

The Valley Diary

Binderton ~ Charlton ~ Chilgrove ~ East Dean ~ Singleton ~ West Dean

thevalleydiary.org ~ February 2026 Edition

JOHN HOLT BEM!

A lot of you will know John Holt from his regular update on agricultural matters in The Valley Diary, under the byline "Farmer John". But the New Year's Honours List saw rather greater recognition, when he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to Sustainable Farming.

Having started his career in agriculture over 50 years ago, when his father ran Droke and Manor Farms, John has seen many changes in both public attitudes and the technology available to help farmers achieve the best results whilst taking good care of the land. But perhaps the biggest change was his own decision a few years ago to move to organic production. "We've moved away from artificial fertilisers and chemicals and I really enjoy farming this way" he said. "It's given me renewed purpose." But he was keen to share the credit with everyone else involved. "It's very much a team effort; I've been very lucky to have good staff over the years and my family have always helped too. My wife, my son and my daughters have all been part of the farm."

The award followed nominations from local residents - John's neighbours - to

the Honours Committee of the government, who in turn advise the king. It is this aspect which means the most to John - "To find out it was the local community made it very special. I'm very appreciative that they value what we do here."

If you want to experience first hand what John and his team are doing, and you haven't already tried it, take a trip down Droke Lane to the Milk Hut at Ides Barn. There you can buy fresh whole organic milk in litre and half litre glass bottles (plus a range of flavouring syrups) about 20 yards from where the cows are milked. **Tim Weeks**



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Emsworth's independent estate agent have recently won The British Property Awards 2025 Estate Agent in Emsworth & Hayling Island, for the second successive year. The sales branch performed outstandingly throughout the extensive judging period, which focused on customer service levels.

Borland & Borland have been established on Emsworth High Street for 30 years - the team celebrated their Award win and their 30th year in business, with a special lunch at the Grade II Listed, boutique, Harbour Hotel Chichester.

Steven Borland, Senior Partner said "This second, successive Award, on top of our current 30th Anniversary, gives us much to be proud about and celebrate! It demonstrates Borland & Borland's sustained excellence and commitment to providing a quality property service in the heart of Emsworth, with our entire team continuing to display high levels of communications and customer service."

The Property Awards' independent judging included mystery shoppers, against a set of criteria, to obtain a balanced overview of customer service levels. In comparison to their local competitors, Borland & Borland Estate Agent was independently assessed as providing outstanding levels of service.

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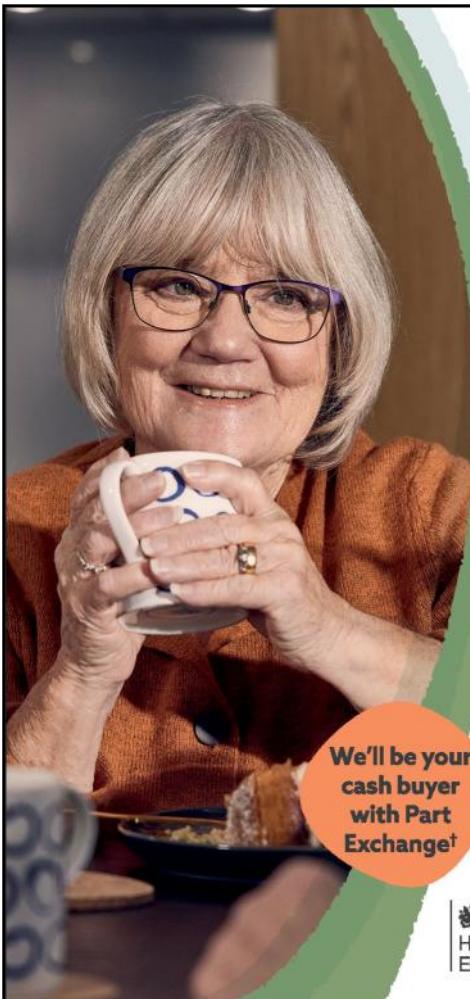


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SC023368



31 JANUARY - 8 FEBRUARY CANDLEMAS

Exciting Year of Living History and Immersive Family Experiences...

The Weald & Downland Living Museum is delighted to announce its vibrant and wide-ranging programme of events and activities for 2026, offering visitors a full year of living history, traditional celebrations and hands-on family fun across every season. Something for everyone, whatever the weather. From folk traditions and historical reenactments to immersive family experiences, visitors are invited to step into the past and discover how people lived, worked, ate and celebrated throughout history.

Candlemas Living History Residency (see above) until Sunday 8th February: Meet the Black Knight Historical Living History Team as they recreate daily life during the medieval period.

Very Victorian Half Term Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th February: Family fun exploring what life was like for children growing up in rural Victorian England.

The Toll House Reimagined Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th April: See the Toll House from Beeding brought vividly to life, with expert interpretation from Tastes Through Time living history specialists.

Try a Trade Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th May: Children can become junior apprentices for the day, trying traditional heritage crafts and earning a certificate in their chosen skill.

Victorian Showtime May Bank Holiday, 23rd - 25th May: The spectacle of a Victorian travelling show.

Midsummer Fayre Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th June: Celebrate folklore, nature and seasonal traditions with music, storytelling and encounters with the Oak King and Fairy Queen. wealddown.co.uk



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A Good Start...

