

# Meon Matters

A close-up photograph of a brown rabbit with long, upright ears, sitting in a field of vibrant green grass. The rabbit is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a soft-focus green field.

*News, Views & Comment  
from East Meon*

£1.00

Spring 2025

Issue Number 224

[meonmatters.com](http://meonmatters.com)



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Have you registered that it is 25 years since the Millennium? It seems only the other day... How long have you lived in East Meon? Some people who have lived here over 25 years say that they can't think of any major changes, good or bad, that have had an impact on this wonderful village. Of course, there is a new Church Room, which has made it possible for members of the congregation to chat after a service and other activities such as Prayer Group and Yoga to be held there. Also, after the first Covid Lockdown, younger people, able to work from home, moved into the village, bringing down the average age quite considerably. Trees and hedges have been planted to guard against climate change and the river's banks have been protected. Beavers have also been re-introduced. Hearteningly, volunteers running clubs and village support services have been and gone but they continue with the help of new energy and inspiration.

We have some interesting articles in this edition. Please note that the Church Flower Team are putting on a Flower Festival in the Church on 21st-24th May 2026. Seeing that, I thought it might be useful to have a 2026 Event Diary in Meon Matters in our next edition. Could all of you deciding on event dates for the year ahead, let me know so that we can prevent clashes and plan a balanced diary for 2026?

Keep a watchful eye on Meon Matters' website so that you know about East Meon Arts Events, Open Gardens and the May Fair amongst many other fixtures.

Seeing my first snowdrops appear and Christmas Roses lifting their drooping heads to display their full glory, I realise that Spring is just round the corner. Watch out for sunny days and green leaves in abundance; they are coming.

Nicky Staveley

Next Issue. Meon Matters 225 should be published on or around 1st July. We welcome feedback ideas and suggestions. The final deadline for contributions and adverts will be June 14th. Please use [MeonMatters@gmail.com](mailto:MeonMatters@gmail.com).

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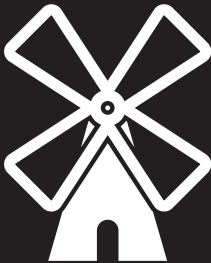
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## Village Diary - Village Events – April - May

April 1st	East Meon Arts talk. CS Lewis before Narnia
April 4th	Moviola – Conclave
April 12th	East Meon Arts talk, Music and Migration.
April 29th	Moviola – Paddington in Peru
May 5th	Village Fair
May 8th.	VE Day – free film. Village Hall
May 17th	The Great Meon Boat Race
July 6th	Church Fete

Details of these and other events can be found at [www.meonmatters.com](http://www.meonmatters.com).  
Please send event listings to [meonmatter@gmail.com](mailto:meonmatter@gmail.com)

### April and Easter Church Services All Saints

Sunday 6th April

8.00am	Book of Common Prayer in the Lady Chapel
10.30am	Benefice Eucharist Service

Sunday 13th April

8.00am	PALM SUNDAY Book of Common Prayer Service
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Thursday 17th April MAUNDY THURSDAY

6.00pm	Commemoration of The Last Supper in the Church Hall
7.00pm	Stripping of The Altar and Vigil
10.45pm	Compline

Friday 18th April GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday Walk of Witness commencing 9.30am at Warnford, calling at West Meon, East Meon and Langrish.

Sunday 20th April

8.00am	EASTER DAY BCP Lady Chapel
10.30am	Family Easter Day Service

Sunday 27th April

8.00am	BCP in the Lady Chapel
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## A Quarter of a Millenium in East Meon

Judith Goodhead tells us what she has seen change since she moved to East Meon, an unusual character she remembers, and what she regrets with the passing of time. She is certain that she is now the longest serving resident in the High Street.

Judith and Ken moved to their house opposite Washers' Green from Petersfield. They were very keen gardeners, and they wanted space for their boys. When they arrived, they were welcomed in true EM fashion and their opposite neighbours Tony and Judith Perkins invited them round for strawberries and cream. That gesture founded a love of the village which is undiminished; Judith never wants to leave it.

The couple immediately became volunteers in the village, particularly Judith with the British Legion and Ken taking responsibility for raising and lowering the flag on Washers' Green every morning and evening. There was also a communal effort in their area to clear the river of weed and to keep the middle of the village clean and tidy. They planted the crab apple and at least one other tree on the green opposite the Izaak to attract birds and provide shade to passers-by.

Judith remembers that one of the biggest characters was a herbalist who lived near the Izaak Walton, grew herbs in her back garden and gave out lavender water to her neighbours. J's granddaughters thought she might be a witch.

Sadly, many of the changes that Judith has noticed over the past 25 years are not all good. The traffic, particularly at rush hour in the morning and evening, together with large groups of cyclists, have destroyed much of the peaceful atmosphere round the war memorial. She rarely sees fish in the river and ducks on it. The Meon's ducks used to regularly lay eggs in Judith's front garden.

She is horrified by the lack of buses in the village and finds it difficult to imagine how young families manage, particularly if they are working beyond East Meon.

She remembered fondly both the sewing group (25 people) in the Church room, where the Church's superb kneelers were created whilst members enjoyed a convivial chat; and jumble sales. Judith recalls making £700 at a jumble sale and felt that these events contributed to village camaraderie.

Looking to the next 25 years, she hopes that traffic restrictions will restore tranquillity to the village centre and that the volunteering tradition will continue to flourish so that the village remains a welcoming, inclusive and happy place to live.

Nicky S



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## Celebrating East Meon's Women Entrepreneurs

Setting up your own business requires guts and gumption. Writing this on International Women's Day, I've found motivation for my own business launch from the shining examples of female entrepreneurship in our village, which is home to an incredible array of female-led ventures.

