

The Valley Diary

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

thevalleydiary.org ~ September 2026 Edition

PLANNING REFORMS

The Government is introducing major planning reforms across England aimed at speeding up development and standardising decisions. Taking effect on 31st October 2026, these changes shift power towards officer delegation and redefine local authority roles district-wide.

To outline these changes, training sessions will be held at East Pallant House at 2pm on Wednesday 14th October or Thursday 15th October.

Key Changes

Mandatory Officer Decisions

(Schedule 1): Minor residential, commercial, householder, and reserved matters applications must be decided by officers, removing committee discretion.

Officer-Led by Default (Schedule 2):

Committee referrals become the exception, reserved only for major economic, social, or environmental proposals.

End of the "Red Card": Councillors will no longer have the automatic ability to call contentious applications to committee, though alternative reporting channels are being developed.

Amendments to the Council's Constitution will be considered in September. Further information packs for parish councils will follow.

This latest notice from CDC is another attempt by the Government to undermine our planning process under the guise of "speeding up development." They fail to realise housing isn't being built because houses aren't selling amid financial uncertainty, high inflation, and steep mortgage rates. These reforms won't fix that - they will simply erode democratic rights to comment on local applications. Crucially, we are being asked to help formulate a new Local Plan to 2045 before 25th September, yet we won't even know what geographic area the Plan covers until the MHCLG announces West Sussex reorganisations in late October. Remember, our current Chichester District Local Plan was only implemented in 2025 to run through 2039. Cllr. Henry Potter, CDC Ward Member for Goodwood

For full details on the new national delegation rules, visit gov.uk and search for 'National Scheme of Delegation for Planning'. To view Chichester District Council's updated Constitution and meeting agendas regarding these changes, visit chichester.gov.uk

Sussex Yeomanry Association Remembrance Sunday Service

**Sunday 8th November
10.45am**

Sussex Yeomanry Memorial at Charlton

All are most welcome to attend



**Star and Garter
Tuesday 8th September
7pm, All Welcome!**

Mark Astley, MNAEA
Director

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CLAY SHOOTS ARE BACK!

Great news, we have secured our clay shoot dates for 2026/2027

**17th October, 14th November, 12th December
16th January, 13th February, 20th March & 17th April**

Join us for a great day out, tickets can be purchased for birthday or Christmas presents. Full details on our events page.

Keep an eye out for what's "Coming soon"

Follow us on social media or check out our website for upcoming events...

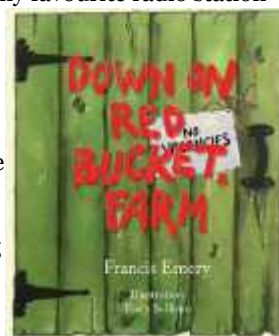
**www.thefoxgoesfree.com
01243 811461**

The Smiling Sunflower! *HG*



Down on Red Bucket Farm is Back on the Air!

I learned at very short notice that my favourite radio station Angel Radio based in Havant, which only plays the good oldies have decided to rerun my book, narrated by yours truly. It was too late to get this into the last issue, but by the time you read this, there will still be about 12 of the 18 chapters still to go. So please tune in to Angel every Monday morning at 10.20 for a bit of fun. **Francis the Poet!**



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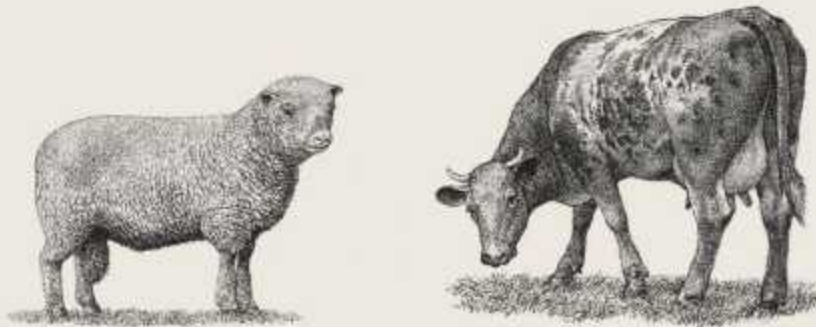


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Did you know that many made by hand heritage crafts and traditional skills are at risk of being lost forever?

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Dinky Dragon's Toddler Club

Our Dinky Dragon's Toddler Club is calling all curious explorers aged 2-4 years old, bring your adult for a rip roaring adventure at the **Weald & Downland Living Museum**.

Knucker, our resident dragon puppet will take you on a journey of discovery exploring a different theme inspired by the Museum each session. Expect stories, songs, 'make and take' crafts and plenty of hands-on, free range fun in the great outdoors! The toddler club will run on selected Friday mornings, 10.30am to 12noon, during West Sussex term times (25th September - 11th December 2026).

Each session has a different theme for the children to enjoy. **Book at** wealddown.co.uk/events/dinky-dragons



More images from the museum - HG



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Singleton Fete 2026 A Wonderful Celebration of Community Spirit

Singleton Fete 2026 had a lovely hot and sunny afternoon, providing the perfect setting for another memorable village celebration. The fete was opened at 1pm sharp by Ann Pollock, who had previously helped organise the event alongside her late husband, Maurice. It was particularly special to welcome Ann to officially open the fete and continue a much-loved Singleton tradition.



Once again, the fete showcased the wonderful community spirit that makes Singleton such a special place. The organising committee of Alex Charman, Pete Williams, Sarah Barnes, Gay Godfrey, Andy & Andrea Clarke and Barry and Julie Shrimpton worked hard to bring everything together, with plenty of support from local volunteers and helpers.

