

# Village news

July 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

## All aboard for Wilstone's Open Village and Gardens.

On an overcast Sunday afternoon in July, the village of Wilstone came alive as the main road was closed to traffic and transformed for the annual *Open Village and Gardens* event. The turnout was impressive, with crowds undeterred by the grey skies..

The bunting-draped street created a festive atmosphere, lined with over twenty vibrant stalls offering everything from charming bric-a-brac, candles to garden plants, home produce, and unique crafts. The open gardens and carefully tended allotments drew many visitors.

At the heart of the village, The Half Moon pub hosted live music, with straw bales arranged as informal seating that added rustic charm. The adjoining car park featured a display of gleaming vintage cars, attracting enthusiasts and families alike.

Food and drink were in abundant supply: street vendors served a tempting variety of dishes, while the shop offered a classic homemade cakes, and traditional tea.

Children enjoyed a variety of attractions, with the colourful Play Bus proving particularly popular. Jane Shirley's two friendly donkeys were a highlight, delighting both young and old with their gentle nature.

All in all, it was a joyful community celebration that captured the spirit of Wilstone, bringing neighbours and visitors together for an unforgettable summer afternoon.

**See page 23-24 for more pictures and report**



Photos by Alan Fowler and Village news.

For the residents of Puttenham, Astrope, Long Marston, Gubblecote, Wilstone & Little Tring.



# THE 2025 LONG MARSTON VILLAGE SHOW

## HORTICULTURAL SHOW

Don't forget to enter. Pack of  
Freshlay Farms Golden Yolker  
eggs for all Domestic entries  
Scan the QR code at the  
bottom for  
details of classes

## AMAZING RAFFLE

£300 party voucher Sapphire Gym  
£100 voucher Masons Coaches  
£40 voucher Crockers  
£30 voucher Tyre Changers  
plus many, many more prizes  
donated by our generous  
sponsors.

## FOOD AND DRINK

Barbeque Teas  
Cakes Pimms  
Beer

## ATTRACTIONS

Something for everyone:  
Bouncy Slide Rodeo Bull  
Splat the Rat Coconut Shy  
Golf challenges  
Crockery Smashing  
Beat the Goalie  
Bucks Weavers  
Hook a Duck  
Craft Stalls  
Bees  
Plant Stall  
And more

## IN THE ARENA

Sound by Radley Windows  
New Moon Morris dancing  
Jukebox Junction  
line dancing  
Family Games  
Rock Chorus

## FUN DOG SHOW

REGISTRATION FROM 1.30pm

Prettiest bitch Handsomest dog  
Best rescue/rehomed Waggiest tail  
Best crossbreed Waggiest tail  
Dog judge would like to take home  
Most appealing eyes  
Best biscuit catcher  
Best in Show

No bitches in season  
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**SATURDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug**  
**From 2.00pm**

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07940127450/07956238706

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Village Society



**Editor this month: Colin Moore**

Editors: Caroline Clist, John McCall, Colin Moore  
and Marcus Postings.

Managing Editor: Colin Moore.

40 Tring Road Wilstone HP23 4PB

Phone: 01442 826976

Finance: Keith Fox 01442 825846

Distribution: John Taylor 07940 206056

Advertising: Amanda Russell 07444 747010

To submit an item for publication please send to

**editorwlp@yahoo.com**

or 40 Tring Road Wilstone HP23 4PB

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Issues	1	10		
Small	£12	£60	267	Large 1/2 page
Medium	£23	£115	×	
Large	£46	£230	94	130 x 194
Medium 1/4 page				
	130			
	X			
	94			
		63 x 194		
		63 x 94		
				Small 1/8 page

Distribution enquiries :

John Taylor 07940 206056

**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!

**Printed by Harlequin52 Ltd**  
**www.harlequin52.com**

**The editor for the September edition is Colin Moore and the deadline for items is: Wednesday 13 August**

I'll be out with my camera tomorrow at the Wilstone Open Village and Gardens, hoping to capture the spirit of the day.

The weather forecast looks promising — overcast skies and temperatures in the low twenties — so fingers crossed!

I'm relying on the event to provide enough photographs to complete the upcoming magazine, which needs to be at the printer by Monday morning. It's all a bit last-minute, as usual!

In recent months, we've found it increasingly difficult to fill all 24 pages. The last issue I edited was back in May, and I had to resort to using AI to fill a page at the eleventh hour! This month, I'm in a similar situation. Fortunately, we've received some fantastic cartoons from a local cartoonist, which may become a regular feature.

Sticking with the AI theme — this time I asked it to generate a cartoon-style image of a typical English village fête. You'll find the result on page 13. It also came up with some cheesy jokes to help fill our *Corny Corner* on page 5!

Most people have heard of AI, but not everyone fully understands what it can do. Over the next few issues, I'll be exploring some of the creative possibilities this powerful tool offers. Maybe next, I'll get it to write a poem or compose a song!

That said, AI will never replace the value of articles and photographs submitted by our readers — we absolutely rely on your contributions to fill our pages. So why not have your say next time? Perhaps you've seen something unusual in the garden, or been on an interesting walk. If you can support your story with a good photo, you don't even need many words.

Right — I still have a page to fill and I'm rapidly running out of time. I hope you enjoy this issue!

