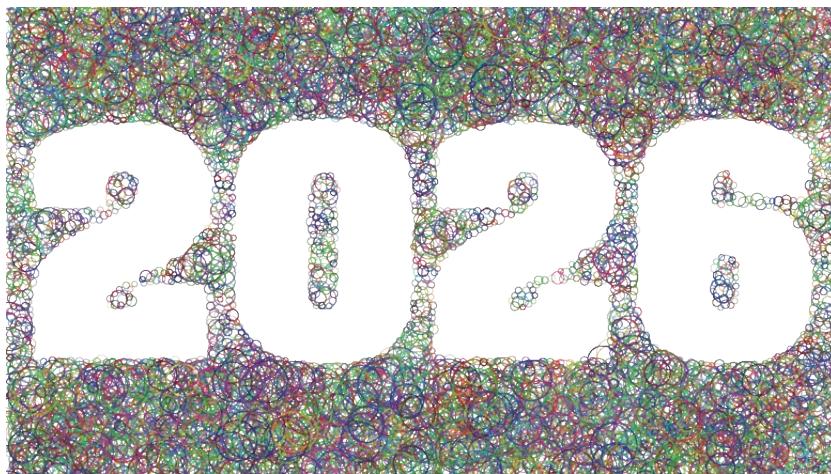


St Mary's Acton
St David's Wettenhall &
St Oswald's Worleston
January 2026



The Cross Country Parishes
of
Acton with Worleston, Church
Minshull and Wettenhall

Happy New Year!



I wonder how you will celebrate the New Year's arrival. To many people it is just another day to work or survive. Children are not interested unless it happens to be their birthday.

However, we do need to mark the passing of time and a new year is important if you will be eligible to drive, or get married, start school, or collect a pension in 2026. The year is vital if you are researching your family history, or some past event. Of course, to organise life so that it runs smoothly we also need to mark smaller portions of time with clocks and then mark days, weeks and months. As if that wasn't enough we have seasons as well although they don't start or finish on any particular day.

The Christian church has its own calendar and seasons which mark the birth, life and death of Jesus. It started this new year on November 30th 2025! This was Advent Sunday which reminded us all of the coming of Jesus at Christmas. In January we mark the end of the Christmas season with Epiphany on the 6th January. This lasts until the beginning of Lent, in February.

Epiphany is the season marking the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. Usually the story becomes part of the Christmas story and we hear it and sing carols about it then, so that probably those variously called wise men, kings, or magi get overlooked. The Christmas cards always show three richly dressed kings riding camels holding their strange and exotic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, and following a star. We know that their return journey was not what they had planned because they were warned in a dream to avoid going back to the wicked King Herod.

If you are a puzzle or quiz fan you could spend a few minutes looking up 'Epiphany', 'manifestation', 'Gentiles', 'frankincense' and 'myrrh'. You may be surprised at what you find and the information will come in handy at the next Pub Quiz!

The kings brought gifts and at a new year it is a good time to think what gifts we have, apart from money, which we could offer to our families, friends, neighbours, community and beyond. We have been given the precious gift of a new year of life so it would be a good way of thanking God for it.

Isobel

Contents

	Page	Cross Country Pages	16
Letter	2	Recipe	22
Services	3	Worleston News	24
Wettenhall News	4	Schools	26
Acton News	8	Contacts	39

Sunday Services

Acton

- 4th Jan 11:00 am Communion
- 11th Jan 8:00 am Communion, 11:00 am Morning Prayer
- 18th Jan 10:00 am Messy Church
- 25th Jan 8:00 am Communion, 11:00 am Morning Prayer
- 1st Feb 11:00 am Plough Service at Reaseheath**

Church Minshull

- 4th Jan 11:00 am Service of the Word
- 11th Jan 11:00 am Cafe Church
- 18th Jan 11:00 am Communion
- 25th Jan 11:00 am Messy Church
- 1st Feb 11:00 am Plough Service at Reaseheath**

Worleston

- 4th Jan No Service
- 11th Jan 9:30 am Communion
- 18th Jan No Service
- 25th Jan 9:30 am Morning Prayer
- 1st Feb 11:00 am Plough Service at Reaseheath**

Wettenhall

- 4th Jan 11:00 am Morning Prayer
- 11th Jan 11:00 am Communion
- 18th Jan 11:00 am Thanksgiving Service
- 25th Jan 6:30 pm Informal Communion
- 1st Feb 11:00 am Plough Service at Reaseheath**

