

THE BRIDGE

Lechlade's Community Magazine

A Window on Lechlade



**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND A
HAPPY NEW
YEAR**



DECEMBER 2025 / JANUARY 2026

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Christmas and New Year edition of The Bridge. Although Christmas is a time of great religious significance for some, I think it resonates for all of us as a time when we think about family, friends and the local and worldwide community. We go out of our way to send gifts and best wishes to those we know and love, and support those in need whoever and wherever they may be. I'm sure I'm not alone in being much more likely to donate to a charity during the Christmas period. It is true that the commercialisation of Christmas continues apace but I think the caring and supportive spirit is still very much in evidence. By the time you read this, the Lechlade Christmas Lights Switch-On will have happened; all organised by volunteers working together to bring that festive excitement to our town.

That brings us to New Year; a time of new beginnings, and that is very much true of our own Bridge community magazine. Several long-serving committee members are stepping down. Simon Winckles has been managing the layout and compilation of the print edition and, more recently, the online edition for 23 years. Shan and Alan Garnell have been managing distribution, with Shan also serving as assistant editor, for eleven years and I have been editing for eleven years as well. Also retiring is Kristen Sousa. I know I speak for all of us when I say that it has been a privilege and pleasure to work with our contributors and fellow community members to produce The Bridge. Thanks to you all for your support and encouragement.

But, do not fear, some committee members are staying on, and we have a new Editor and IT manager taking over from the February/March edition. I would like to wish Jean Blackbeard and her editorial committee well in the future. I am sure Jean will be introducing herself and her new team in the next edition.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Bridge team.

Marian Winckles, Editor



LECHLADE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Our big news is the incredible success of our Bra Bank collection. Working in conjunction with Lechlade WI, a fantastic total of 840 bras were collected! The bras will be recycled and the resulting funds will go to the charity 'Against Breast Cancer' to pay for pioneering breast cancer research. The amount the charity receives is based on weight: £700 per tonne. Our thanks go to Lucy Marston for organising this and Patricia Mason for her invaluable publicity. But primarily, we would like to thank all those who donated bras. The bra bank will likely be back next year, so save those bras please.

Our AGM was well attended with Chair of Directors. John Watkins, thanking retiring Directors Sarah Duce, Fiona McAnespie and Clare Cordingley. Afterwards, some of us retired to the New Inn for a meal.

As our regular borrowers will know, much of our budget goes on buying new adult, young adult and children's books so our stock is always up to date. If you've not been in for a while, pop in to browse – we're sure you'll be impressed. To help you with your borrowing, especially books from libraries across Gloucestershire, the county has a new Spydus Library App. Download it to allow you to search the county's collection and manage your loans and reservations.

Other recent events include a visit from Lechlade Youth Club and a well-attended children's 'Bat-tastic' Halloween activity morning.

Our regular events also continue:

Mah jong – 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month 4:00pm - 6:00pm: 3 & 17 December and 7 & 21 January. Beginners welcome.

Canasta – 2nd Wednesday of the month 4:00pm - 6:00pm: 10 December & 14 January.

Book Club – 4th Wednesday of the month 5:00pm - 6:00pm: December no meeting & 28 January. Book to be announced.

Computer & IT Expert – in the library every Thursday 10:00am - 1:00pm.

While the refurbishment of the Market Place takes place, important notices from Lechlade Town Council are being displayed in the library window along with all our usual information on what is happening in our area. We also have a new notice board inside the library displaying other local information.

Christmas in the library

We close on Wednesday 24 December at 1:00pm and reopen on Friday 2 January at 1:00pm.

All children borrowing books in December receive a small gift.

There is a free **Children's Christmas Trail** in the library in December. Open to all children, not just members. A small prize will be awarded to the winner.

John Watkins, Chair of Directors

SERVICES AT ST LAWRENCE CHURCH

Regular services

The pattern of worship in St Lawrence Church is as below.

On the first Sunday of the month

8:00am Spoken Holy Communion BCP
10:00am* Holy Communion (with children's groups **in term time**)
5:00pm Choral Evensong

On the second Sunday of the month:

8:00am Spoken Holy Communion BCP
10:00am* Together@10 All Age Service
5:00pm Sung Holy Communion

On the third and fourth Sundays of the month:

8:00am Spoken Holy Communion BCP
10:00am* Informal service (with children's groups **in term time**)
5:00pm Choral Evensong

On the fifth Sunday of the month (when there is one):

8:00am Spoken Holy Communion BCP
10:00am* Traditional Holy Communion (with children's groups **in term time**)
5:00pm Healing service (no choir)

*these services will be live-streamed via Facebook for joining in together and are also available there to watch later. The order of service to use if joining online is loaded onto our website each week.

During DECEMBER there will be some changes to services, and some special ones. There will be no 8:00am or 5:00pm services on 28 December. For the special Christmas services and events please see page 48

Team Vicar: Rev Andrew Cinnamond 01367 253651

Churchwardens: Susan Holmes – 01367 253268, Paul Cobb 01367 253100

Parish Office: 07876 172613 – info@stlawrencelechlade.org.uk

Visit our website stlawrencelechlade.org.uk for more information





HOW TO DEAL WITH A CARDIAC ARREST

Cardiac Arrest is not just something that may happen to older people. Schoolchildren have suffered Cardiac Arrest as have well known sportsmen and women. Put simply, the heart fails to work properly and stops pumping blood around the body and, in particular, to the brain. Unless there is some action taken very quickly, the result will be at the very least a difficult recovery or more likely, death. At present, in part because of poor distribution of defibrillators, in Gloucestershire only 1 in 10 out of hospital cardiac arrest patients will survive the event.

The immediate action for anyone nearby is to:

- Check for Danger.
- See if there is any Response.
- Shout for help. Make sure the Emergency Services have been called.
- Check/open the Airway. Tilt the head back to do that.
- Check for Breathing – Ideally two good breaths in a 10 second period.
- Start Chest compressions and get and use a defibrillator. Do not bother with Rescue Breaths unless you know what you are doing.

When the Emergency Services are called, put your phone on speaker as the call-handler will give you advice on what to do, including the location of your nearest defibrillator for someone else to collect.

There are also times when someone you are with may feel unwell (difficulty breathing, chest pains, etc) and the 999 call handler may advise collecting the defibrillator as a precaution. That is because the sooner a defibrillator can be used on a cardiac arrest patient the better the chance of recovery. So, if it is there with a suspected cardiac arrest patient, it is ready to be used.

Over the last 3 years, defibrillators across the Fairford, Lechlade and Kempsford area have been deployed either on a precautionary basis or because of a cardiac arrest 54 times.

Stephen Andrews, Community First Responder



GARDENING HINTS

I've always kept a gardening diary of sorts, noting down the weather, first frosts, plants bought and planted, frog sightings -all those kind of things, as well as gardening disasters and triumphs. Since 2012 I have been loyal to Sarah Raven and bought the diary that she sells. I've got used to the format, the helpful lists of jobs to do each month, and a good recipe. There they are in a pleasant row on one of my shelves. But... it is not very easy to check and compare various events through the years. e.g. first blossom of the spring, because I have to get down the books and riffle through the pages. I can't see it at a glance. So I have decided to abandon Sarah this year, and go with Beth Chatto, whose descendants and website produce a five year diary which will be so much easier to use to compare the same day over a period of five years. Also, probably cheaper as only one diary instead of five! My dear husband rather took the wind out of my sails by saying 'Do you think you are good for another five years? Will you get the use out of it?' My cheerful reply was 'I hope so! Fingers crossed.'

And in that vein, I AM excited about next year. In spite of the disastrous summer we had this year with no rain, and then too much rain, and a garden that turned into a parched desert and then a jungle, I remain optimistic and next year will be Better. I have been as good as my word and removed plants that I no longer like, or which didn't perform well. Up came the rose whose buds always turn brown and fall off before they open. Out came the untidy honeysuckle that flowers once and is then a bird's nest of a tangle and all the leaves fall off. Yes, I'm more impatient and less tolerant of things which don't please me. But I am giving a third chance to a rose, which I think is Gertrude Jekyll, which has been planted in two places already, and it has not liked either of them. She can have one more chance and if she doesn't buck up then out she comes.

And I'm excited about the space that used to be under the mulberry tree, which is no more because it split and had to be removed. Where there was shade now there is light.

We've planted more bulbs - the 'woodland' tulip, *tulipa sylvestris*, which, if it likes you, will multiply. And *leucojum* - the taller later snowdrop look alike. I can't wait to see how they look in 2026.

Barbara McNaught

PENNY WARREN

Many of you will know that Penny Warren is retiring. She and her late husband, Bob, came to The Trout 38 years ago from The New Inn in Coln St Aldwyn. Immediately, they immersed themselves into Lechlade life supporting anyone who asked for help, donations etc. Bob's love was music and 'anything that goes'.