January would not seem to be a particularly good time of year to have a pub quiz, or anything else that involves people going out. One might assume that everyone will be all partied out after Christmas and New Year, and what with folks going 'dry' for the month, trying to get a decent turnout on a wet Sunday evening is surely going to be an uphill struggle.

So it was a surprise to me as much as anyone when the Star and Garter quiz on the 18th January was one of the best supported we've ever had with ten teams crammed into the pub for six rounds and a chicken curry. This time, as well as the standard Current Affairs (soon to be renamed "Oh God, What's He Done Now?") and General Knowledge, we had a guest round from Jo Ransom on Horticulture and Gardening and Sarah Mayhead had devised an 'Only Connect' round, where the teams were presented with several sets of pictures and words and had to deduce what the next one in each sequence would be. A bit different, but it's good to try new ideas sometimes, and it seemed to go down pretty well!



The result was satisfactorily close; Korky The Kat came third with 68 points, We Still Don't Know were second on 70, but holding onto their unbroken winning run this season, Maya's Mates won with 72.5. But of course the real winners were the **Chichester and Arun Hygiene Bank**, since the evening raised a total of £701 for them; more important than ever at this time of year when the need for basic things like toothpaste, flannels, soap and sanitary products is at its highest but donations are very low.

The next quiz will be on **Sunday 22nd February** and in aid of **The Friends of Chichester Hospitals**. If you've been to St Richard's lately you'll know it needs all the friends it can get, so please put a team together and come along to support a very worthy cause and have a bit of fun whilst you're at it! **Tim Weeks**



Ben's Steam Engine!

Spotted by Richard Pailthorpe in Charlton as Ben Headon, who keeps the lovely engine at Singleton, was taking it out for a run down to East Dean recently. Ben has a saw bench which is operated from it which he demonstrates at the Museum and at West's Wood Show, Richard tells us.



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For Pete's Sake Pay Up!

A Poem by Francis

Young Pete enjoyed his job,
In a factory quite near here.
But he also liked gardening,
Which he did over here.

He made our garden look good,
In which many hours were spent.
Then recently he noticed,
Where badgers came and went.

For despite his very best efforts,
With many long hours of toil.
They crept in late at night,
Turning part of the lawn back to soil.

He called me over to show me,
So I told him straight away.
To drop everything else.
And block off that route today.

Armed with bags of tools,
Wire, mesh and bricks.
He crawled into the undergrowth,
To do build a permanent fix.

That was at eight that morning,
At noon still no sign of Pete.
At four whilst I was still searching,
I heard the patter of tiny feet.

Did I see what came and went?
No I was far too late.
But I found a note from the badgers,
Pinned to the garden gate.

Yes, they had kidnapped Pete,
And now demanded a ransom.
Well they won't get that from me,
Pete's not even very handsome.

But I had a change of heart, and,
Left their demands to be claimed.
But it stayed put for ages,
Because no one ever came.

We've not seen Pete in months,
But I've heard he has no regrets.
They say he is very happy now,
Going around in a different 'sett'.

Singleton Village Hall



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A huge thank you to the many respondents to the recent survey on the future of Singleton Village Hall (both online and on paper). Many thanks also to all the distributors who kindly delivered the paper surveys, The Valley Diary for publicising it and The Partridge, The Fox Goes Free and Hannah's Cafe for being collection points. Submission of completed surveys is now closed. We will begin compiling the results for publication which will be shared and discussed at a future community consultation. Further details in the March edition of The Valley Diary.

Singleton Village Hall Committee

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Letter to the Editor...

Dear Ted

I love reading The Valley Diary, and well done you.

I was born at East Dean and went to East Dean School, where nobody passed the 11+! When I left school, the school closed and the children, including my younger sister Eileen and my cousin Janet, went to Singleton instead. We were of the West Family and my Mother's family were Lillywhite.

I went on to become Secretary to both David Cover the Timber Importer and his brother Douglas Cover, the Credit Controller, replacing both of their Secretaries! I worked there for about 12 years. Of course I have been retired for many years now.

I took up bee keeping and had 3 hives of bees! I enjoyed that for many years. My paternal grandfather, Harold Lillywhite, kept bees - but I never got involved in those years at East Dean. I do not keep bees now. Sadly I became allergic to bee stings in later life! I had the odd sting as a youngster!

Anyway, thank you for your good work!

Kind regards

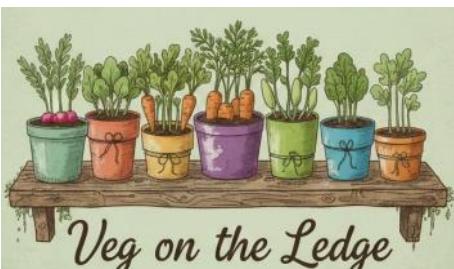
Ruth Flint, Slindon

Lavant Horticultural Society

In January **Pip Bensley** took us behind the scenes at the **Chelsea Flower Show**. As a successful exhibitor, judge and now monitor of judges, Pip was able to give an insight into how this grassy area in central London is transformed into one of the largest annual flower shows in the world.