In the world of fashion, Camilla Ridley, founder of Ridley London, and Kate Barton, an independent designer, are redefining bespoke and sustainable fashion. Louisa and Helen Galliano run Jaipur Jammies, and with personalised accessories from Jenna Tyrwhitt-Drake's Lily & Bean, East Meon is a truly stylish place!

Creativity is at the heart of other businesses. Georgia Fiennes, Jane Martin and Caroline Hawkey are successful artists. Rachel Thompson runs Flowers by Rachel as well as We Love to Dance, and Alison Butler has seen success in textile design and now art classes at Blooming Designs. Lesley Hussell runs copywriting and content creation company Editing Edge, and Wendy Blease welcomes guests to Pound Orchard, her design-led home in the village centre.

Vicky Parkinson and Charlotte Haigh bring expertise and creativity to interior design projects – and I'll be joining them as I launch my own studio, Kitedown Creative. Despite over 20 years of running her business, Vicky told me she doesn't think of herself as an entrepreneur as she's doing something creative and fulfilling her passion. I am struck by her collaborative approach – whilst 'the quality of your partners is critical', it is clear that forging and maintaining these mutually beneficial partnerships is part of the joy of entrepreneurship. In a recent project Vicky and her trusted craftspeople delivered an impressive 250 years of collective experience.

Beyond creative fields, East Meon's women run important services. Many people value Katie Foster's Meon Valley Chimney Sweep. Lou Bushell operates Local Treasures, connecting skilled tradespeople with those who need them, Caroline Whitear has a cleaning business and Annabel Tyrwhitt-Drake is an independent Travel Agent and travel business mentor. And let's not forget those who came before us – Anella Parker-Martin and Gill Martin's catering company and Gillie William's independent PR business.

Businesses often face challenges along the way and resilience is critical. Ally Mitchell recently launched Smart Wave, providing business support. Many of her clients are local entrepreneurs themselves – Ally’s administrative support frees them to focus on delivering their services. We spoke of the risks of being a business owner, the challenges of motivation and the fear of ‘empty days’ – but as she said, ‘what I put into this is what I get out’, and in her focus on doing a great job, she’s making a positive difference to other businesses. The benefits of flexibility, and knowing her work is truly valued, are just some of the pay offs.

Our first steps are all the more exciting because of this supportive community of female entrepreneurs. Their success stories serve as proof that with creativity, determination, and a strong local network, women-led businesses can thrive and enrich our community.

(And huge apologies to any other entrepreneurs I wasn’t told about)

Jenny Humphreys



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## The Other Woman

Next year I'll be having one of those O birthdays. Not Oh wonderful, but Oh no!

How did that happen? So much time has sneaked past while I've been working, raising a family and having fun with friends.

What makes it worse is my Maurice has another female in his life. She's one of these sleek glossy females with curves in all the right places. She was born in 1961 which makes her younger than me.

You won't be surprised to learn this relationship started with him surfing the net. He's been lost for hours, secretly gazing at photographs. He travelled to meet her in September and actually brought her home. I was pleased to see she has a spare tyre. I don't.

His face shines with joy when her name is mentioned, and I know he's told his friends how wonderful she is. I've heard exclamations of "Wow, gorgeous!" and "She's beautiful." Of course, they don't discuss her with me. I've noticed when he touches her, she purrs. Although she's not a cat she does have feline qualities.

Now things are getting worse. I checked his camera the other day and was horrified to find he's photographed her from every angle. He had the cheek to tell me she recently became overheated. Do I need to know that?

He keeps buying her things on eBay. I've lost count of the number of parcels that have arrived for her, including choc's. Last night he was talking in his sleep. I had to pull the duvet over my ears.

He spends so much time in her company I've decided to choose a new outfit and matching shoes. That will get his attention. However, there's one small consolation. I'm obviously fitter than her. He's admitted she needs her differential adjusted. Also, he referred to her as the mark two which obviously makes me number one.

The three of us have been going out a lot lately and people wave at her as we go along the road. Some motorists even flash their lights. She gets so many admiring glances. But I get delicious lunches and a large glass of wine.



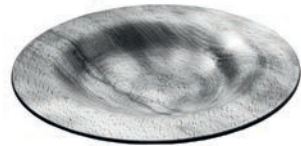
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## West Meon Wine Society



The West Meon Wine Society (WMWS) was established as an independently run division of the West Meon village shop in May 2020. It aims to help our members discover new and interesting wines, have fun with a growing network of friends and neighbours, and raise revenue to help support our much loved village shop. So far, our activities have allowed us to make a direct contribution of over £7,000 to the shop.

We currently have an eclectic portfolio of over 140 different wines. Our range includes more than 75 (!) grape varieties, and wines from 15 countries – the obvious, France, Italy, Spain, South Africa, Chile,....but also Georgia, Lebanon, England of course, and others. We aim to bring you good wines, but also to introduce interesting new ideas.

All of our listed wines have been tasted and selected by the management team members, at their own personal expense. Wines are listed on our website only if they have been approved for enjoyment and affordability by a significant majority of the team. We intend this approach to give our members and customers confidence that they will appreciate wines purchased from WMWS.

It has always been a central aim of WMWS that we should host or facilitate get-togethers of Members during the year to taste WMWS's wines and enjoy the company and friendship of old and new friends from the village and its neighbouring communities.

