

# Marcham & District News

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Your Independent Local Newsheet – [www.madnews.co.uk](http://www.madnews.co.uk)



JANUARY 2020 VOL: 42 NO: 1

READ & RECYCLE!

FREE



▲ Dexter and Magic Peter at the show before Christmas



▲ How Pre-school got ready for Christmas 2019 see page 11



▲ Marcham Village Shop is proud to sponsor our football team



▲ Marcham WI at their Christmas party see page 7



## Diary for January



1 Wed	NO WASTE COLLECTION – it will be on Friday 3 Jan (Rubbish and Food Waste)	3	14 Tue	Marcham Society Annual Lecture: Peter Steere – The League of Beleaguered Gentlemen, All Saints' Church, 19.30	7
8 Wed	NO WASTE COLLECTION – it will be on Thursday 9 Jan (Recycling, Food & Garden)	3	15 Wed	Abingdon Arts Society, Power Politics and a Country Church, Trinity Church, Abingdon, 10.30 & 14.00	2
8 Wed	Christmas Trees collection at Marcham Textile Bank		16 Thu	Marcham WI: Christine Wallace, Denman College, 19.30	7
8 Wed	Marcham Parish Council Meeting, Duffield Place, 19.30	3	20 Mon	<b>Deadline for next MADNews, 17.00</b> <a href="mailto:editor@madnews.co.uk">editor@madnews.co.uk</a>	
9 Thu	Midweek Walk: The Greyhound, Letcombe Regis, 12.30 lunch / 13.30 walk	7	21 Tue	National Trust: Sumatran Orangutang Society: Trinity Church, Abingdon, 14.30	11
10-18	Abingdon Drama Club presents Snow White, Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon	13	28 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14.00-15.30	7
11 Sat	Christmas Trees collection at Millets		29 Wed	Marcham Café in the Baptist Hall, 12.00	7
14 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14.00-15.30	7			

*Details of events may change after publication, please check with the relevant organisers before attending events*

# THINGS TO DO

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The Arts Society Abingdon (ex ADFAS) is holding its monthly lecture on **Wednesday 15th January, 10.30am and 2.00pm**, at Trinity Church, Conduit Road, Abingdon, OX14 1DB.

### Power Politics and a Country Church

The story of Geoffrey Chaucer's grand-daughter, Alice de la Pole and her husband William, Duke of Suffolk  
by Jonathan Meyer

The Duke and Duchess of Suffolk created a chantry trust, reordered an Oxfordshire church, built a school, alms-houses, and an extraordinary palace favoured by Henry VII and VIII. Jonathan will look at them in an historical context, and how the couple sought favour, power and influence, and explore Alice's alabaster tomb with its rare cadaver figure in nearby Ewelme church, which is thought by many to be the best example of its kind in Europe.

Non-Members welcome, £6.00. The lectures are one hour long, but leave extra time for announcements etc.

**For more information on future lectures and other activities see [www.theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk) or email [info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk](mailto:info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk)**



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### RECYCLE CORKS FOR WILDLIFE

Bothy Vineyard has signed up to the UK's only natural wine cork recycling programme – Recorked UK. For every cork collected Recorked UK will donate at least 1p to nominated charities. They also recycle corks and supply free corks to various charities and schools for use in craft projects. Please help us gather corks so that we can benefit local wildlife charity – Wild Oxfordshire ([www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk)), which builds active and innovative partnerships for wildlife.

Corks – only natural corks please – can be deposited at the front door of the Bothy Shop (Frilford Heath) or at the Marcham Shop.

Many thanks, **BOTHY VINEYARD**

[www.bothyvineyard.co.uk](http://www.bothyvineyard.co.uk)



### FRIDAY CRAFT MORNINGS

Don't let the grey skies get you down!  
Brighten up your autumn by bringing along a craft project to our new Friday craft mornings. There is no charge and it's a great way to chat to old friends or make new ones. No experience needed and all very welcome. If you don't know where to start pop along for a coffee and see what others are doing for some inspiration.

We currently have people Christmas card making, knitting, sewing, jewellery making and even the most exquisite lace-making!

