

# **FOCUS**

**May 2024**

***Relax***

***Bank  
Holiday***

***May 6th***

***May 27th***

**Eaton Bray, Edlesborough,  
Northall & Dagnall**



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## Kindly Note

*Articles and events for publication must be submitted to the Editor by the 10th of the preceding month. August/September and December/January are joint issues and articles must be submitted by 10th July and 10th November respectively. If an event falls in the first week of the month, it is advisable to submit the details into Focus a month earlier. The magazines are not delivered from the printers until the first of the month and it takes a few days for them all to be circulated throughout the villages by our volunteer distributors.*

*✍️ Editor*

*Focus accepts no responsibility as to the accuracy or content of any advertising or articles published in 'this' magazine, neither do they reflect the opinion of members of the Committee.*

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## Defibrillator Locations

These units are registered with the Ambulance Services. To access them, please phone 999. You will be given the access code and the location of the unit will be confirmed. The defibrillator is easy and safe to use. The units can be found on the outside walls of the following locations:

**Dagnall:** Red Lion Public House & Munns Farm Shop

**Eaton Bray:** The Coffee Tavern

**Northall:** The Swan Public House

**Edlesborough:** Edlesborough Memorial Hall &  
Baptist Church, Summerleys

## Edlesborough Surgery

**01525 221630** [www.edlesboroughsurgery.co.uk](http://www.edlesboroughsurgery.co.uk)

# Village Diary



## Weekly

- Mon-Sun St. Mary's Edlesborough opening times are currently very limited  
Please see notice board and website
- Mon-Fri (term) Eaton Bray Pre-school, Eaton Bray Lower School, 01525 220468, admin@eba.ec
- Mon-Fri (term) Dagnall Under 5's, Dagnall Village Hall, 9.15am - 12.15pm, Mrs Ann Tobin 07816 358342
- Mon-Fri (term) Edlesborough Primary Academy Pre-School, 01525 220431, epamanager@epa-primary.org
- Mon-Fri (term) Totternhoe Pre-school, Totternhoe CE Academy, 01582 662959, totternhoeoffice@tot.dsamat.co.uk
- Mondays Pilates, 10.45am, Totternhoe Memorial Hall, Lisa: 07832 230774
- Mondays Dagnall Community Choir, All Saints Church 7.45-9.45pm, w:dagnall-community-choir.co.uk
- Mondays (term) Movement and exercise classes with a dance flavour, Northall VH 2-3.30. Jan 01442 864271.
- Mondays Cubs (8-10½ years old), 6.30pm - 8pm, 1st Eaton Bray & Edlesborough Scout Hut, High Street, Edlesborough. Contact Liz Coates 01442 842550
- Mondays Yoga, 6:45pm, Edlesborough Memorial Hall, contact 07837 727302
- Mondays Barre, 8pm, Edlesborough Memorial Hall, contact 07837 727302
- Mondays Eaton Bray Tennis Club - 4-7pm mini / junior tennis coaching
- Mondays Eaton Bray Tennis Club - 7-8pm Adult Coaching 'Get Back Into Tennis'
- Tuesdays Pilates, 10-11am, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Nicky Roussou 07861 162680
- Tuesdays Totternhoe Baby & Toddler Group, 9.30-11.15am, St. Giles Church Hall, Ruth Allen, 01525 222468 or 07796 265174 or email ruthallen002@gmail.com
- Tuesdays Tap & Ballet Classes, JoAnn Latus School of Dance, 4-8pm, Eaton Bray VH, 07800 518654
- Tuesdays Coffee Morning, Bring & Buy, Table Top Sale, 10-11:30am, Salvation Army Hall, Booth Place, Eaton Bray
- Fortnightly Jazzercise 9:15-10:15, Eaton Bray VH, Beth 07539 739136
- Tuesdays Eaton Bray Tennis Club - 6-7.30pm Social play for all adults
- Tuesdays Berkhamsted Taekwon-do Kids, 5.45pm-6.30pm, Dagnall Village Hall, 07813 755785
- Tuesdays Berkhamsted Taekwon-do Adults, 6.30pm, Dagnall Village Hall, 07813 755785
- Tuesdays Movement is Medicine Pilates, 1:30-2:30pm, Billington Hall, moira@stjudesclinic.com
- Wednesdays Pilates, 8pm, Northall Village Hall, Lisa: 07832 230774
- Wednesdays Northall & District Age Concern Wednesday Club, 10am - 3pm, Northall Village Hall, Contact Dee on 07854 230243
- Wednesdays Art Course online 9.30 -11.30 am, contact Lorna Moore 07896 619660
- Wednesdays Art Course, Bellows Mill Eaton Bray, 2-4.30pm, contact Lorna Moore 07896 619660
- Wednesdays Pilates 6-7pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Heather Holmes, 07305 023077 pilateswithheather@mail.com
- Wednesdays Movement is Medicine Pilates, 7-8pm, & 8:05-9:05pm, Billington Hall, moira@stjudesclinic.com
- Wednesdays Stay & Play toddler group, 'Musical Monkeys' at the Eaton Bray Village Hall, 10am, £4.50 for one adult and child, £1 for extra children/adults, 0-6 months free
- (term) Edlesborough Knit, Knatter & Crafting group, 11.30 – 1.30, Edlesborough Pavilion. Contact: e-mail pavilionknitters2023@gmail.com
- Wednesdays
- Thursdays KFFPA Street dance classes, Edlesborough Memorial Hall 4.15pm-6.30pm (4 years+)  
Contact Kiri 07988161043 or visit Facebook page 'KF PerformingArts/ KFFPA' for info
- Thursdays Berkhamsted Taekwon-do Adults 6.30pm, Dagnall Village Hall, 07813 755785
- Thursdays Beavers (6 to 8 years old), 6.15-7.30pm, 1st Eaton Bray & Edlesborough Scout Hut, High Street, Edlesborough. Contact: ebebeaverleader@ebescouts.co.uk
- Thursdays Eaton Bray Methodist Church Social Afternoons, 2 - 4pm, All Welcome
- Thursdays Explorers Scouts (14-18 years old), 8pm-9.30pm, 1st Eaton Bray & Edlesborough Scout Hut, High Street, Edlesborough. Contact Simon Betts, simon\_betts@hotmail.com
- Thursdays Jazzercise 18:30-19:00 and 19:00-19:45, Eaton Bray VH, Beth 07539 739136



# Village Diary

Thursdays	Retro Line Dance Class. 11.15am to 12.45pm. Eaton Bray Village Hall. Beginners welcome. <a href="http://www.jukeboxjunction.co.uk">www.jukeboxjunction.co.uk</a> info@jukeboxjunction.co.uk 07864212171
Fridays	Tap & Ballet Classes, JoAnn Latus School of Dance, 4-8pm, Eaton Bray VH, 07800 518654
Fridays	Jazzercise 9:15-10:15, Eaton Bray VH, Beth 07539 739136
Fridays	Scouts, (10½ to 14 years old), 7.00-8.30pm, 1st Eaton Bray & Edlesborough Scout Hut, High Street, Edlesborough. Contact Mark Owen, ebescoutleader@ebescouts.co.uk, 07899 892344
Fridays	“Little Luvvies” baby ballet classes, 10am-11.30am, Northall Village Hall. Contact Emma Whittemore on 01525 376124
Fridays	Movement is Medicine Pilates, 10-11am, Great Gaddesdon Parish Hall, moira@stjudesclinic.com
Saturdays	Jazzercise 9-10am, Eaton Bray VH, Beth 07539 739136
Saturdays	KFPA Musical theatre classes, Edlesborough Memorial Hall 9.30-10.30am (4years+) Contact Kiri 07988161043 or visit Facebook page ‘KF PerformingArts/ KFPA’ for info
Sundays	Sunday Worship at 11am, Edlesborough Baptist Church, Moor End, LU6 2FL. Contact: 01525 222064 or edlesboroughbaptistchurch@gmail.com
Sundays	Karate for kids & adults, 3-4:15pm & 4:30-5:45pm, Eaton Bray VH, Contact 07500 007779
Sundays	Eaton Bray Tennis Club - 10am -12pm Social play for all adults
<b>Monthly</b>	
1st Monday	Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, The Coffee Tavern (except Jan-2nd Monday)
1st Monday	Eaton Bray W.I. Meeting, 7.30pm. Eaton Bray Methodist Church Hall. Contact Margaret Jones on 01525 220991
1st & 3rd Tues	Dunstable & District Orbit (social and charitable) Club meet at Dunstable Rugby Club at 8pm. For details contact 01525 222441 or 01582 755147
1st Saturday	St. Mary’s Church, Eaton Bray Coffee Morning, 10:30am - 12 noon (July held on 2nd Saturday)
1st Saturday	Book Swap at St Mary’s Eaton Bray, 10:30am -12 noon (July held on 2nd Saturday)
2nd Monday	Film Society, Sep to June, 2pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Graham Chappell 07980 321977
2nd Tuesday	Dunstable & District Local History Society meeting, 7.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Dunstable
2nd Tuesday	Edlesborough W.I. Meeting, 7.30 pm, Edlesborough Memorial Hall. Contact Jackie Flint 01525 221618
3rd Thursday	Edlesborough Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, Edlesborough Pavilion or as stated in Edlesborough Parish Council News
2nd Friday	Leukaemia Research Coffee Morning 2, Dunstable Road, Dagnall 10.30 a.m. all welcome. No meeting in September, June plant bring and buy, December Sherry & mince pies
3rd Sunday	Lunch club 11.30 to 2.00pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Chris Hewitt 222288
Last Saturday	Coffee Morning, 10:00-12 noon, Edlesborough Methodist Church
<b>This Month’s One Off/Annual/Irregular Events</b>	
6th	Cheddington Bowls Club Open Day, 2-5pm Cheddington Recreation Ground
11th	Appledown Dog Show & Fayre, 11am, Harling Road, Eaton Bray, LU6 1QY
19th	Cafe Church, 10am, St Mary’s Church, Eaton Bray
25th	Repair Cafe, 9:30am-12:30pm, Ivinghoe Hub

The paper used for this magazine is sourced from sustainable forests and can be recycled



Focus is online at [www.thefocusmagazine.co.uk](http://www.thefocusmagazine.co.uk)

# Village Info



**EDaN Community Transport**  
**Peter Williams: 01442 842506**

## Police Contact Details

*making neighbourhoods safer together*

**General Assistance (Recommended Number): 101    Emergency: 999**

### **Bedfordshire Police (Eaton Bray)**

T/Sgt 6268 Amy Ison, Leighton Buzzard Community Policing Team, Duncombe Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Telephone: 01582 473408