We look forward to **Wednesday 11th March at 7.30pm** when **Julia Parker** will tell us about **Veg on the Ledge - and a whole lot more**. Julia is an entertaining speaker and will judge the Spring Flower Competition before her talk.

Visit lavanhortsoc.org.uk for more details and gardening tips



Lavant Friendly Club

Wednesday 4th February, 2pm - 4pm, with Crochet & Quaver. A lovely duo playing a wide range of material on Saxophones. Something a bit different for us and it will only cost you 50p. Minibus transport possible, just ask me.

Chichester Country Music Cub Concert

Friday 13th February at 7.30pm. £10 for 3 hours of live Country Western music with Longshot, a duo from Hertfordshire. Bar etc.

North Mundham Hall Dance

Freestyle, Ballroom, Jive but no Line on Saturday 28th February. Local lady Treeanna will do a Shania Twain Tribute in one session. Also Guest Artist. 7.30pm - 10.30pm.

01243 527439
tonybleach@talktalk.net

Chichester Natural History Society

Illustrated Talk by Matthew Phelps, Lead Ecologist and Science Communicator at the Knebb Estate on 'Wilding the Knebb Estate' at The Pallant Suite, Masonic Hall, South Pallant, Chichester on **Wednesday 4th February** at 7.30pm. Members free, visitors £3. 01243 786079. Wheelchair access.

RSPB

Illustrated Talk at The Pallant Suite, Masonic Hall, South Pallant, Chichester on **Thursday 26th February** at 7.30pm. Members free, visitors £3. 07402 375257. Wheelchair access.

The Mulberries

Saturday 14th February
The Mulberries present **Louise and The Street Party Soul Strut Band** (60's - 90s tribute) at the Pagham Village Hall, Pagham Road at 7.30pm. Tickets in advance £9 on 07833 971620 or 01243 306655. Bring your own food and drink. Wheelchair access. Proceeds to local charities.

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A perfect match could be closer than you think...

This month's column is a little different from my usual property update. As we now are well into 2026, I wanted to try something slightly more hopeful and perhaps a little more fun. The start of the year always brings fresh starts, new ideas and unexpected opportunities, and in property that can sometimes lead to the most satisfying outcomes of all.

Right now, I am working with one very specific buyer for our villages who is actively looking to move into one of our beautiful villages in PO18 or GU29. This is not a speculative enquiry. They are motivated, ready to proceed and have a budget of up to £2m for the right home. The buyer is a cash purchaser, offering a level of flexibility that is increasingly rare, whether that's on timing, completion dates or simply making the process as smooth and straightforward as possible for the right seller. (We are paid by the buyer not the seller.)



What if their perfect house is already here, quietly waiting?

So often, homeowners assume "now isn't quite the right time", while buyers assume "nothing suitable ever comes up". Every now and then, a simple conversation creates a genuine perfect match, one that works beautifully for both buyer and seller, without pressure or publicity. This buyer is looking for what our villages do best: character, space, privacy, gardens, and a home in a perfect West Sussex village. Perhaps it's a house you have loved for years but are starting to think about the next chapter. Or maybe it's simply a case of if the right buyer comes along. Well, they just might have done!

This year, it might be worth seeing what happens. After all, some of the best property stories begin with a quiet conversation and end with a very happy match indeed.

Jennie Hancock, Property Acquisitions Limited, 07776-452128, propertyacquisitions.co.uk

Letter to the Editor

We have been residents of Singleton for some 22 years and have never wished to get involved in local politics but the topic of "flogging off" the Village Hall has dragged us out of our torpor.

The Village Hall sits in a protected use class of community buildings. It cannot be used for any other purpose and there are no permitted development rights. Planning permission would have to be obtained and in my view (and I have some experience in these matters) planning permission would never be granted. Not only would all sane residents of Singleton object to any form of commercial use but so would the charity commissioners, the CPRE, our local councillor and our excellent MP and the SDNP. As to residential use, there is no parking or vehicular access and this use would not be granted.

You would lose your charitable status, Goodwood would have to be consulted and could well seriously think about taking back their donated asset. You would spend far more on planning applications and solicitors fees in a wasted cause.

You should concentrate on raising money. Seek donations, have fundraising events, and above all, make sure the fete gives you a proper donation. Singleton is not a poor village and you would be surprised how many people would rally round and support.

If any of the Trustees of the Village Hall are not wholeheartedly for the retention of the Hall then they should resign immediately and trustees should be appointed who will secure it for future generations. To lose the Hall would be community vandalism, village vandalism - and anyone who supports this diabolical scheme should hang their heads in shame.

Clive Sutton, Downmead, Singleton

The BFG heads to Chichester Festival Theatre following giant-sized success at the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon

Roald Dahl's THE BFG

Adapted by Tom Wells with additional material by Jenny Worton - 9th March - 11th April

Roald Dahl's beloved story The BFG comes to life on a truly giant scale at Chichester Festival Theatre this spring. The opening production of CFT's 2026 Festival season will deliver a theatrical feast of jaw-dropping giants, oversized snozzcumbers, iridescent dream jars and frobscotted fit for the Queen of Enger-land herself.

For those who don't know, the BFG is the story of a young orphan named Sophie, who is snatched by a giant one night and taken far away to Giant Country. There she learns that human-eating giants are guzzling 'norphans' the world over.