All the usual favourite stalls were there, including Bric-a-Brac, Jewellery, Books, Plants, Tombola, Raffle, Silent Auction and Vintage. Face painting proved popular with the children, while there was plenty to keep younger visitors entertained throughout the afternoon. Traditional children's games included the sack race, egg and spoon race and three-legged race, alongside pony rides and a bouncy slide. Also a record 10 commercial stalls were invited to attend, local honey, beautiful crochet animals & homemade Candles, basket weaving, stationery & gifts metal work and wood craft to name but a few as well as charity stalls including the wonderful Brent Lodge Wildlife Hospital, West Sussex Rivers Trust and SHADH (Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land).

There was certainly no shortage of refreshments either. Visitors could enjoy the licensed bar, a delicious BBQ and, of course, the ever-popular cream teas - the perfect accompaniment to a summer fete! The dog show was another great success and attracted plenty of enthusiastic participants and spectators. This year saw the introduction of a new race, the "Dastardly & Muttley Dash", which caused lots of excitement and laughter. Judges Lizzy Jasper and Spencer Macey had some tough decisions to make! The competition was fierce, but eventually, Best in Show was awarded to a beautiful Jack Russell cross called Coco owned by Kayleigh with second place awarded to a Cocker Spaniel called Rafi owned by Ellie.



This year we raised a lot of money from sponsorship. Local firms along with companies supplying good and services to our area were very generous. This allowed us to pay for things like the Pony Rides, inflatable slide, programmes and more, meaning funds generated on the day went straight to the fete. Our main sponsor was Inert Recycling who regularly have large trucks travelling through our villages. They were keen to acknowledge the inconvenience this may cause and engage with the community.

Most importantly, the fete once again demonstrated what can be achieved when a community comes together. The total funds raised, currently stands at an impressive £8,340. We are still awaiting further, promised sponsorship money, so hopefully the final total will increase even further. Keep an eye on singletonfete.co.uk for updated totals and more pictures of the event. All monies raised this year will be divided equally between Singleton Church and Singleton Village Hall, helping to support two important and much-valued assets of our village community.

A huge thank you must go to all the wonderful stallholders, helpers, volunteers, organisers and everyone who supported the fete in any way. Your hard work, generosity and enthusiasm are what make the event such a success year after year. We simply couldn't do it without you! Here's to another fantastic Singleton Fete – and to the continued community spirit that makes it such a special occasion.



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Thanks Very Much Microsoft!

I've been editing *The Valley Diary* now since 1764 and have always been able to use Microsoft's excellent Publisher software (as a part of 365 these days).

As of 26th October 2026, they are pulling the rug out from under our feet. I have been working for months-on-end to find a solution but I'm afraid that 63-year-old Mr Tinybrain is now being taxed to the limit! I don't think that I'm thick, but the software that I've landed on to continue with the good work is Affinity (formerly Affinity Publisher). And in all my years of computing, I have never had to tackle such a steep learning curve! But I have!

You see, MSPublisher was designed to be simple for bods like me and local volunteer groups and the like creating little newsletters and flyers. Affinity is knee-deep in tools I don't need, but are set up much more for professionals. And people who have been on a course to learn how to use! I've been through all sorts of other options, Microsoft reckon that Word or PowerPoint has all you need to carry on without it - but I promise you that it doesn't! Nor does Scribus, or LibreOffice Draw or the 101 other options I've looked at and tried. There's Adobe InDesign, which costs a fortune and then the learning curve is even steeper! Buying an old copy of Publisher on a disk is another route, but that has pitfalls too.

Anyway, the reason I'm telling you all this, dear reader, is that this is the first month I've tried to use Affinity. What you're looking at is created from that. Even though I have worked closely with the nice folk at Lollipop Print to try and get it right, and endless late nights with Gemini, you might find imperfections as I move forward. Let me know what you think or if you find anything screwy! **Ted the Ed.**

editor@valleydiary.org

Jackson-Stops Reports that the Valley Property Market is Robust

Jackson-Stops in Chichester is celebrating another clutch of exchanges, introducing lots of new neighbours into the Valley so far this year.

Andrew Richardson (Director) said "having served the West Dean across to Upwaltham property market for just over 30 years it is fair to say that I have seen several property market squeezes, and this year continues to be challenging to say the least. There is, however, a bright spark in the market that is the Valley area. We have completed on an excellent number of properties this year, with another handful coming through the pipeline".

With the autumn market fast approaching now is definitely the time to be looking at launching a property to the market. With the obvious attractions of the area it remains one of the most popular in West Sussex. Good freehouse pubs, the South Downs National Park and the Goodwood Estate, along with great schools all contribute. There is even a Padel Court at Ides Barn!

For up-to-date property marketing advice contact Andrew Richardson.
andrew.richardson@jackson-stops.co.uk
01243 786316



Click Bait and Media



Media headlines can sometimes give the impression that crime is rising inexorably as newspapers and TV channels increasingly adopt an emotional approach as they vie for the reader's attention. We see daily examples of this and, while some are based on actual incidents and verified crime reports, we also see click bait myths and hysteria promoted across social media. When I meet concerned local people, I try to separate fiction from fact to reassure them they are relatively safe in Sussex

Last month, the latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales were published. It may surprise some readers to hear that crime against households and individuals has "generally decreased over the past ten years" - although fraud has risen substantially. Last year the number of homicides decreased by 7%; offences involving knives or sharp instruments fell by 8% as did offences involving firearms. Perhaps most surprisingly there was a 4% reduction in shoplifting. There was a 9% reduction in robbery of personal property offences but improvements in recording practices for robbery of business property led to a 10% rise. This shows that headline reported figures do not always match local experience and reality and we have seen this for ourselves in Sussex with previously under-reported retail crime. **Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner**

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Latest News from St Wilfrid's Hospice

Firewalk - Can you handle the heat?