Fridays 10-12 Marcham Baptist Hall

NB people 16+ only  
due to the pins, needles, scissors etc!

### Events in Abingdon's Market Place

10th January Tilsey Park and Abingdon School sports promotions  
11th January: Sponsored spin and rowing by soldiers from Dalton Barracks in aid of Anthony Nolan Trust  
17th January Farmers' Market  
see [www.abingdon.gov.uk](http://www.abingdon.gov.uk) for more details

If you are holding an event within or near the MADNews area, please contact the editor for more publicity!  
01865 391725 or [editor@madnews.co.uk](mailto:editor@madnews.co.uk)



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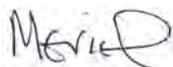
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Dear Readers

Another year over and a new one just peeking over the horizon! This is the year Marcham gets a village hall back and it is a wonderful achievement for everyone who has worked so hard to get this far.

We just need a bit more effort so that we can all start enjoying the amazing facilities. You can still sponsor a brick in the shop or join in any of the events that are raising funds!

Until next time



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Jane Mander  
**DEADLINES**

Advertising: 5pm 15th month  
Other copy: 5pm 20th month  
except for Jan when it is 15th Dec for both  
**ADDITIONAL COPIES**

These are available free from Marcham Post Office or the Editor. Postal copies are also available – contact the Editor.

**DISCLAIMER**

We apologise in advance for any errors that may creep into MADNews (online or print), or omissions that creep out - we don't do it on purpose!  
The Editor reserves the right to alter, omit or hold over copy to another issue. The views expressed in the Marcham & District News are not necessarily those of the editorial team, who are all volunteers.

**POLICE**

PCSO Rich Osborn C9323  
[Richard.Osborn@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Richard.Osborn@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) for Marcham  
07980 924693  
Or just dial 101 (non-emergency) and omit the C from his number

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Richard Webber, Orchard Barn, Sutton Wick Lane, Drayton OX14 4HJ  
Tel: 01235 534001  
[Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com](mailto:Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com)

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

Marcham and Shippon  
Catherine Webber, Orchard Barn, Sutton Wick Lane, Drayton OX14 4HJ  
Tel: 01235 534001  
[Webbercatherine1@gmail.com](mailto:Webbercatherine1@gmail.com)

For other councillors go to [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

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**MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL Christmas Tree Recycling**

A reminder for those of you who have real Christmas trees, and are not signed up to the District Council's garden waste service. Please take your tree to the square of tarmac which was the former bottle bank site, next to the Salvation Army textile bank, in Howard Cornish Road opposite Duffield Place, when you no longer need them. All real trees should be placed there by the end of the day on Wednesday 8th January 2020 for collection the next day. The Vale of White Horse District Council will collect these and arrange for recycling.

**Council Tax 2020/21**

The Parish Council will be carefully considering the budget for 2020/21 at its meeting to be held on 8th January. Once finalised, the Council will set the amount of council tax that comes to the parish from the total amount paid by residents to the Vale of White Horse District Council.

**Neighbours**

As we continue through Winter, please give a thought for your neighbours, particularly the elderly and those without transport. Bad weather can bring chaos to businesses, travel delays, school closures etc, but also affects those who are unable to get out. Do please check on your neighbours, make sure they are all right, and see whether they need assistance with anything.

**Parish Council meeting dates**

The Council currently meets on the second Wednesday of the month, but has been considering possibly changing its meeting night once the new hall is open. This will be partly to fit in with other hall users, and dependent on when the hall is available. Look out for future announcements as to Council meeting dates in due course.

**Parishioner of the Year Award**

Last chance to nominate someone for the Parishioner of the Year Award. Please contact the Clerk by the end of the month, with your nomination suggestion, explaining why the person should receive the Award, and how they have significantly contributed to life within the parish.

**Estate Agent Sign Boards**

The Council has received comments that estate agent 'For Sale' sign boards are being erected in locations well away from the properties to which they relate. Planning consent is required for certain types of advertising, and the Council will be writing to the planning authority as well as the estate agent firms direct, to see whether they can be removed.

