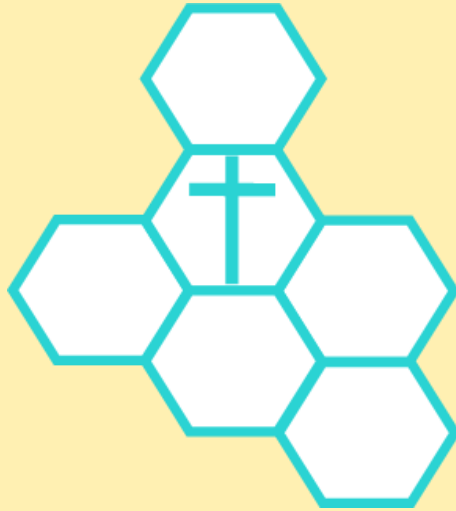


**July / August  
2026**

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**The Parish Magazine for the North Bedfordshire**

**Stodden Villages:**

**Dean, Melchbourne, Pertenhall,**

**Shelton, Swineshead & Yelden**

***Supporting Save the Pub!***

# National Gardens Scheme Open Gardens this summer

1c Bakers Lane, Tempsford,  
Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2BJ



Enchanting, wildlife friendly garden where each month of the year has something exciting to offer. This garden opens for By Arrangement visits from 2 February to 29 November. Please contact the garden owners to arrange a visit: Juliet & David Pennington juliet.pennington01@gmail.com or call 01767 640482

**Beck House, Water End, Wrestlingworth,  
Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2HA**

A 2 ½ acre garden created over 40 years with many varied areas of interest - formal and informal areas divided by hedges and shrub borders. Features inc topiary yew avenue, circular dahlia garden (c. 40 different varieties) with small pond, parterre with English roses, herbaceous borders, courtyard garden, herb and vegetable gardens, rose and clematis pergola walk. Woodland garden.

Open Saturday 1 August, 2pm - 5 pm Available tickets on the website.  
<https://bookings.ngs.org.uk/book/>



## MOBILE LIBRARY every fortnight

For further information please check the routes and timetable on Bedford Borough Council's Virtual Library website.

Village	Location	Arr	Dep	July	Aug
<b>Pertenhall</b>	Chadwell End	10:40	10:55	10, 24	14, 28
<b>Pertenhall</b>	Wood End	11:00	11:20	10, 24	14, 28
<b>Swineshead</b>	Church	13:50	14:05	10, 24	14, 28
<b>Yelden</b>	Old Chequers	14:15	14:30	10, 24	14, 28
<b>Upper Dean</b>	Church	14:40	15:30	10, 24	14, 28

# CHURCH STAFF

Reverend Simon Aley

Reverend Simon Aley's email: [sialey@aol.com](mailto:sialey@aol.com)  
or mobile: 07860 414743

Please contact Simon if you are interested in getting married, confirmed or baptised - or if you would like a home visit or home communion. For all general enquiries you may contact your churchwardens who are:

<b>Dean</b>	<b>Lindsay Langley</b>	<b>07719 640920</b>
	<b>Anna Phillips</b>	<b>07941 800713</b>
<b>Melchbourne</b>	<b>William Tusting</b>	<b>07778 411041</b>
	<b>James Stewart</b>	<b>07792 791794</b>
<b>Pertenhall</b>	<b>Julie Botterill</b>	<b>01480 861382</b>
<b>Shelton</b>	<b>John Wells</b>	<b>01933 622930</b>
	<b>Bob Green</b>	<b>01933 624625</b>
<b>Swineshead rep.</b>	<b>Clive Seddon</b>	<b>07768 818923</b>
<b>Yelden</b>	<b>Gillian Nursaw-Smith</b>	<b>07799 762590</b>

**Honeycomb Editor - Anna Phillips [annatphillips@gmail.com](mailto:annatphillips@gmail.com)**  
**Advertising Manager- Sarah Croft [sarahcroft07@btinternet.com](mailto:sarahcroft07@btinternet.com)**

Editor's note: Welcome to the summer holidays edition of Honeycomb, supporting local businesses, talent and traditions. We are fortunate in these small, rural villages to still have two popular local pubs. Thanks to both pubs for featuring in this edition and to all Honeycomb contributors, distributors and advertisers. Please email politely any changes that need to be made.



**COPYDATE FOR NEXT EDITION**  
**- 12th August**

**Thank You**



# VILLAGE ACTIVITES

Please send any new info to the Honeycomb editor by 12<sup>th</sup> August for the Sep / Oct edition.



*A range of activities flourish in the six villages throughout the year. If planning an event or new club, please refer to the list below to try to avoid a clash.*

*VH is short for Village Hall, DH for Dalton Hall.*

## Monday

**Melchbourne VH Evening Table Tennis** 5.30 – 7.30pm New members welcome!  
Contact Peter Wilkinson 07792 056 157

**Dean DH Yoga** 6.30pm Contact Rosie at [rosie@nightingaleyoga.co.uk](mailto:rosie@nightingaleyoga.co.uk)

## Tuesday

**Melchbourne VH Pilates** 8.30am Contact Penny Hales 07956558386

**Yelden VH Afternoon Tea & Cake** Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday monthly 3pm

**Dean Brownies DH** Tuesday 6 – 7.30pm every fortnight. Contact [debbieparen@gmail.com](mailto:debbieparen@gmail.com)

**Swineshead VH Yoga** 6.30pm Contact Rosie at [rosie@nightingaleyoga.co.uk](mailto:rosie@nightingaleyoga.co.uk)

## Wednesday

**Dean Pilates DH** 2-3pm Contact Lisa Riley [Lisa.pilates@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Lisa.pilates@yahoo.co.uk)