### **Thames Valley Police (Edlesborough, Dagnall & Northall)**

PCSOs Tina Hobson & Megan Dean

Charlotte Cottage, 73 Leighton Road, Wing LU7 0RD

Email: [greatbrickhillwingivinghoenhpt@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:greatbrickhillwingivinghoenhpt@thamesvalley.police.uk)

To report non urgent crime: [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)

## Village Hall Booking Contacts

**Northall:** Lorna Cubbage Tel: 07857 318696 [www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/nvh](http://www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/nvh)

Email: [northallvhbookings@gmail.com](mailto:northallvhbookings@gmail.com)

**Eaton Bray:** Norman Lee 07975 797202 & Jane Taylor 07852 586045

Email: [bookings@ebvh.co.uk](mailto:bookings@ebvh.co.uk) Website [www.ebvh.co.uk](http://www.ebvh.co.uk)

**Coffee Tavern:** 07836 240467

**Dagnall:** Bev Way 07875 462128 & Trish Owen 07762 151364

Email: [DVH\\_Bookings@outlook.com](mailto:DVH_Bookings@outlook.com)

**Edlesborough Memorial Hall:** Penny Pataky, Tel: 01525 229358

Email: [manager@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](mailto:manager@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk)

**Edlesborough Pavilion:** [booking@edthepav.org](mailto:booking@edthepav.org)

## Parish Council Contacts

**Eaton Bray Parish Council:** 07931 479663

Email: [clerk@ebpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@ebpc.co.uk) Website: [www.ebpc.co.uk](http://www.ebpc.co.uk)

**Edlesborough Parish Council (including Dagnall & Northall):** 01525 229358

Email: [clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk) Website: [www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](http://www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk)

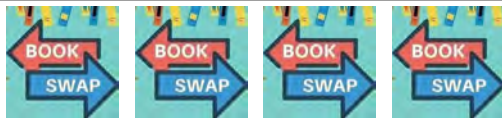


## Helpline: 07930 987064

Manned phone hours: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday  
(An answering service is available for out-of-hours calls)

Call us if you want help getting to the surgery/hospital, collecting prescriptions, minor errands, form-filling, walking your pet, on-line shopping support etc.

*We help people of Eaton Bray, Edlesborough, Northall and Totternhoe*



Take a book you want to read - Leave a book you want to share

**The next Book Swap is at St Mary's Church  
on Saturday May 4th from 10.30 – 12.00 noon**

Last month the coffee morning was very busy and we had many visitors at the Book Swap corner. We were in a new space due to electrical work being carried out and we all enjoyed the change.

I look forward to seeing you all next week.

We are getting a few more books being returned than are being taken out, which we cannot accommodate and we cannot store at the church, so we have to dispose of them.

**Please, only bring in as many books as you are going to take out.**

For more information about Book Swap please contact:

Chris Sanders      Email: [chris.sanders45@gmail.com](mailto:chris.sanders45@gmail.com)

Jenifer MacKenzie      Email: [jenimackenzie@hotmail.com](mailto:jenimackenzie@hotmail.com)

## Appledown Rescue Dog of the Month



Introducing Mark Greene, a lurcher born in June 2019. This handsome lad came to us after he had been abandoned by his owners and had been on the run for some time. Mark is a very gentle boy, but his frightening experiences had made him very nervous and it has taken a lot of time and patience by the staff to help him gain confidence. Now Mark is really starting to trust people and enjoy his walks, so we would love him to get a home where he will be helped to blossom. He likes other dogs and would benefit from living with a confident dog, pending introductions. Mark has not lived in a house before, so owners must be willing to help him understand what is expected of him. When he is settled in the right home we believe he will be a super dog. For more information please see his album on our Facebook page or email the kennels. Visit

our website for details about adoption and an application form.

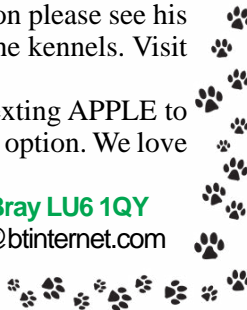
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**Appledown Rescue & Rehoming Kennels Harling Road, Eaton Bray LU6 1QY**

01525 220383 (10am-1pm & 2-4 pm) E-mail: [appledown.kennels@btinternet.com](mailto:appledown.kennels@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.appledownrescue.co.uk](http://www.appledownrescue.co.uk)

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# **Eaton Bray with Edlesborough Parish News**

**Vicar: Rev'd Joy Cousins**

**The Vicarage, 11 High Street, Eaton Bray - Tel: 01525 220261**

**Associate Priest: Rev'd Stephen Burge**

**Church Warden & Pastoral Matters: Catherine Hayden (01525 220527)**

**Reader: Gordon Gray (01525 220136)**

**Website: [www.stmaryseatonbray.org.uk](http://www.stmaryseatonbray.org.uk) Facebook: St Mary's Eaton Bray**

Throughout the year the Church of England celebrates the lives of the saints, as well as others who may not formally be saints but who have had a huge impact on the life of the Church, such as Thomas Cranmer (author of the Book of Common Prayer) and John and Charles Wesley (the founders of Methodism and the writers of so many good hymns!). On the 14th May, the Church will be remembering St. Matthias, the disciple who took the place of Judas Iscariot. Although we know very little about his life, I think that there is a lot that we can learn from his story.

All that we know about Matthias is found in Acts 1:21-26. After Judas' betrayal of Jesus and his own death, Peter argues that the twelfth disciple (Judas) should be replaced. So, the disciples pick two people, Matthias and Joseph, and cast lots to see who should become the new disciple. Before they cast their lots, Peter says that the replacement for Judas must be "one of the men who have accompanied us throughout the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us - one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22) From this, we know that although he may not have been one of the Twelve disciples, Matthias was a close follower of Jesus and had been with him throughout his ministry. This is all that we know about Matthias from the Bible – he is never mentioned again, even in the Acts of the Apostles which gives us so much information about how the disciples went out into the world to spread the good news of Jesus. The Oxford Dictionary of Saints adds that there are traditions that Matthias headed out towards the Caspian Sea, but other than that Matthias' life is something of mystery.

So, what can we learn from his life? In many ways Matthias embodies the type of person that the vast majority of Christians are: we are not all like Peter or Paul, going out into the world and making a name for ourselves, putting ourselves in danger, upsetting the authorities, we are not all great theologians or spiritual teachers; we are not all leaders of the Church, or pioneers in ministry and evangelism. Instead, most Christians are much more like Matthias: faithful, committed, and loving, but not at the forefront of Church mission and government. I like to think of Matthias as someone who went out into the world, bearing witness to the Gospel and preaching the love of God in his own quiet, unremarkable way.

But to say that Matthias was unremarkable is not a negative thing at all. Matthias, as he went out into the world changed the lives of many through his witness to the Gospel in his life and in his teaching. We do not all need to be leaders – indeed, we cannot all be leaders; but we can all live the Gospel, in our own unremarkable ways, and the world is a much better place for it. God does need leaders, God does need pioneers, God does need people to call out injustice and corruption; but God also needs saints like Matthias, people who simply get on with the task at hand, showing God's love to all whom they meet. The life of Matthias



reminds that we all have a role to play in spreading the Gospel, however small that may be. So, this month I encourage you to give thanks for all those people who, like Matthias may have lived out the Gospel in a quiet and unremarkable way, but who have had a huge impact on your faith and your own spiritual life.  
✠ Rev'd Stephen Burge



## **SERVICES AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, EATON BRAY**

**SUNDAYS: 10am PARISH HOLY COMMUNION**

*(apart from the third Sunday - see below)*

*On the First and Third Sundays of each month there is  
HOLY COMMUNION at 8am*

*On the Third Sunday of each month there is a  
CAFE CHURCH at 10am, coffee, croissants, chat and worship*

**WEEKDAYS: Wednesday at 10am HOLY COMMUNION**  
**EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT THESE SERVICES**

**Details and ONLINE WORSHIP: [www.stmaryseatonbray.org.uk](http://www.stmaryseatonbray.org.uk)**

## **Dagnall Church Services**

**Sun. 19th May 10.30 am Holy Communion**

**For any queries please contact**

**Philip Lee on 07977234453 or Dorothy Green on 01442 843237**



## **Café Church**



Come and join us for coffee, croissants,  
and an informal service for all ages

### **St Mary's Eaton Bray**

Sunday 10am

21<sup>st</sup> April, 19<sup>th</sup> May

16<sup>th</sup> June, 21<sup>st</sup> July

**Relaxed - welcoming - refreshments**



Saturday 25th  
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# Edlesborough Parish Council News

## Including Edlesborough, Dagnall and Northall

### Cllr Kevin Cabbage

This month marks the 25th year of Cllr Kevin Cabbage continuous service to Edlesborough Parish Council. Cllr Cabbage was elected to the Council in May 1999. He has always thrived on big projects and the challenges that go with them.

His first big challenge was the setting up of Edlesborough Parish Council's website, which he initially launched in April 2003. It has been progressively improved over the years since then, again with his guidance throughout.

He took over as Chairman in October 2010 following the death of the then sitting Chair, Anne Thompson, and continued in that role until handing over to Cllr Alan Williams in May 2014.

No sooner had he stood down as Chairman than he embarked on his next big project - updating the Parish's 143 streetlights to LEDs. This was eventually completed in 2015/16.

Cllr Cabbage was one of the leading proponents of the new Edlesborough Pavilion; a project that was originally conceived in 2014. It took several years of planning led by Cllr Cabbage and building finally commenced in 2019 and was completed in 2021. Although the day to day running of the Pavilion has been handed over to ECSC CIO, the Council, as the owner of the building, still has a responsibility for resolving some of the snagging problems left over from the build. Guess who's leading that on behalf of the Council!



### Celebrating our volunteer litter pickers!

Once again EPC would like to praise and thank all the volunteers who regularly litter pick in the three villages. These volunteers work incredibly hard collecting all sorts of litter, some of it extremely unpleasant! So far this year they have collected well over 25 black sacks of rubbish! There are probably many more as many of them carry out this task quietly and dispose of the litter in their own green bins.

EPC has provided the litter pickers with over **500** large black sacks in the last year.

**Over 500 sacks of rubbish is an outrageous amount of litter in just one year!**

**Let's all work together to keep our villages tidy and litter free!**

Anyone wishing to join the volunteer litter picking team should contact the Clerk for more information.

### Village Planters

The EDaN Beautification Team NEEDS more volunteers to help with the upkeep of the various planters in the Parish. Can you spare some time? If so, please contact Christine Yates, [chris@brooklyns.org.uk](mailto:chris@brooklyns.org.uk) or Lorna Cabbage, [Lomamcabbage@hotmail.com](mailto:Lomamcabbage@hotmail.com) to find out more.

