

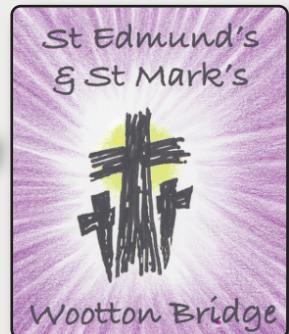
FEBRUARY 2026

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THE CHURCH PARISH MAGAZINE OF WOOTTON

The Bridge

Building Bridges in the Community



Repentance, Love and Kindness

February is derived from the Latin word 'februa' – meaning to cleanse. It was named after Februalia, the Roman festival of purification, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place at this time of the year.

For Christians, February signals the start of the season of Lent – a time of reflection and repentance. These forty days are set aside to praise and worship God.

Ash Wednesday (this year on the 18th of February) reminds us that true worship begins with humility which leads to God's mercy. We are called to give ourselves wholly to God. God loves to cleanse and renew us, for his grace is so deep and powerful.

February is also known for Valentine's Day. This is a time when we send messages of love to those close to us, sometimes anonymously. However, there is nothing anonymous about God's love for us. He gave His Son Jesus as the Saviour of the world.

This month also includes the day of random acts of kindness (February 17th) when we are encouraged to show kindness and thoughtfulness to strangers. During Lent, as a church, we identify a local charity to support. We endeavour to support those who may need just a little more consideration or support at certain times in their lives. This is a central part of our Christian duty. Last year we chose Ability Dogs for Young People and this year we have nominated the Isle of Wight Youth Trust.

Should you wish to support our choice you can add your donation by using the card machine at St Edmunds Church which is open every day for prayer.

Steve Beynon

For February services, please see Page 3

Reverend Sandra Matthews

Many of our readers may not be aware that Wootton was without a priest for four and a half years. Towards the end of that period we worked with East Cowes (St. James) and Whippingham (St Mildred's) to form a new "plurality". i.e. a group of parishes sharing a vicar.

We worked with those parishes to draw up a parish profile (details of what goes on in each parish) so that we could place an advertisement for a shared priest.

Each parish detailed what it would be looking for in the new incumbent. We asked our congregations for their "wish list" The results included someone to develop our worship; someone to be a focal point and leader in the new plurality; someone who would develop and extend the many skills of our lay leaders which had grown during the interregnum; someone who would not come and "throw the baby out with the bathwater" or act as a "cork in a bottle" stifling individuals' talents; someone who was empathetic and showed a warmth in their working relationships; someone who could develop our work with children.

So, Reverend Sandra applied, was interviewed by a panel consisting of two representatives from each parish, and she was appointed. She was married to Roy, who was also a priest. "Two for the price of one"?

But how much of this criteria did Sandra meet?

Those who met her, worked with her and came to know her, realised she met **all** aspects of the wish-list. We considered her a Godsend.

She was housed in the Rectory in Wootton and as she took up residence no end of problems were identified in the building. Not a good beginning. Sandra shared her time with Roy ministering across the three parishes trying to meet the needs by doing things that only clergy are qualified to do. Fortunately, Wootton had developed a strong lay ministry which allowed Sandra and Roy to meet the needs of our neighbouring parishes.

Then tragedy struck. As Sandra and Roy were about to go on holiday, Roy was taken ill and died. Following time on the mainland sorting out family affairs, Sandra returned to the Island and continued her ministry. Then, as if she had not been challenged enough she had serious health problems. Again she continued her ministry. However her support systems and family were all on the mainland and she felt the need to be nearer to them.

So what did she achieve in her relatively short time with us?

She set us an example in how to trust in God regardless of the trials and tribulations that face us. She taught us to trust in the power of prayer. She encouraged all of us in developing whatever talents we may have. She was robust in ensuring we followed correct procedures. She demonstrated a love for all, and when she was aware of others' stresses, she arrived on doorsteps with flowers or cake, combined with loads of encouragement. She rose to the challenge of developing shared resources of the three parishes. We now have a greater understanding of how to move forward together.

It was Sandra's intention to be here for perhaps 10 years. God had other plans for her. In my view she achieved His purpose for us and has left us in a much better condition to do His work.

