

# THURSLEY PARISH MAGAZINE

## St Michael & All Angels

MARCH 2026



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## EDITORIAL

*By Tricia Horwood*



**It** must be the start of spring as once again I am delighted to welcome back Debbie Spencer's monthly column encouraging us all to *Give it a Grow!* There is something wonderfully hopeful about this time of year. Gardens begin to stir, seed catalogues reappear on kitchen tables, and even the smallest patch of soil seems full of possibility.

**As** I write this, the sun is shining — and what a difference it makes to our mood. After months of deluge, a little warmth and brightness can lift the spirits in an instant. As can a chance meeting today at the 50+ Ladies lunch at the pub with a new resident at Smallbrook Farm, who makes orange marmalade to raise funds for the church (read p15). And coincidentally there is a recipe for a wonderful Orange Marmalade Cake on p21 (Camilla was kind enough to bake me one and it is absolutely delicious).

**Plans** for Thursley Pavilion are progressing, and volunteers are required to help with a community clean-up there on the morning of Saturday, 14th March (see p29). A few willing hands can achieve a great deal, and it is always remarkable how satisfying it feels to work together for the good of the village.

**And** for those who enjoy gardening from a historical as well as a practical perspective, we also have news of a fascinating forthcoming talk exploring 500 years of gardening history at Hampton Court Palace. From Tudor kitchen gardens to grand Victorian planting schemes, the story of how our gardens have evolved is also a story about changing tastes, innovation, and our enduring relationship with the land. It promises to be both informative and inspiring (see p16).

**Wishing you all a green and sunny Spring!**

**PLEASE NOTE DEADLINE OF 14TH MARCH 2026 FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES TO THE APRIL 2026 ISSUE OF THURSLEY PARISH MAGAZINE.**

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	<b>9.45am</b>	<b>Communion at St Michael's, Thursley</b>
	10.30am	Modern Service with Communion at St James' Church, Elstead
<b>SUNDAY 8th Lent 3</b>	9.15am	Communion at St James' Church, Elstead
<b>SUNDAY 15th Mothering Sunday</b>	<b>9.45am</b>	<b>Communion at St Michael's, Thursley</b>
	10.30am	Communion at St James' Church, Elstead
	11.00am	Service of the Word at St Mary's Church, Shackleford
<b>SUNDAY 22nd Passiontide</b>	10.00am	Communion at St Nicholas, Peper Harow
<b>SUNDAY 29th</b>	10.30am	Service at St James' Church, Elstead
	11.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church, Shackleford

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## VILLAGE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### MARCH

Tuesday 3rd	7.00pm	<b>Thursley Parish Council Meeting.</b> Village Hall. All welcome.
Saturday 14th	10-12 noon	<b>Clean up at Thursley Pavilion.</b> All welcome. See p29.
Sunday 15th	9.45am	<b>Mothering Sunday Service</b> at St Michael & All Angels Church.
Wednesday 18th	7.30pm	<b>Horts Society talk on “500 Years of History at Hampton Court”.</b> See p16.
Thursday 19th	12.30pm	<b>Thursley 50+ Ladies Lunch.</b> Three Horseshoes Pub. Booking essential. Contact Lisa Woods.
Saturday 21st	10.00am	<b>Churchyard Working Party.</b> St Michael & All Angels Church. All help welcome.

### FUTURE DATES

**Easter Saturday, 4th April**  
**OVIS CANTORUM Choir in St Michael’s Church**

**Saturday, 11th April**  
**SPRING SHOW**

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## FINDING HOPE IN A CHALLENGING WORLD

By Revd Hannah Moore



**Lent**, which this year began on the 18th of February, is a season in the church calendar that is marked by giving something up, such as chocolates or alcohol. But more importantly, it is a season that invites us into a period of self-reflection and perhaps realignment. It is a gentle but honest season that asks us to pause, look within, and turn to God with renewed trust.

**The** 40 days of Lent echo the experience of Jesus in the wilderness, where He faced hunger, temptation, and uncertainty. It was a place of testing, but also a place of closeness to His Father. Many of us know something of that wilderness feeling—when life is unsettled, when we feel stretched or weary, or when the world around us seems unpredictable. Lent does not pretend life is easy. Instead, it offers

us a pathway through the wilderness, reminding us that even in difficulty, God is present, faithful, and leading us toward hope.

**And** yet, Scripture assures us that the wilderness is never a place God abandons. Rather, it becomes a place where He shapes us, strengthens us, and teaches us to depend on Him more deeply. The words of the beautiful Footprints in the Sand poem are another reminder that God never leaves us:

*"My precious child, when you only see one set of footprints in the sand, it was then that I was carrying you."*

**In** the busyness of modern living, Lent offers us time to re-centre ourselves. It is a time to lay down the distractions that cloud our vision, to breathe more deeply, and it is about creating space in our hearts so that we might see more clearly the hope that God offers.

**The** world around us can feel overwhelming: global uncertainty, personal struggles, and the everyday demands of life can leave us asking where hope can be found. Lent gently reminds us that hope is not found in perfect circumstances, but in the unchanging character of God.

**Psalm** 46 tells us, “*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*” Hope grows when we place our lives—uncertainties included—into the hands of the God who holds all things.

**Lent** has a inspiring destination – Easter and the resurrection. So even as we reflect, repent, and simplify, we do so with an eye on the promise that the story does not end in sorrow. The cross leads to an empty tomb, and the world’s darkness is met with God’s Easter promise.

**In** this way, Lent teaches us a deep and steady hope—a hope that does

not deny hardship but looks beyond it. It is the assurance that God is always working, always renewing, always leading us toward life.

**And** as we journey together as a community, may we support one another with kindness, prayer, and love—living signs of God’s hope in a world that needs it. May this season lead us closer to God’s heart and fill us with the quiet, enduring hope that comes from knowing we are held, guided, and deeply loved.

*Hannah*

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## THURSLEY PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

*By Chairman James Mendelsohn*

**Following** the fire that devastated the Common in May 2020, a significant sum of money was raised by local people and organisations to help restore the boardwalks, which so many of us enjoy on a regular basis.

**This** work was primarily funded by Natural England and Waverley Borough Council through their CIL fund. With this generous external funding, some of the local funds are still available in the Preserve our Reserve account that is managed jointly by us, in partnership with Elstead Parish Council.

**We** are anxious to ensure that these funds are put to good use, and therefore at our February meeting, we agreed with the proposal put forward by Elstead Parish Council that the majority of the remaining funds should be used to provide the materials for the volunteers on the Common to complete the one section of boardwalks that was not restored after the fire. We hope that you agree that this is a good use of the available funds.

