

INKPEN AND COMBE BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2026

The Great Inkpen Quiz

AT INKPEN VILLAGE HALL



6th March, 7.30pm

Is it time for a new team of Eggheads
to take home the prestigious trophy?

If so, gather your team and
reserve your seats now!



Licensed bar at 'pain free' prices.

Message/call 07871 107327 or
email inkpenvh@gmail.com.

CHURCH LETTER

Dear Parishioners

February often feels like the in-between month. Christmas is a distant memory, spring still seems to be taking its time, and the weather can't quite make up its mind—frosty mornings, grey afternoons, and the occasional burst of sunshine just to keep us hopeful.

Yet February has plenty to offer in the life of the Church. At the beginning of the month, we celebrate Candlemas, when we remember, Jesus being brought to the Temple and recognised as the light of the world. Not a powerful leader arriving with great fanfare, but a tiny baby, carried in his parents' arms. It's a gentle reminder that God so often works quietly and unexpectedly.

That feels especially relevant just now. Turn on the news and we see world leaders speaking loudly, arguing strongly, and competing for power and influence. Jesus offers such a different picture of leadership—one shaped by service, kindness, and truth. In a noisy and sometimes anxious world, his way still speaks deeply to hearts.

There are some really encouraging signs too. Many people are noticing a growing spiritual curiosity among young people. In a world that can feel uncertain and overwhelming, younger generations are asking big questions about meaning, hope, and what really matters. That's something to be grateful for—and something the Church is called to respond to with warmth, honesty, and openness.

One way we're doing that is through Alpha. Alpha is a friendly space where no question is off limits, and no one is expected to have the answers. It's about conversation, community, and exploring faith together. Please keep Alpha in your prayers, invite friends or family who might be interested, and don't rule it out for yourself for the future—you might be surprised.

As February moves on, we also begin to look towards Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. Lent isn't meant to be gloomy. It's really about slowing down, making space, and having a chance to begin again. The ashes remind us that we're human, imperfect, and deeply loved—and that God is always ready to meet us where we are.

Outside, the days are stretching out just a little. The weather may still be wintry, but signs of new life are starting to appear. And the same is true in our faith and our church life: God is quietly at work, drawing people closer, planting seeds of hope, and inviting us all to walk a little more closely with Jesus.

With every blessing,

Revd Annett

NEWS FROM St. MICHAEL'S

Looking back at 2025

New Year message from Annette:

As we step into a new year, I find myself looking back with deep gratitude for all that God has done among us over the past twelve months. Our church family has shared moments of great joy and moments of sorrow, all held within the love of Christ and the care we offer one another.

We have rejoiced in the baptisms of children and adults alike—precious signs of new beginnings and God's grace at work. We've celebrated weddings, standing with couples at the start of their life together. And we have also known the sadness of farewells, entrusting much-loved friends and family into God's eternal keeping.

We miss those who have moved away, and we give thanks for the new faces who have made their home in our village and in our congregations where it has been a year of encouraging growth. Our ministry team has also grown, with new gifts, fresh ideas, and a shared commitment to serving our communities.

Looking forward to 2026

February sees the start of **Lent** with Pancake Day on 17th and Ash Wednesday on 18th. Lent is often a time for giving up but we will again be focusing on our **Lent Giving** campaign which secures the vital funds we need for the day to day running of the Church.

Our **Family Services** are becoming more popular so put these dates in your diary for the next few months:

Mothering Sunday 15th March – making posies for Mums.

Palm Sunday 29th March – outdoor service at the Church with donkeys!

Easter Sunday 5th April – lots of eggs!

Rogation 10th May – another outdoor service usually at a farm.

Pentecost 24th May – flying kites on Combe Gibbet.

Pet Service 28th June – bring your pets for a blessing.

CHURCH SERVICES FOR INKPEN AND COMBE

INKPEN

Sunday 1ST February – **Compline at 4pm**

Sunday 8th February – **Holy Communion at 8.30**

Sunday 15th February – **Holy Communion at 9.45am**

Sunday 1st March – **Compline at 4pm**

Sunday 8th March – **Holy Communion at 8.30am**

Sunday 15th March – **Mothering Sunday Family Service at 9.45am**

Sunday 29th March – **Palm Sunday Family Service at 9.45am**

WEST WOODHAY

Sunday 8th February – **Holy Communion at 11.15am**

Sunday 22nd February – **Holy Communion at 11.15am**

MASONS FARM

Sunday 1st February – **Youth Alpha Team at 5pm**

Sunday 8th February - **Youth Alpha Team TBC**

Sunday 1st March - **Youth Alpha Team at 5pm**

CHURCH CONTACTS

Benefice Administrator: Tamara Laing, part-time at the **Benefice Office** Email:

wbb.office.contact@gmail.com **07359 327072**

Churchwardens:

Inkpen: Charlotte Bampfylde (inkpenchurch@outlook.com)

Combe: Tina Fiertz (tel. 668529), Katherine Astor (katherine@kirby-house.co.uk).

