

EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH MAGAZINE



Our Parish Council and Community website has been relaunched at a new location <https://eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk/>

We have aimed to provide local information and act as a hub with links to the services that residents will find useful together with, amongst others, our Parish Magazine, Aerial Photos of our parishes to view and download and a link to the Village Hall online booking system where you can check availability and enter a provisional booking for yourself.

Links to services include:

- Planning Applications
- Recycling & Waste Collection – check your next collection day
- East Herts Report an Issue - submit issues to the relevant local authority, such as potholes, missed bin collections and more
- Roadworks and Road Maintenance - The Causeway one.network website informs you of all current and upcoming planned roadwork
- Gilston Area Information Hub - A hub for residents and businesses to see what construction works are due to be undertaken in the development of the Gilston Area as well as providing a means to report any estates management issues.
- Harlow and Gilston Garden Town information
- The Gilston Estate – Places for People’s website detailing the development planning stages
- Location of the 4 defibrillators supplied by your Parish Council

If you have an activity or event you would like to offer to Eastwick and Gilston residents you can email your text to clerk@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk to have it published on the News page

Have a look at our new website and let Christine Law our Parish Clerk know if you have any suggestions for additional information links or other improvements at clerk@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk

JANUARY 2026

GILSTON AND EASTWICK VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



See below a calendar of all clubs and classes that take place at our hall.
For more information about booking the hall go to www.eastwickgilston.org.uk

MONDAY			
	Parish Council	Parish Clerk – Christine Law 01279 411646 Meet on the 2 nd Monday of January, March, May, July, September & November	8.00pm – 10.00pm
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY	Phonics Fox	Amy Abblitt – amy@thePhonicsFox.com	9.30am – 11.30am
		Hall Cleaning	1.00pm – 3.00pm
THURSDAY	Baby Massage	Elena Luck	9.30am – 2.30pm
	Irish Dancing	Amanda Hennigan – 07713974077 For More Information	6.30pm – 8.30pm
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Chair: Janine Bryant

Vice Chair: Trevor Brown

Treasurer: Linda Harvey

Bookings Officer: Erin Reilly 07710271611

Holding Trustee: Keith Harvey & Mary Jackson

Booking enquiries: gevillagehall@gmail.com for all booking enquiries or go to the Village Hall new web site:

hallbookingonline.com/gilstoneastwick to see if the date you require is free and make a provisional booking.

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USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

EASTWICK & GILSTON PARISH COMMUNITY WEB SITE: eastwickandgilston.org.uk

www.gilston.info

gilston@meeting-place.uk

HUNSDON EASTWICK & GILSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP WEBSITE: hegnp.org.uk - For all regular updates and information from the group you can subscribe to the mailing list at this link: <https://tinyletter.com/gilston>.

EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL: <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk>. Telephone 01279 655261

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk>. Telephone 030012234040

FLY TIPPING

Report all Fly Tipping to East Herts Council on 01279 655261 or enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk, eastherts.gov.uk/fly-tipping. In an emergency situation contact the Police on 999.

HIGH WYCH POST OFFICE

Located at the rear of High Wych Memorial Hall. Open **Mondays** 9.30am – 12.30pm .
Wednesdays 1.00pm – 3.15pm. **Thursdays** 9.30am – 12.30pm.

KNOW YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH COUNCIL



CHAIRMAN

MARK ORSON
Neighbourhood Planning Group
Footpaths Officer



VICE CHAIR

JANINE BRYANT
Neighbourhood Planning Group



LINDA HARVEY
Highways
Village Hall Committee



WERNER MARX



JAMES BEAZLEY



PARISH CLERK
CHRISTINE LAW
01279 411646

clerk@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk



JOHN DUNLOP
EAST HERTS DISTRICT
COUNCILLOR



ERIC BUCKMASTER
HERTFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCILLOR

CONTACT DETAILS - Email Addresses:

MARK ORSON - cllr.m.orson@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk
JANINE BRYANT - cllr.j.bryant@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk
LINDA HARVEY - cllr.l.harvey@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk
WERNER MARX - cllr.w.marx@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk
JAMES BEAZLEY - cllr.j.beazley@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk
ERIC BUCKMASTR - eric.buckmaster@hertfordshire.gov.uk
JOHN DUNLOP - john.dunlop@eastherts.gov.uk

EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING

NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON
MONDAY 12th January 2026 – 8.00PM

VILLAGE HALL, PYE CORNER

All residents are most welcome to attend our council meetings.

