

FEBRUARY 2024

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THE CHURCH PARISH MAGAZINE OF WOOTTON

The Bridge

Building Bridges in the Community

St Edmund's
& St Mark's



Wootton Bridge

Ashes and Valentines



"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ." With those uncompromising words, the priest marks the forehead of each member of the congregation with ash made by burning some of the Palm Crosses from the previous year. It is Ash Wednesday, and the Church is once again beginning the cycle of reflection, prayer, grieving and celebration which is Lent, Holy Week and Easter. For those of us who participate, it is, despite the hard message, a solemn and uplifting moment, especially in St Edmund's Church, where Ash Wednesday has been marked for almost a thousand years.

This year, Ash Wednesday is on February 14th, yes, Valentine's Day. Far more people will be thinking about greetings cards and possibly a meal out than about using the season of Lent to reflect on a world that could certainly do with a lot of reflective healing. And, as saints go, Valentine, a third century Roman martyr, is pretty obscure. There is even some confusion as to how many Saints Valentine there actually were, and the Roman Catholic church has downgraded his status, so that his name no longer appears in the main calendar of saints' days (though he is still recognised as a saint). How he came to be associated with courtly and, later, romantic love is also a bit of a mystery. He is the patron saint of beekeepers and epileptics, as well as of lovers. Obscure and downgraded he might be, but he clearly keeps himself busy.

Of course, Valentine's Day is no longer really about Valentine. And to the extent that it is about fostering, promoting and remembering loving relationships, it has to be a good thing. It is also, of course, a commercial opportunity at a time of year when business can be a bit slack. But, perhaps, when we are asked to express a positive view of close relationships, we should set our cynicism aside, and allow Valentines Day to give us some inner warmth in the continuing winter cold.

Surprising as it may seem, there is a real connection between Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day. Both respond in their own way to Jesus' great commandment, "Love God, and your neighbour as yourself". Whatever our religious beliefs may be, that commandment is always worth reflecting on.

David Bennison

For February services, please see Page 3



Bringing learning alive!

No matter what age we are or the experiences we have had in life, each and every one of us learns in different ways using different styles. Recent research supports the need for young children to have practical hands-on activities which enable them to use their senses to learn. Also, being able to rehearse and practice new skills, children are able to retrieve prior learning and understanding to develop their skills and knowledge further. At Wootton Primary we work hard to ensure that our learning journey enables children to retrieve prior lessons to enable them to deepen their knowledge across a range of skills



*Mrs Jane Wilford
Headteacher*

A recent example of this was with our Year 2 class. In Science, the children are working hard to be able to describe the basic needs of animals for survival, describing the importance of exercise, diet and hygiene for humans and considering the basic needs of animals, plus additional needs for health and wellbeing. They are also going to investigate simple differences between living and non-living things, and notice that animals have offspring which grow into adults, showing an understanding of the human life-cycle.

The class were so fortunate to have a visit from the Wildlife animal sanctuary who gave a talk about the white-tailed sea eagles. The children were so engaged in the learning, asked some fantastic questions drawing on their prior knowledge, and have subsequently completed a range of activities to fully embed their learning with really great outcomes. This has reaffirmed that it is so important that children are exposed to real life experiences and we are so fortunate to be able to access the many resources we are lucky to have on the Island.



Angela Hewitt (BEM)

(Local watercolour artist and designer)

by Yvonne Gilbert

There is a framed original watercolour on my living room wall. It is the portrait of a hen, one leg raised as if she is intent on urgent business. The artist is Angela Hewitt of Angela Designs Ltd, based at Padmore Lodge, East Cowes. I have enjoyed this picture since I bought it in 2003 at Aston Apple Orchard, Freshwater.

Angela Hewitt is successful and well known for her paintings of wildlife, domestic birds and farm animals. All her subjects have their own vibrant colours and a lively eye.

She is also founder of Naturezones, a reservation open to the public at Blackwater which is supported by the Heritage Lottery and her own investment.

All this is evidence of her passion for conservation and education allied to her artistic skill and she was awarded the BEM medal in 2023 for this.

