

# The Kingsclere Tower



What's On & Local News  
February 2025



# The Kingsclere Tower

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PRINTERS:	Kingsclere Design & Print Ltd	
COVER PHOTO:	A hungry starling (Steve Steare)	

## Happy New Year from the Editorial Team

Before we put 2024 behind us, we would like to report a summary of grants paid from The Tower's surplus funds to local organizations. The surplus arises from fees from our advertisers which pay for the production of the magazine. Last year we awarded grants to The Fieldgate Centre, Kingsclere Community Library, Friends of Kingsclere Primary School, St Mary's Church, and Kingsclere Pre-school. In supporting our advertisers, you are supporting your local community.

2025 is the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of Jane Austin in the nearby village of Steventon. To mark this Anniversary a number of events, exhibitions and activities will take place this year in the Basingstoke & Deane area (page 4). Continuing the literary theme, we are delighted to mark the start of the year with a short poem, Dawn by Paul Jenkins (page 17).

**The Editor**

Neither the Editor, nor the Management Committee accept responsibility for the opinions expressed or the goods and services advertised in the Kingsclere Tower. The Editors reserve the right to omit, amend, or condense any item submitted for publication.

### **To all "Tower" Contributors**

Copy for **March** to the Editor at [kingscleretower@gmail.com](mailto:kingscleretower@gmail.com).

**NOT LATER THAN 12th February 2025**

If possible please submit articles as a MS Word document, A5 page size, font Times New Roman 11, single spacing. If email not possible post to  
23 Swan Street, Kingsclere, Newbury RG20 5PP.

**Will ALL contributors please include full name  
& phone number/e-mail address.**

## Kingsclere Parish Council (KPC)

**Chairman:** Cllr Clive Mussett

**Email:** [clerk@kingsclere-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@kingsclere-pc.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 01635 298634

**Office:** 37 George Street, Kingsclere RG20 5NH



**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS** – Once again a huge thank you to Andy Bates and his team. Although the Christmas lights will be long gone by the time this issue is published, KPC would like to express thanks once again on behalf of the village to all involved; the warm lights do bring much needed cheer and warmth to the centre of our village. The weather hasn't played its part over the festivities and we appreciate it's been a testing time for the team with the stormy conditions.

**ALLOTMENTS** – We have had several plots given back in the last couple of months for varying reasons and are in the process of reallocating them to residents from the waiting list ahead of the spring. Thank you to all tenants who sent their fees and agreements back so quickly; a gentle reminder to those who have yet to do this you only have until the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

**PARISH NOTICE BOARDS** – The third new board has arrived and will go up shortly. We are hoping to replace the one opposite the George & Horn next.

**FLOWER BORDER IN THE SQUARE** – At the time of writing the large flower border in the Square was being overhauled with a view to planting up, and we are also arranging for the Information Board located within the border to be replaced whilst simultaneously refurbishing the two boards on White Hill.

**CEMETERY LYCHGATE** – We have accepted a quote to do the required repairs to the Lychgate up at the cemetery, and hope this work will be completed in the next month or two.

**THE HOLDING FIELD** – The Hedges at the time of writing are in the process of being cut. The job was delayed twice due to the ongoing traffic lights on the Ashford Hill Road, resulting in the contractor cutting after the awful weather experienced over Christmas and New Year period. The ground itself on the Holding Field will be repaired by the contractors once the weather dries up; be assured this hasn't been forgotten.

The Parish website [www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk](http://www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk)



@kingsclerepc



facebook.com/KingsclereParishCouncil

**DEBRIS PILE IN THE MALTHOUSE OPEN SPACE** - Over several years this pile behind the Church has been increasing in size. We have arranged for the pile to be removed (at cost) and would remind everyone that placing debris, dead flowers, branches and leaves anywhere is classed as Fly Tipping. The remains of the old compost bins will soon be removed too. We realise that waste attracts waste and it is convenient, but the land belongs to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and that anyone found to be placing waste here going forward will be reported. KPC contractors are aware and we have spoken to the Church. We look forward to a tidy fresh start for this area.

**DOG WALKING** – Polite request: Many of us are, but please remember to be considerate to others while walking around the village. Some people are worried when being approached by someone with a group of dogs as a lone walker. Please be kind, and where you have time place your dogs on leads while in the vicinity of others.

**GREEN WHEELY BINS & GLASS RECYCLING** – The collections dates are Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February, and 5<sup>th</sup> March.

**NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** – The next full Council Meeting is scheduled for 7:30pm on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February, in the Village Club. We welcome the attendance of all parishioners at our meetings and anyone who wishes to raise any matters will be given the opportunity to do so during Public Questions.

**REPORTING ISSUES** – Please do help by reporting tree issues blocked gullies, pavement, and road concerns to the relevant department to help get action where it is required.

**REPORTING HIGHWAYS ISSUES** - A reminder of some useful links:

**Potholes:** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

**Tree/hedge problems:** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

**Flooding/drainage issues:** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

**Pavement problems:** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

**Problems with rights of way:** <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

**Electricity:** Any loss of supply or damage to the electricity network can be reported by dialing 105.

**Flooding:** For assistance in the event of flooding call 0345 988 1188 or text 0345 602 6340.

## Celebrating Jane Austen's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Basingstoke  
and Deane

To mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jane Austen's birth, a diverse programme of events, exhibitions and activities for residents and visitors to enjoy are being arranged in the area where Jane spent her first 25 years.

Organisations involved include Love Basingstoke, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Overton Jane Austen Trails, The Willis Museum, Hidden Britain Tours, Destination Basingstoke, Steventon Jane Austen 250.