### Grass & Hedge Cutting in the Villages



Now that the spring has arrived the cutting of the grass verges will resume. EPC requests that parishioners do not park on the grass verges as this causes damage to them and inconveniences the contractors.

EPC reminds all parishioners whose hedges border the pavements that they are required to ensure that their hedges are kept well-trimmed, ensuring that the maximum pavement width is available for pedestrians, pushchair, and wheelchair users.

### Traffic Calming in the Parish

The latest data collected by the Moveable Vehicle Activated Speed (MVAS) devices is available



on the Traffic Calming page of the council's website [www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/community-information/traffic-calming-in-the-parish/](http://www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/community-information/traffic-calming-in-the-parish/)

### EdleFest 2024

EdleFest 2024 will take place on 7th and 8th June. More information and tickets are available via the EdleFest website <https://edlefest.site123.me/>

Full details of the terms of the scheme can be found here on the EPC website [www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/community-information/epc-small-grant-scheme/](http://www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk/community-information/epc-small-grant-scheme/)

### NMJ Planning Applications

At the time of writing this report Council is aware that decision on the following application has been delayed again.

- 23/02966/APP Change of use to retail convenience store including associated external alterations, plant equipment, parking, and servicing area, 2 Pebblemoor Edlesborough Buckinghamshire LU6 2HZ – new agreed expiry date 24th May 2024

The following application is currently awaiting a decision.

- 23/02884/APP Erection of a commercial building for MOT and Car Service Centre, under Class B2 use N M J Motorhouse Tring Road Edlesborough Buckinghamshire LU6 2EQ.

Council is monitoring the applications for any further updates.

Should the Case Officer be minded to approve application 23/02966/APP it is highly likely that it will go to the Development Control Committee for determination, given the unprecedented number of objections to the application.

### Parish Allotments - Notice of Inspection

Allotment Inspections will be carried out at The Green, Cow Lane, Dagnall, Northall between 1st and 7th May 2024. Any tenant wishing to discuss their plot should speak to their site warden or contact the Parish Clerk via [clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk) or 01525 229358.



### Council Meetings

The next Edlesborough Parish Council Meetings will take place on:

- The Annual Meeting of Edlesborough Parish Council will be held on Thursday 16th May 2024 – in Edlesborough Pavilion. This will be followed by an Ordinary Meeting of the Council.
- The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 23rd May – in Edlesborough Pavilion. This meeting is an opportunity for organisations within the Parish to share information about themselves and/or a project they may have. The bar will be open from 7 - 7.30pm, it will then re-open again once the meeting has ended.
- There will be no Council meeting in June.
- Thursday 18th July 2024 – in Dagnall Village Hall

The meetings will commence at 7:30pm.

Parishioners are welcome to attend all Ordinary Parish Council meetings and may ask questions, raise issues, and give suggestions during the Open Forum before the formal start of the meeting. Council requests that where possible questions, issues and suggestions are submitted in writing to the Clerk by the Tuesday preceding the meeting.

The agenda and full minutes of previous Parish Council meetings are available to view on the website or from the Parish Clerk.

Clerk: Miss Penny Pataky Office hours Mon – Fri 10am – 2pm (Excl. Wed)

Email: [clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@edlesborough-pc.gov.uk) 01525 229358 Website: [www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk](http://www.edlesborough-pc.gov.uk)

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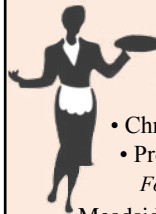
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# EATON BRAY PARISH COUNCIL

## Eaton Bray Parish Council Focus Report March 2024

*A full copy of the minutes for Eaton Bray Parish Council can be found on our website: [www.ebpc.co.uk](http://www.ebpc.co.uk). A hard copy of the minutes can also be viewed on the Parish Council's notice board at The Coffee Tavern.*

### Parish Council Website

To keep up to date with what is happening in your parish, you can get all Parish Council news and updates from the Parish Council website. The website has all Parish Council meeting agendas, minutes, financial documents and contact information as well as official sponsored events/initiatives and is the official council communications website. Visit it here: [www.ebpc.co.uk](http://www.ebpc.co.uk)



### Eaton Bray Facebook Page

Follow Eaton Bray Parish Council on Facebook, keep up to date with what is going on in the parish. <https://www.facebook.com/EatonBray>

### Eaton Bray Parish Council Accounts

A copy of the Parish Council's Finance & Annual Reports can be viewed on the Parish Council Website.

### Flooding Information

For whom to contact if you experience flooding in the parish, a list of flood support contacts is available on the Parish Council website. Visit it here: <https://www.ebpc.co.uk/flooding-information/>

[Anglian Water: 0800145145 - open 24 hours a day - to receive calls relating to the flooding - if effluent involved then they must be on site within 4 hours]

### Overgrown Hedging

It is important that owners of land next to the highway (or footpath/pavement) ensure their hedges are regularly cut back to the boundary and that trees do not overhang, causing an obstruction of roads and pavements. This is to protect the safety of pedestrians and vehicle users.

You can report an overgrown or an overhanging tree or hedge on private to FixMyStreet. If it endangers or obstructs road and pavement users, the owner will be contacted requesting that they cut it back.

If the overgrown tree or hedge is not cut back by the owner within the council's timescales, they may be served with a notice to do the work under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980.

If cutting back private hedges would disturb wild birds, the council may allow the owners to delay the work until the bird nesting season is over. This is because there are laws against disturbing wild bird nests.

### FixMyStreet

CBC have a reporting system to make reporting easier, quicker and more accurate. To report and track highways and environment problems go online/use the FixMyStreet app: <https://fixmystreet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/>

## **Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting**

Held on Monday 4th March 2024, from 7:30pm

*(Minutes ratified at the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 8th April 2024)*

### Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC)

Your Ward Councillor: Cllr Philip Spicer

Email: [Philip.Spicer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Philip.Spicer@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

CBC Website: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

CBC Email: [customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

CBC Customer Services: 0300 300 8301

- Flooding issues, still at Market Square and other areas within Eaton Bray:
  - Highways conducted an investigation in February and cleared out the road drains which has helped the situation.
  - The river Ouse drainage board have been contacted regarding their investigation. In addition, they were asked about the maintenance of clearing the grills on the gates, as these are now backing up water.

### Bedfordshire Police

- For general Police contact/enquiries: non-emergency call **101**
- For emergencies: call **999**

### Planning Applications & Appeals – March/April 2024

A copy of the Parish Council's response to planning applications can be seen on the Parish Council website or obtained by applying to the Parish Clerk.

### Recreation Ground

- Waiting for quotation for groundworks to install Gridforce flooring at the entrance to Holmans Field.
- The Rye – car park fencing. The Parish Council received quotations for a replacement fence and approved the improvement works to this area.

### Mill End Close/Waterside

The IDB [Internal Drainage Board] works have started and are progressing, however due to the bad weather and high-water levels this has meant a delay to the emergency repair works and it is expected that IDB will be on site for a few more weeks.

### Monthly Payments, March 2024

A copy of the Parish Council monthly payments can be seen on the Parish Council website or obtained by applying to the Parish Clerk.

### Parish Council Meeting

1st Floor, The Coffee Tavern, Eaton Bray

Details can be obtained from the EBPC website, [www.ebpc.co.uk](http://www.ebpc.co.uk)

- Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of Eaton Bray Parish Council, Monday 20th May 2024 from 7:00pm
- Parish Council Meeting, Monday 3rd June 2024 from 7:30pm

### Parish Council Open Office Ground floor 10am-12noon at

The Coffee Tavern, High Street, Eaton Bray

Dates/times subject to change, please check the EBPC Website for updates

- Tuesday 14th May 2024
- Tuesday 11th June 2024



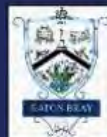
**Heidi Head, Parish Clerk**

Email: [clerk@ebpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@ebpc.co.uk) – Telephone/Text: 07931 479663 – Website: [www.ebpc.co.uk](http://www.ebpc.co.uk)

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EdleFest, our annual village music festival, is just around the corner on June 7th and 8th. You can enjoy a glass of something in the sunshine at the stunning venue of the Church on the Hill, overlooking Aylesbury Vale, before sitting down (or even dancing, if you prefer) to two evenings of fabulous live music. At the time of writing, tickets sales are at a record high, so don't miss out.

We've got another great line-up for you this year, encompassing blues, swing, americana, country, folk and indie-pop. You can check out all the details by searching online for EdleFest, or visiting [edlefest.site123.me](http://edlefest.site123.me), but meanwhile here's a quick taster.

## Friday 7th June

### ***Jaywalkers***

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### ***Em Risley Band***

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### ***Our Atlantic Roots***

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## Saturday 8th June



**Rob Heron and the Teapad Orchestra**  
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Morgan, BBC Radio 2.

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For those of you who have been to EdleFest before, you'll know how fortunate we are to host this fantastic event, right on our doorstep. For those of you who haven't – well, maybe this is the year to come and try it! Find out more by searching online for EdleFest, or visiting [edlefest.site123.me](http://edlefest.site123.me), by calling 07974 921923, or by email to [EdleFest@gmail.com](mailto:EdleFest@gmail.com). See you there!



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Good Neighbours**



Summer is here! Let's hope the weather reflects this in May. But while most of us are thinking about getting out into the garden or going away on holiday, some of our less able neighbours in the villages don't have this luxury. Some people find it difficult to get out and about or to use public transport to do shopping, collect prescriptions or get to medical appointments. This means we are in urgent need of volunteers, especially volunteer drivers. You can opt to do collection and delivery of prescription and shopping or you can opt into driving clients to medical appointments. We are always looking for volunteers so if you would like to help do get in touch with the phone number below.

Eaton Bray Good Neighbours is part of a network of similar groups operating under the umbrella of Bedfordshire Rural Charities. Our local group covers Eaton Bray, Edlesborough, Totternhoe and Northall. Our telephone number, 07930 987064, is with a volunteer Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm with an answerphone available outside of these times. We have 90 clients registered to access this help and last year we carried out over 900 tasks. Volunteers are not on a rota or committed in any way. They can just opt into a job if it is convenient so do give some thought to joining us as a volunteer. We look forward to hearing from you.

EBGN

## **Open Gardens 2024**

Since 2006, one of the social highlights of the year in our villages has been our Open Gardens event. We have had some wonderful afternoons enjoying gardens that have been opened by willing gardeners; both gardeners and visitors enjoy the event which, this year will take place on Sunday 28th July so people who have previously opened their gardens in mid-June may wish to show off an entirely fresh colour scheme and others who have not opened their gardens before may feel their garden is beautiful in July. This is a really special event in our villages' calendar. We already have a few offers of gardens but we do need some more.

