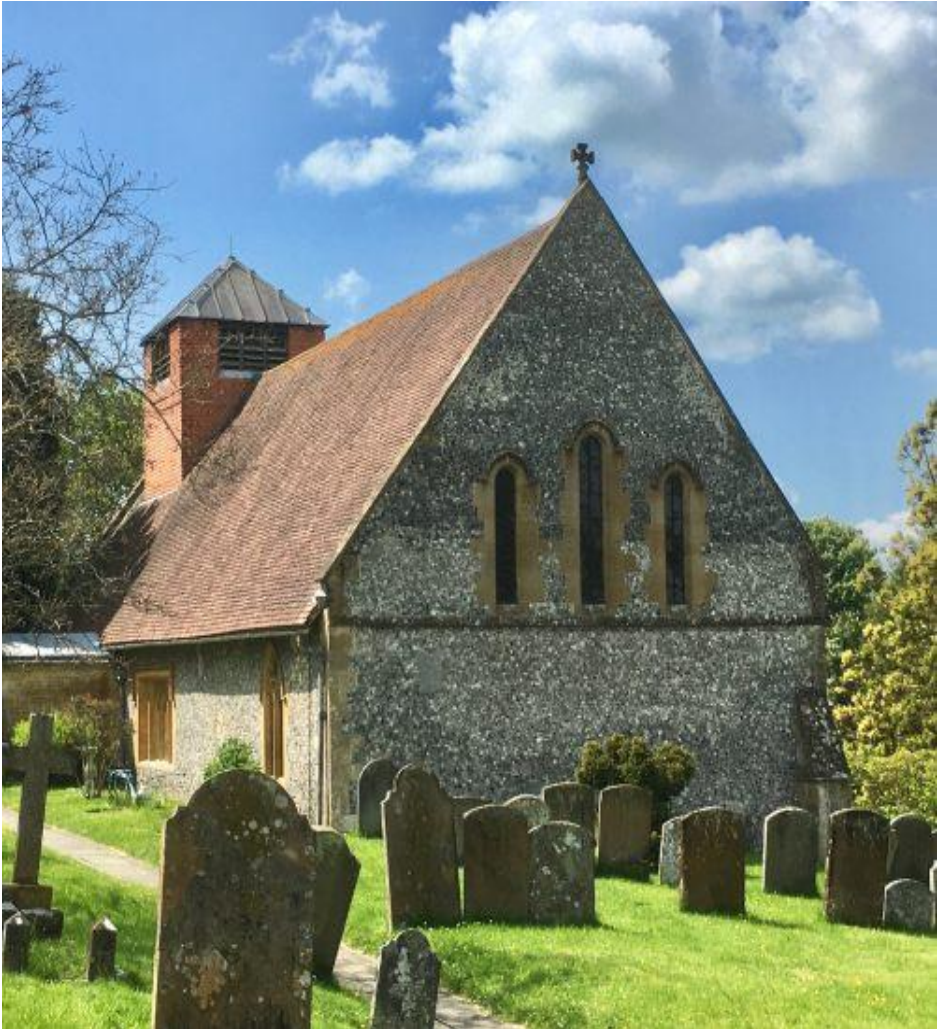


INKPEN AND COMBE BULLETIN

MARCH 2026



CHURCH LETTER

Walking the Easter Story (with muddy boots and hopeful hearts)

One of the things I love about Easter is that it refuses to stay tidy. Just as we think winter has had the final say, Easter arrives — along with muddy paths, lighter evenings, lambs in the fields, and the first brave shoots in the garden. New life has a habit of turning up when we least expect it.

I'm always reminded of this when I'm convinced something in my own garden hasn't survived the winter, only to spot green pushing through what looked like lifeless soil. Easter faith says that this is not just gardening optimism — it's theology. Christians believe that God is in the business of renewal, not only in souls, but in the whole of creation.

The Easter story begins on Palm Sunday, when Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. It's joyful, hopeful, and slightly chaotic — much like life itself. In Inkpen, we hope to welcome donkeys again this year, reminding us that God often arrives not in power and polish, but in humility and gentleness. As one hymn puts it, "Ride on, ride on in majesty... meekly on to death He goes."

But the cheering doesn't last. Good Friday takes us to harder ground. In Kintbury, we will mark the day with a short Walk of Witness, carrying a cross made from our old Christmas tree. I find that deeply moving: the wood that once held lights and celebration now shaped into a cross. The child born at Christmas is the same Christ who walks the way of suffering. Or as the hymn says, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

Later that day, there will be a meditative Good Friday service in Inkpen — quiet, spacious, and honest. And then comes Easter morning.