From earliest times, mankind appears to have been bent on decorating his own dwelling: witness the cave drawings discovered in Lascaux, Dordogne Department, France in 1940, dated 2.5 million years ago (the Palaeolithic period). Since the discovery of these cave drawings with the outlines of huge animals in colour using charcoal and red ochre they have needed protection from mould brought on by lights, air conditioning and the breath from thousands of visitors. A replica of The Great Hall of Bulls was opened in 1983. Since the discovery there has been ongoing intense discussion by scientists debating the best route for conservation in ambient conditions.

In our own domain we could have an imaginary scenario on a farm: In the byre pictures of Highland Cattle knee deep in a Scottish river and a still life with fruit inside the sty.

(<https://www.angelahewittdesigns.co.uk>)



Church Services in Wootton during February 2024

(Please be aware that all services of Holy Communion are subject to a priest being available to take the service)

Please feel free to wear a mask if you would be more comfortable with it and hand sanitiser is available.
We are now able to offer the St Mark's Brunch service to everyone.

ST EDMUND'S

FEBRUARY

Sun 4th	0800 Holy Communion
Sun 11th	1700 Evensong
Wed 14th	0930 Holy Communion
Wed 21st	0930 Holy Communion
Sun 25th	1700 Evensong
Wed 28th	0930 Holy Communion

ST MARK'S

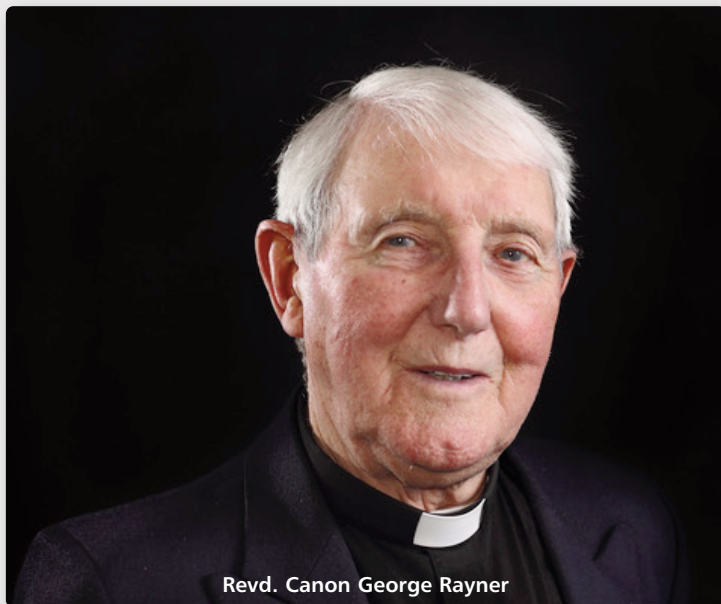
FEBRUARY

Sun 4th	0930 Brunch Service
Wed 7th	1115 Café Communion at St Mark's *
Sun 11th	0930 Holy Communion and Explorers
Sun 18th	0930 Morning Worship followed by the Big Mac Talk
Sun 25th	0930 Holy Communion

(*) If you would like to come to Café Communion, please leave us a message on the parish answerphone 301880 or email: stedmundsandstmarks@gmail.com.

George Rayner, Founder of *The Bridge*

This third instalment of George's own account of his life begins when he left his first parish in Taunton, and returned to the Isle of Wight as the Vicar of St. John's Sandown.



Revd. Canon George Rayner

With the invitation to go to St. John's, Sandown in July 1963 with the mandate to raise the ecclesiastical temperature, with Sung Communion and vestments, etc. to balance the local Evangelical parish church, he found similar challenges to Holy Trinity.

The church needed a complete face-lift, which the parishioners did themselves, erecting a west porch on which to place the fine Father Willis organ, building an adjoining hall, and after its destruction by fire, ensuring that the Church School should be retained.

St. John's is a handsome building, praised ecstatically by John Betjeman and just as everything was running smoothly and George thought he would spend some years

there, the summons came from the Bishop of Portsmouth to go to Wootton, where the village was scheduled to grow in size and had stagnated after a 30 year tenure by the previous Rector.

Understandably, he was very reluctant to move from Sandown and only did so under pressure from the Bishop and George was inducted there as Rector in January 1969.