Additionally there is a 10:30 am Communion at Acton every Wednesday

St David's Church Wettenhall		
Sidespersons		Cleaning and Flowers
4 th	Jan	Mrs M Drinkall
11 th	Jan	Mr A Burrows
18 th	Jan	Brownies
25 th	Jan	Informal
1 st	Feb	United at Reaseheath

[Find us on the A Church Near You website](#)

Christingle Service

We were delighted to welcome the staff and families of Calveley Academy, along with our usual congregation and their families to our jolly Christingle. Thanks to everyone who helped to prepare for this event, particularly to Mary for supplying the oranges and the dedicated team of Christingle makers! The sum of £80 has been forwarded to further the work of The Children's Society.

Christmas Thank You's

Ann Hignett and family who once again, provided the beautiful Christmas tree and to **Angela** for decorating it.

Heather for displaying the wonderful Nativity Scenes around the windows
Chris for the Christmas lights in the churchyard and restoring the flood lighting.

We are very grateful for the safety they provide during our dark winter evenings.

Thanksgiving and Remembrance

It will be fifty years on 19th January 2026 since the tragic accident involving two RAF Harriers took place in the skies above Wettenhall. Throughout these years, the families of Flight Lieutenant John Roberts and Flight Lieutenant James Downey, have never been far from our thoughts. On January 18th at 11am we will hold a special service of Thanksgiving for their lives. We will be honoured to host the pilot's families as we remember them and commemorate their lives..

Following the service we will share in a meal, to which everyone is welcome. For catering purposes, it would be helpful to sign the form at the back of the church or ask one of the church members to add your name.

PCC Meeting

The next meeting is on Monday 26th January at 7.30pm in church.

Coffee and Cake

The next meetings will be on January 8th and February 5th from 10-12 noon in Church.

Everyone is very welcome to pop in for as little or as long as they wish.



Darnhall Brownies

Our Brownie Pack Holiday at Pettypool

From Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd November 2025, our Brownie pack enjoyed an unforgettable residential at Pettypool Girlguiding Centre in Sandiway. The weekend was filled with festive fun, laughter, and plenty of adventure.

The Brownies loved watching Christmas movies, crafting their very own wreaths, and decorating gingerbread cookies—with lots of icing and sprinkles, of course!

One of the biggest highlights was the zip wire, where the girls showed incredible bravery and had an amazing time soaring through the trees. Their cheers (and a few excited squeals!) could be heard all across the site.

On Saturday evening, we had a very magical visit from Father Christmas himself. It was a wonderful weekend full of friendship, confidence-building, and festive spirit. We left Pettypool with tired legs, happy hearts, and lots of memories to treasure.



Darnhall and Wettenhall WI

Christmas Meeting 2025

The darker, colder, months of the year are all marked with celebratory meals at the Darnhall and Wettenhall W.I. meetings. We start with the Hotpot Supper, move onto the AGM committee buffet and end with the December meeting Christmas Dinner. We enjoy turkey, roast potatoes, vegetables and all the trimmings. Obviously, this is followed with Christmas pudding and custard. It's a good start to the season and the conversation flows alongside the alcohol free Prosecco! Toiletries are collected by the committee through the months, and a bumper raffle is held after the food. A fiendish quiz of anagrams of items associated with Christmas followed. No table was able to work them all out, but it gave us all something to think about. The committee work hard to make our group a success, and this year has been no exception. Thank you to all.

We have a break in January, so the next meeting is Tuesday 3rd February 2026.