Across the benefice, churches will celebrate the resurrection — the astonishing claim that death does not have the final word. In Kintbury, after the 9.45am service, there will be an Easter egg hunt, because Easter joy is not meant to be sensible or restrained. As another hymn reminds us, "Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son."

Easter does not deny suffering; it walks straight through it. It says that despair is real — but not ultimate. That endings are not the end. That new life is possible.

Whether you come every week, haven't been for years, or are simply curious, you are warmly invited to walk this Easter journey with us — and perhaps to ask what it might mean to live as if hope were still possible, trusting that new life can emerge even from places we had quietly written off.

With my prayers and every good wish,
Revd Annette

NEWS FROM St. MICHAEL'S

'Lent is for Giving, not just for Giving up'

We would like to appeal to the generosity of parishioners to make a Gift to the Church this Lent.

You might come to Church regularly or occasionally or would like to use it for Weddings, Baptisms or Funerals. You might just like to contribute to the maintenance of this beautiful, historic building at the heart of our community.

Please use a Gift Aid envelope which can be given to your Bulletin deliverer or dropped off in the secure bucket in the Crown & Garter Café.

Better still, sign up online to the **Parish Giving Scheme** on www.parishgiving.org.uk

- *Enter Inkpen in the search box, then click on Find your Church. Click on Give Now beside Inkpen St Michael All Angels and then on Regular Giving or One-off Gift (we pay a 1.5% transaction cost for one-off gifts so Regular Giving is preferable).*

Your gifts are enhanced by having tax refunded through Gift Aid.

Thank you!

LENT LUNCH

There will be a Lent Lunch by kind invitation of Meg Atkins at her house on FRIDAY 20th March from 12 noon. It will be a simple soup and cheese meal with donations going to the **Loose Ends Charity** which provides clothing and hot meals for the homeless in Newbury. Please let Meg know if you are coming, phone 07769 695325.

MOTHERING SUNDAY

For Mothering Sunday on 15th March, we are trying something a bit different. Rather than making posies for mothers beforehand, the children will make them during the service with flowers provided.

PALM SUNDAY

With luck, Janie Grievson's donkeys will again be cooperative and make the symbolic journey to the Church from Totterdown via Sadlers and the Drove in time to start the Palm Sunday service outside the Lych Gate.

CHURCH SERVICES FOR INKPEN AND COMBE

Other **Family Services** coming up:

Rogation 10th May – outdoor service at a Farm

Pentecost 24th May – flying kites on Combe Gibbet.

Pet Service 28th June – bring your pets for a blessing.

INKPEN

Sunday 1st March – Compline at 4pm

Sunday 8th March – Holy Communion at 8.30am

Sunday 15th March – Mothering Sunday Family Service at 9.45am (making posies)

Sunday 29th March – Palm Sunday Family Service at 9.45am (outdoor service at the church with donkeys)

Friday 3rd April – Good Friday at 11.30

Sunday 5th April - EASTER DAY Family Communion and lots of eggs at 9.45am

Sunday 12th April - Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) at 8.30 am

Sunday 19th April - Parish Communion at 9.45

WEST WOODHAY

Sunday 8th March – Morning Prayer at 11.15am

Sunday 22nd March – Holy Communion at 11.15am

Sunday 5th April – Easter Sunday Family Communion at 11.15am

COMBE

Sunday 15th March – SERVICE CANCELLED

Sunday 5th April – Easter Sunday Holy Communion at 11.15am

MASONS FARM

Sunday 1st March - Youth Alpha Team at 5pm

Sunday 8th March – Youth Alpha Team at 5pm

CHURCH CONTACTS

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

Churchwardens:

Inkpen: Charlotte Bampfylde (inkpenchurch@outlook.com)

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

CHURCH SERVICES AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HUNGERFORD

Our Lady of Lourdes, Priory Road, Hungerford RG17 0AF

Parish Priest - Fr Zbigniew Budyn 01635 40332

Sunday Mass - every Sunday at 9.00am

Weekday Mass - every Wednesday at 10.00am

COPY DATE

Please email aliedesforges79@gmail.com by **March 21st** with all features, news and events for the April edition.