Now is the time to offer to open your garden. It can be large or small, newly designed or mature – all gardens have something to offer visitors and past experience suggests that those who open their gardens are delighted by the positive feedback they receive. Do please think about it, then get in touch with Gordon Gray (220136).

**Would you open your garden for a few hours  
on a Sunday afternoon?  
If so please contact Gordon Gray on 220136.**

## **Buckinghamshire Volunteer Matching Service Matches 2000th Volunteer**

Set up in 2020 in response to the pandemic, the Buckinghamshire Volunteer Matching Service has recently placed its 2000th volunteer in the county, supporting over 140 local charities.

Anyone who is 16 or over can sign-up to the service which finds volunteer roles to suit their preferences such as location, type of role, interests, and availability.

It currently has 800 volunteer roles to fill across the county – from frontline emergency response positions, befriending and mentoring opportunities, to outdoor roles. To find out more about these volunteer roles and how to register, go to the Volunteer Matching Service; once you have completed the 5 minute form, the team will look for a role for you.

You can read the stories of some of the volunteers placed by the service, including the 2000th volunteer Evie, on the Community Impact Bucks website.



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## Whats on at Leighton Buzzard Theatre

<https://centralbedfordshire.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows>

### Film

Seize Them! - 3 May

The Phantom Menace - 4 May

Mothers' Instinct - 8 May

Back to Black 17 May

Challengers - 24 May

Kung Fu Panda 4 - 29 May

Love Lies Bleeding - 29 May

### Music

John Doyle - 7 May

The Music of Simon and Garfunkel - 10 May

Jazz Dynamos ft. Lucy Randell : Jazz'n'80s - 31

May

### Comedy

Barnstormers Comedy - 4 May

### Theatre

The Importance of Being Earnest 23 May

### Event Cinema

The Royal Opera: Carmen - 1 May

National Theatre Live: Nye - 9 May

42nd Street - 16 May

The Royal Ballet: The Winter's Tale - 22  
May

A Sadler's Wells and Universal Music

UK Production: Message in a Bottle - 30  
May

# Dagnall Community Choir

As was mentioned in last months edition of the Focus Magazine the Choir had been working hard on two pieces for competition performance at the Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts. I am pleased to report although our plan was to knock them dead with two excellent performances, we only managed to stun the adjudicator and we came second with a Commendation in our category. Still, we always say it is the taking part which is important, not the winning. If you believe that you will believe anything!



The Choirs Concert Season is now beginning to take shape, starting with a combined concert with Luton choir Cantata. This will be taking place at St Augustine's Church, Luton on the evening of June 9th.

At the end of June, the 30th to be precise, we are holding a Cream Tea and Concert at Whippsnade Village Hall, commencing at 2.30pm. Tickets are available at £12.50 per person . Please see the advert in the current edition of the Focus Magazine for further information. The Choir will be holding a stall at this years St Mary' Village Carnival, taking place on Saturday 6th July when we will be running a tombola.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the Poppy Prom will be taking place this autumn at St Mary's Eaton Bray during the afternoon of Saturday 16th November. It is always a pleasure to take part in the Poppy Prom along with South Beds Concert Band. Further details will be available at a later date.

The Choir is continuing to gain members, although like many other choirs we are fighting for men. There is obviously not enough to go around. However, if you want to come along and give it a go (a musical term) please join us, male or female on a Monday evening at All Saints Church, Dagnall. We do not ask for an audition, just the wish to enjoy singing and be part of the Dagnall Community Choir.

## May at the Grove



### Popular Music

The Searchers - 3 May  
How Sweet It Is - The Greatest Hits of Motown - 4 May  
Jaymi Hensley: Homecoming - 11 May  
Calling Planet Earth! - 16 May  
Radio GaGa: The Ultimate Tribute to Queen - 17 May  
Dire Streets '24 - 18 May  
The Fureys - 21 May  
The Marvin Gaye Songbook - 25 May

### Comedy

Barnstormers Comedy Club - 23 May

### Variety

Forbidden Nights 2024 - 10 May

### Film

All of Us Strangers - 2 May  
Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire - 9 May  
Memory-14 May  
The Iron Claw - 24 May  
American Fiction - 29 May

### Children's Shows

There's A Monster In Your Show - 7/8 May

### Live Screening

Carmen: The Royal Opera House - 1 May  
The Winter's Tale: The Royal Ballet - 22 May  
Message in a Bottle: Sadler's Wells and Universal Music UK - 30 May

*Ticket prices vary; for more information or to book, call the Box Office on 01582 60 20 80 or visit the website at [www.grovetheatre.co.uk](http://www.grovetheatre.co.uk).*

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# Potholes



Our potholes look like craters, more holes than on the moon,  
we'll be dropping onto Australia if they don't do something soon.

Vehicles swerve to avoid them, as they veer across the road,  
then bang it's often over when you hear your tyre explode.  
Roads swathed in makeshift patchwork, quick fixes that just fail,  
exasperated drivers, frustration off the scale.

Politicians blame the council, local councils have no cash,  
It's drivers who bear the burden, from the bureaucrats' backlash.

Ducks are all now swimming across the pothole lakes,  
I think I saw a hippo when I tried to use my brakes.  
It's like driving across the outback or shrublands found in Spain,  
avoiding all these potholes has become a blasted pain.

Pricey high-class vehicles are not exempt at all,  
just watch them all devalue, the writings on the wall.  
Your tyres and shock absorbers are victims in the end,  
Potholes are the nemesis and not a driver's friend.

© Teresa Harrison-Best



# A Plea for Nature

Such beauty of our country, this green and pleasant land,  
Is spoiled, and desecrated by our own inhuman hand,  
Such gifts that God has given us, adorned on blessed ground,  
Are hidden in the litter that mankind has strewn around.

A blessed gift of nature, is choked and cannot grow,  
A bird will die of choking, from that cling film that you throw,  
That glass you broke, and left behind you scattered on the floor,  
Will lacerate the pad of any foxes on the moor.  
The tins you drop behind you, when you sneer and walk away,  
Will still be there to haunt you, should you return someday,  
And there as beauty tries to shine, your litter blows around,  
For plastic takes a thousand years, to rot into the ground.

Please have a care for nature, listen to its voice,  
It simply just relies on you, it has no other choice,  
What you inter with litter, will never grow again,  
And the beauty of this greenery, will be as barren as a plain!

✍️ Mick Westwood



***Have you penned a verse with local interest that we could publish in Focus? We would be happy to accommodate any budding poets.***



## Nigel's Thoughts

Dear Friends,

My Gardener's Almanac informs me that 'May is the month of freshness. Soft greens, young shoots, crisp flowers and potential – packed seedlings'.

This time of year is a time of new beginnings, with everything bursting into life. There is no mistaking the fact that we are in the season of resurrection.

Do you remember the days when we used Tippex to correct mistakes by 'whiting them out'? Those days are long gone now. It seems to me that there sometimes came a point in our documents when there were simply too many corrections. It was time to start again. This was particularly infuriating when errors were made near the end of what we were typing! There was nothing for it but to tear the paper out of the typewriter, throw it away, and start all over again with a fresh sheet. Of course, nowadays we have spell checkers to help us, and we can correct our documents as we go along. They are not printed until they are fully ready, and hopefully as flawless as they can be.

We can and must learn to bear with one another's differences, idiosyncrasies and flaws, as God has taught us in the example of his son Jesus. We are not crumpled

up and disposed of when we do not turn out as expected. In fact God has few expectations of us, other than that we seek to be as he made us to be. This includes loving acceptance of one another and careful living with each other, together with faith and trust in how he has acted to right all wrongs through the humility, faithfulness and sacrificial love of Jesus on the cross. God raised Jesus from the dead. This is so that we can start again daily with one another, and with him. This is resurrection.

My Gardener's Almanac concludes its commentary on the month of May 'Any potential problems feel on hold in May. It is a time to relish, with the added joy that summer is just around the corner'.

Have a very Happy May as you let new life be born in you.

God bless,

✍️Nigel



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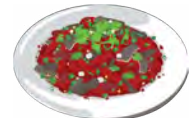


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# Asparagus & Crab Salad

## Ingredients

20 asparagus spears, trimmed  
50g rocket  
100g white crabmeat  
For the dressing  
3 tbsp crème fraîche  
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard  
juice ½ lime  
brown crabmeat, if you have it  
olive oil, for drizzling

## Method

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and cook the asparagus for 2 mins until just cooked. Drain, tip into iced water to refresh and drain again. Cut each spear on the angle into 2-3 pieces.

For the dressing, mix all the ingredients with brown crabmeat, if you have it. Toss the asparagus through the dressing, then

build a nest of asparagus spears on plates. Place some white crab meat in the centre of each nest, top with a small bundle of rocket and drizzle everything with olive oil before serving.



# Gooseberry Cream & Elderflower Jelly Pots

## Ingredients

300g / 11 oz green gooseberries, topped and tailed  
100g / 4 oz caster sugar  
600ml / 1 pint double cream  
2 gelatine leaves  
100ml/3 ½ fl oz elderflower cordial  
nice biscuits, like shortbread, to serve (optional)

## Method

Put the gooseberries in a frying pan with 25g of the caster sugar and gently heat until tender, but not pulpy.

Put the cream and remaining sugar into a small pan, bring to the boil, then simmer for 3 mins. Take off the heat and stir in the gooseberries and any pan juices. Divide the mix between 6 glasses and put in the fridge until they firm up – this will take about 2 hrs. To make the elderflower jelly, soak the gelatine in a little water. Warm the cordial in a small pan – when you see it steaming, remove from the heat. Squeeze the gelatine leaves to remove the excess water, then stir

into the hot cordial until they are completely melted. Add 100ml cold water, then transfer to a small jug.

Carefully pour a layer of the jelly mix on top of each glass of gooseberry cream – get the jug as close as possible so you don't disturb the cream. Transfer the little pots to the fridge and chill for at least 3 hrs or until the jelly is set. Serve with biscuits, if you like.



# Book Review

Courtesy of [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com)

## The Housemaid by Freida McFadden

“Welcome to the family,” Nina Winchester says as I shake her elegant, manicured hand. I smile politely, gazing around the marble hallway. Working here is my last chance to start fresh. I can pretend to be whoever I like. But I’ll soon learn that the Winchesters’ secrets are far more dangerous than my own...

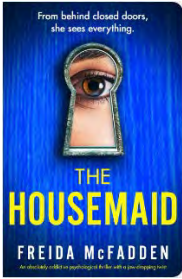
Every day I clean the Winchesters’ beautiful house top to bottom. I collect their daughter from school. And I cook a delicious meal for the whole family before heading up to eat alone in my tiny room on the top floor.