Here again, there was building to do, a new large hall was built, St. Mark's, an Edwardian daughter church, having been closed for 25 years, was re-opened to provide for the anticipated increased congregations. A weekly Parish Communion, with priestly vestments, servers and a larger choir, consisting of boys and adults, was established soon after George's arrival that flourished, and the numbers out-grew the first pews that were purchased from Cowes Congregational Church, replaced with longer ones from St. Andrew's, Freshwater.

An organ was purchased from the closed Ventnor TB Hospital, which George and helpers re-erected in St. Mark's.

St. Edmund's, the parish church was upgraded with a small meeting room, toilets and kitchen, making a compact unit.

From 1967 until 1977 George had not only been Editor of the re-vamped Diocesan monthly Newsletter, but because of production costs, he installed a complete printing plant, so that he could print the 27,500 copies each month, which Hazel his wife packed for individual parishes and her father, Mr. Russell did all the billing and accountancy. (In contrast, The "Pompey Chimes" published only some 8,000 copies). He resigned when there were murmurings in some quarters at his editorial style that had ruffled some feathers and being unable to encourage the then Bishop to write articles suitable for the diverse readers through the Diocese, he resigned from that task.

Under such pressure, George found that he was suffering from stress and depression and was advised to resign, at the early age of 63.

So have we reached the end of George's productive, and sometimes controversial, career in the Church? You can find out in the final instalment, to be published next month.

[to be continued]

For Your Diary ... What's On ...

KEEP ACTIVE MOVE MORE CLASSES. BINSTAD COMMUNITY CENTRE ON TUESDAYS AT 11.20am AND WHIPPINGHAM VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAYS AT 9.45am, 11am, 12.15pm, 1.30pm, 4pm. AND FRIDAYS AT 10.10am at ARRETON VILLAGE HALL. Go at your own pace exercise program to help improve strength, stamina and balance. CONTACT: **ANDY SAVAGE 07779 616189**

KEEP ACTIVE RELAX MORE (K.A.R.M.) CLASSES. SANDOWN BROADWAY CENTRE ON MONDAYS AT 4.15pm AND WHIPPINGHAM VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAYS AT 2.45pm. A gentle movement program to calm and relax the body that is easy to learn and based on Tai Chi principles and can be done seated or standing. CONTACT: **ANDY SAVAGE 07779 616189**

BREATHE EASY ISLE OF WIGHT SUPPORT GROUP FOR ISLANDERS LIVING WITH CHRONIC LUNG CONDITIONS. MEETINGS HELD AT ARRETON VILLAGE HALL ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH FROM 2PM TO 4PM. FOR FURTHER INFO GO TO [HTTPS://BREATHEEASYIOW.ORG](https://breatheeasyiow.org) OR CONTACT: **ANDY SAVAGE 07779 616189**

PARKINSONS UK ISLE OF WIGHT HAVE REGULAR WEEKLY EXERCISE CLASSES AT ARRETON VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAYS AT 11.15am, 12.25pm and 2pm SPECIFICALLY SUITED FOR ANYONE LIVING WITH PARKINSONS. FOR FURTHER INFO CONTACT **ANDY SAVAGE 07779 616189**

Elephant Club

A social group for people living with memory loss and for others just wanting an afternoon of good company.....and cake. If someone you care for has memory problems, the ELEPHANT CLUB will be meeting at St Mark's Church between 2-4pm second Thursday of each month. If you would like good company and laughter, and to exercise "the little grey cells" whilst eating cake, do come and join us. We would love to see you. Each month's programme is different so we hope there will be something for everyone to enjoy. Next session: February 8th.

Stay & Play @ St Mark's Church

Looking for somewhere to take your young child on Thursday mornings? St Mark's is extending its former Little Lions club to all children (with their carers) eight years & under. The sessions will run from 9.15 – 11.30 and include some themed activities. There is no charge. (A small donation would be very welcome but is not expected). Next sessions: February 8th, 22nd & 29th. Free toast and a snack available to all, and free tea/coffee for adults. We hope to see you there! If you have any queries please email welcome.stmarks@gmail.com

WOOTTON BRIDGE METHODISTS

Every Monday Morning 10.am till 12 noon. Come and enjoy coffee and chat at Wootton Methodist Church from 10am-12 noon every Monday until further notice. Everyone welcome.