**Dean DH Indoor Bowls** 7.30– 9pm Contact Jo Cordell 01480 869486

**Melchbourne VH New Tai Chi class** 6 -7pm Contact Rob Poynton [Simplyflow@outlook.com](mailto:Simplyflow@outlook.com)

## Thursday

**Stroller Walk** 10.30am to 2.30pm. Every 2nd Thursday. Walk with pub lunch, local areas. Different pub each month. Contact Jo Cordell 07773 696313

**Melchbourne Luncheon Club** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month

**Melchbourne VH Evening Table Tennis** 5.30 – 7.30pm See above for contact det.

**Pertenhall VH Evening WI** meet 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month

**Swineshead VH Afternoon Teas** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month 3pm

**Yelden VH Morning Yoga** 10 – 11.30am For details contact Stuart 07771 802635

## Friday

**Swineshead Evenings at The Sixth Bell Bar** see Swineshead page for details

**New!\*** **Dean DH Pickle ball and tennis** at Upper Dean tennis courts from 6pm throughout the summer. Please contact Camilla 07818 048179

## ***FROM THE STODDEN RECTORY***

Letter from the Stodden Rectory

As I write this letter we are going into another heatwave and across Europe temperatures are soaring. Much of the UK is set for record breaking June temperatures and the phrase 'Flaming June' seems quite appropriate! Fortunately the Rectory is quite a cool house and can be a pleasant relief from temperatures outside and most of our six church interiors can offer that same relief from the sun and heat. Something to bear in mind in this hot weather. You are most welcome!

The roaring heat reminds me of the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Daniel, chapter 3. These three Israelites were among those who had been taken from Israel into slavery but Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego along with Daniel had been taken into service in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar. The King was a bit of a control freak. He had a golden statue and required everyone to worship this statue god whenever a trumpet or other instrument was played. These three Israelites refused. Nebuchadnezzar was angry and ordered them to be thrown into the furnace but ordered that it be heated up still further so the Babylonians who threw them in died themselves because of the heat. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego however came out unscathed, even their clothes still intact and it seemed as though there was someone else there in the furnace – an angel, or God himself? When I worked in Corby, I had a picture in my office by a local artist of one of the furnaces at the steelworks there. You could see the flames dancing off the hot cauldron and if you looked closely you could see to one side a small image of a stick man, a steelworker. Any closer and he would have suffered the same fate as those Babylonian executioners.

In June the Church also remembered the Ugandan martyrs who are commemorated with a huge shrine just outside Kampala. Sadly, that too is a story of a controlling King or kabaka. When Christian boys in his court refused to do as the kabaka ordered because of their Christian faith, they were forced to make a funeral pyre, tie themselves to it and were martyred. Sadly history does repeat itself and reminds us that we must pray against man's inhumanity to man, especially when in positions of power. Please stay safe and cool during these heatwaves we are having and look out for each other. And another big thank you to all who provided and supported me with gifts on my recent trip to Uganda. They were all really appreciated and yes, we did get that guitar out to Mgahinga community Primary School.

But things are hard in southwest Uganda, being so close to Eastern Congo where the recent Ebola outbreak started. Many drivers are refusing to go there, making food scarce. So, the plan is to send seeds so they can grow their own food. I have contacts who can help, especially as travel and tourism are also affected by this outbreak. Just leave them labelled at any of our churches or the Stodden Rectory. Once again thank you and wherever you travel this summer, keep cool, stay safe and have a great time. Revd Simon

### **Wanted - Used Print Cartridges!**

Please put used print cartridges in the collection box in the All Hallows Church porch, Dean for to raise funds for the Stodden Churches.

# ***PARISH NEWS***

## Ascension Day and Confirmation Service

On Thursday 14th May 7.30pm at St Peter's Church, Sharnbrook there was a joint Ascension Day and Confirmation Service. Led by Bishop Rob Wickham, Chair of the Church Urban Fund, the service celebrated the confirmation of three candidates, the youngest being Oscar Prescott from Melchbourne



Rev Simon Aley and Rev Tim Wilson from the Colmworth Benefice were helping lead and Lindsay Langley and Mandy Pippard from Dean both sang with the combined choir made up of choristers from across the region. Thank you to all who came to support this Sharnbrook Deanery service and especially best wishes to the family of Oscar Prescott. Great hymns and a beautiful anthem, accompanied by the excellent Sharnbrook organist Colin Scott.

## Teddy Bear's Picnic Family Service at Melchbourne

A big thank you to all the families who brought picnics and supported this event at 4pm on Sunday 31st May. Thankfully the spell of good weather lasted all afternoon and the churchyard was pretty with table cloths spread with treats, rugs, home baked cakes, (Caroline Jefferson's chocolate biscuit cake a particular highlight) and all ages relaxing in the sunshine. Especial thanks goes to William and Sue Tusting for the fantastic zipwire activity. With their organised team, including Primrose Hudson and Matt and Sara Woodcock, great and small teddies were lifted in a basket to the top of the church tower before William attached them to the zipwire to zoom high across the churchyard. 63 delighted adults and children watched numerous brave teddy bears!

Thank you to the Stodden Choir who sang John Rutter's The Lord Bless You and Keep You, Sharnbrook organist Kate Ritchie and River Duigenan from Eileen Wade School, aged six, who read a poem.