**We** also agreed that, after retaining a small amount for contingencies, the balance of the fund should be used to improve the signage at the main access points to the Common. Rather than telling visitors what they can and can't do in a way which runs the risk of being counter-productive, we are working with Natural England to produce some more educational signs, that will explain to visitors that the Common is a National Nature Reserve, what is so special about

it, and how visitors need to respect the Common to maintain its integrity.

**The** feeling is that if we explain to people the rationale behind the rules, some of which can appear to be quite draconian, then we have a better chance of visitors of understanding the situation and abiding by them. Unfortunately, initiatives like this can move relatively slowly with Natural England but we will work with Elstead Parish Council to try and push this idea through as soon as possible.

**It** is encouraging to see that the plans for the redevelopment of the cricket pavilion are progressing well, as you will read elsewhere in this magazine. The pre-application planning report was encouraging – although it did highlight a number of areas that will need to be addressed very carefully – and things are moving forward with a session on the morning of Saturday 14 March at 10.00am to clear some of the unwanted items from the pavilion and the surrounding area.

**I** very much hope that as many of you as possible will be able to help us on that day, not only because with enough hands, it will be a very manageable (and, I hope, fun) project, but it will also give us the opportunity to update you on how our plans are progressing in a little more detail.

**With** Spring now (hopefully) approaching, there will be a number of 'maintenance' projects going on around the village, simply trying to ensure that the village

always looks its best. If you are able to help with some sign cleaning, pavement clearing or litter picking, either generally or perhaps outside your own property, we would certainly appreciate it. It really

is a matter of many hands making light work!

**The** next Parish Council meeting will take place in the Village Hall on Tuesday 3 March at 7.00 pm.

## **CHURCH FUND RAISING ORANGE MARMALADE**

For more than 400 years, oranges have flourished on the land at Ave Maria's orchard in Seville. Each January, these wonderful organic Seville oranges make their way to a friendly wholesaler in Kent, who kindly donates around 60 kilos, at cost, to the church.



Our new residents at Smallbrook Farm in Thursley then take on the task of collecting and preparing the oranges. The shredded, part-cooked mixture is frozen in bulk, ready to be turned into delicious homemade marmalade throughout the year.



Marmalade making has been a cherished tradition for over 35 years, in two churches in the parish of Crondall & Ewshot. Now, we are delighted to have a new outlet in our very own St Michael & All Angels. Processing the oranges is a team effort lasting about a week each year – and we warmly welcome Thursley volunteers to join in next January!

Last year, around 500 jars of marmalade made at Smallbrook Farm were sold across the three churches. You'll find supplies as you enter St Michael's in Thursley, on the left. If you can, please donate any similar sized jam jars – just place them on the shelves below the display so they can be reused and help support our cause to raise funds for the church.

Enjoy! *Lynne Stewart-Brindle*





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## THURSLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

By Pat Clark

I hope that by the time you read this the weather will have improved and you will be looking forward to the Spring Show on Saturday April 11th. We are adding a special extra class to the cookery section.

**Please** make a stunning 'Showy' Cake, with any ingredients of your choice, any size or shape, but make the main element the decoration with as much chocolate as you would like to use. The cake itself need not be chocolate. Everyone - well most people - love chocolate - and it should look spectacular! We would like to see a whole table full of beautifully, amazingly decorated cakes. Draw your designs and try them out now - there is time! Members and non-members, children included, are all invited to help us create a great display. If you are interested, please email:

**[thursleyhortsoc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thursleyhortsoc@hotmail.co.uk)**

by Thursday 9th April, so that we have enough table space....

**A** heads up too to children and parents. The children's classes are on page 6 of the schedule - if you have not got one, please get in touch. Children are invited to make a Bird Feeder, a Flower Arrangement and/or a Garden on a round container, maximum diameter 30 cm. Again, we are looking for the spectacular. The Bird Feeder can be made of any material and may be as large or small, tall or short, as the child would like. Ask them to be creative.

Maybe look at existing examples - but more excitingly, make their own unique design. We are not expecting real birds! - but something perching on the feeder would be fun.

**The** Garden in a container is always popular and can look very pretty, but the chosen theme could be as unusual, strange, colourful, wild or geometric as wished. There is no height restriction, and the garden could include elements of any material, natural or not. Make one with a serious message, or one to amuse. All children are invited to take part, including grandchildren who don't live in the village. Email below:

**[thursleyhortsoc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thursleyhortsoc@hotmail.co.uk)**

by Thursday 9th April to enter. There will be a prize for every entry.

**Finally**, a reminder that before the Show we have a Talk from Graham Dilmore, Head Gardener, entitled '500 Years of Gardening History at Hampton Court' This talk has been specially recommended. Graham has years of gardening experience at Hampton Court and is an amusing speaker. One of our members, Mart Veerus, now a Head Gardener himself, has worked with him. This should be an absolutely fascinating talk for gardeners and historians and anyone interested in Hampton Court. Do come to the Village Hall on Wednesday 18th March at 7.30pm. Admission free. Refreshments and a Raffle. Bring your friends. Non-members welcome.

## THE PORTSMOUTH ROAD & MARY TOFTS

*By Jackie Rickenberg (from the archives of the History Society)*

**Thursley** History Society is building up quite the library of interesting books all concerning either the village, its occupants, buildings and/or surroundings. These can be lent out as required and expect to see them at many of the Society's events throughout the year. As we have designated this year to transportation and its many facets, this month I am including passages from a book in our archives called "The Portsmouth Road" by Charles G. Harper, first published in 1895.

It is a little jewel of a book, detailing the road from its London source, to its Portsmouth destination and everywhere in between. The road, of course, cut through our village and was a source of much folk lore and some incredibly mysterious goings on. I have included small extracts, but the book is a fascinating read with lovely illustrations by the author and "Old time Prints and Pictures", a couple of which I have included here.