But she soon discovers that her new friend, the BFG, is different – he's a dream-catching, snozzcumber-munching gentle soul who refuses to eat humans!

Tickets from £15 - cft.org.uk - 01243 781312



The Valley Parish

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22nd February

11am

West Dean

Stories, games and songs

THE BEGINNING OF LENT

It seems like only yesterday that we were celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas, and yet this month we begin the season of preparation for his death and glorious resurrection – The season of Lent.

In the church calendar, Lent mirrors Jesus' forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness, following his Baptism in the River Jordan. Traditionally, it is a time for prayer, fasting, and giving. Many people choose to give something up, such as a food, a habit, or a distraction, or take on a meaningful practice, such as daily bible reading or a quiet time, to deepen self-discipline and spiritual awareness. While these sacrifices can be challenging, they are intended to refocus attention on faith, compassion, and personal growth.

But Lent is not solely about deprivation, it is a time for us to examine our lives honestly, seek reconciliation, and prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter.

Services and Events

1 st February	10am	Holy Communion With Choir East Dean
8 th February	10am	Holy Communion Singleton
15 th February	10am	Holy Communion West Dean
18 th February Ash Wednesday		Details will be posted in Church noticeboards and via The Rector's Rambles
22 nd February	10am	Holy Communion West Dean
	11am	Children's Church West Dean

Contacts

Parish Priest - Rev Sarah Manouch

priestvalleyparish@gmail.com - 07468 854864

(Principal working days are Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Not available on Thursday.)

Churchwarden

Sarah John - 07769 887546 / sarance@btinternet.com

John Holt - 07787 567140 / john@drakefarm.co.uk

PCC Secretary

Susie Holmes - pccsecretaryvalleyparish@gmail.com

The Diary

Here's a quick overview of what's actually going on, in and around the villages of the Lavant Valley in the coming months. Do please let us know if we've missed anything and we'll add it next time for the benefit of all.

www.thevalleydiary.org

February 2026

Mon 9th Singleton Community Cafe: 10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village Hall
Tue 10th Ladies Night, Star & Garter, East Dean, 7pm
Thu 12th An Evening with Alan Chalmers: East Dean Village Hall: 6pm
Fri 13th Valentine's Quiz: Fox Goes Free: Charlton: 7pm
Tue 17th - Thu 19th Very Victorian Half Term: Weald & Downland Museum
Wed 18th Singleton and Charlton Parish Council Meeting, 7pm, Singleton Village Hall
Thu 19th Singleton & East Dean WI: Singleton Village Hall: Jason Howard: 7pm
Mon 23rd The Valley Diary Copy Deadline: 12noon

March 2026

Thu 19th Singleton & East Dean WI: Singleton Village Hall: Annual Meeting: 7pm
Sat 21st Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes Free

April 2026

Sat 25th Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes Free
Sat 25th & Sun 26th The Toll House Reimagined: Weald & Downland Museum

May 2026

Fri 1st & Sat 2nd Goodwood Horseracing
Sat 9th & Sun 10th Try a Trade: Weald & Downland Museum
Sat 16th & Sun 17th Goodwoof!
Wed 20th Singleton and Charlton Parish Council Meeting and AGM, 7pm, Singleton Cricket Club
Fri 22nd & Sat 23rd Goodwood Horseracing
Sat 23rd - Mon 25th Victorian Showtime: Weald & Downland Museum

June 2026

Fri 5th Goodwood's Three Friday Nights
Sun 7th Goodwood Horseracing
Fri 12th Goodwood's Three Friday Nights
Sat 13th & Sun 14th Midsummer Fayre: Weald & Downland Museum
Fri 19th Goodwood's Three Friday Nights

July 2026

Thu 9th - Sun 12th Goodwood's Festival of Speed
Wed 15th Singleton and Charlton Parish Council Meeting, 7pm, Singleton Village Hall
Tue 28th - Sat 1st (Aug) Goodwood Horseracing

August 2026

Tue 28th (Jul) - Sat 1st Goodwood Horseracing
Fri 28th - Sun 30th Goodwood Horseracing

September 2026

Wed 16th Singleton and Charlton Parish Council Meeting, 7pm, Singleton Village Hall

Got something to add to the Diary?

Please let us know...

Lots more dates and events can be found in the Diary Online at...

thevalleydiary.org/diary

Deadline for the...

March 2026 Edition

All information for to arrive by **12.00hrs (noon)** please on...

Monday 23rd February

editor@valleydiary.org

*Submissions, news, reviews, event information, photos and anything you have to share with your community should arrive **as soon as possible**.*

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East Dean Village Hall	07785 740625
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Lavant Road Pharmacy	01243 380185
Local Police	101
Singleton & East Dean WI	07770 822067
Singleton Fete	01243 818037
Singleton Parish Clerk	07702 240126
Singleton School	01243 811679
Singleton Tearooms	01243 811899
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Weald & Downland Museum: Office	01243 811363
Weald & Downland Museum: Shop	01243 811020
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A Greener Clean for the Valley

By Julia Willkins, Owner of Home & Dry

Hello to all readers of The Valley Diary. As we navigate the depths of winter, laundry baskets fill up faster than ever with heavy jumpers and muddy layers! At Home & Dry, we are busy helping neighbours keep on top of the load, giving back precious weekend free time.