**Planning Applications considered by the Parish Council**

P19/V3109/FUL Conversion of garage, workshop and store into new dwelling with retained workshop space and associated landscaping at 7 Packhorse Lane. The Council expressed concern regarding development in the air quality management area, access onto the A415, and lack of safe footway.

P19/V3128/FUL New 4 bed house and parking on land rear of 8a The Gap. Council expressed concern regarding possible overlooking of other housing in the vicinity, site drainage, the adequacy of on site parking and the exit into The Gap.

**Date of Next Council Meeting:**

Wednesday 8th January 2020 at 7.30p.m. in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place. Please check the Council's website in case arrangements change.

**Clerk to the Council:** Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Rd, 01865 391833 [clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

[www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**The Chairman, Council members and Clerk wish everyone a happy new year**

Any member of the public is most welcome to attend any of our meetings. There is a section near the start of each meeting for public participation, where any member of the public is able to speak about any topic which is relevant to the work of the Parish Council (for a maximum of three minutes). Members of the public are also welcome to observe some or all of the rest of the meeting.

**HOLIDAY WASTE COLLECTIONS**

~~Wednesday 1 Jan~~ **Friday 3 Jan**  
**Rubbish and Food Waste**



~~Wednesday 8 Jan~~ **Thursday 9 Jan**  
**Recycling, Food and Garden Waste**



happy new year

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Dear Editor

Where has the sundial from the protected facade of the institute gone?

**A CONCERNED RESIDENT**



Neil Rowe replies:

I can report the sundial is safely in storage to protect it from damage or theft. It will be restored to its rightful place at the end of the rebuild.

Dear Editor

Thank you and so many others for the Great MaD Weekend at the end of September 2019.

New Year's Resolution 2020 for everyone:

**Go For It!!**

**RJM**

**MINIBUS SERVICE TO TESCO**



There is a **weekly run on Mondays to Tesco** for any residents with transport difficulties. Leaving Duffield Place at 9.45am (and other places by arrangement) and returning from Tesco at around 11am - a voluntary contribution (min £2) to cover costs.

Can you spare a couple of hours every few weeks to join our rota - or would you like to join the passengers?

Contact Marion Belcher on 07507 797757 or for more information

Planning a night out with friends?

A birthday trip with the kids?

A family trip to the beach?

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A standard donation is requested for each booking to cover diesel/maintenance.

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Mon - Fri: 07.30 - 17.30

Saturday: 08.00 - 12 noon

Sunday: 08.00 - 10.00

Happy New Year  
to all our volunteers  
and customers!



January: 1st CLOSED • 2nd back to normal 07.30 - 17.30

Last acceptance time for post: Mon - Fri 16.45 & Sat 10.15

**British gas customers can now pay their bill and top up their pre-payment meter at the Post Office counter**

*If have difficulty getting to the shops, call us on 391993 and we will get your essential supplies to you.*

Warm up those January blues, with coffee and a cake for £2



**Marcham  
Moldova  
Lifeline**

With the donations from the Moldovan Gala Dinner held in Marcham in September we were able to buy a professional oven for a community centre in Cobani, a small village in Moldova. This will help provide warm, nutritious meals for both the young and elderly during the winter months. We are very grateful for all the generosity from our village that made this possible.

**ALICIA DAVIES**

on behalf of the Marcham Moldova Lifeline

**Healthwatch Oxfordshire, the county's independent health and social care watchdog, is recruiting new Trustees.**



*If you have a passion for making things better and you like to make a positive contribution to how health and care services are delivered, you could be the ideal person.*

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is a charity whose role is promoting and supporting local people to get involved in, and have their say on, the planning, commissioning and delivery of health and care services.

Rosalind Pearce, Executive Director of Healthwatch Oxfordshire, said: "These services are facing enormous pressures as patient demands increase and become more complex, while at the same time there seems to be constant reorganisation and change. This means it is more important than ever before that the voices of local people are heard and acted upon by hospitals, GP practices and care services."