- \* The Overton Jane Austen Trails group has developed three new trails that can be explored on foot or by cycle.
- \* Whitchurch Silk Mill will be celebrating Jane Austen's love of fashion as part of a special exhibition, starting in March, showcasing the history of silk weaving, a craft that was prevalent during Austen's time.
- \* The Vyne will host a series of Regency-themed events throughout 2025, including costumed tours and workshops.
- \* The village of Steventon, where Jane Austen was born, will host a literary-themed country fair in July and a special event on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December at St Nicholas' Church, marking the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth.

For more information and a full calendar of events, please visit:

**[www.LoveBasingstoke.co.uk/celebrating-250-years-of-jane-austen](http://www.LoveBasingstoke.co.uk/celebrating-250-years-of-jane-austen)**

### Kingsclere Bowls Club

The 2025 outdoor bowls season will soon be upon us. Kingsclere Bowls Club are looking for new members. Here are 5 reasons to give bowls a go:

1. Playing bowls is very do-able whatever your physique, age or ability.
2. Bowls is not expensive; a set of bowls and joining our club costs less than £100.
3. Sociable experience, bowls players are very social people and welcome new members.
4. Outdoors in the fresh air with light exercise is great for the mind and body.
5. Fun is the name of the game.

I made the transition from motocross to bowls in 2022. As a relatively new bowler I am continually learning new ways to play and improve my game. The club offers 1:1 mentoring and coaching to new members. Why not give bowls a try?

Contact **Steve Kendrew** on **07929876831** for more information.



The Fieldgate Centre is run by the Kingsclere Community Association as a charity (No. 1168366). The association is made up of volunteers who rely on the support and participation of the community.

2025 has begun and the Fieldgate Centre is already taking bookings galore for the year ahead. The usual programme of exercise classes, sports club matches, blood donor sessions, activities and private events continues. Check our website for full details and come and join us for Pilates, Clubbercise, Ceroc, Slimming World, Badminton, Darts, Monthly Meet Up and Songtree. Check out our calendar for full listings.

The cold weather isn't stopping the activities and events. The **FOSM Great Quiz Night** returns on **7<sup>th</sup> February**, with **doors open from 6.45 pm** and the quiz starting promptly at 7.30 pm. Tickets cost £17 which include a Ploughman's Supper and wine for the table. These tickets always sell quickly so don't delay if you would like a table.

The **Six Nations Rugby** starts on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January and runs throughout various weekends in February, and we try to show as many matches as possible on the Big Screen. Look out on our social media and website for details of the matches to be shown and definitely save the date for 'Super Saturday', which is 15<sup>th</sup> March.

The **Monthly Meet Up** is taking place on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February** from **2.30-4.30 pm**. It's a lovely friendly afternoon of chat, cuppas, cake and activities. This month there is a talk from Cyber Bobby on staying safe. Everyone is welcome.

Contact us if you need any further information about our activities or if you would like to hold your event at The Fieldgate Centre. Please visit our website or Facebook page for more information.

**[www.thefieldgatecentre.co.uk](http://www.thefieldgatecentre.co.uk)**

**01635 298497**

**[fieldgatecentre@outlook.com](mailto:fieldgatecentre@outlook.com)**

## **KINGSLERE TENNIS CLUB**

Tennis continues throughout the autumn and winter, weather permitting. Don't forget our social tennis sessions on Thursdays. If anyone, old or young of any ability, would like to join the morning session from 9.30am, please contact Daphne Snook on **[dsnook339@gmail.com](mailto:dsnook339@gmail.com)**.

We're a friendly bunch and we just enjoy playing as long as the weather permits. Please visit our Facebook page or website for details of the latest activities and more information: **[www.kingscleretennisclub.co.uk](http://www.kingscleretennisclub.co.uk)**



## Watership Down Health



**Making the Most of Digital Systems:** Digital systems are transforming healthcare, and whether you love or dislike them they are here to stay. From ordering prescriptions online to accessing medical records, digital tools can empower you to take control of your care. Please remember though that all IT systems require upgrades and downtime. This month we will look at three aspects:

**Booking and Managing Appointments:** We provide a range of online appointments. These allow you to:

- Book and cancel appointments at your convenience.
- Set reminders to avoid missing your scheduled visits.

Please be aware that at the current time, we cannot offer all appointments online, however our Enhanced Access (evening) appointments are always all offered online. We also use a tool called AccuRx to offer a range of appointments via what is known as Self-Book. This does require a Smart mobile phone to be able to book into these appointments. We use Self-Book for a range of appointments such as COVID, flu, RSV as well as a range of other types of care.

**Accessing Your Medical Records:** Digital systems give patients access to their General Practice medical records and other provider data if a patient has consented to share documents with us, which will be uploaded in time.

Benefits include:

- Reviewing your test results, prescriptions, and medical history.
- Spotting errors or outdated information and notifying us via our web site.
- Sharing records with other healthcare providers for continuity of care including a hospital or community clinic.

Most hospitals and clinics now offer secure patient portals or apps. Please sign up for one of these if under the care of a clinic or hospital as it can take some weeks before copies of hospital/clinic letters are shared with your General Practice.

**Ordering Repeat Prescriptions:** You can request repeat prescriptions online through our website and/or apps like the NHS App. Please note that we need a **minimum of 5 working days** for a prescription to be correctly processed.

Features include:

- Quick reordering of medications.
- Choosing to collect prescriptions at a pharmacy or have them delivered (only certain apps provide these services).



