

Village news

April 2025

Puttenham
Astrope
Long Marston
Gubblecote
Wilstone
Little Tring



Your independent village magazine - produced and delivered free to every home in Tring Rural villages entirely by local volunteers

Margaret Noakes Obituary 1938—2025

MARGARET passed away at her home on 26th January after a short illness.

Her life was varied and interesting, always full of love, learning and curiosity.

Margaret was born in Hammersmith to Ivy and Victor Jenner, her sister joining the family 10 years later at the end of the war. Her father managed a paint shop, and her mother worked as a shop assistant. Both had grown up in Kent. During the war, Victor was a gunner in the 10th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, and when Margaret was very young, he was based in the training camp in St Agnes, Cornwall, and the family moved there for a few years until his involvement in D-Day. After a period of time living with Victor's family in Kent whilst Victor was away in France, the family returned to live in London in a prefab in Shepherds Bush.

Margaret went to school at Godolphin and Latymer in Hammersmith and became part of a strong friendship group which remained a big part of her life for most of her life. She completed her nursing training at St Mary's Hospital Paddington, and it was during that time that she met her husband-to-be, John, who was training as a doctor at the nearby Charing Cross Hospital. They married in 1960, and after a move to Harrow, where John was offered a role in a GP practice, their first son, Paul, was born in 1961, followed by Alistair in 1963.

As the family grew, they moved to Hatch End, where their daughter Sarah was born in 1969. They had a large garden where John was able to develop his interest in cultivating alpine plants and Margaret in breeding butterflies. Margaret worked as a family planning nurse in the local area, but in 1970 the pill was introduced, and unmarried women were allowed to be prescribed contraception. It brought with it a significant change in social/clinical attitude. She was asked to open a new clinic to cope with the busier workload in Pinner.

When her daughter was old enough to go to school, Margaret found part-time employment at Northwick Park Hospital. She fitted this alongside her taxi service for her children, taking them here and there as they pursued their



interests.

She later started a course for health visiting at the University of the Southbank. This required her to complete her Part One Midwifery to add to her qualification of being a State Registered Nurse.

After two years she qualified as a health visitor and found a vocation she loved, working with families and young children, offering her kindness, care and wisdom and shaping the lives of many young people. She remained in health visiting for 14 years. *(continued on page 2)*

She was later offered a role as a facilitator in Hertfordshire involving setting up programmes for the training of practice nurses, this being an innovative approach considering there were only a few practice nurses working in general practice at the *Continued on page 2*

time. She was also invited to Scotland to advise the health board on practice nurse training.

As well as her role as a health professional, Margaret pursued a role as a magistrate at Hendon and was involved on the Youth Bench for 20 years. Her strong values of fairness and justice were motivators, and her colleagues identified how she approached her work with kindness and compassion and always with a calm and soft disposition.

Margaret was a talented pianist, and as a young mother, she worked to gain her grade 8. Her love of music developed as a young girl, and whilst she wasn't able to take up an offer of a scholarship to a music school, she continued her love of music in her playing, attending concerts and playing with her son Alistair on the clarinet and Sarah on the flute.

Margaret and John's relished welcoming and spending time with their friends at their home. Margaret became known for her amazing cooking and looking after everyone through food. Later in life, when her speech became more difficult, her care of others through food became a big outlet, likely at the expense of many waistlines!

Travel and exploring were important to Margaret and John. After purchasing a narrowboat (named Brimstone after Margaret's favourite butterfly!), they were regularly absent, travelling the canals of Britain with friends and family. In 1996 they moved to Long Marston, where they settled in their home at Old Church Cottage.

Locally, John and Margaret were instrumental in raising money for the successful repair of the church tower adjacent to their home. Events such as Tea at the Tower were enjoyed by many, and their persistence in lobbying groups such as English Heritage finally brought financial success, and the tower was restored.

Margaret developed a keen interest in the black poplar tree, a locally common but nationally rare native tree. With the support of the WI, the Countryside Management Service, grants from Dacorum and technical support from David Kelland, they surveyed and mapped the trees in the area and produced a leaflet to promote the Black Poplar Trail. A further survey was carried out a few years ago, and Margaret worked with local landowners to encourage management and planting of trees.

With the support of many, Margaret and John were also successful in enabling Butterfly Conservation to purchase a unique wildlife haven in Long Marston, later to become known as Millhoppers. The reserve continues to go from strength to strength with the aid of volunteers. Margaret was secretary for the local Hertfordshire and Middlesex Butterfly Group of Butterfly Conservation for many years.

Margaret and John pursued their love of nature and curiosity in the wider world, spending time visiting countries such as Russia, Iran, Jordan, Turkey, Antarctica and the Galapagos. She developed her collection of bells from



As a young nurse

around the world, often approaching local farmers to purchase a bell from their livestock. They also regularly visited their daughter Sarah and grandchildren in Australia, where Sarah was living for a period of time.

Old Church Cottage became a beautiful home and haven for Margaret and John in later life. Retirement allowed more time for travel and being with an ever-growing family, including four grandsons. John and Margaret developed a wide collection of snowdrops. They regularly opened their garden to visitors through the National Garden Scheme.