Our plan for 2025, usually held in West Meon village hall or sports club, currently includes:

Date/ Month	Event	Notes
21 March 2025	Good Neighbours	Best value wines to be found next door to famous neighbours
End April/early May	Wine merchant insights	Still under discussion
Mid June	Hampshire Vineyard Visit	Further details in due course
25 July 2025	Wines around the Med	A tour of interesting wines from east to west across the mediterranean
3 October 2025	Wines of the Rhone	A tour of good value wines from the north to the south of the Rhone valley
28 November 2025	Wines for Christmas	A selection of interesting and good value wines for the Festive Season



At the end of 2024 WMWS had over 30 members and regular customers. The principal benefits of membership, which has been maintained at £30 per annum, are priority and discounted access to our tastings (you more than get your money back through ticket price discounts if you and one other attend most of our events), invitation to our new annual Members drinks party, and access to help and support for events that Members wish to hold with their friends and neighbours.

We welcome new members at any time, or feel free to join us at one of our forthcoming events. WMWS information event tickets, and online purchasing of our selected wines is available via our website: [www.westmeonwine.co.uk](http://www.westmeonwine.co.uk). You may also contact us at [westmeonwine@gmail.com](mailto:westmeonwine@gmail.com) with any queries or to request being added to our mailing list.

We look forward to sharing our enjoyment of good wines with you.

Jerry Berry

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## Cont. The Other Woman (from p8)

I've decided I can live with the situation. As long as she continues to sleep in the garage.

Val Uden



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## **Annual Parish Assembly**

**Monday 28 April 2025**

**7.00pm in East Meon Village Hall**

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Questions are welcome from residents

Guest Speaker:

**Energise South Downs**

East Meon's Future Energy Landscape

**All Welcome**

Cheese and Wine will be served after the meeting

## **East Meon Parish Council - Chair's Report 2024-25**

The role of a parish councillor is rewarding and frustrating in equal measure. It is rewarding when we manage to get something done which will enhance the life of residents in the parish, it is frustrating when we need to rely on another organisation to play its part and that organisation is dragging its feet.

Some time ago we secured agreement from Hampshire County Council to install traffic calming measures along the High Street but strapped for cash HCC is now saying it cannot commit to the work. Last spring we agreed with a contractor that he would start work on a new path across The Green - wider and with less of a camber - the contractor procrastinated and then his tarmac supplier ceased business. We are now told it will be completed as soon as the weather warms up.

We have, however formed a very successful partnership with the Hampshire Monday Group of volunteers who last year, supplied by us with the materials needed, rebuilt the steps leading up to the footpath heading west from Frogmore Lane and we have also made headway with the protection of BOATs (Byways Open to All Traffic) in the parish. We have 11 of these ancient tracks which are regularly damaged by motorcyclists, especially over the winter months when they delight in churning up the mud rendering them almost impassable for walkers, cyclists and horseriders. HCC is at last listening to us and are introducing six month winter closures and short - term summer closures when there are bad weather warnings, installing metal gates to control access and engaging residents in opening and closing them. There is still a way to go but definite progress.

Whether or not we have made any real headway on sewage bubbling up from manhole covers in Workhouse Lane remains to be seen. Originally Southern Water claimed that the problem was attributable to Fat Oil and Grease (FOG) clogging up the 6 inch sewers. After battling with them they now accept that the problem is in fact infiltration of surface water through misconnections (where houses have their downspouts connected to the sewer) and from ground water entering the Victorian sewers through cracks and burst joints. Until very recently we have had tree roots happily growing inside the sewers. Within the

past month these have for the first time been removed by super jetting. SW has agreed to deal with residents' misconceptions without charge installing soakaways and provided it can get the funding it will be lining the inside of the sewers. That, of course, is the problem... SW like HCC and East Hampshire District Council is short of funds (HCC has a £132m deficit). We had to wage war on HCC to keep the No 67 bus. HCC threatened to withdraw this service on the grounds that it was not economically viable. Many emails and a local radio broadcast eventually persuaded them that the elderly, carless and young going to school and college would have been severely impacted if they could not leave and return to the village other than by taxi! Persistent lobbying can pay off.

Then there is all the general maintenance that needs to be carried out. The PC owns The Green, 2 play areas, the multi sports court, the football pavilion, Washers Triangle, 2 areas of allotments, the War Memorial, the Frogmore car park (the Workhouse Lane car park is owned by The Bereleigh Estate), the football pitch and the Recreation Ground as well as other small areas of land. All need to be looked after. Grass needs cutting ( by QLS which offered a competitive quotation) the play areas require safety checks and repairing (they are also due a major refurbishment which has been initiated), and the War Memorial needs cleaning. We continue to look after our trees and plant more! You will have noticed saplings along the front of The Green and more are to be put along the boundary to the football field.

On top of this there are a mass of random matters we have dealt with - a request to hold a wedding reception on the football pitch, relatives of a deceased resident asking to plant a tree on The Green in her memory, new fencing along the Frogmore allotment path and round the football field, a solar panel to power our 30mph sign on the Clanfield Road, new basketball backboards on the multi sports court, a new gate to the Recreation Ground and repairs to the Workhouse Lane car park barrier.

There are some matters which continue to challenge us, the Football pavilion is on that list. It is nearing the end of its life and we have been thinking about how we replace it providing facilities with low maintenance costs which meet the needs of residents. Having reported last year that Harvest Football Club had moved to a pitch nearer to where the players live, in the summer we signed up

the newly formed East Meon Vets Team which is holding regular matches on the pitch. Another ongoing source of concern is the increasing numbers of potholes on our roads. The Frogmore sunken lane is a disgrace. HCC Highways fills them with inadequate material on a regular basis and they then reappear within weeks. We are advised that all we can do is keep on reporting them. Eventually one supposes HCC will find a better way of dealing with them!