CHRISTINE LAW - PARISH CLERK
01279 411646 clerk@eastwickandgilstonparish.gov.uk

WE STILL HAVE TWO VACANCIES TO BE FILLED FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS IF YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH CLERK OR ONE OF OUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

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PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2026

All Parish Council Meeting are held in Gilston and Eastwick Village Hall at 8.00pm

- Monday 12th January Full Business Council Meeting
- Monday 9th March – Annual Parish Meeting (this is a meeting of the electorate and not a Parish Council meeting). This is followed by the Full Business Council Meeting
- Monday 11th May – Annual Meeting of the Council – followed by the Parish council Full Business Meeting.
- Monday 13th July – Full Business Council Meeting
- Monday 14th September – Full Business Council Meeting
- Monday 9th November – Full Business Council Meeting

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The Parish Council Business Meeting of Monday 10th November 2025. Village Hall, Pye Corner, Gilston 8.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr’s Beazley, Bryant, Marx, Orson, Cllr Eric Buckmaster (CC), Cllr John Dunlop (DC), 1 member of the public. Christine Law (Clerk) in attendance.
Cllr Buckmaster and Cllr Dunlop’s reports be found on the web site.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a) No questions were raised.

47) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a. None.

48) RECEIVE COUNCILLOR’S DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. None.

49) MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

- a. The minutes of 15th September 2025 meeting were proposed by Cllr Marx and seconded by Cllr Bryant.

Signed by Cllr Orson as a true record.

50) ACCOUNTS

- a. Clerks report to the Council of accounts summary (appendix 1).
 - b. The proposed Parish Council Budget for 2026-2027 was discussed and agreed.
- a-b proposed by Cllr Marx and seconded by Cllr Beazley.

51) PLANNING AND ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS

- a. Grassland, Pye Corner, Gilston – 3/23/1110/FUL – Retrospective change of use of buildings A (Class e), B (class B8), c (Class B8), D (Class B8), E (Class B8) and F (Class E). Awaiting decision.
- b. X/25/0215/CND – Discharge condition 6 (Strategic Landscape Masterplan) attached to 3/19/1045/OUT – Land North of the Stort Valley and the A414 Gilston, Herts. Awaiting decision.
- c. The Old Rectory, Gilston Lane, Gilston – 3/25/1522/FUL – Conversion of and alterations to existing detached garage to form 1 x 2-bed maisonette to first floor with associated works including creation of residential curtilage and bin/cycle store (retrospective) Awaiting decision.
- d. 4 Vine Grove, Pye Corner, Gilston – 3/25/1508/HH – Part two storey and part single storey rear extension, insertion of a new first floor side window. Awaiting decision.

52) PARISH PATHS

Cllr Orson reported

- a. Nicholas Maddex our Access Project Officer for HCC Countryside and Rights of Way has provided the following updates:
Eastwick Footpath 16 - the new waymark post where the recently cleared path emerges from the spinney is still in place and clearly visible. However, the bench is still in its old location. Although it is accessible from the new route, It would be advisable if Knight Frank could arrange to have it moved as offered, to discourage walkers from straying from this route. [Requested via gilston@meeting-place.uk copy to Knight Frank]
Eastwick Footpath 22 and Bridleway 22 have been inspected, following complaints that they needed mowing again.
 - i. Footpath 22 had regrown strongly, as my contractor had had difficulty in cutting it in the spring, due to the pylon works. I have therefore had it recut.
 - ii. Bridleway 2 has not regrown so badly, although there are a few nettles at the south end, so I have not ordered any more works yet. If the warm weather continues, I may need to reconsider this
- b. Maintenance of non-tenanted and uncultivated land. There is a general problem with uncultivated PFP land growing a good crop of thistles and generally left to deteriorate. Clouds of thistle down blown across Pye Corner / Gilston Lane (and no doubt other areas) from around early July to mid-August. Reported to gilston@meeting-place.uk copy to Knight Frank and progress chased. No response so far. We are told that this issue was on the agenda for a meeting with Knight Frank held on 5 November, however, Knight Frank work to their client's instructions and it will need PFP's agreement and funding to arrange maintenance of non-tenanted and uncultivated land.
- c. Footpath Map by Diary Cottages, Gilston Lane needs some repair. Cllr Harvey knows someone that she will contact about its repair.

53) COMMUNITY FORUM/ NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- a. Cllr Bryant reported: **EHC Community Forum and Neighbourhood Development**

EHC Gilston Area Community Forum held 14th October 2025

Affinity Water gave an informative presentation explaining their Water Resources Management Plan, which sets out how they intend to maintain the balance between water supply and demand for a minimum 25 years– current plan up to 2075.