In 2022 John sadly died, and Margaret remained in the house for a further 2 and a half years. They were both truly happy in Long Marston, much down to the love and friendship shown to them by so many in the village. Their sons and daughter would like to put on record their appreciation for the many acts of kindness shown to them, especially in the last years of their lives. It has meant a lot.

Margaret was a true caring spirit whose passion for nature, social connection and curiosity in others and the world has touched many. We will truly miss her.

If people would like to give to two very personal causes for Margaret (Butterfly Conservation and the UN Refugee Service), please visit her 'Much Loved' page: <https://margaretnoakes.muchloved.com>

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Village News is written, edited, produced and distributed entirely by local volunteers. We aim to be local, interesting, informative, fun and a good read. Please let us know if we are not!

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The editor for the May edition is Colin Moore and the deadline for items is: Wednesday 16 April.

So let's start with an Easter joke:

"What do you call a line of bunnies walking backwards?"

"A receding hareline!" (grandson's contribution)

Puns aside, thanks to everyone who submitted an article, all were much appreciated. Also there is a plethora of activities advertised throughout this edition.

Enjoy what you can.

For those of you who are eagle-eyed there are a couple of light hearted April Fool articles hidden in this edition.

If you haven't spotted them the page numbers are at the bottom of page 23.

Finally from all at the Village News Team, do have a very Happy Easter.

Wilstone shop Easter opening hours

Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday; 9am-12
Easter Saturday 8am—1pm

You can always find a copy of **Village News** wherever you are: www.wilstone.me.uk or just scan me

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What's on in & around our villages

Diary Dates

Saturday 5 April

Long Marston Litter Pick
Victory Hall 10.00am

Monday 7 April

Meet on Monday LM Victory
Hall 2-4pm

Friday 11 April

Wilstone Film Night 8pm
Conclave

Saturday 12 April

Tring Farmers Market

Monday 21 April

Long Marston Easter Egg Hunt
Victory Hall 2-4pm

Saturday 26 April

Tring Spring Fayre 10-2pm. Tring Farmers Market

Monday 5 May

Wilstone Free Childrens Party Wilstone Village Hall

Sunday 22 June

Wilstone Open Village and Gardens

Saturday 2 August

Long Marston Village Show.

Tring Rural Parish Council

Meeting start at 7.30pm The public are welcome to attend

Wednesday 30 April Cecilia Hall, Puttenham

Wednesday 16 July Long Marston Victory Hall

Church Services

Below is a list of the Services for the Village churches for April – **these could change so please check online** at <https://www.tringteamparish.org.uk/news-events> or phone the Rectory on 01442 822170

We also will have live streamed services online so please take a look.

1st Apr (Tues)

10am – Morning Prayer– St Cross, Wilstone

6th Apr –Lent 5

6pm – Celtic Service in All Saints, Long Marston

8th Apr (Tues)

10am –Holy Communion– St Cross, Wilstone

13th Apr – Palm Sunday

10am - Joint Villages Palm Sunday Service – All Saints, Long Marston

14th, 15th and 16th Apr – Holy Week

8pm – Compline Services – St Peter & St Paul, Tring

15th Apr – (Tues)

10am – Holy Week Service -St Cross Wilstone

17th Apr –Maundy Thursday

10am& 8pm – Holy Communion cw – St Peter & St Paul, Tring

18th Apr – Good Friday

11am – Walk of Witness, Tring

2pm – Joint service for the village churches – St Mary's, Puttenham

6pm – Joint service for the village churches – All Saints, Long Marston

20th April – Easter Sunday

10am – Joint HC service for the village churches – St Cross, Wilstone

22nd Apr (Tues)

10am Holy Communion cw – St Cross Wilstone

27th Apr –Easter 2

3.30pm – Evensong BCP at St Mary's, Puttenham

29th Apr (Tues)

10am – Morning Prayer -St Cross Wilstone

ST. CROSS WILSTONE

EVERYONE IS
VERY WELCOME

EASTER DAY
SERVICE

SUNDAY 20TH APRIL
10.00AM

A SERVICE OF CELEBRATION
FOLLOWED BY
REFRESHMENTS

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April at the Queens Head, Long Marston.

Saturday 12th at 8pm
Back by popular demand
LEVENA JOHNSON
(featuring Whitney Houston, Diana Ross,
Stevie Wonder and any more)
Not to be missed

Tuesday 15th at 7:30pm
Quiz Night

Every Thursday night 6pm till 8pm.
Pie & Pint Night £13.95

Sunday's
Homemade Sunday Roasts
Menu 1pm till 4pm
**Beef, Pork and Chicken
£14.95**

Easter Egg Hunt

All ages welcome

Start at Long Marston Victory Hall

Monday 21st April
Any time from 2.00pm - 4.00pm
Hunt entry free. Donations welcome
All proceeds to the Tower restoration fund



Follow the clues to the Old
Tower to win a prize

Learn about the history of
the Tower and garden

Enjoy tea and cakes



Tring
enjoying life Together

Spring Fayre

Launch Day

Saturday 26th April
10am-2pm, Church Square & Yard



Live
music



Community stalls &
Farmers' Market



Pop-up
zoo

For more information
www.tringtogether.org.uk

Join the Great British Spring Clean

Be part of the pick

Village Litter Pick

Long Marston & Puttenham WI
For the community by the Community

Saturday 5 April

Meet outside the Victory Hall at **10 AM**

All equipment &
refreshments provided
Everyone Welcome!