They had music festivals, music at weekends and occasionally during the week, steam rallies and, of course, his beloved Fergie tractor – still in use mowing the field. It, also, towed the tractor carrying Bob's coffin to the church for his funeral.

Both supported endless charities with collections for The Lions, Lifeboats, Prospect Hospice, Royal British Legion, Noah's Ark in Macaroni Woods and many more. The Flower and Produce Show was held in the marquee for two years after the Memorial Hall fire.

In 2011 Bob wanted something different for his pub - to sell jam on the bar and so The Jam Factory was born. A massive £44,000 has been raised for MacMillan Cancer Care – a charity close to his heart. Penny agreed to sell The Bridge magazine, adding to the range of outlets where the print edition could be purchased. The Bridge team sends her their thanks.

Thank you, Penny, for EVERYTHING and enjoy a less hectic and exhausting way of life. We shall all miss you enormously.

On Behalf of the Lechlade Community



CRAMPI ITALIAN FOOD & WINE

Our own independent Italian grocery store has been recognised in the prestigious 2025 Cotswold Life Food and Drink Awards. Crampi has won the Best Customer Service Award. Peter tells me that it is a rigorous process, so he is justified in feeling very proud. After nomination, the magazine selects finalists who all then 'mystery shopped' to identify the winners in each category. He was presented with his 'trophy', a giant inscribed wooden spoon, at the awards ceremony in Gloucester. Just like the 'Oscars', winners don't know they've won until their name is announced!

I'm sure we've all been in to browse and purchase from the amazing range of stock. If not, you're missing a treat! In addition to the grocery goodies, Peter hosts pop-up wine tasting and private dinner events and pop-up shops. And, of course, he sells Sourdough Revolution bread, which was itself awarded the 2025 Food and Farming Education Award from Cotswold Life.

The shop is open Tuesday to Saturday 8:30am-5:30pm and 8:30am-2:00pm on Sunday. You can buy coffee during the week and, on Saturdays, delicious sourdough focaccia sandwiches.

The Editor



ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

Lechlade's Railway – the end of the line!

So, we come to the final chapter in Brian Rushby's railway story.

During its lifetime, Lechlade station had many staff doing a wide range of jobs. The first station master, Jonathan Honey (1873-1907), was followed by four others. It then fell to Ted Russell to oversee its closure in 1962. George Ryman drove the horse and carriage, and then the bus, from the New Inn to the station for around 30 years. Joining the staff in 1935, Jack Hunt spent most of his time driving a lorry, making deliveries of goods that had arrived by train. He also carried out other duties around the station including looking after the staffs' pride and joy – the station garden opposite the platform. An annual competition for the best garden was held on the line and Lechlade often took first prize.

By the 1950's the line was losing money, and the writing was on the wall for the 'Fairford Flyer', as it was known. In January 1961 the expected news arrived. There was very little objection, and the date of closure was given as Monday 18 June 1962, with the last train on Saturday 16 June. It was a beautiful summer's day and the photographers were out in strength to record the sad occasion. There was a scramble to buy the last ever tickets and the train was packed to capacity.

Eighteen months later, Thomas Ward & Co, scrap merchants, began removing the track. They started at Fairford, removing the rails and station and taking the debris away by train. The track and the stations were systematically dismantled towards Witney. For many years, all that remained in Lechlade was the bridge that carried the A361 over the former track, the short road down to the station, a very weedy platform and scores of blackberry bushes as nature reclaimed the site. The land has now been used for housing with the bridge, but not the hump, removed to allow access. But there is a ghostly echo of its former life – the residential road is called Old Railway Close!



Last train - 16th June 1962



Lechlade station and garden

Lechlade History Society is the proud custodian of a scale model of the station, built by Lechlade resident, the late Hubert Evans. The model is currently undergoing restoration and we hope to be able to display it in the not too distant future.

With thanks to Lechlade History Society and the late Brian Rushby for use of archive materials.

Marian Winckles



LECHLADE THEATREGOERS

Our visit to see Mamma Mia in Southampton in October was a great success, to see and hear the comments of people boarding the full coach for the homeward journey was wonderful.

Our Christmas outing is to The Hippodrome in Birmingham to see the ballet **The Nutcracker** on **Tuesday 9 December**. This sumptuous and timeless production boasts daring swordfights, falling snow, magic and a 30-foot Christmas tree. Tchaikovsky's glorious score is performed live by the 60-strong Royal Ballet Sinfonia and provides the captivating soundtrack to this festive classic.

In the New Year we are off to Oxford on **Thursday 22 January** to see **Inspector Morse: House of Ghosts**. This original story written for the stage is the first major stage adaptation of ITV's iconic detective series.

Our next play is on **Wednesday 25 March** to Stratford to see **The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind**. This is a new musical based on the memoir of William Kamkwamba. William wants to build a windmill as drought comes to his family farm and as rains do not come. All William has to hand are some library books and scraps of old machinery. Will he defy expectations?

All of the productions above are at present fully subscribed but there are always cancellations and we operate a waiting list. If you wish to put your name down for any return tickets for productions, please leave your name with Ellie Maughan.

With the colder weather here, our thoughts turn to Christmas. Lechlade Theatre-goers committee would like to wish you all A Very Happy Christmas and we hope to see you, if not this year, in the New Year, 2026.

Ellie Maughan

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candemaughan45@gmail.com

Brian Rudge

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brudge@sky.com

Rachel Range 01367 252056



LECHLADE MEMORIAL HALL AND PAVILION

As we approach the end of 2025, we would like to say a huge “Thank You” to everyone who gives blood. In June 2025, NHS Blood and Transplant highlighted that blood stocks in England were critically low and asked for more people to volunteer to do this. More than 5,000 donations are needed every day to help maintain a safe and reliable blood supply. In 2026, NHS **Blood donor** sessions will take place in the Memorial Hall on the following Fridays; **23 January, 27 March, 22 May, 24 July, 25 September and 27 November**. Appointments are available between 12:50 – 7:00pm. To book an appointment, visit blood.co.uk, download the app NHS GIVE BLOOD app or phone 0300 123 23 23.

We would also like to say “Thank You” to the Lechlade Community Fund who have provided a grant for a new bench on the playing field. This will replace one which is showing signs of wear and tear. The position of the new bench will also help Lechlade Football for all Youth football club to make better use of the space on the playing field for one of their pitches.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the Trustees of the charity for all their hard work throughout the year. All of this work is voluntary, in aid of our local community. As is no doubt true for many “village hall committees”, the age profile of Trustees is somewhat skewed towards the more mature end of the spectrum. We would love to have greater input from a younger generation of community-minded individuals. Our facilities are there to benefit the whole community. So, it would be good to get some fresh ideas to help ensure that we are serving the whole community. If you, or someone you know, may be interested in finding out more, either serving as a Trustee, or in a less formal, advisory capacity, then please get in touch via chair@lechladememorialhall.co.uk

To arrange a viewing or for more information about any of the activities which take place in the Memorial Hall and Pavilion, please go to our website which is at www.lechladememorialhall.co.uk or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/lechladememorialhall. Claire, our bookings clerk can be contacted on 07788 809784 or via email at bookonlinelechlade@gmail.com

Simon Paul BEM

Chairman of Trustees, Lechlade Village Hall and Recreation CIO

LECHLADE WITH FAIRFORD MOTHERS' UNION

We are coming to the end of our 2025 programme of events and meetings with speakers. In October, at our monthly afternoon meeting, we listened to Ruth Creighton. She spoke about the Royal British Legion with particular focus on The Battle Back Centre at Lilleshall, established in 2011 to support serving military personnel to overcome barriers and challenges encountered because of injury or illness. The centre focuses on what someone can achieve, instead of what they cannot do. Adaptive sports, adventurous training, theatre and art and well-being courses are the way RBL support veterans. So, when Remembrance Day came around this year, we wore our poppies with pride and were able to remember what the RBL are doing right now.

At our October quarterly evening meeting, we welcomed Steph Allison, a magistrate who works in the Gloucester and Cheltenham Family Courts. We heard about the Family Court proceedings and how the child is at the heart of all their decision making. Did you know that magistrates are volunteers?

At the November afternoon meeting, our visiting speaker was Chris Lowther from Open Doors, an amazing charity that supports persecuted Christians worldwide. Chris had a floor map of Africa and spoke about the life for Christians in different African countries. We could see where persecution hits hardest. Open Doors produce an annual list which ranks countries where Christians face the most extreme persecution. Chris thanked us kindly for donating to the charity.

Thanking our members for supporting MU worldwide and one another, during the last year. Happy Christmas.

Dates for Diary.

Wednesday 10 December at 2:00pm - **Christmas party** with carols. Memorial Hall.