I try to ignore how Nina makes a mess just to watch me clean it up. How she tells strange lies about her own daughter. And how her husband Andrew seems more broken every day. But as I look into Andrew’s handsome brown eyes, so full of pain, it’s hard not to imagine what it would be like to live Nina’s life. The walk-in closet, the fancy car, the perfect husband.

I only try on one of Nina’s pristine white dresses once. Just to see what it’s like. But she soon finds out... and by the time I realize my attic bedroom door only locks from the outside, it’s far too late.

But I reassure myself: the Winchesters don’t know who I really am.

They don’t know what I’m capable of...



Friend of Bucks



## Age Concern NORTHALL & DISTRICT WEDNESDAY CLUB



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# Slugs and Snails

Courtesy of [www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk)

Slugs and snails can be one of the most frustrating 'pests' for organic gardeners. Here are some natural ways to deter and deal with them

Slugs and snails are often regarded as the scourge of the seedbed but they do some valuable jobs in the garden. They help to break down plant matter, disperse seeds and provide food for lots of other beneficial creatures.



But when they become a problem, here's a few ways to deal with them...

1. Protect your plants. Create barriers with slug collars, grit, wool pellets, and cloches made from plastic bottles. Keep checking daily – especially after wet or damp weather.
2. Collect slugs and snails. Put down a flat slate on the soil near your plants and check underneath it every day to remove the slugs and snails which have congregated in the dark and damp. Dispose of them as you wish – ideally putting them in a suitable natural habitat away from any cultivated land.
3. Bio-controls i.e nematodes. These are expensive to buy so make sure you follow the instructions regarding soil temperature, watering, etc, carefully to ensure success.
4. Choose trouble-free plants. Slugs and snails love hostas and delphiniums but won't go for foxglove or fennel. See below for a list of flowers not so high on their menu.
5. Wait to plant out seedlings. Slugs love young green growth, so wait until your young plants are more mature before planting out. This way they will be more resistant to attack.
6. Choose slug-resistant varieties. Potato varieties such as Ambo, Cara, Desiree, Romano, Sante and Valor have shown resistance to slugs.
7. Get the balance right. Attract ground beetles, frogs, toads, hedgehogs and birds to your garden, as they all feed on slugs. Make your garden a wildlife-friendly place by avoiding harmful sprays and creating a variety of wildlife habitats and nesting boxes.
8. Remove slug homes. Ensure piles of stones, flower pots and plant debris are moved away from cultivated areas. These can all be hiding places for slugs and snails.

## **Barriers and traps to catch slugs and snails**

Here's some useful ways to deter slugs and snails. None of them are failsafe, but they can act as a deterrent, along with other measures...

- Bottle cloches - cut the bottom off a clear plastic bottle and firm it into the soil around a vulnerable seedling/plant.
- Grit or granules - these natural mineral products form a sharp, gritty repellent barrier or suck the moisture from the slime that slugs and snails exude as they move.

- Bran, oats or coffee grounds. Put a thick layer around the plant, slugs will eat it, swell up and become easy picking for birds. But you need to renew daily, especially in damp weather.
- Spray repellent - made from yucca plant extract, spray onto surfaces and around vulnerable plants. Especially useful in hard-to-protect-places like greenhouse window frames. Needs renewing after heavy rain.
- Copper tape/rings - copper gives a natural electric charge that repels both slugs and snails. Tape is useful around pots and legs of greenhouse staging.

### **Biological controls**

Nematodes. There is a microscopic nematode *Phasmarhabditis hermaphrodita* which kills slugs - particularly small, soil-dwelling ones - but not snails. It is a native species and can be found naturally in the soil throughout the UK.

For it to be effective, however, you need large numbers and regular application. You can buy nematodes online. They are often supplied in a pack of moist clay; this is mixed with water and applied to the soil with a watering can. Slugs will be controlled for up to six weeks, after which re-application is often necessary.

Important points for success with nematode controls:

- The soil should be moist for two to three weeks after application to enable the nematodes to live. During dry spells watering may be necessary.
- The soil temperature should be above 5°C. If you live in the south, this is probably between March and October. Further north, your window is more limited. In a greenhouse, use it whenever slugs are active.
- Once opened, the contents must be used immediately. Unopened, the sachet may be stored in a fridge for four weeks or in a cool dark area for two days.

### **Slug pellets**

We would advise gardeners NEVER to use slug pellets containing metaldehyde or methiocarb, but also to avoid organic versions. So-called organic slug pellets contain ferric phosphate-based, which affects the calcium metabolism in the gut system of snails and slugs - causing them to stop feeding and die within three to six days. Although the ferric phosphate is less toxic than metaldehyde (used in other pellets), there remains the problem of the other ingredients in the tablets - known as chelators. These chemicals help bond the iron molecules and make them more toxic to the molluscs. Unfortunately, they also affect earthworms, and, if consumed in large quantities, can poison pets.

### **Flowering plants resistant to slugs and snails**

Gastropods show little or no interest in the following plants...

Acanthus, Achillea, Agapanthus, Alchemilla mollis, Antirrhinum, Aquilegia, Astrantia, Bergenia, Corydalis, Cynara, Dicentra, Digitalis (Foxglove), Eryngium, Euphorbia, Fennel, Forget me not, Fuchsia, Gallardia, Hardy Geranium, Geum, Hemerocallis, Japanese anemone, Lysimachia, Nasturtium, Nepeta, Pelargonium, Phlox, Polygonum, Potentilla, Pulmonaria, Oriental poppy, Rudbeckia, Sedum, Sempervivum, Thalictrum, Verbascum.



## Want to know more about slugs and snails?

The garden snail (*Cornu aspersum*) is usually dark or golden brown, or chestnut with yellow stripes. The body is soft, slimy and brownish-grey. As it moves, it secretes mucus which helps it glide across a surface by rhythmic waves of contraction. The snail moves at a top speed of .012 metres per second (compare this with Usain Bolt who runs a thousand times faster, at 12 mts per second.) However, unlike Bolt, the snail is helped by its mucus to go up a slope at any angle, including upside down; it can resist being pulled off a firm surface with an adhesive strength several times its own weight; rest on a surface at any angle without any expenditure of energy, and it can pass over the edge of a razor blade without harm.

Snails are herbivores, eating vegetables, fruit, flowers and cereals, as well as rotting plant material. When injured the animal produces a defensive froth of mucus to repel enemies such as aggressive small ants. When it's freezing, the snail alters its blood structure to prevent the formation of ice in its tissues. In dry weather, it seals the shell opening with a thin membrane of dried mucus. This helps retain moisture and protects it from insects.

The snail's head has four tentacles; the upper two have eye-like light sensors, and the lower two are tactile and used for smelling.

How do snails reproduce? Snails are hermaphrodite and take up to 2 hours to mate. They lay a batch of about 80 spherical pearly-white eggs into crevices in the topsoil or sheltered under stones. In a year it may lay six batches or so. That's nearly 500 young snails, which will take one or two years to reach maturity.

Slugs use their mucus as a navigation system, as it helps them follow the trail back to their tunnels and feeding sites.

The slug's mantle is an area behind the head and is made of thick flesh. If a slug is frightened or not active it will retract its head into the mantle for protection.

The keel is a ridge that runs the length of the back of some species of slug. Slugs live in dark damp places or underground. They need persistent moisture to prevent drying out. Cool weather, rain and fog are perfect for slugs. However, in a long dry spell, slugs can encase themselves in a papery cocoon-like structure and attach themselves to a wall or a tree and wait it out.

Most UK slug species are herbivorous, eating leaves, flowers, fruits, mushrooms, lichens and decaying plant material. Some, such as the Leopard slug, are carnivorous and hunt other slugs and snails.

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### Mayhem and Maybes?

For this May Focus issue I was temporarily at a loss for words to describe the goings on at our Wednesday Club, Northall. The committee, staff and volunteers teams pulled a last minute Tea/Coffee Afternoon out of the bag on the 27th March (apologies, I omitted to include the date in my last report) - to those loyal & new attendees we are pleased to record funds raised on the day neared £100! It's always amazing how the various "strings" of our merry band pull together, so thank you from us and all the members.

It's also timely, perhaps, that I draw your attention to Volunteers' Week 2024, this runs from Monday 3rd June to Sunday 9th June. Our session being on the 5th I am sure we shall have something special planned or on offer. Checkout the official website at [volunteersweek.org](http://volunteersweek.org) they are celebrating 40 years!



We, as ever, shall be more than happy to chat and discuss with you any voluntary assistance you care to offer. Maybe you've a loved one that benefits from attending our club? Maybe you're looking for some meaningful way to support the community? Maybe you've a talent for singing/entertaining? Maybe you're a whizz with a teapot and love peeling spuds? There's really no limit to how we can extend a warm Welcome.

However... Volunteering is a 2 way street so might we suggest some benefits our volunteers hopefully gain in return? Increased wellbeing, new skills, valuable experiences and increased confidence - according to The National Council for Voluntary Organisations. We'd like to add friendship too.

So here's a great big round of applause for ALL volunteers - as a club we rely heavily on our very special volunteers:

- they shop & cook for us
- they pick us up & take us home
- they support us in fundraising
- they handle all sorts of committee roles
- they always step up to help us out
- they have time for a smile & chat
- they pull out all the stops!



Ever wondered what you could gain or offer as a volunteer? Why not get in touch or maybe we'll see you very soon? Please feel free to leave your contact details on the Club phone 07854230243 and we'll get back to you ASAP. Dee, Club Leader, shall forward your info and details. Thank You.

JUNE - Outdoor Fun & Games Afternoon Wednesday 26th  
Join us for Tea/Coffee, Cake & Raffle

JULY - Carnival Stall at Edlesborough Green Saturday 6th

AUGUST - AGM election of officers TBC

SEPTEMBER - Coach Trip with Fish & Chips Lunch Wednesday 4th

OCTOBER - Harvest Auction Evening Friday 4th

**Becoming a Club Member?** Simply contact us on **07854 230243**, leave a text or message including your contact details, and our leader Dee will get back to you ASAP with a date to visit, our availability or the option to join the waiting list.

**Your donations of goods** always go a long way to support our activities: We gladly accept and appreciate regifting and items for fundraising, plus those seasonal fruits and vegetables enhance our homemade meals.

For the latest updates, information, and any last minute announcements, be sure to follow us on Facebook at Wednesday Club, Northall or on Instagram as wednesdayclubnorthall2024 for the latest - and anything I've neglected to include here.



I have a pencil that used to be owned by William Shakespeare.  
But he chewed it a lot. Now I can't tell if it's 2B or not 2B.