Places for People also gave a brief presentation, key points:

- Strategic Landscape Master Plan was submitted to EHDC earlier this year. Awaiting decision.
- Village 1 Masterplan about to be submitted
- Due to the need to create the Strategic Transport Corridor (STC) route from Village 1 to Village 7, masterplanning work on Villages 5 & 6 has begun – more information on this to follow.
- Central Stort Crossing enabling works started in March. Main contractor about to be appointed with works scheduled to start on site early in the new year.
- If anybody would like to get involved with the masterplanning process, please email gilston@meeting-place.uk and we will be in touch nearer the time with further details.

No one from **Taylor Wimpey** attended.

Past presentations available at the East Herts Gilston Area Community Forum webpage
<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>.

We urge residents to attend these forums and, if possible, submit questions, via email, at least 10 days before to community.forum@eastherts.gov.uk

You can also ask for specific topics you want to learn more about to be included in future meetings.

Neighbourhood Development

Judicial Review for the two Gilston outline applications is still on-going with a further appeal having been submitted.

Village 1 Places for People have submitted and had approved 3/25/1615/NMA

“Implementation Works” comprise the marking out of a section of the non-reserved access to the Gilston Park Estate site from the A414 at Village 1 including associated tree/vegetation removal, site clearance and remaining topsoil strip. The extent of the area to be marked out is shown on plan VD21466-VEC HGN-C1A-SK-CH-0159 P03 (the “Implementation Site”).

Expect to see some activity north of the Eastwick roundabout soon.

Villages 5 & 6 Masterplanning Places for People **anticipate community engagement** will start end 2025 / early 2026

Watch out for invitations to become involved.

The **Neighbourhood Planning Group** held a useful meeting with our excellent planning consultants, Urban Silence Ltd (Martina Juvara) and Changing Cities (Joanna Chambers) to review the group’s priorities for the coming year.

This has been set out in letter format, but has not yet been finalised.

Gilston Stakeholder Liaison Group

These meetings are between the parish councils of Eastwick & Gilston and Hunsdon, Places for People, PfP, and East Herts Council.

We finally have a meeting scheduled for late November. Agenda not available yet.

Estate Management – Reminder

Places for People’s **gilston.info** website demonstrated at the February Community Forum

The website has 3 headings:

Current Works – a map of current and planned works in the Gilston Area.

Report an Issue – a map where any issues, eg tree fallen across a RoW, fly tipping, etc., can be reported

News – construction works and developments for the Gilston Area.

Roadworks update.

Redricks Lane has been closed for sometime, due to additional / upgraded electrical supply for the development (Electricity Network Company Ltd).

For information on current and upcoming roadworks go to [Causeway one.network](https://one.network)

<https://one.network/uk/hertfordshire>

Places for People gilstonparkestate website NEWS page

<https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/news/enabling-works-for-gilston-underway/>

Nothing new on roads since 20th December 2024

Below is a reminder of what the Neighbourhood Planning Group is (hegnp.org.uk)

The Hunsdon, Eastwick, and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group (HEGNPG) plays a crucial role in shaping and overseeing the Gilston Area development, to ensure it aligns with community values and sustainable development principles. After successfully completing the award winning Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP), the HEGNPG continues to jointly represent the two directly affected Parish Councils of Hunsdon and Eastwick & Gilston. It seeks to coordinate engagement with developers, Places for People and Taylor Wimpey, and local authorities, especially East Herts Council.

The HEGNPG is involved in reviewing planning applications and master plans for the proposed villages, ensuring they meet the expectations of Local Plan policy and the GANP. Our primary goals are to advocate for high standards in urban design, proper and timely infrastructure, environmental responsibility and community-focused planning.

We believe we have influenced the quality of green space and community land, promoted biodiversity and landscape integration, and continue to press for better interface with the existing communities, sustainable transport solutions, and “village master planning” principles where each village within the development retains distinct features. Additionally, we will actively monitor the agreements related to infrastructure, affordable housing, and the long-term governance of community assets.

In summary, the HEGNPG acts as a voice for residents, holding developers accountable to promises for the delivery of a sustainable, high-quality development that respects both local heritage and environmental goals. Through this active oversight, we aim to be the voice of the two directly affected Parish Councils and so keep the development aligned with the community’s hopes and aspirations and ensure it remains adaptable to future needs.