He has called her to the village of Swanmore, (the home of my ancestors). We wish her well in that new role and thank God for the time she spent with us.



Sandra's leaving gift

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

(see more events on Page 5)

Fun, local, physiotherapist-led, Pilates based movement and balance classes. Wednesdays 4.30-5.25 or 5.30-6.25, St Marks Church Coffee Lounge. Flexible terms: no need to pay ahead - you only pay for the classes you attend. For more information and spaces contact Anna on aqphysio@outlook.com

What's On at The Old School Centre - (T) 01983 882820 (E) hello@theoldschoolcentre.org

Power Of Self-Esteem 6-week funded course starting Monday 2nd Feb or Wednesday 4th March 9:30am-12:30pm secure your space with a £10 deposit online at www.bookwhen.com/centreforattention + £20 to cover materials payable before the course start, for more details visit our website or contact Steph on 07976009087 or hello@the-oldschoolcentre.org. **Sarah's Crafty Café** Tuesdays 10am-12pm £3 inc. materials. **Move & Stretch** with Suki Thursdays 11am-12pm free/donations. **Adults Beginner Ballet** with Suki Thursdays 4:30pm-5:30pm £8.50. **Adults Beginner Tap with Suki** Thursdays 5:30pm-6:30pm £8.50. Special offer for both ballet & tap classes £15. **Wootton Crafters Group** 2nd & 4th Sat of month 10am-4pm £7. **MoJo Yoga** Mondays 6pm-7:15pm contact Jo at 07435955506 to book on the next 6-week course. **Confidence Course** Monday afternoons planned mid-Feb contact us to register your interest. **Get Quizzical** details coming soon Tuesday afternoons small fee/person to enter & chance to win a prize. **Tea Dance** details coming soon Thursday afternoons small fee to take part. Are you a community group or activity looking to hire a venue? – complete our booking request form via www.theoldschoolcentre.org to enquire.

Ali's Fitness Fusion - Thursdays at Wootton Bridge Community Centre - 5.30pm is Rockbox Fitness (A stress busting, therapy session. Punch, kick, and smash sticks to classic and modern rock tunes, 6.30pm is Fitsteps (Strictly Inspired Dance Fitness Class). Classes also at Binstead Community Centre on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Contact ali_ontheisland@yahoo.co.uk or www.alisfitnessfusioniow.com

Short Mat Bowls - Every Tuesday in the Wootton Community Centre at 10am. It is £5 per session to include tea & biscuits and finishes about 12.30. Please contact Colin on 882588.

“Sounds Lively” - Hello all of you singers. We are a mixed singing group, and always open for new members. Our choir leader is a talented musician and we sing in a range of musical styles: Traditional, folk, and international songs, and always focus on harmony. There are no auditions or a need to read music. Although we do take our music seriously we have fun too. We are: A friendly bunch and stop mid-session for tea/coffee. Where: Newport Scout Hall, Woodbine Close, Newport. When: Wednesdays 10:30am – 12:30pm. Cost: £5 per session (term time only). Contact: Alison 07731 933 286.

QUARR ABBEY EVENTS

05 February '26
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Spud & Crumble Night
Food & Drink

12 February '26
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Curry Night
Food & Drink

19 February '26
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Irish Night
Food & Drink

26 February '26
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Mexican Night
Food & Drink

06 - 11 February '26
A Place at the Table Art Exhibition

14 - 21 February '26
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Half Term at Quarr Abbey

22 February '26 - 04 March '26
Furniture at Quarr

06 March '26
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Quarr Photographic Exhibition

Church Services in Wootton during February 2026

ST EDMUND'S

February 2026

Sun 1st	8am Holy Communion Service
Sun 8th	5pm Evensong
Wed 11th	9.30am Holy Communion Service
Wed 18th	9.30am Plurality Ash Wednesday Holy Communion Service
Sun 22nd	5pm Evensong
Wed 25th	9.30am Holy Communion Service

ST MARK'S

February 2026

Sun 1st	9.30am Sunday Brunch
Wed 4th	11.15am Café Communion Service
Sun 8th	9.30am Holy Communion Service
Sun 15th	9.30am Morning Worship Service
Sun 22nd	9.30am Holy Communion Service

Getting Fitter, In The Spirit

As I write this, it's an early January morning and the outside ground 'crackles' as you walk on it, due to the harsh ground frost we had the previous night.

