under increasing threat, let your [local MP](#) know that your environment is important to you. Once green, natural

spaces are gone, it is unlikely that we will get them back again.

### **Switching off your Outside Lights**

The North Wessex Downs NL ask people to switch off their outside lights when they're not absolutely necessary. Wildlife groups ask the same. Neighbours living next to someone that keep their outside lights on at night want the lights to go off and the police tactfully suggest that leaving outside lights on simply helps burglars. Switching off your outside lights helps the environment and saves money.

Any suggestions about how to incentivise people to switch off unnecessary outside lights would be gratefully received. Email [inkpen-climate@outlook.com](mailto:inkpen-climate@outlook.com).

### **The Community Asset Scheme**

Many of you may have heard about the Community Asset Scheme, which permits a community group to list a village asset, such as a pub, in order to have enough time to raise funds for a bid. I attach the link to the West Berkshire website, which gives more information here. [Community Right to Bid - West Berkshire Council](#)

The Parish Council would like to point out that **The Swan** in Lower Green has been listed for sale with a local agent, and the scheme may be of interest. However, the sale price needs to be matched, and of course, if the pub was taken over, there would be significant refurbishment costs and ongoing maintenance. It would need to remain as a pub. If this is of interest, please respond in the first instance to The Parish Council.

### **PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

Parish Council and Planning Meetings are displayed on the notice boards outside the Crown & Garter Pub and on the Lower Green Triangle and online on the Inkpen Residents Facebook page and at [www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk). Both Council and Planning meetings are open to the public so please feel free to attend if you wish to raise any parish issues or have any comments on any village planning applications.

Parish meeting now has an open forum session which allows villagers to raise any issues, ideas, and questions.

#### **Parish Councillors:**

Mark Bates - Parish Chairman ([mark.bates@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:mark.bates@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
Brian Cox - Parish Vice Chairman ([brian.cox@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:brian.cox@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
John Come - Planning Chairman ([john.come@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:john.come@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
Darren Durham - Planning Vice Chairman ([darren.durham@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:darren.durham@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
Clare Macinnes ([clare.macinnes@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clare.macinnes@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
James Fisher ([james.fisher@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:james.fisher@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))  
David Thomas ([david.thomas@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:david.thomas@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))

#### **Clerk to the Parish:**

Angela Boyce ([clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk))

### **Upcoming Planning Applications:**

If you have a planning application or wish to comment on a local application, then you can attend our planning meeting and comment online on the West Berks Planning Portal.

### **Useful Information:**

**Upcoming Roadworks:** Website: [one.network](#) – where you can set alerts of local road closures and planned works

### **Report a problem on a road or pavement:**

Report a variety of problems relating to roads including drainage issues, potholes, streetlights and grass or trees that need cutting.

[www.westberks.gov.uk/article/35980/Report-a-problem-on-a-road-or-pavement](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/article/35980/Report-a-problem-on-a-road-or-pavement)

or call 01635 551111

### **Fly Tipping:**

Did you know you can report any fly tipping to West Berks Council using the online portal to identify the location of the rubbish.

[www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping)

Inkpen Parish Council can be contacted at [clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Website: [www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

### **Litter picking**

At this time of year when the hedges have been cut and grass on the verges is short it is a great opportunity to take a bag when you are walking and pick up the various delights jettisoned from vehicle windows.

## **Public Rights of Way**

When fencing near public rights of way (PRoW), landowners must ensure the public path remains unobstructed, using clear signage to warn of potential hazards like electric fences, and avoid any infringement on the legal width of the right of way including allowing crops and farm animals to stray onto the public footpaths, bridleways and public routes that do not directly cross the farmland.

Contrary to popular belief, a farmer does not have a legal right to shoot a dog that is worrying their animals, but it is currently an offence to allow a dog to worry livestock, so it is recommended that all dogs are kept on leads especially near to fields that contain sheep, cattle etc.

Inkpen Parish Council.

# LAMBING WEEKEND

**12th-13th APRIL**  
**FOXGLOVE FARM**



**INKPEN RG17 9QR**

**OPEN 10 am - 4 pm. Free Parking. Local Food and crafts.**

**Tractor Farm Tours. Hot Food. Bring your wellies.**

**No pregnant women.**

**Adults £7. Kids (2-16yrs) £3 Cash or Card Includes Tractor Tour Fun family educational weekend lots of children's activities include: Easter Egg Hunt, Carriage rides, Pony grooming, Baby chicks 🐣 Bottle feed a lamb 🍼🐑 Local fire engine 🚒 Vintage tractors display, Potato planting 🥔 Painting, Tombola prizes, Hot food 🍔🍌 and selection of Homemade cakes 🍰 from the shepherds hut. Sorry no dogs.**