Monday 15 December 7:00pm - **Christmas Party** with supper. 8 Katherine's Walk

Wednesday 14 January - AGM preceded by 12:30pm lunch £6. Memorial Hall

Little Lights

Pre-school pram service and playgroup will be held in St Lawrence Church on **Wednesdays 7 and 21 January** 9:30 - 11:00am

Kathy Newton

EUROPEAN CHAMPION

Congratulations are due to Ollie Lewis - our own European champion!

Seventeen-year-old Ollie, whose proud Dad lives in Lechlade, has just returned from Turkey where he struck gold in the European Biathlon Championships for under 19 men - plus silver in the mixed relay. Biathlon is a combination of run-swim-run and clearly the work that Ollie has been doing with coach Kevin Buttle and the Swindon Harriers' team stood him in good stead as he roared to his first international victory in the city of Alanya.

And to say that Ollie was surprised by his success is an understatement! "Honestly I have no words for it, I just can't describe how happy I am feeling," said Ollie last night. "To be honest I went there for the experience and didn't think about getting on the podium at all. Competing in my first international event was a big step up and I didn't expect anything, so to become European champion is an amazing feeling."

On the first 800m run, on tarmac, Ollie got himself into the top three before they kicked off their running shoes and headed into the sea for the 200m swim.

"Going into the second run (again 800m) I saw at the turning point I had a big gap so I slowed down a bit. But then I realised the guy behind me had put in a strong surge and was catching me so with 150m to go I absolutely bolted it and eventually won by three seconds."

What a proud moment for the Harrier athlete, who is also a member of Royal Wootton Bassett Otters Swimming Club and Vale Tridents Triathlon Club.

"Oliver has been training with me for around two years now and in that time he has represented the Harriers many times at both cross country and on the track," said Kevin. "He has become a dedicated and valued member of the club. As a person Oliver is a great lad and always encourages the others in the group and gives everything in training. His European medals build upon the silver in the GB Schools Biathlon earlier in the year. I think that Ollie has a really bright future ahead of him."

Swindon Harriers



HOLE IN THE WALL

I'm sure we've all spotted the new take-away food outlet in the Market Place. The Health Box has been planning to convert this unused space for years and now it's up and running as 'The Hole in the Wall', a reference to the cash machine that occupied that window when Barclays Bank was in residence.

By day, (Wednesday – Friday 7:00am-2:00pm & Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm) it's a take-away cafe run by Abbey with a mouth-watering range of sandwiches, hot baps, salads, soup, pastries and cakes together with hot and cold drinks. Apparently, the hot bacon and brie bap with cranberries is particularly popular and I've selflessly tasted the brie and cranberry sandwich on your behalf – delicious! Much of the food is homemade using locally sourced ingredients. Look out for seasonal specials as Christmas approaches.

In the evening, amazing independent chefs offer pop-up events including Caribbean, Thai, Smash Burgers and Tacos. Look out for information on Facebook, Instagram and outside the Health Box.

The venture is proving a big success, which is good news for locals and visitors alike.



ST THOMAS, FAIRFORD

Mass times: 6:00pm on Saturday and 11:00am on Sunday

Christmas Services:

Wednesday 24 December

8:30pm Carols

9:00pm First Mass of Christmas

Thursday 25 December

11:00am Christmas Day Mass



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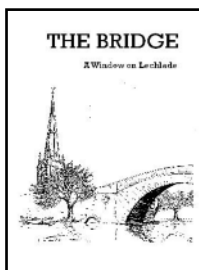
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RSCM (ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC) BATH CHORAL COURSE AUGUST 2025

St Lawrence Church Choir was once again proud to be represented on the course this year by two of its choristers. Hannah (13) returned as one of the Girl Choristers, having enjoyed attending the course so much in 2024, and following successful application, Tia returned for her third year as a member of staff having first enjoyed the course herself as a Scholar in 2022. I am delighted that they both had a fantastic week, culminating in singing services in Bath Abbey. Hannah came away with a glowing report from her House Tutor. She writes of her experience below.

Hannah: We took part in a wide range of activities, like workshops where we learnt how to conduct and play the organ. Us choristers also did a liturgy workshop where we prepared sermons and prayers and chose the hymns for the 'Voices of Hope' service that we did on Friday. Other services which we did with the Scholars included Eucharist, Evensong, Compline and a Concert.

There was also a wide range of music with solo opportunities. My favourites included Thou Knowest Lord by Purcell and I Am the Gentle Light by Meallor. We also sang in beautiful places such as Kingswood Chapel, Christ Church and Bath Abbey. We also did an informal concert on Friday for the course participants where I was in a group with my friends and we performed Ave Verum by Elgar.

Overall, the Bath Course was a really fun experience, where I made lots of new friends and took part in activities and services, and I would really recommend it.

Hannah & Rachel Bath

JOLLY SUPER THINGS

Classes:

Thursday 4 December: Mosaic Christmas Baubles – 10:00am to 1:00pm at Jolly Super Things.

Saturday 13 December: Block Printed Christmas Stockings- 10:00am to 1:00pm at Jolly Super Things

Thursday 22 January 2026: Learn to Crochet – 10:30am to 3:00pm at Jolly Super Things

Thursday 29 January: Metal Embossing – 10:00am to 1:00pm at Jolly Super Things

Saturday 31 January: Mosaic Making – 10:00am to 4:00pm at Jolly Super Things

Details - www.jollysuperthings.co.uk

Jennie Turner Maskell



VALE TRIDENTS JUNIOR TRIATHLON CLUB

Faringdon's junior triathlon club celebrates 20 anniversary

The Vale Tridents Junior Triathlon Club, based in Faringdon, Oxfordshire, is proudly celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2025 — and the club is stronger than ever. The Tridents currently have 50 junior triathletes aged 7–17, with an inspiring membership balance of 65% girls and 35% boys. This reflects its ongoing commitment to equality, inclusivity, and ensuring that triathlon is accessible and welcoming to all young people.

To mark the milestone, the club welcomed its founder, Carolyn Murphy, to present the annual awards and trophies. Joining her was Mel Nichols; Paralympian, and world-record ultra cyclist, who attended as a celebrity guest and presented the South West Junior Series certificates.

Both delivered motivational speeches, along with the Chairman Richard Lewis and the Head Coach Tom Gilbert. The club train every Saturday morning for two hours, combining running and cycling on the FCC grounds and then a coached swim session at Faringdon Leisure Centre. To keep training fun and varied, sessions regularly take place at: The Folly (hill sprints/cross country), Tilsley Park (track running), Moredon sports hub (cycling track), Lake 62 (open-water swimming), leisure centre studio (turbo sessions).

The Vale Tridents' mission is to inspire and nurture a lifelong love of triathlon by providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment. The club promotes resilience, teamwork, and fair play, while celebrating effort, diversity, and the joy of multisport. With qualified coaching, structured training, and a welcoming spirit, every child is supported to develop their skills, confidence, and passion for an active lifestyle. It is not all about being competitive, the Tridents encourage all levels of participation. This year all of the club's athletes participated in events, some in their first ever triathlon.

Children who are interested in joining the Vale Tridents or taking part in their events can find details at www.valetridents.com, email valetridents@gmail.com, or follow [@valetridentsjuniortriathlon](https://www.instagram.com/valetridentsjuniortriathlon) on Instagram and Facebook.

The Vale Trident Junior Triathlon Club looks forward to the next 20 years of inspiring young athletes — and celebrating every step, stroke, and pedal along the way

Kurstie Gilbert

QUANTUM HEALING HYPNOSIS TECHNIQUE (QHHT)

There's Hypnosis... and then there's Quantum Healing Hypnosis Technique (QHHT)

As someone who has spent my professional life helping people in various ways, I wanted a healing modality that went deeper — something ethical, well-researched and genuinely transformative. That search led me to Quantum Healing Hypnosis Technique, or QHHT.

When Dolores Cannon developed QHHT, she observed that traditional hypnotherapy often focused on narrow issues and typically required multiple short sessions — sometimes six to eight just to address a serious phobia. She also saw that very little time was devoted to truly understanding a client's life story, patterns, and experiences that may underpin their challenges.

Over 45 years, she refined a method that enables a deeper, more holistic engagement. QHHT is designed so that one comprehensive session can address a client's needs without further intervention.

QHHT goes far beyond simple past-life regression. It offers a profound exploration of the subconscious mind and facilitates a connection with the Higher Self for insight, clarity, and healing. A session lasts around five hours (sometimes more), during which you are guided through an in-depth exploration of your life, issues, and recurring themes.

Only part of the appointment involves active trance work. The true healing begins with you — being seen, heard, and given the space to reflect on your life in a safe, confidential environment. This depth is why many people experience significant shifts after just one session.

QHHT works on the understanding that the subconscious and Higher Self hold the keys to healing on all levels: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. By accessing this wisdom, clients often uncover root causes of challenges, release emotional blocks, and experience meaningful transformation.

Many of my clients report improvements in physical and emotional wellbeing, alongside a renewed sense of confidence and peace.