By the time you read this, however, it will be February and Lent will be fast approaching with Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) on February 17th, and Ash Wednesday on February 18th.

As I mentioned around this time last year, Lent is the 40 day reflective period when many Christians around the World choose to either - give up a 'bad habit' (e.g. eating chocolate or drinking alcohol etc.) or take up a good habit (e.g. read the Bible more or pray more etc.). Both have the same aim; to bring more discipline into our lives and therefore draw us closer to God.

What I'd like to share with you are a few FREE apps that you might like to consider downloading, as they might help you have a deeper 'spiritual rhythm' to your life, which in turn would get you in better 'spiritual shape'.

(1) 5 mins a day - have the Bible read to you, and then listen to a very short explanation on how to apply the passage to your everyday life. There are several free apps that do this, e.g. Lectio 365 and Everyday Faith.

(2) 15 mins a day - have the Bible read to you, but don't have an explanation of the text. Being a longer time commitment, this means you will hear the entire Bible in one year. One of the places you can get this is through the Christian Radio Station called Premier Plus.

(3) 10 mins a day for 40 days - have the Bible read to you with a short reflection, but with the specific intention of getting a better 'life' balance between the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. To get this free app, download Everyday Faith and click on 'Life Giving Habits for Lent'.

Whatever you choose to do for Lent, I hope your 'give up' or 'take up' actually draws you closer to God and more richly into His love for you.

With every blessing,

Revd Sandra Matthews
Rector
East Medina Plurality



The IW Story Festival is back for 2026

....to be held at the Quay Arts Centre, Newport, 19th - 21st February with a terrific line-up of storytelling, children's authors, hands on activities, performances, music, poetry, dance and more! The perfect February half term day out for all ages.

Meet favourite authors like KIERAN LARWOOD, EMMA CARROLL, PHILIP REEVE, LUCY STRANGE and JOSEPH ELLIOTT. Buy the books in advance at MEDINA BOOKSHOP and read your way into a world of new Adventures.

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- story tellers, artists, dancers and actors
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- Laugh at the antics of the AstroSauras with Steve Cole
- Write your own poems with Adam Gaterell, Kathryn Rossati or Lottie Begg
- Catch a Book Witch with Coppice Theatre or meet the Pugs of the Frozen North with The Foundry

Pick up a programme from Quay Arts, any Library and many other locations.

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW! <https://www.iwstoryfestival.com/booking>

For many sessions, accompanying adults go free. See our flyer on Page 7.



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

(see more events on Page 3)

KEEP ACTIVE MOVE MORE CLASSES. BINSTEAD 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, their carers and friends, 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 on the 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: Thursday February 12th.

C.A.M.E.O. Wootton Together - The Living Well & Early Help Service has now launched its Wootton Together sessions under the new name of C.A.M.E.O WOOTTON TOGETHER held at the CHURCH CLOSE COMMUNITY CENTRE, CHURCH CLOSE, WOOTTON PO33 4QD. Weekly sessions every Monday from 2pm - 4pm. Please come along for a cuppa and chat with your neighbours and access information and guidance from a range of visiting organisations and support from the LWEH team. For more information please see the Living Well & Early Help Service Facebook page, look out for the flyer being posted to local addresses or check the noticeboard at the community centre. **Free to attend**, we really look forward to seeing you there. Bring a friend if you can. Michelle 01983 240732.

WOOTTON BRIDGE COFFEE MORNING - This is held every Monday between 10.00 - 12.00 at Wootton Methodist Church Hall. Come for coffee and a chat, we even have a corner shop. Parking is available in the Steam Railway car park. Everyone welcome.

Pilates and Yoga with Jo (Wootton Bridge Community Centre)

Monday & Wednesday mornings. More details from Jo at joannemunt@yahoo.co.uk, also on 07726215526

Mark's Brothers Breakfast/Brunch Gathering - This group meets on the second Wednesday of the 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. Next meeting Wednesday 11th February.