Keepbritaintidy.org
#GBSpringClean





Come and Be Part of the Long Marston Village Show!

Are you new to Long Marston and looking to get more involved in village life? Maybe you're home from university for the summer and want something fun to do? Or perhaps you just love meeting new people and being part of something special?

Well, we'd love for you to join us at the Long Marston Village Show on Saturday, 2 August 2025, at the Recreation Ground and Victory Hall! This event is a highlight of the village calendar—full of fun, laughter, and community spirit—and you can help make it happen!

Ways to Get Involved:

♥ Helping with Set-Up & Packing Away – Just an hour or two on Friday morning, Saturday, or Sunday morning and at the end of the Show would be a huge help. We'll make sure you're well looked after with refreshments.

🎲 Running Stalls & Games – Get together with friends or family and help us run some of our classic stalls like Tombola, Raffle, Splat the Rat, Beat the Goalie, Golf Chip & Putt, Hook a Duck, Skittles, Reverse Bike Challenge, Coconut Shy, Horseshoes, Guess the Weight and more! Don't worry—you'll get breaks to enjoy the Show, too.

🍔 Helping with Refreshments – Fancy flipping some burgers? We're looking for a team to set up and run the BBQ. We'd also love to have a stall serving strawberries and cream.

🚗 General Event Support – We also need extra hands for things like planning the field layout, stewarding, parking, and keeping everything running smoothly.

Even if you can only spare an hour, we'd love to have you on board!

Volunteering at the Show isn't just about helping out—it's also about having fun, meeting people, and feeling part of something special. If you'd like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you! Every little bit of help makes a huge difference, and we truly appreciate your support.

Thank you!

Long Marston Village Show Committee
07956 238706 / 07940 127450

To follow the preparations and to get show updates, please 'like' and follow our facebook page – Long Marston Village Show
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You can also email us at lmvillageshow@gmail.com with any questions.



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Wilstone Allotment Association



Secretary Wanted

Wilstone Allotment Association is looking for a new secretary to assist in the running of the Association. This voluntary position is part of a small (6 person) committee that maintains the smooth running of the allotment site. Ruth Patterson has done a wonderful job for us for many years but is moving on to pastures new this spring.

As Ruth will testify, the position of secretary is not particularly onerous, the busiest period is around September when memberships are renewed and the AGM is held, the rest of the year involves a few days a month managing the waiting list for plots and assisting in ordering supplies for the plot holders (manure, wood chip etc). The main requirements are a sociable temperament and a basic level of IT skills.

If you are interested in knowing more about helping to run our successful association, please let myself or any member of the Committee know and Ruth will be happy to talk interested parties through the role before she leaves. Being a current member of the association is not a necessary requirement, but an interest in growing things would obviously help. Steve Smith, Chairman

tringsteve@gmail.com

07753 744437

VE DAY[®]

80TH ANNIVERSARY

Wilstone Children's Free Party Monday May 5th



We are working on plans for a free celebratory event at Wilstone Village Hall, remembering the end of World War Two. This event is aimed at children who live in Wilstone. Whilst we get some ideas together, please put this date in your diary, and we will publish more information later.

Monday May 5th

Got it covered

A story of Longub Puttastone

by Martin Winship

IT WAS the time of year – the early spring – when last year's temporary repairs to the Longub Puttastone village hall began to reveal themselves as just that. Temporary. Very temporary indeed! Things that had been painstakingly patched up unaccountably shed their patches; electric wiring that had been refixed and wrapped with insulating tape began to spark and fizz for no good reason, and drips and leaks that had been meticulously sealed and sorted suddenly returned with renewed enthusiasm.

And so began the annual effort to raise the money to once more administer necessary first aid to the venerable old building. The challenge was to come up with new ideas, more interesting and exciting ways to persuade people to put their hands in their pockets and, mixing metaphors somewhat, cough up the readies. All the well-known (some might say hackneyed) approaches had been practised over and over: the Jumble Sale, the Bingo Nights, the Raffles, the Ladies' Mud Wrestling, the Race Nights and "Fun" Runs.

The returns were becoming disappointing, as more and more villagers succumbed to the dreaded Fundraising Fatigue. Something new and original was required to reboot the efforts to keep the hall going. One evening in the Half Head, when the conversation had turned once again to this knotty problem, someone had brought up the idea of a series of fundraising parties. Prunella's ears had pricked up, and she immediately announced that she (and in consequence, her husband) would host the first such party at her house. Her husband quietly groaned and experienced stabbing pains in his wallet and subsequently consumed a considerable quantity of strong liquor. Later, at home, Prunella set about the planning for what she had already decided would be the sophisticated soiree of the year (in Longub Puttastone at least).

Dress would, of course, be formal. The invitations would be especially printed and involve a lavish amount of gold. Catering would be by one of the best suppliers (to the gentry) in the county, and the wines and spirits of the finest. Music would be performed by a celebrated quartet and would be strictly classical.