On Friday 16th October, you are invited to take on the challenge of walking barefoot across a bed of hot embers Taking place at Bognor Regis Town Football Club, you'll have to put mind over matter as you take on the Firewalk in support of St Wilfrid's Hospice. Get your ticket today at stwh.co.uk/firewalk

Looking for a challenge?

St Wilfrid's Hospice has a number of incredible challenges available for you to take on, from marathons, trail runs, skydives and even ultra challenges such as the South Coast Challenge! Taking on one of these challenges in support of the Hospice is a

great way to push yourself while also making a difference to local people living with a life-limiting or terminal illness. See all the events at www.stwh.co.uk/events



Gifts in Wills

Your kindness could mean less tax for you and more hospice care for your community. A gift in your Will to St Wilfrid's Hospice could reduce the amount of tax you have to pay. A gift left to any charity, such as St Wilfrid's Hospice, would be taken off the value of your estate before Inheritance Tax is calculated. Plus, if 10% or more of your estate is left to charity, your Inheritance Tax rate could also be reduced. Your gift could help protect the future of hospice care in your local community. It's simple to do and we are here to help you every step of the way. You can find out more about the importance of gifts in Wills and how it can help local charities like St Wilfrid's at stwh.co.uk/gifts-in-wills



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Keeping Sussex Safe in the Summer

We were saddened to see the devastating wildfire in Hampshire's New Forest last month, where hundreds of acres of precious heathland have been damaged after a vehicle fire spread rapidly through the dry landscape.

It is a stark reminder of just how vulnerable our countryside becomes during periods of prolonged hot and dry weather. Sussex has beautiful heathland, woodland and open spaces facing these risks. A thoughtlessly discarded cigarette, disposable barbecue, campfire or even a vehicle parked on dry grass can be enough to start a fire. Our local fire and rescue services are urging residents and visitors to take extra care, avoid using disposable barbecues in open spaces, dispose of litter responsibly and report any signs of fire immediately by calling 999.

The hot weather can also affect our health, particularly for older people, young children and those with existing medical conditions. NHS Surrey and Sussex is reminding people to stay hydrated, keep homes cool, avoid the sun during the hottest part of the day and check in on vulnerable neighbours, friends and relatives.

A little extra caution can make a big difference. By looking after ourselves and our environment, we can all help Sussex stay safe during this spell of very hot weather.

Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner



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It's a Dog's Life

A Poem by Francis

She was a stickler for hygiene,
Ever since they were wed.
Most especially when,
Bert got ready for bed.

Washing hands and face of course,
And a brisk brushing of teeth.
With attention to other places too,
Particularly sweaty feet.

Her tone could be quite scary,
If he'd not done things right.
Shouting, "You are a dirty dog!
Go sleep on the sofa tonight!"

All very understandable,
It is the name of the game.
But he never dared to ask,
He just hoped she did the same.

Then it happened! What a shock!
After he'd been working away.
Returning to find someone else,
Had moved in that same day.

He found them relaxing together,
On the lounge settee.
She was stroking his head,
Which was resting on her knee.

And did she insist he washed
Before bed? No! No! No!
Teeth, feet, slobbery chops?
To the bathroom he did not go.

Watching them cuddling up together,
Bert's jaw hit the floor!
He then rushed out of the bedroom,
As he couldn't take any more.

As he went he loudly hollered,
"If there really is reincarnation,
I'm coming back just like him,
A full blooded smelly Dalmatian!"

Petworth House & Park nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth

Expressions in Blue: Monumental Porcelain by Felicity Aylieff: Ends 27th September. See towering sculptures by renowned ceramicist Felicity Aylieff. The exhibition takes place across the whole property, including installations throughout the house. Discover the remarkable 'making' process in the exhibition room. Free with admission, no booking required.

Petworth Late: In Conversation: Friday 25th September, 6.30pm - 8.30pm Explore the House and Expressions in Blue exhibition after hours. A highlight of the evening will be artist Felicity Aylieff and author Kassia St. Clair in conversation. £25 per person. Booking advisable, either through our website or 0344 249 1895.

Painting Courses with West Dean College: 14th August - 28th September Hosted across the beautiful estates of West Dean and Petworth, this series of courses will provide an introduction to a variety of mediums, from oil painting to watercolour and chalk pastels. westdean.ac.uk to book and for more information.

Heritage Open Days: Saturday 12th & Sunday 13th September Visit for free on Heritage Open Day weekend. Join a free guided tour of the house, with other talks, tours and family activities and throughout the day. Our friendly volunteers will also be running free walks through Petworth, where you can discover the fascinating connections between the town and Petworth House. Tickets and timings will be available from Church Lodge.

Free electric blanket testing: Chichester



Tuesday 29 September

10am – 4.30pm

Sage House, City Fields Way,
Tangmere, Chichester
PO20 2FP



Book an appointment
on 0345 872 9719



More than a hundred faulty electric blankets were identified and taken out of use during West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service's annual testing sessions last autumn.

Defective electric blankets pose a serious fire risk. Regular testing is recommended for blankets over two years old to ensure they are still safe to use, while blankets over ten years old should be replaced.

Testing is taking place on Tuesday 29th September at Sage House, Fields Way, Tangmere, Chichester PO20 2FP between 10am and 4pm by appointment only. Residents can book an appointment to have their blanket tested by calling 03458 729719.

The session will also be attended by a range of partner agencies such as the Prevention Assessment Team, Sussex Fraud Team, Neighbourhood Watch, and the Citizens Advice Energy Team, who will be on hand to offer additional advice and support.

