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Welcome to the thirty-first edition of the Edington Village News.

We have as usual a selection of articles ranging from an article about the small corvids of Edington to an opportunity to brighten your windows in the run up to Christmas. For those of you who dislike the cold weather an article from an ex-villager who now resides in warmer climes. There is also a report on the bonfire party that didn't have a bonfire!

There are a number of events coming up in the village in the near future, starting on Saturday 19th November with the Charity Christmas Cards Sale in the Parish Hall and followed in the evening at 7.30pm with the Curry and Quiz night, an opportunity to show your prowess at quizzes or just come for a good time and of course the curry.

Thursday 24th November is the first of a number of Thursdays when the Parish Hall will be open to provide a warm space for people, more details later in this newsletter.

The annual lighting of the village Christmas tree will take place on Friday 9th December at 6.30pm on the playfield.

On Saturday 10th December at 7.30pm in the Priory Church is the annual Advent Concert when the 34 strong mixed choir of Merton College, Oxford will be performing. There will be music for Advent and for Christmas from across the ages, both traditional and contemporary. As always in the run-up to Christmas, there will be mulled wine and mince pies in the interval, helping to get you in the mood. Full details further on in this newsletter.

As a warning to all of us, reports of two different scams that are around at present please make sure that you are not a victim or your neighbours who may not know about them.





## Local surgeries latest

**REMEMBER YOU MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING WHILST IN THE BUILDINGS**

**White Horse Health Centre and Bratton Surgery**



**Westbury surgery TELEPHONE 01373 828330**

**Bratton Surgery TELEPHONE 01380 831911**

**For medical emergencies dial 999**

Due to increased COVID infection rates in the community, from the 3rd October 2022 we will be asking that all patients and visitors coming to the practice wear a face covering if they are able to do so.

We have been made aware by some of our patients that a new scam is in action. The fraudsters will make contact and explain that you have been identified as a contact for a positive COVID case, and that you need to pay for and complete a test urgently, which then gets followed up by another fraudster pretending to be your bank to clarify security questions.

Please be reminded that the NHS will not contact you asking for you to make payment, or for any security details relating to your finances.

For more information on what fraud is, and how to prevent it please go to

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

### **Westbury Group Practice Facts and Figures for the week 24th October - 28th October 2022**

- Phone calls taken: 1596
- Face-to-Face appointments: 1931
- Telephone appointments: 658
- eConsults submitted: 138

- Appointments where the patient did not attend (DNA): 78 - equivalent to 15.5 hours
- On the day emergency appointments where the patient DNA'd: 3 - equivalent to 0.75 hours

Thank you

**Dr Edwards & Partners**

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



**Courtyard Surgery, West Lavington**

**Telephone 01380 813 300**

**For medical emergencies dial 999**

[The latest news from the surgery - Our Practice Leaflet can be read here.](#)



## Wiltshire Police

Crime figures across Wiltshire have returned to pre covid levels in line with police forces nationally.

Wiltshire has seen a year on year increase of 10.5 per cent from the period July 2020 to June 2021, and July 2021 to June 2022. This has returned volumes close to pre covid levels - a trend which is in line with other police forces nationally.

However, rates of residential burglary in the Wiltshire force area are showing a 19.7 per cent increase, with a similar increase reported across other south west regional forces.

Wiltshire Police has recently announced they have joined a national pledge to make personal visits to all victims of domestic burglary.

Prior to the pledge, officers were attending approximately 90 per cent of all reported residential burglaries, to meet with victims, secure potential evidence and provide vital reassurance.

Assistant Chief Constable Dave Minty said:  
"We fully recognise the profound





impact that a burglary can have on victims and that is why we have joined the national pledge to meet every victim of these crimes. Your home should be your safe haven and to have somebody violate your home can have a long lasting impact and can feel incredibly upsetting and unsettling.

"These latest figures show why it is more important than ever that we ensure our officers are attending reports of burglary at the earliest opportunity, not only to provide reassurance to victims, but to increase the chance of preserving potential evidence to support a prosecution and ensure criminals are put before the courts."

The statistics also show a decrease in crimes where a knife has been used of six percent between June 22 and June 21, but an increase in crime involving the possession of a knife of 48 per cent.

ACC Minty added: "As an organisation we will continue to work closely with our partner agencies and the Police and Crime Commissioner, to make improvements in better educating the public - in particular, young people - of the dangers of carrying a knife, and the harm they could inflict on others.

"Young people hear about it on the news, they talk about it at school, and we know some, because they tell us, would carry a knife for protection.

"However, we know carrying a blade means you are more likely to find yourself in a situation where you could get seriously injured or even killed.

"We need to get to a position in our communities, within peer groups, and within families where carrying a knife or blade is not just frowned upon, it is seen as completely unacceptable."

Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Wilkinson said: "Now we have seen the first set of annual figures which don't include a lockdown period, it is no surprise there has been an increase in crime and, in particular, a rise in

burglary.

"Wiltshire Police cannot be complacent about this increase, as it is higher compared to similar areas across the country. Its commitment to visit all victims of home burglary is much welcomed to ensure we are tackling this issue head on. Residents need to have confidence this commitment, alongside improved investigations, better victim support and improved evidence gathering, will mean more successful prosecutions.

"Our residents deserve an effective, quality, efficient frontline service – my role, as PCC, is to scrutinise force performance to ensure that happens."