2024 saw considerably fewer planning applications than the previous year, due to a sharp drop in the number of applications for extensions or alterations to homes (especially since the summer), counteracted in part by an increase in applications concerning farm diversification. 2024's applications are broken down as follows:

2024	No objection	No objection with comments	Objection	<b>Total 2024</b>	<i>Total last year</i>
Dwellings	13	4	0	<b>17</b>	34
Trees	10	0	0	<b>10</b>	11
Farms	4	2	1	<b>7</b>	0
Other	2	2	1	<b>5</b>	5
Total	29	8	2	<b>39</b>	50

The Planning Committee visited the sites of all applications, no matter how large or small, before submitting a response. Details of the Parish Council's comments on all East Meon planning applications can be accessed via the SDN-PA planning website <https://planningpublicaccess.southdowns.gov.uk/online-applications/>

The 2 objections were to an application to allow camping on a plot of land on Westbury Park (not related to Westbury House), and to an application to site two proposed hazardous substance storage containers on farmland. Both applications were approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Building work on the second of our Neighbourhood Development Plan (NPD) sites commenced during the year, which will result in 5 new homes in the village. Once completed, it means that the 17 new homes promised in our NPD will have been delivered. Also ongoing is the addition of 14 new houses at Leydene. Additionally, there exist approvals, or applications in progress, for 5 new homes on sites around the Parish. If all these are built and including the 12 new homes in Windwhistle Rise and Salt Hill View, the result will be a 7% increase in the housing stock in the Parish.

The South Downs Local Plan is being reviewed, as is required every 5 years. The plan contains policies which underpin development in the National Park and protection of our treasured landscape and environment. The current plan has won awards, so much of it will be retained, but a number of changes to existing policies and new policies are being proposed as well as new sites for development across the Park. The Plan Review is currently out for consultation and the Parish Council will submit comments.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to all those residents who volunteer their time to monitor sewage leaks, care for our trees, our Tree Warden, the members of TWiG and East Meon Nature and of course my fellow councillors. I especially wish to record my thanks to Andy Hales who stepped down in the autumn to be replaced by Richard Downer who brings a wealth of financial experience. We also say goodbye and thank you to Chris Smith who has been looking after the Pavilion and sports areas for many years and are delighted to welcome Stuart Powney who will be adding other tasks to the caretaker portfolio.

Last but not least, a huge thank you to Sam, our Clerk - a real star who we are now sharing with 3 other local parishes... she is a true super clerk!

Susan Davenport  
Chair East Meon Parish Council

## East Meon Parish Council Update - March 2025

This month's Parish Council meeting was held on 20th January with a number of important matters covered.

A number of maintenance and infrastructure issues in the village either have been or are due to be shortly addressed. Potholes - soon to be repaired, but this is an ongoing problem so please keep reporting them! The new path across the village green: work to start in the spring. Byways etc: HCC has already closed a number of BOATS to non pedestrian traffic over the winter months, so that pathways are left in good order for the spring. Frogmore Lane: foliage clearance and step renovation is now complete. And the football pitch by the Pavilion has been recently rolled to improve playability.

Chris Smith has retired as our village caretaker and the role has been taken on by Stuart Powney. We thank both of them for their past and future support in keeping our public areas free of rubbish and other waste and for keeping the grass and other areas maintained.

The village already benefits from 3 defibrillators thanks to the initiative led by Clive Tillbrook who is also a first responder volunteer in the village, however, we need to decide on the location for a 4th already purchased. After discussions on location, it is proposed to site this in the grounds of the school, which will provide an additional level of coverage to the village.

An update on the village sewerage system. Southern Water has now concluded that the system is in part overloaded due to cracked pipes through the village to the processing plant. This allows excessive land runoff into the system, along with sediment, which is not helping the capacity of the system to cope. Remedial measures are being considered such as regular jet washing and possible lining of the pipework, but unfortunately there is no quick or easy solution.

Victory in Europe - VE Day, 80th anniversary commemoration event on 8th May. We can now confirm there will be a small village event and a beacon will be lit, courtesy of the Tyrwhitt-Drake family, on Park Hill.

Finally, as many of you are aware, the Village Hall is an ageing community asset that has suffered over the years from poor maintenance due to budget shortfalls. As fashions change and the use of the Hall declines, it is becoming increasingly harder for the Village Hall to make ends meet, despite the best efforts and dedication of the Village Hall Committee. Thanks to the considerable efforts of David Pepper and the team of Village Hall trustees various renovation options are being researched, along with a number of funding initiatives. The Parish Council is now working with the Village Hall Committee to evaluate options to ensure this important community building serves future generations. In the near future, the Village will be polled for opinions on what you would like from your Village Hall. This is to ensure that usage is improved so that we can restore and make improvements to the fabric of the building, whilst balancing the financial books. We hope as many people as possible respond to the poll, as it is critical to the success of these community projects that they are aligned with what local people want. Watch this space.

Richard Downey

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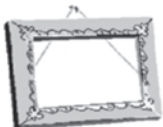


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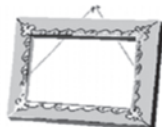
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## Church Flower Report

The first important occasion of 2024 was Fr.Tony's Licensing in February. Paul Hawkins did the most spectacular pedestal and the windows and tables looked equally wonderful – many thanks to all those involved. 2024 was otherwise a much quieter year for the flower arranging ladies with only one wedding but the arrangements that were done were absolutely stunning. Sadly we seem to have had more funerals this year and for most of these some lovely flowers have been done.

The church for Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas was beautifully decorated as usual – the dedication and time given by all the team is amazing and we are so lucky to have such talent and commitment in the village.