**Please Save the Date for the next Family Service:**  
Pet Service at Melchbourne on Sunday 30th August at 4pm

Please bring your friendly animals!  
All ages welcome, please see advert on page 21.

And don't forget, every third Sunday, Café Church 9.15am at Yelden with breakfast and a play acted by our young people. Everyone is welcome.

The installation of the new Bishop of St Albans, the Rt Revd Andrew Rumsey will take place on Saturday 19 September at St Albans Cathedral and his ministry in the Diocese will begin in the autumn. You can watch his video series Going to Ground on YouTube, and announcing his appointment while dog walking across the countryside <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gp310CbLUas>

# *FARMING LIFE*

**By Andrew Brodie**



So as I sit here contemplating my view, the pool, the mountains hazy in the background framing the vineyard in the foreground, wondering what to write, I can't help comparing my situation to Ian Fleming (note to self must ask editor for salary increase), looking out of his grand abode GoldenEye, dry martini in hand (shaken not stirred,) elegant cigarette holder perched between fingers creating his next Bond masterpiece. Yes I am on holiday but don't think I'm taking it easy. As ever dear reader, I am dedicated to filling my slot in Honeycomb.

As I write, the rain has been tipping down, on and off, for about 10 days which for us as farmers is like manna from heaven. What looked like another poor harvest has perked the crops up just when it's needed or nearly when it's needed. A dry May wasn't great but hey, let's now be thankful for what we've got.

World wheat prices are in the doldrums but as we well know, anything can happen in a few months. In any case, why worry about a silly thing like wheat prices when we can just make reality whatever we like, Mr Trump does it all the time! Let's not get into politics, most don't live in the real world anyway, but like Ian Fleming but he was better at spinning a yarn!

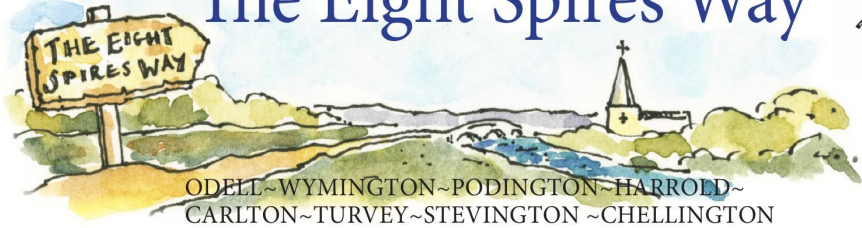
Thinking about birds, the feathered variety, I hasten to add, I am a keen birdwatcher of mostly the ones in my garden although I do obviously see many on the farm and when I see an unusual one I will go home and investigate more information. I wouldn't career all over the country to view a rare bird, I think that's literally 'for the birds'

We have been very lucky over the years to have House Martins nest in the eaves of our house. They do leave quite a lot of poop dribbling down the walls below their nests but for the delight of seeing them swoop and dive around the house I can live with that. However they have become less and less in numbers over the last few years which saddens me. I do wonder if they have predators that target them; I know Sparrowhawks have been known to pick them off.

I got to thinking about apex predators. We have so many species that could be described as apex predators and most are protected, Sea Eagles, Golden Eagles, Buzzards, Peregrin Falcons, Kites, Sparrow Hawks; then we have the corvids, crows, magpies, jackdaws (eat birds' eggs) and now I do believe a Raven has been spotted in Northampton. These birds are all to a lesser or greater extent protected, which is correct when they are a disappearing species but recently I was doing some work in a field and I counted 22 Red Kites (scavengers) and two Buzzards above me. I think everything in life has to be in balance and I am wondering if the balance of small song birds versus predatory types has swung too far the wrong way. I'm not a qualified ornithologist by any means, but I do observe and see.

I love seeing some of these birds, they are so graceful, but are we so enthusiastic because there weren't so many before they were protected and now our delight in seeing them clouds our judgement on how nature 'balances the books', I don't know?

# The Eight Spires Way



ODELL~WYMINGTON~PODINGTON~HARROLD~  
CARLTON~TURVEY~STEVINGTON~CHELLINGTON

## Saturday 4th July 2026

Join us for a day of shared endeavour as we once again tackle the fabulous Eight Spires Way. Starting and finishing in Odell, the 24 mile route is divided into eight legs of varying lengths, running between the seven villages and eight churches of the Chellington Team.



For full details  
see webpage



All are welcome, whether for one leg, the full monty or simply for a cup of tea. There is no need to register, just pull on those boots, turn up and step out into an adventure.



- Leg 1 depart 07:00 from All Saints' Odell to St Lawrence Wymington, 5.2m*
- Leg 2 depart 09:05 from St Lawrence Wymington to St Mary's Podington, 1.7m*
- Leg 3 depart 10:00 from St Mary's Podington to St Peter's Harrold, 4.7m*
- Leg 4 depart 11:55 from St Peter's Harrold to St Mary's Carlton, 1.5m*
- PICNIC LUNCH 12:15 - 13:00 at St Mary's Carlton*
- Leg 5 depart 13:00 from St Mary's Carlton to All Saints Turvey, 1.9m*
- Leg 6 depart 14:00 from All Saint's Turvey to St Mary's Stevington, 3.8m*
- Leg 7 depart 15:40 from St Mary's Stevington to St Nicholas' Chellington, 3.7m*
- Leg 8 depart 17:15 from St Nicholas' Chellington to All Saints' Odell, 1.6m*

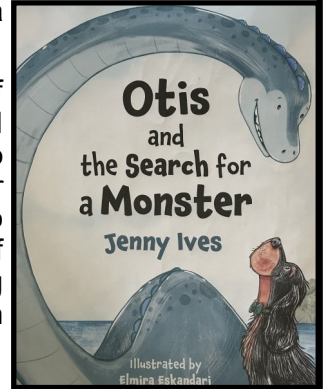
## Book Corner

### 'Otis and the Search for a Monster'

Local author Jenny Ives, who moved to Yelden from Bedford 19 years ago, was successful in having a book published last August 2025. Since then Jenny has discovered that being published can take over your life, with book launches, bookshop signings, various Christmas Fairs and now school visits.