Please note that it is only medications which your GP has put on ‘Repeat’ that are available to order online. Medications which are ‘Acute’ i.e. you have been prescribed as a One-off will not be available to order online.

**Support for Those Less Familiar with Technology:** If you’re not confident using digital tools:

- Please ask Reception if you wish to have an online account set up and have not been able to do this directly through the NHS App. If a family member needs support, consider having a Proxy account available for Adults and Children (must have Parental responsibility)
- Friends, family, or carers can often assist.
- We can arrange for a member of our Primary Care Network to come and talk to any local groups of our patients about the NHS App. Please let Reception know.

Please note that with Proxy Access for children at the Ages of 11 and 16, access drops off and must be reapplied for. This is a government ‘rule’ that the practice has to observe.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Digital tools offer convenience and improve access to healthcare services.
- Online portals, apps and our messaging system help for efficient communication.
- Protect your personal data and seek help from some trusted if you’re unsure how to use digital systems.
- Our Reception team are still here taking calls between 08:00 – 18:30 Monday to Friday.

Making the most of these tools can enhance your healthcare experience and empower you to play an active role in your well-being.

### **New Starters in 2024**

In 2024, we have been joined by Dr Helen Thomas and Dr Ali Al Musawi.

Our Primary Care Network has recruited a number of new starters including:

Bethan Woodruff, Registered Mental Health Nurse

Juliet Wells, Advanced Mental Health Pharmacist

Jennifer Hogan, Psychological Therapist

Oliver Mildmay, Peer Support Practitioner (Andover MIND)

We keep our website up to date with changes to our Team, see

<https://www.watershipdownhealth.com/practice-information/>.

## Kingsclere Local History Association

Our next speaker meeting will be on **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February** when **Richard Coghlan** will present **'The Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway'**.



In 1879 the first part of a railway to connect Didcot with Southampton was opened between Newbury and Didcot. By 1885 two separate lines were running, one westwards from Alresford and the other southwards from Sutton Scotney and meeting just north of Winchester. Both are now long gone, and much of their routes are no longer accessible.

The story is one of a fascinating study in ambition, manipulation and failure!

Richard is a railway enthusiast both in history and practical application with the Watercress Line. He will tell us the story and remind us of locomotives, rolling stock, stations and signal boxes etc. of yesteryear.

We meet in the main hall at **Kingsclere Village Club, 35 George Street, RG20 5NH** commencing at **7.30 pm**. Visitors are always welcome at £3 p.p.

**Michael Leah, Chairman/Secretary 297403**



**Headley Village Hall**  
**Thursday Mornings**



**9.00 - 9.50am**



**10.00 - 10.50am**

**Drop-in's welcome. First Class Free.**

£8 per session. Or choose a class pack:

10 Classes @ £6 per class / 5 Classes @ £7 per class

**For more info:**

**www.zenfitnessrachel.co.uk**

Facebook: @zenfitnessrachel

Email: [rachel@zenfitnessrachel.co.uk](mailto:rachel@zenfitnessrachel.co.uk)

Phone/WhatsApp: **07443 837472**





## KINGSCLERE VILLAGE CLUB

**Est. 1921 CHARITY 1189234**

Website <http://www.kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/kingsclerevillageclub>

**Mrs Baker's Company:** The wonderful actor, Alison Neil, returns to the Club on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm**, with her one-woman show, '*A tale of rogues and vagabonds, being a lively and true account of the triumph and struggles of strolling players*'. Meal included, please let us know of any dietary requirements. Tickets £18 from [www.wegotickets.com/event/639721/](http://www.wegotickets.com/event/639721/) or Helen (below)

**Watercolour Classes:** Following the success of the Autumn classes, Tracy Larkin will return to the Club on **February 3<sup>rd</sup> for six weeks; Mondays 1pm to 3pm**. This is a small class with guaranteed individual attention, £108 refreshments included. Please contact Emma on [bookings@kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk](mailto:bookings@kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk)

**Community Café:** The Community Café achieved a 5\* hygiene rating at a recent inspection. Well done us! This month's Café is on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10am to 12.30pm**, featuring a fun quiz (11am) and a craft table for younger visitors. Hot & cold drinks, homemade cakes and other snacks. All welcome.

**Save the Dates:** Shakespeare in the Garden (As You Like It) 7<sup>th</sup> July and ABB (blues band) 25<sup>th</sup> October. Contact Helen for more information or to be put on the advance ticket list.

**Helen 01635 297390 or [events@kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk](mailto:events@kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk)**

### Kingsclere Rugby Club

**Adults Rugby** – You are more than welcome to come and join for training on Wednesday evenings between 7- 9 pm. In December we played league games against Farnham 4<sup>ths</sup> and won 21 - 0, and Winchester Knights and also won 34 – 12. The man of the match for both games was Louis Copie. We are currently 2nd in the league. There will be a home game on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February** against Basingstoke 2<sup>nds</sup>. Kick off **2.30 pm**. Please feel free to come and support.

**Men's Walking Rugby** – Come and join us; Wednesdays 7 – 8 pm.

**Women's Walking Rugby** – Come along on a Wednesday and join the men for a mixed game or on a Thursday for a women's only game. Both are held at The Fieldgate Centre between 7.00 - 8.00 pm.

For more information please visit our Facebook and Instagram pages.