Going Green has been our aim and far less oasis is now being used which is very good news. Apparently there is a biodegradable foam that has been developed in the USA, let's see what that is like if it gets to the UK! Thank you to those who have used their own pots and jars – we will definitely look to get some more for all to use in the church.



The big news and a date for the diary is a Flower Festival to be held from the 21st – 24th May 2026. This will be an opportunity to involve many others in the village and I do hope it will be supported by the wider community. More details to follow.

Once again a huge thank you to all members of the flower arranging team – it is lovely to have one or two new faces on board – if anyone would like to join in the fun please just let me know.

Philippa Tyrwhitt-Drake



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## News in Brief

### Church Membership

All Saints Church is refreshing its membership roll, an essential task under Church rules. Membership allows a say in how the church is run and helps establish the importance of East Meon in the diocese and beyond. The registration forms are available in the Church section of MeonMatters.com (<https://meonmatters.com/village-life/church/>) or from the Church Wardens.

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## East Meon Litter Pick

A big thank you to all those who turned up on a damp but happily dry morning in February to litter pick the centre of the village. Some 10 bags of plastic bottles, coffee cups, crisp packets, sweet wrappers and cans were collected leaving the village looking much tidier.

A plea from the volunteers: please pick up your dogs' mess and put the poo bags in a bin and do NOT leave them on the verges!!!

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## **More Colour, Less Work - Fact or Fiction? Garden Club Talk by Gillian Taylor**

The East Meon Garden Club AGM was swiftly and deftly executed by its outgoing Secretary, Fiona Wyatt and new Chair, Emma Crowley.

We then were thoroughly entertained by Gillian, who dispelled any myths about colour needing hard work and expense. She is a vet turned horticulturist, garden designer and lecturer. She amusingly regaled us with a story about Lord Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor, who would show his weekend guests around his garden on the Saturday and then again on the Sunday, by which time his gardeners had planted another 10,000 bedding plants to change the colour of the formal gardens!

She did not advise us to go down that route. In fact, by showing us wonderfully colourful slides of both her Upham and French gardens (both over 1 acre), she did her best to persuade us that it was possible to achieve year round colour by choosing the right plants, ignoring weeds, mulching, pruning and cutting back only once a year.

A fascinating part of her talk touched on the tools that she found most useful in her garden. They ranged from a shrub rake to a razor hoe. Many of these clever garden aids can be found on a website run by the "Three Growbags"! She also advocated buying both right and left handed tools so that you spread the load and do not incur repetitive strain syndrome. No surprise that Felco secateurs won the prize but it is possible to vary from the generic No:2 to No:6, which are mini, lightweight ones.

She advocated using plants with a varied tonal range of greens to give year round interest. Ferns provide interest for 10 months of the year. For deep shade she recommended *Bergenia Ciliata* Wilton, which had enormous, interesting, evergreen leaves. She also said that if you planted tulips at 3 times the recommended depth, they would perform as perennials. Perennial alliums also provide annual interest without the need for replanting.

Another interesting saying by Beth Chatto: “Paint the Sky” was employed by Gillian to remind us that an important colour contrast is to look at tall, loose plants against the sky. She also advised us to grow clematises and roses through fruit trees and shrubs that have a short flowering period.

Her tips were incredibly useful and it is impossible to do justice to all of them here. She rather nicely told us that she had cut her teeth giving this kind of talk only 5 years ago with the EM Garden Club. One very important point she made was that ‘Perennial’ is the new name of the Gardeners’ Royal Benevolent Fund, set up originally to look after gardeners who fell on hard times after retirement or ill health.

What a fount of knowledge she has become in that very short time. We look forward to welcoming her back very soon.

Nicky Staveley



The Friends of East  
Meon School  
presents

# The Great East Meon Boat Race

Registration **11:30**  
Race Start 13:00  
'Duck Dump' 14:15  
Prize Giving **14:45**

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## Saturday May 17th

Class 1: Based on 1L plastic milk bottle

Class 2: Based on aluminium foil food tray

Class 3: Open - no restrictions

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Full class specs/rules can be found on:  
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**Class 3. Unlimited. No size constraint** other than it should be **able to float down the river. Imagination and ingenuity** essential! Recycled/upcycled materials with all small parts firmly attached and **no glitter**. You can push the boat out here! **Big is beautiful!**

**Entry fee: £2.50 per boat**



**Prizes** will be awarded for **best boat** in class, **first boat** in each race and **'most deserving** in the eyes of the Organisers'!

**Imagination and ingenuity** encouraged!

**Note:** All boats **will be inspected** and may be refused entry if they do not comply with the class rules. **Good luck and get building!**

## **EAST MEON MAY FAIR - MONDAY MAY 5TH**

### **12.00 noon – 5.00 - or until the beer runs out**

#### **Come to the Fair**

Our traditional May Fair will be taking place on the village green as it has for over 30 years. It will be opened by a brass band and the Petersfield Town Crier. There will be Maypole dancing, with the arrival in a horse drawn carriage of the May Queen and May King. And more music, games in the arena for all ages including the Tug of War, but if that is too strenuous there will be a coconut shy, tombola, human fruit machine, penalty shoot out, bouncy castle, craft stalls etc. Plenty to do for all ages.

This year there will be classic cars on display and a fire engine. Home made cakes, tea & coffee, burgers, hotdogs, vegan food and the hog roast will all be available. Plus of course the beer tent.

#### **Polish Your Dog**

Enter your doggie friend in the Great Fun Dog Show. She maybe the best bitch..... or he might be the dog most like its owner. And for the first time we will have a 'teach an old dog new tricks' competition. Finishing with a parade of all the great dogs in the main arena where the Best In Show Cup will be presented.