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# What's on in & around our villages

## Diary Dates

### Tring Farmers Market

Saturday 2 and 26 July  
9 and 23 August  
at The Market Place  
**Meet on Monday,**  
Long Marston Victory Hall  
2.00 to 4.00pm. 7 & 21 July.  
Tea, cake and a chat

**Saturday 5 July** Beacon  
Library AGM 9am at  
Library, Ivinghoe.  
[www.bvcl.org.uk](http://www.bvcl.org.uk)

**Saturday 2 August**  
Long Marston Village Show

## Tring Rural Parish Council

Meeting start at 7.30pm The public are welcome to attend

**Wednesday 16 July Long Marston Victory Hall**

**Wednesday 3 September Cecilia Hall, Puttenham**

## Church Services

Below is a list of the Services for the Village churches for July & August – **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

**Tuesday 1 July** 10am – Holy Communion – St Cross, Wilstone

**Sunday 6 July – Trinity 3** 6pm – Celtic Prayer – All Saints, Long Marston

**Tuesday 8 July** 10am – Morning Prayer -St Cross Wilstone

**Sunday 13 July – Trinity 4** 8am BCP & 10am WfA at Tring, 10am HC at Aldbury

**Tuesday 15 July** 10am Holy Communion cw – St Cross Wilstone

**Sunday 20- July – Trinity 5** 10am Holy Communion – All Saints, Long Marston

**Tuesday 22 July** 10am – Morning Prayer -St Cross Wilstone

**Sunday 27 July – Trinity 6**

3.30pm – Evensong – St Mary's Puttenham

**Tuesday 29 July** 10am – Holy Communion– St Cross, Wilstone

**Sunday 3 August – Trinity 7**

6pm – Celtic Prayer – All Saints, Long Marston

Tuesday 5 August

10am – Morning Prayer -St Cross Wilstone

**Sunday 10 August – Trinity 8**

8am BCP & 10am WfA at Tring, 10am HC at Aldbury

**Tuesday 12 August**

10am Holy Communion cw – St Cross Wilstone

**Friday 15 August**

3pm – VJ Commemoration Service followed by afternoon tea party in churchyard– St P&P, Tring

**Sunday 17 August – Trinity 9**

10am Holy Communion – All Saints, Long Marston

**Tuesday 19 August**

10am – Morning Prayer -St Cross Wilstone

**Sunday 3 August – Trinity 10**

3.30pm – Evensong – St Mary's Puttenham

**Tuesday 26 August**

10am – Holy Communion – St Cross, Wilstone

**Sunday 31 August – Trinity 11**

8am BCP & 10am HC at Tring, 10am HC at Aldbury

## BEACONLIT BOOK FESTIVAL

Saturday 12 July 2025 9.30am–5.20pm  
Ivinghoe Town Hall and Ivinghoe Old School Hub

day pass £35, 1/2-day pass £20 available from [beaconlit.co.uk](http://beaconlit.co.uk)

Mark your calendars! On Saturday 12th July, BeaconLit Book Festival returns to Ivinghoe for a day-long celebration at both the Town Hall and the Old School Community Hub, LU7 9EP.

Founded in 2013, the festival is held annually and fundraises for the Beacon Villages Community Library (<https://bvcl.org.uk/>), a much-needed resource. With group panels, headliner interviews, a poetry circle and even a writing workshop, there's something for everyone at BeaconLit. So, if you're interested in crime fiction, children's novels, coming-of-age stories or are searching for something new, we hope you can join us at our two Ivinghoe venues.

## LONG MARSTON ALLOTMENTS

There are several vacant allotment plots at Long Marston Allotments in Potash Lane. If you are interested in trying your hand at growing your own vegetables please call or email.

Elaine Winter  
(Secretary to the Trustees of Tring Charities)  
01442 827913 or [info@tringcharities.co.uk](mailto:info@tringcharities.co.uk)

You can always find a copy of **Village News** wherever you are: [www.wilstone.me.uk](http://www.wilstone.me.uk) or just scan me





## The Tring Together Summer Carnival

Starts on Thursday 10th July with the Tring Together Big Quiz Night. Tables of 6 compete for the prize of best team! Tickets (£8 per person, £14 to include BBQ) also include entry to the

rock n roll bingo. Tickets can be bought online (small fee applies) <https://tinyurl.com/sc2025bigquiznight> or from Fancy That Tring (cash only). It is a fab night out - do you have a winning team?

Saturday is Carnival Day with all the fun of the circus. It starts with the midday parade through the High Street to Pound Meadow where the Carnival is declared open! The carnival has 2 arenas, the marquee and a dog show arena. Local dance acts and music groups will perform during the day along with our Arena acts of Sheep Dog display, Bubble Act and Circus Workshop. The field will be full of fun stalls including food and drink, Tring Brewery Marquee, children's fairground rides, vintage cars and much more. A full fun day out for the family. Entry is just £3 with under 5s free.

Saturday 12th Evening is Music in the Marquee Big Band Night Out! Featuring smooth jazz from the Zebra Jazz Collective and swing, pop and Latin from Tring Phoenix Big Band. Dancing shoes are advised but not mandatory. There will be a bar and paella available. Tickets for the music event £15 adults, £10 students and can be bought online at <https://tinyurl.com/sc2025bigbandnightout> or for cash from Fancy That, Tring."

Finishing with Soundscape on Sunday 12 to 3pm (see below).

### Corny Corner (powered by AI)

"Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of soda?  
No, what happened?  
He's okay, it was a soft drink!"

"Do you want to hear a construction joke?  
Sure!  
Never mind, I'm still working on it."

Why did the scarecrow get promoted?  
I don't know, why?  
Because he was outstanding in his field!"

**SAVE THE DATE**  
10th-13th July

Tring Together  
enjoying life

**Summer Carnival**  
On Pound Meadow

featuring  
**Summer Carnival Day**  
Saturday 12th July

**4 days of summer fun and live entertainment!**

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TRINGTOGETHER.ORG.UK

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**TRING'S ATTENTION SEEKERS HEADLINE!**

Tring Together Summer Carnival TRING BREWERY Co.

