



# NEWSLETTER

For The Lee, Lee Common, Hunts Green, Kings Ash and Swan Bottom

## From the Editor

By Jonathan Batten

February is the shortest month taking its name from the Latin *februa* which means 'to cleanse'. In the Roman calendar it was the last month of the year named after *Februalia*, the Roman festival of purification, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement.

Considered to be the last full month of winter, with the Snow Moon at its fullest on the first day, there are some other interesting, random facts you should know about February: in 1869, James Oliver invented the removable tempered steel plough blade which revolutionised agriculture; in 1941, Teflon was patented, leading to significant advancements in non-stick cookware and other applications including coatings for some politicians.

What happens in February? Well Valentine's Day, of course. Whilst its origins are pagan, St Valentine is recognised as a saint. He is the patron saint of beekeepers, engaged couples, happy marriages, love, lovers, and young persons – all people we can relate to whether you are a faithful or a traitor.

**Recycle**



**Read**

Once you've read it, why not return this Newsletter to Shop at The Lee for someone else to enjoy?

Before you fully immerse yourself in the main text, sit and smile at the words of the song of the month written by Rodgers and Hart and perhaps most recognisably sung by Frank Sinatra:

*My funny valentine  
Sweet, comic valentine  
You make me smile with my heart  
Your looks are laughable,  
unphotographable*

*Yet you're my favourite work of art  
Is your figure less than Greek?  
Is your mouth a little weak?  
When you open it to speak  
Are you smart?*

*But don't change a hair for me  
Not if you care for me  
Stay little valentine, stay  
Each day is valentine's day*

Before you turn the page, I need to use the rest of this column to make an urgent appeal for some help with The Lee Flower Show.

### Tea tent rollover

We've had a bit of a change around: after many successful years, the dance team has stepped down and the existing tea tent team is side stepping, to segue into the new dance team. This leaves us with a role to fill – a new tea tent supremo.

In the world of the Flower Show this might seem like a crisis, akin to the recent Jurassic coast cliff collapse, which could turn into a drama, but I know there is someone out there who

can save us. Where would we be without the tea tent?

If you would like to join the team and help run the tea tent then please do get in touch. Don't feel daunted, you will receive all the back-up and support available.

Please send your contributions for the March edition to the editor, Phil Harrison, by 12<sup>th</sup> February, at [theleenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:theleenewsletter@gmail.com)

## Your letters

**Rosie Lee**

To the Editor

On behalf of the 'guests', a big thank you to the organiser of the local ReEngage Charity, Erica Cheetham, and her team of volunteers.

Once a month we look forward to the tea party hosted by the volunteers,

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and drivers who deliver us to the venue and back home again! We enjoy meeting fellow members, the lively conversations and even sometimes entertainment.

We are served with a high tea of sandwiches, scones and cake etc. with endless cups of tea. Again, a big thank you to everyone involved.

Valerie Edwards  
Ballinger

## Revd David Burgess RIP

To the Editor

I am sure by now that most of the community will have heard the sad news about the sudden death of the retired Revd David Burgess on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2025 following a cardiac arrest.



He was the Vicar of The Lee Parishes for 22 years, until progressive ill-health forced him to take early retirement and for him and his wife, Penny, to relocate to Eastbourne six years ago. There, they could be closer to family and again became active members of their local church.

David, Penny and their three children, Robert, Emma and Charlotte, moved here from a parish in Hanwell, West London, to what must have been a significant culture shock and adjustment to the quiet, sedate life of The Lee parish!

However, they adjusted quickly, getting involved in all the area had to offer, including David being an active Head of School Governors for Lee Common School, alongside his many other pastoral roles.

He was greatly respected and liked by all who knew and worked with him and he will be deeply missed.

Our thoughts are with Penny and the family.

Michelle Patte

Lee Common

## Michael Holden 1936-2026

To the Editor

Michael Holden, a former Lee Common resident, died on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Hazelmere Lodge, a local care facility.

He was born in India in 1936 where he lived with his parents and twin brothers until returning to the UK aged 16.

He was a very talented artist and worked for the art suppliers Windsor and Newton. Later he would form his own double glazing company, Wentworth Windows.

He and his wife Sue with their dogs Harley, followed by Henry, lived at Heathrons in Oxford Street, Lee Common, for over 30 years.

He was a dear friend and neighbour and will be sadly missed.

Michelle Patte

Lee Common

## Anyone for tennis?

By Helen Carleton-Smith

**E**ver dreamed of lifting a trophy on Wimbledon Finals Day? Now's your chance.

## The Lee one-set championships

We are gauging interest for a village tennis tournament – a fast-paced, friendly competition designed for everyone. Whether you're a seasoned pro or haven't picked up a racket since school, we want you involved.

Give yourself a good target and something to aim for with this year's new year resolutions.

### The (rough) plan

- **Format:** one-set 'sudden death' quick and fun matches.
- **Guaranteed play:** every player gets at least two matches thanks to our 'Plate Competition', if you lose your first round, you move into the Plate competition.
- **Flexible scheduling:** to make sure everyone can join in, matches will be played over two weeks leading



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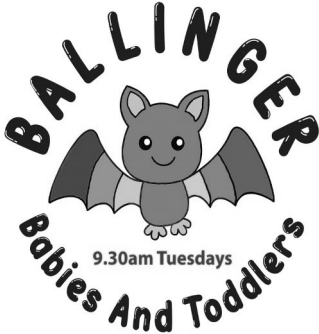
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Swan Lane, Swan Bottom

up to the final. Times will be allocated but you and your opponent would be able to move the match to a time that suits your schedules, dependent on availability.