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<b>Coffee Morning</b> (fortnightly)	<b>Tues 10am – 12pm</b>
<b>Home League</b>	<b>Weds 2:30pm – 3:30pm</b>
<b>Champion's Club</b> Age 5+ (term time only)	<b>Weds 6:15pm – 7:15pm</b>
<b>Girls' Night Out</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs of the month)	<b>Thurs 7:30pm</b>

For more information please call into the hall,  
telephone: 01525 222087 or  
contact us by email:  
eaton.bray@salvationarmy.org.uk

## Dunstable Probus Club

Dunstable PROBUS Club meets on the second Monday of the month at Tilsforth Golf Centre and membership is open to retired or semi-retired professional and business people. The Club's main purpose is the promotion of good fellowship. Members enjoy some social activities and the occasional organised visit throughout the year and after their regular monthly lunch meetings are entertained by speakers who give talks on a wide range of topics. If you are interested in joining the Club, please contact the Secretary, Philip Savage on 01582 662462.



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# Pitstone Windmill History

The date of 1627 is the oldest of several dates found inscribed in the woodwork inside the mill building. However, as structures like this would have undergone frequent repairs it is thought that the mill was built earlier than this and that this inscription may refer to the date of a refurbishment.

Whether or not this assertion is true, the date of 1627 still makes Pitstone Windmill several years older than the similar post mill at Bourn in Cambridgeshire.

## A lucrative asset

The windmill was used from its earliest days to mill grain grown around the nearby villages into flour. Village mills like this one were once an essential resource within a community so it is no surprise that the mill has a history of providing a lucrative income for its owners and tenants.

Although the industrial revolution began to undermine the importance of a local mill through the advent of mass production, investment in the Pitstone Windmill continued.

During the 19th century much of the machinery was replaced by the Canal Company, who owned the mill until 1842, or by Francis Beesley, who sold it for £400 in 1874 to the third Earl Brownlow, owner of the nearby Ashridge Estate.

Lord Brownlow subsequently let it to a local farmer, Hawkins of Pitstone Green Farm, who ran a successful business from it and oversaw further repairs in 1895.

## Nearly lost

In 1902 a fierce gale caused extensive damage. The sails were not turned in time and blew forward, causing the tail bearing to fly through the roof and the sails to crash into the roundhouse walls.

This put the windmill beyond economic repair and it was left to decay. In 1924 the Ashridge Estate was broken up and the mill was sold off. It was bought by its tenants, the Hawkins family. The Hawkins were unable to save the windmill though and in 1937 they donated it, and access to it, to the National Trust.

## Pitstone Mill saved

After efforts to stabilise the mill proved difficult, in 1963 the Pitstone Windmill Restoration Committee was founded to raise the funds and manpower to fully repair the structure. This work reinforced existing materials and used old photographs and local memories to repair and replace the interior and exterior. By 1970 the mill was able again to grind corn.

The National Trust now carries out maintenance work on an annual basis with the help of specialists, although the sails are sadly no longer active as they cause extreme shaking and vibration.



*Photo by Eric Meadows*

*Pitstone Windmill. In the distance, each summit of Ivinghoe Beacon has an Iron Age barrow on it, and the Icknield Way is just south of them.*

## Leap into Monkey Forest

Whipsnade Zoo will transport visitors to the forests of southeast Asia with the new forest now open.

It will be the first chance for visitors to the conservation zoo to see Francois Langurs and Sulawesi crested macaques, the latter of which have moved to Bedfordshire from zoos around the UK to form a new super-troop. Visitors will see the sociable monkeys as they journey through the Monkey Forest pathway, as well as coming face to face with curled-tusked Babirusa and lowland anoa, also known as 'demons of the forest', along the way.

The new macaque habitat is the largest in the UK, covering 11,500m<sup>2</sup>, equivalent to 44 tennis courts. The habitat will incorporate a woodland of over 100 trees, providing the perfect habitat for the troop to clamber around and explore.

Along with the chance to see incredible animals Monkey Forest visitors will also learn about the threats facing the animals in the wild. Southeast Asia is a hotspot for incredible wildlife, but many species, like those in Monkey Forest, face extinction due to habitat loss and hunting.

ZSL, the conservation charity behind Whipsnade Zoo, is working with palm oil production companies in Indonesia to encourage sustainable production and practices, which helps prevent the habitat loss which threatens many of the animals at Monkey Forest. ZSL also works alongside local communities and governments in Asia to halt the smuggling of precious animals like the critically endangered pangolin, as well as the poaching of tigers.

The woodland forest setting is the perfect place for families to learn more about the incredible animals and to be inspired these Easter Holidays. To find out more about Monkey Forest head to [www.whipsnadezoo.org/monkeyforest](http://www.whipsnadezoo.org/monkeyforest).





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# Totternhoe Garden Club

The March meeting was really well attended indicating a high level of interest in the content of Sue Mitchell's talk on "Birds of Prey" or "Bray" - our speaker being very local!

As the talk unfolded it was clear that Sue is very passionate about her subject and her birds. Four owls were on display throughout the evening: Barn Owl, White Faced Scops owl, Tengmalm's owl and Chaco owl.

Sue covered the anatomy of owls, their eating habits and the importance of their well-being including daily exercise and weight checks. It was so fascinating and illuminating to be given many facts on the different species of owls and raptors all the while being ogled by the owls peering at us! Sue also highlighted the differences between owls and the hawk family and talked about falconry in general.

All of the owls were individually named and clearly are an integral part of Sue and her husband's life. At the end of the talk members were able to view them close up and, wearing a falconry glove, could hold the Barn Owl.

Thanks are certainly due to Sue for such an excellent talk and, as we are coming up to the AGM, thanks are also due to our hard-working committee and Chairman Joyce for this and previous club evenings plus the outings throughout the year.

✍️ Chris Jell

For more information regarding Totternhoe Garden Club plus the outings e-mail Joyce Murphy at [tgc@mothermurphy.co.uk](mailto:tgc@mothermurphy.co.uk) or telephone 01582 667085.

For membership queries contact Mary Payne-Cook on 01582 699485.



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## Top 10 Facts About May

Courtesy of [www.express.co.uk](http://www.express.co.uk)

1. May, from the Latin 'Maius', is named after Maia, a Roman goddess of growth.
2. May is National Asparagus Month, National Share-a-Story Month and National Burger Month in the UK.
3. In response to May 1 being Labour Day, May 2 was named the International Day of Idleness at the World Tramps Congress in Argentina in 1966.
4. The Robin Williams film What Dreams May Come (1998) is the only film with the word 'May' in its title to win an Oscar (for Best Visual Effects).
5. No US President has ever died during the month of May
6. Midsummer Night's Dream is the only Shakespeare play that mentions a maypole.
7. 'May' was the 493rd most popular name given to a baby girl in the UK in 2003. 'Mae' was 499th.
8. They were both well behind Maya (53rd), Amaya (238th), Ellie-May (244th), Lily-May (255th) and Lilly-May (274th).
9. In 2004, a study of 40,000 people showed that people born in May think themselves luckier than those born in any other month.
10. According to old superstitions, it is unlucky to marry, buy a broom or wash a blanket in May.



# Northall Baptist Church

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## Special Dates

We all remember and celebrate special dates in our lives. What special dates do you celebrate? Birthdays usually come top of the list and Christmas is very important. In Scotland New Year is often the most special day of the year. Easter, holidays, wedding days and wedding anniversary are all also very important as well as family or a friend's death.

We have always been very careful to celebrate our wedding anniversary but some don't.

The church has lots of special days to celebrate with Christmas and Easter top of the list. These are special as Christmas celebrates the birth of our Lord Jesus while Easter remembers the death and resurrection of Jesus. In His death He paid the price of our sin and coming here He became the Saviour of the World.

So, Easter wasn't the end of the story of Jesus life. He rose again in his resurrection body, which showed the marks of his sufferings on the cross. The nail marks in his hands and the wound in his side. He was able to talk to his disciples saying 'Peace be with you'. I think they were feeling anything but peace. They were scared. They were having to hide and had locked themselves away. They didn't understand properly what had happened.

Then the risen Jesus appeared, arriving amongst them without coming through the door. Understandably they thought they were seeing a ghost. Jesus explained that he wasn't a spirit as they could see that he had flesh and bones. Thomas particularly had said that he wouldn't believe without the evidence. A living Jesus was the evidence he needed.

Over 40 days the Bible describes at least 8 appearances, several of them to his disciples but one of them was to over 500 at one time. This was something the disciples were getting used to but things were about to change again.

In May we remember the ascension of Jesus back into heaven. Then a 10 day wait for the Holy Spirit to arrive to those who believe. Most churches around the whole world remember the time between Ascension Day, on 9th May 2024 and Pentecost on 19th May 2024 with a special time of prayer for more people to come to know and love Jesus. We will be praying that God's Spirit might work in the lives of those who have not yet responded to the love of Jesus for them.

The Holy Spirit is described as a Dove, Fire, Wind, the Sanctifier, the Comforter, the Giver of graces and is the 3rd person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is therefore in us and with us, so we are never alone. A calming and supporting presence. We'll be praying for you.

Our Sunday services are in the Church at 11 am. We'd love you to join us for our worship and song. You will get a warm welcome. For those unable to attend in person we also stream our services.



*Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay*

For those interested in the history of Northall Baptist Church, a free copy of the booklet, *Rebels in Green Pastures* can be supplied or downloaded from our website: <http://northallbaptistchurch.org/>

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# Eaton Bray History

## Eaton Bray Vicarages

(courtesy of the Bedfordshire Archives)



*The Vicarage in the early 19th century*

The earliest reference to the vicarage at Eaton Bray comes in a terrier of church property compiled by the Archdeaconry of Bedford in 1708. The house was built of timber (presumably it was half-timbered with render infill) and had a thatched roof. It had three rooms downstairs, two with brick floors, one with an earthen floor and five bed chambers upstairs. Barns and stables lay outside. A painting of this property survives from the early 19th century.

A photograph of the Vicarage from about 1920 reveals a totally different building, so presumably the old property was pulled down and replaced. Plans dated 1828 by Robert Feake Nixon, surveyor and builder of Woburn are held at the archive of the Diocese of Lincoln. It seems likely that the newer building was built on or near the same spot as it would have occupied the glebe land. The only map of Eaton Bray to pre-date this, a strip map of 1819 simply shows some properties in the area of the later vicarage, but they are simple rectangles to denote a building rather than an attempt to trace the shape of the building itself. This is not surprising as the map is simply designed to show land ownership.