#### **Want to Help?**

As well as the usual crowd we have many brilliant new volunteers. Our school and nursery school are giving invaluable help but of course we need more helpers on the day. We also need prizes such as presents of any kind - large and small, including bottles of wine, spirits and non alcoholic for the raffle, tombola and other games plus old plates, glasses, mugs etc. for the crockery smashing. And anything for the bric a brac stall. These can be left in the Village Hall during the Friday café opening hours 10.00 to 12.00.

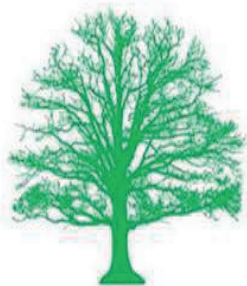
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## Nature Group

Our wildlife could be forgiven for being confused: a few warm, wet days in February and then a couple of weeks of sharp frosts. One minute, everything says it's a good time to throw yourself into the "dog-eat-dog" business of reproduction and the next you're back in winter.

If you've walked up to the cricket pitch you'll have heard the noisy chatter of rooks as they build their nests high up in the trees. It's all very human - warning each other about threats, protecting territorial boundaries, passing on information about food sources and just building the social connections that make them stronger as a group than as individuals. With all that noise, it can be no accident that the collective term for Rooks is "a Parliament".

If you've walked up Coombe Road, you could be forgiven for missing the migration of toads and newts to their ponds this year. A move that normally unfolds over a month or more in March and April has compressed into a couple of wet nights in February. Whether they knew it was about to turn cold



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or just moved en masse with the ideal conditions, it is difficult to say, but our toad patrols have so far rescued over 450 newts and 365 toads. There were some casualties (50 newts and 40 toads) but far fewer than had there been no patrol. There may be more to come when the weather warms up again but our thanks to all who have been helping our little amphibian friends across the road.

Winter is generally a quiet time for the Group as nature goes into hibernation. But it has been a good opportunity for the Tree Working Group to manage the invasive plants that thrived in last year's damp conditions. Both at the wildflower area by the pavilion and on our wild hedge plantings, we have cut back the brambles and other plants that threaten to smother our good work. Thanks again to all who have helped with this.

It will be month or two before we start our butterfly count but some brave souls have already woken up with the warmer days - notably, bright yellow Brimstone butterflies out feeding on the nectar-bearing flowers in our gardens and hedgerows.

It is also of course the time of year when seed and plant catalogues pop into our mail boxes. Where possible, I would encourage you to buy those that have the little bee icon that marks out those plants that are insect friendly. This will still leave you with plenty of choice and will support insect populations that had a pretty tough time last year.

Finally, with birds industriously nest-building, it's good to keep the bird feeders topped-up to help the parents successfully rear their young. But do keep your feeders regularly disinfected. Disease has ravaged many species, especially our finches. Bird feeders are a critical source of food for many birds, even in the spring, but they are high risk for spreading disease.

Jonathan Iremonger

## River Meon Designated for Conservation Funding

Towards the end of 2024, Natural England designated the River Meon (and the River Test) as a compensatory Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to mitigate potential impacts to the River Itchen SAC due to water extraction during times of drought.

Usually, this derogation is used for things like national infrastructure projects. For example, a railway is being built, and before it can cross an SAC wetland, additional land is purchased, the wetland expanded, given over to a Wildlife Trust (or similar) to look after for a sufficiently long period of time (e.g. 100 years), and signed off by Natural England as “secured”. Only then can harm be allowed to occur.



In this case, problems on the Itchen would arise if Southern Water were forced to apply for a “drought order” to continue abstracting from the Itchen beyond the point of ecological harm in order to maintain public water supplies. This is a novel problem because nobody can accurately predict a drought, nor create a “new” chalk stream. Instead, the Environment Agency drew up an agreement under Section 20 of the Water Resources Act which forces Southern Water to undertake both pre-emptive mitigation habitat improvements for the sections of the Lower Itchen and Candover Brook that could be harmed by drought abstraction, and compensation habitat improvements in sections of nearby analogous chalk

streams that would not be impacted by the it i.e. the River Meon. In other words, as well as funding improvements on the Itchen, Southern Water must fund the ecological upgrading of sections of the River Meon (and the River Test) to a quality analogous of the Lower Itchen SAC.

This is obviously an enormous challenge, requiring many significant projects, and is essentially a race against time but one where we don't know if and when a drought will occur. The Environment Agency is leading on mitigation within the impacted areas, whereas Wessex Rivers Trust was asked to lead on compensation habitat and fish passage, and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust was asked to lead on crayfish and damselfly compensation. The Meon Valley Partnership (which includes the SDNPA) will also be involved. Input will also be requested from the Parish Council. What does this mean for East Meon?

Our Local Planning Authority (SDNPA) needs to ensure that the new 'SAC' status of the River Meon is considered in its Local Plan Review. East Meon is in the River Meon catchment area, so the SAC status could potentially impact development. There may be a new Policy to this end in the reviewed South Downs Local Plan

There may be some projects to improve/restore the river in our Parish. This is being worked on right now; more details will be forthcoming in future months.

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Steve Ridgeon Jan  
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## **Forest School at East Meon School**

The notion of Forest School has grown in popularity over the last decade and is often heard mentioned in the media over recent years. It is a child-centred approach to working outside in the natural environment and offers a long-term program that encourages play, exploration and supported risk taking. It encourages children to enjoy and connect with the natural world, at a time when many of them spend increasing amounts of time inside and on screens. It provides opportunities for children to develop independence, confidence, resilience, self-esteem and their own ability to risk assess activities.