*"The Portsmouth Road was measured from the Stones' End, Borough. It went by Vauxhall to Wandsworth, Putney Heath, Kingston-On-Thames, Guildford and Petersfield; and thence came presently into Portsmouth through the Forest of Bere and past the frowning battlements of Portchester. The distance was seventy-one miles, seven furlongs; and our forebears who prayerfully entrusted their bodies to the*

*dangers of the roads and resigned their souls to Providence, were hurried along this route at the breakneck speed of something under eight miles an hour, with their hearts in their mouths and their money in their boots, for fear of the highwaymen who infested the roads.*

*By 1821 the speediest journey was quoted as nine hours, performed in that year by what was then considered the meteoric and previously unheard-of swiftness of the "Rocket", which, in that new and most fashionable of era of mail and stage-coach travelling, had deserted the grimy and decidedly unfashionable precincts of the Borough and the Elephant and Castle, for modish Piccadilly.*

*They were jolly coach-loads that fared along the roads in coaching days, and, truly, all their jollity was needed, for unearthly hours, insufficient protection from inclement weather, and the tolerable certainty of falling in with thieves on their way, were experiences and contingencies that, one might imagine, could scarce fail of depressing the most buoyant spirits".*

**At** this juncture, I digress from my planned article and literally go down a rabbit hole as I read about Mary Tofts of Godalming. I previously wrote an article



**A Scene of the London to Portsmouth Road**

about Hammer Ponds, in which it was mentioned that there was an area of farmed rabbit warrens nearby (hence Warren Park) which had disappeared in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was supposed that rabbit meat went out of fashion, but perhaps it was a result of Mary Tofts' legacy.

***“Godalming** was a place notorious in the eighteenth century as the scene of one of the most impudent frauds ever practised upon the credulity of mankind. The story of Mary Tofts, if not edifying, is at least interesting. She was the wife of Joshua Tofts, a poor journeyman cloth-worker of this little town, and was described as of “a healthy, strong constitution, small size, fair complexion, a very stupid and sullen*

*temper, and unable to write or read”. Stupid or not, she possessed sufficient cunning to maintain her fraud for some time, and even to delude some eminent surgeons of the day into a firm belief in her pretended births of rabbits. For this was the preposterous nature of the imposition, and she claimed to have given birth to no less than eighteen of them.*

***A** Mr Howard, a medical man of Guildford, who claimed to have assisted Mary in giving birth to eighteen rabbits, seems, from the voluminous literature of this subject, to have been something of a party to the cheat; and if we did not find him a guilty accomplice, there would remain the scarce more*



flattering designation of egregious dupe. But Mr Howard, dupe or rogue, was extremely busy in publishing to the world the particulars of this extraordinary case. Public attention was now roused in the most extraordinary degree, and the subject of Mary Tofts and her rabbits was in everyone's mouth.

**The King** (George I), too, was numbered among the believers, and things came to such a pass that ladies began to be alarmed with apprehensions of bringing into the world some unnatural progeny. "No one presumed to eat a rabbit", and the rent of rabbit-warrens sank to nothing. But a German Court physician – a Dr Ahlers – who had proceeded to Guildford in order to report upon the matter to his Majesty, was rendered sceptical as

much by the behaviour of Mr Howard as by that of his interesting patient. He returned to town, convinced of trickery, and finally Mary Tofts and her medical advisor were brought to London and lodged on the Bagnio, Leicester Fields, where, in fear of combined threats of punishment and an artfully-pictured operation darkly hinted at by Sir Richard Manningham, Obstetrician, she confessed that the fraud had been suggested to her by a woman, a neighbour of Godalming, who, with the showman's instinct of Barnum, told her that here was a way to a good livelihood without the necessity of working for it. The part taken by Mr Howard has never been satisfactorily explained, but as he was particularly insistent that Mary Tofts deserved a pension from the King on account of her rabbits, his part in the affair has, naturally, been looked upon with considerable suspicion. Doctor and patient were, however, committed to Tothill Fields, Bridewell. (a prison located in Westminster, Central London and demolished in 1834 – Ed.).

**Could** this account for the disappearance of the rabbit warrens in Thursley? To read the original Hammer Ponds article, please visit the website:

**[thursleyhistorysociety.org](http://thursleyhistorysociety.org)**

**The** subject of transportation and the history of the Portsmouth Rd will be continued next month – with absolutely no mention of rabbits!

## SUGAR & BAKES

By Camilla Daubeney

### ORANGE AND MARMALADE CAKE



Packed with Vitamin C, and totally moorish, this makes a wonderful pudding. If you have made your own marmalade this year, do use it in the cake, homemade is always preferable to store bought.

#### Ingredients

200g unsalted butter  
4 small oranges  
3 tablespoons demerara sugar  
200g caster sugar  
4 heaped tablespoons marmalade -  
thick or thin cut  
4 large eggs  
200g self-raising flour  
50g ground almonds  
Handful of flaked almonds

#### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas 4/160 Fan. Grease the base and sides of an 8" loose-bottomed cake tin.
2. Thinly slice 1 of the oranges. Sprinkle the base of the cake tin with the demerara sugar, then arrange the orange slices over the base, just overlapping each other.
3. Cream the butter and caster sugar until pale and fluffy, then beat in 4 heaped tablespoons of marmalade, followed by the eggs.
4. Fold in the flour, ground almonds and a pinch of sea salt. Finely grate in the zest from the remaining 3 oranges, and all the juice from the 3 oranges and fold through.
5. Carefully pour the cake batter into the tin on top of your orange slices (it will be a very liquid consistency). Bake for about 50/55 minutes, or until golden and firm to touch.
6. Remove from the oven and allow to stand for about 20/30 minutes.
7. Very carefully, while it's still slightly warm, turn out the cake onto a serving plate, and scatter the flaked almonds on top.

## GIVE IT A GROW

By Debbie Spencer



### PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP

This year on 20th March (at 2.46pm) the UK reaches the Spring Equinox, the moment when day and night are almost equal in length. The word equinox comes from Latin, meaning “equal night”, and for centuries this date has been seen as a natural turning point — a time of renewal, hope and fresh beginnings. Long before calendars and clocks, people looked to the sun and the land to mark the changing year, and the equinox was an important moment in that cycle.

For gardeners, the spring equinox isn't about following the calendar exactly, but about observing change. Soil temperatures begin to rise, plants respond to the longer daylight hours, and growth becomes more visible across the garden. While it's still wise to be cautious,

the equinox marks the moment when the garden truly starts to wake up.

### Roll up your sleeves

If you haven't already done so, March is a good time to tidy borders and beds. Cut back the remains of last year's perennials to make space for new growth, taking care not to disturb overwintering insects where possible. Clear fallen leaves and debris, and check for signs of life emerging at ground level. As the soil dries and warms, it can be gently worked. Avoid digging when it is still wet, but once conditions allow, incorporate well-rotted compost or manure to improve structure and fertility. Mulching around shrubs, roses and fruit trees helps to retain moisture and feeds plants as they begin to grow.