Jenny's book, 'Otis and the Search for a Monster' is a children's picture book aimed for 4-7 year olds.

Reasons for writing the book included the idea of encouraging young children to experience the visual and tactile appeal of books. Jenny also wanted to highlight a wonderful dog breed, the Gordon Setter (which actually is the Scottish Setter as opposed to the English or the Irish Setter). The main character of the book is based on Jenny's own Gordon Setter dog called Otis. She has owned and worked with Gordon Setters for over 24 years.



The storyline of the book follows Otis and his family having a holiday in Scotland. Their adventures include a boat trip, exploring a castle and a trek through a forest. Hearing stories about a monster, Otis spends his time looking for this mythical creature, meeting local wildlife along the way.

Educational elements of the story include a tentative look at geography and travel, exploration and adventure, folklore stories, myths and legends. Are all monsters scary or can they be friendly?

This leads into the importance of safety with dogs. This safety aspect is a pertinent part of the book and at the end of the story there is a fact page with points to remember whilst interacting with dogs. These points are presented as a special message from Otis himself, rather than an adult giving instructions, for example checking with the owner before saying hello to their dog. It was thought that this might be more engaging for the children.

Whilst having thought initially that this could be a relatively easy mission to write a child's book, Jenny found the reality was somewhat different! The book took around 2 years to complete.

First finding a publisher...not easy as the literary world is quite difficult to enter. Then the editing process of the manuscript which was thorough and quite tough! Creating the illustrations took around five months, and these were done by a professional children's illustrator from the publisher. They are based on Jenny's own photographs of Otis and Scotland.

Then there was putting text and illustrations together to create the book which took around 6 months.

Jenny was so pleased with the finished, published book but rather overwhelmed by the amount of interest it received and all the positive and encouraging feedback.

This is where the school visiting commenced. Jenny is being invited to attend schools for storytime sessions with her book, followed by questions and answers. Otis comes along as well which generates great excitement. He is overseen by Jenny's husband Graham who helps out a lot. Otis is very used to public 'meet and greets' as he is an ambassador for his breed!



Otis attends Crufts each year to represent the Gordon Setter in the Discover Dogs area. He also attends various Game Fairs around the country to carry out this role. Incidentally it has been during these events that Otis has briefly met HRH Princess Anne, HRH Prince Michael of Kent, the Duke of Richmond and lastly Claire Balding on two different occasions.

Not bad going for a dog!

Jenny has picture boards and a pop-up banner which she takes into schools. These display photos of the development of the book's illustrations thus providing something visual and of further interest for the children.

The book is priced at £8.99. It can be ordered on-line, preferably from the publisher 'Troubador' which has bookshop sales on its website.

Order online or in store from Waterstones or any other high street or independent bookshop.

It can be ordered directly by emailing [jenny.ives@sky.com](mailto:jenny.ives@sky.com)

## Running a rural English pub in 2026...

*Kindly contributed by Adam Heast, landlord of The Three Compasses, Upper Dean*

We've all seen the "for sale" signs, pubs converted into homes and various campaigns across the UK to save British pubs. Economic pressures are tough across the industry just now. So, what is it like to run a rural English pub in 2026?

Tina and I brought The Three Compasses in November 2013 and reopened it in December of the same year. 13 years on, we have faced the highs and lows of owning and running a pub in rural England. Over the years, we have had the privilege to host, and be part of, many birthday dinners, parties, weddings and wakes and thoroughly enjoy playing a part in these important events of community life. We have raised vital funds for several charities and contributed to many local and village events. We both find a joy in creating a welcoming atmosphere; a home-from-home feeling for both new and regular faces.

The pub is part of the local skittles community with 2-3 teams playing at the pub regularly and we host events such as their New Year's Eve party, the Summer Hog Roast, quizzes and karaoke nights.

In the time that we have owned The Three Compasses, we have invested significantly into the refurbishment of the building, including rethatching, new carpets and new furniture. We have always strived to achieve the highest quality in all that we do; in 2019 we were awarded the CAMRA Most Improved Pub of the Year. We always achieve full marks for hygiene inspections in both the kitchen and cellar and are proud to have achieved Timothy Taylor Championship status - an award only given to pubs who serve a consistently high quality and well-conditioned pint of Cask Ale. We have widened our range of non-alcoholic drinks to cater to more tastes and are always looking for ways to diversify the business.

One of the biggest problems we currently face is the unpredictability of turnout on any given night. The pandemic had a big impact on this. Pre-Covid, the pub had a community of consistent regulars who were the heartbeat of the business. It made staffing, menu planning and stock management more predictable and efficient. After restrictions were lifted, many customers did not return to their previously normal routines of visiting the pub.