Mr Wilkinson added: "The increase of possession of a knife or bladed weapon is especially concerning even if actual knife crime has decreased. Carrying a knife can have life-changing consequences for all involved. This issue needs a multi-agency approach and both I, and the force, will be working with our partners to tackle it head-on."

**27 October 2022**



## Four Villages Link

If you require a lift to an appointment, shopping or help around the house or garden, call our

coordinator on 07852 256939.

Information on LINK can be found at

<http://thefourvillageslink.org.uk/>



## Wiltshire Council

### Latest News from Wiltshire Council

#### **Wiltshire Council's Dog Warden service recognised in the annual RSPCA PawPrint Awards**

**Published 4 November 2022**

Wiltshire Council's Dog Warden service has received national recognition from the RSPCA.

The service has been awarded a Gold Stray Dogs award in the annual RSPCA PawPrints Awards 2022.

The annual awards recognise local councils who have clear procedures and protocols in place that ensure the welfare of stray dogs. There are a number of categories in the awards, with bronze, silver and gold standards in each.

It was noted that the work of the team continues to be an inspiration to others, especially during difficult circumstances with a large increase in stray dogs this year.

The work of the team contributes to safe and active communities where people can live well together, all key aspects of the council's business plan.

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Public Protection, said: "We are extremely proud of our Dog Warden Service and all that they have achieved. This award highlights the hard work that goes into the service and the high standards that we strive to achieve.

"This has been an especially difficult year for the team, with long waiting lists at shelters and a large increase in stray dogs, many of which appear to have been abandoned by their owners. Through all these difficult circumstances the team has maintained and even enhanced the service. I couldn't be prouder of them.

"Congratulations to everyone involved - this

award is very well deserved."

RSPCA public affairs manager for local government Lee Gingell said: "We're delighted to recognise Wiltshire Council's stray dog provision with a gold PawPrint.

"From proactive work to encourage responsible pet ownership, to the provision of an out of hours service, this service is vital for animal welfare in Wiltshire.

"The council joins 50 public bodies across England and Wales recognised for going above and beyond for animals.

"Too often, this work is unsung and doesn't get the credit it deserves. PawPrints is all about shouting from the rooftops - praising those public bodies looking past statutory minimums because it's the right thing to do - for humans and animals."

If anyone finds a stray dog and cannot contact the owner, it is a legal requirement to report it to Wiltshire Council by calling 0300 4560107.

#### **Wiltshire Council uses government funding to respond to Ukraine housing needs**

**Published 3 November 2022**

Wiltshire Council is using government funding to help secure homes for Ukraine nationals where host families can no longer provide a home for them and all other options have been explored.

The council will use the government funding for Ukraine families to support the initiative to secure homes across the county.

Wiltshire is one of the top authorities in England for taking in Ukraine nationals due to the war.

Currently in Wiltshire, 578 sponsors are matched with 1,369 individuals and there are presently 879 guests are being accommodated in 377 households across Wiltshire.

Under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, hosts need to provide a home for a minimum of six months. The council has asked sponsors to advise whether they can continue to





provide a home after that time, and many have already confirmed that they can, so the council can work with families.

In line with the council's general support for homeless families, officers will work on a number of options for Ukraine nationals, including looking for homes in the private sector or temporary accommodation.

For those Ukraine families that need to look for other accommodation, the council already offers a deposit guarantee and a month's rent in advance, as long as it can be confirmed that this would not be affordable for the family and also the property they are moving into is both suitable and affordable for the family afterwards.

The Government funding will then be utilised to enable Stone Circle Housing Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Wiltshire Council that was set up for the benefit of Wiltshire residents, to purchase homes across Wiltshire. These will become available over a period of time.

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council, said: Wiltshire has welcomed many Ukraine guests and they have settled into our county well. Our sponsors under the Homes for Ukraine scheme have been generous in opening up their homes and we thank them for everything they have done, and to those who continue to provide a home. As the six months' minimum time expires however there will be some Ukraine nationals who face an uncertain future, and this is an issue we need to address.

We are going to use the government funding in an innovative way to purchase homes that can be used for Ukraine nationals now and for wider use into the future. We are still working out the details and this is still early days, but we will keep everyone updated as we move forward. The government has provided all local authorities with funding to support Ukraine guests and we believe this will be an effective way for people to continue to live safely in our county.

## **Newly installed heat pumps at leisure centres helps council stay on track to be carbon neutral by 2030**

**Published 1 November 2022**

New air source heat pumps have been installed at a number of Wiltshire Council leisure centres, one of which is one of the biggest in the country, meaning the facilities are now carbon neutral for all their energy use.

The installations have taken place at Five Rivers Health & Wellbeing Centre, Salisbury, Springfield Campus, Corsham and Olympiad, Chippenham.

The work has been delivered by the council's Strategic Asset Maintenance & Facilities Management (SAM&FM) Energy Team and funded through the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). The public sector decarbonisation grant from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy provides grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.

An air source heat pump works much like a fridge operating in reverse, by transferring heat from outside air into water, which can then heat rooms via radiators or underfloor heating. It can also heat water being stored in a hot water cylinder for hot taps, showers and baths. The pump will use zero carbon electricity to run but uses less electrical energy than the heat it produces, making it more energy efficient.

Cllr Richard Clewer, Wiltshire Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Change said, We are committed to making our council buildings more sustainable and lowering our carbon output, which we hope inspires other organisations to do the same. This project is a great way of implementing our business plan priority to become carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030 - something we are very much on track to achieve.

To find out more about the council's Climate Strategy, which was recently adopted, people should visit

[www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate-change](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate-change).