**The Attention Seekers**

**PRE-REGISTER**  
TO POCKET YOUR BAR TOKEN

**SUNDAY SOUNDSCAPE**  
SUNDAY 13 JULY

**12-3PM**

TRING BREWERY MARQUEE, POUND MEADOW

**FREE ENTRY ON THE DAY**

QR code



## July at the Queens Head, Long Marston.

For August list  
See Page 23

Sunday 13th  
Live Music  
The Wet Bandits  
4:30pm to 6:30pm

Tuesday 15th at 7:30pm  
**QUIZ NIGHT**

Saturday 19th from 9:30am  
**British Lions Rugby Open**  
(Breakfast Baps available)

Saturday 19th from 5pm  
Goat Boat are serving **Caribbean Food**.  
Join us for Food & Music

Saturday 26th  
Live Music from 8pm  
**Rockbone**

Sunday 27th from 7:30pm  
**OPEN MIC NIGHT**

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

Every Friday Night  
**PIZZA NIGHT**

**COME IN AND JOIN THE FUN**

# SESSIONS

ON THE FARM



**SATURDAY  
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Mead's Farmhouse Kitchen, Wilstone green, Wilstone, HP23 4NT

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Are you hoping to go to University or College  
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resources might not match up to the  
requirements?

Are you under the age of 22? Have you lived in Aldbury,  
Long Marston, Marsworth, Pitstone, Puttenham, Tring,  
Wigginton or Wilstone for at least three years?

To see if you would be eligible for a grant, apply to  
Tring Charities' Millennium Education Foundation for  
information and an application form.

Website details: [www.tringcharities.co.uk/education](http://www.tringcharities.co.uk/education)

Telephone: Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees  
01442 827913

Email: [info@tringcharities.co.uk](mailto:info@tringcharities.co.uk)

Please note that the closing date is **15 November 2025**  
to lodge a completed application for grants payable  
from Autumn 2026.



## Community Action

Dacorum hold  
their outreach  
drop-ins on the  
first Friday of  
every month at Tring High Street  
Baptist Church.



On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025 we are  
expanding the event to welcome community  
organisations to pitch a stall to promote their  
volunteering opportunities and the work they  
do in Tring.

Please email  
[leanne@communityactiondacorum.org.uk](mailto:leanne@communityactiondacorum.org.uk) to  
book your space.

Spaces are limited – first come first served!

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www.wilstonecommunityshop.org.uk



**WE'RE OPEN:**

MON-FRI 8am-2pm

SAT 8am-1pm

SUN 9am-noon

## EPOS, Dojo, Avery Berkel, Image Retail, Orbit scanner – do any of these terms mean anything to you?

In days very long gone, when you bought something in a shop, the counter assistant would depress two or more keys on what looked like an old manual typewriter to register the price in pounds, shillings and pence, and even half pennies and farthings (a quarter of a penny from before 1971 for those under 40). Today, things are very different. The product's bar code is scanned or the till screen is touched and the price is automatically registered, and payment is made by mobile phone, card or cash. And this is the system that has operated in the shop for several years but time moves on and the system now needs updating.

After much researching, the shop will be getting a new Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system (ProEPOS with Image Retail), a different

card reader supplied by Dojo, the new till linking with our current scales - an Avery Berkel set - with a back-up scanner called Orbit. As you will appreciate, procuring all these systems so they all talk to each other has been no mean (or inexpensive) feat



and we hope that you won't notice the difference in the excellent service the shop provides when you buy its wonderful products once the new system is up and running.

### Hole in the road

On Friday 13 June our neighbours had no water (unlucky or what?) so Thames Water were called out as a matter of urgency and that night they started digging and to their credit the leak was fixed by the next morning. Tarmac was laid over the hole in the road on the Saturday but the work did also require excavation of the ramp to the shop that had only been laid a couple of years ago. We are assured that matching resin will be laid soon so, although there will be some inevitable difference in the appearance, the ramp will be fully operational again.





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# 20 years ago

The front page story from the July 2005 edition of Village News, featuring Colin Reedman.

## Parish Warden in Gun Drama

ON Friday 17 June at about 10am Parish Warden, Colin Reedman, was checking the paths through the copse at the canal end of Wilstone recreation ground when he was approached by a woman from a canal boat. Agitated, she explained that an hour earlier 2 men carrying air rifles came along the towpath firing at ducks and her boat! Colin obtained a description of the 2 men, immediately contacted the police, to learn that a call had already been made by a local resident and that officers were on the way to Wilstone. Within a few minutes officers arrived by car and met up with the warden and the woman at the canal. It appeared that the men had made off on foot along the towpath towards Marsworth. The officers made their way towards Marsworth by road and Colin walked the towpath, keeping in contact with them by way of his mobile phone. Colin was able to direct the officers to the canal bridge at Watery Lane, Marsworth where the 2 men were seen carrying guns. They were detained after a short struggle and taken to Hemel Hempstead Police Station for questioning in relation to a number of possible firearm offences. The guns were apparently high powered air rifles capable of causing considerable damage to wildlife and property. The 2 men, of European origin, came from an address in Bedfordshire.

Speaking to *Village News* Colin said "it was quite a change from picking up litter".



## Wilstone Wasters Set to Face Buckland Baggies in Annual Charity Cricket Showdown

Get ready for a thrilling evening of cricket and community spirit as the Wilstone Wasters take on local rivals the Buckland Baggies in their much-loved annual charity match on Friday, August 15.

This year's clash promises to be especially competitive, with the Wasters keen to settle the score after Buckland clinched victory in last year's encounter. With pride and bragging rights on the line, both teams are expected to bring their A-game to what has become a highlight of the local summer calendar.