- **All levels welcome:** the aim is to have a fun community event and some healthy exercise, not finding the next Andy Murray!
- **The big finale:** finals will be held on Wimbledon Finals Day, Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> July.
- **The cause:** all entry fees and proceeds will go toward The Lee Parish Hall.

## Who can play?

We are looking for adult singles players initially. If we have the numbers, we hope to run separate men's and women's tournaments. We want to keep this local, so it's open to residents and those with close connections to the



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village – strictly no 'ringers' from outside the area.

## No gear? No problem

If you don't have a racket or any balls, don't let that stop you. We have spares available for you to borrow.

## Are you in?

If you'd like to play, please email [alexesm@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alexesm@hotmail.co.uk) or message us on 07525 354517 by 14<sup>th</sup> February so we can see if we have the numbers to make it happen. This gives us plenty of time to finalise the schedule and for everyone to practice.

# Jeremiah was a bullfrog

By Giles Robertson

**A**t this time of year all kinds of creatures start to open their eyes, with the early long shadows and low sun, they imagine it's spring. Time to wake up.

## Joy to the world

Which nicely brings me to frogs – my aim is to get a few new faces signed up for the frog patrol. It's great fun and very informative. It suits all ages and on a wet evening, that's not cold, you might help 20-30 frogs, toads and newts across Ballinger Road, helping save them from passing traffic.

The purpose of The Lee Frog Patrol team is to save frogs, toads and newts from getting run over. We help then over the road back to the pond they were born in, to have their babies. Exciting stuff – Spring Watch right on your doorstep.

## 10 minutes of your time

It only takes about 10 minutes an evening or two a week; any time you can spare would make a big difference

to our green amphibians. Who doesn't love frogs?

If you'd like to help please email me at [giles@greenbananamarketing.com](mailto:giles@greenbananamarketing.com) or message me on 07812 917173. Please do get in touch to help with our patrol; let's make sure frogs get where they need to safely.



## Every frog has his day

Last year we managed to save 128 amphibians from being squashed, including frogs, toads, smooth newts, and crested newts.

We have new hi-vis Frog Patrol vests to keep you safe and our banners, designed by Fletcher, the winner of The Lee Common School frog logo competition, will warn drivers to slow down – a real community effort!

## Frog dreams

I dreamt of a frog last night, partly inspired by our frog patrol. Also, a few years back I put on my wellies only to find a massive toad sleeping in the toe part of the boot. They even come and visit me in my dreams!

The frog patrol usually operates from the first appearance of frogs around 21<sup>st</sup> February through to 26<sup>th</sup> March.

*[A musical interlude fits in here nicely, thanks to Paul McCartney and the Frog Chorus. Ed.]*

*Win or lose, sink or swim  
One thing is certain we'll never give in  
Side by side, hand in hand  
We all stand together*

*Play the game, fight the fight  
But what's the point on a beautiful night?  
Arm in arm, hand in hand  
We all stand together*

*Keeping us warm in the night  
La la la la  
Walk in the night  
You'll get it right*

*Win or lose, sink or swim  
One thing is certain we'll never give in  
Side by side, hand in hand  
We all stand together.*

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# Book review

*Four Letters of Love* by

Niall Williams

Review by The Lee Literati

**H**alf of us loved the book and all thought the writing by Niall Williams was beautiful and poetic in places.

Whilst the language is old-fashioned and some might find the plot fanciful, the story and the characters are both well drawn.

A very Irish book, exploring the power and pain of love and the idea that there's a soulmate for everyone – though fate can conspire to bring them together or keep them apart. Now made into a film and shown on Amazon Prime Video with a great cast.

# I'm sitting in the railway station

By John Horsman

**Y**ou may have noticed that there are new card readers at Great Missenden station.

Journeys can now be paid for by touching in and out using a debit or credit card (not Oyster) and this can be more convenient than using traditional online or ticket office purchases.

Contactless charging is based on single fares and there is a cap on the cost of travel charged during any one day or week. This works in a similar way to a travelcard for all train, tube, bus and tram travel added together.

Before using Contactless, it's worth comparing the cost against what you've previously paid online or at the ticket office. Many fares are the same or similar, but it can sometimes be cheaper to continue buying tickets



using those old methods that remain available. This can often be the case if you have a National Railcard (e.g. senior), travel at peak times or use a season ticket.

Any single fare from Great Missenden using Contactless can be viewed on the TfL single fare finder at <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/find-fares/single-fare-finder>

## Station to station

Here are some examples:

- Great Missenden to Marylebone £12.70 (P) £7.90 (OP)
- Marylebone to Great Missenden £12.70 (P) £7.90 (OP)
- Great Missenden to Piccadilly Circus £17.90 (P) £11.50 (OP)
- Piccadilly Circus to Great Missenden £16.60 (P) £11.40 (OP)
- Great Missenden to Aylesbury £7.40 (P) £5.40 (OP)
- Aylesbury to Great Missenden £7.40 (P) £5.40 (OP).

*Peak times (P) are Monday to Friday 6:30 am to 9:30 am and 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm returning from London. Off-Peak (OP) at all other times.*

The all-day cap on fares charged using the same card all day/week is £34.60 (£20 if your first touch-in is after 9:05 am. In both cases, this is 60p less than the equivalent travelcard. The weekly anytime (Monday to Sunday) cap is £116.70.