### **Craft and Create: Explore Your Creative Side**

Craft and Create invites you to participate in a thoughtfully curated series of workshops designed for those looking to enhance their crafting skills. Led by experienced professionals, our workshops at Folly Farm, Kingsclere include:

- Candle Making
- Beginners and Advanced Cold Process Soap Making
- Beginners Melt & Pour Soap Making
- Pillar Candle Making
- Bath Bomb Making
- Salts & Clays
- Upholstery (Headboards, Bring Your Own Wing chair, Ottoman Boxes, and more)
- Curtain and Blind Making (from Beginners to Advanced)
- Quilt Making & Soft Furnishings (Cushions)

Join us at Craft and Create where you can create, learn new skills, and connect with fellow enthusiasts.

For more information and to book: **[www.craft-create.co.uk](http://www.craft-create.co.uk)**

E-mail: **[asabove3@gmail.com](mailto:asabove3@gmail.com)** Telephone: **07748 715350**

## **Kingsclere Preschool**

Welcome back to our children and families. We enjoyed a festive sing-along at the end of last term, which was also an opportunity for us to gather and show our appreciation for Jacquie on her last day. A big thank you again for everything she contributed over her years with the preschool. Hello to our new starters this term and to our new manager, Becky – we look forward to getting to know you!

2025 began with a visit from Environmental Health, which we are proud to say resulted in a 5 star food hygiene certificate. As the term progresses we are excited for warmer weather and the topics and activities that come with spring.

Thank you to our friends and community for their ongoing support, and particularly to Kingsclere Parish Council, Kingsclere Tower, and the Snowdrop Foundation for their recent grants. These donations have funded IT equipment and staff training.

There are a few spaces available for the spring and summer. For enquiries please contact **[admin@kingsclerepreschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@kingsclerepreschool.co.uk)**.

## The Church Pages

Hi,

In the lead up to Christmas I was particularly struck by the biblical story in Luke, Chapter One of how God chose two “ordinary” women to be central figures in the coming to earth of Jesus - Elizabeth, the mother of John The Baptist, and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Elizabeth and Mary were run-of-the-mill, regular folk - unremarkable people. Yet they played extraordinary roles in the unfolding of history. Without their involvement in the Christmas story we probably wouldn't have ever heard of them.

This made me think of how we value the people we do life alongside – the ordinary folk of northeast Hampshire. Those who empty our wheelie bins, repair our roads, teach our children, stack the shelves at the supermarket. You and me. Regular people, who quite probably won't register in history like the two Christmas mothers, but people who go about life, doing their best, giving their all, and making society just work better.

In a letter to the early church in Rome, the apostle Paul wrote:

*“we have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.....Honour one another above yourselves.”*(Romans 12:6-10)

It feels to me like this is what most of us do on a daily basis. This is how society works. But I fear we often take it for granted, and ignore those serving, encouraging and leading diligently around us – too busy playing our own part, very probably. But Paul says we should *“Honour one another above yourselves”*. Paul wrote in ancient Greek, and the word translated “honour” is a Greek word, *timé* (pronounced tee-may), which means to “value”. It comes from the word, “tino” – to pay. To honour someone is to recognise their value, their worth. I'd suggest we should go one step further than just recognising the value of our postman or the lollipop lady – we should let them *know* we recognise it. Say “thank you”; give them a wave or a smile; write them a note; buy them a coffee.

I came across a poem recently that says this:

*“A smile costs nothing but gives much. It enriches them who receive it*

*without making poorer those who gave. It takes but a moment, yet the memory of it might last for ever. A smile cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something of no value to anyone unless it is given away."*

As we start another year, why not make it a year of letting people know we recognise the value of what they do?

Bless you,

**Rev. Pete Williams**

## Worship in our Churches

### February 2025



<b>Sun 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	9:00am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30am BCP Holy Communion 10:30am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Thur 6<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30am Traditional Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Sun 9<sup>th</sup></b>	9:00am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30am Bubble Church 10:30am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St. Paul's Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Thur 13<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30am Traditional Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Sun 16<sup>th</sup></b>	9:00am Traditional Holy Communion 9:30am Traditional Morning Worship 10:30am Contemporary Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Paul's Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Thur 20<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30am Traditional Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Sun 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	9:00am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30am Traditional Holy Communion 10:30am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Paul's Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
<b>Thur 27<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30am Traditional Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere

## Lighting Up St Mary's

The sight of St Mary's Church when it is floodlit is truly beautiful. Many people sponsor these lights (£15 per evening) to celebrate an occasion, such as a birthday, wedding, anniversary, christening, or some other special day in their lives. To book, please email [administrator@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk](mailto:administrator@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk) or call **01635 299528**.



### December

**26<sup>th</sup>** In memory of Derek Rodwell, his wife, Ruth, his sisters Janet, Sheila and Iris, and brothers-in-law, John and John, who all lived in the village for part or all of their lives. With love from Tricia and Graham Rodwell.

## Kingsclere Methodist Church

### Services for February

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr Peter Frank
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Rev Rachel Borgars
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Worship Leaders
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Mrs Rosie Greenhalgh

All services begin at **10 am** unless stated.

**Coffee morning every Thursday 10.30 until 12.** All are welcome.

Hall for hire - see the Directory at the back of this magazine for details.

### Saturday Coffee in the Kingsmill Room, St Mary's Church.

Fresh brewed coffee, tea and delicious homemade cakes.

**February 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> 10.00 - 12.00**

If you're looking for great company,  
we'd love you to join us for a cuppa and a natter!

For more info, please contact the church office on **01635 299528**.