## **Be wary of cold callers and scammers looking to take advantage of financial climate**

**Published 28 October 2022**

Wiltshire Council is advising residents to be wary of cold callers and scammers that are looking to take advantage of the current cost of living challenges.

Wiltshire Council's advice is for people to not engage with any businesses which cold call either at the door or by telephone. Some businesses operate in a less than ethical fashion, using 'hard sell' tactics to get a sale, and these traders usually target more vulnerable members of the community.

Examples of previous scams in Wiltshire include companies selling alarm systems, solar panels, roof repairs, loft insulation and gardening services. Legitimate businesses would not put a resident under pressure to buy a product or service quickly.

If something seems suspicious or too good to be true then people are advised not to engage any further. Nationally there have also been reports in recent weeks of people being sent texts claiming to be from an energy regulator and inviting people to "claim their rebate". If correspondence is genuine, a company will never push people into handing over any personal details, including bank account information.

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Public Protection, said: "It's sad that some people are cruel enough to try and cash in on this challenging financial time, but that's the stark reality. The majority of businesses in the county provide excellent services in an ethical way, but they are being let down by those that just want to get a quick sale or people's money no matter what.

"It's an old adage, but certainly still relevant - if it's too good to be true, then it probably is. If something doesn't feel right then please take a moment to consider if what you're being offered is genuine. Hard sell and scam tactics are

getting more sophisticated but don't rush into any decisions and part with your money until you've checked that everything's ok.

"As stated in our business plan, we'll do what we can to protect people through our public protection and trading standards services, and we'll continue to advise and raise awareness of these types of issues."

Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber-crime where people should report fraud if they have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber-crime. More details can be found on the [Action Fraud website](#).

Advice can also be found on the [Citizen's Advice website](#).

## **Wiltshire Council is improving the safety and visual impact of its highways network thanks to increased investment into white line painting on roads throughout the county.**

**Published 8 November 2022**

In July, the council's cabinet agreed to invest an extra £200,000 each year for the next three years into white line painting. This funding is being used to boost the £270,000 the council already spends on white line painting each year, with a focus over the three years on renewing give way lines, roundabout markings and stop lines in urban areas and on inter-urban roads.

This financial year, the council's main priority has been painting the markings on high-speed rural sections on A and B roads, as the centre lines on these routes provide the greatest improvements to road safety. Some other routes have also been painted, but the vast majority of the work has been on the A and B class network.

Since April, the council has painted 185,585 metres of white lines throughout the county, with more to come over the next three years, though the work is scaled back over the autumn and winter, as the road surface conditions aren't as favourable for line painting during these months.



## Edington Parish Council News

October has been a quiet month for the Parish Council. We were joined at our October meeting by Sgt Oakley the Neighbourhood Sergeant for the Warminster area and she outlined some of the challenges she faces with an area stretching from Edington across to Mere in the south west of the county and including the A303.

We have been informed that the work on installing the 20mph areas in the village is now due to be completed by the contractors by the end of January 2023. News on the no waiting restrictions in the Long Hollow and Tinhead Road area are still awaited.

If you have read the recent minutes of the Parish Council you will have read that the Parish Council are in the process of establishing a footpath from the top of Monastery Road across

the fields to join up with the public footpath that exists from opposite the City across the field to the Weir (Footpath EDIN4A). The landowners have kindly agreed to this being established and although this has been discussed for many years we are at last in the final stages of establishing this. Once the path is open it will provide a safe route between the top of Monastery Road and the field giving a safer access route between the two parts of the village.

The Three Daggers have kindly offered to donate a Christmas tree for the village again this year and it will be located on the playfield. The turning on of the lights will take place on Friday 9th December at 6.30pm when the Bratton Training Band will be joining us for the singing of carols,

Remember you can always contact the Parish Council by email

[parishcouncil@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:parishcouncil@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)





## *Village Musings*

I want a house of blessing next to a pond on a village green under the hills, close to an everlasting plain.

I want to look out of my kitchen window onto a field with sheep, and hills rolling away into the distance.

I want to stand up high in my home and watch a sunset melt into night time and call out to the first star.



I want to wake under a huge, soft duvet, warm in my bed, cold on my face, and turn to snuggle into the sturdy,

beloved shoulder next to mine. And feel safe.

I want to see tiny fingerprints all over my looking glass and sticky hand prints down the stairwell.

I want to hear mischievous giggles and hurried whispers from under the bed.

I want to go hand in hand down a country lane, dancing in the moonshadows and pointing out Orion's belt.

I want to hear talking, and laughing and maybe sometimes weeping in my house of



blessing – I want so many people that we count wrongly for tea. And sit on the floor. And share jumpers.

I want to lie still, in the soft velvety darkness



and hear the church bells gently telling the hours.

I want to see the wind hurtling against my windows and

rain rushing on my roof whilst I curl up next to the fire in dear and beloved arms.

I want to dig in a garden, deeply, into chocolate, crumbly earth and smell things growing.

I want to share a glance of merriment and joy.

I want to smell a cardboard den and gingerbread and strawberry toothpaste.

I want to wake at an hour after midnight and share the brightest moon and make a date to see the next one in many decades time.

I want to feel the warmth of infant hair against my cheek.

I want to walk up hills to collect flint and gaze at infinity and talk philosophy with someone who is seven.

I want to pull wellies onto little feet and zip up little coats.

I want to sit completely still on a leather sofa with a tiny sleeping child on my lap.