St David's Wettenhall

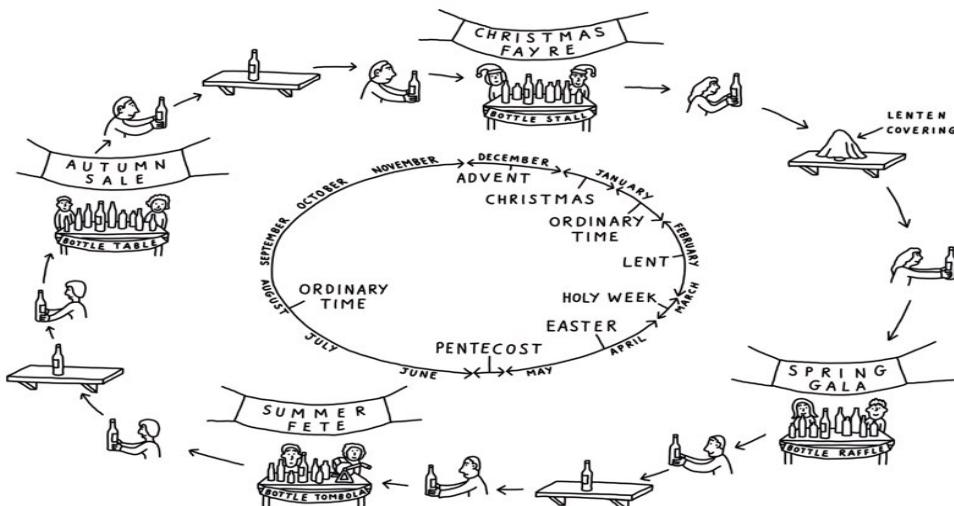


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St Mary's Church, Acton Sidespersons

4 th Jan	Miriam Harvey and Steve Davies
11 th Jan	Chris and Christine Barratt
18 th Jan	Tracey and Peter Foster
25 th Jan	Charles and Sue Hull
1 st Feb	United at Reaseheath

Visit: www.stmarysacton.org

Tea at the Tower Guided Walks

The next walk is:

11th January 2026

Tea at the Tower is open every Sunday from 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm.

On the above date there is a guided walk departing the church at 12:45 pm. Nick organises circular walks varying between 3 to 5 miles, then returning to the church for a refreshing cup of tea or coffee and a slice of delicious cake.

The pace of the walks is relaxed, and the routes generally involve canal towpath and lane walking. The footpaths should be good (also hopefully dry?) and only a small number of stiles are negotiated. Stout outdoor shoes or walking shoes/ boots are recommended.

All are welcome including dogs on leads

For further information please phone Nick Harley, Lead Walker, on 01270-620612 or 07710983125.



From the Registers

Baptisms

23rd November 2025 **Hudson Andrew Parker**

30th November 2025 **Henrietta (Hetty) Barlow**

We welcome them into the family of our church.

Funeral

4th December 2025

Norma Sheila Healey, service and cremation held at Crewe Crematorium

Our deepest sympathy is expressed to Sheila's husband John and their family and friends following their sad loss.

Thank You

As we draw to the end of our calendar year, we would like to thank you for supporting St Mary's throughout 2025, whether that be at services, Tea at the Tower, Movie Nights, Walks and Talks, Concerts, Christmas Tree Festival, Summer outing to Llandudno and Ladies' Lunches. The list is endless! Our sincere thanks go to all who volunteer - making St Mary's "A Place of Welcome".

Festive Tea at the Tower

St Mary's Church in Acton invited the community to two festive editions of its popular weekly café, 'Tea at the Tower', as Christmas approached. The Sunday café, held year-round from 2:30pm to 4:30pm, offers hot drinks, homemade cakes and friendly conversation in the Grade I listed church. One session featured live music from The Swinging Woodpeckers, and both included mince pies served by dedicated volunteers. Donations support the upkeep of the historic building, which regularly welcomes 40-50 visitors, rising above 70 at busy times. Founded in 2017 with just a few teapots and plenty of enthusiasm, the café has grown into an award-winning community space. A representative from St Mary's said: "Our Christmas sessions are always a highlight — a chance for people to come together and enjoy the warmth of our wonderful community."



Ready for the Christmas Walk



Christmas Tree Festival

St Mary's Church in Acton hosted its ninth annual Christmas Tree Festival from 5–7 December, transforming the historic building into a festive showcase of twenty-eight storybook-themed trees created by local groups. Visitors enjoyed a quiz, homemade cakes, handcrafted goods, and festive raffle prizes, while Nativity figures and atmospheric lighting added to the magic. Sunday featured music from Friends of Acton and the annual Christmas Walk, ending with refreshments and a visit from Father Christmas. Funds raised support the church's upkeep and community work. A St Mary's representative said the event was "a cherished tradition" and praised the community's creativity and support.





Holly Holy Day

St Mary's Church in Acton will mark the historic Battle of Nantwich on Saturday 24th January 2026 with a morning of events alongside the Holly Holy Day celebrations and the Sealed Knot re-enactment. Visitors can enjoy hot drinks and toast from 9:30am, before a 10am talk by local historian Mike Lea on "Nantwich's key role in the Civil War". A Q&A with Sealed Knot members follows, and at 11am guests can either climb the church tower or join a guided walk to the original battlefield.

The Battle of Nantwich, fought on 25th January 1644, saw Parliamentarian forces led by Sir Thomas Fairfax relieve the besieged town, securing a decisive victory near Acton. The tradition of wearing holly sprigs in celebration continues today.