### Pull the Wool

March marks the beginning of the sowing season. Hardy vegetables such as carrots,



beetroot, parsnips, peas and broad beans can be sown outdoors when conditions are suitable. Using gardening fleece or cloches can provide extra protection and encourage stronger early growth.

More tender plants, including tomatoes, courgettes and annual flowers, are best started indoors or in a greenhouse. A bright windowsill will suffice, but seedlings should be turned regularly to prevent them leaning towards the light. Mark seedlings clearly to save confusion later!

### **Seeds of Advice**

I asked our resident veg grower Tina Chant from Thursley Horts for her personal seed recommendations at this time of year;

*'I normally spend a lot of time reading the seed packets and choose a mid range price-wise but always check the packet quantity as I don't want too many seeds. For outdoor sowing in March:*

*Carrots: I choose fly resistant varieties (such as 'Flyaway').*

*Beetroot: suggest to go for Bolthardy.*

*Spinach: I like Perpetual varieties.'*

Also a good time to grow under cover/ window sill or greenhouse; peppers, chillies, courgettes, cucumbers, lettuce (maybe a couple of varieties like Salad bowl and Little Gem).

### **What does Tina do for indoor sowing or greenhouse tender types such as tomatoes and cucumbers?**

*'It often works out cheaper to buy the plants as I usually only want a few plants (especially tomatoes). I normally like 4 tomato plants of different varieties, a cherry, a beefeater and 2 regular size. If you grow from seed you end up with a lot of excess- best advice is to visit Tim's tomato stall at the plant sale.'*

### **Flower Power**

It's still possible to sow flower seeds now for summer colour; Sweet peas (sow outdoors or under cover in root trainers, toilet rolls, modules or pots). Also cornflowers, cosmos, antirrhiniums, nigella and marigolds. Check seed packets for planting advice.

March isn't about having everything finished — it's about getting started. Whether you are simply sowing a small packet of seeds or starting a major garden project, this is the month when the garden invites us to turn a corner and look forward to longer days.

## A MONTH IN THE LIFE OF ALBIE (AKA LAND SHARK!)

*By Julia Cash*



Albie in Air Jail

**It** wasn't an easy decision to get a new puppy.

**After** a busy few years with one thing and another, things were somehow a bit more settled – so obviously we needed to introduce some mayhem into our lives.

**Life** in the country didn't feel quite right without a dog and we missed our old pooch Woody. The daily step count was trending down and so this was the perfect time to get a puppy (if there is such a thing). So, operating on gut and heart, rather than head, we drove to Ledbury, in Herefordshire to collect a seven-week-old Wirehaired Vizsla we had decided to call Albie.

**The** drive home was rather howly, punctuated by all too brief power naps, so he arrived well-rested, apparently unfazed, absurdly confident, and immediately in charge. He trotted into the house as though he had always lived there, inspected each room with quiet authority, and promptly fell asleep. We all fell in love.

**The** first few days were filled with novelty and chaos. Albie was ridiculously cute and surprisingly bold. By the end of the first week, after too many early-morning stints standing half-dressed and shoeless on a frosty lawn or in a rainy gale, we began to question our judgement. Seeing Albie encounter snow for the first time was undeniably magical. Seeing him eat it, paw at it, and then need to go outside again four times a night was less enchanting. Somewhere in this period Ian and I also picked up the latest winter lurgy, while the children, mysteriously, slept through every single whimper and cry, before deserting us back to their respective homes in early January.

**By** the end of that week, we were both exhausted, mildly unwell, and operating at reduced capacity. We were fussing, overthinking, and beginning to feel slightly incompetent, just as we had 20 years ago with our first born. So, we called in the local dog trainer.

**She** was calm, practical and refreshingly no-nonsense. Within minutes she had assessed Albie, the

situation, and, more importantly, us. “Take your feelings out of it,” she said. “He’s fine. You’re doing okay.”

**She** gave us three words to remember: bed, yes and ok! — the last delivered in an upbeat, slightly higher-pitched tone that suggested order could be restored if only we followed instructions properly. She also taught us a few simple hand signals, as Albie was still too young to process much language. Under her watchful eye it took Ian and me an embarrassingly long time to remember these simple cues, much to our son’s amusement as he sat quietly observing proceedings, coffee in hand:

*“Guys, it’s a dog. Not a baby.”*



**This** was true but the reality is that a puppy is very much like having a baby — except the cuddly, immobile phase lasts about a week. After that, you are living with a very fast, very determined toddler who explores the world entirely with his mouth.

**Cables**, shoes, chair legs, jumpers, hands, feet — nothing was safe. And if we missed the early signs of tiredness, Albie became shark-like. An overtired Vizsla puppy is exactly like an overtired toddler: dramatic, unreasonable, and entirely incapable of self-regulation.

**By** eight weeks old, Albie could sit, lie down, wait for food, and follow simple cues. He was happy in his crate and, miracle of miracles, sleeping through the night. We congratulated ourselves. Dream dog we thought. Perhaps we were getting the hang of this.

**Then** he turned nine weeks — his weight had increased by 50% in 2 weeks — his energy levels ramped up, his teething properly kicked in, and every day began to feel like Groundhog Day. Our house looked like a crime scene. I looked worse. The days followed a strict loop: an early, rude awakening; a quiet scramble for clothes in the dark so as not to disturb whoever had earned that day’s lie-in; a dash into the garden; scattering food to buy enough time to make coffee; then twenty minutes of intense puppy engagement — play, chew, calm — before crating him for sleep.

**In** theory, that sleep should have been two hours. In reality, it was often considerably less. The trainer advised

us to leave him if he woke early, for his benefit rather than ours. We found this hard. Listening to him cry felt more exhausting than getting up to comfort him. I was reminded of Gina Ford (“the Queen of Routine” – a baby sleep training guru of the late 90’s, for those of a different generation), where our daughter cried on one side of the door and I cried on the other, until I inevitably gave in, after an argument with Ian about tactics and infant psychology.

**One** evening, after a particularly long day, just as I was thinking to reach for a gin and tonic, I logged into ChatGPT and typed:

Am I doing this wrong?  
When will this get better?

**It** replied, reassuring me that how I was feeling was completely understandable and that Albie’s behaviour was entirely normal. To help further, it suggested I tell it the breed.

**When** I typed “Wirehaired Vizsla”, the response was immediate:

“Oh goodness... now I understand everything you’ve explained.”