The Rating and Valuation Act 1925 specified that every building and piece of land in the country was to be assessed to determine its rateable value. Eaton Bray, like much of the county, was assessed in 1927 and the valuer visiting the vicarage found that it stood in 1.893 acres. The building comprised three drawing rooms, a work room, a kitchen, a scullery and pantry with seven bedrooms and a bathroom above. A brick and slate



*The Vicarage about 1920*

coal shed, a store and a W. C. stood outside together with a weather-boarded garage, (“tenants – moveable”). The valuer was not impressed commenting: “Not up to much” Papers held at the Ely Diocesan Archive from 1873 show alterations and additions to the vicarage at that date.

The new vicarage was 27 The Comp and it served as an interim measure before a new vicarage could be built. The Comp seems to have been used from 1970 to about 1973, when the Vicarage moved to 11 High Street.



*The Vicarage drive July 2012*



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# Down the Lane



The best place for gardening at the moment is the greenhouse, escaping the worst of the weather. I might even get round to tidying it up properly! As usual I seem to have a large number of plastic pots of various sizes and shapes. At least they can be recycled with our household waste if they can't be re-used.

I've potted up my dahlia tubers which I dug up last year. Some of them are already sprouting. Every year I'm amazed that the dry, grey

tubers spring back to life, except, of course, last year. I left a few in the ground so I will be surprised if they survive all the rain we have had.

There's a little woodland area in the garden underneath a couple of field maples. The ground is fairly moist as a good layer of leaf mould has collected over the years. Lots of plants have established themselves and are self-seeding and have suppressed the weeds. The hellebores have spread, the winter aconites give a glorious burst of colour, at last the foxgloves are growing. It has taken several years for them to decide to grow and I have transplanted seedlings and spread seed in previous years. A small clump of lily of the valley is now established. They must have the right conditions because I had tried growing them in other parts of the garden without success. I hope I don't regret planting them because they can be invasive. A cyclamen has seeded itself so I'll be interested to see how quickly it spreads. The euphorbia looks pretty at this time of year.

The clematis plants are rampant this year and some are just coming into flower. I haven't had time to cut them back so they will make a marvelous display trailing over shrubs and walls.

The muntjac which visits our garden has a taste for garlic and alliums but not weeds, unfortunately. It has eaten the leaf tips of garlic I planted and sampled various alliums around the garden. I hope it doesn't like the flowers! It also has an expensive taste for the bark of fruit trees and roses. I won't replace the roses that have died and am wondering what to plant instead that is muntjac proof. It's not as though there isn't plenty of grass around the garden.

I'm looking forward to an abundant crop of fruits this year after all the glorious blossom.

✍️ Sally Taylor



*The tulips are surviving the wind*



# Eaton Bray Cricket Club

Good numbers have been attending works party's and we are ready to start an historic 110th year as Eaton Bray Cricket Club.

## Dates for the diary.

April 21st Friendly Sunday X1 v North Crawley home.

May 4th Friendly Cockfosters CC v Eaton Bray X1 away.

## Off field events.

May 11th Race Night

June 15th Poker Night

July 13th VR Night

August 3rd Darts Night.

Eaton Bray Cricket Club are always looking out for new players of any age or ability. We run 2 senior teams in the Herts League and a senior side in the Beds Sunday League. 5 Junior teams at aged U9 U11 2xU13 U15 and a Ladies Softball team. If you would like to join a progressive family friendly club pop down to the Rye Gardens or get in touch via Facebook or X @EatonBrayCC

The club would like to thank our sponsors Meadow Marquees, The Westrope Butchery, Fine & Country Homes, Prestige Kitchens and the Focus Magazine for their continued support.

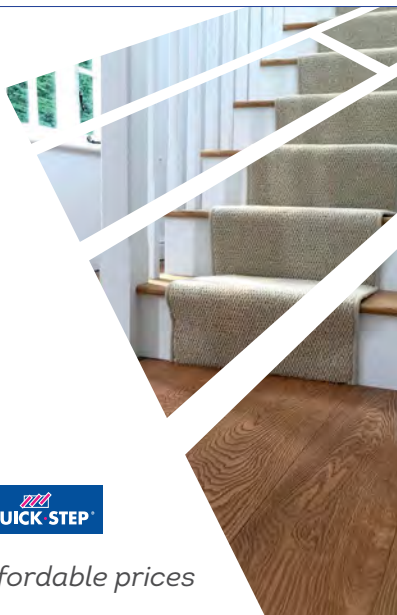
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# What to do in the Garden in May

**May has arrived and the days are getting warmer and longer. Summer is on its way and it's time to tidy up spring plants, plant out summer flowers and get planning for autumn.**

## **Timely Tips for May**

1. Start planting out summer bedding plants towards the end of this month in warmer parts of the country.
2. Look after your finished spring bulbs for next year. Once they've gone over, resist the temptation to cut back the foliage. Instead, let it die and break down on its own and add liquid fertiliser all around the clumps. This will give you an even better display next spring.
3. Remember to open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days. You can also damp down your greenhouse on hot days to increase humidity and deter red spider mites.
4. Optimise your watering regime – watering early and late to get the most out of your water – and start collecting and recycling water whenever possible.

## **In the flower garden in May**



- Thin out drifts of hardy annuals.
- Harden off half-hardy plants by leaving them outside during the day and bringing them back under cover at night for 7 to 10 days before planting outdoors.
- Plant summer hanging baskets, adding good-quality compost, slow-release fertiliser and water-retaining crystals, to keep them in top condition. Protect them from late frost under cover. Try planting petunia 'Pegasus Wine Splash' for cascading stems of brightly spotted blooms.
- Harden off dahlias and tender exotics such as canna 'Tropicanna' lilies for planting as soon as the risk of frost has passed.
- Continue dividing herbaceous border perennials to improve vigour and create new plants.
- Divide established clumps of hostas as they come into growth.
- Trim back spreading plants such as aubrieta, alyssum and candytuft (*Iberis* sp.) after they've flowered, to encourage fresh new growth and more blooms.
- Towards the end of the month, keep an eye out for powdery mildew on flowering shrubs and flowers, like rhododendrons. Treat with fungicide to prevent further spread.
- Lift forget-me-nots to prevent heavy self-seeding and reduce spreading.
- Prune penstemons now – cut all the old shoots back to the base, providing there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves.
- Lightly cut back & tidy up late-flowering honeysuckle. Leave any big pruning jobs until winter.
- You've still got time to plant any container-grown evergreen climbing shrubs now the risk of frost has passed.
- Take cuttings of tender perennials, such as fuchsia and pelargoniums (tender geraniums). The new shoots of hardy perennials can also be used

for cuttings.

- Take softwood cuttings of shrubby herbs (such as sage and lemon verbena).
- Prune out overcrowded and dead stems of early-flowering clematis (*C. alpina*, *C. cirrhosa*, *C. macropetala*, *C. armandii*, and their cultivars) after flowering.
- Tie in rambling and climbing roses. Laying the stems horizontally will help to produce more flowers.
- Tie in sweet pea plants with sweet pea support rings to encourage them to climb.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after flowering.
- Cut back flowered shoots of choisya to promote a second flush of flowers in autumn.
- Trim lavender plants, cutting off old flower heads and about 2.5 cm (1 inch) of the current year's growth.
- Feed and water container plants.
- Top-dress permanent pot plants to refresh the compost.
- Supplement container plants with balanced liquid feed every 2-4 weeks to promote healthy growth.
- Closely inspect plants for pests and diseases – early prevention is much easier than curing an infestation.
- Pick off any larvae or lily beetle from rosemary or viburnum plants as soon as you spot them to prevent an infestation.
- Look out for signs of blackspot on roses. If discovered, treat it with a systemic fungicide.
- Continue to weed beds and borders. This reduces your plants' competition for water and nutrients.
- Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring-flowering bulbs.

## In the vegetable garden in May



- Continue earthing up potatoes. Read our potato growing guide for detailed advice on how best to do this.
- Harvest asparagus spears when they are no more than 18 cm tall.
- Thin out direct-sown vegetables such as spinach, carrot and lettuce seedlings, then water the rows well.
- Harden off outdoor tomatoes, courgettes and pumpkins for planting early next month.
- Protect carrots from carrot fly by covering with horticultural fleece or enviromesh.
- Pinch out the growing points of broad beans as soon as beans start to appear at the base of the plant to reduce the risk of blackfly attack.
- Weed around your onions and garlic to reduce competition for nutrients and water. Apply an onion fertiliser to boost growth.
- Make supports for your runner beans, using 8 ft (2.4 m) bamboo canes.
- Support pea plants with twiggy sticks or pea netting.
- Keep on top of weeding – weeds will compete with your vegetables for precious water, light and nutrients.

**Obtain more tips from:**  
**[www.thompson-morgan.com](http://www.thompson-morgan.com)**  
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# Dagnall Weather Station (AONB)

## Weather Conditions for March 2024

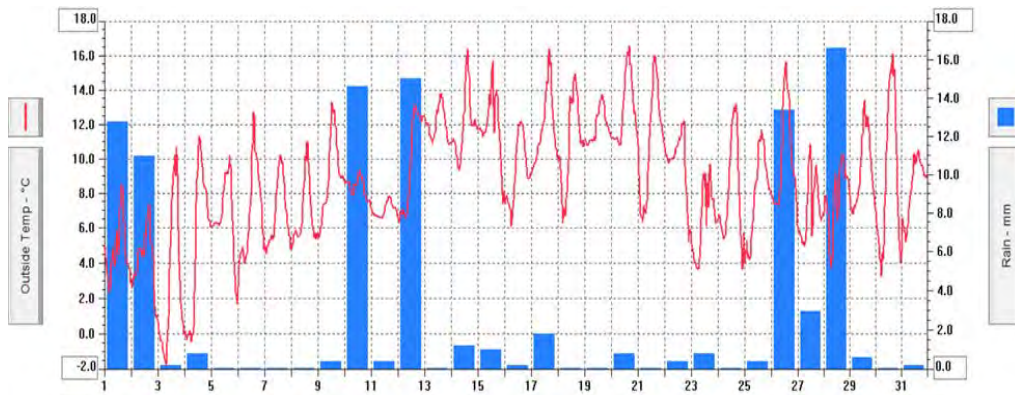
Elevation: 450 ft - Latitude: 51° 50' 13" North - Longitude: 0° 33' 34" West



Meteorological spring started on the 1st of March. Despite being mostly mild, the month was also very wet and didn't feel like spring most of the time. We recorded 21 days of rain totalling 95.6mm, which is 193% of the average, although there were some moderately dry periods between the rainy days. March began cooler and experienced just a couple of nights where it dropped to below 2°C, nevertheless the very mild conditions allowed the monthly temperature to be above average.