St Mary's representative, Stephan Davies said "the church is proud to be part of the commemorations and welcomes visitors". Donations are appreciated.

For details, contact 07731 800663.



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The QR code below will take you to the Parish Giving Scheme website where you can make a donation to St Mary's, Acton.

Either a one off or a regular monthly donation



Reverend Anne

Revd Anne will be installed as an Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral at Evensong at 3.00 pm on Sunday 1 February. Details of guests etc have yet to be announced. Please listen out for further announcements. The service will be live-streamed and available to watch after the event at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfTBv9K29kok_zzLCT7xSiQ

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School Children have their First Communion

Admitting Children to Communion

Over the last 18 months or so, the older children from Acton School have been joining with the Midweek Communion once each half term for a Community Communion. The children start attending in March of Year 5 and continue until March of Year 6, when they hand over to the Year 5 children in the year below.

The children help to lead the service, reading, leading prayers, presenting the bread and wine, helping to prepare the altar and asking questions which form part of a special Eucharistic (Communion) prayer written for use when lots of children are present.

Earlier this year it became clear that the next obvious step was for those children who were interested, and had been appropriately prepared, to be admitted to Communion ahead of Confirmation.

This took careful discussion in PCC meetings, and there was opportunity for anyone who wished to consider this to attend a meeting following the Annual Meeting in May.

It was a joy to prepare 4 children to be admitted to Communion, and to admit Matilda, Joseph, April and Emma at the Community Communion on 3 December 2025.

Revd Anne



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Wednesday 7th January, 7.30pm

Thursday 8th January, 7.30pm

Friday 9th January, 7.30pm

Saturday 10th January, 2.00pm & 7.30pm

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pskinsey@hotmail.com



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MAINWARING'S LAMENT

It was ordained by Testament
My body be to Acton sent.
When serving good King Richard's will
I fought the warring French until
I met my match in Aquitaine
And there was I so sadly slain.
Then Archers, liveried green & white
did execute their legal right
to bear their Liege Lord's body home
ensuring Mainwaring's will be done.

.....

Thus, to the chapel made of stone
they bore my broken body home.
A beast of burden holds my head
and alabaster is my bed.
In prayerful slumber now I lie
and dream in restful piety.
The Chantry bathed in red and gold
is where the Masses for my soul
were by the priest so sweetly sung
and chanted in a foreign tongue

.....

So, gentle Christian, should you find
your gaze upon me – please be kind
and say a prayer for all those knights
who in great wars were sacrificed.

Cross Country Pages



this month to

Cameron Mather	Katie Drinkall
Chloe Yarwood	Kiere Pelle
Ella Day	Liberty Howarth
Elliot Nicholas	Sienna Palin
Fallon Ward	William Herbert
Hannah Boyd	William Jones
Isabelle Herbert	Zara Donellan
Jack Harding	

Special Birthdays

Happy 18th Birthday wishes to
Katie Drinkall

Everyone at Acton Church and across the parishes would like to wish Zoë Sutton a very happy birthday on Saturday 3 January 2026; many congratulations Zoë!

Thank You

As we begin a new year it's appropriate to thank everyone who has worked so hard to support our churches in so many unseen and different ways. We are grateful to those who compile and deliver the magazines month by month; those who bake and provide refreshments at the end of services; those who welcome parishioners; those who put flowers on the altar and decorate for festivals; those who Hoover, dust and polish with increasing regularity!

We are always grateful for extra help so if you think you can help in any way, please contact any of the churchwardens who will be very happy to hear from you.

Ladies Lunch

Tuesday 20th January
at
'The Royal Oak, Worleston.

12:30 pm

All Welcome

£12.50

For further details contact:
Joyce Percival 01270 691315,
Heather (07887 760930), Isobel
(624521), or Ann (528273)

A light lunch of Ham, Egg and Chips,
Fish and Chips, Chicken and Fries or
Fishcake and salad can be ordered for
£12.50 by ringing Joyce Percival
07703292900, by 18th of January.