As a Trustee you will determine the charity's strategy and support the executive team to use what we learn from the public to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided locally.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is particularly looking for candidates with experience in communications, including social media or website development, but also happy to talk to anyone with other relevant experience, for example in research or HR. Most importantly the charity is looking for people with a commitment to improving health and care services across the county.

The Trustee Board meets around six times a year. The role is unpaid with expenses paid. To find out more, telephone 01865 520520, or email hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire visit

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)

## HOME & GARDEN

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## Marcham WI

**Date:** Thursday, 16th January  
**Time:** 7.30pm  
**Venue:** Denman College  
**Topic:** Bake Off



We had a fun **Christmas party** last year, with much laughter when we were divided into teams for various activities: decorating teddies in teams and making Christmas decorations. We brought along donations for the foodbank and bottles for the bottle raffle that took place at the end of the evening.

Are you a fan of 'The Great British Bake Off'? For our first meeting of the year, we are excited to be welcoming **Christine Wallace**, a former quarter finalist from the show, who will be coming to tell us about her experiences on the programme and life in the famous Bake Off tent. We hope you'll come along, and perhaps bring a friend, to what promises to be a fabulous evening.

*New members and visitors are always welcome  
 Visitors £5, members free*

*For further information, please contact:  
 Pippa Hoath 01865 391349 pippahoath@gmail.com*

## MARCHAM SOCIETY MIDWEEK WALK:

**Thursday, January 9th**

For this winter walk of about 4 miles we will be eating at 12.30 for lunch at The Greyhound, Main Street, Letcombe Regis (Map Ref: SU382865, OX12 9JL). Starting at 1.30 we will walk up the course of the Letcombe Brook though the nature reserve to Letcombe Basset, then up to the Ridgeway and back via Segsbury Castle. This is 4 miles with a climb to the Ridgeway, but a short cut is available!

Ring Eric Dunford on 391439 for further details and car-sharing, especially if you are not on our email list as sometimes late changes have to be made. Members free, non-members £1. We always welcome new walkers.



Photo © airchaology.org



Wednesday 12pm  
 in the Baptist Hall  
*All welcome – young and old!  
 It's a wonderful way to catch up  
 with old friends or make new ones  
 and have a delicious light lunch!*

### Dates for this Term

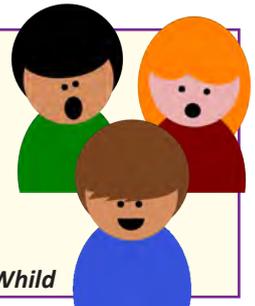
29th January	
5th February	4th March
12th February	11 March
19th February NO CAFE	18th March
26th February	25th March

## SINGING IS GOOD FOR YOU!

**Tuesday 14th & 28th January**  
 From 2 – 3.30pm in the residents' lounge  
 at Duffield Place

- Sing a wide range of popular songs
- Get to know fellow villagers and forget your aches, pains and woes!

Phone 391270 for more details *Christine Whild*



## MARCHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUB

The Marcham Senior Citizens Club, due to lack of members and personal circumstances, was closed on 30 November 2018. Despite considerable effort by the committee, no increased interest was forthcoming within Marcham village.

A preliminary closing meeting was held on 31 January 2019 to discuss the disposal of Club assets. At this meeting it was decided, as a token of appreciation for their support over many years, to give donations to Age UK and Sobell House.

This meeting then decided that the residue of monies should be held in the bank for a period of 12 months (until 31 January 2020), to enable the rejuvenation of the Senior Citizens Club by any interested villagers.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS CLOSURE AND HAVE A KEEN INTEREST IN RESURRECTING A SENIORS CLUB IN MARCHAM PLEASE CONTACT

**John Woods (Secretary)** 391705



## Annual Lecture: The League of Beleaguered Gentlemen

Comparing the impact of three Medical Officers of Health on the health of Berkshire residents in the late 19th century

*Peter Steere*

*All Saints' Church, Marcham*

**7.30 for 7.45pm Tuesday 14th January**

Non-members always welcome £3

Further details: Sheila Dunford (391439)

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

## DRAYTON SEQUENCE DANCE CLUB



Dancing Thursday Nights at  
 Drayton Village Hall  
 7.30pm – 10.30pm  
 Admittance £2

Do you want to dance?  
 Friendly club seeking new members  
 Further information 01235 531701

## Marcham Bridge Club

Do you play Bridge?