Anyone who wishes to get involved, please contact us or go to the hegnp.org.uk contact page

Useful websites:

Village 1 and Strategic Landscape Master Plan

<https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/get-involved/>

Section 106 docs Villages 1 - 6

<https://publicaccess.eastherts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PRSRKCGL00V00>

Village 7

<https://www.village7.co.uk>

Section 106 docs Villages 7

<https://publicaccess.eastherts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PZKRYCGL05I00>

East Herts Community Forums

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>

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<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>

54) HIGHWAYS

a. Cllr Harvey reported:

1. The roads through and by our villages have been adversely affected by the works to Harlow roads for some time. Congestion routinely occurs approaching the roundabout from the A414 on all sides of the roundabout. It has been said that these will complete by the end of Autumn. Work to maintain the road bridge on the A414 was completed smoothly and with little interruption to the flow of traffic.

2. Access through Redricks Lane is blocked probably until the end of November whilst pylon works are pursued as part of preparation for the new development.

3. Further works around the approach to Harlow are likely in the new year.

4. Currently major works on the Eastwick Hall Lane from Eastwick to the farm are being undertaken. Some improvements to drainage are being made.

5. It remains important for locals to report potholes and road problems via the Herts County Council Website – www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

Their website states:

Timescales for road repairs.

Emergency road repair dealt within 2-4 hours.

Permanent pothole repair – within 1-4 weeks if the pothole meets intervention levels.

Street lighting defects – repaired within 4 weeks if the fault is not on an A, B, or C road.

None -emergency works – logged and assessed to be included in regular maintenance works, if possible. We try to group these together to be efficient as possible.

If there is severe weather there may be a delay in these time scales.

6. There is now an East Herts App which makes finding appropriate departments easier.

b. New Gilston Lane Sign (Village entry sign). Cllr Bryant is having problems with the application as planning are not happy with aspects of the application.

c. Trees in central reservation -Roseley Cottages, Eastwick. The Clerk informed the meeting that she has been in contact with Clarion Housing and they have instructed their Arborist to carry out maintenance work on some of the trees, which has been done. Clerk to write and

thank them for their help in this matter and also ask them when are the drains going to be looked at.

55) NEW HOMES BONUS/ INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

- a. Web site – Cllr Orson reported that updating of the new web site is progressing and that a Zoom meeting will be scheduled for Councillors to review content before it is launched to residents.
- b. Daffodil Bulbs – Cllr Bryant requested sponsorship for the supply of spring bulbs for planting by volunteers within our villages. A budget of £1,000.00 was proposed by Cllr Bryant and seconded by Cllr Beazley.

56) VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- a. The hall has benefited by several events this last period.
 - 1 The projector has been adjusted, and it is now available for use.
 2. The Hive has been set to work- though only recently. This at least means it will not be a cold winter and hopefully once the programs are set up there will be a reduction in electricity costs.
 - 3 . At our last meeting we were fortunate enough to gain two new committee members and hope in the future to fill some of the administrative posts.
 4. We have a new handyman volunteer, Blair Roxburgh, from Eastwick, has begun to bring a new freshness to the paint work and ceiling tiles and who has constructed our new reserved parking signs for residents. He has also installed a new key box which makes opening the hall a little easier and secure. Anyone who has a key does not need to use it. He will continue to make improvements through the winter- in the first instance repainting the lobby. We are most grateful for his help.
 5. We have bookings through to Christmas and hope to restart Chair Pilates soon.
 6. The hall using the East Herts Arts Grant was able to provide an evening of an “Introduction to Jewellery making. We are most grateful to Claire and Erin Reilly for running this event which was very well attended.
 - 7 . Erin has the position of village hall manager for a 6-month trial period and will continue to manage Hall bookings.
 - 8 . Hall bookings will become much easier for everyone once the new website for the parish council has been established. Instructions are clear and available on the site. Erin will have access to the bank account and can more easily manage payments.
 - 9 The hall - Gilston and Eastwick has a Facebook page and its following has increased.

57) CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Cllr Eric Buckmaster report is attached to these minutes.
- b. Cllr John Dunlop report is attached to these minutes
These reports are not published in the Parish Magazine but can be found with the minutes on the Parish web site.
- c. Protect Our Pubs – an email has been received from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) with concern for the future of our local Hertfordshire pubs, many of which are facing an unprecedented onslaught of well-documented economic and social pressures, sometimes leading to closure.
To help, a number of Hertfordshire Parish and Town Councils have already achieved Asset of Community Value (ACV) status for their pubs – almost 40 awards are currently in place. The status requires the current pub owner to inform the District/Borough Council should they decide to sell the pub and they, in turn, are required to notify the ACV applicants – triggering a moratorium period during which the community might signal an attempt to raise funds to finance a purchase. We have two pubs within our villages that have been closed The Lion in Eastwick and The Dusty Miller in Gilston that both belong to McMullen Brewery Cllr Beazley said that he would contact them to see when they may be reopening.

58) ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

a. None.

59) ITEMS COUNCILLORS WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA.

a. None.

60) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Meeting for 2026

- a. 12th January 2026 – Council Meeting
- 9th March – Annual Parish Meeting – Followed by the Parish Council Business Meeting
- 11th May – Annual Meeting of the Council – Followed by the Parish Council Business Meeting
- 13th July – Parish Council Business Meeting
- 14th September – Parish Council Business Meeting
- 9th November – Parish Council Business Meeting

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Cllr Buckmaster and Cllr Dunlop reports can be found of the Parish Web site.

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2023 Aerial Photographs

In 2023 Aerial Photographs were taken of our lovely parish. These photographs can be viewed in the Photo Gallery on the website.

You can access the Photo Gallery by going to <http://www.eastwickandgilston.org.uk/gallery.php?id=24> or by scanning the QR code below.

In the Photo Gallery you will see that there are different galleries for different areas of the parish. We are working on a way to enable people to easily download the photographs for personal use and will hopefully have more information to share on this soon.



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FAULTY ROAD SURFACE



To help us keep Hertfordshire’s roads up to scratch we need YOU to let us know when things are not right! So whether it’s a pothole, pavement problem, faulty streetlight, icy road or any other highway fault, go to: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/highwayfault or call: 01432 261800 or General Enquiries 0300 123 4040 – Hertfordshire Highways Fault line.

JIMMY'S
Baby & Toddler Group

Every Thursday morning
From 9.30am to 11.30am
at High Wych Memorial Hall
(term time only)

Healthy snacks will be provided

£2 per session, per family
For childminders: £2 per child

Scan the code above to pay securely online

RESTARTS THURSDAY 8TH JANUARY 2026



Benefice of High Wych and Gilston with Eastwick

Church website: stjameshighwych.org.uk

Facebook: Gilston & Eastwick church's

For all recorded church services go to the Facebook page above.

JANUARY SERVICES 2026

4 th January	2 nd Sunday of Christmas	8.00am	BCP Holy Communion	St James, High Wych
	Epiphany	9.30am	Breakfast followed by Family Service at 10.00am	St James, High Wych
11 th January	Baptism of Christ	9.30am	Holy Communion	St James, High Wych
	1 st Sunday of Epiphany	11.15am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Gilston
18 th January	2 nd Sunday of Epiphany	9.30am	Holy Communion	St James, High Wych
		3.00pm	Messy Church	High Wych Memorial Hall
25 th January	3 rd Sunday of Epiphany	9.30am	Holy Communion	St James, High Wych
	Conversion of Paul	11.15am	Family Service	St Botolph's, Eastwick

Benefice churches will be open for private prayer. St James, open every day 9.00am to 4.00pm. An information notice is displayed outside the church. St Mary's open every day 8.00am to 4.00pm and for advice on opening of St. Botolph's for private prayer, please contact Rev. Alison Jackson.

PRIEST IN CHARGE: Rev'd Alison Jackson

revajacksonhwge@outlook.com

1 Dovedale, High Wych, Sawbridgeworth CM21 0DT

01279 790145

07833 667707

READER: Judith Denton, Path Cottage, High Wych Lane, CM21 0JP

01279 723714

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Cath Sharples

01279 600996

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA)

01727 818107

HIGH WYCH PARISH

LAY LEADER OF WORSHIP: Jan Bellingham

01279 724247

CHURCH WARDENS:

Janet Bellingham

01279 724247

Sam Clark

07717542524

GILSTON WITH EASTWICK PARISH

CHURCH WARDENS:

Michael Shaw

01279 726792

We have a vacancy for a Church Warden

LAY LEADER OF WORSHIP / MISSION ENABLER:

Rosemary Davis

01279 419763

PCC SECRETARY:

Mrs Christine Law

01279 411646

PCC TREASURER:

Werner Marx

marxwerner2@gmail.com

January Letter



Joy in your every day

Happy New Year my friends

Over Advent (Dec 1st to 24th Dec) we did an Advent Study Course called ‘Joy to the World’. We looked at the many things that bring us **JOY** during the approach to Christmas. We also acknowledged that for many, Christmas can be difficult for so many different reasons.

As Christians, we are called to have **faith, hope, love with joy** as we move through our time in this world. **Faith** in the story of Christmas and also, as promised, faith in all the promises that God has made to us through the Bible and through the life and death of Jesus Christ. We are called to believe that Jesus died for us so that our sins will be forgiven and we will have eternal life, a life after this life that we see, where we will be with God and will be his people.