Mobile Library

Jan	Jan	Feb	Tuesdays	
6 th	27 th	17 th	Arr	Dep
Badger Church Minshull			10:20	10:45
Home Farm Park South			11:10	11:20
Lea Green			11:30	11:50
Home Farm Park North			12:05	12:20
Lea Green			13:35	13:55
Wettenhall Church			14:05	14:30
Station Rd Calveley				
Tolle machen Arms				
Alpraham				

Jan	Jan	Feb	Thursdays	
1 st	22 nd	12 th	Arr	Dep
Pinfold Craft Centre			11:00	11:25
Poole			11:35	11:45
Worleston Station			11:50	12:10
Aston Juxta Mondrum				
Worleston Village Hall				

Jan	Jan	Feb	Thursdays	
8 th	29 th	19 th	Arr	Dep
Farmers Arms			10:00	10:15
Ravensmoor			10:30	10:50
Goodwill Hall Faddiley			11:05	11:20
Greenfields Farm				
Gradeley Green				

Favourite Hymns: Joy to the World

The hymn 'Joy to the World' is usually considered to be a Christmas carol, so perhaps it should have been in the December magazine, not January 2026! However, it was not written as a Christmas carol by its author Isaac Watts, the so - called 'Father of English Hymns'. Watts was born in Southampton in 1674 to a deeply religious, but nonconformist, family. His father was imprisoned twice for his nonconformist views, refusing to support the Church of England. As a child Watts displayed a remarkable ability to create rhyming speech and written verse. It is said that his father punished him for constantly speaking in verse at home. However, he was undeterred and went on to write 750 hymns, including 'When I survey The Wondrous Cross' and 'O God Our Help in Ages Past'. He had a lifelong interest in poetry, verse, rhyme and music. Watts never married and went on to become a pastor in the Mark Lane Independent Chapel in London. For two years he wrote a new hymn every week. Alongside his writing he was widely known as a preacher and private tutor to others who wished to become preachers. When he first published his hymns there was a mixed reception. At that time singing in church was largely confined to the psalms and some wished it to remain unchanged, others enjoyed the new songs.

So, into this environment Watts published 'Joy to the World'. In its original form it then went on to say, 'The Lord is Come', rather than the later version 'The Lord Has Come'. Based on psalm 98, the song was about the second coming of Jesus as a King, rather than his human birth as a baby. Like many of his songs, this one is a combination of deeply held belief, reflection and an emotional connection to the Bible and Jesus' teaching, alongside his knowledge of theology. It was a century later, in 1839, when an American

music composer, publisher, and banker, Lowell Mason [1792-1872], born in Massachusetts, discovered the poem and set it to a melody, 'Antioch', adapted from themes in Handel's 'Messiah'. By chance it was published just before Christmas and was immediately popular as a Christmas carol. It soon became the most published Christmas carol in the USA, cementing its use across the English-speaking church.

Isaac Watts died in Stoke Newington and is buried at Bunhill Fields Burial Ground in London. By the time of his death, he was known as a great hymn writer and had been knighted to reflect his impact on church music. His 350th birthday was celebrated on 29th September 2024 with a 'Songs of Praise' special edition, led by Aled Jones. Perhaps we should sing this hymn in January to celebrate Watts immense contribution to church worship.



Heather Pope

Ladies Lunch in November

Ladies Lunch for November saw us made very welcome at The Little Man in Wettenhall. We always try to go to a venue within the boundaries of the Cross Country Parishes, and The Little Man is very convenient for St. David's church. It was a dreary, wet, day, typical of November, but inside the tables were clustered around the fireplace and conversation flowed. We were treated to a choice of soup, various sandwiches and a slice of homemade lemon drizzle cake afterwards. It all made the day seem much brighter, and there was lots of laughter, chatter and sharing of news for everyone.

Plough Sunday Service
11 am Sunday 1 February 2026
The Horticultural Building
Reaseheath College

Preacher: Revd Canon Dr Judy Hunt

(Judy has experience of rural life and ministry, both as a Vicar and Archdeacon. Prior to ordination she was a large-animal vet)

The Horticultural Building is the new building behind the large new Agricultural Engineering building. Car Parking is via Entrance 1 off Main Road, Reaseheath (the B5074)

Limited parking for the disabled is available immediately outside the horticultural building, both to the front and the rear of the building, accessed via Entrance 2 off Main Road, Reaseheath (the B 5074)



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Scottish Flummery

Serves 4

Ingredients

- ▢ 1 level tbs oatmeal
- ▢ 4 tbs liqueur
- ▢ half pint/275ml double cream
- ▢ juice of half a lemon
- ▢ 3 tabs clear honey



Scottish Flummery

This is a traditional Scottish recipe and just right to help celebrate the New Year.