Prunella sat back from her notes and plans, with a pleased smile and a faraway look on her face. She was at heart a romantic, albeit a ruthless one, whose view of the world was through very rose-tinted glasses. She harboured no doubts that everyone who was fortunate

enough to be included in her highly selective guest list would be thrilled to attend, having paid the hefty fee for the privilege. It was to be in aid of the village hall, after all. She became aware that her husband was standing near her, still with a drink in his hand and a worried frown on his face. She tutted; *she* was doing all the arranging. All *he* had to do was pay for everything. He could be so shallow at times.

In the event the party was not a total disaster. True, the dress code was not strictly adhered to; in fact, Prunella got the impression that many guests had either come straight from gardening or had thought it was fancy dress, though when she bluntly questioned some of them, they vehemently denied this. The food, though of an exceptionally superb standard, proved inadequate for the gannet-like appetites on display. It was apparent that the refined delights of petit fours and delicately stuffed vol-au-vents were lost on many, who piled their plates as high as they could while still maintaining a vestige of stability and proceeded to "scoff the lot". Indeed, several attempted to provide themselves with second helpings, in which enterprise they were disappointed, as such gluttony had not been anticipated, and the rations soon ran out.

The delectable selections of fine wines were similarly unappreciated. Prunella, in despair, noticed that half-pint tumblers were the preferred drinking vessels for most and were topped up with alarming frequency. The beautiful music was not as popular as she had expected, with comments like "Can't have a knees-up to this stuff" being overheard. The quartet fortunately included a selection of Rolling Stones numbers in their repertoire, to Prunella's dismay and her guests' delight. The one undeniable success was the auction of "Eligible Men", which raised a decent amount.

Prunella's husband attracted very low bids and went for less than a fiver, but Ben Winchester obviously held more promise – he was knocked down for nearly fifty quid. Afterwards Prunella's husband was bold (or drunk) enough to suggest that if they had skipped the party and he had simply presented a cheque for half of what he had forked out, the hall would have been better off. A week or two later, Thomas surprised everyone by letting it be known that he intended to hold his own cider party as the second fundraising event at his cottage.

He had some remarkably clever and original ideas for collecting money for the hall, and if everything had gone according to his scheme, there is little doubt that a great deal of cash would have been forthcoming. Unfortunately, after a couple of bottles of his vintage home-made cider (as a "steadier"), he could not remember what these ideas had been. A similar fate met his many party guests, who also indulged in Thomas' notorious brew

(continued on page 9)

and were soon, in consequence, oblivious to the actual purpose of the function. The day after the shindig, there was nothing to show for it but an impressive collection of empty bottles and a large number of very debilitating headaches.

Old Siegfried was well aware of how fervent Alice's concern about the hall was; as a member of the Women's Association, she was a frequent user of its facilities. He decided to do his bit, essentially to get into Alice's good books. Sensibly (which is not a word often used in connection with Siegfried), he opted to hold his party at the Half Head. His cottage was rather cramped and bijoux, and besides, he did not want to risk any of his valuables (whatever he imagined they might be) disappearing. He was also concerned that the noise and smell of visitors could easily disturb Mentless Belle, his pig. So Siegfried went to have a word with Rupert, the landlord of the pub. Rupert was in negotiations with the man from Swindles Insurance. Siegfried knew little and understood even less about insurance, so he waited until the business was concluded, hardly trying to eavesdrop at all. Then he and Rupert agreed on the date, time and details of the next fundraising party. Siegfried let everyone know and put the word out that contributions of food of various descriptions would be expected (thereby giving him a good free nosh, he hoped). He arranged the loan of a big white tablecloth from the Women's Association via Alice and also "borrowed" two silver candlesticks from the church (without referring to the vicar).

Siegfried said it would improve "the ambulance", but everyone knew what he meant.

The evening of the party started in a particularly promising way, with the great majority of villagers arriving with plates and dishes containing a wonderful assortment of appetising snacks and food. Soon the white tablecloth was virtually invisible, hidden beneath the plethora of goodies. Prunella brought her contribution at last, or rather her husband brought it. It was a spectacularly large cake, and Prunella's husband

seemed to be staggering under the immense weight, and he had a severe trial raising it enough to get it onto the already groaning table. The extra considerable strain proved too much for the legs, which suddenly gave way, resulting in an avalanche of sandwiches, sausage rolls, nuts, crisps, breadsticks, and all manner of victuals crashing to the floor. The candlesticks also fell over, and the flaring candles immediately set fire to the tablecloth. Pandemonium followed.

It was some time before the flames were beaten out and order restored. Then it was spotted that both the silver candlesticks had mysteriously vanished in the mayhem. Alice was surprised when she noticed that throughout the debacle Siegfried had remained calm and apparently unruffled.

"Don't worry, Siegfried," she told him. "We'll get this mess cleared up in a jiffy. I hope you won't end up badly out of pocket."

Siegfried shrugged. "I'm not blooming bothered. Rupert's insurance will cover everything anyway."

"Are you sure?" Alice asked in a doubtful tone of voice.

"Oh yes," replied Siegfried. "I was there when Rupert arranged it with the chap from Swindles. It sounded tailor-made for this evening. It was THIRD PARTY FIRE AND THEFT."

Sudoku Corner by Colin Moore

No 186 moderate

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

Solution on page 21



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www.wilstonecommunityshop.org.uk



WE'RE OPEN:

MON-FRI 8am-2pm

SAT 8am-1pm

SUN 9am-noon

Where can you pre-order your hot cross buns?