I want to read a favourite picture book twenty times in a row. And enjoy every time.

I want to see shoes at the bottom of my stairs – great shoes and little shoes and every kind of shoe, telling me about the people in my home. And feel my heart ache with love.

I want to hug people I love with abandon.

I want to be utterly content.

Oh wait! I am already.

**Mercedes Henning**



## Charity Christmas Cards Sale

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Parish Hall 10.00 till 12.00 noon

Cards & gifts supporting your favourite charities

Catch up with friends over coffee and cake

And mince pies of course!





## Edington & District Gardening Club,

First Thursday in the month

7.30pm Parish Hall

We were delighted to have Peter Chmiel, debut winner of not only The Gold Medal but

the Best in Show at Chelsea Flower Show 2021, at the October Meeting.

Peter who is a Landscape Architect with Grant Associates in Bath, was invited to China to Guangzhou, to do a Chinese garden for the Chelsea Show, together with Chin Chen. The concept was to be 'Landscape Cities' balancing the needs of people and wildlife and made resilient to climate change and biodiversity loss.

The Guangzhou Garden was based on the city of Guangzhou, a city of 16 million people which was heavily polluted. To the north of the city are the Mountains – the green lung, and to the south the Wetlands – the blue kidney, with the

populous between – the social heart, on the Pearl River. However, the middle also has a thriving wildlife habitat brought into the city. Guangzhou has now become the main flower production base and distribution centre in China and is rated as an International Garden City. Peter explained how the garden was a concept of ecological civilization through the landscape by cleaning the air and soil while innovative structures provide homes, social space, play and rest areas for both people and wildlife. The airflow from the living green wall was cycled through the water and the soil removing 98% of pollutants. The build itself was done over 3 weeks with 9 semi mature trees and over 4000 plants, and beautiful wooden structures. The garden had more water than any other garden ever built at Chelsea.

The recycling continues with the trees relocated to Bishopstrow and the garden going to Bristol Botanics.

Visitors are always welcome to come along to any of the meetings. The Village Web page has all the information on upcoming events.

For more details contact 830133.

## Warm Space Event in Edington Parish Hall

Thursdays 2-4pm , starting on Thursday 24th November 2022

Wiltshire Council is in the process of developing an interactive Wiltshire Warm Spaces map for people to find their nearest warm, welcoming spaces throughout the coming winter months. Edington Parish Hall will provide a warm space with a cup of tea and cake on Thursdays 2pm - 4pm, starting on 24th November. All welcome. If you would like to volunteer to help in the hall and/or provide cakes on a rota basis, please contact Clive Earp: **07939 277813**, or [cliveearp@yahoo.com](mailto:cliveearp@yahoo.com)



**Meeting every second Tuesday of the month 7.30pm.**  
**Edington Parish Hall [www.facebook.com/edingtonandtinheadwi](http://www.facebook.com/edingtonandtinheadwi)**  
**Contact Jan Billinge 07309 117686**  
**email: [janel.billinge1@gmail.com](mailto:janel.billinge1@gmail.com)**

Report from our meeting on October 11th 2022.  
All welcome to our meetings.

## **Stuart Robbins: From Mars to Long Hollow**

So why did someone with a stellar engineering and management career at Mars decide to open a bicycle workshop in Edington?

Stuart says that he did not initially see himself as a practical person and left school at 16 to



take an art course at Trowbridge College. Realising this was not for him he took up an engineering apprenticeship

at Bowyers at 17. He credits their structured training program for developing his enthusiasm and confidence to make and mend things, and 'do things right' which has stayed with him through his career. He gained HND qualifications and a degree in mechanical and electrical engineering before the company suddenly closed.

Although this came as a shock, by the following Monday he was working at Mars and it is here that his career truly took off. For a young man with aspirations this large international company offered opportunities, development, and overseas travel. Starting as team leader he worked his way up to heading up the design, management and maintenance of new industrial production processes and promotions to more senior overseas roles were offered.

This gave Stuart pause. Now married with a young family, he loved the work but was increasingly frustrated that the long unpredictable hours, commuting and overseas travel were affecting his family life. Instead of taking a further step up, he took a step back, taking a less demanding job at Twinings. At first the pressure eased, but then began to build back up. To spend more quality time with his children, a more radical change was needed. But it had to be something personally meaningful to justify relinquishing a successful career.

Always a keen cyclist, he decided to turn his passion into a business. Having equipped his home workshop and taken every Cytech course on the books, he opened his doors to customers and started applying his engineering skills to the bicycles and e-cycles of Edington and the surrounding area. As well as repairing standard bikes and tuning their performance his skills include hand-crafting bicycles from scratch, restoring vintage models and adapting bikes to accommodate different physical capabilities. He now has the best view possible from his workshop window! However he said the best bit about self-employment is that he can work when he wants and do the school runs.

Keen to share his skills and enthusiasm he gave us a demo and DIY tips for balancing a wobbly wheel. His passion for creating and maintaining well-balanced machines was evident and he says his own work-life balance is much improved. The training and guidance he received as a young man were very important to him and he said he is keen to mentor young people to get the best out of themselves as well as their bikes!

An excellent and informative presentation.



## Smaller corvids of Edington

The jackdaw is the smallest crow being only about half the size of a raven. It is one of the commonest birds around Edington. It has a reputation for being a thief and appeared in the poem by the 19th Century poet Richard Harris Barham called 'The Jackdaw of Rheims'. In the poem the bird steals the ring of the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims. 'The Devil,' wrote Barham, 'must be that little Jackdaw.' The majestic red kite as it soars across the field opposite our house must think the same thing as it is regularly mobbed by a band or clattering of jackdaws.