As tradition dictates, the match will be held at the picturesque Long Marston Cricket Ground, a perfect setting for a summer evening of friendly rivalry, fun, and fundraising. Gates open at 5:30pm, with the first ball to be bowled at 6:00pm sharp.

Spectators can look forward to a relaxed and festive atmosphere, complete with a fully stocked bar and sizzling barbecue, making it a great outing for families, friends, and cricket enthusiasts alike. All proceeds from the event will go towards supporting local charities, so every pint poured and burger served will help make a difference.

Bring a blanket, bring your cheer, and come support your team in what promises to be an entertaining and meaningful evening of sport and community.



**Jon Sainsbury captain of Buckland receives the trophy from umpire Martin Arscott last year**



Long Marston Cricket Club

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Suite 4, George House, 64 High Street, Tring, Herts. HP23 4AF

# From our reporter at the council meeting

The fourth TRPC meeting of 2025 was held at Wilstone on May 28th.

## Election Results

The meeting started with the re-election of Cllr Fox as chair and Cllr Foster as vice-chair of the TRPC. Cllr Fox announced that Cllr Smith-Wright had been elected as a County Councillor, as well as being a borough councillor, and had decided that she could no longer carry on as a parish councillor as well! Cllr Fox stated that she would be a loss to the TRPC and thanked her for her hard work on behalf of Puttenham residents.

So, there is another vacancy! The TRPC are particularly keen to have volunteers to represent Puttenham and Wilstone residents, and IT and social media skills would also be an asset!

## Fail to plan, plan to fail?

Public participation was interesting when the councillors were thanked for stepping in regarding a planning objection. It appears that a planning application had not followed the usual process, in that the residents who should have received a letter from the planning department didn't get one, and the orange notice that should have been publicly displayed was not.

The councillors recommended that the residents affected make a complaint to Planning Officer Gareth Forest. Clerk Chloe suggested making a Freedom of Information Application to ask when the notices were sent; Cllr Foster confirmed that there should be a record of when they were posted.

Cllr Foster stated that it is not TRPC policy to intervene in objecting to planning applications on behalf of residents, unless there are wider community concerns which, in this case, there were.

## Joining the Dot-ties

Cllr Fox asked for formal approval from the councillors for the cost of the works to transform the CAB into a cafe, which they did. The contract amounted to £105k, £32,400 of which had been raised through the lottery, grants and Cllr Sally Symington. He thanked Cllr Foster for leading the working party.

Cllr Foster reported that the planning officer needed to approve the interior materials and the proposed works to the grounds. Outside the building we can look forward to native trees, such as buckthorn, alder, wild cherry, rowan, hazel and birch, along with wild flowers and raised beds/planters.

Cllr Foster said that cafe operator Helena Winter-Brown, of *Dottieaboutcake*, is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, especially about tea and cake, although he was hoping for a focus on good coffee!

The intention is that the cafe will be ready in time for Long Marston's village show!

## In other news

Clerk Chloe advised that she had not received notification about the 9-dwelling planning application at Startops Farm in the usual way; Cllr Foster would look at this.

Cllr Adams advised that Wilstone Village Hall plans to extend the car park by 30 spaces would be circulated again. It was hoped this would improve hall bookings, but consideration must be given as to how to keep the spaces for hall users.

Cllr Fox advised that there might be a 20 mph speed limit in Long Marston and that by autumn it would be known whether there were sufficient funds for the pedestrian crossing. He also advised that the bollards outside the Queens Head pub had been replaced.

**Date of next meeting:** 16th July 2025, 7.30pm, Victory Hall, Long Marston.

**Note:** Cllr Caroline Smith-Wright has been elected to the Bridgwater 8 Division of Hertfordshire County Council, representing Berkhamsted, Flamstead, Great Gaddesden, Little Gaddesden, Markyate, Nettleden, with Potten End and Northchurch.

## Wilstone traffic concerns

Several Wilstone residents are concerned about the volume and speed of traffic travelling through Wilstone Village and have asked Village News to publicise this issue. The centre of Wilstone does not have pavements and this makes it difficult and some times dangerous for both pedestrians and householders that live adjacent to the main road. Invariably, it means that pedestrians constantly have give way to traffic, often several times in a short distance for example walking from the village hall to the shop.

If you are affected please email your concerns / suggestions to:

Local MP Victoria Collins : [Victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk)

and

County Councillor Sally Symington : [sally.symington@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sally.symington@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Also copy in the parish council as they are addressing a similar issues in Long Marston with a proposed 20 mph limit and a pedestrian crossing!



# Hot Dog!

## A Story of Longub Puttastone

By Martin Winship

The pageant of the year had rolled along, playing to an appreciative audience who enjoyed the variety of the seasonal weather and the procession of leaves and flowers, and now July had stepped boldly out from the wings to take its place centre stage. The wise and worldly

meteorologists were firm and unanimous in their predictions of a cool, wet month to come, so confidence was high that it would be warm and dry and consequently perfect for outdoor events. In Longub Puttastone, as was ever the case, much consideration was being given to the needs of the veteran village hall, which was constantly demanding repairs and maintenance, requiring, of course, a steady flow of cash into the coffers. The idea of a village picnic had been proposed some time previously and greeted by most residents with enthusiasm. Now offers of help to organise and run such an event in July came from all quarters. Jake, well known for his fettling and fossicking skills, had, he revealed, recently completed a new and (in his own words) revolutionary BBQ, which he would be very pleased to operate on the day of the picnic. He admitted that he would need the assistance of a willing helper, and he (along with everyone else) was surprised and, to some extent, pleased when Old Siegfried offered to do his bit. Furthermore, Siegfried stunned all concerned by offering to supply the BBQ with his own special sausages. Though extremely dubious, they agreed it was too good an offer to ignore.