At Wilstone's community shop, of course!

If you want to be sure not to miss out on fresh hot cross buns this Easter, the shop is taking orders from the beginning of April. This is just another example of how your shop goes out of its way to help its customers. So next time you're collecting your papers or buying bread, eggs or milk place your hot cross bun order for collection a few days later.

And while you're there, take a look at the vast range of goodies (and some delicious not-so goodies!) that have been specially sourced for the holiday. In addition to the customary Easter eggs there are many handmade cards and gifts including the ever-popular, expertly-crafted bunnies, chicks and lambs.



Easter opening times:

**Good Friday, Easter Sunday
and Easter Monday:**
9am - midday

Saturday: 8am - 1pm

We hope to see you soon.

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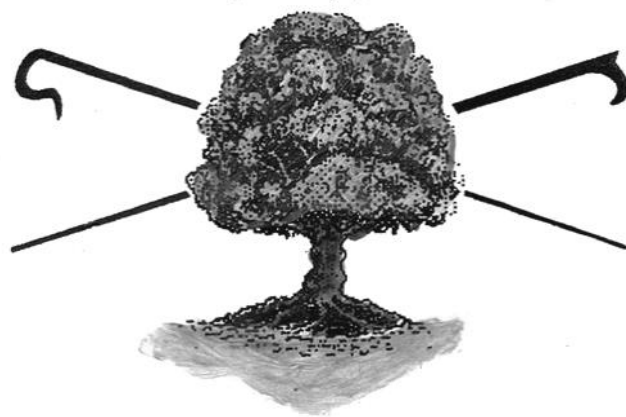
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From our reporter at the council meeting

THE SECOND TRPC meeting of 2025 was held at Long Marston on February 26th. No resignations were announced this month, but there were a few apologies for absence, with only three councillors present. Combined with four parishioners, it led to a very short meeting!

Goodness gate-cious me!

Neil Murray of Astrope got everyone talking when he asked whether Astrope residents were being discriminated against, by not being allocated a sign or gates on the roads into the hamlet. He felt the location should be identified - and this reporter thinks many delivery drivers would agree!

Cllr Fox explained that Dacorum Borough Cllr Sally Symington had offered funds for gates for each of the three villages, i.e., Long Marston, Wilstone and

Puttenham. It was determined that Gubblecote and Astrope are hamlets, as they don't have a central facility. The Highways Report from 5 - 6 years ago had shown that drivers slow down when they see village gates, but the concern was that too many gates lost that effect.

Mr Murray suggested the addition of a sign to identify Astrope instead, which Cllr Fox felt was a good compromise. Mr Murray also asked for a 20mph speed limit down the lanes, to deter inconsiderate drivers. At the end of the meeting it was revealed that correspondence had also been sent to the clerk expressing concern about the volume and speed of traffic passing through Wilstone, and asking for a speed survey.

Astrope again

Sue Foster reported that the Astrope Lane 9-house development had passed the planning Committee stage. However, it seems that the LLFA document was only uploaded three days before the closing date for comment, and the applicant drainage document was uploaded too late. Mrs Foster believed that this document was flawed and asked whether TRPC could pay for, or contribute to, a drainage report? The clerk will be arranging an extraordinary meeting to discuss this.

Dacorum Digest

Cllr Fox extended congratulations to Sally Symington, who is now the Liberal Democrat leader of Dacorum Council, and gave his personal thanks for the donation of £2,500 towards security for the CAB cafe.

As Cllr Symington was unable to attend, Cllr Fox passed on the remainder of her update, which was that Puttenham's new sign was to be moved closer to Puttenham, and would incorporate Astrope on the reverse; and the fly tipping reported in Watery Lane had been removed.

Date of next meeting: 30th April 2025, 7.30pm, Cecilia Hall, Puttenham.

CLEANER WANTED FOR WILSTONE VILLAGE HALL

Due to the imminent retirement of our lovely long-serving cleaner, Wilstone Village Hall will shortly require a replacement, ideally one who is resident locally.

We offer regular pay for this role, to be discussed at an interview.

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If you are interested, please call Peter Walker on 07768 605684 or email chairman@wilstonevillagehall.org.uk

Notice of AGM

Wilstone Village Hall Committee hereby gives public notice of the Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday 12th May 2025 at 7pm at St Cross, Wilstone

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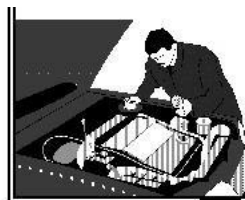
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Friday April 11th

At Wilstone Village Hall. Doors open at 7.15pm.

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Astrope Lane Development Lack of due process

by Sue Foster

WHEN THE purchase took place of my home at 3 Loxley Stables in 2019, I was always aware of the intention to seek planning permission to develop the field adjoining Marston Court. Indeed, initially I did not oppose this until I became aware of the land drainage and flooding issues affecting the village. My daily dog walks made it apparent to me the scale of the problem, especially in the fields towards Astrope and Puttenham. If evidence was needed, one only has to consider the problems around the Little Copse development, where a drainage strategy was approved which was clearly ineffective, and on some days the water is so deep on the footbridge crossing the Gudgeon Stream that it is almost over the top of my wellington boots!