However, running a modern laundry service isn't just about cleaning clothes; it's about cleaning up our act environmentally. For decades, our industry has relied on single-use plastic "polyrobes" -those thin bags covering cleaned items. While they protect garments in transit, the sheer volume used is terrible for the planet.

I'm thrilled to share that Home & Dry has completely ditched standard plastic garment covers. We have made a permanent switch to packaging manufactured entirely from potato starch.

This innovative material offers the same hygienic protection for your freshly laundered shirts and dry-cleaned curtains as traditional plastic, but it is 100% compostable and biodegradable. When you get your items home, you can put the bagging straight onto your home compost heap, or often into food waste collections. It breaks down naturally, leaving zero microplastics.

We believe it's vital to protect the beautiful area we live and work in. If you want to lighten your laundry load this month while making a sustainable choice, take action today. Book a convenient collection online at www.homeanddry.biz or call our friendly team on 01243 543877. See our new advert on Page 3. A great clean shouldn't cost the Earth.



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We are a non profit making organisation and our community magazine covers a small area of West Sussex, as you know. We do get copies out and about towards Midhurst and Chichester too, so if you are a local business owner (or represent one) who would like to support our local magazine, please do get in touch. We only need to ensure that we make enough to pay for the printing each month and expenses, so do consider helping us - and an advert will surely help you too. Prices are on our website, so do head over there or send us an email.

Ted Salmon, Editor
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Thirty years in bloom: Chichester Cathedral's Festival of Flowers marks a landmark anniversary

One of the South's most loved cultural traditions will celebrate a major milestone this summer, as the Festival of Flowers at Chichester Cathedral marks its 30th anniversary.

Returning from 3rd - 6th June, the biennial Festival will once again transform the Cathedral with more than 60 breathtaking installations, conceived by leading Sussex floral artist and Festival Designer, Caroline Daines. Each of the spectacular designs will be brought to life by hundreds of talented florists.

Since its launch in 1996, the Festival of Flowers has become a treasured event - one which is woven into the cultural life of Chichester and Sussex. Over the years the incredible displays have drawn tens of thousands of visitors, raising more than £1.4 million towards the care of the 950-year-old Cathedral.

Over the past three decades, each Festival has reflected a moment in time, responding to faith, art, music, literature, landscape and wellbeing. Themes have ranged from Darkness into Light (1996) and Celebration and Remembrance (2008), to more recent explorations of renewal, creation and the natural world. Designers from the last 30 years gathered at the Cathedral - Caroline Daines, Fiona Barttelot, Georgie Macqueen, Hilary Tupper, Tessa Pascoe, Hannah Howell, Verity Gunnery, Diana Cave and Jose Pound.

More than 100 volunteer arrangers will interpret the theme of Nature's Embrace this year, working with over 50,000 blooms. From volunteers, local charities and floristry clubs to professional designers and artists, those involved span generations. Alongside the spectacular large-scale floral installations, visitors can explore the popular Festival Market and Plant Market and enjoy food and drink from Cloisters Kitchen & Garden - making the Festival a celebration for all the senses. £21 tickets will be released on 14th February 2026.

tinyurl.com/2xut2orj



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FROM STAGECOACH TO STAGECOACH - 300 YEARS OF TRAVEL IN THE LAVANT VALLEY: A HISTORY TALK

Monday 23rd March at 3pm
West Sussex Record Office in Chichester (and online).
Booking essential at wsro.org.uk/events

This illustrated talk by local historian Alan Green explores the importance of the Lavant Valley as a transport link north from Chichester towards London - from the rough route over the Trundle, through stagecoach services over the turnpike, and a short lived railway to the modern Stagecoach buses. Alan Green is by profession a chartered civil engineer, but in retirement he has fulfilled a long ambition, that of writing and lecturing on his passions for local history, transport and the art and architecture of Georgian Britain. He serves on the committees of Chichester Local History Society and Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society and for 15 years was Chairman of the Chichester Conservation Area Advisory Committee on which he also represented the Georgian Group. Published works include nine full-length books and several shorter monographs on the history of his native Chichester.



TRANSFORMING THE WEALDEN GARDEN - THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'PLANTSMEN GARDENS' BY INCOMING COUNTRY HOUSE FAMILIES C.1840-1920S: A HISTORY TALK

Monday 27th April 2026 at 3pm
West Sussex Record Office in Chichester (and online)
Booking essential at wsro.org.uk/events

We imported plants for centuries but, from the 1840s into the interwar period, a group of families bought old or built new country houses in the Weald and began to create gardens with an emphasis on plant collections from abroad. Several families co-funded professional plant hunters. Some of the schemes survive today as an important part of the Wealden landscape. We will explore where the family money came from - mainly from innovations in industry and finance and what may have influenced their interests. Our speaker, Sue Berry, has published on aspects of the history of Sussex in the important Sussex Archaeological Collections (now accessible online), Journal of Garden History, Journal of the Georgian Group etc. She is also interested in persuading people to value and to use the wonderful archives for the county in our two record offices and elsewhere. She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and of the Royal Historical Society.

Latest News from St Wilfrid's Hospice...

New Year Raffle: You could win £1,500!