CHURCH SERVICES AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HUNGERFORD

Our Lady of Lourdes, Priory Road, Hungerford RG17 0AF

Parish Priest - Fr Zbigniew Budyn 01635 40332

Sunday Mass - every Sunday at 9.00am

Weekday Mass - every Wednesday at 10.00am

BAPTISM ANNOUNCEMENT

Olive Elizabeth Ball, daughter of Alexander and Laura Ball, baptised 16 November 2025 at St Michael's Church, Inkpen. Granddaughter to Wayne and Linda Ball and Tim and Jo Kempster of Inkpen.

COPY DATE

Please email aliedesforges79@gmail.com by 22nd **FEBRUARY** with all features, news and events for the March edition.

THE CROWN AND GARTER – February events

Every Friday is Kids Food Friday, with children's meals served from 5pm — a perfect end to the week. Valentine's Day is on Saturday 14th, when we'll be offering a special set menu alongside our usual à la carte (no sharing dishes this time, just plenty of lovely options). On Monday 16th February we're hosting a Kids Valentine Party with face painting, a buffet, and arts and crafts for £13 per person. And finally, join us for Quiz Night on Wednesday 25th from 7.30pm — bring your team and your thinking caps.

For further details please call 01488 668325 or visit www.crownandgarter.co.uk.

INKPEN PLAYING FIELD & PAVILION

The IMPFT (Inkpen Memorial Playing Field Trust) is pleased to host several regular clubs and societies as well as being available to hire for events (parties, work functions, luncheons etc.). Please check for an up-to-date list of events / bookings under impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk



Activities and regular bookings:

NEW Art Classes	Every 2 nd Tuesday of the month @ 10am (Sept – Feb initially)	gilly.burrough@gmail.com
Climate Group	Sessions throughout the year	climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Cricket	Sundays during the season See calendar for fixtures	InkpenCricketClub.org Impft.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Daisy Chains	Every Friday 09:45-11:45 From 6 th June	clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk
Football 5-a-side	Sunday Evenings	Chris Stapleton Mob: 07909 851968
Football (Juniors to U16)	Sunday morning from 10:30am during the season	HTJFCSecretary@outlook.com
History Society	Sessions throughout the year	History.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Netball	Monday evenings Juniors 6pm / Adults 7pm (excl. bank holidays)	Sally Mob: 07444 593 560
Pop in Café	Every 1 st & 3 rd Thursday of the month @ 10am	All welcome, just “pop-in”
Stargazers	Sessions throughout the year	Stargazers.inkpenvillage.co.uk
Tennis	Pay as you play / subscription (tbc)	clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk
Yoga	Saturday 09:45 -10:45 pay as you go	Oliviaboydall@gmail.com Mob: 07554 446 502



INKPEN STITCH AND KNIT

The Stitch and Knit group will meet in Inkpen Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 4th Feb. If you haven't been before, and you enjoy handicrafts, come and join us, and bring along something you'd like to work on. There is usually someone there who can help if you want to try something new. We meet every first Wednesday of the month, and charge £2 to cover hall costs and tea/coffee. Or, if you want any further information, ring Stephanie (07713 097609), our communications contact.

THE VILLAGE HALL



Inkpen Village Hall - Regular Clubs & Activity

www.inkpenvillagehall.org email:- inkpenvh@gmail.com, tel:- 07963 647087

Carpet Bowls	Thursdays	1.30-4.30pm	Sandy Wilson, tel: 01488 668336
Darts Social Club	Mondays Fortnightly	7pm	Mark, mob: 0756 828 4750
Guitar Tuition	Tuesdays	4-8pm	Russ Timms, mob:- 07860 830515
Pilates	Thursday mornings	11.45am	Caroline McCord, Mob: 07817 503546
Market	On hold – more volunteers required	10-12.30pm	Christine, Mob: 07767 480777 Email: Humphries.c@gmail.com
Stitch & Knit	1st Wed every month	7.30pm	Stephanie Pike, Mob: 07713 097609
Seated Exercise	Wednesdays	11.30am	Kate Wiggins, mob: 07706 357801
Table Tennis	Wednesdays	4pm-6pm	Linda Pateman, email: lindapateman@yahoo.co.uk Mob: 07774 775599
U3A Table Tennis	2 nd & 4 th Mondays	1.30-3.30pm	Linda Pateman, details as above
Yoga	Tuesday Thursday	9.30am 6.30pm	Olivia Boydall, Mob: 07554 446502



Research is showing that conversation and laughter is good for your mental health and being active is good for your overall wellbeing plus learning a new skill is great for your brain.