Sessions are available from January in Lechlade and Witney. To find out more or book, email: Mary@findyourjoyfullife.com (See the advertisement on Page 52)

Mary McGuire



ST LAWRENCE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, LECHLADE

St Lawrence CE Primary has had a busy autumn so far and, as we now enter the winter months, there are lots of upcoming events too, especially in the lead up to Christmas.

We have been taking part in various sporting fixtures including sports hall athletics, a rugby festival and a hockey festival. As always, we are very proud of the pupils' efforts and how well they have represented the school.

At the end of September, our Year 6 pupils attended the Steam Museum to learn how trains were used in WW2 to support the war effort. Over the term several classes have visited Coleshill to enrich the children's design and technology curriculum learning. Most recently our Year 3 pupils visited Stonehenge to see the monument and learn about what life was like in the Neolithic period.

We held our Harvest Festival service in church in October and the children were invited to bring in an item or two with them to be donated to the Swindon Foodbank. The donations will help families in crisis to put food on the table.

Our Friends of St Lawrence School (FOSLS) team have also been busy this term raising vital funds for the school. At the start of November, a disco was held where the children showed us their best dance moves. In the coming weeks we will have a Christmas raffle and a Santa dash for the children to enjoy too.

You may have seen us leading the singing at the annual 'Light up Lechlade' event on Saturday 29 November and the choir will be singing at Hillier Garden Centre on the 3 December and to St Birinus Court residents on the 8 December.

Preparation for our Infant Nativity is in full swing. The children are doing a wonderful job of practising their parts and we look forward to presenting it to their parents. On Wednesday 17 December pupils will come to school in 'Christmassy' jumpers and enjoy a Christmas lunch menu. To finish the term the junior pupils will celebrate at St Lawrence Church with our carol concert.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Gordon Soutar, Head Teacher



LECHLADE HISTORY SOCIETY

In October, Ian Mackintosh came to talk to us about the history of Stroud. Originally it was part of Bisley parish and not particularly important, referred to by the Anglo-Saxons as a 'marshy place overgrown with brushwood'. However, its location at a crossroads and at the junction of five river valleys, with a good water supply and associated power generation, led to its subsequent growth and prosperity, and a market is recorded by 1570. The medieval wool trade brought great wealth to the town and large quantities of woollen cloth were sent to London and on to the Netherlands, East Indies and China. Ian described some of the medieval buildings and mentioned the original features that can still be seen. There were 170 water-driven fulling mills by the late 1700s and Stroud became 'a sort of capital of the clothing villages'. Wealthy Georgian merchants rebuilt or refronted houses to make imposing residences. The Industrial Revolution, the use of steam power from coal and the network of canals for transport brought even greater prosperity, although some Victorians rather disparagingly considered that 'there's nought that's pretty, wise nor witty' about Stroud.

After our short AGM in November, Sean Callery took us to the 'Offbeat Cotswolds' and Stroud was one of the locations included in his talk about some of the quirky and unusual facts and features that could easily be overlooked by visitors. A perpetual cross-cutter machine for raising the nap on wool was invented in Stroud and tennis balls and snooker baize are still made there. The machine's use of rotating blades inspired the invention of the lawn mower.

Broadway has long been connected with artists and the artistic colony at Russell House was where John Singer Sargent painted 'Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose'. William Morris set up a printing press in Broadway Tower, starting his campaign to preserve historic buildings. Woolstaplers' Hall in Chipping Campden was formerly the home of the Arts and Crafts designer C. R. Ashbee and a carving above the door amusingly depicts ash leaves and a bee. Have you noticed the small, thatched building by the roundabout at Seven Springs? It used to be a parcel depot in the 19th century. Have you ever wondered why Bibury is so popular with Japanese visitors? Hirohito visited the village in 1921, before he became emperor.

It seems that pigeons pecking at mineral deposits led to the establishment of the spa at Cheltenham. Pigeons appear on the town's coat of arms and as finials on top of signposts and a phone box. Although Tetbury is inland, dolphins feature on the town crest, on buildings and in the names of local organisations, supposedly because two dolphins saved a local Norman lord from drowning.

So we should all try to look at the smaller details as well as the obvious attractions when visiting towns and villages in the Cotswolds.

Diary Dates

December – no meeting

Monday 19 January 2026 – ‘The Cripps: Socialist Squires of Filkins’ (Sir Stafford Cripps was Attlee’s Chancellor of the Exchequer). with Bert Clough
All meetings are held in Lechlade Memorial Hall GL7 3AY. Doors open at 7:00 for a 7:30pm start. All welcome - Members £8 p.a. plus £2 per meeting. 2026 subs now due. Visitors £4 per meeting. Refreshments available.
Linda Kent



LECHLADE ON THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

Have your say on Cotswold District Council’s Local Plan update
The consultation for the Cotswold District Council Local Plan is now open, and we want to make sure local community voices get heard.

The consultation comes after the Government more than doubled the housing targets for the district, meaning the Council must now plan for 18,650 more homes between now and 2043.

They are also planning beyond that – offering a longer-term view of future developments for locations that, indicatively, could accommodate more homes.

Visit [your.cotswold.gov.uk](https://www.cotswold.gov.uk) to have your say.

This plan will shape how towns and villages across the district grow, covering housing, transport, green spaces, employment, and more. Your input is vital to ensure the future reflects what matters most.

Please take a few minutes to share your views. Every response helps create a plan that protects what we value and supports what we need. Thank you for helping shape the future of our community.

Community Speed Watch – Volunteers Needed in Lechlade!

A big thank you to our current and past volunteers whose time and dedication have already made a real difference in keeping Lechlade safe.

Due to the recent resignations of long-standing members pursuing other interests and commitments, we are looking for new volunteers to join Lechlade’s Community Speed Watch team.

By giving just a little of your time, you’ll help remind drivers to slow down and make our streets safer for everyone.

Training will be provided by Gloucestershire Police, so you’ll feel confident and supported as part of the team.

If you’re interested in finding out more, please contact Ali or Ginette at the Town Council office: E: clerks@lechladeonthames-tc.gov.uk T: 01367 252338
Alison Webber, Deputy Town Clerk

PREPARING FOR WINTER

Here in the South Cotswolds, we are usually reminded of our relationship with nature most vividly in the warmer months, when we spend more time outdoors and the landscape feels alive with energy and growth. As autumn turns to winter and the leaves begin to fall, that connection can seem to fade. The fields appear quieter, the skies greyer. But of course, there is no “off switch” for nature - it is simply entering another phase of its cycle, resting and renewing for the year ahead.

We too have to adapt. Winter brings its own challenges, not least the risk of flooding, which affects so many towns and villages across our constituency. From Purton to Poulton to Parliament, I have been working hard to ensure our communities are better protected and prepared.

Earlier this month, I convened a Flooding Summit in Cirencester, bringing together local councillors, parish representatives, and community flood groups to share progress and plan practical steps for the months ahead. The discussions were constructive and grounded in real experience - a reminder that while national policy and investment are vital, the most effective solutions often come from those who know their local landscapes best.

In Parliament, I will continue to raise this issue through debates, legislative work, and direct engagement with ministers. But what inspires me most is what I see here at home: neighbours supporting one another, community groups taking the initiative, and volunteers stepping forward to protect their towns and villages from future flooding. The South Cotswolds spirit of collaboration and care is one of our greatest strengths.

That same spirit is at the heart of the Cotswold Volunteer Flood Warden Scheme, run by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council in partnership with Cotswold District Council. Flood Wardens act as the eyes and ears of their communities - keeping an eye on local watercourses, helping share information, and providing vital updates during a flood event. They receive full training and ongoing support, and their efforts are making a real difference across the district.

If you'd like to get involved, I encourage you to find out more at www.cotswold.gov.uk/floodwardens or contact Rachel Seymour at rachels@grcc.org.uk. Even if you're not able to volunteer, there are many ways to help - from checking on vulnerable neighbours to reporting blocked drains or keeping watercourses clear. Small, local actions can add up to real resilience.

As we look ahead to the colder months, I know many people are concerned - about energy bills, weather extremes, or simply the shorter, darker days. But winter also brings an opportunity to reconnect in a different way: through community warmth, shared effort, and kindness. Whether it's lending a hand, joining a local initiative, or just sharing a cup of tea with a neighbour, these small gestures help us all feel stronger and more connected.

Let's face the winter together - with care for one another, for our homes, and for the beautiful landscape we all call home.

Roz Savage MP

South Cotswolds, roz.savage.mp@parliament.uk, 01285 300555



NEWS FROM THE CHOIR PEWS

The Michaelmas term began with a valedictory choral evensong for our retiring Head Chorister, Sophie. We thanked her for her eleven years of committed service to the choir and musical life of St Lawrence Church Choir at this special service where the music was chosen by Sophie herself. She has been a splendid Head Chorister and excellent role model for the younger choristers whom she has helped train and encourage. She has supported the choir in all its activities, including Restoration Appeal concerts, weddings, services of thanksgiving, performed numerous solos and cantored at evensong as well as supervised choristers on fun activities such as surfing! After the service, a short photo presentation in 'This is your life' style was given of her time in the choir and she was presented with a card, gift and photobook of her time as a chorister. We wish her much happiness and success as she begins her degree in Environmental Science with Placement Year at Exeter University and look forward to her singing with us when she is able.