St Wilfrid's Hospice
Making a difference to local lives

St Wilfrid's New Year Raffle is open, inviting the local community to take part and enter for a chance to win some amazing cash prizes. By entering, you'll be helping to support the incredible care and compassion that the Hospice provides to those in need. The raffle closes on March 2nd, so don't miss your chance. Get your ticket for only £1 at stwh.co.uk/raffle

Moonlight Walk 2026: Walk in memory of a loved one!

St Wilfrid's Moonlight Walk returns this June 13th, inviting you to join us on a in-memory walk around Chichester. This is a wonderful event, with hundreds of other walkers taking part and fundraising to support the Hospice. By taking part, you'll get to explore Chichester under the moonlight and stop at exclusively decorated areas.

Tickets are available now at stwh.co.uk/moonlight

Make a Will Fortnight: As life changes, so should your Will.

From March 9th – 20th, a group of generous local solicitors are offering the chance to update or write your Will. In return, they ask that you redirect their usual fee as a donation to St Wilfrid's Hospice, helping us continue providing exceptional palliative care to those who need it most. See which solicitors are participating and get in touch to book your appointment at stwh.co.uk/mawf

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Caring Together for Our Three Churches...

Dear Friends

On behalf of the Parochial Church Council, we are writing to share an important update on the life and finances of the Valley Parish and our three historic churches. These buildings hold deep spiritual meaning, treasured memories and generations of shared history for many in our community.

Our churches are far more than stone and timber. They are places of worship, celebration and comfort, where we gather at Christmas and Easter and mark life's most significant moments through christenings, weddings and funerals. The churchyards and surrounding grounds are also places of remembrance and reflection, cared for on behalf of the whole community. Together, they stand at the heart of our villages, entrusted to us as stewards for future generations.

What is less visible is the cost of keeping all of this open, safe and well maintained. Simply running the parish and caring for the buildings, churchyards and grounds costs around £300 each week, before essential repairs are considered. In addition, the parish must contribute towards diocesan costs. While the wider Church of England meets the expenses of bishops and cathedrals, responsibility for diocesan and parish funding rests with local churches like ours.

Like many parishes, we face increasing financial pressure. Costs continue to rise, while the real value of regular giving has fallen. Repairs and general maintenance depend

on the generosity of those who support the parish. Even so, current income is no longer sufficient to sustain our three churches and their churchyards as we would wish.

For the larger repairs urgently needed for each of the three church buildings we have our separate 'Standing the Test of Time' appeal fund which is steadily growing through generous donations and grants. Some of this fund has indeed been used to pay for work already completed and more work is planned this year.

To be open, we need to increase our regular income if we are to continue caring for these much-loved buildings and grounds and to support worship and parish life.

There are several ways you can help, and every contribution makes a difference.

1. Setting up, or reviewing, a standing order donation, which can be gift aided.
2. Increasing the amount you give at services, if you are able.
3. Making a one-off gift to Standing the Test of Time Appeal.

We are deeply grateful to those who already give regularly, and we simply ask everyone to reflect on how inflation may have affected the value of their giving.

Our shared hope is that these three churches and their churchyards will remain open, active, and prayerful places for generations to come. To achieve this, we need to pull together in a spirit of shared responsibility, faith, and care.

Thank you for your continued support, prayers, and commitment to the Valley Parish.

Yours sincerely,
The PCC of the Valley Parish



**Sussex
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Man jailed for child abuse images and online exploitation of young women

A man from Worthing has been jailed for 2 years and 4 months after being convicted of possessing child abuse material and carrying out a sustained campaign of online deception and abuse against young women and teenage girls.

He created an online persona and posed as a teenage girl named 'Riley'. Using this persona, he amassed a substantial following on social media platforms including TikTok and Instagram, as well as dating sites. To further the deception, he used a voice changing application. The judge described it as chilling.

The conviction constituted multiple offences under the Online Safety Act, including sending false communications with intent to cause harm and sharing intimate images without consent.

The offender pleaded guilty to all charges. As well as his jail sentence he was also given a Sexual Harm Prevention Order which will last 10 years.

This is another unwelcome reminder of the dangers posed to children online.

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YOUR NEW WEEKLY FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE IS COMING SOON!

From spring 2026, the council will be introducing a new weekly food waste collection service for households which will be rolled out across the Chichester District area-by-area.

Before collections start, each household will receive a kitchen caddy (about the same size as a toaster), a roll of caddy liners to get you started, an outside bin (about the same size as a pair of wellington boots) and instructions on how to use the new service. You won't need to be at home to receive the containers, we'll place them outside your property. These will be delivered in phases, ensuring minimal delay from when you receive your bin to your first collection starting. Nearer the time, collection dates will be available online at: chichester.gov.uk/checkyourbinday

Your food waste collection day may be different to your recycling and waste collection day, so we strongly recommend that you check your start date before you begin to use your bin.

All household recycling, waste and garden waste (if subscribed to) collections will continue as usual every two weeks. Collections for communal properties who share bins will start later in the year. More information will be provided to residents nearer the time.