The "Crafty Ladies" - We meet on Wednesday afternoons at the Church Close Community Hall, 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 now £3 a session, with the first one free. Please call Jan on 882381 for more details

Wootton Table Tennis Club - Friday mornings at Brannon Way Community Centre, from 9.30-12.00. Cost: £3.00 per session (first week is free). Equipment provided. Friendly group catering for all abilities. 07894169706. Just come and try it.

CREEKSIDER WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (WI) - A warm welcome awaits you on the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at the Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Wootton. We meet at 7.15pm. Come and see what we get up to & make new friends. Visitors & new members are always welcome. Plenty of free parking in the Steam Railway Car Park opposite. Come along & have some fun. Contact: Marlene 01983 685266.

Creekside WI Activities for February

4th Feb	Ten Pin Bowling
11th Feb -	Main Meeting A Mock TRIAL. What have we been up to?
12th Feb	Book Club
18th Feb	Amble
20th Feb	Coffee morning
25th Feb	Kurling social evening.

We are looking forward to welcoming all of you.

Lots to look forward to.

Don't forget our Craft Club too.

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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 meeting will be on February 13th & 27th & March 13th and 27th. £2.50 per person. Contact Colin on 882588.

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Here are some of the services we offer:

- Personal care and medication
- Home help & support
- Outings - shopping, out for a drive, for lunch or to appointments.
- We also care for loved ones whilst the main carer has some respite.
- We support people living in care homes for outings.

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Mobile: 07967531576



I.W.U.F.T Wootton Bridge History Group

We meet on the first Friday of the month in the Scout Hall within Wootton Park/doorstep green. Doors open at 2pm. The speaker/ presentation is from 2:30pm until 3:30pm, followed by refreshments. Charge for 2026 will be £3 per person for I.W.U.F.T members, to cover hall hire, speaker fees and refreshments. £4 per person for non members, friends and guests.

Fri, 6th February ~ "A History of I.O.W. Pubs" ~ Mark Earp. Popular local speaker and a favourite of the group returns to us to take us on a 'virtual pub crawl' back through history.

Fri, 6th March ~ "S.S. Great Britain" ~ Paul Bradley. Come and learn all the facts and enjoy a beautifully photographed tour of one of the most famous ships in the world.

All welcome

WOOTTON SCOUT HALL FOR HIRE.

Hall including modern kitchen, central heating, rear garden etc. Reasonable rates.

Contact Peter on 883385 or peteflow@uwclub.net for bookings.

WOOTTON BRIDGE METHODIST CHURCH (Station Road)

Minister: Rev Gina Hoff
Sunday Morning Service 10am
Evening Services as announced
Minister's Message

Wintering

Trees significantly slow down in winter by entering a state of dormancy, similar to hibernation, to conserve energy and survive cold, dry conditions with less sunlight, slowing growth and reducing metabolic activity, deciduous trees lose leaves and evergreens by reducing activity but still photosynthesizing slightly. They attain this by producing hormones that initiate leaf drop (in deciduous trees) by suspending cell division, protecting vital systems until warmer weather returns.

I've been reading a book called 'Wintering' by K. May, it has some really helpful tips on how to manage the winter months of short days and the cold patches, it's especially helpful if you are someone who finds the winter months challenging and have darker moods and frustrations around being inside more often.

For some people of faith, "wintering" means embracing seasons of spiritual quiet, rest, and waiting, like hibernation, to deepen faith through reflection, prayer, and drawing closer to God, much like the natural world. In particular the trees rest for future growth, often involving slowing down, simplifying, seeking God's presence in darkness, and building unseen roots of belief until spiritual spring arrives. It's about trusting God's purpose in desolate times, finding spiritual nourishment in the Word, and recognizing it as a central period for unseen spiritual development, not failure, preparing for future fruitfulness.

Embracing a time of rest and recuperation is essential to humans; taking time to set aside the rush of it all.

We are offered a weekly Sabbath rest to refresh our spiritual lives, let us perhaps try and set further time to enjoy by putting worry aside and allow the season of winter to be a positive experience. Worry does not empty tomorrow of sorrow; but it empties today of strength - Corrie Ten Boom



Wootton Bridge
Methodist Church

'Song of Solomon 2:11: "For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land" (ESV), offering hope for spring's return.'

It won't be long now, hang in there, spring is on its way!

Reverend Gina 



FOR FUN, FRIENDSHIP
AND FOOD.
COME ALONG AND JOIN US.