A few weeks later we enjoyed admitting her successors at the 10:00am Parish Communion service: Lily (Head Chorister) and her deputy Hannah (St Lawrence Chorister). We wish them and Alistair (who supports them as Librarian) every success in their new roles. This term you will have seen our newest Probationer, Jamie (who has been regularly attending choir practice and undergoing training) start singing in the services as well. He is doing brilliantly and shows great potential.

I am delighted to report that this term, four of our choristers have been successful in achieving their Light Blue Ribbon. Many congratulations to Lavinia and Alistair (who jointly scored the top mark of 94%), Jonathan and Kaitlyn. They will receive their awards at the 10:00am service on Advent Sunday. They have all worked extremely hard for these medals, well done.

The choir are looking forward to singing services over Advent and Christmas – do come and hear us, and we wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Rachel Bath



December 2025

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---|
| Monday | 1 | LECHLADE LIBRARY Children's Christmas Trail starts (Until Christmas) |
| Tuesday | 2 | WI Social Event Memorial Hall 7:00pm |
| Wednesday | 3 | LECHLADE LIBRARY Mah Jong 4:00-6:00pm
LIONS Santa Sleigh Hillier Garden Centre 5:00-8:00pm |
| Thursday | 4 | MEN ALOUD OUT Programme Planning The Trout 7:00pm
LIONS Santa Sleigh Gassons Rd area |
| Friday | 5 | PROBUS "Misericords in Gloucestershire" Memorial Hall 10:30am
FFLC Annual Raffle Draw |
| Saturday | 6 | ART SOCIETY Pop-Up Art Sale Memorial Hall 10:00am-2:00pm |
| Sunday | 7 | ANTIQUES & VINTAGE MARKET Memorial Hall
ST LAWRENCE CHURCH Christingle Workshop 3:00pm & Service 4:00pm |
| Monday | 8 | WI Reading Group Baptist Church 10:30am
CHRISTMAS CONCERT St Lawrence Church 7:30pm |
| Tuesday | 9 | LIONS Santa Sleigh. Downington area |
| Wednesday | 10 | LECHLADE LIBRARY Canasta 4:00-6:00pm
GARDENING CLUB AGM & English Cider Tasting Memorial Hall 7:30pm
MU Christmas Party Memorial Hall 2:00pm |
| Thursday | 11 | CDC Local Plan Review Consultation Fairford Community Centre 2:00-7:00pm
LIONS Santa Sleigh Perrinsfield & Roman Way areas
ARTS SOCIETY UPPER THAMES 'Top 20 Artists' Memorial Hall 2:00pm |
| Sunday | 14 | BAPTIST CHURCH Carol Service 10:30am
ST LAWRENCE CHURCH All Age Christmas Worship 10:00am |
| Monday | 15 | MU Evening Christmas Party 8 St Katherine's Walk 7:00pm |
| Tuesday | 16 | LIONS Santa Sleigh St Lawrence Rd area
LECHLADE LIBRARY Mah Jong 4:00-6:00pm
WINTER WASSAIL The Trout from 7:30pm |
| Friday | 12 | PROBUS Christmas Lunch Memorial Hall
BURFORD JAZZ |
| Saturday | 13 | REPAIR CAFÉ Memorial Hall 9:30am-12:30pm |
| Tuesday | 16 | WI Coffee morning Riverside Pub 10:30am
MU Christmas Party Kathy's 6:30pm |
| Sunday | 21 | ST LAWRENCE CHURCH Nine Lessons & Carols 5:00pm |
| Wednesday | 24 | LECHLADE LIBRARY Closes 1:00pm
CRIB SERVICE St Lawrence Church 4:00pm
CAROLS (8:30pm) followed by First Mass (9:00pm) St Thomas R.C. Fairford
FIRST COMMUNION OF CHRISTMAS St Lawrence Church 11:15pm |
| Thursday | 25 | CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICES:
Holy Communion BCP St Lawrence Church 8:00am
Family Communion St Lawrence Church 10:00am
Christmas Celebration Baptist Church 10:30am
Mass St Thomas R.C. Fairford 11:00am
CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH Fairford Community Centre 12:30pm |



Save some lives,
**DON'T
DRINK AND
DRIVE!**



DE DIARY

ts are proceeding as advertised.



January 2026

Wednesday	1	NEW YEAR'S DAY
Friday	2	LECHLADE LIBRARY Re-opens 1:00pm
Sunday	4	ANTIQUES & VINTAGE MARKET Memorial Hall
Wednesday	7	LITTLE LIGHTS St Lawrence Church 9:30am LECHLADE LIBRARY Mah Jong 4:00-6:00pm
Thursday	9	ART SOCIETY UPPER THAMES 'Australian Aboriginal Art' Memorial Hall 2:00pm
Saturday	10	REPAIR CAFÉ Memorial Hall 9:30am-12:30pm
Wednesday	14	GARDENING CLUB 'Sex, Lies & Putrifaction' Memorial Hall 7:30pm UTRNTA 'Three Choirs and a Reformation' Highworth MU Lunch 12:30pm & AGM 2:00pm Memorial Hall LECHLADE LIBRARY Canasta 4:00-6:00pm
Friday	16	PROBUS 'Why Stonehenge had a Roof' Memorial Hall 10:30am
Sunday	18	COMMUNITY CINEMA 'The Ballad of Wallis Island' Memorial Hall 7:30pm
Monday	19	HISTORY SOCIETY 'The Cripps: Socialist Squires of Filkins' Memorial Hall 7:30pm
Wednesday	21	LITTLE LIGHTS St Lawrence Church 9:30am LECHLADE LIBRARY Mah Jong 4:00-6:00pm
Friday	23	BLOOD DONATION Memorial Hall
Wednesday	28	LECHLADE LIBRARY Book Club 5:00-6:00pm



REGULAR MEETINGS

Please check with organisers before first attendance

Sunday	Antiques & Vintage Market Memorial Hall
Monday	Fitsteps 3pm - 4pm Memorial Hall Badminton weekly 8:00pm Memorial Hall
Tuesday	Tuesday Club Weekly 10:30am-3:00pm Memorial Hall Tuesday Lunch Club Weekly 12:30-2:00pm Memorial Hall TATT Second 8:00pm The Trout U3A First 2:30pm Palmer Hall, Fairford Art Society variable 2:00pm Pavilion
Wednesday	Little Lights First & Third 9:00am, St Lawrence Church Lechlade Voices Second & Fourth 7:00pm Baptist Church Mens Shed 9:30am - 12:30am Fairford Thames School of Dancing Weekly 7:00pm & 8:00pm Memorial Hall Scottish Dancing Weekly 2:30pm Memorial Hall (Term time only) Adult Ballet Weekly 9:30am & 10:45am Memorial Hall
Thursday	Spiritualist Church Weekly 7:30pm Pavilion Thursday Art Group Weekly 9:15am - 12:15pm Pavilion Working4wellbeing Digital Drop In Weekly 10:00am Baptist Church Working4wellbeing Talking Cafe Weekly 10:30am Baptist Church
Friday	Memory Lane Singers First & Third, 11:00am Pavilion Riverfolk Second & Last 8:00pm The Trout
Saturday	Repair Cafe Second 09:30am - 12:30pm Pavilion

FROM THE REGISTERS

At St Lawrence Church:

We remember:

Pamela Chadwick
Elizabeth Banks
Denbigh Hamilton-Harding
Stanley Godwin
Estelle Lockett
Rodney Benson

MEN ALOUD OUT

The purpose of Men Aloud Out is simple in that the Group was set up as a relaxed talking-place for men. We usually meet on the first Thursday of the month at the Trout Inn for a beer and discussion. Our topics are wide ranging, but all are considered from a Christian point of view, and lest anyone should be put off by this, you would not have to be a practicing attender of church services and, certainly, you do not have to be knowledgeable on church matters. You would find us to be simply a bunch of ordinary guys meeting over a pint and putting the World to rights. All views are welcome, and tolerance is the watchword.

Normally, we start a meeting at 7:30pm except for our February and August meetings when we meet at 6:30pm either for board games or simply to chat and have a light meal. In August we also play Aunt Sally. On a couple of occasions, we will have a meal together and at which we have an invited speaker. On other occasions, we meet for a chat on a topical subject and one of us will suggest that subject to be chatted through to give us structure; such discussions often become very wide-ranging indeed. Why not come and give us a try; you would be very welcome.