Whitgar Morris, meet in the coffee lounge at St Mark's on Tuesdays 7:30pm - 9:30pm. New members, dancers or musicians welcome. For further details ring 880118.

Mark's Brothers Breakfast/Brunch Gathering

This group now meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 10.30am - 12 noon in St Mark's coffee lounge. The opportunity for the men of the village who would like to sort the world to rights over just a coffee (if you're not a fan of bacon) or include the bacon butty too. Please let Harry Kirby know if you will be attending. A small, voluntary, contribution towards costs always appreciated. 07814809083 or harryskirby@btinternet.com The group is very friendly and welcoming.

The "Crafty Ladies"

We meet on Wednesday afternoons at St Mark's Church, Wootton, from 1.30pm 'till 4pm.

We would like to welcome new members to our friendly group, who get together to enjoy a variety of different crafts, no experience necessary. Come in and join us for a natter and a coffee/tea as well. Age is no barrier!

It's £5 a session, with the first one free.

Please call Jan on 882381 for more details

CREEKSIDE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (WI) - Everyone welcome at 7.15pm on the first Wednesday of each month (except August) at the Methodist Church, Station Road, Wootton Bridge, IW, and see what we get up to. Visitors and new members always welcome. Contact: Marlene Cassidy 01983 882718.

Creeside WI Activities for February 2024

February 14th - Members Main Meeting Speaker Alan Jenkins on 'Radar'. (A revisit because he is so good).

February 18th - Visit to Shanklin Theatre

February 28th - Kurling with the Methodist Church.

Don't forget our Book Club, Craft Club, Amble, Coffee Chat and Bowling.

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The Monday games and chat in the Zoomiverse sessions will be back when the weather closes in.

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**If contributing to *The Bridge* is something that interests you, contact:
David Bennison on 882783**

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More details
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Bennison on
882783



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For more information please contact Hilary by:

Tel: 07769588644

Email: annachaplain@cofeparishofwoottonbridge.org.uk

Website: <http://www.cofeparishofwoottonbridge.org.uk/anna-chaplain/>

Military Whist Drives

Teams of 4 are welcome to the drives held in the Methodist hall (parking in Station car park). The next meetings will be on February 9th & 23rd, & March 8th & 22nd. £2.50 per person.

Contact Colin on 882588.

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IWUFT Wootton Bridge History Group

Meets on the first Friday each month in the Scout Hut, Wootton Rec. Doors open 2pm. Talk at 2:30pm. New members welcome. £4 per person, £3 to IWUFT members, includes refreshments after.

Friday Feb 2nd "Newport: Saints, Sinners, and Salty Sea Dogs" by Mark Earp. An amusing miscellany of tales and anecdotes and little known history of our County town.

Friday March 1st. "A History of Nursing" by John and Sonja Drewry. Part powerpoint presentation, part costumed drama, don't miss this!! Not to be missed. All welcome.

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WOOTTON BRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH (Station Road)

Minister: **Revd Frances Balham**

Sunday Morning Service 10am

Evening Services as announced

Minister's Message

Dear friends,

This morning the sun was streaming through my office window, the sky clear and blue, and the air still – it is still very cold though. As evening approached on the same day, I had a flutter of excitement when I realised that the nights are 'pulling out'. It creeps up on me unexpectedly each year. The winter has brought extremes and contrasts of weather - alongside this, are the extremes and contrasts life brings to us, we never can tell what surprises life will bring our way from one day to the next.

Often, when we look back over our lives and remember moments of happiness, and life changing events, we realise that they have come at unexpected and unplanned times. I remember once being given a card by a friend and inside it was written the following verse.

*"when you go chasing butterflies, they
constantly elude you, and then when you turn
your back, they come and gently land
on your shoulder."*

We can spend so much time and energy looking for and chasing happiness, when often it's right

where we are but we just haven't had enough time to stop and notice it.

The 'green cross code' told us to 'stop, look and listen' - perhaps we should use this code – not just for crossing the road – but to look for our blessings, and then count them - both great and small.