If you live within the district, you can download the council's app! It's a handy way to stay updated as we get closer to launching this new service. Make sure that you sign up for notifications to receive live service updates during rollout, including for bin deliveries and service start dates. You can find more information at chichester.gov.uk/chichesterdcapp

Food waste collections are on the way, and every bit counts - no matter how much or how little you currently throw away. About a third of the average rubbish bin in the Chichester District is food waste, so once you start separating it, you might be surprised at how much you're wasting.

More information at chichester.gov.uk/food-waste

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INSIDE THE WILDLIFE HOSPITAL IN FEBRUARY

We are very busy this February at Brent Lodge, with patients ranging from malnourished hedgehogs and concussed owls to orphaned cubs and injured pigeons. During these cold and rainy days, our precious wildlife really appreciate any little acts of kindness and support we can offer. Garden birds will already be thinking about building their nests and will be incredibly grateful for any seed, pellets or fat balls that can be put out for them. It's also a great time, if not already done, to clean out bird boxes to allow for fresh nests to be built. If you have a pond or similar feature, creating a ramp of sorts will help any little animals that may accidentally topple in to be able to get themselves out again, which is especially helpful in these damp, dark and slippery conditions! As always, please call us anytime if you need advice/assistance with wildlife enquiries or wish to know how you can support us. Thank you! brentlodge.org - **01243 641672 - enquiries@brentlodge.org**



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Sunset and Snow at the Museum, HG



West Sussex still shines during the winter months with the chance to visit four beautiful snowdrop gardens in February

From swathes of snowy white blooms to colourful mixtures of aconites, hellebores, iris and crocus under early blossom a garden visit will lift your spirits as the year begins.



And this is just the beginning: A wealth of fabulous West Sussex gardens will welcome you over the next 9 months. To find your perfect garden or to find out more about the gardens featured below, visit ngs.org.uk, download the **National Garden Scheme App** or pick up a free copy of **The Sussex National Garden Scheme Booklet** available from February in many local stores, garden centres and libraries.

Manor of Dean - Tillington, Petworth, GU28 9AP. Open Sunday 1st February (2am-4pm); Sunday 22nd March, Sunday 26th April (2pm-5pm). Admission £6, children free. Tea, coffee & cake. Visits also by arrangement 2nd February to 19th June for groups of 20+.

Highdown Gardens - 33 Highdown Rise, Littlehampton Road, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, BN12 6FB. Opens for NGS Wednesday 11th, Thursday 12th February (10am-4.30pm); Wednesday 29th, Thursday 30th Apr (10am-7pm). Admission by donation. For other opening times and information, please email or visit garden website.

Sandhill Farm House - Nyewood Road, Rogate, Petersfield, GU31 5HU. Opens Sunday 15th February (12pm-4pm). Admission £10, children free. Home-made teas.

Denmans Garden - Denmans Lane, Fontwell, BN18 0SU. Open for NGS: Monday 16th February, Monday 27th April, Monday 26th Oct (9.30-4). Admission £10, children £8. Pre-booking essential, please phone 01243 278950, email office@denmans.org or visit denmans.org for information & booking. Light refreshments.

Thanks to the generosity of garden owners, volunteers and visitors The National Garden Scheme have donated over £77.8 million to nursing and health charities and in 2025 made an annual donation of over £3.8 million.

The core beneficiaries include Carer's Trust, Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK, Parkinson's UK and The Queen's Nursing Institute.



To prevent local groundwater flooding, we've sealed over 10 miles of sewers around Charlton and Singleton.

This is part of a larger £3.3 million project to help keep excess groundwater from overwhelming the network during rainy periods and follows similar improvements we've made in East Dean, Funtington and Bosham.

The Lavant Valley often experiences high groundwater levels, which can seep into sewer pipes.

This causes flooding and can also contribute to storm overflow releases further down the valley and into Chichester Harbour.

By sealing our network in these rural villages, we're helping protect homes and the environment.

tinyurl.com/25uohbue



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Whilst we've had some nice dry cold spells lately, January has also brought a lot more rain and our dairy slurry stores are getting very full. As both farms fall in an area designated as a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) to protect water supplies from nitrate leaching or runoff, we are unable spread this slurry during the 'closed' period from October to the end of January.

As soon as ground conditions allow this month, we will be applying a low rate of this liquid manure to fertilise our grass crops and encourage early spring growth. This in turn will enable us to turn our cattle out to grass in good time and save on winter feed. As always in farming so much depends on the weather.

All our sheep at Droke have now been sold but at Goodwood the small flock of Southdown ewes are lambing right now in the shelter of a barn while the rest of the flock, mainly Mule ewes, will be lambing outside in April when it will be hopefully, much warmer. The Southdown flock provide the young rams that are used to cross with the Mule ewes and produce good quality offspring.

Wintertime provides a great opportunity to maintain fences and hedges around the farms to help keep our livestock safe and secure for the coming season. Josiah has been busy replacing a lot of worn-out fences and at Droke, Ben is currently using an old 'hedge laying' skill to improve a rather scrappy but ancient hedge that has become very open (see picture).

By 'laying' and filling any gaps with new hedge plants, we hope in time, to create a much better environment for small birds and other wildlife as well as forming a barrier to contain livestock.

John



DEFIBRILLATORS

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Singleton School Woodland...

You may have noticed some exciting activity in Singleton at the foot of Levin Down. Thanks to the generosity of the Goodwood Estate and their Farm Team, Singleton Primary School is creating a brand-new woodland in this field.