## Friends of St Marys Kingsclere (FOSM)

The **200 Club** has started a new year of monthly draws. There has once again been great support for this lottery, with a similar number of participants to previous years. There is still room for anyone who wishes to join at £12 per entry and the chance of winning £50 each month. Thank you to all its supporters.

Our **Quiz Night** is due to take place on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February** at the **Fieldgate Centre**. At the time of writing there are still some places available but it is likely to sell out quickly. Tickets are £17 each to include a substantial ploughman's supper plus 2 bottles of wine per complete table of 8. Tickets available from Swan Street Stores, or Peter Turner on **01635 298434**.

Our ever popular **Plant Sale** will once again be held in St. Marys Churchyard on the morning of **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May**. If you are potting up or dividing plants from sowing please bear us in mind and get in touch with Jane Royle on **01635 297430** or [jane.b.royle@gmail.com](mailto:jane.b.royle@gmail.com).

[friendsofstmaryskingsclere.org](http://friendsofstmaryskingsclere.org)

**Peter Turner, Chairman**  
[fosmkingsclere@gmail.com](mailto:fosmkingsclere@gmail.com)



### FOSM 200 Club

The winner of the January 2025 Draw  
was Sue Stamp, No.19  
Congratulations, Sue

Next month's Draw will take place at  
Bel and the Dragon at about **7 pm** on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February**.

## Tired of small talk? - Try Alpha

Alpha is a chance to explore life's big questions and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and relaxed environment. Everyone is welcome, no matter your background or beliefs, you're invited: [alpha.org.uk/try-alpha](http://alpha.org.uk/try-alpha).

**Wednesday evenings: 7.00pm - 9.00pm**  
**Starting 29th January until April 16th 2025**  
**St Mary's Church, Kingsclere RG20 5SR**

We begin the evening with dessert and coffee, watch a short video and you'll have the opportunity to chat. Everything is free and there is no pressure. To find out more please visit St Mary's Facebook page or the events page on the website [www.stmaryskingsclere.co.uk](http://www.stmaryskingsclere.co.uk).

## Kingsclere Tower Magazine

### Delivery Volunteer Urgently Required

One of our long standing volunteers has had to withdraw their help, so the team need find a replacement to maintain delivery of 'Tower Magazine' in the following location: **Cedar Drive - 52 magazines.**

The magazine is prepared for distribution on the last Friday of each month (January - November). If you feel you can spare a hour at the end of each month (January - November) it will be much appreciated.

For further details please email: **b.elborn345@btinternet.com**

**Telephone: 01635 298704      Mobile: 07741075473**

Many Thanks, Brian Elborn

## Kingsclere and Headley Woodlands WI

A very Happy New Year to all readers of the Tower from the ladies of the WI. We sadly lost our oldest member, Nancy Watts, who had been a member of the WI since 1947. Nancy celebrated her 105<sup>th</sup> birthday the day before our December meeting and was her usual self. She was so pleased to have reached her milestone birthday; she attended all three institutes in our group in her birthday week. A wonderful lady, who will be greatly missed. Farewell Nancy.



Our ladies greatly enjoyed the meeting in December. We and our guests had an excellent buffet lunch prepared by three of our members; this was a brilliant way to round off 2024. Our first meeting of 2025 in January was very well attended in view of the weather, and we were very pleased to welcome the Rev Jill Bentall telling us about food fads and fashion.

The topic for **Wednesday February 12<sup>th</sup>** is about modern day law and order; we are delighted to welcome once again, Jackie Dimmock, with the final (we think!) installment of her life as a policewoman in the Hampshire police. This visual presentation is slightly different from usual in that it is conducted with the help of tapestry panels, all worked by Jackie. I'm sure our members will be very interested in the update. As usual, we meet at the **Village Club, George Street at 1.45pm**. Do come along and listen and watch and see what you think. You will receive a very warm welcome with tea and biscuits and lots of chat! The competition letter will be L.

**Margaret Geary, President    01635 297197**

## Basingstoke Gang Show

It's your last chance to book tickets for the Basingstoke Gang Show, returning to The Haymarket for its 29<sup>th</sup> variety show.

With a production of classic to contemporary performances showcasing the very best in local talent in the Scout & Guide associations; you can expect to be delighted by a show lasting 2.5 hours.

Performances start on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>** and run until **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025**, excluding Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>. Matinee performances are also on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Tickets are on sale via **[www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk)**.

Adults £23, Children £16 and last night (Saturday 22nd) all seats £24.



## WOLVERTON MARKET

The next Market will be held on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February** in the **Village Hall, 9.30 - 11am**. Delicious locally produced Honey will be for sale and would make an unusual but very welcome gift. Also for sale are some very pretty handmade Greeting Cards and Gifts including wood-turned Clocks, Pens and Light pulls. New to the Market are items made from very colorful Resin and some hand printed Canvas Gift Bags. All the usual Bric-a-Brac stalls will be loaded with hidden treasures and I am sure there will be the odd unwanted Christmas present looking for a new home! The Stall Holders look forward to seeing you so do come along and support the market and enjoy a cup of coffee while you browse.

**Wendy Morgan 01635 297538**

## Kingsclere Charities

**The Robert Higham Apprenticing Charity:** This Charity promotes the education and training of young people aged 16 – 25 resident in The Parish of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley. Grants are awarded to assist with the cost of: equipment, books and specialist clothing required for learning or training in a stated subject and expenses incurred in travelling to and from home to a place of learning.

**Welfare Charity:** This Charity helps anyone resident in the Parish of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley regardless of age or means. Grants have been given towards mobility aids, medical equipment such as nebulisers, aids to make life easier for the sick and less mobile, and travel costs to and from hospital.