Or do you want to learn?

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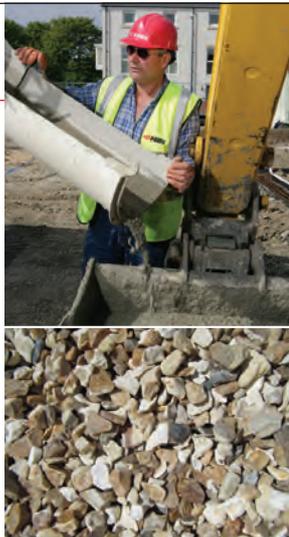
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## Happy New Year 2020: the year of our new hall!

Thank you to everyone who came to the public meeting and AGM on 5th December and for your enthusiastic support for MCG and the MarchamCentre project.



We were delighted to be presented at the meeting with a very welcome cheque for £500 towards our furniture & fittings fund from Wantage and Grove Lions—a huge thank-you from all of us in Marcham for this generous donation.

### Building progress

Our new village hall building continues to make good progress — the work is mostly inside the building now, and the heating system is installed and being tested. Work is moving at a rapid pace to fit out the internal facilities, including kitchen, changing rooms and toilets. The weather will dictate progress on the car park, MUGA and external grounds work. Work will start in the new year on levelling the playing field for the new pitch positions. During this time areas of the field will be fenced off for ground work and grass re-seeding. We hope that regular walkers here will be patient during this time.



Happy New Year 2020: the year our new village hall will open!

## Moonrakers Concert—Saturday 22nd February Moonrakers

### 7:30pm at the church

The next big MCG fund-raising event is a concert by Moonrakers (an Oxford-based folk group—see [www.moonrakers.net](http://www.moonrakers.net)) in Marcham Church on 22nd February at 7:30pm. MCG will be providing refreshments. Tickets (£15 each) are already on sale in Marcham Village Shop. Please put the date in your diary and buy your tickets now.



We will keep you updated on progress here, with updates, photos and posts on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/marchamcentre/](http://www.facebook.com/marchamcentre/) or [@marchamcentre](https://twitter.com/marchamcentre), and our website, [www.marchamcentre.org](http://www.marchamcentre.org). We are happy to answer any questions you may have.



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### Keep Gardening, But Tread Lightly

Are we urban Creatures? Are We rural creatures? Are we creatures of habit? I'd advocate the theory that we are very adaptable creatures of habit, who may not be as conscious of our immediate environment as we may think. I'll leave that one hanging, and open to your own interpretation and perception. What I will say is, it's easy to fall into the mindset of 'it's winter, there's nothing to do in the garden at this time of year'.



There's always something to do, a bit of titivating here and a few repairs and overhauls there. Even if I'm successful in convincing you to get out into the garden and do the jobs that are there to be done, I urge you to think before you go wading in. Disturbing a warm habitat that wildlife may be sheltering under during the cold season can be hideously damaging.

Your garden next summer is only as good as the work you put in the previous autumn and winter. The wildlife you will see next summer is dependant on what you do at this time of year as well.

You may have enticed a ton of wildlife last summer, but if you disrupt shelters during winter, it just won't return next year.

So, don't go wading in at this time of year, keep gardening but tread delicately.

**Happy Gardening!**

**Stuart Mabbutt**

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### MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL

Christmas celebrations and preparations have really taken hold at pre-school this month! We've been trying on costumes, creating a variety of crafts, singing, dancing and generally having lots of fun!

At the beginning of December, we invited all the parents in to join us for a crafty afternoon. Providing all the resources (and the cleaning up!) meant that everyone could get involved with glitter, glue, paint, stickies, card, string and more! We had a great time, and the children were delighted to be able to share 'their' pre-school with their parents ☺. It's one of our favourite times.



We've got lots in the pipeline for January ... including ... but not limited to ... Zoolab animal handling workshop, Burns celebrations, Chinese New Year, Road Safety Week, podcasts, eat the rainbow and lots, lots more!!