When it comes to safety in numbers, jackdaws are keen to join the mob. Jackdaws are more likely to band together to drive off predators if lots of them are up for the fight, new



**Jackdaw – note the grey nape at the back of its head (del. S.F. Henning)**

research suggests. A study found that when jackdaws call out to show they are willing to mob a predator, others join in, as I regularly see from my sitting room window.

The jackdaw's short stubby bill, grey nape (back of its head), and small size distinguishes it from the crow and the rook. It is gregarious, forming flocks, on fields and a variety of other habitats. It performs aerobatics along cliffs, gorges and in towns and cities. Its flight is strong and powerful, and it can soar and glide and do aerial dives.

The jackdaw feeds mostly on farmland, often in company with rooks. It feeds on a wide variety of food ranging including worms, insects, nestlings, eggs, small mammals, fruit, grain, and carrion.

The jackdaws start breeding in late April to early May. Originally, they inhabited rock formations and old hollow trees, but today they also frequent tall buildings, ruins, and holes in the walls, chimneys and clay pits. They also sometimes take over the old nests of other birds. The cup shaped nest is made of twigs and is usually lined with hair, fur, grass, and wool – which the jackdaw sometimes plucks from the back of sheep. The female lays 4-6 pale blue eggs spotted with brown. The female incubates the eggs and is fed on the nest by the male. The eggs hatch after 17-18 days and the young are helpless and downy. The parents bring them food in a special sac in their throat and continue to feed them for a short time after they have learnt to fly. The young take 28-32 days to fledge and leave the nest.

The magpie is a large black and white crow, with distinctive long wedge-shaped, green-glossed tail. It was originally a bird of rural areas – particularly neglected farmland and mature pasture and thick hedges. In more recent times it has spread into suburban areas and gardens in some of the big cities. They are regularly seen around Edington and are resident all year round.





**Magpie with its striking black and white plumage and long tail (del. S.F. Henning)**

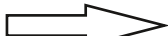
Magpies are omnivorous, feeding on carrion, invertebrates, small mammals, nestlings, and eggs. grain, berries, and fruit. They are sociable birds and are often seen 'chattering' noisily in small groups across many habitats, from gardens to parks, and heaths to hedges. In the spring, large numbers of magpies often gather to resolve territorial conflicts and social standing. These gatherings, called parliaments, probably gave rise to the many nursery rhymes and poems about magpies, such as: 'One for sorrow, two for joy...'

During spring, the male helps the female to build a nest by bringing materials which they then arrange. It is famous for collecting all kinds of objects, particularly anything shiny, to decorate its nest. They nest in trees or bushes,

sometimes as low as two metres, but usually high enough to allow a clear view of their surroundings. The large nest can take several weeks to complete and is made from small branches and twigs and lined with mud and vegetation. The nest unusually for a crow is domed to prevent predation by other corvids. The dome is made with a characteristic open-work arch of foliage and the entrance is on the side. The female lays 5-8 eggs that are smooth, glossy, and pale blue with olive-brown or grey spots. She incubates the eggs for 17-18 days and when the young hatch they are helpless and downy. Since the females starts to brood when the first eggs are laid, the young are of varying sizes. Both parents feed the young after they have hatched. The chicks take from 22-28 days to fledge and leave the nest. After leaving the nest, the young often draw attention to their position by their feeding time calls. The family remains together for some time after the young have left the nest.

The Jay is a large woodland crow with distinctive pinkish-buff plumage, rounded wings, and long tail. It can be found in forests, hedges, heaths, and gardens. It is generally a secretive bird, and its presence is often only detected by its harsh cries. When spotted in flight, it is usually flitting from one group of trees to another with distinctive, jerky beats of its rounded wings. I first saw one in Edington along Cowlease Lane about 20 years ago sitting in one of the tall trees.

Jays rely heavily upon trees, especially oaks, for their existence. They bury acorns for their winter food and will also store beech-nut and other nuts and seeds. To a lesser extent they will catch small mammals, earthworms, spiders, insects, and will also eat the eggs and nestlings of other birds. Often, they will also eat blackberries and rowan berries.

Jays are 'Masters of Planning', with incredible foresight and a depth of self-control not seen among many other bird species. A number of experiments have been done by 



**The jay is a crow with distinctive plumage (del. S.F. Henning)**

scientists over the years to show the extent of their abilities. In one such experiment, Jays were faced with a series of different foods (peanuts, raisins etc) to see if they could be sorted and stored onto various different trays. The jays did this, showing a level of anticipation not before seen.

The food was stored for later consumption, similar to cooking food for each lunch time over the following working week.

Jays have also been shown to have the ability to give of gifts and show an awareness of the feelings of others. As part of their mating rituals, jays have been reported to anticipate future needs by considering the desires of their future partner(s). Jays have often been seen to use tools and have an excellent level of mimicry and vocalisation - sometimes copying the songs and calls of other birds. Jays can also express a range of emotions such as anger, playfulness, and affection. It has also been shown that they understand that objects exist even though they can't see them, a skill that takes humans an entire year to master. Jays also show gregariousness, sociability, and have the skill to form complex alliances and coalitions, similar to chimpanzees and dolphins

In the spring, the jays sometimes hold formal courtship ceremonies, in which groups of jays pursue each other with slow wingbeats and a great deal of calling. The ceremonies often speed up and reach their climax in an exciting chase through the branches of trees, during which the male birds turn their bodies sideways to the females and raise their crest and body feathers.