Further advice on keeping safe and warm at home can be found at tinyurl.com/ysrgsgqb

CHICHESTER NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Combined meeting with Chichester RSPB Local Group

Wednesday 2nd September

Illustrated talk by Mark Mallalieu on 'Honey Buzzards and Hawfinches in Sussex' at The Pallant Suite, Masonic Hall, South Pallant, Chichester, PO19 1SY at 7.30pm.

Entrance: members free/visitors £3: 01243 786079: wheelchair access

BRANDY HOLE COPSE

Tuesday 8 September

Pond Working Party at Brandy Hole Copse Local Nature Reserve from 10am until 12noon.

For further information please call 07788 140698

The MULBERRIES Event

Saturday 5 September

The Mulberries present **Midnight Dynamite** at the Pagham Village Hall, Pagham Road, Pagham PO21 4NJ 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.

Maria Wildman

01243 306655

thewildthings2@outlook.com

Desalination Plants and the UK

If the UK can't cope with droughts every summer and having too much rain in the winter without enough reservoirs, why don't we, like, for example, in the middle-east, have desalination plants, turning the billions of gallons of sea water surrounding us into drinkable and irrigation-helpful water, I wondered. So I asked Gemini. (Usual caveats apply involving AI!)

It sounds logical on the surface - we are surrounded by ocean, so filtering sea water seems like the ultimate fix for dry spells. However, comparing the UK to the Middle East overlooks a vast gap in energy economics, geography and climate realities. While the UK actually does have a major desalination plant - the Beckton plant built by Thames Water in East London in 2010 - it has largely been considered a financial nightmare. Several key factors explain why desalination remains a last resort in Britain.

1. Astronomical Energy Costs and Carbon Impact - Desalination uses reverse osmosis, forcing seawater through ultra-fine membranes at extreme pressure.

Middle Eastern nations can power massive desalination plants using abundant, cheap oil and solar energy, often running co-generation plants that use waste heat from power generation. In the UK, electricity is significantly more expensive and subject to strict carbon-reduction targets. Desalinating water requires 3 to 5 times more energy than treating river or reservoir water, sending water bills soaring.

2. The Maintenance "Mothball" Trap

- In the Gulf, desalination plants run 24/7/365 because there is zero fresh groundwater. In the UK, droughts are intermittent. Desalination plants do not handle being switched on and off easily. The delicate membranes degrade if left sitting idle and pipes corrode. London's £270m Beckton plant was intended as a "drought-only" backup, but because it sat unused for years at a time, it suffered constant mechanical failures, chemical leaks and maintenance headaches. It ended up costing over £500 million

in debt and upkeep while barely providing a week's worth of water over a 15-year period.

3. Infrastructure and Topography (Moving the Water) - Water is extremely heavy and expensive to pump uphill. UK coasts are generally low-density, while the highest demand is in inland urban areas or elevated regions in the South East. Pumping millions of tonnes of desalinated water from the coast miles inland requires massive new pipe networks and massive pumping stations, creating another huge ongoing energy cost.

4. Harsh Local Environmental Impact - For every litre of drinking water produced, desalination creates a litre of concentrated, highly toxic brine. In deep, warm waters like the Persian Gulf, brine can disperse relatively quickly. In the shallower, sensitive marine

...continued on page 20

The Valley Parish

www.facebook.com/ValleyParish

Find out more about our services and events on the A church Near
You website



Harvest Celebration

27th September

11am

West Dean

Join us for bible stories, songs and
games.

(oh and of course cakes and biscuits)

Services and Events

6 th September	10am	Holy Communion With Choir East Dean
13 th September	10am	Holy Communion Singleton
20 th September	10am	Holy Communion West Dean
27 th September	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)

Churchwardens

John Holt - 07787 567140 /

john@drokefarm.co.uk

Sarah John - 07769 887546 /

sarance@btinternet.com

PCC Treasurer

Lance John -

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PCC Secretary

Susie Holmes -

pccsecretaryvalleyparish@gmail.com

As we move into September, the familiar signs of autumn begin to appear: cooler mornings, darker evenings, leaves changing and a return to more settled routines. But this year, autumn arrives after a summer that has left more of a mark on our country, and our lives, than most of us might have expected. The effects of heatwave after heatwave have left farmers struggling with crops and livestock, reservoirs and rivers dangerously low, endangering the wildlife that rely on them, and an increased risk of wildfires. There has also been a human cost, with thousands of deaths linked to the heatwaves earlier this year.

Perhaps this year, as we enter into autumn, there is a greater understanding that every action of ours affects people and creation far beyond our own villages. As we pray for rain, and give thanks when it comes, we need to resist taking water, nature, the whole of creation, for granted and remember that we are not the owners of our world, we are its caretakers and stewards for the generations who will follow us, and we need to do all we can to hand it over in the best possible condition we can.

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.

thevalleydiary.org

September 2026

Wed 2nd River Lavant Restoration
Project Drop-In: Singleton Village Hall:
1pm - 8.30pm

Tue 8th Ladies Night at The Star &
Garter at 7pm

Wed 9th West Dean Parish Council
Meeting

Sun 13th Plant Fairs Roadshow: West
Dean Gardens

Mon 14th Singleton Community Cafe:
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village Hall

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

Thu 18th Singleton & East Dean WI:
From Marching to Mulching!: Maggie
Haynes: East Dean Village Hall

Fri 18th - Sun 20th Goodwood's
Revival

Tue 22nd The Valley Diary Copy
Deadline: 12noon

Wed 23rd Goodwood Horseracing

Thu 24th The Baby Boomers Last Stand:
a fund raising evening at and for the
Singleton Village Hall: 6.30pm

Sat 26th & Sun 27th Made by Hand:
Weald & Downland Museum

Sun 27th June Hampton in
Conversation: East Dean School: 3pm

October

Sun 11th Goodwood Horseracing

Mon 12th Singleton Community Cafe:
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village Hall