It was against this background that I opposed the Astrope Lane development. The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA – part of Hertfordshire County Council) is the statutory body responsible for protecting us from flooding and which is consulted by Dacorum on planning applications. In March 2024 the LLFA opposed the application as it found the land drainage proposals to be unsatisfactory, and so the applicants were given over six months to come up with revised engineering, but my amateur review of those proposals led me to believe that they were flawed. The publicly available "Lidar" values (a measurement of height above sea level) indicate that the drainage proposed both along the Braid towards the Tring Bourne and along Astrope Lane towards the Gudgeon Stream would require water to run uphill! I pointed this out in my comments submitted to Dacorum.

Since those revised proposals were placed on the Dacorum planning website in September 2024. I have been following that website regularly to see what the LLFA had to say with a view to instructing my own land drainage engineer in the event that the LLFA lifted its objections. In fact, the LLFA wrote to Dacorum as long ago as 11th October 2024, indicating that it no longer

opposed the application (subject to stringent conditions), but that letter was not posted on the planning website until 27th January 2025 (3 days before the planning committee meeting considering the application) but backdated to 13th November 2024. Dacorum were asked to adjourn the consideration of the application to allow me time to obtain my own report, but this was refused.

At the meeting of the Development Management Committee on 30th January 2025, the application was delegated to planning officers for approval. This is not the actual approval, as various steps have to be taken beforehand, but it delegates the power to grant approval at the appropriate stage. I therefore wrote a pre-action letter to Dacorum concerning possible judicial review proceedings to set aside any decision, but even if successful, this would only set aside any decision requiring it to go back to the council for reconsideration. Clearly, however, judicial review proceedings would be a waste of time and money if my drainage engineer did not agree with my amateur review of the drainage proposals. So, I asked for a pause in the officers issuing the planning approval until I obtained my report. I was allowed 7 days, which was understandably insufficient for my drainage engineer to prepare a report.

Although my husband is Vice Chair of Tring Rural Parish Council, he has, for obvious reasons, recused himself from being part of the decision-making regarding this application. The Parish Council did hold an extraordinary meeting at which it decided to jointly instruct the drainage engineer and to seek time for this. A request made by me and the Parish Council for time until 7 April 2025 to obtain our report has been made, but no response has been received as at the time of writing this (17 March 2025). Indeed, it has been indicated that the planning application will be formally approved during the week of 17 March.

My husband works in the judicial system and has always said that the most important matter is to ensure that the loser (and there always has to be one) feels he or she has had a fair hearing. I am afraid that what has happened here leaves the loser (if that is what I am) with the opposite feeling. In this great democracy in which we live, fair play and due process are perhaps more important than the eventual outcome, whatever that might be.

If others feel as strongly as I do, there is a complaints procedure which can be accessed on www.dacorum.gov.uk.

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Wilstone Open Village and Open Gardens event—free! Sunday June 22nd



On Sunday June 22nd, we once again throw open the village to visitors from far and wide, to enjoy live bands and with the freedom to wander around the village without traffic. We combine our Open Village day with the Village Open Gardens, where several local residents open their gardens to visitors, some providing tea and cakes.

On the day, we close the main road through the village, set up a bandstand at the pub for live music all afternoon, plus lots of other attractions, including:

- Free playbus for children
- Petting zoo
- Vintage car show at the pub
- Trade stalls
- Dog 'sniffer' event
- Pimms Stall
- Asian vegetarian food
- Burgers from the pub
- Ice cream van
- Souvlaki stall

The Open Village event is free to all. For a tour of the gardens, tickets are sold on the day from a stall and maps are provided for visitors. All proceeds go to charities.

Jo and Mark Woodbridge are leading the Open Gardens event. If you would like to open your garden for the day, please contact them for more information, contact:

jomarkwoodbridge@outlook.com

Peter Walker is organising the Open Village event on behalf of the village hall committee. If you would like a stall or participate in some other way, please contact walkersandbrook@gmail.com

We especially need help on the day directing traffic and erecting gazebos.

Weather permitting, it has been a great village and family event over the years.

The event runs from midday with the gardens opening at 2pm, and runs until late afternoon. But first things first - diary this date: **SUNDAY JUNE 22nd**

Keeping you in the picture

Residents of Long Marston and the nearby villages have been immensely thrilled at the news that the Parish Council plan to convert the old football changing rooms on the recreation ground into a brand new venue – the Long Marston Espresso Bongo.

Eagerly anticipating the approaching day when they will be able to drop in for a coffee and a bun (and buy such hard-to-find essentials like bread and milk) residents were astonished to hear of yet another bold initiative in the village.

It is rumoured that the Council now intend to convert the Old Church Tower at the end of Chapel Lane into a state of the art cinema. The plans include the use of a hi-tech seating system (originally used on The Widow-Maker ride at Alton Towers) which will tilt film-goers up on end to face the screen cunningly mounted on the underside of the tower's roof.

This will allow audiences of around one hundred to attend (although it is admitted that eating popcorn might prove to be a challenge, but at least everyone will get some). Watch this space for updates.