The jay nests 2-6 metres above the ground, in trees and tall bushes. The nest is built by both the partners and is rather small compared to that of other crows. It is only about 30 cm across, flat, with the relatively deep well. Thin twigs are the main building material, and it is lined with grass, small roots, and hairs. The female lays 5-7 pale green eggs speckled with buff. Both parents take turns to incubate the eggs. The eggs take some 16-17 days to hatch, and the young are helpless and naked. The young do not make much noise while in the nest and take about 19-20 days to fledge. The adults continue to feed them after they have left the nest and the family stays together right into autumn.

## Dr Stephen Henning





## Edington arts

The choir of Merton College, Oxford, will be performing this year's Advent Concert in the Priory Church on Saturday 10th December, starting at 7.30pm.

We are delighted to welcome back Benjamin Nicholas, Director of Music at Merton, and the college's 34-strong mixed voice choir, one of the elite Oxbridge choral ensembles. Merton performed our first Advent concert back in 2015, (if you were there, you will remember how wonderful it was,) and were due back in 2019 only to be ruled out by the Pandemic. While the students in that choir have graduated and left Oxford, those that have filled their places have

gone on to confirm the Merton chapel choir under Benjamin Nicholas's directorship as "one of the best collegiate choirs in the land" (American Record Guide) and "one of the UK's finest choral ensembles" (The Gramophone).

There will be music for Advent and for Christmas from across the ages, both traditional and contemporary, with contributions from the College's Organ Scholar accompanying the choir and performing as a soloist.

As always in the run-up to Christmas, there will be mulled wine and mince pies in the interval, helping to get you in the mood.

Tickets are on sale now from Chrissy on **01380 831256**, or by email from [sue@edingtonarts.org](mailto:sue@edingtonarts.org); they remain at £20/15/10 with 18 and under coming free. Edington Angels have a 10% discount. This is one of the most popular concerts in the calendar so don't delay securing your tickets!





## Carpet Bowls in the Parish Hall

Those attending our first taster session were welcomed to the smell of brewing coffee and bacon and sausages cooking. Soon the Parish Hall was ringing with lots of laughter and words of encouragement as we tried to get to grips with the idiosyncrasies of the sport that is Carpet Bowls. Jon and Alan generously gave up their time to come and provide some expert tuition not least to explain about the bias that the bowls have, essential knowledge if you wish to keep the bowls on the mat!



A big thank you to Jon and Alan. "...I'm sure that the floor is not level...", "...there must be a

definite slope as the bowls keep going off the mat...", "...oops I forgot I'm not playing skittles..." were some of the 'excuses' to be heard. However, there are some villagers with hidden talents (Alex, Joy and Peter to name but a few) who very quickly mastered the bias and were able to place the bowl very close to the jack.

In between trying to keep the bowls on the mat, trying not to hit the back fender and get close to the jack, people were fortified with bacon or sausage rolls, muffins and tea and coffee.

All of the equipment (the mat, fenders, bowls and target mat) has been purchased thanks to a grant from Westbury Area Board and it was good to welcome Suzanne Wickham both as a villager and our Wiltshire Councillor to the session so that she could see first-hand how the carpet bowls equipment is contributing to the social activities in the Parish Hall. We are grateful to



Suzanne for her support in securing the grant as well as the other members of Westbury Area Board.

Further Carpet Bowls sessions are being planned so watch this space! Thank you to everyone who came on Saturday, your support is much appreciated and we hope to see you at future sessions; thank you also to my fellow committee members David, Helen and Clare for helping to make the taster session



such a success. Wanting something to do with the family or friends on a wet, cold day or dark winter evening, why

not book the Parish Hall and try your hand at carpet bowls or hone your skills on the target mat? All equipment is provided along with a set of rules should you wish to have a game. If interested please email [parishhall@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:parishhall@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)

Our next social event is the Curry and Quiz night on Saturday 19th November – please see next page.

**Wendy Pollard**



**Curry and Quiz Night  
at  
Edington Parish Hall  
ON  
Saturday November 19th at 19.30**

Teams of Four £8 per person, payable at the door.

BYOB



Winning team gets their money  
back.

To book your place contact:

Helen O'Donoghue tel **830501**

[helenod42@gmail.com](mailto:helenod42@gmail.com)





## Edington Priory Church Choir

For 12 months now, it has been my privilege to look after the choir at Edington Priory Church. And I am glad to report that I have really enjoyed it.

Let me tell you a little bit about the choir. We are a mixed group of women and men, divided into four voices – Sopranos, Altos, Tenors and Basses. Most of the music we sing is written in four parts. Much of the music is accompanied by the organ, but we also frequently sing without any accompaniment.

We sing for services in the church every week. On three Sundays each month we sing at the morning Holy Communion service and on two Sundays we sing Evensong. We also sing for special services e.g. at Advent and Christmas, during Lent, Easter and Remembrance Sunday. Our role is to lead the people in worship, and we sing hymns, psalms and anthems.



### Do You Like Singing? – Come and Join Us!

If anyone out there enjoys singing, why not give the Church Choir a try? Some experience of music-making would be useful, but we provide lots of resources to help our members learn the music, and we won't put you through an audition!

We meet every Thursday evening, from 7pm to 8.30pm to practise. Give me a ring, and come and join us one Thursday – we promise to give you a warm welcome.