Thu 15th Singleton & East Dean WI:
Fabulous Floristry: Alison Brown: East
Dean Village Hall

Sat 17th Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes Free,
Charlton

November

Sun 8th Sussex Yeomanry
Remembrance Service: Charlton
Memorial: 10.45am

Mon 9th Singleton Community Cafe:
10.30am - 12: Singleton Village Hall

Sat 14th Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes
Free, Charlton

Wed 18th Singleton and Charlton
Parish Council Meeting, 7pm, Singleton
Village Hall

Thu 19th Singleton & East Dean WI:
Agatha Christie: Jane Tally: Singleton
Village Hall

December 2026

Thu 10th Singleton & East Dean WI:
Christmas Party: Singleton Village Hall

Sat 12th Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes
Free, Charlton

Mon 14th Singleton Community Cafe
Xmas Special: 10.30am - 12noon:
Singleton Village Hall

January 2027

Mon 11th Singleton Community Cafe:
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village
Hall

Sat 16th Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes
Free, Charlton

Thu 21st Singleton & East Dean WI:
Dog Sledding through the Snow: Zoe
Mann: Singleton Village Hall

February 2027

Mon 8th Singleton Community Cafe:
10.30am - 12: Singleton Village Hall

Deadline for the...

October 2026 Edition

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

Tuesday 22nd September

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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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

Useful Telephone Numbers

CDC Councillor, Henry Potter	07792 857973
East Dean Football Club	07944 036709
East Dean PC Clerk	07710 098512
East Dean Village Hall	07785 740625
Goodwood Security	07909 876823
Lavant Road Doctors Surgery	01243 527264
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
Singleton Village Hall	07711 573276
W&D Museum: Office	01243 811363
W&D Museum: Shop	01243 811020
West Dean College	01243 818300
West Dean Gardens	01243 818318
West Dean PC Clark	07596 884847
West Dean School	01243 811247
West Dean Stores	01243 818222

Lineage Ads.

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Albert says...



How many ran the marathon?
 59,000?! Well bless their souls.
 No wonder London's streets,
 Are so full of endless potholes.

Register of Local...

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Hunters Lodge, Lavant - or indeed another Helen!
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 B&B - Ring **Sophie** on 01243 811465
Harper's Cottage, East Lavant. Ring Caroline 01243 278659
Flint Cottage, 47 Mid Lavant, Lavant Road, PO18 0AA: Sue Kemble 01243 785883 / 07814903541
The Shepherds Barn, Chilgrove: Lucy 07775 934999
www.shepherdsbarnsussex.co.uk
The Blue Bell, Cocking: 01730 239669
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[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) #followthestar

Our team is currently busy caring for wildlife casualties of all shapes, sizes and ages, with the busy summer season showing no signs of slowing as we head into autumn. Among the animals in our care are dozens of tiny hoglets and young birds, many of whom were found alone after nest disturbances, becoming separated from their parents or surviving predator attacks. Each one needs specialist care and support to give them the best possible chance of returning to the wild.



We are incredibly grateful for your continued kindness and support, which makes it possible for us to care for every animal that comes through our doors

This gorgeous, albeit a tad grumpy-looking, little owl came into us very recently after he was found alone in the middle of a road by a kind passerby on her commute! He appeared to be very lethargic and was likely the unfortunate victim of a vehicle collision. His finder very kindly took time out of her day to bring him to us before work, just as we opened. Although we usually see dozens of tawny owls each year, we don't often get little owls (yes, that is their official title!) in our care, so it is always very special when we do. As it is still very early on his care at time of writing, we are still undergoing different tests and assessments to see if he has any underlying issues that need addressing and will treat him accordingly. He is being hand-fed and monitored very closely and, although his recovery is still uncertain at this early stage, he has a safe place here to rest and recuperate

For more information and tips, please visit our website or contact us on the details below.

brentlodge.org
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The library is making a return in our homes...

Over the past 35 years, the way we live in our homes has changed dramatically. First, I noticed formal sitting rooms and dining rooms disappearing, walls being removed and larger, brighter living spaces appearing. Box bedrooms were turned into offices, ensuites were added, and more recently, utility rooms, boot rooms and even pet rooms have become increasingly popular.

Lately though, a quieter trend is making a return – the library. Once viewed as outdated, it is now becoming a sought-after refuge in our homes for reading and relaxing, away from digital distractions. An increasing number of prime homes I'm viewing now have a dedicated library, and smaller properties often have clever, informal reading corners and book shelving displays with a cosy armchair.

When I visit homes where the owners have lived for many years, there is often no space left for a single book. Tightly fitted shelving lines the walls, packed with a lifetime of well-read stories, many forgotten or squeezed in out of reach as the years passed by.

I often wonder what happens to all these fascinating books as the owners move on. There is every chance they will end up in a charity shop or maybe passed on to the next generation. Our parents would have gifted books to friends, giving them another lease of life.

Reading serves many purposes, from gaining experience and knowledge, firing our imaginations and entertaining us on long evenings. It also deepens our understanding of the world around us and stimulates our minds.

Ultimately, the return of the home library tells us a great deal about how people want to live today, and perhaps we're turning away from our increasingly digitised lives and seeking something quieter and more analogue. Often the most luxurious room in the house is the one that invites you to stay a while.

"A house without books is like a room without windows." Horace Mann

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LAVANT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

'The National Garden Scheme' is the subject of Mark Porter's talk on **9th September**. It will be interesting to hear of the origin and 'behind the scenes' organisation which not only gives pleasure to those of us who love visiting other people's gardens but raises valuable funds for causes. Guests welcome for £3.