So why not come along to the Short Mat Bowling Club which meets every Thursday afternoon from 1:30 to 4:30 in the Inkpen Village Hall. There is a small charge of two pounds which covers a cuppa and a biscuit or two!

Everyone is welcome, it's an easy game to pick up and there is plenty of friendly advice to guide you.

So come along for a friendly chatty afternoon

INKPEN MARKET



Would you like the Inkpen Food & Craft Market to return?

A small team of new volunteers is considering re-introducing the market in the near future but before that, a bit of 'market' research is required to see if enough of our community would welcome and support this.

So, the first stage is they would love to hear your thoughts. Please email: inkpenvh@gmail.com or message 07963 647087 if you'd like to see it again and if so what specific stalls, local produce, or crafts you would love to see at the market. Are you a potential Stall holder? Do you have any other ideas?

Your feedback is really important and will be forwarded to new volunteers to help determine whether this goes ahead or not.

THE INKPEN HISTORY SOCIETY

We are putting together a presentation showing Inkpen's role during the crusades.

Up until Victorian times, our church, St Michael's and All Angels, housed three effigies of crusaders but two of them were thrown out as they didn't fit in with the new style of the church. We don't know where the two missing effigies have gone to but are very keen to find out. Again, your help with this is pivotal. We believe one of these effigies was of a Spanish crusader but are not sure of the third. The effigy that remains within the church is believed to be that of Roger de Inkpen who is supposedly buried in the crypt – something that has been sealed for a great many years.

You can get a feel for what St Michael's looked like in the past, by looking at the images on <https://history.inkpenvillage.co.uk/pics.html>. Ham church didn't get the same severe Victorian make-over as Inkpen's St. Michael's, so retains a more original look.

If you would like to help us with our work on the Crusades, and specifically, Inkpen's role, do get in touch at info@inkpenhistory.uk.

In the next month we'll be trying to sort a plan to start excavating an area at the top of the hill, near the crossroads above the church.

Last year there was insufficient interest in this project but hopefully, this year there will be more people, with more spare time to help, and an interest in digging into Inkpen's past. We are also seeking professional guidance to ensure that the dig is done correctly. Again, please contact us at info@inkpenhistory.uk if you would like to take part. It is worth remembering that every area of Inkpen that was scanned by archaeologists back in 2022/2023 showed buried archaeology.

If we don't do this work now, the opportunity to do it in the future may not exist. Thanks for your interest and for any help you can provide.



NORTH WESSEX DOWNS

Over the Christmas break, the Inkpen History Society put together a set of descriptions of the historic environment for each, and hopefully every, parish within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. These are temporarily held at nwd.inkpenvillage.co.uk. Please have a look and if you find any errors, notify us at climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk. Your help in getting these historic environment descriptions right in every detail, is

important and much appreciated.

Work continues to relate each parish to all the others, in terms of terrain and historic highlights etc. so that we can clearly see how the landscape influenced the different historic eras. This work will also be added to this website.

INKPEN POP-IN CAFÉ

New Year resolutions may be out of fashion but no matter the time of year, it's always good to make new friends and renew acquaintances. Well, that's what the Pop-In Cafe is all about. In February we are holding the cafe on the 5th and 19th, that's the first and third Thursday of the month and in March it's exactly the same, the 5th and the 19th. Do come along. Bring a friend if you can. As always, there's coffee, tea (of many types) and hot chocolate, plus, cake and cakes and a truly friendly atmosphere.

There's no charge, although donations are very welcome, and you can sit on your own if you want, or join in and chat with others. The topics are whatever you want them to be.

We are particularly keen to welcome carers and those being cared for. We support Dementia UK and other charities and where we can we will help those needing assistance, to find it. It's the first step that's the hardest and we're here to make that an easy step to make.

So, remember, the cafe is on the first and third Thursdays of the month, between 10 and 12:30 at the Inkpen playing field pavilion. If you come by car, there's plenty of parking. If you're seeking a walk, the pavilion is a great place to start from and end up at. We hope to see you there.

STARGAZERS

We meet every second Wednesday of the month, 7:30 pm at the Inkpen playing field pavilion. Our track record of picking dry evenings with clear skies is not great, but we are always happy to meet, particularly when such a rare event does occur. Subs are £3 for a one-off visit or £15 for a year (June to June). We're a group of mixed abilities, happy to share experience and equipment.

In February, on the 11th, we are visiting the Marlborough College astronomical facility. If you are interested in joining us, email us at climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk. Numbers are limited so first come first served.