Looking back over the last year, I am surprised and delighted to discover how many times the choir has sung, and how many new anthems we have learned.

Since October 2021:

We have sung anthems on 23 different occasions.

We have sung 26 different anthems.

We have learned 17 new anthems.

That's a tremendous achievement for a small village choir, and here I would like publicly to congratulate all the Choir members, and thank them for the hard work and time they have devoted to the Choir.

**Andrew King**  
**01380 831227**



## Four Villages Link

More volunteers are urgently needed! The requests for lifts to doctor

and hospital appointments have increased and on some days we are unable to find available drivers. Please consider volunteering – you can fit it around your timetable, it's great chatting to the clients, and your mileage is paid.

Please call 07852 256939 and see more information at

<http://thefourvillageslink.org.uk/>



## New Life In Dubai

From The Lescott Family (October 2022)

We moved to the so-called 'Sandpit' in early August. My 2 daughters, aged 10 and 12, our dog (Monty) and me joining my husband who had already been living here for 4 years.

Dubai is an extremely cosmopolitan city with nationalities, cultures and religions (and food!) from all around the world. There is a strong British expat community which is very supportive to newcomers, with everyone keen to help and recommend places and tips on how to adjust to your new-found lifestyle.

August is the hottest month of the year, with temperatures sometimes reaching as high as 50 degrees Celsius. This means that the sea, when we first ventured for a dip, was rather like a warm bath – something we had never experienced in Dorset or Pembrokeshire. Thankfully, at night it cools down to a chilly late 30s....



We must walk the dog before sunrise (5/5.30am) and after 6pm once the sun has set, so the ground isn't too hot for his little paws. I must admit, I think he's adapted to his new lifestyle faster than the rest of us and he is loving going to day-care for a swim and play with other dogs. It isn't Salisbury Plain but he's still enjoying himself. When it gets cooler after October; we can all enjoy lovely walks in the

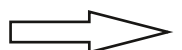


desert and explore the various oases and mountains too.

There are two things that I will not get used to while living here and that is driving in and around Dubai and the maintenance team 'professionals'

that are called in when your AC stops working or there's a bad smell coming from one of the bathrooms.

There are 2 main motorways in and around the city: Sheikh Zayed Road and Al Khail Road. Both with up to 8 lanes! It would be difficult to get around without having to join at least one of them. The city was built very quickly and the roads had to be built around landmarks and communities very fast too. It is a little bit like 'Wacky Races' where people are coming from both sides at crazy speed, entitled with no care or right of way. If you want to stay alive while on the roads in Dubai, you have to be selfish and a daredevil at the same time! But you have to keep your cool. If you are caught swearing, making rude gestures at other fellow drivers, you can risk 1 year in prison or a hefty 10,000 Dirhams (£2,500) fine!





When we first arrived in our new home, opportunists were ringing the bell and asking for work and offering their services for general DIY, gardening and maintenance around the house. Most of them unfortunately with no professional qualifications or experience, armed with a mallet and a screwdriver.

Virtually anything you can think of can be delivered to your door with a couple of thumb clicks on your phone - even your caffeine fix from your favourite coffee shop within the hour. Or you might be cooking, mid-recipe and realise you're missing a lemon and it can be with you in 15 minutes!

Car needs washing? Click, click, khalas (done)! Running low on fuel? Even petrol gets delivered to your door for a fraction of the price we pay in the UK. It

sounds indulgent (and is) but it makes good sense as, bizarrely, there are only a few petrol stations and they get very busy. If you happen to queue for your fuel, when your turn comes, no need to step out of your car; someone is there to do it for



you!

With people from all over the world living here, there are foods to suit all tastes. You can have fish and chips or pizzas anytime you want, but we have found it nice to try and enjoy the many delicious Middle Eastern dishes such as hummus and moutabel dips, Tabbouleh and Fattoush salads and, of course, the chicken or beef shawarma sandwiches!

So, lots to get used to, both good and bad but it's certainly an adventure and nice to all be together again. We will no doubt be back to visit within the year and will have to re-acquaint ourselves with, what do you call them? Ah yes! 'Rain'? 'The cold'?



## Edington Under Fives



We meet every Thursday in  
Edington Parish Hall  
between  
10am and 12 noon.

The first session is free, and only £2 per family thereafter (to help with running costs). For more information contact Emily on

**07910228383**



## Edington Advent Windows – a new challenge!

A couple of years ago the village rose, admirably, to the challenge of Christmas Scarecrows, producing a wonderful array of characters for our Crib Service. Well, this year we have a new challenge for you:



We would like to create a kind of Advent Calendar around the village. We need 24 volunteers to create a Christmas image to be displayed in their window or front garden. Each day of December a new image will appear around the village until, on Christmas Eve, there are 24 to enjoy – just like opening a new window each day on an Advent Calendar.

**If you'd like to join in, please contact me.**

I will co-ordinate the list of contributors and make sure we don't get 24 Santas – although that sounds quite fun too. I will allocate you a Day Number – the date from which your window will be on display – and produce a map of where to find all the windows.

I hope you like the idea and are able to participate.

**Andrew King, 01380 831227, [apking1@sky.com](mailto:apking1@sky.com).**

## Coffee Morning Drop In



Every Tuesday

10.30 - 11.30 am

in the Three Daggers.

Transport available contact

Pauline or Joy.

## EDINGTON PARISH HALL

At the top of Monastery Road, is available for hire at very reasonable rates and has the benefit of a car park opposite the hall. Suitable for parties, meetings, family celebrations, funeral wakes and other events.