Thomas said that he would be pleased to slake locals' thirsts with a supply of his notoriously strong home-made cider, although he regretfully acknowledged that he would not be allowed to charge anything for the popular tippie; he had no licence. Rodney, always a shrewd operator, announced that although this restriction was most definitely the case, they could certainly charge punters for the necessary drinking vessels, of which, by an extraordinarily happy coincidence, he happened to have a good supply in one of his garden sheds. He would, he averred, be more than willing to take charge of this little "detail". Alice said she would have a small table set out at the picnic and sell (for the benefit of the village hall) some of her various products and herbs, including, naturally, jars of her celebrated Brussels Sprout Relish. When the vicar offered to organise another tug-of-war, he was, in view of the previous experience, and after a struggle, dissuaded, but his slightly ruffled feathers were smoothed by the request that he oversee a friendly game of rounders instead. Although there were several further suggestions and offers, the general consensus was that this was sufficient. Any more, it was agreed, might well turn the whole proceedings into another version of the village show.

The picnic went ahead on the first Saturday in July, under near-perfect conditions. It was very warm and settled, and not a trace of a cloud disrupted the wonderful blue dome of the sky. There was a good turnout on the recently mowed recreation field, and it was a pleasing sight to see all the people in their summer finery (well, t-shirts and shorts, to be fair), the colourful tablecloths spread out on the grass,

and the numerous sunshade garden umbrellas sprouting like so many mushrooms to protect from the glorious sunshine. Prunella and her husband turned up with an immaculate set of expensive cane furniture, complete with a grand outdoor table, and not one but two rather ostentatious Fortnum and Mason hampers, plus a goodly supply of perfectly chilled champagne. Things were generally quite restrained to begin with and remained so until people began to sample and enjoy Thomas' cider (and for the select few, some of Prunella's champers). Rodney did a brisk trade in plastic beakers reasonably priced at £1 a go – some of which *did* end up going to the village hall fund, but not much. Most of it ended up in Rodney's pocket, but no one would realistically have expected otherwise.

The vicar's game of rounders began sedately enough, but as more and more of the participants tried Thomas' brew, the game became quite boisterous and began to diverge from the orthodox play and standard rules when fielding players started to rugby-tackle the runners, often to their physical disadvantage. Alice predictably sold a good deal of her sought-after concoctions (potions and spells, as Old Siegfried would call them), and unlike Rodney, all her takings were added to the hall fund. The BBQ started off in quite a spectacular fashion. It emerged that Jake's revolutionary contraption was novel in that it used not simply charcoal, but this was supplemented by patio gas, which was piped up and into the burning coals. The result was somewhere between a blacksmith's forge and a blast furnace, certainly not a means of gently cooking meat. It produced such an intense heat that Jake found it well-nigh impossible to get anywhere near the thing. And when he did eventually manage to get close enough to sling a few of Siegfried's RK sausages (as he called them), they were instantly incinerated and subsequently vaporised. Much to Jake's chagrin and crestfallen disappointment, he was obliged to turn the gas off and rely solely on the hot charcoal. When more of Siegfried's sausages were introduced to the somewhat cooler grill, they were soon cooked and then sampled by several wary but brave souls. The sausages were discovered to be delicious; in fact, many confirmed they were the best bangers they had ever had. Word got round, and Jake was kept busy for the rest of the picnic. There was much speculation amongst those partaking of the unexpectedly flavoursome treats as to what "RK" could stand for. Prunella suggested that perhaps it was Richmond Kings, as she was sure there existed a connection between sausages and Richmond, however tenuous. Thomas did not agree, and his consumption of his own brew made him loquacious. "Knowing Siegfried", he asserted, "is much more likely to be something very earthy and off-colour. Probably Royal Knobs or something equally ribald".

The nature of the sausages was also the subject of some debate, and eventually, someone, having imbibed a significant quantity of Thomas' cider, challenged Siegfried on the topic. "I mean, they're not all the same, are they? All good. All good. They are, but not all the same. What sort are they?"

Siegfried chuckled; this was not frequently an altogether encouraging thing. "There's the usual types of meat – rabbit and pheasant – and there's also a fair number of venison – I was lucky to get a blooming muntjac. I skin them all myself, of course, and then I take the meat to a farmer friend of mine.

Continued on page 13

**Hot dogs continued from page 12**

He owes me a blooming favour, so he minces the meat and puts it through his sausage machine. You should see the snorkers squeezing out – it would make a blooming midwife blush!"

Alice gave Siegfried a stern look. "Are you poaching again?" she demanded in her no-nonsense voice.

Old Siegfried scowled. "Poaching nothing!" he snapped. "I just don't like to see things going to waste. If they're not there in the morning when I'm on my way to my allotment, but they're there when I head home in the evening, they must be blooming fresh, mustn't they? And as you've all agreed, they were all delicious. The rabbit, the pheasant, the muntjac." Siegfried looked thoughtful. "I must admit, I had my doubts about the badger, but even they were good, weren't they? They had a sort of wild, woody flavour".

A few of the BBQ customers had developed an unusual green pallor.

"Er, Siggy," Jake said slowly. "What exactly *does* 'RK' stand for?"

Old Siegfried chuckled again, and there was definitely something sinister in the sound this time. "Well, I would have thought it was blooming obvious. RK? Road Kill, of course".

The green pallor had suddenly become ubiquitous, and with hands over mouths –

**EXEUNT OMNES!**

**Sudoku Corner**

by Colin Moore

**No 190 moderate**

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

**Solution on page 20****It's fete time in the villages!**

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# Goat's-beard

*Tragopogon pratensis*

By Martin Winship

Goats-beard flowers during June and July but (depending on environmental factors) can appear in May.