Running a pub and keeping it afloat is tough in today's economic climate; increased costs of food, business taxes, entertainment licenses, minimum wage and employer's national insurance all make margins very tight. As business owners, we are wary of passing these increased costs onto customers, aware that the cost of living is high for everyone. Pubs are an important part of our social fabric; they are community hubs,



meeting places and for some people, might be the only place where they have an opportunity to socialise. If communities don't want to see local pubs disappearing for ever, they need to rally round them, support them and visit them.

## **The Heart of the Village: Why Our Rural Pub Matters**

*Kindly contributed by The St John's Arms, Melchbourne*

In an age where so much of life is online and independent businesses face increasing challenges, the importance of the village pub has never been greater. More than a place to enjoy a drink or a meal, a rural pub is often the beating heart of its community – where friendships are formed, stories shared, milestones celebrated and everyone feels welcome. That has been our vision at The St John's Arms, Melchbourne – affectionately known as 'The Sinjon' – since Lexy Prior (née Beaty) took over in September 2023.

Having returned home from London, Lexy was determined to breathe new life into a pub that had always held a special place in her heart. The aim was simple: to create a country pub where everyone, from lifelong locals to first-time visitors, feels at home. One of the joys of walking through our doors is that you're almost guaranteed to see a familiar face or strike up a conversation with someone new. The Sinjon brings together people from all walks of life, creating genuine community spirit.

Families are at the heart of what we do. Our secure, gated garden and children's climbing frame mean parents can relax while little ones play safely, and we're always delighted to welcome four-legged visitors too, complete with complimentary dog biscuits. Roaring log fires make winter evenings wonderfully cosy, while throughout the year, our kitchen serves a varied menu of locally sourced produce wherever possible, including exceptional steaks from Gilbert's Butchers, alongside ales from Digfield Brewery, Barnwell Brewery and Saxby's Cider. Every pint poured, every meal served and every event attended, helps sustain not only our local pub but also the many local suppliers, producers and businesses we proudly work alongside.

Throughout the year we host events that bring our community together, from the Tuesday Quiz Nights, monthly Open Mic evenings and regular live music, to our annual Beer Festival on 11th July. We love creating occasions for everyone to enjoy, whether it's Christmas gatherings, ping pong suppers, book clubs, tractor runs, car boot sales, village fete celebrations or our ever-popular children's Halloween party. These are the moments that strengthen friendships and make village life so special.

Giving back is equally important and we are incredibly proud to support the Air Ambulance, having already raised more than £12,000 through the generosity of our customers and fundraising events. Our next event is a lively Ho-Down on 12th September, hosted by the fabulous Debbie Garon, and we hope the community will once again come together to support this vital cause.

When Lexy welcomed her son Milo in late 2024, Abi Brayfield stepped into the role of manager with remarkable enthusiasm, professionalism and attention to detail. Together with our dedicated kitchen and bar team, who work tirelessly to ensure every visit is memorable, they continue to make The Sinjon a place people are proud to call their local. Village pubs have always been places where communities gather, celebrate, support one another and create lasting memories. By choosing to support your local pub, you're helping preserve not just a business, but a way of life. Long may the village pub remain the heart of our rural communities.



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# The Three Compasses Upper Dean

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# NOEL CARRINGTON

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Detail from 'Orlando – His Silver Wedding' by Kathleen Hale

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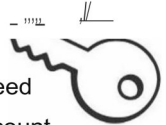
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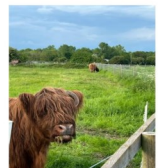
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[www.innfarmdaynursery.co.uk](http://www.innfarmdaynursery.co.uk)



## Bible readings for July and August 2026

Date	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Gospel
5/7/2026	Romans 7, v14–end	Matthew 11 v25-30
12/7/2026	Romans 8, v1 –11	Matthew 13, v1-9
19/7/2026	Romans 8, v12-25	Matt 13, v24-30
26/7/2026	Romans 8, v26 to end	Matt. 13, v31-36
2/8/2026	Revelation 1, v1–8	Luke 1 v68– 80.
9/8/2026	Revelation 6 & 8, v1-5	“ “ “ “
16/8/2026	Rev 8, v6-13 & 11, v15 to end.	“ “ “ “
23/8/2026	Revelation 15	“ “ “ “

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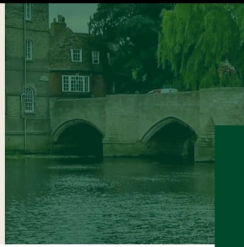
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# **SWINESHEAD**

**Correspondent - Alex Dunn**  
**[alexandra.barnard18@gmail.com](mailto:alexandra.barnard18@gmail.com)>**



## **St Nicholas Church**

4th Sunday Holy Communion 9.00am  
Please see back cover for more service details.  
Please note there is no service on Sunday 23rd August\*

### **Dates for your Diary**

**New Yoga Class in Village Hall**  
**6.30pm on Wednesdays; see Activities page.**

**Saturday 1st August Barn Dance and Burgers**

**Sunday 30th August 10.30am**  
**St Nicholas Church, a 5th Sunday\***  
**Holy Communion Service**

**Friday 4th September Bar Night**

### **Where did the village name come from?**

Swineshead is first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it was written *Suineshefet*. There is some dispute as to the meaning of the name. One theory, as put forward by A.Mawer and F.M.Stenton in *Bedfordshire Place Names* is that it means just that, a swine's head. The theory is that posts with animal's heads on them, or representations of them, were set up to mark a place for public meeting. The later changes in name probably owe much to the dislike of the inhabitants to being associated with pigs, preferring the nobler swan. The other theory, as put forth in the *Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names* is that it means pig's hill, perhaps from the grazing of swine on the slopes.