For more information or to book the hall, using the online booking system, go to [www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/hall](http://www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/hall). Alternatively email [parishhall@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:parishhall@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk) or phone 01380 830441. We look forward to welcoming you to the hall.





## Erlestoke Cricket Club Fireworks

A very wet and miserable weather day failed to dampen the spirits of the organisers, and visitors, to the Walled Garden. The annual Cricket Club fireworks event has grown quite a reputation for excellence over the years, and despite all the challenges that the weather could throw at it, this year's fireworks evening was another great success.

Sadly, after a week of rains and dampness, the bonfire defeated all efforts of the crew to ignite it and the bonfire will now await another and drier time to give its cheer and warmth.

Despite the bonfire set-back the rest of the night was a wonderful success. The medieval knights gave an energetic display of sword and axe fighting and many young and old visitors



took up the offer to wield a sword for themselves and to engage in mock swordplay with the knights. The longbow archers were a popular stall and many visitors got the

chance to send an arrow or two into a cut-out knight target. The glo-stuff stall did sparkling business with our younger visitors and the Walled Garden was soon alight with flashing wands and headbands. A stalwart team of club volunteer

caterers kept the burgers and hot dogs coming and the soup and mulled wine did great business.

It was close to a record attendance for the Walled Garden fireworks night and there was a palpable buzz and hope that the firework display would be its usual thrilling and spectacular success. The fireworks organisers, from local Erlestoke firm Distant Thunder, did not



let us down. A truly fantastic firework display launched up and away and lit the night skies and the ghostly trees with brilliant jewels and tracers of every colour and hue. Rockets, spirals and cascades,

whoops and wails and the final crescendo of a breath-stopping sky-wide curtain of firework extravagance and wonder.

It was a marvellous night and, hopefully, a profitable one. The club is trying to build a new pavilion at the Walled Garden and every £ helps bring it a little closer.

Thanks to all who turned up to help and join in, and to all our visitors – we hope you enjoyed the night and will want to come back again next year.

Christmas Turkey Draw tickets are available now at the Post Office, £5 a ticket for the draw prize of a Douse Brother's hamper of Christmas meat.



## THREE VILLAGES MINIBUS (TVM)



Some of our passengers still feel more comfortable wearing a face covering but the option is left to each individual.

A hand sanitiser is still available for use when entering the minibus.

All these journeys accept concessionary passes and will return you to your door.

These trips are open to **all** resident of our villages; we welcome everyone, of any age.

Group hire can now resume if groups wish to do so.

**Joy Fraser (830426)**

## Lunch in the Parish Hall

Our lunch in December will be our Christmas Lunch and will be on

**Wednesday 7th December.**



Note this is the first Wednesday in December not the second Wednesday as is usually the case.

All will be most welcome to join us.

This is always a very popular lunch so please book your place early with Pauline (830013)

to avoid

disappointment. All bookings must be

made by

December 1st as this

is essential for catering arrangements.



TVM will provide door to door transport.

### Shopping Trips starting at Edington on

Destination	November	December	Start Time
Devizes - £3.20	Thursday 3rd	Thursday 1st	9am
Warminster - £2.80	Tuesday 15th	Tuesday 20th	1.25pm
Westbury - £2.30	Every Thursday	Every Thursday	1.30pm
Salisbury - £5.00	Saturday 12th	Saturday 10th	9.30am

**All these journeys accept concessionary passes and will return you to your door. These trips are open to all resident of our villages; we welcome everyone, of any age. Contact Pauline or Joy Fraser to book a place**



## Edington What's On Diary

Date	Time	Event	Venue
8th November	7.30pm	WI talk - Personality as seen in handwriting	Parish Hall
12th November	9.30am	Salisbury shopping - TVM	
14th November	7.30pm	Parish Council meeting	Parish Hall
15th November	1.25pm	Warminster shopping - TVM	
19th November	10am - 12 noon	Charity Christmas Cards Sale	Parish Hall
19th November	7.30pm	Curry and Quiz Night	Parish Hall
1st December	9.00am	Devizes shopping - TVM	
7th December	12.30pm	Village Christmas Lunch	Parish Hall
9th December	6.30pm	Village Christmas tree lights turn on	Play field
10th December	9.30am	Salisbury Shopping - TVM	
10th December	7.30pm	Advent Concert	Priory Church
12th December	7.30pm	Parish Council meeting	Parish Hall
20th December	1.25pm	Warminster shopping - TVM	

***TVM trips - please Contact Pauline or Joy Fraser to book a place***

**For these and future events please check the village website for more details.**

### Contacting us

Email the newsletter at

[newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)

or via the village website

[www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](http://www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)

### Future editions

We welcome your comments on this venture, please send them to the address below. If you would like to contribute an article to a future edition of the Edington Village News please email us with details of your article and we will contact you or speak to Pauline in the Post Office.

[newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)

**Deadline for articles 5th of the month.**

### Sharing the Newsletter

We are still hearing about villagers who say that they haven't heard about this newsletter, next time you speak to any of your neighbours and friends why not ask if they are receiving a copy and if not inform them that they can register for an emailed copy through the village website or send an email, the address is below. If they are unable to receive an electronic copy a paper copy can be obtained from Edington Post Office or perhaps you could volunteer to print out a copy for your neighbour.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically please visit the village website

[www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/newsletter](http://www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/newsletter)

and enter your details or email

[newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)

and you will be added to the mailing list.