4 December at 7:30pm. No formal talk or discussion has been planned for this particular evening, but we shall be taking the opportunity to review and plan our programme for 2026.

In January, 2026, there will be no meeting, but on **5 February 2026** at 6:30pm our meeting will be Board Games and a meal, or for a general chat between those present.

Dacre Watson



FLOODLIGHTING

Many people comment on the fact that it is a joy to see St Lawrence Church floodlit, especially in the dark winter months. For many years the people of Lechlade, and others, have generously helped to fund the expense by giving donations to commemorate a special event – a birthday perhaps, an anniversary, a thanksgiving; we can dedicate a date to anything really!

If you would like to contribute towards the running costs of the floodlighting and would like to commemorate a special person or event, please use the form on the church website (<https://bit.ly/LechladeLights>) or scan the QR code.

If you don't have internet access please contact the Parish Office.

The names and events are published in The Bridge and the church website on a regular basis.

The PCC has suggested that a minimum donation of £10.00 would be appropriate and if you are a taxpayer, please do consider gift-aiding your contribution. At present the web form doesn't incorporate a facility to make the payment so this is still 'manual', but there are instructions on the form. Do contact the Parish Office with any queries.

With thanks to those who have donated to St Lawrence to help with the ongoing cost of floodlighting the spire, which we are pleased to recognise by these dedications:

4 September	Remembering Win and Terry Chivers on their wedding anniversary, with so much love from Kim and Pete.
13 October	In memory of Robert Long
17 November	In loving memory of Nancy Hyde
19 November	Remembering Peter Berridge - always in our thoughts. Ruth, Jamie & Jonathan
1 December	Keith, Kathy, Ken & Letty. Always remembered
24 December	Remembering our dear friend John Greenway at this special time of year. He loved Lechlade and the River Thames. God bless you. Brenda and Tim
25 December	Remembering with love 'Rosentere', Ron Tooth, Ruth and Dennis Selwood at this special time of year. Brenda and Tim



LECHLADE GARDENING CLUB

On **Wednesday 10 December** it is our **AGM**. Please don't be put off as this is usually very brisk and is to be followed by Alex Sheen with a talk on **English cider** together with lots of free samples to taste. Plus wine and nibbles provided by the club. There is no entrance fee for this evening. You can pay your yearly sub if you so wish.

On **Wednesday 14 January 2026** our speaker is Timothy Walker with a talk entitled '**Sex, Lies and Putrefaction**' - all about pollination and pollinators. Timothy has been to us before and he is a very lively and entertaining speaker, as well as being extremely well qualified in the gardening field. He was the Horti Praefectus (Director) of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum.

Our usual meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the New Memorial Hall, Lechlade where there is ample parking. Membership is £5 per person per annum, after which it is £2 to attend each meeting, or £3 for Visitors, who are always most welcome. Membership also entitles you to 10% off plants at Burford and Bampton Garden Centres if plants are not already discounted. Current membership cards have to be shown at the checkouts.

For further information please contact 01367 252286 or any member of the committee.

Barbara McNaught



**Friends of Fairford and Lechlade
Communities**

Formerly The League of Friends of Fairford Hospital

FRIENDS OF FAIRFORD AND LECHLADE COMMUNITIES

Funded Counselling for Young People Age 11-18

We are thrilled to be partnering with Cotswold Counselling to offer short term counselling sessions for young people aged 11 to 18, living within Fairford, Lechlade and the surrounding villages. To find out more and to download an application form, please see our website www.friendsoffairford.org.uk

Annual Charity Raffle

Be in with a chance to win a huge range of prizes in our Annual Raffle! Tickets are on sale in our Charity Shop, from our Trustees and by emailing admin@friendsoffairford.org.uk The draw will be held Friday 5 December at our Bereavement Café at Fairford Community Centre. Good Luck!

Website: www.friendsoffairford.org.uk

Agneta Lindgren

THE DOOR YOUTH CLUB

Hey! I'm Maddie, and I am the Community Youth Worker for Lechlade, Fairford and Cirencester. The Door is a local charity that has been open in Gloucestershire since 1991, working closely with young people to run youth club sessions and other events. At The Door we offer various aspects of support for vulnerable young people and their families, including mentoring, support groups and youth clubs. Youth clubs are FREE safe spaces for 11–17-year-olds to socialize, learn new skills and receive support. Youth clubs are open access meaning young people simply turn up, no need to book!

At Lechlade youth club, we have been busy cooking fresh soup, doing arts and crafts and even had a games session at Lechlade Library. Looking ahead, we will be hosting a pizza night as well as a cupcake decorating session for our Christmas fundraiser! In December, there will of course be plenty of Christmas themed food and activities to get excited about. We would love to hear your ideas so get in touch via @cotswolddoor (Instagram) Madison Door (Facebook). Keep an eye on social medias for updates and find out more about The Door at thedor.org.uk.

The Door welcomes youth club volunteers and encourages those passionate about working with young people to get involved! Volunteers can share their interests and hobbies in session. For example, teaching the young people arts and crafts, cooking and more. Volunteers must be 18+. Please visit our website for more information: <https://thedor.org.uk/volunteer/>

	Lechlade	Fairford	Cirencester
Where?	The Pavilion (next to Memorial Hall)	Fairford Community Centre	St Lawrence Church Hall
Day?	Fridays	Mondays	Tuesdays
Time?	6:30-8:30pm	6:30-8pm	3:30-5:30pm
Who?	11-17 year olds!	11-17year olds!	11-17year olds!

Madison Fey



LECHLADE LITTLE LEARNERS

Top 10 Tips for Making Christmas Magic for Children on a Budget

Christmas is a season filled with wonder, warmth and excitement—yet for many families, it can also bring financial pressure. At Little Learners, we believe the magic of Christmas has very little to do with money and everything to do with moments shared, traditions created and love freely given. Here are our top ten tips for making the festive season magical without stretching your budget.

1. Create Simple Family Traditions

Children remember routines far more than pricey presents. A hot chocolate evening, picking a “Christmas book of the night,” or wearing festive socks together can become cherished traditions.

2. Make Decorations Together

Paper chains, salt-dough ornaments, and dried orange garlands are inexpensive, fun to make and give your home a unique handmade charm. Children feel proud when they see their creations displayed.

3. Go on a Christmas Lights Walk

Wrap up warm and explore your neighbourhood. Many families say this becomes the highlight of December—free, sparkly and full of community spirit.

4. Bake Something Festive

Gingerbread biscuits or simple fairy cakes decorated with icing can feel magical to children. The experience matters more than the baking skills!

5. Create a Christmas Eve Box — Using What You Already Have

A cosy blanket, a story you already own, and a homemade treat can turn an ordinary evening into something special without buying anything new.

6. Make Homemade Gifts

Children love crafting presents: painted stones, bookmarks, handprint cards or decorated jars with sweets. They’re heartfelt and affordable.

7. Enjoy Free Local Events

Look out for community carol services, library crafting sessions, or Christmas markets. Many offer free entertainment ideal for little ones.

8. Swap Rather Than Shop

Organise a toy or book swap with friends or neighbours. Children enjoy receiving something “new to them”, and it gives loved items a second life.

9. Focus on Experiences, Not Things

Movie nights, family games or building a sofa cushion fort create memories that last far longer than most toys.

10. Keep the Magic Simple

Children don’t need elaborate surprises. A personalised letter from Santa,

spotting “reindeer tracks” in the garden (flour or sand!), or leaving out carrots and mince pies creates wonder at no cost.

Join our ‘12 Days of Christmas Festive Raffle’!

Little Learners are hosting a special Christmas Raffle this year. We hope that the various prizes in our 12 Days of Christmas Festive Raffle will appeal to everyone. Tickets can be purchased for just £1 and the raffle will be drawn daily from 1st to 12th December. Please consider supporting your local preschool and you may well end up winning one of the fantastic prizes! More information and raffle tickets can be found by scanning the QR code. Good luck!



Little Learners Committee

A GOOD READ

Precipice by Robert Harris



This is a fictionalised account of the real love affair between H. H Asquith, then the Prime Minister, and Venetia Stanley, a clever, bored and reckless aristocrat. It is set in 1914 as the world moves inexorably towards war. Amazingly, Asquith shared many government secrets with Venetia during their meetings and in a tidal wave of letters. The story concludes with the end of their relationship as the grim reality of WWI unfolds.

Venetia kept all Asquith’s letters and these form the source material for the book along with original telegrams, newspaper reports and official documents. Asquith was amazingly indiscreet, sometimes showing Venetia confidential government documents and then screwing them up and throwing them out of the car window as they travelled!

I enjoyed the read both as a story and as a fascinatingly original window into a period of history. This book is available to borrow from Lechlade Community Library.