# MELCHBOURNE FEAST DAY & DOG SHOW



Sunday 5th July  
1pm - 5pm

- Sew Crafty
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# MELCHBOURNE

Correspondent - Ali Gordon

E-mail - alexandra.gordon7@btopenworld.com



1. The church from the north

## St. Mary Magdalene Church

1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, please see back cover for more details.

**Save the date!**

Melchbourne Barn Dance

Saturday 17th October with Kelly's Eye

## CELEBRATE OUR PETS

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## Our first wonderful year in Upper Dean

*Kindly contributed by Marc & Romie den Hertog - Goedicke*

It was a perfectly ordinary Tuesday morning when the message appeared on the village WhatsApp group. Marc looked at his phone. Then at Romie. Then back at his phone. Between a photo of the successful Teddy Bear's Picnic family service in Melchbourne and a found fitness tracker, someone had posted, with admirable matter-of-factness: there was a dodgy DVD in the bus stop library. We disposed of it. This, we agreed, could only happen in England.

We are Marc and Romie, and together with our three children we moved from Haarlem to Upper Dean last summer. Haarlem is a Dutch city of bikes, canals and coffee bars. Upper Dean is a village of footpaths, tractors and a bus stop that apparently doubles as a rather eclectic lending library. We traded traffic noise for birdsong, streetlights for actual stars, and the daily chaos of Dutch city life for something we are still trying to find the right word for. Wonderful, mostly.

The WhatsApp group has become our favourite window into village life. Lost dogs – sometimes ours (sorry) – found cats and other animals, burst water pipes, bins not emptied again, stuff to trade, activities in village hall and the church. There is a warmth to it — and a very particular English restraint. Concerns are raised politely, grievances aired with a kind of cheerful stoicism; even the DVD incident was handled with dignity. No names. No drama. Just a gentle but firm community notice.

What strikes us most is how much village life is still built on participation. There are events, committees, traditions and gatherings that only work because people actually show up. We have tried our best to do the same — partly because we want the full English experience, and partly because the welcome we received made it feel like the natural thing to do. People here wave. At everyone. We are still getting used to that — in Haarlem, you know your neighbours, of course, but you do not necessarily wave at passing cars.

The children have settled in ways that still astonish us. They have picked up the language, the rhythms, the school uniforms, the friendships. They have opinions about the weather now, which feels like a rite of passage. Marc has even started a podcast on our English village life seen through Dutch eyes. You can find it on Spotify if you are curious.

A year in, we are still learning. We have learned that “it’s fine” rarely means it is fine, that the queue is sacred, and that the British are extraordinarily friendly - except, perhaps, at roundabouts. But mostly we have learned that Dean is a genuinely good place to be. Small, beautiful, occasionally surprising.

We would not swap it for anything. Well, perhaps Italy...



# DEAN

Correspondent - Anna Phillips 07941 800713  
annatphillips@gmail.com



**All Hallows Church Services**  
4th Sunday of the month at 10.30am.

**All Hallows Heroes** 1st Friday of the month  
please help tidy the churchyard 4.30—  
5.30pm followed by drinks at The Compasses

## Community Picnic

From 12.30

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> July

**Dalton Community Hall**

**PE28 0LT**



Why not meet up with your friends and fellow villagers –  
Bring your own picnic and drinks and some snacks will be  
available if you would like to buy them.



All profits will go to the repair and maintenance of the Dean and Shelton Village Hall through The Dalton Charity.

### HOG ROAST & LIVE MUSIC

The Three Compasses, Upper Dean

Date: Saturday 8th August

Time: Starting at 7:00 PM

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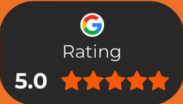
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# SHELTON

Correspondent - Heather Wells 01933 622930  
wellshd81@gmail.com



## St Mary 's Church Services

2nd Sunday of the month 9.00am

## Sudoku

Moderate

			5		9			
1						7		
	5			7	2			6
7	8				6	9	3	
				4				
	2	9	7				6	5
5			8	1			4	
		4						7
			4		3			

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# ***PERTENHALL***

Correspondent - Rob Poyton 01480 869291

Email: [rpoyton@outlook.com](mailto:rpoyton@outlook.com)

## **St Peter's Church Services**

2nd Sunday at 10.30am

Please see back cover for more details.



## **POP UP PUB DATES FOR DIARY 2026**

Friday 25th September starting at 6pm

## **PERTENHALL VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB MONTHLY PRIZE DRAW WINNERS**

### **APRIL 2026**

1ST PRIZE: Paul Sheard

2ND PRIZE: Chris Mitchell

3RD PRIZE: Jim Crisp

### **MAY 2026**

1ST PRIZE: Jill & Brian Strand

2ND PRIZE: Sarah & Phillip Knightley

3RD PRIZE: Peter Goodge

# Melchbourne and Yelden Parish Council

Below are the key points from the May 2026 annual meeting of the parish council:

**Present:** Cllrs Peter Wilkinson, Craig Young, Jason Gordon, Sarah Croft, Mark Fitzsimmons, Simon Paynter, David Brough (Clerk), and six members of the public.

**Chairman and Vice Chairman** Councillor Peter Wilkinson was elected as Chairman for the coming municipal year and Councillor Craig Young was elected as Vice Chairman.