**Kingsclere Charities 2025 Meeting Dates:** Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, Apr 17<sup>th</sup>, Jun 19<sup>th</sup>, Sep 18<sup>th</sup> and Nov 20<sup>th</sup>.

Contact **Gill Hern** at **[Kingsclerecharities4@mail.com](mailto:Kingsclerecharities4@mail.com)**

## The Kingsclere Cancer Research Fundraiser 2024

Our final numbers are in: the Kingsclere Cancer Research Ball 2024 raised the incredible sum of **£39,547.76** for Cancer Research UK. This takes our fundraising total since 2022 to **£81,426.25**. Thank you so much to everyone who bought tickets, offered sponsorship, donated a prize for the silent auction, helped with publicity, lent a hand setting up, or supported in any other way whatsoever. We made this happen together. The next Ball is booked for **4th September 2026 at Oakley Hall Hotel**.

**Beccy, Claire, Mandy and Sean**

**<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/kingsclere-vs-cancer>**

### Dawn

Darkness caresses the soft glow of dawn  
 And gently from the shadows colours are born.  
 Stars in the heaven that fade into blue  
 Are captured again in the sparkling dew.  
 The chalice of silence searching and still  
 The birds with their songs joyfully fill.  
 As cool clear air blows a baptising breeze  
 Awakening the soul in the meadows and trees.  
 Thus nature's spirit is glimpsed by that soul  
 Revealing secrets that make the world whole.  
 Now with its wisdom no longer a pawn  
 When love fills its heart each moments a dawn.

**Paul Jenkins**



**It started with a kiss...**

**The Life and Times of Dylan Thomas**



Dylan Thomas was both a famous and infamous Welshman. As a poet/writer he will always be remembered for his ground-breaking work 'Under Milk Wood'. However, his life became one long drink at the bar encouraged by his wife, Caitlin, and his friend Augustus John. Dylan died aged 39 in 1953.

TWOgether, Jacqueline and Brian Sutton, present their talks with quirky facts and humour so this promises to be an entertaining morning! Join us for this talk on **Wednesday 19 February 10 am at St Mary's Hall, Overton**

*Free to members - Non-members £3 on the door*



## Nature Notes

*‘As the day lengthens, so the cold strengthens.’*

January takes its name from the Roman god Janus, who had two faces, one looking into the past and one looking into the new year ahead. Looking back to the end of December, we might remember days of intense mists in this part of the country. A few days after Christmas, my family and I walked along Watership Down in fog. The water droplets in the air were so dense that we could not see a few paces ahead of us. A phenomenon that our toddler struggled to grasp, as Daddy had promised her fantastic views over the village, and the poor thing kept asking us ‘Where the views had gone?’. Gateposts and a few solitary trees loomed out of the grey foreground as if we were underwater, and they were life forms lying undiscovered on the sea bed.

Looking forward, the winter solstice now behind us, the cold has certainly tightened its grip. The frost beautifies the most mundane of items – refuse bins sparkle as the sun lights up the early morning roadside; blades of downtrodden, mud-caked grass are transformed into stems of crystals – as I shine my torch after my dog in the early morning, the frost reflects the light in a dazzling array of tiny diamonds. It is a unique winter joy to spot an impressive icicle walking down Frog’s Hole. Frozen puddles turn something on in our dog’s brain: she leaps onto the ice and scratches like mad. If I tread on the ice she tries to dig at my boots, then hears a crack and races away in delight. At least someone is having fun in sub-zero temperatures.

One great advantage of the bare branches of the season is the clear view we get of the birds. It has been wonderful for us to watch the fuzzy little long-tailed tits whistling through our garden again, hopping about between the thorns on our rose bushes. A song thrush has been carefully searching our lawn for food, and, hearing its song whilst walking around Porch Farm fields, I managed to track it high up in a barren tree top, worshipping the winter sun.

Signs of spring are here. Bulbs are pushing their bold shoots up though the frozen leaf litter. There is a tiny yellow primrose flower emerging from one of our pots, like a far-away star. Buds are starting to swell on magnolia trees. Snowdrop flowers are already knowingly nodding to each other, nestled around the base of trees in St Mary’s churchyard.

Let’s keep our gaze firmly forward now, and enjoy watching the new season unfurl.

# Kingsclere Community Library

**Calligraphy Display** Kingsclere Primary School's Calligraphy Club have their work on display in the library. It's very impressive – pop in and have a look!



**Local Author Reads Her First Book** Amy Power will be reading her first book “As Beautiful as a Dove” in the library on **18<sup>th</sup> February at 10.15am**. This book is aimed at 4 – 6 year olds but of course all children are welcome. It's free and Amy will be selling and signing copies of her book after her reading.

**Gigaclear Books** Gigaclear has given money to the library and we have used this to purchase some new children's books. A huge thank you to Gigaclear!

**Visiting Books** A new collection of “visiting books” is now available in the library – come and have a browse!

**Thank You** A huge shout out to Alex and Co. at the Village Butcher for continuing to donate the ‘bone jar’ money to the library, we are very grateful.

HOURS Tuesday and Thursday 1.00pm – 5.30pm  
Saturday 10.00am - 1.00pm

Nicki Lee, Library Phone 01635 297464  
[kingsclerelibrary@gmail.com](mailto:kingsclerelibrary@gmail.com) [www.kingsclerelibrary.co.uk](http://www.kingsclerelibrary.co.uk)



**Our next Repair Cafe is Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 10am-12:30pm.**

Please register your repair at our website. We try to fix a number of items: electrical, mechanical, toys, fabric items, crockery/porcelain (with clean cracks) etc.