This project is supported by the South Downs National Park Trust, which has provided funding for all of the trees. So far, school children and local volunteers (a big thank you to you who have helped!) have been busy planting, with guidance from the South Downs Ranger Team. The woodland will provide a fantastic space for outdoor learning and forest school activities, while boosting local biodiversity with a rich new habitat. We're planting nearly 3,000 trees (including 33 different species) and in the future, we hope to add an orchard at the bottom of the site and sow wildflowers among the fruit trees.

Our final planting and mulching session will take place after school on **Thursday 5th February from 3 - 4.30**, followed with celebratory cake and hot chocolate in the village hall afterwards. Everyone is welcome - come along to lend a hand or simply take a look at the progress! **Chloë Goddard**



THE DEAN REACH SEASON'S HALFWAY POINT

With the season at it's halfway point the Team sit third and still are in one cup competition, two wins away from a final. Manager Ben Kemps has settled in really well and has the team fighting for promotion in his first season at the helm. Training has now moved to the facility of our good friends' at Bognor Regis Town FC. They have a new state-of-the-art 4g surface and we train on Wednesday nights. Any budding footballers are more than welcome along.

We are saddened to announce both Phil Cooper and Dave Freeman have passed away, two dedicated Dean volunteers and supporters, who will be sadly missed. We now have Helen Glue helping out at the club on match days, daughter of Les and the late Tim Calloway. Helen has been involved since the start of the season - and we are also up with the times now as we can take card payments on match days! It was also great to see a few locals from the village on match days recently.

We look to finish off the season strongly on and off the field and hope your 2026 is great too. **Peter Kearvell**



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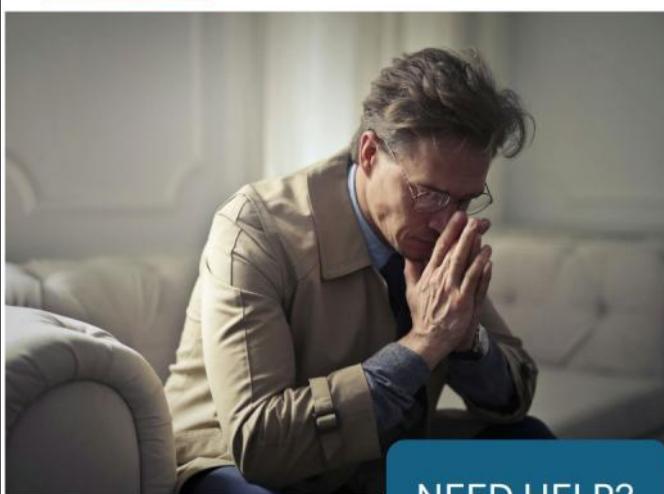
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Please note, applications can only be considered from people and groups from Singleton and Charlton

Any individual or group wishing to be considered for a grant should contact the trustees
at trusteehenrysmithsc@gmail.com

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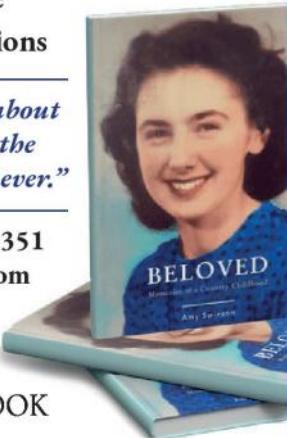
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The January meeting of the Singleton and East Dean WI was held in Singleton Village Hall on Thursday 15th January. Whilst it was a bleak and blustery evening, I was delighted to see the women of the WI out in number. As our December meeting is held a week earlier than the rest of our meetings, it always seems like such a long time between December and January's meetings, so it was wonderful to catch up with everyone.

We had a lovely speaker, Daisy Day, a Master Beekeeper (one of only a few in West Sussex), come and speak to us about beekeeping, hives and threats to bees in this country (although Daisy mentioned the positive signs of bee evolution to defend themselves from modern-day risks). Daisy also brought in honey, which we could buy (and pointed out that where you can, you should try and buy locally sourced honey; most of the honey in supermarkets is blended - if not entirely - with sugar syrups and in fact contains very little honey). It was also lovely to spend some time dreaming about sunnier days, when the bees are flying and the flowers are out!

As well as our brilliant talk, we had to vote on the resolution from the WI shortlist selection, which will be counted and included with all Women's Institutes throughout the country and put forward for debate and national vote. The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of Action on Women's Homelessness. This resolution has the potential to tangibly improve the lives of some of society's most marginalised women and will hold the government to account for the manifesto pledges it made.

As ever, it is my privilege to be a part of this phenomenal group of women. If you would like to come and join the Singleton and East Dean WI, or come to a meeting to see what it is all about, please do drop me a note at zk.mann@icloud.com or call me on 07770 822067. We'd be delighted to see you. **Zoe Mann**

**1st Prize – Elizabeth McGovern, Charlton
2nd Prize – Bea Harling, East Dean
3rd Prize – Martin Asscher, East Dean**

100 CLUB

2026 started well for our three lucky winners, sharing prize money of £120.

Congratulations to everyone. The next draw will be on Sunday 1st February at East Dean Church. **Wendy 01243 811608**



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