At East Meon School, we felt that Forest School would be an ideal addition to our curriculum as we have extensive grounds and had identified the need to help our children develop their independence and resilience skills. In an increasingly busy school schedule, Forest School allows children time to lead their own learning and development, exploring physically and creatively in the natural environment. We also felt that the children would benefit from the wellbeing elements of having time outside and appreciating nature as well as opportunities to develop skills away from the classroom academics.

We set about creating our provision. This involved allocating an area of the school site and developing it to become our Forest School area. The addition of a fantastic shelter paid for by our Friends of East Meon group has created an extremely useable and versatile area which we can access all year round. Forest School must be led by a qualified Forest School Leader so we also allocated time and funding to enable Mrs Perkins to complete the training which takes about a year.

We are delighted that this year has seen the full roll out of our Forest School programme to the whole school. All the year groups are allocated a half term where they attend Forest School for a full afternoon each week. This is mapped out so that every child will get to experience each of the different seasons (and the opportunities these provide) over the course of their 7 years at the school.



In the sessions, we provide opportunities for children to challenge themselves and develop their own risk management skills through physical play and adventurous skills such as fire lighting and tool work. On a child-led level, they can access digging, the mud kitchen, bug hunting and crafting every week. On top of this, they have opportunities to firelight, cook on fire, use tools to develop practical skills like drilling, hammering, sawing and whittling or carving with support. Each session also includes opportunities to discuss how our Forest School area is changing through the seasons and developing their knowledge of birds, plants and creatures that we can see or hear. A large focus is placed on respecting the natural environment and what we can do to support it.

As you can see from the photographs, the children thoroughly enjoy their time out in the Forest School. We have seen many successes and children persevering when something is not going to plan. It has been a delight to watch children, who perhaps find academic learning more challenging, having the opportunity to be the successful one who can then go around helping others!

We are always on the look out for new resources for the Forest School, such as log stumps and tree offcuts suitable for crafting or firewood etc. If you are interested in finding out more about Forest School at East Meon School or have any resources you think we could make use of then please contact Mrs Perkins on [stephaniep@eastmeonprimary.co.uk](mailto:stephaniep@eastmeonprimary.co.uk)



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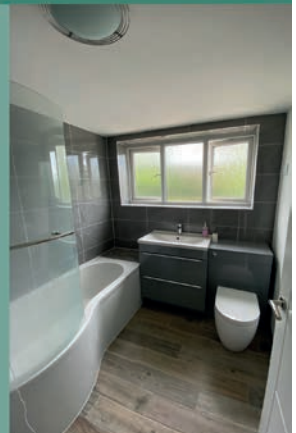
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## East Meon School World Book Day

East Meon School celebrated world book day on the 7th of March 2025. The School Council (made up of children from every year group) organised the day and held a range of different activities for the whole school to enjoy including:

- Dressing up
- Book swap
- FEMS book sale (they raised £78.65 for our school)
- Gruffalo trail
- Story time
- Making bookmarks

The Gruffalo trail was a fun activity for the whole school ranging from Reception children to Years 5 and 6. The children had to follow clues which were linked to different books and solve some riddles.

To dress up, the School Council asked the children to donate animal food for the charity RSPCA. We are very thankful for all the donations we received. Children came wearing all sorts of different costumes from their favourite books.

Books are very important to the teachers and children of East Meon School as they give the children the opportunity to learn and have fun at the same time. The children could buy a book for 50p or £1 at a book sale held in the Lodge. This was a fun activity for all the children. The money went to FEMS (the school PTA) and they are amazed of the amount of money they have raised – this will be used to buy new things for the school.

The children brought in an amazing amount of books they didn't want anymore or had read multiple times for the book swap. The book swap was held in the hall where the books were laid out and the children could come and chose a book for free.

We are excited to see what the future of the school year holds.

By Elliott and Gracie (Year 5 Pupils)

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## **EAST MEON MOVIOLA**

### Spring Films for your Enjoyment!

#### **Friday 4th April - CONCLAVE** (Cert I2A, 120 mins)

A multi-award-winning film, based on Robert Harris' acclaimed novel, telling a tale of intrigue in the Vatican. Life imitating art? BAFTA 2025 Best Actor winner, Ralph Fiennes heads an outstanding ensemble cast in this gripping papal election drama.

*NB the change of date from the previous MM edition*

#### **Friday 25th April - PADDINGTON IN PERU** (Cert PG, 106 mins)

Ever wanted to go to Darkest Peru? Or get sticky with marmalade? Now's your chance! Our favourite bear returns to Peru to see his beloved Aunt Lucy. With the Brown family and Mrs Bird in tow, a thrilling adventure ensues when a mysterious disappearance plunges them into an unexpected journey from the Amazon rainforest to the mountain peaks of Peru.

\*\*\*\*\*

As usual, the films will be in East Meon Village Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets remain at £6.50 each, and, as well as the big screen and superb quality sound, there's the bar, ice creams, excellent company and fascinating films.

Buy your tickets in advance at East Meon Village Stores, online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/east-meon-cinema](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/east-meon-cinema) or you can reserve tickets for collection and payment on the night by emailing [eastmeonmoviola@outlook.com](mailto:eastmeonmoviola@outlook.com). Alternatively, turn up on the night and buy on the door (subject to availability).

If you would like to be kept up to date with what's coming up, join our mailing list. Email Lucy or Caroline at the email above.

## **STOP PRESS! EXTRA, EXTRA!**

#### **Thursday 8th May - VE DAY: FOREVER IN THEIR DEBT**

East Meon Cinema and East Meon Parish Council would love you to join them for the evening to mark VE Day 80. VE Day: Forever in Their Debt tells the stories of those who experienced the end of the war in all its many forms and is richly illustrated with archive footage including colour film showing the celebrations in London.