**WOOTTON BRIDGE
TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD**
WE HOLD OUR MEETINGS ON THE 3RD
FRIDAY OF THE MONTH.(not Aug) START 2PM
AT THE METHODIST CHURCH, STATION
ROAD.

**FREE PARKING IN THE STEAM RAILWAY CAR
PARK**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET TOGETHER WITH A
GROUP TO TRY NEW THINGS, FOR FRIENDSHIP AND
HAVE FUN.

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETING.

OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONTACT SUZETTE
suzettemccoll@gmail.com



THE OLD SCHOOL CENTRE

NEW RD | WOOTTON BRIDGE | IOW | PO33 4HX

Supporting community wellbeing & inclusion

Check our **What's on** page at
www.theoldschoolcentre.org
for the latest activities, prices,
& timetable information...



- A diverse timetable of creative & wellbeing activities
- Enjoy light refreshments at **The Buzzy-Bean Café**
- Join community gatherings, workshops & events

See 'For Your Diary' in *The Bridge* or our website for details



Welcome
Buzzy-Bean Café
Tues & Thurs 11am-3pm

COMING SOON!

Confidence Course, Get Quizzical & Tea Dance for 2026!

POWER OF SELF-ESTEEM 6-week funded course only £30 payable - starting Mon 2nd Feb or Wed 4th Mar. Contact Steph on 07976009087 or The OSC website for course details & to book online with a £10 deposit.

Contact us: hello@theoldschoolcentre.org | 01983 882820

*please visit our social media or website for updates or changes



together



Looking for a venue?
Complete our booking
request form at
www.theoldschoolcentre.org

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:

Linda Pitcher, Chair

Sarah Redrup, V.Chair

John Roberts

Jane Allen

Ian Yeo

Kim Massey

Lee Lemon

Jon Smith

Vacancy

Vacancy

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-pc.gov.uk

website:

www.woottonbridge-pc.gov.uk

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



Report from Liz Kingston, Clerk – Wootton Bridge Parish Council. Telephone: 884555. Email clerk@woottonbridge-pc.gov.uk
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.

Spring Tidy Up

We are looking at this taking place on Saturday 25th April 2026 from 10am – 12pm. 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.

We also have equipment in the office if you wish to borrow it at another time. We really appreciate the kind residents that give up their time to help keep our village looking its very best!

Annual Newsletter 2024/25

We have a Wootton Bridge Parish Council annual newsletter available to view on our website at www.woottonbridge-pc.gov.uk (under Agendas and Minutes). If anyone would like a hard copy, please pop into the office.

Speed Watch 2025

In 2025, Wootton Speed Watch volunteers monitored almost 3,000 vehicles and the results are reassuring: 91.2% of drivers were travelling at or below 30mph, 5.47% between 31–35mph, 1.35% between 36–40mph, and only 0.45% exceeding 40mph.

Across the Isle of Wight between April and September, Speed Watch groups recorded steady levels of speeding, issuing between 42 and 114 first-time warning letters each month. 24 drivers were referred for a police visit due to high speeds or repeat offences. When a driver is recorded speeding, the police send a warning letter; after three recorded incidents (whether here in Wootton or by any Speed Watch group across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight) they receive a police visit. Very high speeds trigger an immediate visit. This joined-up network helps identify and address repeat speeders across the region.

Village Survey

We will be updating you regularly regarding the results from the 2025 Wootton Village Survey. To begin with the village survey included 231 respondents, representing about 7% of Wootton's 2021 population of 3,387 (according to the 2021 census). Statistically, community surveys of this scale typically aim for a 5–10% response rate to achieve reliable results, meaning this survey sits comfortably within that range. The findings therefore provide a meaningful and representative snapshot of local priorities and how residents wish to engage with the Parish Council.

