

GREAT SHEFFORD PARISH NEWS

March 2026

Welcome to the March edition of the Parish News! As we move into 2026, we are excited to share important news, upcoming events, and highlights from the past month. Whether you're a long-standing member or new to our community, there's something here for everyone.

As the days lengthen, and we have a couple of warm dry days this week, the daffodils are coming out, the bluebells coming up in the woods, with the springs up, the Lambourn and the Winterbourne are on flood alert, but this has allowed the long awaited Flood Alleviation Scheme its first test and it appears to be working well. Those who walk the footpath to East Shefford Farm can see the water flowing from its outlet down into the River Lambourn.

Help would also be welcomed tidying the churchyard at St Mary's – first working party this year is Saturday 14th 10.00 a.m. This event is normally on the first Saturday of the month and will be so from April.

With the arrival of Spring on Sunday the local cricket club are already practising in their nets and would welcome new players and sponsors for the team. More news further on together with results of the latest Local Lottery draw.

We are missing two of our regular contributions this month due to illness, we wish Stevie from the Craft Club and Molly from Trindledown speedy recoveries to good health.

Content is down to contributors and sadly this month we are missing some. I have asked for an update on the works at the Social Club and the Swan on the River, but sadly nothing has been forthcoming. I believe the PTFA have set up recycling to raise funds, whilst I have a date for this, I have no details. I have included posters found elsewhere, but if you want your events drawn to the attention of the community, you need to provide the necessary information about them.

If you have news you would like to share, please email it to gtsheffordnews@gmail.com. Whilst the cut off date for contributions is the 25th of each month, please don't wait until the last minute to submit yours! As this is a voluntary job, I fit it in around my other commitments.

My apologies that some of you are experiencing difficulties opening these emails or even not receiving them. Email Octopus who host the sharing of these, advise as follows:-

Why should I use my own domain to send emails?

“We highly recommend sending from your own domain, as sending addresses from a free email service providers like Gmail, Hotmail or Yahoo can cause your emails to land in spam or get blocked from the inbox altogether (bounces).”

I am consulting with the Parish Clerk to try and obtain an email address through greatshefford.org.uk – hopefully will have this for the April issue.

If you are interested in helping with the Parish Council, there are currently two vacancies following the resignations of Piers Storey and Louisa Freeman. A link to the duties of a Parish Councillor can be found under the heading Council Membership in the summary of the Parish Council minutes which follow below.

Upcoming Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sunday 1st	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	St Mary's
Monday 2nd	7.30 p.m.	Parish Council	Village Hall
Wednesday 4th	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing	St Mary's
Thursday 5th	5.15 p.m.	Pilates	Village Hall
Friday 6 th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club	Village Hall
Saturday 7th	7.00 p.m.	Curry & Quiz evening	Village Hall
Wednesday 11th	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing	St Marys
Thursday 12th	5.15 p.m.	Pilates	Village Hall
Friday 13 th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club	Village Hall
Friday 13 th	12 noon	Lent Lunch	Village Hall
Saturday 14 th	10.00 a.m.	Churchyard Working	St Mary's
Saturday 14th	8.00 p.m.	Party	Social Club
		Bingo	
Sunday 15 th	10.15 a.m.	Café Church	St Mary's
Tuesday 17 th		PTFA 'Little Recyclers'	Shefford School
		collection day	
Wednesday 18th	6.30 p.m.	Bellringing	St Mary's
Thursday 19th	5.15 p.m.	Pilates	Village Hall

Friday 20th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club	Village Hall
Sunday 22nd	4.00 p.m.	Prayer & Praise	St Stephens, S Woodlands
Wednesday 25th	6.30 p.m.	Bellringing	St Mary's
Thursday 26th	5.15 p.m.	Pilates	Village Hall
Friday 27 th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club	Village Hall
Friday 27 th	8.00 p.m.	Cheese Club	Social Club
Saturday 28 th	8.00 p.m.	It's a Knockout	Social Club

Great Shefford Parish Council – February Meeting Update

The Parish Council met on **Monday 2nd February 2026** at Great Shefford Village Hall.

Councillors present at the meeting were Cllr Miranda Armstrong, Cllr Steve Bullock, Cllr Tony Coard (Chairman), Cllr Louisa Freeman and Cllr Carol Turner.

Church and Village Hall Funding Requests

A representative from **St Mary's Church** and the **Village Hall Committee** attended the meeting to discuss potential funding support.

Councillors considered requests for assistance with churchyard maintenance and

running costs at **St Mary's Church**, as well as support for a Summer Festival at **St Thomas's Church**.

The Council **resolved to award £750 to St Mary's Church** towards heating and maintenance costs, and **£250 to St Thomas's Church** to support the Summer Festival.