Refreshments, raffle and sales table available from 7pm

The First Time the Siren Sounded

On the morning of September 3rd 1939, June Austin (who had recently turned three) went out to gather blackberries up in Bubholts, on the side of East Dean Hill. Just after 11 o'clock she heard a strange wailing sound echoing around the valley and shortly afterwards her brother came up to find her and take her back home, to the village Post Office that her family ran. (At the time it was directly opposite the Star and Garter, hence why those houses are still called Post Office Row.)



There was no air raid that day, but the changes that siren presaged would make a huge difference to the lives of everyone in East Dean during the five years of war that followed it and arguably ever since. Prior to D-Day Canadian soldiers were encamped nearby and they were very popular guests at dances held in the original village hall (where the car park is now) and which June witnessed burning down on November 5th 1948. As a pupil at East Dean School she won a prize for a watercolour painting of blue tits she made aged 11 and of course helped her parents with the business, delivering telegrams being one of the jobs the children were given. And so a family of nine lived in a five roomed house (with one room being the Post Office) a tin bath they all took turns in and a wash house shared with their neighbours.

Now recently turned 90, June Hampton will be coming back to her old school on the afternoon of Sunday 27th September to talk about these and many other memories she has of her early life. This is a very rare chance to hear first-hand from someone who was here 80 years ago and remembers with great clarity the people of that time and how different were the living conditions they accepted as normal, compared to what we expect today.

The afternoon will start at 3pm and take the form of a conversation with June, following which there will be an opportunity for people to ask questions or add their own memories of the village in those days. Tickets (£5) are available by emailing eastdeanhall@gmail.com or by calling or texting me on 07503 282528. All proceeds will go to support the Village Hall. **Tim Weeks**

Found an error or typo in this issue? Let us know so we can get it sorted for next time!

Support local! Please mention The Valley Diary when responding to adverts in these pages.

editor@valleydiary.org

Local Event Notices

Running a charity coffee morning, local club meeting or fundraising event in the Valley? Let us know! Inclusion in The Valley Diary is completely free for local community groups and non-profit organisations. Just drop the details to editor@valleydiary.org before the monthly deadline.

THE BOOK SHED

Singleton Village Hall

Access is through the side gate and is the first shed on the right.

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Quick Seasonal Tip: Storing Fresh Blackberries

Picked a bumper crop off the hedgerows this week? Don't wash them until you're ready to eat them - moisture makes them spoil quickly. Spread them in a single layer on a paper towel inside a container and pop them in the fridge, or freeze them on a tray before bagging them up for autumn baking!

Goodwood Members Meeting

10th & 11th April 2027!

The countdown to the 84th Members' Meeting presented by Audrain Motorsport has begun. Join the GRRC Fellowship today to access early bird ticket prices and experience an unforgettable weekend at motorsport's season-opening celebration

Tickets are now on sale to GRRC

Fellowship Members at the early bird price. Join the Fellowship at tinyurl.com/256cmuma or head for goodwood.com

When Did You Last Have an Eye Health Check?

National Eye Health Week
Highlights the Importance of
Regular Checks

Regular eye health checks are important for detecting changes to the eyes, which may result in the prescribing of spectacles to protect and optimise our vision: however, checks are also vital in detecting signs of serious eye conditions, including glaucoma. Many conditions can be treated if found early enough, preventing unnecessary further damage to the eyes and leading to better outcomes for vision protection and management. And of course, regular eye health checks can identify other issues such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

National Eye Health Week (NEHW) from 21st - 27th September is the ideal time to make sure our checks are up to date. 4Sight Vision Support (4SVS) is once again proud to support NEHW: sight is the sense people fear losing the most, yet many of us don't know how to look after our eyes. National Eye Health Week aims to change all that with an awareness-raising campaign promoting good eye health for all and highlighting how lifestyle choices like diet, exercise and screen time affect your vision and can help you make better decisions.

Why not book an appointment today if you haven't attended for a while, and encourage friends and family to do the same? And if you think you may have an issue with your eyes, act now, and don't risk leaving it too late. Eye health checks are free for certain people; the NHS website has all the eligibility criteria and information. For those living with sight loss, it is important to continue to attend regular checkups as further changes in the eyes can help make the best use of remaining vision and prevent any unnecessary further sight loss. For further information on eye health, practical support and advice including shopping, reading food packaging or preparing meals, or help with accessing a local optician please contact 4SVS on 01243 828555 or email enquiries@4sight.org.uk

More information about National Eye Health Week can be found at visionmatters.org.uk



Plant Fairs Roadshow at West Dean Gardens on Sunday 13th September

Bring the whole family, explore the show nurseries and look at the Gatehouse. Greeting cards, gifts, garden accessories and West Dean grown plants. Finish your day with us at the new Kitchen, where you can enjoy delicious, home-cooked food prepared using produce grown in our kitchen garden whenever possible.

Standard Gardens entry applies: £13.75 adult, children under 16 go free (tickets available on the day). Free parking. Free admission to Gift Shop and Gardens Kitchen. Dogs on leads welcome. tinyurl.com/wdgpfr



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The Government's decision last month to exclude those convicted of rape, serious child sex offences and grooming from the prisoner early-release scheme is welcome news, but this climbdown should never have been necessary.

We have heard directly from victims across Sussex who were distressed and anxious after learning how the scheme could impact offenders in their cases. The policy raised immediate fears that offenders would be released sooner than expected, leaving victims to question why they had put themselves through the anguish of a court case in the first place.

Victims deserve to be heard when decisions about sentencing and release are being considered. Whilst we welcome the Government's renewed commitment to strengthen victim support, improve communication, and give victims a greater say in licence conditions, these measures must be backed by effective delivery.