**Apparently** Vizslas are known as Velcro dogs. They love their people intensely, bond deeply, and prefer to be involved in absolutely everything. They are sensitive, clever, emotional, energetic, and, as puppies, famously mouthy and easily overstimulated.

**ChatGPT** described this phase as “full land-shark mode”, warned me about something called “the chaos potato



stage”, and flagged the existence of “the witching hour” — the period between about 5.30 and 8pm when puppies tend to lose their tiny minds because of the tiredness accumulated during the day. Things were not looking good!

**Our** son suggested putting Albie in “Air Jail” when he started to go a bit wild — briefly lifting him off the ground holding him and his sharp jaw like teeth away from the body. This is a genius manoeuvre that still works – but he’s grown from 3.2kg to 8.7kg in just 5 weeks, so pretty soon, lifting him off the ground won’t be an option – at least for me.

I also learned that dogs apparently find reggae music calming because of its

rhythm. In desperation, I tried it during one particularly fraught settling attempt. To my surprise, it worked. Albie sighed, shuffled, and fell asleep to Bob Marley. I followed not long after. It doesn't work every time, but if you hear reggae drifting out of the pink house over the coming weeks, you'll know why.

**Albie** is now twelve weeks old and about to embark on his first walks. Fortunately, we live in a village where dogs are not just tolerated but celebrated. So far, he has met Fang the

whippet and Milo the little terrier, and once his jabs are complete, he will no doubt be introduced to many more. I am quietly hoping that some of their calm, well-adjusted behaviour might rub off.

**So**, if you see me wandering the lanes looking sleep-deprived and dishevelled (more than normal that is) clutching a coffee and trailing a small, bearded missile on a lead, this is Albie — our new Thursley hound. And as Bob Marley would say, every little thing is going to be alright. Isn't it?



Parishes of Elstead, Thursley, Shackleford & Peper Harow

# Mothersing Sunday

**15 March**

- 09:45 | St Michael & All Angels Church,  
Thursley
- 10:30 | St James' Church, Elstead
- 11:00 | St Mary's Church, Shackleford

Lets come together to celebrate Mothersing  
Sunday & acknowledge those who have shaped  
families, communities & our faith.

Children's craft activity available

All are welcome

Followed by refreshments

*Church in the community, community in the church*




— JOIN YOUR COMMUNITY —

# Thursley Pavilion Clean-Up Morning



**Saturday 14 March 2026**

**10:00am - 12 noon**

 **Thursley Pavilion, Dye House Road**

Drop in for 30 minutes or stay the whole morning.  
There will also be a short update on the exciting plans  
for the Pavilion's future.



Bring gloves  
and sturdy footwear



Refreshments provided  
Everyone welcome



Scan to learn more about the Pavilion project  
[www.thursleypavilion.co.uk](http://www.thursleypavilion.co.uk)



*The* WORSHIPFUL  
COMPANY *of*  
WOOLMEN



MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

# OVIS CANTORUM

DIRECTED *by* DAVID SWINSON

ORGANIST LUKE SAINT

SATURDAY 4TH APRIL, 6PM

St Michael and All Angels, Thursley

PROGRAMME INCLUDES:

Highlights from Godspell and  
Jesus Christ Superstar, Allegri Miserere  
and Duruffe Requiem



## OVIS CANTORUM CHOIR RETURNS TO THURSLEY

*By Giles Schofield*

**The** Chamber Choir Ovis Cantorum, under the direction of David Swinson, see:

**[www.davidswinson.co.uk](http://www.davidswinson.co.uk)**

is returning to the church on Easter Saturday, 4th April, at 6pm. Their programme is going to include well known hits from Godspell and Jesus Christ Superstar as well as Holy Week staples such as Crucifixus by Lotti, Allegri's sublime Miserere and the Durufle Requiem. The organ will be augmented with strings, piano and percussion accompaniment.

**Most** of the singers are current or recent choral scholars and alumni of Trinity School, Croydon where

they sang under David's direction in the world famous Trinity Boys choir. As well as specialising in choral music, they have also performed abroad and at Glyndebourne, the Royal Opera House and in multiple Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Most recently, David's work with Trinity involved directing the music for the BBC's current broadcast of Lord of the Flies. Affiliated to the Worshipful Company of Woolmen, they perform regularly at Livery functions as well as at weddings and private parties. There will be a collection to cover costs and profits from the evening will go towards the church's upkeep. All are welcome.

### **Milford Probus Club Lunch & Talk on Friday 20 March 2026**

On Friday 20 March after a friendly lunch, members of Milford Probus club and visitors (growing in number and always welcome) will learn from Steve Stanley about a fascinating but often misunderstood period of British history. Between the fall of the Roman Empire and the start of the Viking invasions the Irish (aka Scots) Picts, Britons and Anglo-Saxons competed and developed a distinct cultural heritage. This is sometimes but not very accurately described as the time of the Celtic Church.

Steve will discuss how religious change and conversion drove cultural development against a background of political competition. A retired criminologist, he has degrees in history, social research and classical studies. He is also a popular and impressive speaker, who has given talks on the Silk Trade in Roman times and the Fall of the Roman Empire. Come and join us. Lunch and talk are just £32.

*Milford Probus is a club for retired and semi-retired business and professional men and women who enjoy comradeship, informative talks and wider activities. If you are interested, visit [www.milfordprobus.com](http://www.milfordprobus.com) or book lunch (book 8 days before please) with Miranda O'Brien ([miranda.obrien@btinternet.com](mailto:miranda.obrien@btinternet.com)/01483 423398. Venue: Godalming Masonic Centre.*

## WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE FARM THIS MONTH?

By Jo Ranson



**It's** not just wet, it is very wet. I think we will soon develop webbed feet or trench foot. Even the waterproofs aren't holding out that well. Fortunately, we all have several sets of waterproofs as there is nothing worse than putting on a wet coat after coffee break or lunch. The utility room is just a drying room for coats or wet dogs and with Nick constantly on slurry jobs at the moment it really doesn't smell great either.

**It's** still too wet for the cows to go out, when the sun does show a small ray the cows all queue by the gate to go but alas it is not to be. There is grass growing out there, but it would be ruined in seconds. It does however mean we are running low on

food for them. We have moved round some of the spare maize silage, and there is a bit more we could move if we really have to, but we like to save this for August when they calve again. There is also some spare grass silage which will have to be moved from farm to farm but again this will run stocks low and if we aren't as lucky as last year in the quantity and quality of last year's crop it will be disaster. Also if we have a dry summer (and I am concerned this will happen as the weather tends to even itself out) we will need it to feed to dry cows and calves. Fingers crossed we will get a dry spring and do as we did last year - get a really early cut of silage for some spare bales, but we shall see - best laid plans and all that, but we can't control the weather.