Further requests relating to upgrades to heating and lighting at **St Mary's Church**, and potential **Village Hall flooring replacement**, will be considered once detailed costings are available.

Planning Matters

The Council considered two new planning applications:

- Application **26/00036/MDOPO, Street Record for Spring Meadows** - modification of planning obligation – **Objection raised**

- Application
25/02916/HOUSE - a proposed two-storey rear extension at **Manor Cottage, Shefford Woodlands** – No comment

Finance

The Council approved routine payments for grounds maintenance, waste removal, and the Parish Clerk's salary.

A budget report for the period April 2025 to January 2026 was noted.

Following continued delays in receiving agreed credits from SSE relating to street lighting charges, the Council agreed to refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

Highways and Community Safety

West Berkshire Council has advised that visibility concerns at the Wantage Road crossing near **The Swan pub** are linked to structures on private land. Any improvements would require agreement from the landowner.

Community Speed Watch has recently been active, recording 17 speeding vehicles within a 30-minute period, with details passed to Thames Valley Police.

Flooding Update

Groundwater levels across the Lambourn Valley are rising due

to heavy rainfall. While nearby villages have experienced some issues, there were [at the time of the meeting] **no reported flooding concerns in Great Shefford**, which is positive news.

Village Matters

- Unfortunately, no volunteers attended the recent Community Litter Pick on 25th January; Councillors removed litter, a lot of which was left by passing vehicles. Engagement with Duke of Edinburgh students to be explored.
- The new Parish Council website is due to go live shortly.
- A request for repairs to fencing along Newbury Road is being investigated, with cost estimates to be obtained.

Council Membership

Following the resignation of Piers Storey in December, Councillor Louisa Freeman advised that she would be stepping down from the Parish Council. Both resignations were due to personal commitments. The Parish Council will look to co-opt new Members at the next meeting.

Anyone interested in joining the Parish Council is asked to email the Parish Clerk at

clerk@greatsheffordparish.gov.uk

More information on the role of a Parish Councillor can be found at: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/campaigns/becoming-a-councillor/what-parish-and-town-councils-and-councillors-do.html>

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i Objection to Planning Application 26/00036/MDOPO

The covenant in question was included in the agreement for a clear and deliberate planning purpose and has long formed an important part of the planning framework for this area. Local residents purchased their properties in good faith with full knowledge of this covenant and with the reasonable expectation that the land would be retained

for agricultural use, in the event that it ceases to be required for football. This understanding has materially influenced property decisions and expectations over many years. Altering the covenant at this stage would undermine the original intent of the agreement and erode the protections it was designed to provide. Great Shefford Parish Council fully supports retention of the covenant

- This is a summary of the meeting, the full Minutes can be found at: <https://www.greatshefford.org.uk/parish-minutes>

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 2nd March 2026 at 7.30pm** at the Village Hall. Residents are welcome to attend.

Churchyard Working party – Volunteers needed

The Churchyard working party is made up of a small group of volunteers who give up 2 hours of their time each month between March and November to help tidy the Churchyard, maintain the hedges and cutting back the ivy. We will be meeting at St Mary's 10 a.m. on 14th March for a couple of hours.

We would welcome some extra hands once a month to join our small group.

Light refreshments are provided for the volunteers.



YOUR PARISH CHURCHES PROUDLY PRESENT

CURRY & QUIZ NIGHT?

*Saturday
7th
March*

**GREAT SHEFFORD VILLAGE HALL
DOORS OPEN AT 7PM**

Enjoy
**QUIZ
RAFFLE
FOOD
BAR**

EVERYONE CAN PLAY!

£15 each - includes Quiz & Curry
(12yo - 16yo's £7)

A choice of delicious homemade curries
including vegetarian option plus bombay
potatoes, saag aloo & rice

Reserve a place by calling/texting
Denise Herrington 07867934387 or
Emma Richardson 07789621909

Teams of 4-6.....We can make up teams on the
night, or you can make up a team beforehand
Supporting and maintaining our churches

Great Shefford Under Fives

EASTER CAKE AND CRAFT

JOIN US FOR SEED SOWING, EASTER
CRAFTS WITH YUMMY CAKE AND
REFRESHMENTS ON SALE

Wednesday 1st April 2026
Great Shefford Village Hall
10am-12pm
Children must be supervised by an adult
£3 per child or £5 per family

All proceeds to Great Shefford Under Fives Registered Charity
1033744

LENT Lunches

Join us for a Soup Lunch
All Welcome

12-2 pm on:
Friday 27th February, Wickham Village Hall
Friday 13th March, Great Shefford Village Hall
Friday 27th March, Chaddleworth Village Hall

**WEST
DOWNLAND
Benefice**

People | Place | Purpose



Great Shefford Under Fives

We enjoyed the two sunny days at the start of our new term, what a joy! We headed to the park to make the most of the good weather and took our new kite. The relentless poor weather has not spoilt our outdoor learning though; we went to the woods, hung our homemade bird treats in the churchyard after admiring the snowdrops and splashed in the very muddy puddles. Our new wheelbarrow has been a source of great fun; filling it with mole hill soil to move from one field to another is a popular pastime!