Frances 

Preachers for February

4th	February	Covenant	F. Balham
11th	February	Church Worship	Short and Snappy
18th	February		R. Felton
25th	February		A. Geddes



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The Wootton
Calendar



2024

Grateful thanks for those who purchased the 2024 Wootton Calendar. Apart from a few I used as gifts, I was sold out. Some ended up a long way from Wootton, the USA and Canada for instance. One year I recall Africa was included. Thanks to those who enabled me to donate extra to the St Edmund's Building Trust.

Thanks also to those who supported the Carol concert in December, successful, despite the cold weather. We plan to stage another concert in March in aid of the Trust, so watch out for announcements.

If anyone has any requests, for instance a large size copy of one of the images, please let me know and I will see what I can do. Thank you

Doreen Gazey

(already considering the 2025 calendar)

PARISH COUNCIL information

Meetings:

Meetings: usually third Tuesday in every month (except August) at 7pm in The Old School, New Road - details at HIC, on village noticeboards and on website.

Parish Councillors:

Barry Abraham

John Ward

Trish Evans

Vacancy

Barrie Hailstone, *Chair*

Vacancy

Linda Pitcher, *V.Chair*

Lee Lemon

Vacancy

Ian Yeo

Liz Kingston, *Clerk*

Lorna Morey, *Assistant Clerk*

All can be contacted at the HIC on 884555.

Office opening times:-

PARISH COUNCIL

Mon. 9.00am-2.00pm;

Tues. 9.00am-2.00pm;

Wed. 9.00am-2.00pm;

Thurs. 9.00am-2.00pm;

Fri: 9.00am-2.00pm

BEAT OFFICER

First Tuesday in month

10am-12 noon or messages can be left for the Police.

WOOTTON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

5 Joanne's Walk, Brannon Way,
Wootton Bridge, Ryde, IW
PO33 4NX

tel: 884555

email: clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk

website:

www.woottonbridge.org.uk

Full details of all facilities available at the HIC can be obtained from the Parish Clerk or on the website.



Wootton Bridge
PARISH COUNCIL

Report from Liz Kingston, Clerk – Wootton Bridge Parish Council.
Telephone: 884555. Email clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk
New IOW Councillor for Wootton Bridge, Sarah Redrup
Email sarah.redrup@iow.gov.uk

Wootton Bridge Parish Council has a Facebook page – please “like” – which displays all the latest information and you are welcome to comment on any topic.

Parish Councillor Vacancy

We now have two Parish Councillor vacancies which will be filled by co-option at our February meeting. If anybody is interested, please can they either email or phone the clerk? The closing date is February 13th 2024.

Community Speed Watch

We are looking into setting up a Speed Watch in the village. We are now actively seeking people to help and run this. We currently have 5 volunteers and ideally need a few more plus a coordinator. If you are interested, please contact us by either email, clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk, by phone on 01983 884555, or pop into the office.

Party in the Park

Next year's Party in the Park will take place on **Saturday 6th July 2024**. This is our annual afternoon fete and evening music picnic. It is very much a village event and this year there will be lots of food and craft stalls, various performances in the arena, an ice cream van and music. If you would like a stall, then please contact the Clerk on 01983 884555 or via the Wootton Bridge Parish Council Facebook page. To make the event a success we are still in need of volunteers so if you can help in any way, please let us know.

Spring Tidy Up

We are looking at this taking place on Saturday 20th April 2024 from 10am – 1pm. All are welcome - you can either tidy round your own street or come to the office where we will be coordinating the Clean-up and give you an area to clean. Equipment is provided.

Meeting of the Parish Council

Council meetings are held at the Old School in New Road every 3rd Tuesday of the month – details of these are available on our website as well as on our noticeboards.

Chair's Message – Cllr Barrie Hailstone

May I, on behalf of the Parish Council, wish all our Residents a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

It is with sadness that our village has lost one of our business entrepreneur's Mr. Terry Thomas, of Terry's Fish & Chip Shop, who passed from us, on the 19th December 2023. We offer our most sincere condolences to his family and friends for their loss.

I can confirm that your Councillors are working hard for the village and are always contactable if you have any specific problems. Of course, our Clerks are also available 5 days a week from 9 am to 2 pm each day.