**All** this rain has played havoc with the lagoon too; twice more we have had the contractors in to get the liquid one down - a necessary and fruitful job but expensive. Whilst Nick and Toby were at the shiny machinery show they did some shopping and bought an umbilical system for us. It took some chasing for all necessary parts to come but once it arrived we had two people acting like kids in a sweet shop. Off they went - it took nearly all day to get set up but they were pumping by 4pm. They pumped again the following two days and got the liquid lagoon down to as low as we have ever had - it's paying back quickly at the moment. We now need to get as much liquid as we can out of the solid one so that we can get it emptied on to maize ground next

month. There is a weeping wall between the two lagoons and a drain, so we have unblocked all of these to drain liquid through, and Toby has been using the tanker to suck it out and take to further away fields also. Now they know how best to get the system in place we can whip out the umbilical system quickly and easily whenever we like, which lets us sleep at night when the rain is hammering down that it's not going to go over.

**More** rain troubles where trees are concerned, the ground has become so soft that any dead or precariously leaning trees have gone down, some of them are huge too. So, it's been a constant battle to get them cleared up, off fences (which then have to be repaired) and all without making a mess in the field.

**The** baby calves have had their mid-winter muck out. To do this so they can calve they obviously have to come out of the barn and go into another. They have never been out of the barn and stood on concrete since they were born so it can be quite a time-consuming task

encouraging them out. To make it a bit more appealing we make a straw path part way to the next barn and usually when one goes they all go, there will always be one though that perhaps needs a bit more help and man-handling. When the barn is all cleared and freshly bedded up again, they are no problem at all to move back as they like to go home. Doing this mid-winter gets the calf muck time to rot down before being spread on the maize ground and keeps the calves themselves bug free too.

**All** the empty cows have gone now which I am pleased with - they were getting very boisterous - constantly trying to get in the back of the truck with me - they were too big for that behaviour, and it will save us some silage feeding. The Angus are still with us and now that they have eaten most of the brassicas, they are eating more silage, so it's nearly time for them to go too. They will go next month along with about 50 baby beef calves as we only like to keep around 50 beef animals here over the next summer.



**Usually** at this time of the year we are starting to feel a bit of spring in the air - we are getting slightly lighter mornings and nights— yippee, but we are still in full winter mode with milking, scraping and bedding. The workshop has been tidied though, and wearing parts that need replacing for the machinery used for spring work have been ordered and fitted. A new plough has been purchased too so we will all be ready to go when it does dry up.

**All** the new equipment that has arrived recently is a test to our ability to give lorry drivers directions - something I feel we are all very good at. It's the lorry drivers' inability to listen that frustrates us. If I was a lorry driver I think I would take the advice of the person I am delivering to as they know the area better. Most want to follow satnav but that tells them to come in on either of

the two roads with low bridges and they are told to phone at least an hour before they get here so that we can keep them from coming off the A3 too early. One lorry driver in fairness did phone but obviously though better of it and came in the wrong way, he had the plough on so fortunately low enough for the bridge but too long to turn at the crossroads and thought he would turn and reverse up to the farm, this could have worked if he had known how to reverse!!! All that can be said really is the haulage company are sending landscape gardeners out to repair the damage their driver did to the village green.

**We** shall be crossing fingers for some drier weather, then we can have some cows out. The fingers will be crossed for some good sales of the Angus and baby calves and that our vet audit next month goes well too.



Parishes of Elstead, Thursley, Shackleford & Peper Harow

29 March

# PALM SUNDAY

10:30 | St James' Church, Elstead  
11:00 | St Mary's Church, Shackleford

Church in the community, community in the church



## BECAUSE IT'S THERE

By Lizzie Young



**'Because it's there.'** That was the answer climber George Mallory is said to have given when asked, in 1923, why he wanted to climb Everest. If Chat GPT is to be believed (big if), that was, though, ahead of his third expedition. So *'because it's still there'* would have been a better answer. AI tells me that whilst this is often misinterpreted as a dismissive remark (and attributed incorrectly to Edmund Hilary), it was, in fact, a profound reflection on the nature of adventure and the human spirit. Fair enough – I'd go with that, even if it isn't the spirit of this particular human. He died in that third attempt, which makes the remark deeply poignant as well.

**I'm** not adventurous (understatement of the century – I find the log flume rides toddlers love perilous and terrifying), and I'd probably be most likely to answer *'Because it was there'* to the question *'why did you eat the last slice of coffee cake?'*. But this month, I'm

really trying to get inside the mind of the sort of human who possesses that spirt and who would feel that way about climbing Everest, or doing anything else, for that matter, that I'd pay good money not to have to try.

**Why**, you ask? You might not ask, but I'm pretending you have – it makes the writing a less lonely occupation. It's not just the Winter Olympics, although I am, as ever, easily distracted and strangely moved by the endeavour and commitment of the athletes (not you, lovely Lindsey Vonn – you're just bonkers. And not the curling to be honest. Just because it's our best chance for a medal, doesn't make it interesting.). Oh no... but because I have a friend, a dear old one, who has just rowed the Atlantic. Because it's there. My friend is my age – we are nudging sixty. We've been friends since we were 14, although our lives went in completely different directions and I haven't seen him as much as I would have liked in the last twenty years.

**But** for this last six weeks or so, I have thought of him daily. I can't get up from a chair without making a small sort of effort noise (not strictly necessary, but somehow comforting and helpful), and he just spent 44 days continuously rowing in three hours shifts twenty-four hours a day. This relentless pattern interrupted only by fitful, nauseous

naps taken in a claustrophobic's nightmare of a cabin, and forays to the hull of the boat to clean off barnacles causing unhelpful drag. And seeming, mostly, to enjoy it.

**He** was in a crew of 4, all ex-Air Force personnel, all blokes in their late 50s. Two of the others had rowed the Atlantic once before, in their twenties. But, you guessed it, it's still there...so why not have another go, now that you're thirty years older, with considerably less cartilage? The race is called World's Toughest Row, and 43 crews set off from La Gomera in mid-December, with approximately 2800 nautical miles between them and the finish. The winners got to Antigua in mid-January, a mere 31 days after they set off. The 42nd crew finished two days ago, after 59 days, 5 hours and 14 minutes. The 43rd retired, but not before they'd spent about five weeks at sea. I don't know what happened, but my admiration and sympathy knows no bounds.