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The Puttenham Page

by Christine Rutter

** EASTER **

A slightly different programme for Easter this year Please note the different arrangements:

GOOD FRIDAY – 2 pm St.Mary's Church – An Easter Vigil service with the church stripped out of all "decorations" and just featuring on the bare wooden cross. There will also be a 6 p.m. service at All Saints in Long Marston if you are unable to make the 2p.m service at Puttenham

EASTER DAY (SUNDAY) – There will not be a service at St.Mary's this year. We are all encouraged to go to **St.Cross Wilstone** for our 10 a.m. Easter Communion with the three villages together, or to

St.Peter/St.Paul in Tring where there will be the dawn Fire with

Communion (common worship) at 5.30 a.m., an 8 a.m. Holy Communion (book of common prayer), or a 10a.m. Holy Communion (common worship)

St.Mary's – As we will not be having an Easter Day service this year, St.Mary's will be open for private prayer during the Easter Sunday morning.

QUIET DAY – Puttenham

Saturday, 26th April.

We shall be embarking on another Taize day marked as "The Rule of Taize". This will be from 10 am until 3 pm, and will be divided between Cecilia Hall and St.Mary's Church. As always, a simple soup lunch will be provided. There will be three times of Taize and prayer during the day. If you have been to our Quiet Days before, then welcome back. If not, then why not give it a try and have a fully relaxed and prayerful day.

St. MARY'S CHURCH

An Evensong Service still continues to take place on the FOURTH Sunday of each month at 3.30 pm. A beautiful sung service which is followed by a social time with tea/coffee and home-made cakes. Please come and enjoy! A **coffee morning** continues in St. Mary's church each Thursday between 10.30 am and 12 noon. This is an opportunity to meet physically and socialise, and to catch up on all the local chat. Let me encourage you to give it a try. At present, we are only a small group, but everyone is welcome for coffee/tea, a biscuit or two and a good chat.

Local police find a new drug deterrent

Police in Dacorum have announced a brand new weapon in their war on drugs—sniffer chickens.

Their new flock of "Drogenspurhuun" (which translates as drug detecting chickens) joined the force after proving successful during a testing phase.

The police said they were more cost effective as they were cheaper to train and keep than dogs.

They also laid eggs daily which also comes in very handy the police spokesperson said.

Solution No 186

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

Village News is looking for volunteers

Magazine editor

Village News is looking for an editor to join the team of 4 editors. The role involves producing two editions of the magazine per year. Previous experience is not essential, but some familiarity with word processing or desktop publishing, handling emails, and downloading articles and images would be an advantage. Training will be provided. Editors must be prepared to devote a significant amount of time spread over a few days in the production week of the magazine.

Team Organiser

The Team Organiser provides a vital link between the members of the Village News team. Good communication and a modicum of administration are the key contributions.

Please contact Colin Moore 01442 826976 for further information.



9.00 am – 12.30 pm

Church Square, Tring

Saturdays

12 & 26 April 2025

10 & 24 May 2025

Please note, 26 April is the Tring Together Spring Fayre in conjunction with

Tring Farmers Market and is from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm

Local Contacts

Herts Police non-emergency 101

Berkhamsted and Tring Safer Neighbourhood Team 01707 354192

Fly-tipping reports Call Dacorum Waste Services 01442 228000

Call the police if you see a crime being committed.

Reports of river flooding

Environment Agency 0845 988 1188

Cecilia Hall (Puttenham)

Christine Rutter 07514 548289

Cubs and Scouts

Jane Dawson 07759 888085

LM&P Horticultural Society

David Severs 01296 661021

St Cross Wilstone

Rev'd Jane Banister 01442 822170

Olga Martin 01442 822894

St Mary's Puttenham

Rev'd Huw Bellis 01442 822170

Churchwarden

Christine Rutter 07514 548289

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Long Marston Cricket Club

Paul Marsh Chairman

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Long Marston Tennis Club

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Long Marston School 01296 668386

Wilstone Allotment Assn.

Ruth Patterson 07790518105

ruthpatterson15@talktalk.net

Wilstone Village Hall

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chairman@wilstonevillagehall.org

07768 605684

Bookings: Peter Myrants

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Dacorum's Councillors Tring West

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Brian.patterson@dacorum.gov.uk

Caroline Smith-Wright 07931 733151

Caroline.smith-wright@dacorum.gov.uk

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editorwlmp@yahoo.com

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Gill MacDonald (Long Marston)

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Clerk to the Parish Council

Chloe Collins 07516344248

email: clerk@tringrural-pc.co.uk

Villages Warden

Colin Reedman 01442 822031

email: TRPCWarden@gmail.com

Where no personal telephone number is shown use the clerks number

Working together for safer roads and flood prevention in Tring Rural

by Cllr Caroline Smith Wright

A LOT of work has gone into making our roads safer and reducing the risk of flooding in Tring Rural over the last few years. This has been a real team effort, with Tring Rural Parish Council (TRPC), Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and local councillors all playing a part in securing the improvements we see today.

Many of these changes started four years ago with a detailed report put together by TRPC's Highways Working Party, chaired by Cllr Nigel Fox and co-authored with Peter Bygate. This study laid out the key challenges and hot spots in our area, from the need for village gateways to control speeding to safety concerns at the Queens Head crossroads.

Thanks to this groundwork, the case for funding was strong, and Cllr Sally Symington was able to help secure substantial support to improve road safety and mitigate flooding through her Hertfordshire Locality Budget and HCC's highways funding.