Method

- ▢ Heat the oatmeal very gently in a heavy based pan until it turns brown, then set aside.
- ▢ Beat the cream until smooth but not stiff.
- ▢ Melt the honey in a saucepan over a gentle heat until runny, but do not allow to boil.
- ▢ Fold the honey into the beaten cream and finally stir in the liqueur and lemon juice.
- ▢ Serve this warm cream and honey mixture in individual glasses and sprinkle the brown oatmeal on top.

Enjoy





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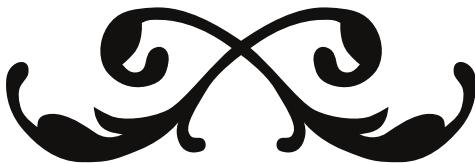
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St Oswald's Church, Worleston			
Sidespersons		Coffee	
11 th Jan	Pam Haigh	Marilyn Booth	
25 th Jan	Diane Darlington	Alison Stokes	
Flowers			Cleaning
11 th Jan	Felicity Adams	Jan	Volunteers
25 th Jan	Diane Darlington		
Website currently unavailable			

Condolences

We were sad to hear of the death of Julia Flanagan on 15th November 2025. Julia moved to Cornwall after the death of her husband, Gordon, to be near her daughter Louise. She had been in failing health for some time. We send our condolences to Louise, Paul and all of Julia's family and assure them of our prayers.



Acton Christmas Tree Festival Entry Worleston WI



Coffee and Cake

Saturday 3rd January from 10-12 noon in Church.

Come along and enjoy Coffee, Cake and Chat.

Everyone is very welcome to pop in for as little or as long as they wish.



Worleston WI

Worleston WI – December Round-Up

A Festive and Enjoyable Month for Members

Worleston WI enjoyed a very busy and festive December. Members attended the Christmas Carol Service hosted by Malbank at Nantwich Methodist Church, organised by Rosalind Lea. Traditional carols were beautifully paired with religious readings, poems and Christmas memories.

Later in the week, members took part in the Acton Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival, creating a Hungry Caterpillar-themed tree. Each member contributed handmade decorations inspired by the story, resulting in a colourful and creative display.

Seasonal Celebrations

A wonderful Christmas dinner at Nantwich Football Club, organised by Carol Hockenhull, saw members, friends and partners enjoying a delicious and varied menu. The food was superbly cooked and served in a warm and festive atmosphere.

Sporting Success for the Darts Team

Congratulations go to the Worleston WI darts team—Annita Gunner, Rosalind Lea, Hazel McLean Barbara Parkinson and Gwen Winstanley—who won their first heat in an impressive 34 minutes. The team continues to practise enthusiastically ahead of the next round.

December Meeting Highlights

Members rounded off the month with a fish and chip supper at the December meeting, followed by an engaging talk from David Hearn on Memories of the 60s. The presentation sparked lively recollections of political, fashion, music and cultural moments from the era.

All our members wish all readers a healthy and peaceful New Year.

New members are always welcome. We meet on the second Wednesday of every month (January excepted when we are meeting on the 12th). Further details contact Lyn Whitmore 07778503191 or Annita Gunner 07751257937



Calveley School

We had a busy and festive few weeks in school as we prepared for the Christmas season.

The whole school took part in an Elf Run in support of St. Luke's Hospice. The children showed brilliant enthusiasm, and we are proud of their effort and community spirit. Thank you to all families who sponsored.

Oak Class enjoyed a wonderful visit to St David's in Wettenhall, exploring in more detail and acting out the Christmas story.

Across the school, classrooms were buzzing with rehearsals, singing, and costume and prop-making as we prepared for our Christmas plays. We couldn't wait to share the children's hard work and excitement with families. Wishing all our families and community very best wishes for 2026.





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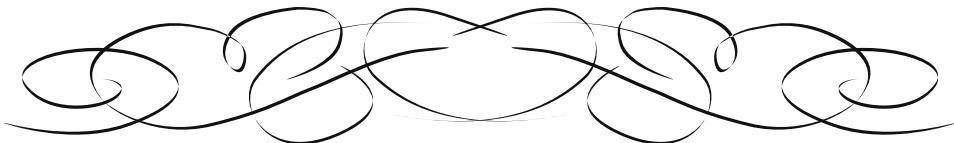
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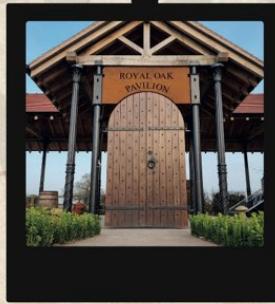


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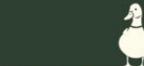
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