	High	Date/Time	Low	Date/Time
Temperature:	17.0°C	17 March 16.00	-1.8°C	3 March 07.00
Mean Temperature	8.7°C			
Dewpoint:	11.5c	17 March 16.00	-2.4°C	3 March 06.30
Humidity:	97%	3 – 6 March	47%	31 March 15.00
Barometer:	1025.1 mb	21 March 09.30	971.5 mb	28 March 03.00
Wind Speed	47 mph S	28 March 21.00	Months avg.	6.5mph
Wind Chill:	16.6°C	20 March 16.00	-2.7°C	4 March 06.00
Dominant Wind:	SSE			
<b>Rainfall</b> * T= total rain days and moisture. R= Actual rain				
* Rain Days: 21(T), 21(R)	Wettest Day 28 March		16.6mm	0.654 ins
Monthly Rain:	Total	March 2024	95.6mm	3.763 ins
Yearly Rain:	Total	3 Month	282.9 mm	11.138 ins

### March 2024 Mild Temperatures and High Rain Fall



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# Big Life Changes to Expect and the Benefits of Having a Dog

Courtesy of [www.purina.co.uk](http://www.purina.co.uk)

**There are so many benefits of having a dog. Of course, there's the obvious benefits like extra exercise and a best friend for life, but they can also improve your physical and mental health! All this greatness also comes with some lifestyle changes, however.**



It's known far and wide that dogs are man's best friend. Their adorable faces and happy go lucky attitudes fill our lives with such joy, but did you know that there's actually numerous benefits of having a dog? Along with the benefits, you'll want to find out how having a dog changes your life! From helping you to get fit to meeting new people to getting you up early, your puppy can actually help to improve your health and social life with their presence.

Nothing compares with the joy of taking a dog into your life – but unless you are prepared for all the changes that are ahead of you, you may well feel as if your life has been turned completely upside down! Which it kind of has!

While some dogs can grow up to be couch-potatoes who enjoy an occasional long lie-in, most will be up at the crack of dawn raring to start the day. Puppies especially will need to go out very early in the morning so your days of lounging around in bed till midday on a lazy Sunday are well and truly at an end!

No matter what the weather might be, dogs need daily exercise. Even those breeds who have fairly low demands when it comes to the great outdoors, need the change of scenery, enrichment, and the break from what can otherwise be a pretty boring day of just hanging around the house. And of course, some of our most popular breeds were created to work all day every day – and so for them, getting out and about for a long, daily walk (or two) is a complete necessity. Without this, all kinds of dog behaviour problems can arise – and you will have an unhappy, bored, frustrated canine on your hands.

This, of course, means you need a whole new wardrobe! Winter dog walks can be a chilly, wet affair if you are not properly dressed for the climate. Your hitherto stylish wardrobe will change – and your priority will be staying dry and warm as you explore the countryside or local area with your new best friend!

Speaking about your wardrobe... most of your clothes will now come with the added addition of dog hair! As will your carpets, soft furnishings and car. Some breeds shed more than others (often it is the smooth or short coated dogs who shed the most) and so an investment in a good pet vacuum cleaner (and matching your clothes to your dog's colour!) is going to be a key part of your new life as a dog owner.

It is vital (and in most places, a legal requirement) that you pick up after your dog – and you only have to get caught out once and have to try and 'improvise', to realise that everywhere you go, you need to have a good supply of poo bags. And always have at least three times more than you need. You can never predict when it could end up being

a 'multi-poo walk'

Your care-free days of impromptu nights out with your friends are at an end. Just like when you have children, you always need to take your dog into account when you go out. In time, your puppy may be able to be left alone for a few hours – or you might have friends or family who can puppy-sit – but part of your new life will be making sure your dog is looked after and happy when you are not there.

How getting a dog changes your life includes your holidays. Just like nights out, holidays have to be planned ahead. No more heading off for a spontaneous weekend away or a fortnight in the sun without thinking about your dog. Thankfully there are plenty of places you can go for an idyllic break where your dog can come too – but of course, this will depend on your dog being well-behaved and social (and that takes time and input from you).

If you want to have a dog-free holiday however, you need to think about who will look after your dog when you are away. Family? Friends? A local boarding kennel? And if it is the latter, the good ones need finding well in advance and booking up early – and giving your dog a couple of trial overnight stays to make sure they are happy and comfortable long before you board a plane!

Dogs are expensive. Sometimes eye-wateringly expensive. One animal welfare charity in the UK forecast that the potential lifetime cost of a large dog could be over £30,000 and at least £5,700 (although that was before the recent cost of living rises!). Food, vet bills, dog insurance, puppy equipment and accessories... they all cost money and are often unpredictable.

While your bank account might be empty and your clothes covered in dog hair, your home – and your heart – will be full of love. Your dog will always be happy to see you (even if you'd only been gone for five minutes!), will always want to be by your side, and will give you the unconditional love and devotion that you can only ever dream of. Knowing how getting a dog changes your life is imperative so you know what you're in for and how to prepare. Though a lot of these may seem daunting, they're actually great experiences that just require a lot of commitment.

If you're looking for a pooch to enter your life but you're not 100% convinced yet, we've listed some of the unexpected benefits to getting a dog! Maybe these reasons can help you make that commitment after we listed those big lifestyle changes...

Nothing beats a long walk with your four-legged friend on a fresh, spring morning. Or seeing the joy on their faces when you pick up a ball and they know it's playtime in the local park! Even relaxing at home feels better in each other's company.

There's an old saying, which is certainly true, that dogs repay the love you give them ten-fold. Before you rush out and adopt a dog, it's important to think it through very thoroughly. As we mentioned, caring for a dog can be hard work and it's a lifetime commitment as your dog will be relying on you for many years to come.

As we mentioned previously, dogs need walking every single day but one of the key benefits of having a dog is that they also significantly increase the amount of exercise you do on a regular basis - and you might not even notice it! While it can be difficult to motivate ourselves to go for a walk alone, when we know our puppy needs exercise, we often don't think twice. All those strolls through the park and adventures in the wood add up.



Even playing games with your dog counts as exercise. You've probably noticed how tired you feel after a long game of 'fetch', even though your dog is the one who's been running around. One of the biggest benefits of dogs is the way they encourage you to be more active, which supports your health as well as theirs.



One of the unexpected benefits of dogs is the way they add to your social life. Going to obedience classes, saying 'hello' to other dog walkers when you go to the park with your canine companion - there are dozens of ways in which your dog makes you more sociable.

Your new puppy will get you out and about, trying things you never considered before and introducing you to new experiences. Whether you're going to a new pet shop or exploring a new area to make your dog's daily walk more interesting, you're bound to see new people all the time.

You're unlikely to stop for a chat with a stranger when you're walking by yourself, but we all know how easy it is to talk when our dogs want to make friends. These people can be invaluable as dog walking companions, sounding boards, and the perfect people to off-load when you need to ask "does your puppy...?" or when everything gets a bit much (as, at some point, it probably will.)

Do, however, fully expect to be known by your dog's name and not your own ("Max's mum," or "Daisy's dad"!)

One of the most fascinating benefits of dogs is their amazing ability to make us feel calm - and that has a brilliant effect on our health. According to Harvard University, studies have shown that dog owners have lower blood pressure which is both due to the increase in exercise and that blood pressure goes down when you merely pet your pooch.

It may surprise you to learn that our blood pressure actually has a big effect on our wellbeing too, so next time you feel stressed, or just need some time to relax, give your dog some TLC - you'll both feel the benefit!

One of the most noticeable benefits of owning a dog is that it's almost impossible to feel lonely when your dog is by your side, and for good reason. Most dogs are highly sociable, and they love company, whether it's canine or human.

When your puppy enthusiastically greets you after a day at work, or looks forward to being taken on their favourite walk, you know you always have a friend by your side. Dog owners know that training requires time, effort and patience - all things that are useful in other aspects of our lives. But that isn't the only thing having a dog teaches us. From enjoying the great outdoors to appreciating the smaller things in life, our dogs really know how to lead by example when it comes to happiness. Dogs and children are also an excellent match as they can teach them a lot about responsibility. Try making your child responsible for a certain aspect of your dog's day - such as feeding them in the evening or brushing them at night (oversee everything yourself, though!) - and you'll be encouraging valuable life skills that can't be learned anywhere else.

Dog owners generally have a stronger immune system, helping them to stay well and spend less time getting over sickness and bugs. In fact, dog owners visit the doctor less

often than non-dog owners, and are less likely to be on medication. People recover faster from illnesses and even have higher survival rates after a heart attack if they have a dog.

Children who have a furry friend have fewer days off school due to sickness.

Children with chronic illnesses often cope better with treatment when they have a canine companion.

Dogs provide us with a sense of emotional wellbeing thanks to the unconditional love they give, which is why they're also great company and comfort for people who live alone.

Owning a dog can help people to recover from personal trauma, such as bereavement. Dog ownership can help those with mental health problems to recover and feel better. On top of all these serious benefits of having dogs, they are also fantastic fun. They always make you laugh, they're there at the end of a hard day, and they'll almost always be on hand for a reassuring hug when you need it!

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## Eaton Bray W.I.

On 8th April we were delighted to welcome Fiona Arscott-Smith who gave a fascinating talk on the changing face of Life Ceremonies.

Fiona explained that there are several different types of celebrant to choose from, including Independent, Civil or Humanist Celebrants. A wedding celebrant can assist and guide the couple in completing the necessary requirements for the marriage license, although they do not have the authority to approve it. Celebrants can however offer more guidance in planning, and officiate a far more bespoke ceremony. Ceremonies can be held in the back garden or in a place of their choosing. Fiona regaled us with stories of weddings – the first was held about 3000 BC. In Rome in 43AD a cake would be made of wheat or barley and broken over the brides head!!

Weddings were held in Church in the UK until 1936 when Civil weddings were introduced. Couples will get married in a Registry Office and then have the wedding celebration afterwards. Tying the knot with ribbons, plaited in three colours is becoming very popular, but Fiona has also attended Fairy Festivals and Viking festivals.

Fiona had officiated at Naming Ceremonies, Vow Renewals and Funerals where she works with the family to create a personalized memorial tailored to the beliefs, lifestyle and preferences of their loved ones.

The meeting finished with the drawing of the raffle, the competition and a cup of tea and cake.

Our next meeting is a Group Afternoon Tea at St Giles Hall in Totternhoe on Friday 3rd May, followed by our AGM on Monday 13th May at the Methodist Church Hall in Eaton Bray.

Eaton Bray WI meets at the Methodist Church Hall, Totternhoe Road, Eaton Bray at 7.30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month and ladies of all ages are most welcome. If you are interested in joining our WI please contact Margaret Jones on 07478 061156.





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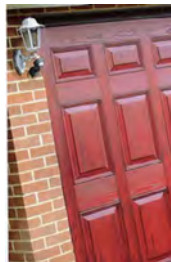


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