As part of our group's activities, we've teamed up with both the Newbury and Marlborough astronomical societies to monitor the quality of the night sky (which determines how clearly we can see astronomical objects). This is really important work which plugs in to an international framework and helps us monitor the way in which our climate is changing, the way in which new developments impact light pollution and the

relationship between climate warming and overcast/rainy nights. We are especially pleased to have new members come along and help us with this work. So, as a reminder, we're at the Inkpen pavilion on the second Wednesday of each month, from 7:30 pm. If you want to come and join us at the Marlborough observatory, get in touch asap at climate.inkpenvillage.co.uk.

THE LIBRARY BROUGHT TO YOU

Library services provide an amazing array of things that you can easily access at home. You can read the daily papers, journals and magazines, listen to audio books and even read trending books online. If you haven't tried it, do give it a go. You'll need a library number and password I think but these are easy to get from the library and it's completely free.

On your laptop or tablet, go to westberkshire.borrowbox.com/caudiobooks/featured. If you're not on the internet but would like to give it a try, or you don't know how to set it up, come along to the Pop-In Cafe, and we'll help you get started. Or, you can ring West Berkshire Library on 01635 519900, email library@westberks.gov.uk. They'll be more than happy to help you get started.

Inkpen Common Phone Box Book Exchange



The book exchange in Inkpen Common is back in action as a community mini-library and book swap. We have given it a spruce up, and will continue to make improvements in the coming months, including more shelving, a richer range of books and books of the month.

We would welcome some select, good quality donations, if you have a book or two you would like to share with other villagers! Please place these in the labelled box just inside the door.

You can find the book exchange just outside the Crown and Garter.

Please do pop in if you're passing — have a browse, borrow a book, swap a book - and enjoy!

KENNET VALLEY WETLAND RESERVE PROJECT



Thank you to Roger Hunt who organised the Carol Singing on the Lower Green Triangle and all those who came along and donated the total of £274 to the Kennet Valley Wetland Reserve project.

If you would like to find out more about this wonderful project for Hungerford and the Kennet Valley do visit our website (<https://townandmanor.co.uk/wetland-reserve/>) or follow us on social media. The Town & Manor of Hungerford hope to bring this project to Hungerford within the next two years depending on the funding raised.

If you are interested in visiting the site or having a presentation on the project, please contact claire.jones@townandmanor.co.uk



If you are interested in donating, please also contact Claire or visit our funding page on The Good Exchange <https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/20620/town-manor-of-hungerford/kennet-valley-wetland-reserve>

Thank you again to the Carol Singers.

TIME TO TALK – WEST BERKSHIRE



Time to Talk West Berkshire (<https://t2twb.org/>) is looking for volunteers to join their events team. It is a wonderful charity providing free mental health counselling for young people in West Berkshire a vital service for our community given the waiting times for public support.

We are looking for volunteers who can give any amount of time either to help out with existing events, come up with fundraising event ideas or run events. It is very rewarding being part of this charity and this team and if you have any spare time and would like to find out more, please do get in touch with either;

Tracey Leeson (Tracey.Leeson@t2t.org.uk) or
Claire Jones (Claire.Jones@t2t.org.uk).

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Parish Council and Planning Meetings are displayed on the notice boards outside the Crown & Garter Pub and on the Lower Green Triangle and online on the Inkpen Residents Facebook page and at www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk. Both Council and Planning meetings are open to the public so please feel free to attend if you wish to raise any parish issues or have any comments on any village planning applications.

Parish meeting now has an open forum session which allows villagers to raise any issues, ideas, and questions.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 9th March 2026 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

Parish Councillors:

John Corne - Parish and planning Chairman (john.corne@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

James Fisher – Parish Vice Chair (james.fisher@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Brian Cox - (brian.cox@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Mark Bates - (mark.bates@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Clare Macinnes - (clare.macinnes@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Steven Whittaker – (stevenwhittaker@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Clerk to the Parish:

Angela Boyce (clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk)

Upcoming Planning Applications:

If you have a planning application or wish to comment on a local application, then you can attend our planning meeting and comment online on the West Berks Planning Portal.

Useful Information:

Upcoming Roadworks:

Website: one.network – where you can set alerts of local road closures and planned works

Report a problem on a road or pavement:

Report a variety of problems relating to roads including drainage issues, potholes, streetlights and grass or trees that need cutting.

www.westberks.gov.uk/article/35980/Report-a-problem-on-a-road-or-pavement

or call 01635 551111

Fly Tipping:

Did you know you can report any fly tipping to West Berks Council using the online portal to identify the location of the rubbish.

www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping

Rubbish collections:

Please see below, links to useful information about rubbish collections.

[Rubbish collections - West Berkshire Council](#)

[Find your next collection day - West Berkshire Council](#)

Inkpen Parish Council can be contacted at clerk@inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk

Website: www.inkpenparishcouncil.org.uk