So far, thanks to this funding, work has been carried out in stages which include:

- **Village Gateways** – Installed in Wilstone, Long Marston, and Puttenham to encourage safer driving speeds and define the rural character of our villages.
- **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)** – Helping to slow down traffic, particularly on Astrope Lane (Puttenham SID repaired twice after vandalism).
- **Ditch Clearance and Drainage Upgrades** – to reduce persistent flooding.
- **Road Edge Repairs** – Fixing potholes and damage caused by HGVs, flooding and the rising traffic volumes.
- **Final resurfacing work** and lines at Astrope Lane to commence in late March.
- **Traffic Calming Measures** – Extra signage, road markings and bollards

Landowners Ditch Responsibility

Collaboration with landowners from HCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). Alerting landowners of their responsibility to clear their ditches from debris and fallen trees to ensure better water flow across our area.

Planning for a Safer Future

The work doesn't stop here, as we have been alerted by concerned residents of the increased dangers of traffic racing through all parts of our area, increased pressure on Wilstone residents as house building continues and footpaths that need better access management.

There are the current conversations ongoing between TRPC and HCC as they look at other important local road safety issues:

- **School Crossing** – A feasibility study has been commissioned to explore a safer school crossing in Long Marston, ensuring better protection for children.
- **Crossroads Safety** – Discussions on crossroads safety at Queens Head have been held, focusing on better visibility and reduced risks.
- **HGV Drivers** – Pressure on Cheddington Industrial Estate to encourage HGV drivers to turn right upon exit, alleviating speeding concerns on Cheddington Lane and congestion at Long Marston crossroads.
- **Safer Parking** – resolutions for school drop-offs have been discussed with Long Marston School.
- **Controlled Planning** – Proactive steps are being taken to control planning applications that could make flooding issues on our roads worse.

Canal & River Trust Releases

TRPC, councillors, HCC, Environment Agency, the LLFA and the Flood Working Party (FWP), as well as knowledgeable locals, have all been involved in investigating and highlighting the weak spots in our ditch systems. There are ongoing discussions with Canal and River Trust (CRT) to find solutions to their water releases that affect Watery Lane. A positive step forward is that CRT has agreed to alert TRPC and FWP before they do release water, giving the community time to prepare.

These local road safety improvements have been a real example of how working together as a community can make a difference – our country roads were never built to carry the kind of extra traffic we now experience. If you have concerns, ideas, or feedback, please get in touch with Tring Rural Parish Council at clerk@tringrural-pc.co.uk; your suggestions are greatly appreciated.

If you haven't spotted the April Fool Articles look at the bottom of pages 19 and 21.

From the Vicarage

by the Reverent
Cannon
Jane Bannister

IF YOU ask someone to name their favorite Easter films, I imagine you would get a blank look. Unlike Christmas, there is not a long list of heart warming cinema offerings that lots of people have seen. Looking for Easter films online produces a lot of children's films featuring the Easter bunny and chocolate, and in one list, there is also the subsection "featuring Jesus'

Easter morning resurrection". The subsection after that is "Horror" which is not what I expected.

My memories of television at Easter include, for some reason known only to the schedulers, the Great Escape or Escape to Victory – I suppose there is a link there to new life and freedom – and then usually a Hollywood Biblical epic on Good Friday afternoon, where all the participants had immaculate hair and corseted costumes.

There are of course lots of films about the life of Jesus which range from classics such as Pasolini's The Gospel According to St Matthew, filmed in black and white, with many of the Italian locals taking part, to more modern interpretations such as The Passion of the Christ, which uses Aramaic, the language that Jesus spoke, and was accused of being very violent (which to be fair, the original events were). The 1970s saw musical versions with Godspell and Jesus Christ Superstar. The tv series Jesus of Nazareth is remembered by many of a certain generation, and there are also lots of versions produced by the Christian right in America, where everyone looks perfect.

The Christian religion has no problem with visual portrayals of God and Jesus, but it is difficult to do it well, and to do it sincerely. In the 1959 Ben Hur film, Jesus was only portrayed as shadow, or from behind, as



A smile from Jane for Easter

that was felt more powerful than showing his face.

One of my favorite versions is The Miracle Maker which is a mixture of stop motion animation and picture animation: something about that format makes it easier than trying to find an actor who can play Jesus. Other films are written from the point of view of another person, such as Barabbas or Mary Magdalene.

I have watched a lot of films about Jesus over the years, and I have found all of them to have some value. Not one is perfect, but all have made me think, which is what faith is about. And each time I watch one of these, I find it moving – the story of Christ's death and resurrection is one of love and anger, betrayal and hope, fear and faith, all things which are part of our lives today.

May Jesus, the risen Christ,
bring joy to our lives,
hope to our hearts,
and courage to all those we love and pray for.

Amen.

Wilstone Open Village Can you help? Tombola and Bric-a-Brac

We're on the hunt for items to fill our tombola stall, so once again the Community Shop will host a donations box for any items you are able to give us. Any small items are welcome plus food items, we just ask that the latter are within their use by date

In addition we need all your unwanted treasures for our Bric-a-Brac stall. Please contact Irene McCall on 0784 942 5886 or by email on:

irene.mccall3@gmail.com

We're looking forward to a really fun day for everyone on the 22nd June and your support in helping to make this happen is much appreciated.