Tickets are free, the doors and pay bar open at 7.30pm, the film starts at 8pm, followed by the lighting of the beacon on Park Hill at 9.30pm. If you feel like it, don your 1940s outfits and get into the spirit.

Looking forward to seeing you - The East Meon Moviola Team



### **Save the Date!**

Thursday 8 May 2025

Come and join us in celebrating VE Day 80 in East Meon Village Hall.

Entry is FREE

Paying bar opens at 7:30 pm and will remain open until 9.30pm. Ice creams will be available.

Film- VE Day: Forever in Their Debt - begins at 8.00 pm and runs for just less than one hour.

The beacon will be lit on Park Hill at 9:30pm

1940s dress is encouraged but absolutely not necessary!

Brought to you by East Meon Parish Council and Moviola

## West Meon Surgery

With effect from 30 April 2025 Dr James Botham is retiring from the practice. We have a book of memories in the reception at the surgery if you wish to write James a message, or you can email or write to us and we will add your message on your behalf. Dr Emma Harris and the team at West Meon Surgery will continue to look after you until a new doctor is appointed.

At the beginning of 2025 we launched our Patient Participation Group (PPG) with patients who expressed an interest in taking part in this group selected at random – not from a hat but from a disposable nursing bowl! This group will be helping us formulate ideas for new ways of working or providing services to patients.

We would therefore like to discuss any questions raised by readers of Meon Matters at our next PPG meeting on 25 April 2025. Please send questions to [hiowicb-hsi@westmeonsurgery@nhs.net](mailto:hiowicb-hsi@westmeonsurgery@nhs.net). Where appropriate, we will share our response in the following edition.

In the meantime, the team at West Meon Surgery wish you a very Happy Easter.

Jane May, Practice Manager

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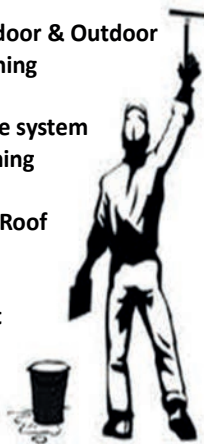
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## Long Service Awards for Much Loved East Meon Men

On Saturday 14th September we were delighted that Malcolm and Stephen Painter were presented with Long Service awards at the Romsey Agricultural and Horse Show Society Annual Show. The presentation took part in the main ring and the commentator had the following to say during the presentation to these wonderful, hardworking and much loved men of the parish of East Meon: Malcolm was brought up in the New Forest. He started his farming career with the Crosthwaite-Eyre and Jewell families, often showing Guernsey cattle and Wiltshire Horn sheep across the country. He and his family moved in 1974 to Wilson Atkinson Farms at Lower Farm in East Meon complete with his New Forest pony Rufus and beloved sheep dogs, Andy and Bess. His knowledge of cattle, sheep and all things farming together with his love of sheepdog trialling and Exmoor ponies, make him an invaluable member of the farming community. Never really retiring, he still lives in East Meon with Pat, his wife of 57 years, surrounded by the farm and countryside he loves.

Stephen, his son, was brought up in East Meon. He went to Sparsholt College and cut his teeth at Hampshire Farms before he followed in his father's footsteps and joined Wilson Atkinson Farms at Lower Farm in 1994. Although having all the skills needed on a mixed farm, Stephen's passion lies with all things mechanical and technical. He is an extremely good ploughman and an excellent fencer and plumber too.



Both of them continue to give unrivalled input to the success of the farm in the Meon Valley. The Atkinson family are extremely grateful for all the hard work and dedication that they have shown over so many years and long may it continue.





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## Mediterranean Roast Lamb

Serves 6

### Ingredients

1.4kg leg of lamb  
3 tablespoons of olive oil  
A few sprigs of tarragon and rosemary  
200g of small shallots, peeled  
900g of small new potatoes  
150ml of double cream  
450g of sliced mixed peppers  
Salt n Pepper

Pre heat the oven 200c/gas6

1. Place lamb in a large oven proof dish, season, add the oil and herbs. Roast for 45mins.
2. Blanch the potatoes and shallots for 5mins then drain.
3. Add to the lamb and coat with the juices, cook for 35mins more.
4. Remove from the oven and add the cream and peppers to the dish.
5. Turn down oven to 150c/gas2 and cook for 20-25mins, until the potatoes are brown
6. Remove lamb to carve, and place the dish on the table for people to help themselves to the peppers and potatoes sitting in the delicious sauce. Add some fresh vegetables of your choice to serve with it.

## Spicy leg of lamb

Serves 6

### Ingredients

Small leg of lamb 1.4kg approx  
2 cloves crushed garlic  
3 tablespoons dry English mustard  
1 teaspoon each of chopped rosemary/thyme/mint  
1 small shallot, finely chopped  
Small glass of white wine  
85 grams/3oz melted butter  
2 cups of fine white breadcrumbs  
250g of button mushrooms  
Salt n pepper

### Cooking

1. Roast the lamb for 10 mins on 210c fan/230c/gas 8 (no butter or oil) then turn the oven down to 160c fan/180c/gas 4 for an hour, leave to cool.
2. Mix the mustard, garlic, herbs, S n P and shallot , and make into a paste with the wine. Drip the melted the butter into the paste.
3. Spread thickly all over the lamb and pat on the breadcrumbs firmly.
4. Dribble the juices from the joint over the coating.
5. Tuck button mushrooms under the joint and roast till a good colour.

Serve with fresh vegetables and crispy diced potato with garlic and rosemary.

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