**We will be collecting for recycling:** Bras, small batteries, milk bottle tops, eyeglasses and printer cartridges. Sadly, we can no longer collect medicine blister packs. We have discontinued The Clothes Rail and Sharing Stall as there was not enough participation.

Coffee/Tea/Cakes available while you wait.

In partnership with Kingsclere Community Association.

Nicki, Sarah, Lucinda & Sue  
[greenerkingsclere@gmail.com](mailto:greenerkingsclere@gmail.com) [www.greenerkingsclere.co.uk](http://www.greenerkingsclere.co.uk)

## Kingsclere Gardening Association



Kingsclere  
Gardening  
Association

In November Malcolm Moodie gave us a talk on how to grow orchids in the home. January was the AGM, the evening concluding with cheese and wine. We were delighted to gain a new committee member, but would still like to recruit more. If there is any member not at the AGM who would like to join the team, we would be happy to co-op them on.

The membership fee remains the same for another year, which is great value for the benefits of joining the association can offer. We have five speakers a year, garden visits, the use of RHS tickets, membership of the Hampshire Federation of Horticultural Societies, and much more.

On **February 13<sup>th</sup>** we have a talk by **Andrew Halstead** “**The Private Lives of Ladybirds**” at the **Village Club at 7:30pm**. Ladybirds are much more diverse in appearance and habits than are generally realised.

My thanks go to Beth for booking our speakers for 2024.

**Denise Allen (Chairman) 01635 297966 denise.allen47@icloud.com**

## Kingsclere Village Bunnies Baby and Toddler Group



Where: The Village Club

When: Tuesdays 9.00am-11.00am

Cost: £2.50 for 1st Child (including snack for child and hot drink and biscuit for adult), 50p per extra child, £1 per extra adult

The Bunnies had a wonderful Christmas party last month. Thank you to all the Big Bunnies who helped with food, craft, decorations, music and games, and a special thank you to Father Christmas who popped in to spread some Christmas magic.

During February half-term week, on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February**, we look forward to a special visit from local author Amy Power, who will be reading to the Bunnies in the library from her book *As Beautiful as a Dove*. Older siblings welcome. Bunnies can also borrow and return their library books.

**February 11<sup>th</sup> Swap Table** - bring any baby or toddler items in good condition that you no longer use for others to make use of, and swap them for something you need.

Thank you as always to the unparalleled Swan Street Stores for their continued support of a weekly donation of fresh fruit snacks for the Bunnies. For information visit our Facebook page, or regular visitors can join our WhatsApp group for weekly updates.

**Lydia Harley-Tomlinson**

**lydia.harleytomlinson@gmail.com**



## Kingsclere CE Primary School



Happy New Year from all at Kingsclere CE Primary School!

Our school term has started well and we have been enjoying the clear skies and sunshine despite it being chilly!

The children performed brilliantly in both the school nativity and our whole-school Christmas Cantata at St. Mary's Church during the final week of the Autumn Term. We are incredibly proud of each and every child for their participation, whether as actors, singers, dancers, or narrators.

Ofsted conducted their routine inspection at the start of November 2024, and their report has now been published online. Kingsclere CE Primary School has maintained its **'good judgement'**. The report recognises the many strengths of our school which we are extremely proud of. These include:

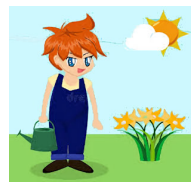
- the school's high expectations for all children
- strong positive relationships between staff and pupils
- children having a strong sense of belonging and being happy at Kingsclere
- the many enrichment opportunities available to all children
- pupils flourishing in a welcoming and supportive school
- effective safeguarding
- our broad and ambitious curriculum
- children getting off to a flying start in Year R
- highly effective teaching approaches in phonics and reading
- English and mathematics teaching where staff check what pupils know and can do effectively

Our Key Stage 2 choir will be performing in the Young Voices Concert at the O2 in London soon. The children have been practising weekly after school with our Music Lead, Mrs Bowden, and have enjoyed practising songs including; Bird House in Your Soul, Hairspray, Get Loud, Oceania, songs by Bob Marley and much more! They are looking forward to performing in the largest children's choir in the world and we wish them all the very best for their performance.

We are also looking forward to sharing our Calligraphy Club's work which will be displayed in the Kingsclere Library and the calligraphy gallery theme is 'Book Quotes'. The children have enjoyed selecting book quotes and using their calligraphy writing to present them. The work will be on display in the library for some weeks following the calligraphy gallery event on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Jo Messenger Headteacher**

## FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN



This month we look forward to slightly longer days; although the weather is still not ideal for gardening we might get the opportunity to get outside if we have a few dry days. If you have a compost heap that is at least a year old it will be ready to add to the vegetable garden. The rest of the garden will also benefit from the compost. Any remaining compost heaps that you have will need turning to aerate; a good job to do on a cold day.

Bulbs will be coming through the soil now; snow drops are a welcome sight after the winter. Remember if you want to transplant and divide snow drops it is best done after flowering, while the leaves are still visible.

The greenhouse will need to be cleaned before sowing seeds; also tidy up sheds and garages making sure tools are in good order. Sweet peas can be started indoors, placed on damp kitchen paper in a warm place so they start to shoot. Early potatoes can also be started indoors, placed in an old egg trays until they start to shoot. Only three or four shoots are required, the rest can be rubbed off. Most of us will be browsing through seed catalogues; just a reminder to keep your seeds in a cool place till required.