## Got a ticket for my destination

As ever, it remains cheaper to use Underground stations, Amersham, Chalfont or Chesham, using a debit/credit card. Oyster cards can also be used at these stations, onto which National Railcards can be uploaded for off-peak discounts of around 33%. The same fares apply whether you use a Metropolitan or Chiltern line train.

Happy comparing and good luck!

## Joan Worsfold

1931-2025

By Carol Addison and Stephen Worsfold



*Our mum, Joan Worsfold, sadly died peacefully on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025 with her family by her side. A celebration of her life took place at The Lee Church and The Cock & Rabbit on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Thank you to all the local people who joined us on that day. Here is an abridged version of Stephen's fitting eulogy:*

I would like to tell Joan's story, my mum, Carol's mum and nana to six wonderful grandchildren. Known to many of you here as the lady who lived in the cottage in the middle of the field, surrounded by buttercups, cows and the occasional film crew.

Joan was born 94 years ago and lived in Park Cottage for 70 years, but



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was actually born in Dunsmore, to Gertie and Fred. Gertie, Joan and her older brother, John, lived happily, but frugally, in Dunsmore with a make do and mend attitude which pervaded the rest of Joan's life and contributed to her stoic character and practical approach to life in The Lee with us and Dad.

As a child she would walk to school in Wendover and play with Robert Donat's children, the actor who won an Oscar for his portrayal as the schoolmaster in *Goodbye Mr Chips*. In later life Mum would welcome many film, television production and advertising companies who wished to make use of her idyllic home. But her head was never turned.

She started work in Reids, the bakers in Great Missenden High Street, selling bread and cakes to all, including the occasional Prime Minister. It was

here where a young and handsome plumber from Wrights the builders, called Derry Worsfold, walked in, picked out a chocolate eclair and the stars aligned for romance to blossom.

They were soon married and the honeymoon was spent in London which was a city they would both return to time and again. Joan, to find cultural stimulation and Derry, a pub where they served beer in a glass with a handle.

Leading up to this time a home was required and they alighted upon an abandoned Liberty Estate cottage with no running water or electricity in the middle of a field. Derry started to renovate and Joan started to rotavate and soon the cottage was ready for their first child, Carol, who brought much joy and wailing to the village of The Lee. Three years later I turned up and, like Carol, came into the world kicking and screaming in the upstairs bedroom of Park Cottage.

Our childhood was full of stories and endless gardening. We didn't have a lot of money, but Joan was a dab hand at providing us with skinned rabbits, jugged hares and plucked pheasants which Derry brought back from the pub under the cover of darkness. Carol and I had an idyllic childhood with a mother who would knit clothes for our toys; I especially loved my action man in his chunky knit crewneck with matching culottes.

After a number of years Joan began work at Lee Common school, first as a dinner lady and then as assistant cook, providing small children and staff with hearty home-cooked food. This was where she made great friends with Winnie and Janet who lived down the road. On Saturdays they would trundle off to Aylesbury to conquer the Bingo



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Hall, and once again rub shoulders with the stars.

They were heady days, but one particular day each year stood out from the rest. The day of The Lee Flower Show. Derry would be heavily involved and in turn, as in most areas of their life together, Joan would get on and do the majority of the work. She was always his right-hand woman, as well as his soulmate, and never complained; she just took everything that was thrown at her in her stride and gave freely of her time, brilliant brain and love, always given with good grace.

Time flies and grandchildren arrive. Carol and Michael first with James and Neil. Then Laura and I produced four more Worsfolds: Ben, Luke, Georgia and Joe. All were much loved, with my mum providing more chunky knitwear with matching culottes. We all spent many happy times in the garden eating cake and potatoes harvested from the prolific and prized vegetable plot and helping Nana with the crossword. There were always flowers in a vase in the kitchen throughout the seasons and a fire in the grate in winter.

We would all visit Park Cottage and drink cups of tea and share stories of The Lee and run after our offspring in the woods, and then sadly Dad died and Mum was on her own. But, in the months that passed after Dad left us, she brushed herself down and in the determined way she always had, took off to London and beyond, for adventures new.

Throughout the years, Park Cottage and Joan hosted film and stage stars from around the world, ranging from Monty Python, Nicholas Nickleby, Denis Waterman, who told her she "was nicked", and a smitten Albert Finney who declared undying

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love from the upstairs window, obviously for her and not as part of the television series he was in! Joan ignored his plea and continued to complete the Daily Mail crossword in record time. She loved a puzzle and was razor sharp and bright as a button until her final days.

She loved her film days in the village and the afternoon teas which were organised by Anthea and Erica, along with the other lovely ladies of The Lee.

Joan had to leave her beloved Park Cottage a couple of years ago and went to live at the Cheriton Care Home in Chesham Bois run by Judith and her friendly, kind-hearted, team.

Mum was truly amazing in so many ways, including the fact that she had never had a headache in the whole of her life and that included living with my dad.

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She was always there for us, none more so than when she provided much needed and appreciated comfort, love and strength to Michael during Carol's long and difficult illness.

As someone recently said, Joan was old school through and through. She was the most selfless person I knew and her "Hello love" every time the door opened and I waltzed in with wife, child or Dora our dog, was always so warm and welcoming.

Life in the cottage, lived simply and well, and that's as good as it gets. She was a devoted and tireless wife, a nurturing and lovely mum and grandparent, always asking about our children and so proud of what they have all achieved; and that's why she was the best little lady that lived in the cottage in the middle of the field.

# Newsletter celebrations

By the Editorial Team

**N**ewsletter contributors, distributors, advertisers and the Editorial Team celebrated another successful Newsletter year at the end of 2025 with the now traditional dinner at the Parish Hall.