Our
City
Arts
project



concluded with the children painting their Elmer clay tiles and sharing Elmer books which we gifted to the children. Rev. Mike visited and brought his guitar, I think he is

a natural Early Years worker as he has everyone joining in, singing and laughing.



We are now looking forward to a short but busy half term heading towards Easter.



Our “drop in” Monday **Baby & Toddler group**, run by Debbie and Kathryn, has been busy with many new parents, carers and their very young children. This runs on Monday mornings from 9.30 – 11am for £3 including refreshments for all so please come along with your little ones.

We do have Pre-School spaces in September so if you would like to know a little more about what we can offer your pre-school child, please do get in touch or look at our website.

www.greatsheffordunderfives.co.uk

Best wishes,

Denise Herrington

Local Lottery, season 2025-2026 – latest draw results

The new season of the Local Lottery draws were started in December. Welford Park Cricket Club and Great Shefford Under Fives would like to thank everyone who was kind enough to purchase a ticket in the draw for the current season. The winners for the latest draw were:-

Xmas Draw

- | | |
|--------|---------------|
| • £150 | Alex Woodward |
| • £100 | Ian Perry |
| • £50 | Nacy Barrett |

The draw was made by Ben Cowley on Christmas day morning.

December Draw results

- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| • £50 | Mike Carter |
| • £25 | Kingstone Gabriel |
| • £15 | Jane Cooper |
| • £10 | Joe Lawrence |

The draw was made on the first day back at preschool.

January Draw results

- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| • £50 | Peter Bertwhistle |
| • £25 | Zak Benney |
| • £15 | Adrian Bean |
| • £10 | Debbie Cripps |

The draw was made after a cricket club indoor match at Bradfield College

Just remember, the results of each draw can be found on the Welford Park Cricket Club web site at https://welfordpark.play-cricket.com/web_pages/local_lottery_winners and they are also published here in the parish magazine.

Many thanks for your support.

Voice from Welford Park Cricket Club

Just a very quick up date from the Cricket Club:-

1. Nets for the new season are now in progress so if you would like to come along please contact me and I will give you the appropriate details.
2. The club is looking for match day ball sponsors for the new season at £40 per game or £100 to cover 3. Again please contact me about this.
3. New players scorers and umpires will be most welcome for the 2026 season with a variety of matches to play in.

Ian Herrington - 07879 204696
ianherro810@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

As the days grow longer and the first signs of spring begin to emerge — snowdrops giving way to daffodils, birdsong returning to our hedgerows, and a little warmth creeping back into the afternoon sun — there is a genuine sense of new life stirring all around us. What better time, then, to embrace that spirit of renewal and join together as a community in something truly exciting?

As I mentioned in last month's magazines, this Lent, we are running the **£10 Challenge** — and we would love you to be part of it.

Inspired by the Parable of the Talents, where the master entrusts his servants with money and encourages them to put it to good use, the idea is beautifully simple. Anyone who would like to take part will receive a £10 note. That's your seed money — yours to invest however your skills and imagination inspire you. Bake something delicious. Craft something beautiful. Upcycle something forgotten into something wonderful. Grow seedlings to sell. Sew, knit, paint, pickle, or preserve — the possibilities are as varied and creative as our community itself.



All the money raised will go towards the much-needed upkeep of our beloved Church buildings across the

West Downland Benefice — buildings that have stood at the heart of our villages for centuries and need our care to continue doing so for generations to come.

To help you find customers for your creations, we will be hosting a **Market Day at Brightwalton Church on Saturday 21st March**. Come along to browse, buy, and celebrate everything our

community has made together. Whether you are a participant showing off your wares or simply a supporter wanting to shop and enjoy the occasion, everyone is warmly welcome.

To collect your £10 and sign up, please see me!

As Lent draws on towards its close, do also keep your eyes open for details of our **Holy Week and Easter services**, which will be taking place at the end of March and into early April across the Benefice. These are some of the most profound and moving services of the Christian year, and we hope to see as many of you as possible joining us to mark this sacred and joyful season together.

With my love and prayers,

Rev Mike
x

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PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Visit this unique URL
westdownland.co.uk/join-in#Stewardship

Or scan this QR code to access our dedicated PGS landing page and set up your one-off gift or regular giving online.

www.parishgiving.org.uk

Give monthly quarterly or annually by Direct Debit

Make a single one-off gift

Give anonymously

Give via social media

Increase your giving annually in line with inflation

Opt in to Gift Aid to increase your giving by 25% (if applicable)

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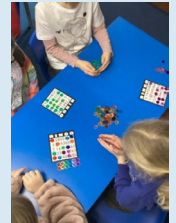
NSPCC Number Day 2026 and House meetings...