**Annual Accounts Approved** The council approved its 2025/26 accounts following a clear internal audit report. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was also approved and submitted for external audit.

**Support for Table Tennis Club** The council agreed to support Melchbourne Table Tennis Club's application for replacement competition-standard tables, court barriers and match equipment. The equipment will help the club continue to provide regular sporting opportunities at Melchbourne Village Hall and support its growing membership.

The council also agreed to apply to the Chelveston Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Trust for 50% of the project costs, with the remaining costs to be met from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding if the grant is successful.

**Remembrance Streetlight Poppies** The council approved the purchase of 30 Remembrance streetlight poppies from the Royal British Legion, with 20 to be displayed in Melchbourne and 10 in Yelden during the Remembrance period.

**20mph Speed Limit** Councillors discussed the potential introduction of a 20mph speed limit through Melchbourne to help reduce the likelihood and severity of road traffic collisions. The council agreed to ask Bedford Borough Council what evidence and process would be required to progress such a proposal.

**Planning** The council considered two planning applications. No comments were submitted in respect of an application to replace two timber barns at York Cottage, Church Lane, Yelden.

The council objected to the proposed conversion of the former Methodist Chapel in Yelden into a dwelling. Concerns included the impact on neighbouring residential amenity, highway safety, parking provision, waste storage arrangements and the treatment of the building's historic character.

**Crime** No crimes were reported within the parish since the previous meeting.

**Next meeting** Date TBD David Brough  
Clerk to Melchbourne & Yelden Parish Council [clerk@melchyeild-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melchyeild-pc.gov.uk)

[www.melchyeild-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melchyeild-pc.gov.uk)

# **YELDEN**

**Correspondent - Nina Lemming 01933 313849**  
**e-mail: [nmr.lemming@gmail.com](mailto:nmr.lemming@gmail.com)**

## **St Mary's Church**

1st Sun Holy Communion 10.30am,  
3rd Sun Café Sunday see below



## ***Café Sunday***

Everyone is most welcome



Café Sunday is Church with a difference; we chat, eat, drink, sing a bit and enjoy a play on the chosen theme acted out by our young people. Why not give it a try?

With a slight change of format and to enable us to make use of our beautiful churches, Café Sunday will be held on alternate months in Church! Whether in the village hall or church, it will be a relaxing, informal start to the day with a coffee, tea, toast and cake to start your day.

### **Dates for your diary;**

Sunday 19th July 9.15am in Yelden Church.

Sunday 16th August 9.15am in Yelden Village Hall.

**For more information please visit the Stodden Churches website which includes online Honeycomb. <https://stoddenchurches.com/>**

## Pertenhall & Swineshead Parish Council

### Summary of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7:45 pm in Swineshead Village Hall

(The Annual Parish Meeting for the Electors of Pertenhall and Swineshead was held immediately before our Annual Parish Council Meeting and the minutes of this meeting are can be viewed on our website).

#### **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman for the Ensuing Year**

Cllr Whitlock elected as Chairman for the ensuing year with Cllr Kingham elected as Vice-Chair

#### **Appointment of Councillor Responsibilities and Representatives**

- Planning - All
- Pertenhall Highways Liaison Officer – Cllr Kingham
- Swineshead Highways Liaison Officer – Cllr Saville
- Broadband Development – Cllr Kingham
- Police/VAS – Cllr Morse/R Day
- Internal Financial Control – Cllr Kingham
- Grass cutting – Cllr Lacey

#### **Proposed Meeting Dates for 2026/2027**

15<sup>th</sup> July, 16<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2026

20<sup>th</sup> January, 17<sup>th</sup> March and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2027 – all approved.

#### **Open Forum**

- Resident reported that the unofficial exit in Swineshead Woods has been blocked by Eastern Farms. Chairman offered to liaise with the manager.
- Resident asked again whether PSC supports the extension of the footpath at Green Lane, Swineshead. Councillors voted unanimously that they did not support the proposition and would not be reconsidering the proposal.
- Resident asked about First Responder Group in Riseley who will now be using O2 as a mobile provider which doesn't work well in Pertenhall or Swineshead. This issue will be raised at the next Riseley PC Meeting.
- Mayor Wootton gave a short report. He advised that the Ward Fund was still available this year. He updated parishioners on EWR reminding them that the public consultation ends on 9<sup>th</sup> June. They have invested in ASBO officers who can be deployed where required. He also confirmed that they were investing more money in road repairs.  
Three additional gully clearing lorries have been purchased. Glass collections have proved popular and food waste bins have now been rolled out throughout the county.

No further matters were raised, and Standing Orders were duly reinstated.

#### **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Regarding our request for a weight limit on the High Street in Swineshead and Gunnersby Bridge in Pertenhall, Andrew Prigmore advised that BBC would not support our request and suggested the community sets up a Lorry Watch group to determine the volume of HGVs.

#### **Highways & Footpaths**

##### **To receive reports regarding highways and footpaths**

- Cllr Kingham reported he was pleased with repairs at Gunnersby Road.
- Cllr Lacey reported that a car went off the road again in Pertenhall. Although there are chevrons here, she suggested additional signage.
- Cllr Saville also thanked BBC for road repairs at the T junction in Swineshead.

## Crime Figures

Clerk advised that in March there were no crimes reported in either village. In April there was one Assault Without Injury reported at Wood End Lane, Pertenhall.