We are called to **Hope** that the promises of Jesus are true and that God’s plan includes us all. We are to understand that each day can be filled with **Hope** as each day is a new day and a gift from God.

We are called to **love** each other and all those that Jesus loves, which is everyone we meet, and also all those that we care for. **Love** does not necessarily mean romantic love, but the love that cares for all, as our hearts grow bigger we find that we have a place for all those we are called to serve and be with and also all those in need across the world, who are our brothers and sisters – even if we have never met them.

And **JOY** – well, I think we have to make a conscious effort to find **JOY** in our every day.

Maybe as we move through this New Year of 2026 that is our question we will need to keep asking ourselves.

What brings me Joy?

Is it in the simple things of life, maybe that walk?, a particular person?, eating boiled eggs? A sunset? A sunrise? The different seasons we experience? Etc.

I have made a New Year’s promise to myself that I will search out and see the **Joy** in every day and I will not let someone else, or a difficult situation steal my **Joy**.

Now I know that I cannot do this on my own. Life will throw me difficult things as it will you, but I am hoping to hold on to this Year’s promise.....

To see Joy in my every day

And the way I can do this?

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

With the help of God.

This is going to be our Benefice Bible verse for this year – you will find it on magnets again at the back of church that you can put onto your fridge and learn it, hold onto it and call God into all those difficult situations you will face and hold on to this simple sentence to give you strength.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

This January we will be running the Alpha Course again, which is an opportunity for people to come together, over an initial period of 6 weeks, to learn more about, ‘Who Jesus is’ and to be able to ask all those niggling questions about faith and God they would like to. It is a chance to make new friends, to journey with people who have similar questions to yourself, and we always try to have fun together along the way.

Dates for your diary:-

21st Jan, 28th Jan, 4th Feb, 18th Feb, 25th Feb, 4th March

They all take place in our house, The Rectory, 1 Dovedale, High Wych, CM21 0DT.

Just drop me an e-mail: revajacksonhwge@outlook.com or ring me on:0783 366 7707 if you would like to come.

If you do you will bring me great **JOY** as we explore the Story of God and the story of Us together.

As you read this I wish you a Merry Christmas and a **JOY** filled New Year. May God be with you in that whisper in your ear, may he bless you and protect you and may you always find those moments of **JOY** in your every day.

Your Priest

Alison

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THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk



One of the pleasures of taking a stroll round any of the towns and villages within the Hundred Parishes is enjoying the variety of gardens which enhance the settings of homes. They are thriving testaments to those within these communities whose horticultural skills add to the local sense of pride.

Last October the RHS published its State of Gardening Report which highlighted the many reasons why gardens are so important. Within the UK they cover almost a million hectares, more than three times the area of National Nature Reserves. Many local gardens include a variety of trees as well as an increasing range of flowering plants, some from other parts of the world so that the flowering season is extended. This provides not just winter and spring colour but also pollen and nectar for any pollinating insects that are active at that time. Well-vegetated gardens are havens for other forms of wildlife too including hedgehogs and many common birds, especially if supplementary food and nesting sites are provided.

Last spring the Essex Wildlife Trust asked residents to complete records of house sparrows visiting their gardens as these once common birds are now in serious decline. The reasons for the decline of urban populations include the reduction of invertebrate food such as caterpillars, which are essential for rearing nestlings, and a shortage of suitable nesting sites in modern houses. 501 gardens were surveyed and the information gathered suggested that older properties were more likely to provide nesting sites for these birds who also favoured gardens with a pond. By growing a wide variety of flowering plants and installing clusters of nest boxes in your garden you may be able to provide a suitable habitat for encouraging house sparrows to thrive. For information about the project see <https://www.essexwt.org.uk/house-sparrow-project>

Tricia Moxey, Trustee.

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Nature Notes by the late Cynthia Howe, long-time nature lover and resident of Gilston

Thursday, 7 January 2010
Striking Looking Birds

Snow still thick on the ground; I watched a covey of eight red-legged partridges in the orchard at the end of our garden. They are a striking looking bird and watching them through binoculars I wished we saw them more often.

The moorhen is back in the garden, this year on its own – another striking looking bird. We are delighted every winter to see it for a few months wandering all over the garden. This year it is pecking at any long stray tufts of grass poking through the snow. It also eats the food put out for the birds.