One of the remarkable things about it is that while the blooms open at the start of the day, they close again before noon! This has resulted in the plant acquiring an assortment of apposite local names: Jack, Jake or Johnny-Go-To-Bed-At-Noon in various counties, Sleepy Head in Somerset, Nap-At-Noon in parts of the Midlands and Lancashire, and Shepherd's Clock in Yorkshire. In Sussex, it is known as Joseph's flower, a reference to Joseph when he was an old man with a long white beard.



Goats-beard is closely related to salsify, which has been cultivated for food, and it is not therefore surprising that goats-beard is itself edible. The roots are long and tapering, and when dug up in the autumn, can be boiled and, once tender, served with butter, like parsnips. It used to be the practice to keep the fresh roots in dry sand so they could be used in the winter. The stems can be cut up and make a good substitute for asparagus, as the flavour is similar and they are just as nutritious.

Goats-beard was highly regarded for its curative and medical properties. Culpepper said that the juice of the entire plant, bruised and boiled, was an excellent treatment in cases of "suppression of urine". An infusion made from the roots was a cure for indigestion and loss of appetite, and the roots eaten with butter were good for a "watery stomach" and to strengthen anyone unfortunate to be lean and consumptive or someone getting over a long illness.

## From the Vicarage

Reverent Michelle Grace

My beloved cat, Jackson, died in March. He was 16 years old and had been with me for 8 years, almost the whole time I've lived in Aldbury. I still miss him a lot. 'Will you get another one?' a few people asked kindly. I don't

think anyone was suggesting another cat would exactly fill Jackson's shoes (paws?), but the decision to get a new cat was difficult. Was I ready? Would I resent the new cat for not being Jackson? Did I want to enjoy a bit of freedom from cat duties for a while? Once several weeks had gone by, I began searching for a cat to adopt.

After interviewing several cats and one kitten, Stan, aged 2, travelled to his new home in Jackson's old carrier, quietly mewling all the way. I can't help but compare them, at least a bit. Jackson was scared of the doorbell (too risky), bin liners (too rustle-y), and the Doctor Who opening credits (too vortex-y). Stan is scared of everything.

It's been difficult, investing in this new (to me) life and him

hiding in fear all the time. Stan isn't offering the companionship that Jackson did. Stan can't purr next to me on the sofa when he's cowering under the bed. There has been some progress; he's exploring the house now and will allow a stroke or two in exchange for some cat treats.

I'm rambling on about my cats probably partly because it's quite cathartic, but also to reflect on the fact that new life isn't usually straightforward; it's often messy and comes with challenges but still holds within it the promise of joy, flourishing, and wholeness. I can't remember new life ever being straightforward and tied up in a nice neat bow. We make tentative steps, we risk something new, and we dare to hope for light and life. The one who said, 'I came that they might have life in all its fullness,' calls us into more hopeful ways, individually and as a community. Hope, flourishing, wholeness, and new life are seldom tidy, but they are worth the mess.



## 73 year old working boats enter Marworth flight.



Two working boats, each 73 years old, enter Lock 40 on the Marsworth flight of the Grand Union Canal in June this year, alongside the beautiful Marsworth Reservoir.

Much like the working boats in older times, they carry coal and other fuels up and down the Grand Union, but now mainly for the residential craft on the canals.

Those who work the canals have various tricks of the trade to lessen their workload around locks. This particular skipper ties a rope around the colourful post shown in the picture and then loops it around the rails on top of the lock gate. When they leave the lock, rather than having to get off the boat to shut the lock gates, the boat does the work by pulling the gates shut as they leave, which saves a lot of time and energy.

200 years ago, when the canals were built, the Marsworth flight was extremely busy with boats such as those above, and the amount of traffic caused a lack of water. When water to fill the locks was scarce, they had to lighten the boat loads so that they did not run so deep in the water. So half the load was transferred to a shallow draught 'lightening' boat, and as a result, the main boat rose higher in the water. At the top or bottom of the lock flights, the loads were transferred back, and the 'lightening' boat, which has rudders at both ends, made a return journey. The Canal and River Trust does free monthly walks around our reservoirs with talks about their history.

Search using Eventbrite / Walk around Tring Reservoirs.

## Intervillage Sports Day returns

By Laura Whately  
Headteacher.

For many years, as past pupils will remember, Intervillage has been a very important sporting date in the Long Marston School calendar. It is an athletics competition between other local, small, village schools, and, for various reasons, including a pandemic and inclement weather, it hasn't run since 2018. We are very excited that it will be returning to Long Marston on Friday 11th July. Alongside this, our PTA will be running our summer fair. Everyone is invited to cheer Long Marston on and to enjoy the fair. From bouncy castles and a luxury raffle to a visiting petting zoo and a climbing wall, there will be lots of fun to be had for everyone and delicious food from various providers.

**The fair and competition will be on from 5.00 to 8.00 (approx.) on Friday 11th July.**

If you live locally, please expect an increase in traffic during this time. Parking will be at the cricket club if you would like to come along, and please follow signs across the field to school. Disabled parking only will be at school. If the weather is wet, please check our school website for updates.

Long Marston VA C of E Primary School



# The Puttenham Page

by Christine Rutter

*The Summer .....*

*CECILIA TEA ROOMS*

*Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> July.*

Our usual times of 3 pm – 5 pm. £7.50 pe head. Once again, we shall be busy baking a variety of cakes and providing an assortment of sandwiches.

Our two attempts at getting a Spring Tea Rooms underway, failed on both accounts, so please make a special effort to attend the Summer Tea Rooms.

Please let me know if you have any special dietary requirements – we can cater for most. Booking your seats is essential to help with catering. Proceeds to St.Mary's Church.