THE CROWN AND GARTER

Spring is finally on the way, and we've got a few lovely little updates to share from the pub.

If you bring your copy of the village bulletin with you, you can enjoy **10% off our à la carte menu, Monday to Thursday throughout March**. Just show it to the team when you order – simple as that.

We've also made a small but helpful change for families – food for the kids is now available **from 5pm every Friday** (instead of 6pm), making those early evening dinners that little bit easier.

Our new Spring menu has just launched, packed with fresh seasonal flavours, and we've refreshed our wine list too – perfect excuse to pop in and try something new.

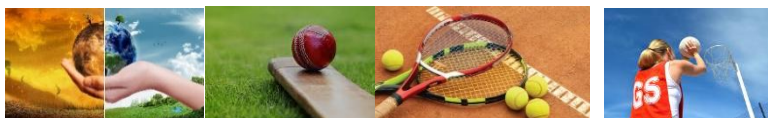
Looking ahead, we have **limited availability for Mother's Day**, when we'll be serving our delicious, locally sourced Sunday roast. As a little treat, every mother will receive a complimentary sweet delight at the end of her meal.

As always, we'd love to see you. If you need any further details, just let us know!

For further details please call 01488 668325 or visit www.crownandgarter.co.uk.

INKPEN PLAYING FIELD & PAVILION

The IMPFT (Inkpen Memorial Playing Field Trust) is pleased to host several regular clubs and societies as well as being available to hire for events (parties, work functions, luncheons etc.). Please check for an up-to-date list of events / bookings under impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk



Activities and regular bookings:

NEW Art Classes	Every 2 nd Tuesday of the month @ 10am (Sept – Feb initially)	gilly.burrough@gmail.com
Climate Group	Sessions throughout the year	climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Cricket	Sundays during the season	InkpenCricketclub.org

	See calendar for fixtures	Impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Daisy Chains	Every Friday 09:45-11:45 From 6 th June	clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk
Football 5-a-side	Sunday Evenings	Chris Stapleton Mob: 07909 851968
Football (Juniors to U16)	Sunday morning from 10:30am during the season	HTJFCSecretary@outlook.com
History Society	Sessions throughout the year	History.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Netball	Monday evenings Juniors 6pm / Adults 7pm (excl. bank holidays)	Sally Mob: 07444 593 560
Pop in Café	Every 1 st & 3 rd Thursday of the month @ 10am	All welcome, just “pop-in”
Stargazers	Sessions throughout the year	Stargazers.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Tennis	Pay as you play / subscription (tbc)	clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk
Yoga	Saturday 09:45 -10:45 pay as you go	Oliviaboydall@gmail.com Mob: 07554 446 502



INKPEN STITCH AND KNIT

The Stitch and Knit group will meet in Inkpen Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 4th March. If you haven't been before, and you enjoy handicrafts, come and join us, and bring along something you'd like to work on. There is usually someone there who can help if you want to try something new. We meet every first Wednesday of the month, and charge £2 to cover hall costs and tea/coffee. Or, if you want any further information, ring Stephanie (07713 097609), our communications contact.

THE VILLAGE HALL



Inkpen Village Hall - Regular Clubs & Activity

www.inkpenvillagehall.org email:- inkpenvh@gmail.com, tel:- 07963 647087

Carpet Bowls	Thursdays	1.30-4.30pm	Sandy Wilson, tel: 01488 668336
Darts Social Club	Mondays Fortnightly	7pm	Mark, mob: 0756 828 4750
Guitar Tuition	Tuesdays	4-8pm	Russ Timms, mob:- 07860 830515
Pilates	Thursday mornings	11.45am	Caroline McCord, Mob: 07817 503546
Market	On hold – more volunteers required	10-12.30pm	Christine, Mob: 07767 480777 Email: Humphries.c@gmail.com
Stitch & Knit	1st Wed every month	7.30pm	Stephanie Pike, Mob: 07713 097609
Seated Exercise	Wednesdays	11.30am	Kate Wiggins, mob: 07706 357801
Table Tennis	Wednesdays	4pm-6pm	Linda Pateman, email: lindapateman@yahoo.co.uk Mob: 07774 775599
U3A Table Tennis	2 nd & 4 th Mondays	1.30-3.30pm	Linda Pateman, details as above
Yoga	Tuesday Thursday	9.30am 6.30pm	Olivia Boydall, Mob: 07554 446502



Research is showing that conversation and laughter is good for your mental health and being active is good for your overall wellbeing plus learning a new skill is great for your brain.