There is some pruning to be done before the birds nest; cut back overgrown ivy and dormant shrubs that have become untidy. Cut back perennials taking care not to cut new shoots. Do not cut the winter flowering shrubs until after they have flowered. The winter flowering shrubs are usually heavily scented to attract the moths to pollinate them. Now is the time to plant bare root trees and shrubs if you require a new stock in the garden.

Trim back winter flowering heathers; these are mostly the heathers that we can grow in our soil in Kingsclere. Cut back late flowering clematis - the birds seem to like the new shoots of the clematis; in recent years I have had to protect them. Dahlia tubers can be placed in a shallow tray with compost so they can begin to shoot, placing them somewhere frost free. Shallots can be planted outside; the birds like to pull the bulbs out of the ground before the roots are established but the bulbs can be replanted back into the ground. Fruit trees at this time of the year will benefit from a mulch of well rotted manure or compost. Autumn fruiting raspberries need pruning now.

Plants flowering this month are Daphne, Mezereum, Camellia, early Crocus, Viburnum Tinus, Clematis Freckles, Iris Histrioides, and the yellow Winter Aconite.

**Denise Allen**

## Shipinnarts

**The Ship Inn Country Hotel, Ashford Hill, RG19 8BD**

**<https://shipinnarts.org/>    [shipinnarts@gmail.com](mailto:shipinnarts@gmail.com)    01189 814504**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 12 – 1pm Flautissimo II**

Contact Alison Pickering, email: [alisonjpickering30@gmail.com](mailto:alisonjpickering30@gmail.com)

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm – 8.45pm Recorder Choir**

**(18 years and up)** Come and join us! Bring your recorder if you have one, Alison has some to lend if not. £5 cash each practice. Contact Alison.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February 7 – 9pm Clayson sings Chanson.** Doors open at 6.30pm, Bar open. Come and join us for this theatrical evening. Alan Clayson, chanteur and raconteur, explores the most mature and cultivated form of popular song. With accompaniment and a supporting programme from songwriter and vocalist Andy Lavery on keyboards and guitar, and Mark T, already familiar to Ship Inn audiences, playing blues, folk and roots music on guitar and bouzouki, the show is prefaced by an explanatory talk that is as entertaining as it is educational. Tickets £9 at Eventbrite:

**<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/clayson-sings-chanson-tickets-1067256806839>.** Tickets on the door £10; cash preferred please.

## Kingsclere Youth Club

Where:        The Fieldgate Centre

When:        Mondays 5.30pm-7.30pm

Entry fee:    £3.50 First session is free.

In December we enjoyed loads of Christmassy activities, including making puddings, cards and light-up

decorations. Our young people showed incredible generosity in their donations to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child scheme that gifts shoe boxes of Christmas gifts to children in need.

We kicked off 2025 making seriously indulgent hot chocolates and some of us made new year resolution journals. Wink murder has been one of our most popular games recently, closely followed by light tag (played in the dark with electric tea lights).

Youth Club welcomes all young people aged between 7- and 14-years-old. We host a broad range of activities including craft, sports, cooking and games. Come along to try it out - the first session is free.

Scan the QR code to visit our Facebook Page.



**Lydia Harley-Tomlinson**

**[lydia.harleytomlinson@gmail.com](mailto:lydia.harleytomlinson@gmail.com)**

## **THE KINGSCLERE TOWER DIRECTORY**

### **POLICE, FIRE or AMBULANCE**

Police Enquiries/Information

**Emergency 999**

**non Emergency 101**

**Kingsclere Health Centre:**

0333 034 1033

**North Hampshire Hospital, Basingstoke**

01256 473202

**Parish Council:** 37 George Street (see page 2)

01635 298634

**Kingsclere Charities Clerk:** Gillian Hern

07884 182696

kingsclerecharities4@mail.com

**Dial-a-Ride**

01256 462101

### **St. MARY'S CHURCH:**

**Vicar**

Peter Williams vicar@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk

**Church Warden:**

John Price johnsaprice@hotmail.com

01635 297780

**Administrator:**

administrator@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk

01635 299528

07422 687125

### **METHODIST CHURCH:**

**Minister:**

Rev Rachel Borgars

07889 905753

Rachel.Borgars@methodist.org.uk

01256 895878

**Secretary & Hire of Hall** Jeanette Billington

01635 297585

### **ROMAN CATHOLIC:**

Rev Patrick Tansey

0118 9814572

tadley@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Bas & Deane

01256 844844

Kingsclere Library

01635 297464

Buses

0345 8101000

Swan Street P O

01635 297035

Trains

0845 7484950

Kingsclere Vet

01635 896330

Gas Emerg.

0800 111999

Berkshire Vet

01635 896333

Chemist

01635 298419

Dentist

01635 299981

### **BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

**David Conquest**

07887 871105

cllr.david.conquest@basingstoke.gov.uk

**Mike Bound**

07833 612735

cllr.Mike.Bound@basingstoke.gov.uk

**Kerry Morrow**

07422 651172

cllr.Kerry.Morrow@basingstoke.gov.uk

### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

**Tom Thacker**

07712 695468

tom.thacker@hants.gov.uk

**MP for N.W. Hampshire:**

**Kit Malthouse**

01264 401401

kit.malthouse.mp@parliament.uk

2, Church Close, Andover, SP10 1DP

**There is a more comprehensive list of local contact numbers on the  
Parish Council website. Go to [www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk/directory](http://www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk/directory)**