**My** lovely pal, who was fundraising, as many of the teams were, let us all know that we could watch the race on an App, and so we did. I added 'check progress on YB' to my morning routine, and often found myself looking in the evening too, watching the group of colourful dots on the screen making their way across the vast expanse of blue nothingness. The App let you look up teams, see their pictures, and my phone, of course, worked out that I was

interested, and began serving me up rowers on Instagram and Facebook, delivering monologues to camera as they bobbed about. There were fours, young, fit and strong, pairs, middle aged couples, solo women. All with their own (to me unfathomable) reasons for setting themselves this Herculean task. I was transfixed. There was a solo female rower about my age. In a tiny boat on that enormous ocean, rowing for as many hours in any 24 as she possibly could, facing waves like walls, engineering challenges, dehydrated food, utter isolation, fear, loneliness and mind-boggling boredom. Voluntarily. Because it was there.

I can only be in awe. And I'm not sure I'm a great deal closer to understanding, although I doubt I will ever experience the high or sense of pride they all clearly do at race's end. I told another friend, who scoffed. At this time of year, he said, the trade winds would practically blow you across. 50 days if you rowed, 60 if you just sat in the boat, he guffawed, rather pleased with himself. I think he may be from the *'if I haven't done it, and don't want to do it, it's not worth doing'* school of machismo, but I'm afraid it's a side of human nature that sits in stark contrast to the 43 crews, with their sunburnt noses and scruffy beards, and their mad courage. As another pal of mine would have said, *'Chapeau'*, my crazy friend. *'Chapeau'*.

## RICHARD CHARLES BATES

12th February 1943 - 4th January 2026



**Richard** grew up in the World War 2 bombed streets of London's East End with his Dad, a bus conductor following his service in the War, Mum, a seamstress, and his younger sister Dorothy.

**One** of his academic achievements was to pass the 11+ exam and be accepted into the local Grammar School where he made lifelong friends.

**His** Uncle Albert was an early inspiration. He spoke Arabic, played the piano, painted and knew artists like the writer Laurie Lee.

**Richard** also took up oil painting and played the clarinet but it was his desire to see beyond the claustrophobic East End that defined him. Early on he loved cycling to Epping Forest where he read The Sunday Times from front to back, a routine he kept his whole life.

**His** social and organisational skills meant he was the one to get his school friends out and about, starting off with youth-hostelling in Britain but he soon had sights on tougher challenges. At 21 he cycled up Norway, in Winter, as far as the Arctic Circle with Graham. Word had got round about his trip and at the top he was greeted by a newspaper journalist and a British diplomat.

**Another** trip in his early twenties was with a group of mates driving through Europe, ending up working in a hotel restaurant by Lake Geneva.

While living at home he worked in the City and in the evenings studied for a Drawing Practice & Machine Design Diploma which allowed him to work as a Draughtsman.

**However** he wasn't going to work in an office in the City for the rest of his life, so at 26 the travelling bug infected him again, this time with the grand idea of an overland trip to Australia. He advertised in the paper and went with 2 girls and

Sean Sinnott, an Irish guitar playing singer, who stayed a lifelong dear friend. Richard did most of the driving in a converted Bedford Dormobile, christened Rosinante (from Don Quixote).

**This** was the journey of a lifetime, nearly having to give up in the snow in Turkey and getting very ill in India but eventually they made it to Sydney, Australia, the land of opportunity, a world away from Stepney Green.

**Richard** took a job in a drawing office, living over Bondi Beach and made close, life-long friends in John Egger and Richard Debenham. From then on he was known as Dicko! Geoff Prouse, an old school friend asked Richard to help him run a supermarket in Darwin, then a remote town in the outback of Northern Australia. Richard was in his element here as his social skills made him a Pom everyone could like, even if he did have to knock out the occasional Aborigine who'd had too much to drink! In 1974 Cyclone Tracy flattened Darwin. He was a driving force in helping the Red Cross in the aftermath but eventually he decided to come home.

**In** the late Seventies, a trip to Egypt provided the setting for Richard to meet Nicki, a nurse and former air hostess. And though they came from different backgrounds, they shared a love of travelling and doing things their way.

**After** marriage in Farnham they found a run-down cottage in Thursley, backing on to Thursley Common. They thought it would be a great place to raise a family.

Richard learnt squash in Australia and his entrepreneurial skills and love of sport meant he wasn't satisfied working as a draughtsman for a company, so he decided to start up his own Squash & Sports Club. Squash was a sport that hadn't taken off yet in 1980's England and he saw the business potential and health benefits for all.

**Then** his two sons came along, James, then Andrew, and with Dingo the dog he was living a life he could never have imagined growing up in the East End.

**Richard** installed a wood burner that connected to the radiators in the house and he was very proud of his money saving idea. In return for volunteering on Thursley Common, the wardens allowed him to use his prized Land Rover to collect any spare wood available. It became a life-time passion to spend most of his free time collecting, cutting and burning wood! He struck up a close friendship with James Giles, the Natural England Warden.

**The** family enjoyed many cycling holidays throughout Europe, fond memories for all.

**When** Richard retired a new life opened up for him as he now had the time to get to know the village and villagers. With his East End charm and famous sense of humour he was equally at home with everyone.

**He** soon became the Village Hall Grand Quizmaster and ran a Table Tennis Club for over 10 years. He volunteered to mow the grass in the village for the Parish Council and also enjoyed helping the Churchyard Working Party.

**Richard** was a self-made man. He grew up in humble surroundings and made the best of his time. He ventured out into the world with a smile for everyone and a bad joke for those who would listen! His attitude meant he was accepted wherever he went. A life well-lived.

## **Bikes, Land Rovers & Travelling**

*By Andrew Bates*

If you know anything about me, then you'll know how Dad's love of two wheels and four certainly inspired and influenced me to follow in his tyre tracks.

**From** the stories of his solo cycling trips around the world, up to the arctic circle through the snow, and across Canada (fending off bears banging a billy can with a spoon..!), to trips in Australia supported by Jono and Marilyn, and our family cycling holidays around Europe, bikes became a part of my life as well.

**At** any given time, Dad would have maps spread out across his desk planning his next ride, right up until recent years, with the full support from Mum, there was always another bike trip!

**This** eventually led me to take on my own adventures around Britain, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia. Since moving to NZ Dad visited many times and we would take on the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge, a 100 mile loop of the lake, all while Dad was well into his 70's! With his last cycling trip at 78 riding down through France to Barcelona..!