Key Findings

Community Priorities

Local residents were invited to choose up to three key issues for the Parish Council to focus on in the coming year. The most frequently chosen priorities were:

1. Building a Toilet Block on the Recreation Ground (117)
2. Upgrade the Play Park in Recreation Ground (116)
3. Support Services for Children and Young People (86)
4. Support Services for Older/Vulnerable residents (84)
5. Support Litter Picking/Keeping the Village Tidy (74)
6. Campaign on Road Safety (60)
7. Environmental projects (e.g. tree planting or rewilding) (56)
8. Organise Community Events (like Party in the Park (52)
9. Enhance Green Spaces (Planting Trees and Flowers) (48)
10. Provide more Public Seating or Bins (45)

This shows a clear focus on improving community facilities and local services, particularly the play park, toilets, and recreation ground.

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-pc.gov.uk

Liz Kingston – Clerk 

Time

As a young child I understood Einstein's statement on the relativity of time.

That is NOT because I was a particularly bright child, but because I knew good things (like birthdays and Christmas) seemed to take a long time to come around — whilst unpleasant things (like school tests) seemed to come rushing around!

In the Bible we are told that all the 'times' of our lives are held in the loving hands of God.

God is the only One who looks at our lives and simultaneously sees its beginning, its middle, and its end, all at the same time.

This means that nothing about our lives ever comes as a shock to God, because He knows what's about to happen to us, and how we will respond to it.

When we are face big decisions to do with our life, such as our careers or our families, He already knows what we will do, because He is all knowing.

In the Bible, The psalmist wrote nearly 3,000 years ago (Psalm139) "You Lord know me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up. Before even a word is on my tongue, you know it completely.

For You created me in my mother's womb. And all the days of my life were written in your book before one of them came to be".

And the author of Ecclesiastes at a similar time wrote (chapter 3),

"There is a time to be born and there is a time to die. There's a time to weep and a time to laugh. There's a time to mourn and a time to laugh. There's a time to grieve and a time to dance".

As I write this, it is a dark December morning, with Christmas still a few weeks away. But by the time you read this, we will have celebrated Christmas, and it will

be early February with spring around the corner. This is because Time does not stand still. Time is constantly moving us forward.

We can draw enormous comfort from the fact that God holds all our times and all the different parts of our lives, in His hands. His hands will hold us securely and safely whether our life is stable or wobbly; whether

it is happy or sad; whether it is joyful or painful. He will hold us steady. Of course, the more you know Him the more you know the truth of that statement. But equally, the less you know Him, the less that statement will comfort you.



So how do we get to know Him? By asking Him to come into our lives and to show us. But have you ever done that? Have you ever sat down in a quiet place and simply said to Him "Lord God I want to know you - help me to know you". If you haven't, then why not do it right NOW?

If you do pray that prayer, God will come to you, and He will reveal to you what He is like, and as He has promised in Holy scripture , He will hold you through all the times and moments of your life. But God won't do that unless you ask Him to, because He has given you the free will to choose, to ignore, or to reject Him. The choice has been and always will be yours. But I pray you will choose to trust and to believe.

Every blessing
Revd Sandra Matthews
Rector of East Medina Plurality



Wootton Calendar 2026

Calendars, Poetry &
Photo Books of
Wootton throughout
the year.
Orders still being
taken.
Please call Doreen
on
883126



ST JAMES' CHURCH EAST COWES

Calling all Jigsaw Puzzle Fans!

Could you be part of our Team
making up Jigsaws for our Jigsaw Puzzle
Festival in August?

We will supply the jigsaws and boards.

We will deliver and collect.

For more information
please call us on 0779 018693

'The Bridge'
is delivered free
to over 1,750 homes and
businesses in Wootton
Note to 'Bridge Deliverers'
the March '26 issue will be available
to pick up from the Churches on
FRIDAY 27th February 2026

Solution - Dec/Jan Wordsearch

Christmas																			
L	T	R	X	O	F	R	O	S	T	Y	I	G	V	C	C	Z	Z	W	W
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BELLS CELEBRATE HOLIDAY NOEL	CANDLES FROM JUBILEE	GARDEN GREETINGS MERRY																	

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-pc.gov.uk

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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.

Chinese New Year February 17th
Year of the Horse



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ST EDMUND'S and ST MARK'S CHURCH

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(stedmundsandmarks@gmail.com)

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stedmundsandmarks@gmail.com or leave a message on 01983 301880
(we will respond as soon as we can)

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David Bennison on
882783, or the
Churchwardens.

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about 'The Bridge' to:

thebridge@cofeparishofwoottonbridge.org.uk