Saturday, 9 January 2010
Goldfinches and Lemon Balm Seeds

We are daily visited by a charm of goldfinches. They are so pretty, and are drawn to the garden mainly because of the lemon balm seeds. Every summer, I forget how valuable these seeds are to the goldfinches and because these plants seed so well, I pull many of them up. I do this with great satisfaction, if only I could be mindful of the value of lemon balm seeds to the goldfinches then I would have much more pleasure during this time of year and the birds would certainly profit more.

Sunday, 10 January 2010
The Pigeons' Revenge

Last autumn two new squirrels came to the garden, built a dray high up in the silver birch. They constructed it almost directly on top of a pigeons' nest. Today I watched the pigeons taking revenge. They mated four

times, each time right after the last, all on top of the squirrels' dray which has been left looking decidedly squashed and sad.

Saturday, 16 January 2010
Moorhen in Pond

The moorhen continues to enjoy the garden and now the ice on the pond is melting, spending much time in the water. Many years ago the marina was a natural lake dominated by moorhens hence the name of the adjacent pub.

Thursday, 28 January 2010
Winter Squirrels

Another cold day, the fields at the end of the garden are still flooded, but at least the pond had no ice on it this morning.

There are less small birds about now. I have noticed a dwindling in numbers the last week or two despite topping up the bird table all day long.

The squirrels have been very hungry also although I realize they hide food for later. Today, I peeled and chopped up apples for the blackbirds and thrushes. Tits and robins also like these. It was interesting to watch the squirrels. They picked over the peelings and flesh, choosing to eat the cores instead. I suppose the pips contain protein amongst other nutritious things.

One little chap was very busy all morning. Finally after nearly three hours, he climbed a tree clutching a piece of food. 25 feet up on a bare branch he sat to eat it. When he had finished, he lay down along the branch and went to sleep.

Although it is not icy today, there is no sun and a bitingly cold wind yet he slept high up in a leafless tree on a bare branch. How did he keep warm? It must be due to his thick fur coat and also other factors like his high metabolic rate.

I did some internet research and apparently studies on summer and winter squirrels show that winter squirrels have significantly lower levels of bile acids and lecithin in their liver as compared to all other groups. A difference between squirrels that hibernate and those that do not may be gall bladder contractibility. Fasting normally results in suppression of gall bladder contractibility. The studies were on American squirrels but I suspect they would prove much the same if done on our English grey squirrels.

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SAWBRIDGEWORTH NEWSLETTER FROM PATIENTS GROUP
Email: patientgroup4sawbosurgery@gmail.com

New Year is often a time when people choose to '**Reset**' after the excesses of Christmas and New Year. Here are some great yet simple ideas:

- **Dry January:** Challenge yourself to not drink alcohol for the whole of the month of January. Some of the many benefits include improved physical health (like lower blood pressure and better sleep), better mental health, and more money saved!
- **Nutrition:** Increase your intake of whole foods, including vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks.
- **Hydration:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day - aim for 6 to 8 glasses, or around 2 litres, of water daily.
- **Physical activity:** Start with gentle daily walks and gradually work your way up to a goal, like 10,000 steps a day. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. Maybe try Yoga or Pilates.
- **Sleep:** Aim for 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep each night. Establish a consistent bedtime and wake-up time. Create a sleep-friendly environment by keeping your bedroom dark, cool, and quiet. Reduce screen time before bed.

- **Mindfulness and stress reduction:** Incorporate deep breathing exercises. Spend time in nature. Connect with others.

Winter Pressures on the NHS: Once again, the NHS is experiencing unusually high pressures with an increase in ‘Flu; Pneumonia and Norovirus. This has put an enormous extra strain on already stretched services in Hertfordshire and West Essex. Winter is always a busy time for the NHS, but this year they have seen unprecedented demand due to a higher than expected surge in flu cases and other seasonal illnesses. For most people, these illnesses are best dealt with at home.

You can help the NHS by using the right service for your needs. This means they can keep hospitals and emergency departments available for treating those with life threatening or very serious conditions.”

Please help the NHS by:

- Preventing winter viruses from spreading, protecting vulnerable relatives and friends and ensuring that vital NHS services are there for those who need them.
- Making sure that you and your family are up to date with flu, COVID, and RSV vaccinations. Ask at your GP practice or drop in to a local pharmacy. Most practices or pharmacies have some flu vaccines left in stock, but you may need to try more than one location.
- Staying at home if you or your family get the norovirus bug that causes sickness and diarrhoea, getting plenty of rest and drinking lots of fluids. Reduce the spread by washing your hands frequently with soap and water – hand gels won’t kill norovirus. Stay away from care homes, hospitals and social occasions until you’ve been clear of symptoms for at least two days. You will still be very infectious until then.
- Treating ‘Flu by staying at home, getting plenty of rest and drinking lots of fluids. Simple painkillers can help if needed. ‘Flu is not usually a concern for otherwise healthy adults and older children, but can be more worrying in the very young, very old or those with other illnesses.
- Using the Pharmacists to help with minor symptoms. There is also a service that allows you to walk into a pharmacy and get advice and medicine, if needed, for these minor illnesses and health concerns. Where the pharmacist is unable to help or if your symptoms need further investigation, they will direct you to your GP surgery or another health care professional:
 - Earache (aged 1 to 17 years)
 - Impetigo (aged 1 year and over)
 - Infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over)
 - Sore throats (aged 5 years and over)
 - Shingles (aged 18 years and over)
 - Sinusitis (aged 12 years and over)
 - Urinary tract infections (UTIs) in women (aged 16 to 64 years)

By using online consultations where possible and avoiding calling at the 8am rush, even though your GP practice is open from 8am to 6.30pm every weekday.

- If you have a family member who has finished their hospital treatment and is due to be discharged home, help to get them home without delay by being available to collect them in your car if you have one. This helps to make beds available in hospital for people who are seriously unwell.

Stay Connected: Check Your Care Messages in the NHS App: We know how important it is to keep up-to-date with your health, and the NHS App is a fantastic tool to help you do just that.

What’s New? Messages About Your Care: You can now use the NHS App to securely receive messages about your care directly from us and other trusted healthcare providers. Think of it as a dedicated, private mailbox for your health information!

This is a simple and secure way to hear from us without waiting for a letter or a phone call.

What Do I Need to Do? To make sure you never miss an important update, here are two quick steps:

Download and Log In: If you haven’t already done so, get the NHS App on your phone or tablet, by visiting the NHS App page: www.nhs.uk/nhs-app You can also find the same services on the NHS website.

Turn on Notifications: This is key! Make sure you turn on notifications for the NHS App. You will need to go into your device’s ‘Settings>Notifications>Change notification settings for each App’. This way, your phone will alert you immediately when a new message about your care arrives.

Why turn on notifications? It means you’ll be the first to know about appointment updates, test results, or reminders from your healthcare team.

Accessing Other Services: Remember, the NHS App is also the easiest way to manage your health 24/7. You

can use it to:

- Order repeat prescriptions
- Book, check, or cancel appointments
- View your GP health record

Please ensure you always know how to contact the practice and how to access services like appointments and repeat prescriptions.

Need More Information? To learn more about all the features of the app and how it works, you can visit the official NHS page and look for NHS App. Using the NHS App is a great step forward!

Chicken Pox Vaccine: Starting from 1 January 2026, the NHS is adding Chicken Pox (varicella) to the standard childhood vaccination schedule. Instead of the familiar MMR vaccine (measles, mumps, rubella), children will now be offered a four-in-one vaccine: measles, mumps, rubella and chicken pox (varicella). The Chicken Pox vaccine has been safely used for decades and is already part of the routine vaccine schedules in several countries.

The move follows recommendations from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and is designed to reduce incidence of Chicken Pox infection and the serious complications which can follow. Chicken Pox is a common childhood infection and most children will recover in a few weeks, but it can cause serious complications for some children and vulnerable adults, particularly pregnant women. By rolling out the MMRV vaccine, the NHS aims to reduce transmission, protect children from illness, give them the best protection and to support parents who would otherwise miss work to care for children while they are unwell. You can find out more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-update-issue-365-november-2025/vaccine-update-issue-365-november-2025>

Making a GP Appointment: Online consultations should be only be used for routine, non-urgent appointments and/or administrative queries. If a patient is not well and needs 'on the day' treatment and/or think they require antibiotics they should phone the Surgery on the day or go to the Pharmacy if the condition can Be resolved by the Pharmacist. (See Winter Pressures information above).



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4. LIVE CHAT / CALL 101
Do you want to share some information with us or speak to someone specific? Use live chat, otherwise call 101.

5. CALL 999
Is it an emergency? Is a crime happening right now, or is a life or property at risk? Call 999.

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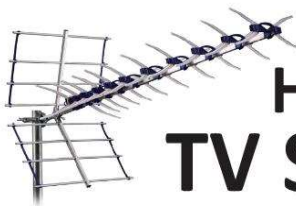
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The Lion Public House, Eastwick – CM20 2QP

Can be found in the covered area to the right of the pub courtyard.

St Mary's Church, Gilston Lane, Gilston – CM20 2RJ

Can be found in the porch as you enter the church on the right-hand side.

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