**Christine: 07514 548289 or email: [christine.rutter2@gmail.com](mailto:christine.rutter2@gmail.com)**

## *MUSICAL CREAM TEA*

*Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> August. – from 2.30 pm*

### Something different!

Enjoy a cream tea while listening to the musical sounds of the Emeritus Brass (our resident musicians). We shall have several sales tables for you to browse and, hopefully, you are tempted to purchase a variety of items, and a raffle to end the afternoon. Please put the date in your diary and help support The Friends who support St.Mary's.

Proceeds to the Friends of Puttenham Church.

### REPORT: **The Jumble Sale held on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May.**

An absolutely HUGE “*Thank You*” to everyone who helped in any way, i.e. bringing in jumble, sorting throughout the week prior, and helping on the stalls during the sale.

We had absolutely masses of goodies. All of this resulted in the fantastic Jumble Sale total of £1,335 . 47p. Once again, a massive Thank You. The funds raised go to the Friends of Puttenham Church who help to support St.Mary's financially.

All the left-over items went to support several charities, i.e. the Salvation Army, Help-in-hands (orphanages in Myanmar – Burma) and Cancer Research UK





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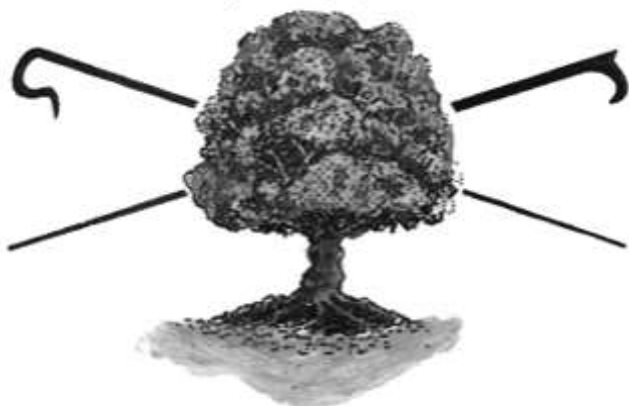
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## The Old Tower Long Marston

The Old Tower Long Marston are resurrecting **Tea at the Tower on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September**. Look out for more information later in the summer. If you are interested in helping, exhibiting or having a stall then please contact us at [towerconservation@aol.com](mailto:towerconservation@aol.com)



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# The Repair Shed and Men's Health Week

Community Action Dacorum

Men's Health Week (9–15 June 2025) is the perfect time to spotlight one of Dacorum's most uplifting community initiatives — The Repair Sheds. Run by Community Action Dacorum, this project has been running for more than a decade and continues to prove that practical activity can have a powerful impact on people's wellbeing.

Often as men age, they face challenges like social isolation and a loss of purpose, particularly after retirement. **The Repair Sheds** offer a welcoming, inclusive space where men (and increasingly women) come together to make, mend, share skills, and connect with others. Whether it's crafting hedgehog houses, building bug hotels, or learning to use a sewing machine, these hands-on activities boost confidence, reduce loneliness, and provide a sense of contribution and purpose.

*"There's something deeply powerful about sharing a cuppa and a project,"* says Tony Mackinder, Repair Shed Officer. *"It's a chance to build friendships while keeping physically and mentally active."*

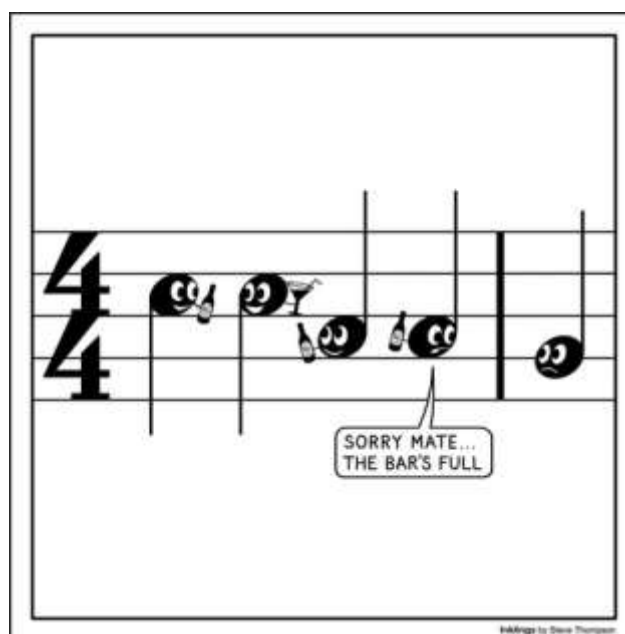
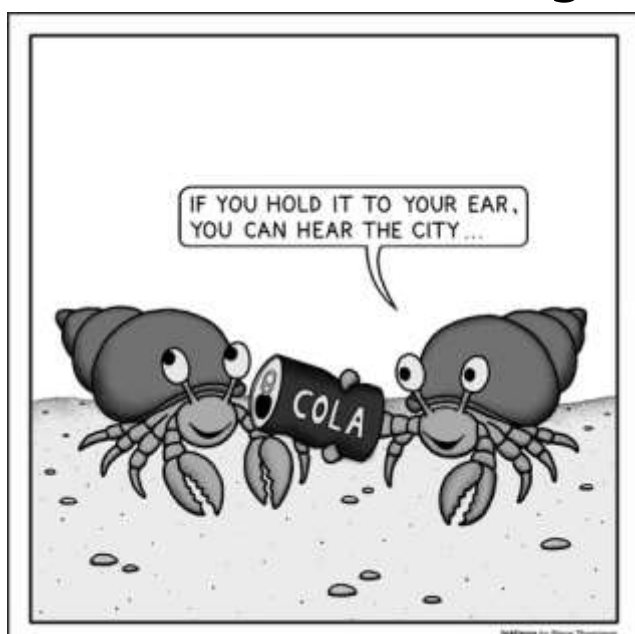
Partnerships with local supporters like Tring Brewery, who named The Repair Shed their 2025 Charity of the Year, have helped amplify its impact. Their event "ToadFest" raised over £4,000 in May, directly supporting the fight against isolation among older men.