Marian Winckles



LECHLADE COMMUNITY CINEMA

We show recently released films normally on the third Sunday of the month, except August and December. Our most recent films in October and November were *The Salt Path* and *The Penguin Lessons*. These proved to be very popular with our local audience. Our next film in **January** will be **'The Ballad of Wallis Island'** (cert 12). Please see posters/social media nearer the time. Tickets cost £4.00, which includes a 50p voluntary donation to Lechlade Village Hall and Recreation CIO (the registered charity which is responsible for the Memorial Hall). Doors open at 7:00pm for refreshments (including wine) and the film starts at 7:30pm. Being part of an audience is a different experience from watching a film at home. So see films as they were intended to be seen, on a big screen and support your local community.

Simon Paul



BUSINESS CONNECT CHRISTMAS MEETING

Connecting local businesses with local community groups

If you have a business or belong to a community group, sports club or PTA in or around Lechlade and Fairford, you are warmly invited to attend the next Business Connect meeting. This will be **Business Connect's Christmas event** on **Wednesday 10 December** at 4:00pm probably in the Clubhouse at Bowmoor Sailing Club GL7 3DT just off the A417 between Fairford and Lechlade, but venue is to be confirmed. The meeting will be preceded by a charity Santa Splash event 11:00am-3:00pm.

What Business Connect is all about?

- Business Connect is not traditional business networking as it incorporates the wider community throughout the Cotswolds to include businesses, local charities, good causes, community groups and clubs, schools and sports clubs.
- With businesses and local groups helping each other, everyone will thrive and succeed in challenging times.

Register to attend Business Connect's Christmas event (you don't have to take part in the Santa Splash to come along and enjoy some Festive cheer) – contact Chris Roberts MBE: 01285-712150, 07443-500744, chrisrobertsmbe@gmail.com.

Sign up to take part in the Santa Splash and book your slot between 11:00am-3:00pm:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/healingmilitaryminds/1822246>.

Chris Roberts MBE



PAN-ASIAN RESTAURANT CONFIRMED FOR LECHLADE

It has now been confirmed that the first 'You Me and Umami' restaurant and take-away service will be opening at the old Red Lion pub.

Foyez Rahman, also behind Sasa's Indian Kitchen and Bar in Crudwell, will open his first Pan-Asian concept in early December in the High Street building that dates back to before 1882. Foyez said: "Since we announced our plans and started looking for local staff, Lechlade has been extremely supportive and welcoming to myself and my family. This is the food I have come to love in the UK and on my travels, and I think Lechlade and the surrounding area will really like it. We have Korean, Japanese and Malay influenced dishes that we hope you will enjoy as much as we do. We use the best ingredients – fish, shellfish, meat and vegetables, sourced locally when possible. We are extremely excited to be coming to Lechlade and to such an historic building."

The restaurant is due to open in early December with a Gala Evening for local businesses and the public. Follow on Instagram: youmeumami and Facebook: YouMe&Umami while the website: <https://www.youmeandumami.co.uk/lechlade> is being completed.

For bookings and enquiries, contact: 01367 831318 or umamilechlade@gmail.com.

Chris Roberts MBE



LECHLADE BAPTIST CHURCH (Sherborne Street, Lechlade, GL7 3AH)

Services and other events:

Sunday 14 December at 10:30am: Carol service

Thursday 25 December at 10:30am: Christmas Day celebration

Sundays at 10:30am: Worship service

Wednesdays at 10:30am: Bible study meetings – and a monthly prayer meeting

Saturdays from 10:00am until 12:00noon: Beans drop-in café – with tea, coffee, hot chocolate and cake

For further details, or to double check weekday arrangements during the holiday period, please don't hesitate to drop in at Beans on a Saturday – or contact the Church Secretary, Mr David Hopkins, on 01285 712586.

On Thursdays you'll also find a Talking Café at the church premises from 10:30am. This is hosted by the Working 4 Wellbeing charity. To check the session dates, please contact the organiser, Mary Ann Dibbs, on 07555 738138.



LECHLADE & DISTRICT LIONS

Keeping Our Community Safe and Entertained this Christmas!

The Lechlade and District Lions Club continues to serve our local community with exciting new projects and beloved annual traditions.

As we head into the festive season, we have some great news about a life-saving first for our area, alongside details of our biggest ever Christmas programme!

Life-Saving Innovation: Lamppost-Powered Defibrillators

We are delighted to announce the successful installation of the final two Public Access Defibrillators (PADs) in our district. This makes our community one of the best served in the country for easily accessible life-saving equipment.

This project was a true community partnership, driven by the dedication of our Community First Responders (CFRs) working with and supported by our Lions Club.

This collaborative project marks a significant innovation: the Defibrillators are powered sustainably directly from existing lamppost electricity supplies. The success of this approach has gained national attention: our Local MP, Dr Roz Savage, has taken the cause to a Parliamentary Committee on Defibrillators, highly recommending this pioneering power approach is adopted countrywide.

To ensure the community is prepared to use this new equipment, we hosted well-attended training sessions across the district. Our thanks go to the CFRs, local authorities, and electrical contractors who helped us turn this ambitious concept into a life-saving reality.

Our Festive Programme: Get Ready for Christmas!

The Lions are gearing up for our busiest and most exciting time of the year: Christmas! We invite everyone to join us in supporting our fundraising efforts, which allow us to continue providing community support throughout 2026.

Santa and His Sleigh Schedule

Keep your eyes (and ears!) peeled! Santa and his sleigh can be seen around our district at the following times and places. Please come out to wave and support our collections for local causes:

Date	Time	Location
Nov 27th & Dec 3rd	6:00pm - 8:00pm	Hilliers Garden Centre
Dec 2nd	5:45pm - 7:00pm	Streets of Quenington
Dec 4th, 9th, 11th, 16th	6:00pm - 8:00pm	Various Streets in Lechlade
Dec 10th	4:30pm - 7:30pm	Tesco Cirencester
Dec 13th	9:00am - 4:00pm	Tesco Faringdon

Christmas Carols

Get into the festive spirit with some beautiful music! Several of our local school choirs will be singing at Hilliers Garden Centre on the same evening that Santa is there with his sleigh (**3 December**).

So, you can combine 3 things: -

- Snap up some Christmas bargains at the late-night shopping evening
- See Santa on his Sleigh
- Enjoy some beautiful seasonal music and singing.

Christmas Grand Raffle

Don't forget to buy your tickets for our annual **Christmas Raffle! The draw will take place on 11 December**. Look out for Lions selling tickets in all the usual places.

We wish all our residents a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your continued support!

To find out more about our routes, events, and work, please visit our website www.lechladelions.org.uk

Ian Thomas



THE PROBUS CLUB OF LECHLADE AND DISTRICT

The Probud Club of Lechlade and District continues to flourish with a very good number of members being maintained, despite our advancing years.

Our Probud Club is open to any person up to any age and we will always welcome anyone who might wish to come and "have a look" in order to see if it might suit him or her. We meet in the Lechlade Memorial Hall on the first and third Fridays of every month (except for Public Holidays) at 10:00 for 10:30am and where coffee is available before the talk. Talks generally last for up to an hour and the meeting is followed by a few drinks at the Bar run by our own members.

The Programme for December and January is as follows:

5 December	Misericords of Gloucestershire - Stephan Aiano
12 December	Christmas Lunch Memorial Hall
19 December	No Meeting
2 January	No Meeting
16 January	Why Stonehenge had a Roof - Sarah Ewbank

We would like to offer Marian and her Editorial Team many thanks for their hard work over so many years.

We also welcome the New Team and look forward to working with them.

Dacre Watson

LECHLADE WI

The Women's Institute (WI) was founded in 1915; it is a unique organisation shaped by its members. It set out to give women a voice and be a force for good in the community. Lechlade WI (founded 1947) meet on the first Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 for 7:30pm, for our main meeting in the Lechlade Memorial Hall. We always start with tea/coffee (no charge) and a chance to socialise before introducing our speaker or the activity for the evening. We try to book a varied programme of speakers and activities for these meetings. Visitors are always very welcome. Contact us on lechladewi@gmail.com for more information.

Our programme isn't limited to our Tuesday meetings. We also have several subgroups and activities (coffee mornings, walking, crafting, foodie group and book group) usually taking place during the day. More details about the groups are given at our monthly meetings.

We recently repeated our 2024 daffodil planting again (with all the necessary permits and permissions) in the grass verge near Alcourt Meadow, opposite the marina. Come spring, the drive into Lechlade should look lovely.

In October our meeting topic was "Pets as Therapy" which was very well received. A couple of members have started the process of getting their own pets assessed and trained as therapy animals.

Lechlade WI walkers enjoyed the good and not so good weather, with several walks in the locality and will have plenty more walks planned for 2026. Also hoping to rebook the Highworth History Walk which had to be cancelled due to heavy rain.

At our recent Annual Meeting (like an AGM) after the formal part of the evening was completed, we enjoyed some festive Christmas card making.

Lechlade WI have also planned their Christmas outing with a sold-out visit to see the lights at Warwick Castle in late November.