**Looking** through all the photos recently of Dads trips, they give me huge



inspiration to do more. I can only hope I'm still capable at that age!

**Dad** was also never too far away from his beloved Land Rover.! Something that he first encountered after the overland trip was when he drove from Perth to Sydney in a long wheel base camper Series 2. It set a standard of a practical image,

admired for being British, and its safety and utility.

**This** too rubbed off on me, and not just the grease..! Having always been hands on, with a love of Meccano and Lego from a young age, it was clear I was set for a mechanical life. And at 16 Dad bought me a run down 1982 short wheel base 2.25 litre petrol Series 3... just some small details I still remember...!

With Dad helping me with the restoration it became a basis of life that has ultimately led me to a career in mechanics and becoming a technician for Aston Martin.

**Dad** had many Land Rovers over the years, however it was the Defender that became his pride and joy! He used this everywhere, from dropping James and myself off at college and family trips, to helping on the common with James Giles and towing the trailer when cutting the grass around the village. It too became an image I loved.

**After** Dad could no longer drive, the decision was made to ship the Landy to NZ. And after a lot of admin it finally boarded a ship last August and has just arrived in Auckland over the weekend! I look forward to driving the Landy as a lasting memory and continuing Dad's legacy for adventure with trips around New Zealand with Sarah.

**Every** sympathy card Mum has received mentions Dad's sense of humour, wit, or bloody awful jokes. When talking to Sean recently he too recalled Dad's humour during their travels - when they would stay at a hostel, Dad would always want to take the top bunk, that way if he

couldn't sleep, he'd get to the edge of the bed and drop off easily... and would laugh at the joke every time he said it...!

**Dad** was a gentleman who loved a laugh and always had a big smile right to the end. I can only hope I haven't inherited the terrible jokes, or maybe it runs in the genes...!

### **Dad, Music & Me**

*By James Bates*

**Music** was a big connection for Dad and me. He bought me my first guitar and an upright piano for my 19th birthday. And first introduced me to my favourite band The Beatles.

**Dad** started playing the clarinet growing up in the East End, mainly inspired by Acker Bilk and his 1961 smash hit 'Stranger on the Shore'. And possibly because he wanted to go out with the Boss's daughter at his first job, who taught the clarinet!

**Dad** took up the clarinet again when he retired and once I was good enough on the piano we would play most evenings in my late 20's and 30's, playing from a big book of jazz standards that he grew up loving.

**Even** when we weren't seeing eye to eye we connected through music. There's something magical about playing music in time with someone you love and it expressed something words could never.

I was there for Dad all the way on his dementia journey. It's a cruel disease and it must have been very frustrating and confusing for him when he started to lose his cognition and communication



skills, especially considering he was such a sociable man.

**However**, with the love of Mum and me, and the village (and villagers) he knew and loved for half his life, Dad was able to stay in Thursley until the last few months.

**Even** when I visited Dad in the care home his eyes would light up and he gave me a big smile and firm handshake and I connected with him in a fundamental way that bypassed words and memory.

**And** Dad could still play the clarinet to the end. I'll always remember the last time I brought the keyboard up to his chair and he managed to play our favourite song 'These Foolish Things', which he use to joke was written about us. The carers all clapped at the end and we both put our hands out for a tip, Dad's cheeky humour was still in there.

**The** care Dad received at Langham Court and Surrey Hills nursing homes was exceptional. It was humbling to witness such selfless human beings who treated the residents as if they were their grandparents.

**I'm** grateful I was with Dad when he died. It was a beautiful day with the sun shining through the trees as I sat with him, told him I loved him and played the music of Acker Bilk. I believe he could feel my presence, hear my words and the music, and it helped him to gently let go. Loved ones live on in the ones they loved. Thanks Dad.

### **Thank You**

*By Nicki Bates*

**A** big thank-you from me to this very special village community for the way you cared for Richard over the many years of his dementia journey. As his cognition slowly declined you always treated him as you always have. Amongst other kindnesses, you laughed at his 'dreadful' jokes, enjoyed playing table tennis at the club he started but thought he still ran, brought him home in the Natural England Land Rover when he was lost on the Common and neighbours did the same when he forgot which house was home. It was agreed he could work at the Three Horseshoes Shoes when the next vacancy came up and he was bought a drink when he thought the bus to take him to London to see his parents, started there. Because you treated him naturally, with dignity and love, Richard only needed to move to a care home for the last six months of his life. Thank you, Nicki



# Elstead Foodbank

Helping villagers during times of crisis

Elstead foodbank has moved temporarily. As the building works move into St James Church the Foodbank has moved into the Youth Centre next to the Elstead Village Hall. We will be open for drop ins every Thursday morning from 10.00 am to 11.00 am.

We continue to support those in greatest need of food and household consumables on a regular basis. We are currently supporting 22 households, a mixture of families with children, single mums, couples, pensioners and singles. It is such a joy to see people who come to us in need and are gradually able to re-take control and come off our regulars list. For that we are able to draw on a small grant from the Household Support Grant managed by Surrey County Council. We are also dependent upon the generosity of our donors both in finances and the many food gifts which often come to us anonymously as they simply appear in our collection boxes in the church porch.

If you are struggling to purchase sufficient food whilst paying all your other bills, do please get in touch and we will try to help you, either with an emergency food parcel or to work with you for longer. We have contacts to be able to signpost you to Citizens Advice and other agencies that might also be able to help.

The Elstead Foodbank is open every Thursday from 10am - 11am at Elstead Youth Centre GU8 6DG. We are here to help villagers through difficult times, and to make sure that no one ever goes hungry. If you need help call Revd Delia on 0735 9098 655 or visit us on Thursday morning and we will have a food parcel ready for you.

If you cannot come to the Foodbank but are in need of food, we can arrange a home delivery, subject to volunteer availability. We are very grateful for all your donations throughout the year. All food donations can be taken to St Michael and All Angels Thursley where there is a donation box in the porch for non-perishable food and toiletries. At this time of year we particularly would like donations of:

- Tinned vegetables
- Tinned meats and fish
- Custard (packet or tinned)
- Tea bags
- Instant coffee jar or hot chocolate
- Pot noodles
- Tinned rice pudding
- Jam or Honey or Peanut butter
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shower gel



If you would like to know more about the Foodbank and how you can help, please contact Rev Delia on 0735 9098 655 or

**email: [minister@parishesofetsph.org](mailto:minister@parishesofetsph.org)**

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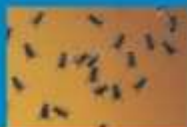
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