We also recognise the pressures facing our prison estate, but public protection and victims' confidence in the justice system must remain at the heart of any reform. In Sussex, we remain committed to ensuring victims can access the support they need and that their voices continue to be heard. You can read more about this at tinyurl.com/22kun75k

Spectacular West Sussex National Garden Scheme Gardens featuring water

Water is the life blood that supports all life on earth and is vital to any garden. The National Garden Scheme is partnered with WWT to promote a wider understanding of the importance of wetlands and water in nature and in our gardens – we share information on how to create mini-wetlands in our gardens and how to conserve water in the increasingly hot summers. With over 1,700 National Garden Scheme gardens mentioning water in their descriptions the importance of this life-giving element is clear.



From natural swimming ponds and stately rills to barrel ponds and water gardens in Belfast sinks, the variety of water in our gardens is inspiring. While water features provide fabulous depths to garden design, it also supports a wide variety of water loving plants and attracts wildlife too.

According to research there's a greater acreage of gardens than nature reserves in England, that's why in a changing climate our gardens are so important. There are 23 million gardens in the UK, and each one, whatever their size, can play a part in reversing biodiversity loss. The parts of your garden which feature water support more life per area than any other habitat. Whether you have a balcony, a window box, an urban patch or an acre or more, start thinking of it as an eco-system in its own right and a steppingstone in connecting habitats to create wildlife corridors.

Many National Garden Scheme gardens showcase water in its myriad forms. Check our website at ngs.org.uk for some of our most spectacular gardens but there are many more featuring smaller water features and ponds which would be at home in even the tiniest garden. Always check current opening information on the website before visiting a garden.

The National Garden Scheme doesn't just open beautiful gardens for charity - they are passionate about the physical and mental health benefits of gardens too. They also support charities doing amazing work in gardens and health and grant bursaries to help community gardening projects.

To learn more about the National Garden Scheme, discover your perfect garden or find out how to open your own garden visit ngs.org.uk - and for gardens opening in Sussex, pick up a copy of The National Garden Scheme Sussex Booklet, available free from many local stores, garden centres and libraries - and as an online Flip Book at galleries.co.uk/NGS/sussex26

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Chichester Cinema Launches 'A Greener Screen' Season

Chichester Cinema is hosting its most ambitious environmental season to date, A Greener Screen, running until 15th October.

The festival pairs international cinema with local environmental action, bringing together documentarians, filmmakers, and a wide array of local Sussex and Solent community groups. The programme explores global issues—including climate change, wildlife conservation, sustainable farming, and marine restoration—while highlighting practical, community-led solutions taking place right on our doorstep.

In addition to feature films and documentaries, the season includes:

Local Group Collaborations: Connecting audiences directly with regional conservation, wildlife, and farming initiatives

Talks & Discussions: Featuring special sessions such as 'The Farmer Drama' on film, exploring agriculture and our relationship with the land

Family & Youth Events: Educational screenings and hands-on creative workshops designed to engage younger audiences in climate and nature topics.

For full programme schedules, venue details, and ticket bookings, visit chichestercinema.org



The Sussex Snowdrop Trust invites you to the...

Saywell International Supercar Day Goodwood Motor Circuit Saturday 10th October 9am - 5pm Free Entry!

Experience the thrill of the Supercars on this iconic track and see this extraordinary collection up-close, on the grid, at 12.30pm. Live Music, Raffle and Activities!

DEFIBRILLATORS

You will find these defibrillators locally at Singleton Village Hall (PO18 0HA), the Phone Box at Charlton (Foxhall Lane, PO18 0HX), behind East Dean Village Hall (PO18 0JG), on the front of West Dean Stores and at Chilgrove on the flint wall of Four Walls Wine, opposite the White Horse Pub (PO18 9HX) or W3W: suspended.lace.marzipan.



Once activated, the device will talk you through how to use it. A defibrillator gives a high energy shock to the heart of anyone who's in cardiac arrest.

100 CLUB

1st... Robert Mayne, Charlton
2nd... Mrs Court, West Dean
3rd... Mick McGoven, Charlton

Congratulations to our August winners sharing prize money of £110. Our summer weather seems to be relentless this year, but I am sure we will all pay the price for it! Sadly the gardens are in great need of water - it would seem that we will probably have an early autumn this year.

As you are all aware, the new year for the 100 Club starts in September and I wish you all good luck with your, hopefully, lucky numbers. Thank you so much for your ongoing support

Wendy, 01243 811608

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The Henry Smith Foundation, founded in 1628, is one of the oldest parish grant schemes in the country. Most of these parishes are in Sussex and Surrey.

The Charity seeks to help local people living in difficult circumstances with small gifts that are awarded by local trustees. Help may be given, for example, with the cost of food, fuel, white goods and furnishings. Some grants are given for hospital visits and doctors' appointments. As well as giving grants to individuals, grants may be given to small local charities or community groups providing support to people in need within the area.

Please note that applications can only be accepted from people living in Singleton and Charlton

Any individual or group wishing to be considered for a grant can contact the trustees by emailing trustees@henrysmithac@gmail.com

Paper copies of the application form can be found in St Mary's Church Singleton.

River Lavant Restoration Project



Come and have your say about exciting new plans to restore the precious River Lavant

Drop in anytime between 1 and 8:30pm on:

- 26th August at East Dean Village Hall or,
- 2nd September at Singleton Village Hall

- View maps of the area and plans for the project
- Feedback and give us your opinions
- Speak to members of the WSRT and Goodwood Estate team
- Learn about the history of the Lavant
- Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available

For more information visit wsrt.org.uk/about/our-projects/river-lavant-restoration-project or scan the QR code



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Dear reader, in 1961, Jimmy Dean had a huge hit on both sides of the Atlantic with Big Bad John. Here is my version following me growing that huge tomato!