Covid and the Flu is once again amongst us, so please take all necessary precautions to stay safe. To those who are fit and well please keep in mind any elderly neighbour who may need assistance. Please help where you can and let us know of any problems. We are here to help.

If you have any areas of concern, or want to report any incidents, please either visit the Parish Office in Brannon Way, or contact us by phone (01983 884555) or email clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk

Liz Kingston – Clerk 

HOMEBRAY HOUSE, WOOTTON

by John Lea

John Lea has lived in Ryde since 1968 and in Wootton since 1991. He was Headmaster of the Junior School of Ryde School from 1968 1976. He was educated at London University and was also a graduate of Trinity College of Music, London. He was the Organist of St. Edmund's Church, Wootton in 1968 and of St. Mark's, Wootton, from its consecration in 1970 before being appointed Director of Music at All Saints' Church, Ryde. He has lived at Homebray House since 2017.

At the beginning of October 2023, I attended a meeting of the Wootton Parish Council. I was not unduly surprised when at least three councillors asked me where Homebray House was, as I have discovered that many long-standing residents of Wootton have no idea where it is, either. I must confess that when I lived in Whitehead Crescent, I did not know. The name is written in large letters on the wall adjacent to the Wootton Car Park but people tend to look in the direction of the shops.

Homebray (the House tag is never used by its residents) was opened as a residential home for the elderly. It is not a care home. The residents must be at least 65 years and able to look after themselves. Mr. Barry Field MP, the Island Liberal member, officially opened Homebray on 20th. February 1988. In the foyer is a photograph of that occasion with the first residents. One of them is still living here. At present the ages range from the sixties up to the ninety-plus.

The flats are mainly one-bed, one lounge, kitchen and bathroom but there are a few two-bedroom apartments for married couples. Many of the residents are widows and widowers. The number of ladies more than double the menfolk but I have yet to hear any of the males grumble about that!

The main entrance stands in Brannon Way although the correct address is Mary Rose Avenue. That is because originally the main entrance was in Mary Rose. Attempts have been made to rectify this but it is as it stands. Homebray's own car park is in Mary Rose and residents have keys to both. Visitors have to dial the number of the flat they require and state who they are. The resident can then let them in or not as he or she decides. Workmen have to gain entry by speaking to one of the managers. Paula is our main manager with Claire as her assistant. They are responsible for the smooth running of Homebray and for the tight security. A Guest Room can be booked for visiting friends and families. There are pull chords in every room and the fire alarm system is tested every Thursday at midday.

Entertainment is mainly homemade. Coffee mornings, cream teas, Bingo etc. are organised by the residents. We are fortunate in having a large lounge. Sometimes Island-based groups come to sing and play either free or for a small fee. There are, of course, plenty of birthdays to celebrate or commiserate with, at which time it is the norm for the birthday girl or boy to provide the cakes. The younger residents are very good at looking after the more elderly, bringing tea and coffee in waiter-like fashion. There is a lift (well used) between the two upper floors and basement.

Homebray was originally a McCarthy & Stone enterprise, built on glebe land. The financial side was in the hands of Peverel but later transferred to First Port. A few years ago, the Government started a Right to Manage (RTM) scheme and two residents undertook the task of taking over the finances for the residents themselves, resulting in reducing the reliance on those professional firms. Some flats are owner-occupied while many rent them. Whichever is the case all residents pay a half-yearly amount to cover the electricity in the communal areas, water, laundry (each floor has different allotted days) as well as cleaning and gardening staff, professional accountant and the managers. The managers meet with elected residents, accountant and other interested relatives to discuss the finances and other relevant matters.

Homebray is well situated and served, for day-to-day shopping in Wootton High Street, doctor's surgery and other amenities. The older residents do find crossing Brannon Way to the surgery a nightmare from speeding traffic and some of the pavements on the Tesco side are a minefield too.

However, Homebray is a happy place and flats are highly sought after. They only come on the market when a resident leaves. Williams Estate Agents (Wootton) and our managers deal with the selling or renting of the apartments. Perhaps, if you are living on your own and your present house and garden are becoming a burden, you might find it worthwhile making an enquiry. You will find a warm welcome and enjoyment living with the like-minded company at Homebray House.