So why not come along to the Short Mat Bowling Club which meets every Thursday afternoon from 1:30 to 4:30 in the Inkpen Village Hall. There is a small charge of two pounds which covers a cuppa and a biscuit or two!

Everyone is welcome, it's an easy game to pick up and there is plenty of friendly advice to guide you.

So come along for a friendly chatty afternoon

THE GREAT INKPEN QUIZ

.....is almost upon us and it looks like it's going to be a full house with 60 Inkpen peeps already securing their seats. However, we've space for a few more contestants if you fancy the challenge! Friday 6th March, 7.30pm, Inkpen Village Hall, £3/head, Licensed Bar, Message 07871 107327 or email inkpenvillagehall@gmail.com to grab those few last places now. It's always such a fun evening.

GUITAR, UKULELE AND BASS TUITION....

...here in Inkpen. Every Tuesday afternoon and evening, we're lucky to have visiting tutor, Russ of www.progressionguitar.co.uk teaching children and adults. There is currently an afternoon slot free so if you'd like the convenience of local lessons from a fab tutor, do visit the website to enquire. Prices start £22.50/half hour.

INKPEN MARKET



Inkpen Food & Craft Market - Will it return? - Last chance to have your say.

Whilst we have received 30 or so encouraging and useful comments from villagers regarding the potential return of the market, the request in last month's bulletin did not prompt any feedback from readers. This was surprising as we felt many Bulletin readers would likely be keen market customers too. So, what to think?

As some may already know if you've seen posts on the Inkpen Residents Facebook page, received an email from village hall or have been approached by potential new volunteers for your views, this was an exercise to gauge likely success if the market was to be re-launched, however, just in case, you missed this request but are keen to see the market remain a part of village life, we'd still welcome your views before a decision is made. Please email: inkpenvh@gmail.com or message 07963 647087 if you'd like to see a return of the market or if you have any useful suggestions. Thank you to those who have already commented and for those yet to come!

Inkpen Village Hall email list. If you'd like to be on the email list for receiving village hall news and updates and you're not already subscribed, do let us know. Email: inkpenvh@gmail.com

INKPEN VILLAGE SCHOOL

It has been another busy term at Inkpen Primary School. Our children have been fully engaged in a variety of exciting activities that not only enhance their learning but also foster a strong sense of community and teamwork.

Recently, our Muntjacs and Pheasants classes participated in thrilling speed stacking tournaments, showcasing their impressive skills and competitive spirit at Park House School. The energy in the sports hall was palpable as students cheered each other on, creating a wonderful atmosphere of camaraderie. Meanwhile, our Red Kite class took part in an archery tournament, where they demonstrated focus and precision. It was fantastic to see the children embracing these challenges and celebrating each other's achievements!

Did you know that every child at Inkpen Primary School attends Forest School sessions every week? This incredible programme allows our children to explore their natural surroundings, take risks, and build confidence and resilience. The outdoor learning experiences are not only fun but also essential for their personal development, helping them to connect with nature and develop a sense of responsibility for the environment. On Friday 6th February, we celebrated NSPCC number day by dressing up for digits. We were so impressed with the efforts made by the children (and staff too!) in supporting this event. As part of the event, our Key Stage 2 children participated in the "NSPCC Rocks" tournament on Times Table Rock Stars. We were so incredibly proud of their achievements:

- ★ Out of 4011 schools that took part nationally, we came 99th
- ★ Out of 25,000 classes that took part, Red Kites came 500th
- ★ Out of almost 500 schools that took part in our region WE CAME 1st! 🏆 Let's hear it for our times table whizzes!

As we continue through the term, we look forward to more enriching experiences and adventures at Inkpen Primary School.

THE INKPEN HISTORY SOCIETY

We are putting together a presentation showing Inkpen's role during the crusades.

Up until Victorian times, our church, St Michael's and All Angels, housed three effigies of crusaders but two of them were thrown out as they didn't fit in with the new style of the church. We don't know where the two missing effigies have gone to but are very keen to find out. Again, your help with this is pivotal. We believe one of these effigies was of a Spanish crusader but are not sure of the third. The effigy that remains within the church is believed to be that of Roger de Inkpen who is supposedly buried in the crypt – something that has been sealed for a great many years.