And it's not just about fixing things — it's about fixing disconnection. Members consistently say the Repair Sheds have improved their mood, mental health, and social life. As one regular noted, *"The best repair job I've done here is on myself."*

To find out more about joining or supporting the Repair Sheds, contact Tony Mackinder at [tony@communityactiondacorum.org.uk](mailto:tony@communityactiondacorum.org.uk) or call **01442 253935** **Community Action Dacorum** |



## Cartoon Corner - Inking by Steve Thompson



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**Wilstone Village Hall**

Chairman: Peter Walker  
chairman@wilstonevillagehall.org  
07768 605684

**Bookings:** Peter Myrants  
bookings@wilstonevillagehall.org.uk  
07857 818638

info:https://wilstonevillagehall.org.uk

**WI** Clare Hill 07802415447

**Wilstone Community Shop**  
01442 891167

**Member of Parliament** Victoria Collins

victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk

**County Councillors**

Members support office 0300 123 7488

Sally Symington

sally.symington@hertfordshire.gov.uk

**Dacorums Coucillors Tring West**

Brian Patterson 01442 823868

brian.patterson@dacorum.gov.uk

Caroline Smith-Wright 07931 733151

caroline.smith-wright@dacorum.gov.uk

**Changes or additions? Contact the Editor.**

**editorwlm@yahoo.com**

**Your Parish Councillors are:**

**Chairman Nigel Fox**

email: TRPCCouncillor@gmail.com

**Vivian Wood**

email: TRPCCouncillor2@gmail.com

**Richard Foster (Vice-Chairman)**

email: TRPCCouncillor3@gmail.com

**Gill MacDonald (Long Marston)**

email: TRPCCouncillor4@gmail.com

**Neil Murray**

email: TRPCCouncillor5@gmail.com

**Maria Adams**

email: TRPCCouncillor7@gmail.com

**Vacancies 2**

**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 07516344248



## Hundreds delight in Wilstone's Open Gardens and Open Village show.

### Bloomin' success!

From Peter Walker

Wilstone's open gardens attracted over 250 visitors to the village, and our homegrown talented bands and singers entertained many, many more, featuring Wilstone's own Jon Waugh, Anna Swannell and the 'Keep Going' Choir.

What a lovely rain-free day it was, and the village had a wonderful, friendly atmosphere. There was a great variety of trader stalls, food stalls and attractions for children, especially Jane Shirley's donkeys. The play bus didn't stop all day.

Despite the challenge of keeping gardens looking good after a spell of hot weather, there were eleven gardens and the allotments open to the public and, new this year, sculpture in the church grounds.

As ever with community events, they only happen through the efforts of a small number of people working together to achieve something that joins the community. Wilstone has a long tradition of such events, which have hugely benefited the village, making it a lovely place to live.

Special thanks go to Jo and Mark Woodbridge for organising the successful Open Gardens event, the proceeds of which will go to the allotments. Also, Ivor Spencer for



Enjoying the cream teas

Photo Mark Fowler

orchestrating the afternoon of live music and getting the bands together, including the Pilferers, Cherry, The James Trio, Dirty Brew, Ride On Revisited and Jam Band.

Huge congratulations to Ali Driver and the team at the Community Shop, who coped brilliantly with a never-ending queue for cakes, and to Guy and Steve Iley for bringing a whole new meaning to fast food.

There was a lot of preparation for this event, including road closures, and we must thank Colin Reedman and Dave Shirley for organising all the road signage and Mary Lynn for organising the volunteers to manage the parking and the boys' brigade, who erected the bunting and the gazebos.

Finally, thanks go to the Organising Committee, who did the planning and carried out many other tasks.

Feedback has been very positive, so thank you to everyone who did their bit for

## Wilstone Allotments

### Today on my allotment

By Colin Moore

Today, being Sunday and the day of the Open Village and Gardens, I decided to make a short early visit to the allotment to gather whatever vegetables and fruit were ready. By this time of year, most of the hard work has been done, and all the beds are either producing or just about to yield useful crops.

Still, there are always jobs that need attention. I chose to tackle the strawberry bed, which has been incredibly productive over the past few weeks, yielding pounds of fruit. Having been netted to protect the berries from birds, the bed had also become a haven for weeds. I removed the netting, picked the last few strawberries, and gave the bed a rough weeding. The soil was very dry, and I noticed that some of the plants will need replacing next year. With a bit of rain, the healthier plants should soon send out runners, which will form new plantlets along their length. I'll pinch off the runner after the first little plant to encourage it to draw strength from the parent plant. Later, I'll use these to replace the old, failing ones.

The next task was to build a support frame for the two cucumber plants I'm growing in a large tub. After that, I turned to the raspberries — a bit of a fiddly job since they



Mangetout

Today's produce

bruise so easily. Unfortunately, the yield hasn't been great this year. It's been too dry, and the plants are stunted, with many of the fruits small and underdeveloped.

Next on the list: picking a lettuce, some new potatoes, a few carrots, a bit of spinach, and a good amount of mangetout. I'm growing a tall French variety, but again, the dry spell is affecting growth. The pods are small, and many are turning into peas too quickly.

Finally, I fetched some water from the well pump. I gave some to the cucumbers and courgettes, leaving the rest for watering in the evening.

All in all, not a bad way to spend an hour on a Sunday morning!



## Wilstone Open Village 2025 in pictures

Photos Alan Fowler / Village News