If you would like to find out more about Marcham Pre-school please do get in touch, via email at [marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk) or by telephoning 01865 392101 or even through our NEW Facebook page!!

Wishing all the MADNews readers a fantastic 2020.

**Nicky Sanford,**

Early Years Teacher, Marcham Pre-School

01865 392101 [marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk)

[www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com](http://www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com)

### Flu Vaccine for Children

For most children the flu vaccine is not an injection, just a quick nasal spray. Children can be badly affected by flu, especially those aged 2 and 3. Don't put it off, ask your GP about the free flu nasal spray today.

### National Trust: Abingdon & District Association

2.30-3.30pm Tuesday January 21st 2020

Trinity Church Hall, Abingdon

**Sumatran Orangutan Society - Lucy Radford**



**National Trust**

The Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS) was founded in 2001 with the mission of ensuring a safe future for Sumatran orangutans in the wild. The charity is based in Abingdon, but its impacts are global and far-reaching. With long-term partner NGOs in Sumatra, SOS works to tackle the causes of deforestation as well as the symptoms, taking a holistic approach to conservation which draws on sustainable livelihood programmes, education and sustainable forestry practices to ensure that the 14,600 orangutans remaining in the wild in Sumatra can thrive long into the future. The small SOS team based in Abingdon are dedicated to fundraising, research and technical support for Sumatran orangutan conservation. They also have a strong focus on communicating the charity's work to local, national and international audiences to create a global network of people who care about orangutans and are empowered to do something to help. Lucy Radford is SOS' Fundraising and Communications Officer. She has worked for SOS since May 2018. Prior to that, she had over a decade of experience working in primate conservation, in roles ranging from research and development to fundraising and volunteer management.

Everyone is welcome and non-members of the Abingdon & District National Trust Association are asked to donate £3. Refreshments are available after the talk. For more information, phone Ruth on 01235 524119.

We had a fabulous December holding a fantastic nativity at Marcham Church. Our children did a brilliant job learning their songs and sung their hearts out. Our families offered us so much support in making the production a big success. We were so grateful to hold the nativity in our village church as it made our nativity story even more special. Thank you to everyone involved.



We have been enjoying the festive frosty mornings, getting outside early doors to learn about what happens to make frost overnight. The children have been having a great time drawing in the frost and feeling it crunch under their feet whilst on our walks on Anson Field.

We turned our baby room into a soft play obstacle course last month, and they had a brilliant time working on their gross motor skills climbing over soft blocks, crawling through tunnels and sliding down ramps.

We are having a very exciting start to our year as we are moving into our new home this month. We were lucky enough to open the doors of our new building to our families just before Christmas where they came and shared mince pies with us in celebration of our imminent move.

**Our spaces are filling fast! If you would like some information about a space for your baby, toddler, or pre-schooler we will be holding visits once we have moved in. Please just give Gina a call on 01865 819992 to arrange an appointment.**

[www.littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk](http://www.littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk)

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**We wish you all a**

**Happy New Year from all the Little Angels family**

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### When should my child return to school?

<b>Chicken Pox</b> When all spots have crusted over	<b>Conjunctivitis</b> None*	<b>Diarrhoea &amp; Vomiting</b> 48 hours from last episode	<b>Glandular Fever</b> None*	<b>Hand, Foot &amp; Mouth</b> None*	<b>Impetigo</b> When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Measles or German Measles</b> 4 days from onset of rash	<b>Mumps</b> 5 days from onset of swelling	<b>Scabies</b> After first treatment	<b>Scarlet Fever</b> 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	<b>Slapped Cheek</b> None*	<b>Whooping Cough</b> 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Flu</b> Until recovered	<b>Head Lice</b> None*	<b>Threadworms</b> None*	<b>Tonsillitis</b> None*		

This information is based on the Public Health Agency guide - full copy here \*No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed.

As you may be aware there are lots illnesses and bugs doing the rounds. Here's some useful guidance on how long your child might be off school for certain conditions.