## Matters Arising from Correspondence/Councillors' Reports

1. Rural Bulky Waste Collection – Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> September from 8:00-9:30am at Pertenhall VH and from 8:00-10:00am at Swineshead VH.

## **Date of next meeting:**

Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 7:30pm in Pertenhall Village Hall [tbc]

A copy of the full DRAFT minutes, as well as past minutes can be viewed on our website at:

[www.pertenhallandswineshead-pc.gov.uk](http://www.pertenhallandswineshead-pc.gov.uk)

Clerk: Mrs Diane Robins | M: 07786 656088 |

E: [clerk@pertenhallandswineshead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@pertenhallandswineshead-pc.gov.uk)



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Charity Number 1190443

Notes of the Meeting of Dean and Shelton Parish Council held  
on Wednesday, 3 June 2026

Present at the Meeting: Councillors: Cllr M Pattison (Chair), Cllr N Barrett, Cllr S Brett, Cllr J Gamblen, Cllr J Moodie, Cllr C Pattison Cllr A Phillips

In Attendance: Mr R Grasmeder (Clerk)

A question was raised regarding the current lack of the mobile Post Office

- 1) No apologies were received.
- 2) There were no disclosures of interest.
- 3) With the agreement of all those present the Minutes of Meetings 1 April and 6 May 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4) The report from the Internal Auditor was tabled and explained by the Responsible Financial Officer and was noted by all those present. Recommendations made will be put in hand.
- 5) The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2026) was tabled and considered and with the approval of all those present was signed by the Chair and the Responsible Financial Officer.
- 6) The Accounting Statements (Section 2 of Part 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2026), having been previously signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, was tabled and considered and with the approval of all those present was signed by the Chair.
- 7) The dates for the Exercise of Public Rights were confirmed as 9 June – 20 July 2026.
- 8) The Certificate of Exemption to certify the Council as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 for the year ended 31 March 2026 was discussed and with the approval of all those present was signed by the Chair and the Responsible Financial Officer.
- 9) Accounts for Payment – the following payments were approved:
  - i. Playsafety Ltd Invoice 97257 – Playground & Adult Exercise Equipment Inspection 2026 - £199.20 *paid be BACS* (Local Govt (Misc. Prov.) Act 1976 s19)
  - ii. Barmicoat Ltd - Invoice 1614 internal audit 2025/2026 - £75.00 *paid be BACS* (LGA1972 s111)
  - iii. Information Commissioner's Office - Data Protection Fee 2026 - £47 (LGA 1972 s111) *it was agreed that this would be made a Direct Debit and therefore reduced to £47. The clerk was asked to action this.*
- 10) East Park Energy solar farms at Swineshead, Pertenhall, Great and Little Staughton – nothing to report.
- 11) The Annual ROSPA report on the Play Area and outside equipment was discussed. It was noted that replacement of the crush preventer on the gate was in progress. New seats for the swings will be sourced.
- 12) The draft IT Policy was discussed and will be reviewed by Cllr Moodie.
- 13) The Annual Report 2025-26 from the Trustees of the Chelveston Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Trust was received and it was noted that a significant amount of money is available for suitable grant requests.
- 14) The provision of additional litter bins is still being pursued.
- 15) Cllr Moodie circulated notes on affordable housing for discussion.
- 16) Cllr M Pattison to ask Cllr Towler to assist in contacting contact Andrew Prigmore of BBC regarding the 20mph circuit.
- 17) Speeding and Police Matters – Nothing to report
- 18) Highways and Drainage – Nothing to report
- 19) Adult Fitness & Play Area Equipment - has been inspected in the last month and found to be in satisfactory order.
- 20) Date for next meeting will PROVISIONALLY be 8 July 2026. The meeting will commence at 7.30 p.m. at Dalton Hall, Upper Dean.
- 21) The Chair closed the meeting at 20.45.

## Services in the Stodden Churches

<b>1st Sunday</b>	<b>5th July</b>	<b>9.00am Melchbourne Holy Communion</b>	<b>10.30am Yelden Holy Communion</b>
<b>2nd Sunday</b>	<b>12th July</b>	<b>9.00am Shelton Holy Communion</b>	<b>10.30am Pertenhall Holy Communion</b>
<b>3rd Sunday</b>	<b>19th July</b>	<b>9.15am Café Sunday Yelden in St Mary's Church</b>	<b>10.30am Melchbourne Holy Communion</b>
<b>4th Sunday</b>	<b>26th July</b>	<b>9.00am Swineshead Holy Communion</b>	<b>10.30am Dean Holy Communion</b>
<b>1st Sunday</b>	<b>2nd August</b>	<b>9.00am Melchbourne Holy Communion</b>	<b>10.30am Yelden Holy Communion</b>
<b>2nd Sunday</b>	<b>9th August</b>	<b>9.00am Shelton Holy Communion</b>	<b>10.30am Pertenhall  Joint Benefice Service with Keysoe, Rev Tim Wilson of the Colmworth Benefice leading with Rev Simon Aley</b>
<b>3rd Sunday</b>	<b>16th August</b>	<b>9.15am Café Sunday Village Hall Yelden</b>	<b>10.30am Melchbourne Holy Communion</b>
<b>4th Sunday</b>	<b>23rd August</b>		<b>10.30am Dean Lay Led Morning Praise</b>
<b>5th Sunday</b>	<b>30th August</b>	<b>10.30am Swineshead Holy Communion</b>	<b>4pm Melchbourne Pet Service Family Service</b>

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