On 29 November, 4:00 to 6:30pm, at the Lechlade Christmas Lights Switch On, Lechlade WI, as always, will have run the mulled wine stall.

On 9 December at 7:00pm Lechlade WI will be hosting other local WIs for an evening of "Christmas Songs and Music" with our local TATT (Tunes at the Trout band) with mulled wine and nibbles.

We also have booked our traditional seasonal lunch for members at the New Inn in early January instead of our regular Tuesday meeting.

Upcoming programme (more details at our Tuesday Meetings) :

Tuesday Meetings – 7:00 for 7:30pm Lechlade Memorial Mall (main hall)

December & January – Social Events

Coffee Mornings for WI members and their guests – 10:30am Riverside pub **Tuesday 16 December**

Reading Group – meet at 10:30am on the Monday following the main meeting at the Lechlade Baptist Church. Annual book list available.

8 December – Guilty by Definition by Susie Dent

2026 reading list –to be announced

Looking forward to seeing all our members, friends and visitors during the rest of 2025 and into 2026.

Hilary Knight, Lechlade WI Secretary lechladevi@gmail.com



FAIRFORD CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

The well established Fairford Christmas Day Lunch will again be held in The Community Centre in Fairford.

As a reminder, the Lunch is for individuals and couples who would otherwise be on their own on Christmas Day and would like to spend some time in company. It is open to residents in Fairford and surrounding villages, plus Lechlade, and will take the same format as before.

The Lunch starts at 12:30pm and finishes after the King's Speech at around 3:30pm.

Our contact details are below and are also on the posters which will be displayed in the area, so please do let us know if you can come - or contact anyone who you think might be interested.

Volunteers are also needed to assist with the preparation and cooking of the meal, drivers to collect and return less mobile guests to and from home, and others to act as hosts/hostesses during the day.

Don't be shy; Please apply!

Amanda or Mervyn Cully. Tel: 01285 712700!

Mobiles: Amanda 07960 485946

Mervyn 07773 557846

Email: cully.amanda@gmail.com

Mervyn Cully



WORKING 4 WELLBEING

We support communities in and around Fairford and Lechlade. We are keen to build our connections right here in Lechlade so please get involved.

Regular events:

Talking Café – Every Thursday 10:30am-12:00noon at Lechlade Baptist Church. Come for a cuppa, a chat and a chance to talk to the W4W team.

Craft & Chat – 1st Thursday of each month 7:00-9:00pm, at Lechlade Baptist Church. Try a different craft each month. Learn a new skill and enjoy the company of others. There is a small charge to cover costs, but if this is a barrier, please get in touch.

Digital support – Need help using your phone, tablet or the internet? We offer friendly, basic support and confidence building. Just reach out to us.

Community meals – Christmas meal on Thursday 18 December in Fairford Community Centre, 6:30pm. Two courses - £7.50. All invited. In March 2026 we are hosting a community lunch in Lechlade.

Monthly shopping trips – December – Orbital Shopping Centre, Swindon. Get out and about without the need for a car!

Regular events in Fairford – Senior Yoga (Monday morning, £4 per session) (currently full but recruiting for another class), Wellbeing Walks (ad hoc – join the mailing list), Family Hub free 'play & stay' sessions (Wednesday, 10:30am-12:00noon, Fairford Community Centre), Toddler Group (Friday 9:30-11:00am, Fairford United Church, £1 per family).

Volunteering – We are always on the look-out for friendly, community minded volunteers, especially here in Lechlade. Full support and training provided.

For more information on all of the above: Contact Mary-Ann Dibbs 07555-738138 maryann.dibbs@w4w.uk www.w4w.uk

Mary-Ann Dibbs

THE TUESDAY CLUB

Remembrance Sunday is a time of reflection and for our members many of whom lived through the war years, it brings back memories of evacuation from cities, rationing, going to bomb shelters and, at times, missing school. It is always interesting listening to their stories of a time that most of us have been fortunate not to have experienced.

Now we are looking ahead to celebrating at Christmas. The Christmas lunch will be held on 2 December with turkey and all the trimmings followed by Christmas pudding or trifle and, naturally, a little glass of wine to help the meal along.

In January there will be a get together to thank all the wonderful volunteers, without whose help the Tuesday Club could not function.

We are still looking for volunteers in the social room chatting and interacting with the members and there are other opportunities to help in the kitchen with food preparation, making puddings, baking cakes or as a main cook if that's what you prefer doing. If you have any time on a Tuesday to help, please phone or message Jane on 07850 002521 for more information.

The Club is held every Tuesday in school term time at the Memorial Hall from 10:30am until 3:00pm. Its aim is to provide a happy and relaxing day for anyone in the community who is feeling in need of some company. Transport is available within Lechlade. The day starts with a cup of tea/coffee, chat, card games, jigsaw puzzles, dominoes and sometimes a craft activity or entertainment. A 2-course meal is served at 12:30pm followed by coffee/tea and a piece of cake to take home at the end of the afternoon. The cost of the day is £8.

If you or someone you know might be interested in coming to the Tuesday Club or you would like more information about the Club, please contact Hazel on 01367 252265

Gay Oliver

TROUT THEATRE COMPANY

'Matchbox Theatre' by Michael Frayn

The latest production from the Trout Theatre Company was something of a theatrical coup! 'Matchbox Theatre' has been performed professionally, live in theatres and on the BBC, but it had never been done by an amateur company until now! Having received special permission, our very own local company have achieved a first!

It's a collection of short entertainments, a sketch show in miniature, containing acutely observed snatches of real life situations. Scenarios we've all experienced and characters we've all met during our daily lives reflected back to us with a wry smile!

There were the two couples sitting at adjacent tables in the pub. On one table the wife described friends' holiday destinations, repeatedly mangling the names of foreign destinations, while the other couple listened in, increasingly unable to contain their amusement, and finally joining in with suggestions to add to the confusion of the other couple. Marrakesh will always be 'Marrakash' to me now!

There was a young woman explaining to her doctor why she had come to see him for a 'funny feeling', not a pain of course, somewhere on her body, she couldn't remember where now as the feeling had gone. She ended up prescribing pills for her thoroughly confused doctor.

Have you ever looked at those massive old tombs in churches with a long dead stone husband and wife reclining on the top and wondered what they would say if they could talk? Well, after watching this performance, I now have some ideas!

The two sketches that resonated with me, and other audience members I spoke to, both focused on the relationship between long-married couples. One sketch entitled 'Finishing Touches' featured a husband who always finished his wife's sentences because, he insisted, he knew what she wanted to say better than she did! The second featured a wife complaining to her newspaper reading husband that he never listened to what she said, only made noises and remarks based on her tone of voice. Sound familiar??



Photo by Andrew Pritchard



The twelve strong cast all turned in brilliant performances and deserve high praise. They thoroughly deserved the accolade of being the first amateur performers of the play. The evening romped along, and I very much enjoyed every sketch. Look out for their next performance and book those tickets immediately.

The Editor



LECHLADE TENNIS CLUB

The Swindon and District Winter League started on 6 October. The Club has one mixed team playing in Division 3. The first match against Swindon B was a close result with Lechlade losing 3-5 and the second match a draw against Pewsey D. With a further ten matches, we are hoping for a few wins.

The coaching programme delivered by Ryan and Matt from Excel Training Academy is going very well with new players taking part and giving positive feedback. This term's coaching continues until Tuesday 9 December. If you are interested in joining the coaching sessions, please visit, www.exceltennisacademy.co.uk/lechladetennisclub

On Friday 7 November the Club held its Annual Dinner at the Trout Inn. Once again Penny, Liz and their team gave us a delicious meal and excellent service. A good evening was had by all who came. Many thanks to all the staff at the Trout.

After tennis on **Friday 12 December**, there will be coffee/tea and mince pies.

The Club is running Pickleball in the Memorial Hall on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month. If you are interested in playing, please contact Kate, email: katetrotter@yahoo.com

The Club is always looking for new members, both for social and league tennis. Social sessions are every Tuesday and Friday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00am and Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:00pm. These continue throughout the year.

Details about the Club are on the website www.lechladetennisclub.co.uk along with contact details for any enquiries.

Gay Oliver

Tunes At The Trout

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8th December	Christmas Concert	7.30pm
14th December	All Age Christmas Worship #	10.00am
21st December	Candlelit 9 Lessons & Carols	5.00pm
Christmas Eve	Crib Service#	4.00pm
24th December	First Communion of Christmas	*11.15pm
Christmas Day	Holy Communion (BCP)	8.00am
25th December	Family Communion#	10.00am

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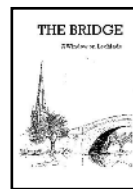
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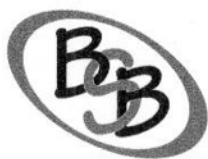
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THE BRIDGE

A Window on Lechlade



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