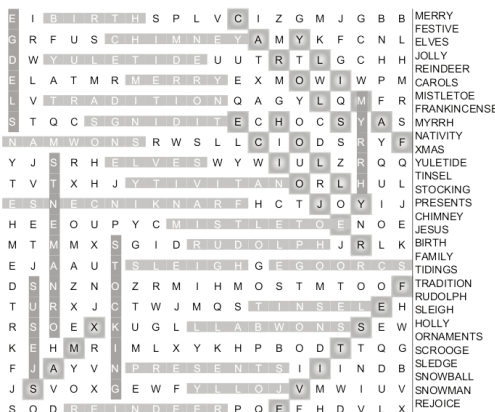


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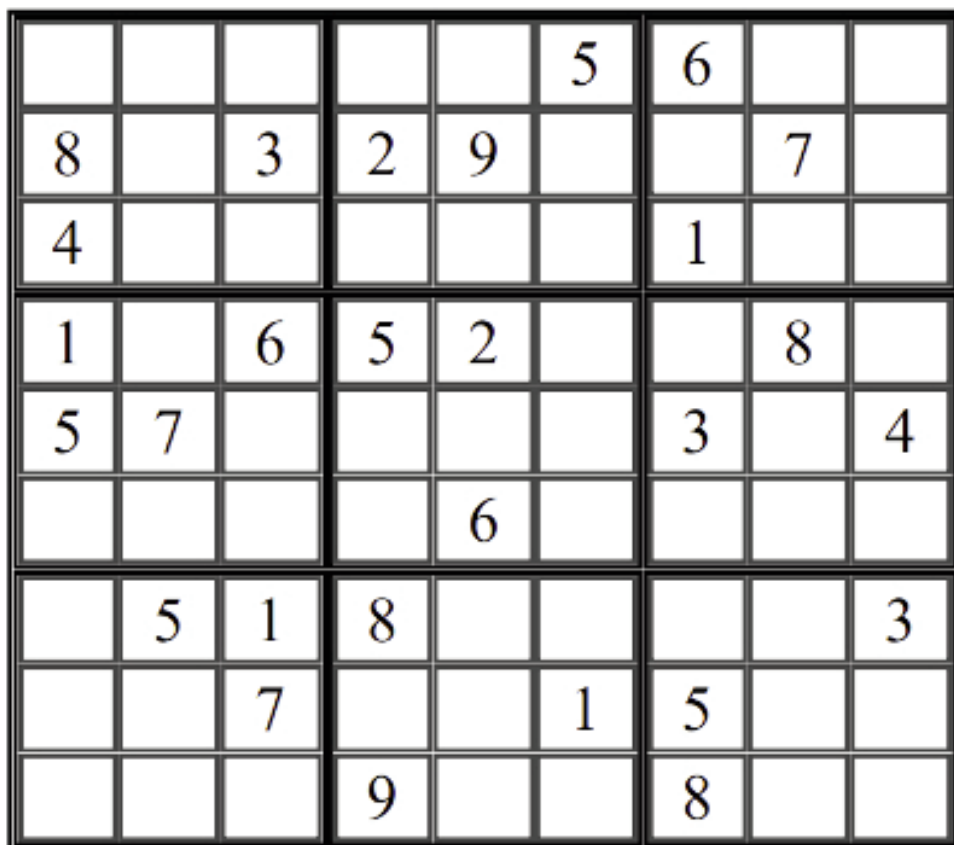
Solution - Dec/Jan Wordsearch



If you have any particular
areas of concern, or want to
report any incidents, please
either visit the Parish Office
in Brannon Way, or contact
us by phone or email

Telephone:
01983 884555

Email:
clerk@woottonbridge.org.uk



SUDOKU

Fill in the grid with digits in
such a manner that every row,
every column and every 3x3
box accommodates the digits
1-9, without repeating any.



6th
February
2024

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ST EDMUND'S and ST MARK'S CHURCH

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For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals please contact us at:
stedmundsandstmarks@gmail.com or leave a message on 01983 301880
(we will respond as soon as we can)

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