## Reeling in the years

The Newsletter team reported another record year for contributions and especially thanked the loyal band of distributors, advertisers and sponsors without whom it would not be possible to produce the Newsletter. Our guest speaker was Oliver Quarrell, taking an evening off from his busy schedule at The Cock & Rabbit to recount his personal 'cock-tale', which passionately captured the journey he made from being a

customer to being the owner of our local pub. The audience was enthralled to hear of the 'pushes' and 'pulls' which had brought him to where he currently is and of his aspirations and plans for the future.



## Poetry in motion

The 2025 Newsletter Award was presented to Diana Taylor for her contributions to the Newsletter over many years and, in particular, for encouraging readers to write their own poetry for the Newsletter.

Our thanks go to many for making the evening a success, especially to our caterer, Kate Weare.

## Stranger things

The only strange part of the evening was the fluctuating electricity supply, which caused both moments of panic and amusement as we dined by candlelight and flashing electric lights (perhaps more like The Lee 100 years ago or in 1974).

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# Diana Taylor

The Lee  
Newsletter  
2025 award  
winner

By Artie Fischel



*Each month your words so brightly gleam,*

*You give our village a voice, a dream.*

*Through every verse, your stories grow –*

*You catch the heart of all we know.*

*Your poems bind our days with grace,  
A mirror held to time and place.*

*For all you give, both truth and art –  
We thank you deeply, from the heart.*

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# Money, money, money

By Adam Speller, Treasurer

Set out below a summary of The Lee Newsletter finances for 2025 (with 2024 in brackets for comparison purposes):

## Income

- Advertising £4,176 (£4,255)
- Annual dinner receipts £1,925 (£1,662)
- Total Income £6,101 (£5,917)

## Expenditure

- Printing of 10 newsletters £3,535 (£3,609)
- Annual dinner costs £1,930 (£1,690)
- Indemnity insurance £360 (£360)
- Total expenditure £5,825 (£5,659)

## Balances

- Surplus in year £276 (£258)
- Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> December £2,149 (£1,873)

Advertising in a difficult and uncertain economic environment often gets cut back, so the editorial team are very grateful for the support of 29 local advertisers and sponsors in 2025. This allows us to keep our head above water financially and leave us with sufficient reserves to ride out any potential stormy times ahead.

## Go tell it on the mountain

Please let our advertisers/sponsors know that you have seen them advertise in the Newsletter to help them monitor the impact of their invaluable support. Thank you.

The Annual Dinner is a popular village event attended by over 50 invited guests from a pool of sponsors,

advertisers, article contributors and distribution volunteers as well as the editorial team itself. It is fully funded by attendees and the historical aim has always been to break even on this event.

Hopefully, the Newsletter provides a useful forum for locals to publicise events and comment upon current and historic issues, for the enjoyment and education of everyone, at no cost (thanks to volunteers). Approximately 450 copies are printed and distributed for each issue as well as the online version on The Lee website.

## Golden fit?

By Liz Ford et al

It's a New Year, and an interesting set of cards were dealt for our first set of hands. How bold will the bidding be?

♠ Q 10 5 4 3

♥ 10 9 8 7 4

♦ -

♣ J 6 5

♠ J 6 2

♥ 5

♦ Q J 8 6 5

♣ A K Q 4

♠ A 9 8

♥ A Q J 3

♦ 10 7 4 3 2

♣ 3

♠ K 7

♥ K 6 2

♦ A K 9

♣ 10 9 8 7 2

Dealer: South  
Vulnerability: None

Bidding started with South opening 1NT, followed by West overcalling 2♦.

What next? See page 24.

## From the vicarage



By Revd Chris Haywood

It was with great sadness that we learned of the untimely passing of Revd David Burgess, the previous incumbent of the Benefices of Hawridge with Cholesbury and St Leonard's, and The Lee.

Having suffered multiple serious illnesses over the last 10 years of his incumbency, enduring them with fortitude and bravery and to a large degree overcoming them, it seems especially hard that he died so soon into his retirement and so young. Our prayers are with his wife, Penny, his children and their families as they come to terms with the grief and loss.

David was a popular and much-loved incumbent of these parishes and

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beyond and his loss will be keenly felt by the church and community alike, especially as he shared his life and ministry with so many of us and was a presence in so many of the important occasions in these parishes.

When he retired, he left a valuable and enduring legacy which remains in the lives of so many of us, and for which I, as the subsequent incumbent, am grateful. His passing is a significant grief and loss for those of us who knew and loved him.

On a personal level, Georgie and I also feel his loss. Many of you will know David married us in 2002 and we got to know him and value his ministry through the marriage preparation we undertook with him. We always found him to be attentive, kind and generous. The news of his passing was a personal grief as well as one we felt with the church and community.

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I was notified of his passing by a close friend of David and Penny. Whilst the need to let the church and community know he had died was appreciated, I was asked to share the bare minimum of information and to share the news in person with church congregations, respecting Penny's wishes and her desire to contact and share the news herself with close friends before it was circulated abroad. Accordingly, I sensitively shared the news with congregations on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January.

After such a joyous Christmas period, where we hosted many church services which captured the joy and wonder of the Christmas message of God with us, it was such a sad way to begin 2026. We can however be confident for David that God our creator and redeemer, who conquered death through Jesus and entered into glory, leads the way for all those who place their faith in the salvation Jesus achieved on the cross and offers to all.