Big Fat Tom

A Poem by Francis

Every morning at the greenhouse,
All the neighbours arrived.
Staring at my huge tomato,
Which was 8 inches wide.
It was broad, it was plump,
Once green, now turned red.
And everyone stood there,
Wanted to be fed, on Big Tom.

Chorus:- Big Tom, Big Tom
Big Bad Tom.

Some thought he came,
From New Orleans.
Where tomato growers,
Are very keen.
I shouted "Hang on!
I've really gotta stop ya.
He's from the West End,
His Dad was 'Fat Tom of the Opera.'"

It shares that sturdy plant,
With other toms too,
And when it's watering time,
There's always a todo.
Especially when feed,
Is mixed with the water.
But the others didn't oughta,
Mess with Big Tom

Chorus

Then sadly one day,
When I opened the door.
Those hefty tomatoes,
Had crashed through the floor.
And very soon after,
The greenhouse followed on.
Disappearing under ground,
It had gone. to join...Big Tom

That beloved greenhouse,
I never did replace.
Which did stop the neighbours,
In their daily chase.
I put a notice there,
It stands completely alone.
It says, "If you want huge tomatoes,
Then grow your flippin' own,... Big Tom!"

Keep the Valley Blooming

As autumn approaches, remember to leave seed heads on sunflowers and perennials a little longer—they provide a vital natural food source for local garden birds over the coming weeks!



West Dean Gardens Summer Evening Dining

***It's not too late - still running until
12th September. Thursday to
Saturday Evenings (5-9pm)***

Experience exclusive summer dining at West Dean Gardens Kitchen. Enjoy outstanding food and stunning South Downs views. Slow down, savour the season and enjoy exceptional food surrounded by nature. Thoughtfully curated menus showcase fresh produce grown and nurtured directly on the West Dean Estate.

Special celebration? A relaxed evening with friends? Or simply a unique opportunity to enjoy outstanding food in truly remarkable surroundings.

Two courses for £23 or three for £28 - booking is required. Email theGardens Kitchen Team.

gardenskitchen@westdean.ac.uk

...continued from page 10

ecosystems around British coastal waters and estuaries, dumping high-salinity toxic brine damages local fisheries and marine life.

What the UK Is Doing Instead:
Rather than relying on desalination, the UK's water strategy focuses on solutions that yield far more water per pound spent.

Fixing Leaks The UK loses roughly 3 billion litres of treated water every single day through aging, leaky underground pipe networks. Plugging existing leaks is far cheaper and greener than building energy-hungry industrial sea-water plants.

Water Recycling (Effluent transfer) Taking cleaned, treated wastewater from sewage treatment plants, putting it back into rivers and taking it out further downstream to filter again. This uses a fraction of the energy of desalination because the salt content is already low.

Regional Water Transfers & New Reservoirs The UK actually has plenty of rain - it's just in the wrong places (the North and West get the rain; the South and East have the population). Building new reservoirs (like the massive planned Abingdon reservoir in Oxfordshire) and cross-country transfer pipes to move water from wet regions to dry regions is vastly cheaper over a 50-to-100-year lifecycle than running desalination facilities.



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We Demand Fair School Funding

At the first full council meeting of our term, a motion was made by my colleague Cllr Sutton on the issue of school funding.

West Sussex is one of the most expensive places to live in the country, but it's one of the worst funded for schools. We receive the seventh lowest funding for primary, and the fifth lowest for secondary schools. The national funding formula has seen below inflation increases in West Sussex school funding for years, it has resulted in schools being unable to fund basic repairs, having to cancel extracurricular activities and having to spend an unsustainably high amount of their funding on staffing due to the high cost of living in our area. Our neighbours in Surrey receive an uplift due to their high cost of living due to it being in the London Commuter Belt, but we do not.

I spoke in the council how this is particularly felt in the small rural schools in my division that major focal points of village life as local institutions that bring us together. I noted how the loss of a school can be devastating to a community, but the low pupil numbers and the high maintenance costs mean they are feeling the squeeze even worse than urban schools. The motion requests that the council lobby the secretary of state for education for a level of funding that better represents our local area. The motion was passed unanimously, because we all agree that children deserve a fair future.

Cllr Jack Lovejoy, Member of West Sussex County Council for Chichester North (covering Boxgrove, Eartham, East Broyle, East Dean, Graylingwell, Lavant, Priory Park, Singleton and Charlton, Summersdale, Upwaltham, West Dean and Westhampnett)



West Dean Gardens Tour & Cream Tea

Enjoy an exclusive tour of the famous West Dean Gardens with two senior and knowledgeable members of the Garden Team, followed by a delicious cream tea in the prestigious Oak Hall

Various dates available, 1-3.45pm, Price is £32 each.

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FARM DIARY

As we come to the end of August, we are still waiting for some decent rain, with nothing significant falling since early June. There is very little left for the cattle to graze outside now, so the herd at Droke has moved onto winter rations. Many of the cattle are also indoors, as calving is now well under way.

Thankfully, calving has been going well. Most cows are managing without any help, and the calves are making a good, lively start.

Dan's the Man!

Out in the fields, we have been sowing seed mixes for the new forage leys and hoping that some much-needed rain will soon give them a good start. Dan, pictured, has been busy rolling the seeds in.

This was a special moment for 16-year-old Dan, as it was his first field operation since passing his tractor test with flying colours last week. Dan is the great-grandson of Frank Calloway, who lived and worked on our farm for more than 50 years, so it feels fair to say that farming runs in his family.

Looking ahead, September is likely to be a busy month on both farms. We will be spreading farmyard manure and ploughing some of the fields ready for the winter cereal crops - provided, of course, that we get enough rain to soften the ground first. **Farmer John**



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