'Dressing for Digits' brought everyone in with Maths on their minds! From numbers, to shape patterns to creative interpretations- you all looked AMAZING!



We began our day with a whole school assembly that reminded us of the many different ways that Maths involved in our lives all day, everyday- reading the time, measuring, sharing, comparing and spotting patterns as just a few examples along side our reading and writing of numbers and all the varied calculations we learn to do too.

We had class challenges and tasks (do take a look at the class blogs to find out more) to work with through the morning, then leading us to our House meetings through the afternoon- full of fun and games, using cards, dice, board games and activities all using our Maths knowledge and skills!



The day also raised the amount of £42.98 to donate to the important work of the NSPCC. Thankyou to everyone for the support, enthusiasm and engagement with the whole day!

Speed stacking KS1...

"On Tuesday six KS1 children took part in a speed stacking event at Park House school. We took part in 8 different challenges including making the biggest tower but the cups were upside down, stacking giant cups and an individual time challenge. The children all had a great amount of fun trying to get as many points as they could. Well done team, you were brilliant!" Mrs Oberholzer.



Speed stacking KS2...

"KS2 had a fantastic time at Speed Stacking on Thursday afternoon. We were super speedy, very steady and worked well as a team. It was lots of fun and I was amazed by some of the individual timed scores - 3.7 was the quickest to build one 3 levelled pyramid from our group!" Mrs Chapman.



Children's Mental Health week...

Our week began with an introduction to the theme of 'Children's Mental Health Week' where we considered firstly what 'mental health' is and how we can keep our minds, as well as our bodies, happy and healthy. We considered our Christian values of Community and Compassion in relation to our own mental health and how we can



support others too.

We identified our homes and families, our school and different clubs and communities as places we belong. Then realising that in the places we belong we have positive emotions and responses such as feeling important and valued, feeling safe and supported by others.

We have worked through the week in our classes on ideas and ways we can support our own mental health like making sure we take time to do things we enjoy, spending time outside in the fresh air, sometimes challenging ourselves to try new things, taking time to talk with people we trust and feel safe with and calming breathing techniques.

Picture News and the BIG question this week...



The BIG question...

Should children have social media?

Adults in the UK are talking about whether children under 16 should be allowed to use social media, as the government is considering new rules to help keep children safe online. Some people believe social media helps children stay connected, while others worry it can affect wellbeing and mental health. During Children's Mental Health Week, the story reminds us how important it is to look after our mental health both online and offline.

The Bible teaches that to be happy we must be kind to ourselves. We need to be careful about what we watch, read and listen to, because what we think about affects how we live.





SCHOOL FUNDRAISING

More clothes -
more funds for
your organisation.
1 kg = £0.45

YOUR COLLECTION IS ARRANGED ON:

17 MARCH

TUESDAY

FILL ANY BAGS WITH CLOTHING AND
BRING THEM TO SCHOOL/ORGANISATION
WE WILL COLLECT AND WEIGH THEM

WE ACCEPT

- Good quality clean clothing (adult's, children's, baby)
- Shoes (paired)
- Bags
- Hats & scarves
- Belts
- Fashion accessories
- Swimwear, lingerie
- Jewellery
- Perfumes

WE DON'T ACCEPT

- Uniforms
- Dirty, wet, ripped, damaged clothing
- Traditional clothing
- Duvets & pillows
- Single shoes
- Toys, stationery
- Bric-a-brac & electrical items
- Books, CDs, DVDs
- Workwear
- Carpets, rugs, mats, curtains
- Hygiene items, diapers
- Linen & towels

PLEASE NO UNIFORMS & DUVETS!

RAISE MONEY FOR YOUR SCHOOL BY GIVING
AWAY YOUR UNWANTED CLOTHES

hello@thelittlerecyclers.co.uk • 0330 043 0550 • thelittlerecyclers.co.uk

Well done and thank you again to our PTFA for the Valentine's cake sale at the end of last term that raised an impressive £171.09!



Parents, carers, and families are warmly invited to join us for a

fun and friendly quiz night

on Friday 13th March at the Ibex Inn.

Come along for an enjoyable evening of trivia, laughter, and community spirit, all while helping to raise vital funds for the PTFA. Teams of up to 6 are welcome and booking a table in advance is highly recommended whether you plan to eat or not. We would love to see you there for a great night in support of our school.

Please call or email the Ibex to reserve a table for your team!

01488 639 052

bookings@theibexinn.com

We hope to see you there!