Accordingly, we can have confidence in his victory and entrust David to God's mercy in the full assurance that as a faithful disciple who walked humbly with his God and trusted in Jesus as his saviour, as David's personal life and ministry so clearly testified, we can have a sure and certain hope for David, and indeed for ourselves, of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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# Opening up literature

By Ann Toettcher

*Et tu Brute,  
Friends, Romans, countrymen,  
The Ides of March,  
Let slip the dogs of war,  
There is a tide in the affairs of men  
which, taken at the flood, leads on  
to fortune.*

All familiar phrases? All from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025, at The Cock & Rabbit, the film of the Bridge Theatre's exhilarating production of Julius Caesar was the subject of our second, very well attended, Shakespeare dinner.

'Opening up Literature' courses are given by Mary Sharp at the Amersham Museum in Old Amersham.

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The next text, starting on 30<sup>th</sup> January, is the Aeschylus trilogy, the Oresteia in translation. One of the most interesting aspects of the course is following these stories forward through western literature, art and culture to the present day.

If you like *Game of Thrones*, you might like one of these 'Opening up Literature' courses.

# ReEngaging through 2025

By Erica Cheetham, Tea Party  
Co-ordinator for The Lee and hamlets

I was really touched to receive cards and phone calls from many of our ReEngage guests in December, warmly thanking all our volunteers for delightful tea parties through 2025. It was a great year; volunteers always feel a 'warm glow' knowing how much our monthly gatherings are appreciated by our older friends.

The year ended with a very successful Christmas party, coloured by amusing seasonal readings and carols led by our musical stars – Andrew and Louise Wadsworth!



*The Christmas party*

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

2025 had started with a very young addition to our team: Daisy French,

Valerie Edwards' granddaughter. She was 14 and volunteered within her Bronze DofE challenge for three months. At the end she reflected she'd learned new skills, felt her confidence boosted and enjoyed helping prepare and serve teas, chatting with guests and baking delicious muffins.

Our February host, Annie Gascoyne, said, "Daisy was great. She was happy to pitch in to anything and it was so helpful to have her."



*Daisy at Caroline and Mark Batchelor's tea party*

If you'd like to find out more about ReEngaging for your DofE Bronze, contact me at [erica@kingsvalefarm.com](mailto:erica@kingsvalefarm.com)

## Not all about the tea

Christopher, a guest from Ballinger, told me that these parties are not all about the tea – they provide a welcome chance to chat with his peers, "I love sharing time with younger people, but when we sit with our age group we talk about different subjects, and that can be refreshing."

## VE Day

His comment was indeed true for the party at Robin and Liz Mills' on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day weekend, when eight of our guests shared their childhood war memories

over tea – some sad, others light hearted, all vividly remembered.

Valerie's VE Day was funny, "I remember our street party in Greenford. The children were expected to do a little turn and I, aged five, was excited to sing a song my Irish Grandma taught me *Lend me Mother a Saucepan*. We were to be rewarded with ice cream, something I'd never yet tasted. Sadly, when the time came, all the adults were so drunk neither our performances nor the ice cream happened!" Poor Valerie. She can still sing it for you, if you provide ice cream.

## Why volunteer?

I asked Annie (our youngest volunteer in her mid-30s) why she joined our ReEngage when she moved to Swan Bottom eight years ago.

"I started volunteering at 17 in an Age UK shop and have always had the

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*Pilates with Louise*



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Wednesday evenings at 5:45 pm - 6:45 pm

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Thursday mornings at 9:00 am - 10:00 am

### Ballinger War Memorial Hall

Monday mornings at 9:15 am - 10:15 am

Friday mornings at 9:15 am - 10:15 am

Contact Louise for more information at 07879 843955

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mindset to do something for communities ever since. Finding ReEngage was certainly one of several ways I became easily connected with the wider community here.

“Many older people don’t have family nearby, loneliness doesn’t discriminate and they all really appreciate that bit of extra human connection we give. I would want someone to do this for me one day. It’s partly about ‘paying forward’.

“As this volunteering is always on an occasional Sunday, I can easily fit it in around family life, and it’s helpful being part of the team. Our older friends are always hugely appreciative. They are so interesting, and lots of them have lived here for a very long time. So if you’re new here, you certainly feel the connection when you join.”

## New volunteers

For our group we need new volunteers to host and/or drive our older friends the short distances to the parties. You’ll host just once or twice a year on Sunday afternoons – and you’ll need to fit six, or more, people around your dining table. Driving volunteers can help on any of the monthly Sunday parties you can make. Many hands make light work! It isn’t a huge commitment.

Please email, text or phone me to find out how you can get involved at [erica@kingsvalefarm.com](mailto:erica@kingsvalefarm.com) or on 07918 158688.

*ReEngage (formerly Contact the Elderly) is a national charity founded in 1965 with tea party groups today spread around the country. The Charity’s mission is to work within communities to end social isolation and loneliness in people over 75, to give them something to look forward to every month.*

# South Heath recommends

## *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* by Margaret Craven

By Lynda Cooke

*On a recent visit to my sister I noticed a rather tatty book on a side table by her front door. About to say my farewells, it was the title that provoked my interest and so I borrowed it to read.*

The first two chapters went by slowly but after that I just couldn’t put it down. 22 short chapters and a total of 130 pages later, I started at the beginning and read it all over again as did several other members of our book club.

It is set in the Pacific Rim National Park of Canada at a time when the centuries old culture of the indigenous First Nations tribes is under threat from the white man. The young want to leave the tribe, move to the cities and integrate. The elders see what is happening and know that standing in their way will not solve the problem. The white man treats the First Nations people mostly with contempt and suspicion.

The story is of a young Anglican priest who is unaware that he is terminally ill. Knowing this, his bishop decides to send him to live amongst one of the First Nations tribes so that whilst serving them he might also learn from them enough to prepare him for the time “when he will hear the owl call his name”.

It is the first novel for an author who had lived amongst a tribe. Her words are simple, penned with a clarity of perception, wisdom and insight providing vivid descriptions of the scenery and characters themselves, their

beliefs, folklore and way of life so that readers are made to feel that they too are very much part of the story.

Have a tissue ready at the end...

# The Lee Parish Council update

By Hayley Farrelly, Clerk

## Council budget and precept

The Parish Council meeting in January reviewed the finances of the council and agreed a budget for 2026/27. Having secured two significant grants towards playground improvements in 2025, the council approved a precept increase for 2026/27 of 4.42%. This will enable the council to continue to provide its usual range of services, with a small contingency for the unexpected.

## Staying safe and secure

A number of useful ideas were discussed at the Thames Valley Police drop-in, held at the Parish Hall in December. One of these was 'Staying Safe'. A leaflet on this has been included for every household with this month's Newsletter. It includes some simple ideas on 'Securing your home' and 'Securing your purse and bank cards'.

## Where am I?

Another rather different idea discussed was the benefits of using the [what3words](#) app to describe your exact location, which is particularly useful to emergency services.

Street addresses and even postcodes, aren't accurate enough to specify precise locations, especially in rural areas or where premises have no house number, and don't exist at all for most parks, footpaths, fields and woods. This makes it hard for people to find exactly where



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help is needed in an emergency. That's why someone created *what3words*.

## What is what3words?

The organisers of *what3words* have divided the world into three metre squares and each square has been given a unique combination of three words. Emergency services and many others are now using *what3words* to find and help people in need using the *what3words* app.

So why not keep a *what3words* record of where you are? For example, the entrance to your drive may be at *peach.friend.spot* which is easy to remember and much more precise than, for example, 'Swan Bottom'.

Visit <https://what3words.com/> to find three words for you to remember.

If websites and apps are not your thing, then the Lee Common Scouts have kindly volunteered to help residents

find the appropriate *what3words* for their house. Send your name and address to [1stleecommonscouts+w3w@gmail.com](mailto:1stleecommonscouts+w3w@gmail.com) or phone/text 07944 302351 and they will get that organised for you.



## Here on earth am I!

This idea of *what3words* is also very useful for those who like to ramble, cycle or ride. If you load the app onto your phone or visit the website then, in the event of an emergency, you can quickly pick up your exact location, or indeed you can simply tell your friends where you have stopped for a picnic!

Is it the best thing since sliced bread? Maybe!

## A year in the life of the Forum

By Ruth Fowler

**A**t the start of each year, Colin and I often look back to see how The Lee Forum has performed in the previous year.

At the start of January 2026 we had 740 members, of whom 390 are resident within The Lee Parish, slightly more than half. Just over 400 of those 740 are subscribed to receive regular

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email updates from the Forum, with many others preferring to log in at their convenience to catch up on news.

The number of posts was slightly up on last year at 1,607, with the split between categories virtually unchanged since last year. There was an increase in posts to *Wanted or For Sale* – I suspect largely down to people moving or clearing houses, who listed many items individually. There was also an increase in the number of *Lost and Found* items, almost entirely down to the increase in lost parcels. Although there was an increase in *Miscellaneous* posts, somewhat to my surprise these weren't all related to road closures but really did cover a range of miscellaneous topics.

### Please Mr Postman

We'd like to thank everyone who has used the Forum over the past year, whether posting or reading items. Although many people have posted generally useful information, we'd like to give a shout out to Anthony, our postie, who not only gives us the lowdown on postal deliveries but does more than anyone else to try and reunite missing parcels with their owners.

If you'd like to see more about how forum usage breaks down and compares to previous years, take a look at the chart at <https://www.thelee.org.uk/the-lee-forum/>

Not yet a member of The Lee Forum? You can find an application form at [www.thelee.org.uk/new-user/](http://www.thelee.org.uk/new-user/)



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# HS2: a modern -day Hydra?

By Cllr Colin Sully

Readers familiar with Greek mythology (aren't we all?) will know that the Hydra was a gigantic dragon-like monster with nine heads (the number varies), one of which was immortal. The monster's haunt was the marshes, from which it periodically emerged to harry the people and livestock. Anyone who attempted to behead the Hydra found that as soon as one head was cut off, two more heads would emerge from the fresh wound (are you with me so far?)

Over the past 10 years that pretty much describes the problem of managing the HS2 project. Whether at government level, where we have now had eight different governments trying

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to tame the beast and point it in a useful direction; at project level, where a lengthy 'reset' is still underway to try to focus the activity of the rampant beast; or at local level, where we seem to be unable to prevent the Hydra causing massive intrusions into the landscape, lengthy unexpected road closures, follies like the Bowood Lane overbridge and an engineering timescale that now appears to be indeterminate.

Of course, in Greek mythology, tackling the Hydra became one of the seven labours of Hercules, who eventually defeated the Hydra with the help of his nephew Iolaus. So, where are these Greek gods when you really need them?

### Into the New Year

While we wait for the results of the current 'reset', the project continues at the start of 2026 in pretty much the same way that it ended 2025, with a slow-down in some (but not all) of the work between Leather Lane and Rocky Lane. We are not expecting any significant changes in the status of the local lanes and roads over the next few months, however:

- night-time closures (8:30 pm to 5:30 am) of the A413 London Road will take place on weekday nights from 16<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February

- the A413 Wendover by-pass will be closed in February over the weekend of Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> (6:00 am) to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> (6:00 am), with contingency dates (in case of bad weather) the following two weekends
- footpath GMI/2 off Potter Row to/ from Great Missenden has now been closed (for the whole of 2026); discussions continue with Bucks Council and HS2 as how best to mitigate the impact during the walking season.

For the latest updates on works in the area, including the latest Advance Works Notices, visit [www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map/](http://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map/)

If you have a question or complaints about HS2 please contact the HS2 Helpdesk on 08081 434 434 or email [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)

## LCS looking forward to 2026

By Pam Batty

The New Year has begun and the staff and children at Lee Common School have hit the ground running with so much going on in the first few weeks.

The snow and ice have not deterred the outdoor Forest School lessons – after all, it’s the clothing, not the weather, that makes the difference!

### Sports fiends

Football, French and Gym clubs have started again, and the first Sports Festival of the year took place at Holmer Green School in January. The children really enjoy visiting other schools and competing with pupils from local settings.



The Nursery has welcomed some new children who have settled well and are enjoying playing with the many toys and resources available to them, in addition to making new friends. Lee Common is a great place to start the journey into school life learning social skills and routines in readiness for full time education.

Wraparound care at Lee Common School, run by Welldon Kids Club, continues to support parents who need childcare for extended hours before and beyond the usual school day. The children love the variety of activities that they are involved with which includes crafts, cookery and games.

After the success of the Christmas Fair, the Lee Common School Association has been busy organising new fundraising events for this year. The school relies a great deal on the funds raised which go towards paying



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for music lessons, extracurricular activities, resources and transport costs. Hopefully you will have already seen the advertising for the school Quiz Night next month – see further details below. It would be great to see members of the community joining this event so please do get in touch soon before tickets run out!

### There's a place

If you are looking for a place for your child, in nursery or any of the year groups within the school, please do get in touch with the office on 01494 837267 to arrange a visit. You can also see some of the activities that the children are involved in by visiting the school's Facebook and Instagram pages.

### Lee Common School

### Quiz Night

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at The Lee Parish Hall, join us for LCSA's

spectacular Quiz Night. Be ready for a night of fun, laughter and some friendly competition.

Don't miss out – this is your chance to support our wonderful village school and connect with neighbours old and new.

The quiz starts at 7:30 pm but the pay bar opens at 7:00 pm so arrive early for a drink and a mingle.

No school affiliation is needed, everyone is warmly welcome – bring your friends, family, or come solo and join a team.

Tickets are just £15 per person, including a mouthwatering sharing platter. Tables are for eight but smaller groups and individuals will be matched up, so no one misses out.

Email Helen Carleton-Smith at [alexscsm@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alexscsm@hotmail.co.uk) or text 07739 002839 to reserve your spot.

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5♦	pass	pass	pass

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East with 11 HCPs and five Diamonds replied 4♦ then waited to see how bold partner felt. With no vulnerability West bid on to 5♦ and the contract made. There were two trump losers, but it was possible to discard the Spade losers on the Club winners.

# Online safety

By the USA

*The USA recently circulated advice to members on online safety. We thought it worth reproducing an extract here.*

**B**y staying informed and cautious, you can enjoy the benefits of the internet while protecting yourself from potential risks with these practical tips for online safety:

- **Use strong passwords:** Create unique passwords using a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Consider using three random but memorable words.
- **Be cautious with emails:** Avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments from unknown sources. If an email seems suspicious, delete it.
- **Secure your devices:** Keep your computer and smartphone updated with the latest software and install reputable antivirus programs.
- **Shop and bank safely online:** Ensure websites are secure by looking for 'https' in the URL and a padlock symbol before entering personal information.
- **Protect your privacy on social media:** Adjust privacy settings to control who can see your information and be cautious about sharing personal details.

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# Dear Diary

The fastest way to let everyone in the parish know about an event you are arranging is to publish it right here in the Newsletter. Contact the Editor by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the previous month (see contact details on page 1).

## February

*Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>. No Village Walk.*

*Friday 6<sup>th</sup>. Ballinger Hall Movie Night.* Casablanca £5 per ticket – bring your own drinks and snacks. 7:00 pm. To book please email [ballingerhall@gmail.com](mailto:ballingerhall@gmail.com)

*Continued overleaf*



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*Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>. The Lee Old Church Quiz* at the Parish Hall. 7:30 pm. Email [ruth.fowler7@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.fowler7@gmail.com) for details.

*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>. Village Friends* at The Cock & Rabbit. 10:30 am.

*Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>. Arts Society Ballinger.* How to get down from a Yak. 7:30 pm.

## Church Services

**St John the Baptist, The Lee**

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>. Candlemas. Holy Communion* (BCP) at the Old Church. 8:00 am.

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>. Family Service* at the New Church. 11:00 am.

*Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>. Parish Communion* (CW) at the New Church. 11:00 am.

*Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>. Sunday before Lent. Holy Communion* (BCP) at the Old Church. 8:00 am.

*Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>. Ash Wednesday. Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion* (BCP) at the Old Church. 5:00 pm.

*Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>. Lent 1. Parish Communion* (CW) at the New Church. 11:00 am.

**St Mary's, Ballinger**

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>. Informal Eucharist* at 9:30 am to which everyone is welcome, followed by refreshments.

## Coming up

*Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March. The Lee Parish Council Meeting.* 7:30 pm at The Lee Parish Hall.

*Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. LCSA Quiz* at The Lee Parish Hall. See page 24.

*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Village Friends* at The Cock & Rabbit. 10:30 am.

*Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March. Arts Society Ballinger.* Wonder Workers and the Art of Illusion. 7:30 pm.

*Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June. The Lee Church Fête* on The Green.

*Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July. The Lee Flower Show* at the Manor Park.

## Contacts

**Buckinghamshire Council**

Many routine enquiries/reports can be dealt with online at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk>.

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If necessary you may follow-up on your enquiry with our Bucks Council, Chesham North Ward councillors:

[Mohammad.Fayyaz@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mohammad.Fayyaz@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

[Justine.Fulford@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Justine.Fulford@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

01494 792478

[Frances.Kneller@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Frances.Kneller@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

07711 859537

**The Lee Parish Council**

**Playground, allotments, benches, noticeboard and memorials:**

Contact the Clerk, Hayley Farrelly, [clerk@thelee.org.uk](mailto:clerk@thelee.org.uk) 07769 698652

**The Lee Parish councillors:**

Chair: Cllr Colin Sully

Vice-Chairs: Cllr Heather Barrett-Mold, Cllr Adam Bunce

Cllr George Baggaley

Cllr Susie Burrage

Cllr Dick Chinnery

Cllr Jamie Wilkinson

**The Lee website/forum:**

Contact [admin@thelee.org.uk](mailto:admin@thelee.org.uk)

**HS2 project**

Contact the HS2 Helpdesk on 08081 434 434 or email [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)

## Local groups

### **Ballinger Babies and Toddlers Group**

[ballingerbats@gmail.com](mailto:ballingerbats@gmail.com)

### **Ballinger Hall Horticultural Society**

Chairperson: Katharine Hersee  
07801 948650, [kjhersee@gmail.com](mailto:kjhersee@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary:  
[jenny.wooding@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.wooding@btinternet.com)

### **Ballinger War Memorial Hall**

Bookings: Jane Ogden, 837379

### **Lee Common C of E School**

School office, 837267  
[office@leecommon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@leecommon.bucks.sch.uk)

### **Lee Common Scouts**

**Group Scout Leader**, Chris Nevill;  
864881, [gsl@1stleecommon.co.uk](mailto:gsl@1stleecommon.co.uk)

**Scouts**, Enzo D'Alessandro;  
[scouts@1stleecommon.co.uk](mailto:scouts@1stleecommon.co.uk)

**Beavers**, Karen Bruton;  
[beavers@1stleecommon.co.uk](mailto:beavers@1stleecommon.co.uk)

**Cubs**, James Bruton;  
[cubs@1stleecommon.co.uk](mailto:cubs@1stleecommon.co.uk)

### **Shop at The Lee**

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### **St John the Baptist Church, The Lee**

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### **St Mary's Church, Ballinger**

Anne Ellis 837247 or Maggi Cameron,  
864790 [maggi.cameron@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maggi.cameron@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Tennis Court @ Parish Hall**

WhatsApp Pippa Hart 07785 323232

### **The Arts Society Ballinger**

Contact: Susanne Baker, 864893  
[ballinger@theartssociety.org](mailto:ballinger@theartssociety.org)

### **The Lee Cricket Club**

[www.theleecc.org.uk](http://www.theleecc.org.uk)

Secretary: Mike Harris 07788 345555

### **The Lee Flower Show**

Chairman: Jonathan Batten, 837450

### **The Lee Old Church Trust**

Secretary: Pam Garner 837501

### **The Lee Parish Hall Committee**

Bookings: Pippa Hart, 837340  
Chairman: Tony Lea, 837237

### **Village Friends**

Jules Eyles 01494 260162  
Frankie Little 07816 871622

## The Newsletter

The Lee Newsletter is published 10 times a year and distributed free to all households in the parish... and a little beyond. The views expressed in it are not necessarily those of the Editor.

We welcome letters and articles of interest and relevance to The Lee. Copy should be sent to the Editor of the month at [theleenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:theleenewsletter@gmail.com) by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month before publication.

Letters should ideally run to no more than 200 words and articles to no more than 700 words; material may be edited and may appear on the village website [www.thelee.org.uk](http://www.thelee.org.uk) unless consent is specifically withheld. Anonymous contributions are not accepted.

To advertise in the newsletter or place an insert, please contact Hannah Lane at [hannahcmlane@gmail.com](mailto:hannahcmlane@gmail.com) or on 07747 114640, by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the previous month.

If you have photographs for publication please contact Jonathan Batten on 837450 or email [battenjonathan@hotmail.com](mailto:battenjonathan@hotmail.com)

For queries regarding distribution contact Phil Harrison on 837469.

Other members of the Editorial team: Ruth Fowler, Mary Godfrey, Liz Macann, Jen Ogle, Adam Speller, Colin Sully and Louise Wadsworth.

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### **To book the Parish Hall**

'phone Pippa Hart on 837340 or  
07785 323232

#### Rates

Mon-Fri - £15 per hour  
Sat/Sun - £17 per hour  
Bank Holiday - £17 per hour

Car park only - £10  
Crockery/Cutlery £15  
(hire outside of hall)



# The Cock & Rabbit



PUB CAFÉ RESTAURANT



Important dates for your diary



14th February  
Valentine's Day

15th March  
Mothering Sunday  
Sunday Lunch 12-5pm

5th April  
Easter Sunday  
Sunday Lunch 12-5pm



**BOOKING ESSENTIAL!**

The Lee HP16 9LZ Tel: 01494 837 540



@thecockandrabbitinn



@thelee.cockandrabbit