**NB this is for guidance only, if in doubt consult your doctor**

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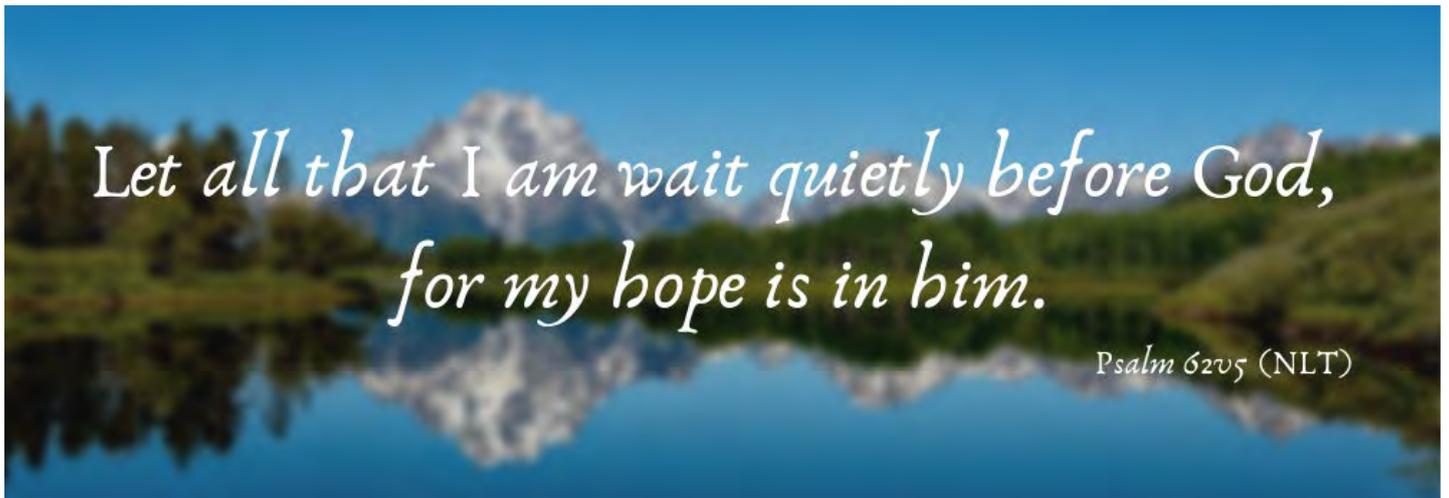
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Dear Friends,

Well, here we are at the beginning of another year! I wonder what priorities you are thinking about? Losing weight after the Christmas binge? Planning your next summer holiday? Wondering whether a new government is going to fulfil its election promises? Perhaps a long-held dream is going to come to fruition?

This New Year heralds some milestones on my personal life journey: I will, later in the early summer, be marking 40 years in the ordained ministry, and beginning retirement from the end of April. New horizons beckon - but with a mixture of both sadness (the prospect of leaving the parish here) and happiness (moving to a new location, and exploring new things).

And in the village we can look forward to the major milestone of the new Marcham Centre being completed and open for business, and all the possibilities that will flow from that facility. All the planning, negotiating and hard work will finally be bearing fruit, and I trust, to the benefit of us all in the community.

January, in the Christian calendar, is a quiet month. Epiphany recalls the visit of the wise men, who were guided to the birth place of Jesus, and then the flight of the family to Egypt to escape the anger of Herod, and the slaughter of male children aged two years and under. The world was a dangerous place in those days, as it is for so many these days.

Psalm 62 says: 'Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him.' (v5)

As this New Year gets underway, perhaps that is a word in season for many of us - to make some space to wait quietly upon God amidst the changing and often loud clamour of the world we live in. Placing our hope in God is a deeply calming and life-affirming step to keep taking. Renewing that hope, day by day, knowing that in Jesus all the promises of God are "Yes" and "Amen" is deeply affirming, and it is that hope that our inner beings find true peace.

May 2020 be a life-affirming year for you, and those you love.

With my warmest best wishes and prayers,

*Richard*

Revd Canon Richard Zair - vicar

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## **Contacts:**

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