You can get a feel for what St Michael's looked like in the past, by looking at the images on <https://history.inkpenvillage.co.uk/pics.html>. Ham church didn't get the same severe Victorian make-over as Inkpen's St. Michael's, so retains a more original look.

NORTH WESSEX DOWNS

Over the Christmas break, the Inkpen History Society put together a set of descriptions of the historic environment for each, and hopefully every, parish within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. These are temporarily held at nwd.inkpenvillage.co.uk. Please have a look and notify us at climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk if you find any errors. Your help in getting these historic environment descriptions correct is important and much appreciated.

Work continues to relate each parish to all the others, in terms of terrain and historic highlights etc. so that we can clearly see how the landscape influenced the progression of different historic eras. This work will also be added to this website.

INKPEN POP-IN CAFÉ

Spring starts again this March. It may not feel much like it right now, except the days are getting noticeably longer. Soon the warmer weather will arrive. Time to come out of hibernation. But for some, the loneliness will continue. The front door will stay closed.

Please help us. If you know of someone near to where you live that might appreciate a knock on the door, a friendly word, please try and bring them along to the Pop-In Café. Apart from the obvious tea, coffee, cake etc., there are no demands. They can join in and make friends if and when they want.

Also, if you are a carer or someone being cared for you will be most welcome. Stay as long as you want, just give us a try.

We next meet on the 5th March, then on the 19th. That's the first and third Thursdays of each month, between 10 and 12:30 at the Inkpen playing field pavilion. There's plenty of car parking space, and a disabled toilet along with all of the usual facilities. You don't have to pay for anything although donations are a help.

We hope to welcome you.

STARGAZERS

On the 11th February, we had a very successful visit to the Marlborough College astronomical facility. It was a great evening, and I think everyone enjoyed the opportunity. This is part of our relationship building with both Marlborough College and Newbury Astro

As part of our combined group activities, we have begun to monitor the quality of our night sky. This is a measure of how clearly, we can see astronomical objects, which in turn can be related to climate change. This is important work which links into an international framework of groups also measuring sky quality. The



The results are to be analysed by experts and used in support of government proposals on climate change. If you would like to help us with this work, please email us at climate.inkpen@outlook.com.

If you would like to join our group, you can find us at the Inkpen pavilion on the second Wednesday of each month, from 7:30 pm, or email us. This month we meet on the 11th of March.

THE LIBRARY BROUGHT TO YOU

Library services provide an amazing array of things that you can easily access at home. You can read the daily papers, journals and magazines, listen to audio books and even read trending books online. If you haven't tried it, do give it a go. You'll need a library number and password I think but these are easy to get from the library and it's completely free.

On your laptop or tablet, go to westberkshire.borrowbox.com/caudiobooks/featured. If you're not on the internet but would like to give it a try, or you don't know how to set it up, come along to the Pop-In Cafe, and we'll help you get started. Or, you can ring West Berkshire Library on 01635 519900, email library@westberks.gov.uk. They'll be more than happy to help you get started.

INKPEN COMMON PHONE BOX BOOK EXCHANGE

The book exchange in Inkpen Common is back in action as a community mini-library and book swap. We have given it a spruce up, and will continue to make improvements in the coming months, including more shelving, a richer range of books and books of the month.

We would welcome some select, good quality donations, if you have a book or two you would like to share with other villagers! Please place these in the labelled box just inside the door. You can find the book exchange just outside the Crown and Garter.

Please do pop in if you're passing — have a browse, borrow a book, swap a book - and enjoy.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

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

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

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 9th March 2026 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

Parish Councillors:

John Corne - Parish and planning Chairman (john.corne@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

James Fisher – Parish Vice Chair (james.fisher@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Brian Cox - (brian.cox@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Mark Bates - (mark.bates@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Clare Macinnes - (clare.macinnes@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Steven Whittaker – (stevenwhittaker@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Clerk to the Parish: Angela Boyce (clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Upcoming Planning Applications:

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

Useful Information:

Upcoming Roadworks:

Website: one.network – where you can set alerts of local road closures and planned works

Report a problem on a road or pavement:

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

www.westberks.gov.uk/article/35980/Report-a-problem-on-a-road-or-pavement

or call 01635 551111

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

www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping

Rubbish collections: Please see below, links to useful information about rubbish collections. [Rubbish collections - West Berkshire Council](#)

[Find your next collection day - West Berkshire Council](#)

Inkpen Parish Council can be contacted at clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk

Website: www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk