



The Kingsclere Tower

What's On & Local News
December/ January 2026

T The Kingsclere Tower

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Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year from everyone at the Kingsclere Tower!

Christmas offers the chance to catch up with families but it is also an opportunity to celebrate the pleasures of living in our village community, The regular Christmas services will be held at St. Mary's Church on Christmas Eve, and at St Mary's and the Methodist Church on Christmas Day. There are also family carol services at St Peter's Headley, St. Paul's, Ashford Hill and carols in St Mary's churchyard. (All times and dates are listed on p14).

Locally, you will also find festive events at the Fieldgate Centre, including Nathan's very popular Christmas Cabaret on the 13th December (see p25), and the Christmas Market at the Village Club (p9).

The Kingsclere Singers are providing their traditional Yule entertainment (p4 and 21). Don't forget you can still enjoy the Kingsclere Players' Snow White panto at the Fieldgate Centre on December 5th, 6th and 7th!

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 **February** to the Editor at kingscleretower@gmail.com.

NOT LATER THAN 12th January 2026

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
& home phone number/e-mail address.**

Kingsclere Parish Council (KPC)

Chairman: Cllr Clive Mussett

Email: clerk@kingsclere-pc.org.uk

Telephone: 01635 298634

Office: 37 George Street, Kingsclere RG20 5NH



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all at the Parish Council.

FESTIVE BIN COLLECTIONS - Christmas can mean extra rubbish. Therefore, for the first collection after Christmas ONLY, Basingstoke and Deane will collect extra rubbish sacks left by your grey bin.

It is also an opportunity to recycle as much as you possibly can. B&D will collect extra recycling as long as it is inside a clear bin liner. In dry weather you can leave extra cardboard next to your recycling bin. Please ensure it is flattened and no bigger than 1m x 1m. Wrapping paper cannot be recycled so please put it in your grey waste bin.

CHRISTMAS CARDS – Cards without glitter and ribbons may be recycled.

FESTIVE RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

Wednesday 10th and Wednesday 24th December.

Friday 9th January and Wednesday 21st January

GARDEN WASTE - Collections will be on Monday 22nd December and will resume on Monday 19th January 2026

(Waste collection has become complicated especially at this time of year. Check <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/bincollections> for further information. Editor)

CHRISTMAS TREES – **Garden Waste** customers can leave real Christmas trees out for collection next to their garden waste containers. Trees over 6 ft should be cut in half and all decorations should be removed.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE AWARDS 2025/26 – **A reminder these are open until January 31st.** A Nomination Form can be found on the Parish Council website, the notice boards on Crown Green and opposite the George and Horn, also on the board in the entrance to the Village Club. Alternatively, we can arrange for one to be sent to you. The awards are about recognising people in our Parish who go above and beyond to help make the village a better place to live. It's about people who work hard up front and centre and also to remember those often behind the scenes and anyone who helps and supports others in our lovely village.

The Parish website www.kingsclere-pc.org.uk

@kingsclerepc



[facebook.com/KingsclereParishCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/KingsclereParishCouncil)

facebook

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – The next Full Council Meeting is scheduled for 7.30pm on Monday 26th January 2026. We welcome the attendance of all parishioners at our meetings and anyone who wishes to raise any matter will be given the opportunity to do so during Public Questions.

Have Your Say on Basingstoke and Deane's Budget!



Basingstoke
and Deane

The council wants your input on how to spend money to keep our town running smoothly next year.

What's planned:

- Cleaner streets and parks — including a new jet washing service.
- Stronger planning services to protect local spaces.
- Smarter use of technology for quicker, easier access to council services.
- Upgrades to sports pitches, tennis and netball courts, and community facilities.

Council tax: A tiny increase of just 10p a week for the average household, keeping Basingstoke and Deane one of the lowest-taxed areas in Hampshire.

Why it matters: Your feedback helps shape the budget and ensures services reflect what matters most to the community.

Consultation closes: Sunday 4 January 2026

Have your say: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/budget2026

Shipinnarts

Shipinnarts at Ashford Hill would like to thank everyone who have been so supportive of our events in 2025 and to the Kingsclere Tower team for putting us in this magazine.



We are now holding events in March, August and November.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year 2026.

Warmest wishes from Alison, Jane, Hazel, Georgi, Jon and Vanessa

The Ship Inn Country Hotel, Ashford Hill, RG19 8BD <https://shipinnarts.org/> email: shipinnarts@gmail.com 01189 814504



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.

Looking towards Christmas and the end of the year, and then into January 2026, the Fieldgate Centre continues to be busy and bustling with its full diary of classes, clubs and activities. Check our website for full details and come and join us for Pilates, Clubbercise, Ceroc, Slimming World, Kingsclere Singers, Badminton, Darts, and Monthly Meet Up.

The festive season brings with it the usual fun and activities at the centre, starting with the Kingsclere Players' popular pantomime, **Snow White**. The December shows take place on **5th, 6th and 7th December**. Full details of times are on the Players' and Fieldgate's websites.

Nathan's Cabaret is back on **13th December**, always a great event! The following weekend we have the **Christmas Sing-along** on the **19th** and the **Christmas Party evening with Gary Myles** on the **20th**. The food van will be back for that evening! Look for full details on our website to make sure you don't miss out on the fun. The **Monthly Meet Up** runs as usual, always a lovely afternoon of chat, cake, cuppas, quizzes and crafts, taking place on **16th December and January 20th**.

We held our AGM in October and one of the longest standing members of the KCA, David Chivers, known to all as Chinner, stepped down from his role as Vice Chair. Chinner has been a huge help and support to the KCA and centre for many years. He will be missed by all and is thanked for all his hard work and efforts in supporting our fabulous centre. Full details of trustees, new and old, are on our website. Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2026.
www.thefieldgatecentre.co.uk **01635 298497**



Kin&scclere Singers

19th December

Community Singalong

7.30pm, Fieldgate Centre Kingsclere

Looking forward to celebrating Christmas 2025
with Fun, Laughter and Singing with you all.



Sandham Memorial Chapel in Burghclere closed for the winter months

Sandham Memorial Chapel in Burghclere is closed for the winter with staff preparing the site during the off-season. The chapel, home to 19 paintings by Sir

Stanley Spencer, relies solely on natural light making it difficult to view some artworks during the darker months.

Notable paintings such as "The Camp at Karasuli" and "The Riverbed at Todorovo" are particularly affected by low light. The chapel is set to reopen to visitors on **5th March from 11am to 3pm.**

Updates will be shared via **nt@Sandham** and Facebook over the winter.



Tadley & District

Kingsclere Outreach

Citizens Advice will be continuing our partnership with the Village Club over the next few months. We may be able to help you resolve issues which make this time of year especially difficult.

Whether you're worried about money, housing, benefits, work, or something else entirely, our trained advisers can help you understand your options and find a way forward. We're an independent charity, so everything is free, confidential, and completely impartial — no judgment, just practical support.

Sessions will be held at: -

The Kingsclere Village Club from 10am to 1pm, on the 2nd and 16th December and 6th and 20th January.

To avoid any delays, we can make appointments - just contact us using the details below and we can book a suitable time.

Alternatively, just pop in, have a chat, and see how we can help. Sometimes a bit of friendly advice can make all the difference. If you do drop in, please be aware that you may have to wait for an adviser to be available.

Contact us

Phone: 0808 278 7987 (including a voicemail service)

Online: <https://www.catadley.org/email>

In person: First and Third Tuesday mornings of the month at Kingsclere Village Club, 35 George Street, Kingsclere, RG20 5NH

Watership Down Health

Surgery Newsletter December 2025



A big thank you to our Patient Participation Group (PPG) members for supporting us with the flu/covid clinics this autumn. Thanks to the dedication of the practice staff, we have been able to offer a comprehensive weekend programme of additional appointments for flu and covid vaccinations alongside our community clinics.

Adult Flu and Covid Vaccination Programmes

If you have not had a flu vaccination, are over 65 or have been invited due to an underlying health condition, please call the practice and book an appointment. The flu vaccination programme will end on the 31st March 2026 (as long as supplies are available), whilst the covid vaccination programme will close on the 31st January 2026.

Covid vaccinations can still be booked through the National Booking Service: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/> or telephone 119.

Child Flu

Our surgeries continue to vaccinate eligible children who are aged 2 – 3 yrs or 4 – 17 yrs with an underlying health condition. Any children who missed their flu vaccination in school will need to contact the School Health Service.

Contacting the Watership Down Health practices:

Walk Ins – We have 3 sites at Kingsclere, Overton and Oakley with opening times displayed on our front doors and our website. Kingsclere and Overton are open from 08:00 to 18:30 hrs Monday to Friday.

Main telephone number – 0333 034 1033. If you prefer to use our ‘Call Back’ service, please make sure that you remain available for the receptionist’s call. Please use this number for all urgent matters.

Website – Our website is available at: <https://watershipdownhealth.com/> where you can submit an e-consult request as well as find advice, guidance and help. We also have a Facebook and Instagram page where you can find information on changes in opening times, temporary closures and health advice.

Generic Email address: The following website link is helpful if our dedicated page is paused for maintenance:
hiowicb-hsi.watershipdownhealth.com

Christmas and New Year Opening Times:

Monday 22nd to Wednesday 24th December 2025 – Open
 Thursday 25th December 2025 (Bank Holiday) – Closed
 Friday 26th December 2025 (Bank Holiday) – Closed
 Saturday 27th December 2025 – Closed
 Sunday 28th December 2025 - Closed
 Monday 29th December 2025 - Open
 Tuesday 30th December 2025 – Open
 Wednesday 31st December 2025 – Open
 Thursday 1st January 2026 (Bank Holiday) – Closed
 Friday 2nd January 2026 – Open

Medication Requests over the Holiday Season

As the holiday season can be a very busy time for the practice, do submit your medication requests and repeat prescriptions as soon as possible. The easiest way to do this is via the NHS App or via our website at: <https://watershipdownhealth.com/services/managing-your-health-online/online-forms/repeat-prescription-request/>

You can also contact the PPG if you need help with the NHS App. They can put you in touch with the person best placed to help you with getting the most out of the app.

When the practice is closed, please call **NHS 111** for advice. The practice will display the Christmas and New Year Community Pharmacy rota and opening times on our website and main front doors of each practice once received.

**From All Our GP Partners, Doctors, and Team,
 we wish all our Patients and their Families
 a Very Happy and Festive Christmas and New Year.**

YOUR CHRISTMAS HEALTH CHECKLIST

Check your prescriptions Put in your requests as soon as you can.

Have to hand the opening hours of the local pharmacies

Refresh your home first aid kit

Include some healthy options in your daily diet

Set up NHS Phone App so all your patient information is in one place

Try to get outdoors if you can

Make sure you have all the medication you need for the festive period.

Accessing services – know the most appropriate one if you need help.

Stay safe and healthy!

KINGSCLERE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Our next meeting will be on
THURSDAY 11th DECEMBER
DAVE STUBBS

will give us a talk entitled
" A LIFE OF CRIME (PREVENTION)".



Dave has spoken to us previously on several historical subjects but this time he will tell us about his career in the Police Force.

Dave was very much involved with the local population when policing meant a lot of walking and cycling. He was based in and around Newbury in the local force which from 1968 became the Thames Valley Constabulary. We will hear of the serious side of his work along with lighter moments of which there were many. We can expect an interesting and entertaining evening followed by some seasonal refreshments.

We begin **2026** on **THURSDAY JANUARY 22nd**

Local historian and author **ALAN TURTON** will be our speaker.

This will be a return visit and Alan's subject will be

" JANE AUSTEN AND THE ARMED FORCES ".

During Jane Austen's short life of 41 years, Britain was at war and under threat of invasion for most of that time. Alan will tell of Jane's connections with the military and what she would have seen on the "Regency Home Front ".

We meet in the main hall at Kingsclere Village Club, 37 George Street, RG20 5NH and visitors are always welcome at £3 p.p.

Michael Leah, Chairman 297403

The
**BEDBUG
RECORDER**



KINGSCLERE IN WW2 COMMEMORATIVE EDITION
by KINGSCLERE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

IT'S OUT!

Our latest publication '**The BEDBUG RECORDER No 5 – Kingsclere in WW2 Commemorative Edition**' has now been published, and is available priced just £8 from:

Swan Street Stores.

eBay.

Any KLHA meeting.

Ideal for anyone interested in local and social history.

We hope you enjoy reading "The Bedbug Recorder"!

Gareth Martin, KLHA



KINGSCLERE VILLAGE CLUB

Est. 1921 CHARITY 1189234

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

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

Christmas Market

7th December 10am - 1pm

So many stalls this year, with something for everyone!

Local artisans have been working tirelessly to bring you a wide range of lovely gifts and treats. Christmas decorations and crafts, jewellery, local honey, wool craft, wildlife photography, feather wreaths, wood craft, handmade fragrance, hair and body products, resin & clay, fabric work, crochet and more.

Bring along the children for pocket money toys, a lucky dip and decorating biscuits. Plus Children's Portrait Photography.

Free entry, café, mulled wine - not to be missed!

Last Community Café?

Join us at the Community Café, **Saturday 20th**

December, 10am - 12.30pm for festive treats and a friendly chat. With a free, fun quiz at 11 o'clock.

Unfortunately, unless more people attend the café, we will not be able to continue, so if you have any ideas on how we can improve and attract more people, please let us know!



Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

Helen 01635 297390 or events@kingsclerevillageclub.co.uk

Burghclere Baroque presents

A French Baroque Christmas

Music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier

Messe de Minuit

In Nativitatem

Singers and players of Burghclere Baroque Ensemble

Soloists: Philippa Hyde, Matthew Keighley, Robin Datta, Dominic Felts

Directed from the organ by Robert Howarth

Friday 19th December 7.30pm, Church of the Ascension, Burghclere

Tickets £10 - £25 at your discretion, under-18s free

Includes a glass of wine or soft drink

Box office - email theresa@burghclerebaroque.com **01635 276009**

Further details at www.burghclerebaroque.com

This concert is supported by The Greenham Trust

Kingsclere Charities – Grants

Wishing Everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

The Robert Higham Apprentices and Educational Charity: This Charity promotes the education and training of young people aged 16 – 25 who are resident in the Parish of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley. Grants are awarded to assist with the cost of such things as equipment, books and specialist clothing and equipment required for learning or training in a stated subject. Also, expenses incurred in travelling to and from home to a place of learning. The Charity also provides benefits not normally provided by the Local Education Authority to schools in the above-mentioned Parishes.

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 hospitals.

Kingsclere Charities forthcoming Meeting Dates for 2026:

19th February 16th April 18th June, 17th September and 19th November.

For an application form please contact the Clerk, Gill Hern,
email : Kingsclerecharities4@mail.com



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www.oakleyroofingandbuilding.com

24 Swan Street – A new lease of life... continued



24 SWAN STREET

We thought it was time to share an exciting update on our progress at 24 Swan Street since our last notice in The Tower earlier this year. We've been busy over the summer, sprucing up the place. The front window frames and doors have been cleaned and repainted, giving the building a fresh new look. We've also cleared and weeded the carpark while trimming back trees and bushes to make parking easier.

Excitingly, we have become affiliated with Berkshire Youth and are exploring ways to start a Youth Hub at 24 Swan Street. We also nearly have a full music room set up, ready for any budding local bands to practice. However, before we can proceed, we need to make a few alterations in some rooms to ensure safety. Throughout this time, we have seen the flourishing of the college students attending Kingsclere Performing Arts College, many of whom have graduated and progressed to colleges and university to further develop their performing arts skills. We also welcome children and adults attending the range of classes run by JLD Dance. Ensuring we protect the space where so many young people learn skills in the performing arts has been a fundamental objective for us.

Since taking on the lease from B&DBC in February, we've set up direct accounts for all utilities, insurance, and waste management. It wasn't an easy task, as we had no credit rating and we had some unpleasant surprises, but we managed to get it done. Although we were disappointed to be rejected for a large grant to fund further improvements to the windows and roof, we are determined to keep pushing forward and are exploring other grant applications.

We would love to invite you to an open afternoon in January to see the work needed to make the building safe and to share our future plans. We are eager to hear your innovative ideas for the future use of this grand building.

The exact date in January will be confirmed soon. We look forward to seeing you there and sharing our vision for 24 Swan Street!

Best regards,

KPAYC Trustees

What if this Christmas was your last? For many patients being cared for by St. Michael's Hospice, this Christmas may be their last. With your support, we can make it as special and unique as they are - filled with comfort, love, and joy.

Making a donation is easy, simply phone our fundraising team on **01256 848848**, visit

stmichaelshospice.org.uk

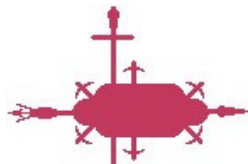
Charity Reg No (England and Wales): 1002856 St. Michael's Hospice, Basil de Ferranti House, Aldermaston Road, Basingstoke, RG24 9NB



Kingsclere Rugby Club

Walking Rugby – This is going well with between 10 and 16 players participating in a game each week

You can either come along on a Wednesday evening and join the men for a mixed game or turn up on a Thursday evening for a women's only game. Both the Wednesday and Thursday evenings are held at The Fieldgate Centre between 7.00 - 8.00 pm. The game is suitable for women from 18 to 70 +. Walking Rugby is a very easy game to learn, no experience of rugby is needed & can be played with just 4 a side. It's a great way to exercise, walking as fast or as slow as your body allows with low impact on all your joints, you don't need to be fit to play. The main aim is to enjoy yourself, make some new friends & get a little bit of exercise at the same time.



For more information, please contact **Joanna Reed** – Moreton Secretary- Kingsclererfc@outlook.com or

Geoff Curtis Youth-coach-Kingsclererfc@outlook.com

Adults Rugby – Training is now in full swing which is held every Wednesday evening. If you fancy playing why not come and join us at The Fieldgate Centre on a Wednesday evening between 7 – 9pm. It is not too late to start putting on your boots. The team has been successful on its last two league outings, winning 49 – 7 against Farnborough away, against Winchester Knights on Saturday 11th October, and 128 – 12 against Aldershot & Fleet 2nds away on Saturday 18th October. The player of the match against Farnborough was Ellis Springer and against Aldershot & Fleet 2nds was Quintin Fraser.

The home games in December and January will be league fixtures against:

Alton 2nds on the 6th December.

Aldershot & Fleet 2nds on the 20th December.

Andover 3rds on the 10th January.

Farnham 4ths on the 24th January.

All the matches will kick off at 2pm. Please come along and support.

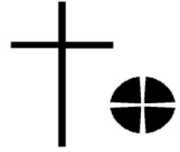
Do you enjoy driving and have time on your hands? Want to give something back to your community? Join us as a volunteer driver! Taking less mobile people to medical appointments or, even driving our handy buses for community groups, allowing people to retain the independence of shopping and socialising.

For more information call 01635 49004 or email Bernie@vcwb.org.uk



Volunteer Centre
West Berkshire

The Church Pages



Let me first wish you a “happy” Christmas and a “peaceful” New Year... But if we reflect on the action of the first Christmas which will be celebrated in our churches across the coming months, they are not always the first words that spring to mind.

I do not know of many pregnant mothers who would be happy about travelling a significant distance just days before going into labour in an animal shelter; I am not sure that many people are happy when their territory is taken over by a neighbouring power and their way of living is dismantled; I am sure that the great fear experienced by the shepherds on the hillside was both sudden and petrifying in equal measure.

The situation in Bethlehem was far from peaceful... there was insufficient accommodation for those who had travelled on the orders of the Romans to be accounted for in the census; contrary to the words of the carol “little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes”, I suspect there was a lot of noise from the newborn baby matched by the noises of the animals around the place; there would have been Roman soldiers and officials going about their business with the census and local merchants cashing in on the sudden influx of additional disposable income...

And then a few days later, we learn that visiting dignitaries have arrived with camels... who are not usually known for their happy and peaceful disposition!

So why do we still use these words around this season?

Could it just be that, somewhere deep in our psyche, we are all seeking for that place where we can be happy with who we are, where we live and what we contribute to the life of the world? If we share the word “happy” often enough, might it be that it will take on a life of its own, as we realise all the joyful things we *can* share together across this small blue planet? “Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me...” says the hymnwriter. St Paul, writing to the church in Rome, says, “If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all...”

Is there space in our preparation for the coming festivities for us to consider how we can make those two words a reality for those around us, not just at Christmas and the turn of the year, but on every single day of our lives? The angel announced “Don’t be afraid! Listen! I bring good news, news of great joy, news that will affect all people everywhere.” Perhaps this year, we could “Hush the noise... and hear the angels sing”

Peace,

Rachel Borgars Methodist Minister

Rachel

Worship in our Churches

December 2025



Thursday 4 th	10:30 am Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 7 th	9:00 am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30 am BCP Holy Communion 10:30 am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 11 th	11:00 am Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 14 th	9:00 am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30am Family Carol Service 9:30am Morning Worship 10:30 am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St. Paul's Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 18 th	10:30 am Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 21 st	9:00 am Traditional Morning Worship 10:30 am Contemporary Morning Worship 6:00 pm Carol Service	St Mary's, Kingsclere St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Paul's Ashford Hill
Monday 22 nd	7:30pm Carols in the Churchyard	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Wednesday 24 th	4:00 pm Crib & Christingle Service 11:30 pm Midnight Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 25 th	9:30 am Christmas Day Morning Worship 10:30 am Christmas Day Holy Communion	St. Paul's Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 28 th	9:30 am Traditional Holy Communion 10:00 am Morning Worship	St. Peter's Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere

Worship in our Churches

January 2026



Sunday 4 th	9:00 am Traditional Holy Communion 9:30 am BCP Holy Communion 10:30 am Contemporary Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere
Tuesday 6 th	7:30 pm Licensing service for Revd Jonathan Hillman	St Paul's, Ashford Hill
Thursday 8 th	10:30 am Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 11 th	9:00 am Traditional Morning Worship 9:30 am Bubble Church 10:30 am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Paul's, Ashford Hill St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 15 th	10:30 am Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 18 th	9:00 am Traditional Holy Communion 9:30 am Traditional Morning Worship 10:30 am Contemporary Holy Communion	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 22 nd	10:30 am Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere
Sunday 25 th	9:00 am Traditional Morning Worship 10:30 am Traditional Holy Communion 10:30 am Contemporary Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere St. Peter's, Headley St Mary's, Kingsclere
Thursday 29 th	10:30 am Morning Worship	St Mary's, Kingsclere

Kingsclere Methodist Church Services for December 2025 and January 2026

DECEMBER

Sunday 7 th December	Rev Amy Walters CF	10am
Sunday 14 th December	Rev Rachel Borgars	10am
Sunday 21 st December	Rev Martin Beukes	10am
Christmas Day	Mrs Maggy Wallace	10am
Sunday 28 th December	Joint service at Whitchurch Methodist Church	

10.30am

JANUARY

Sunday 4 th January	Mr Michael Smith	10am
Sunday 4 th January	Epiphany carols	6pm
Sunday 11 th January	Rev Rachel Borgars	10am
Sunday 18 th January	Mrs Maggy Wallace	10am
Sunday 25 th January	Mrs Hazel Barker	10am

Coffee Morning Thursdays 10.30am

except Christmas Day and New Years Day

Hall available for hire please see page 28 of this magazine

CORMICY VISIT

At the end of October we welcomed 10 adults and 5 children from our twinned village of Cormicy.

Thank you to all our hosts, and members of the Association and of the community who made them so welcome. Their visit included a tour of the Bombay Sapphire distillery, and pie and mash served from a London Taxi Cab!



The Chairman of the Cormicy Twinning Association echoing the value that can be seen in this relationship between our communities.

“We gather once again to celebrate our enduring friendship between our two villages. For over a decade, Kingsclere and Cormicy have shared more than just a twinning agreement – we have built a bridge of camaraderie, culture and mutual respect that continues to flourish year after year. Each visit, whether in the rolling hills of Hampshire or the vineyards of Champagne, is a testament to the strength of our bond... with each exchange, we deepen our understanding, forge new friendships and create memories that last a lifetime. This partnership...is living proof of the Franco-British friendship – one that transcends borders and politics, rooted in shared values and genuine affection...”

Next year we hope that we shall travel again to Cormicy to continue to forge this relationship. If you are interested in joining this visit or becoming involved in any way, please email

kingscleretwinning@yahoo.co.uk or contact Sue Watson on 01635 298940.

Kingsclere Twinning Association

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 mark an occasion, such as a birthday, wedding, anniversary, or some other special day in their lives. To book, please email

administrator@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk or call

01635-299528. To include your tribute in the Tower,

please let us have your words before the 12th of the preceding month.



December

- 14th In loving memory of Jean and Mervin Hiller, remembering all the happy Christmases we had. Love you always Susan, Mark, Julie, Bob, Gina, Tom & Ella.
- 15th Paul Read. Your memory is a keepsake from which we'll never part. God has you in his keeping, we have you in our hearts. Loved always, Alyson, Eleanor and Jazia.
- 19th For Marjorie
- 19th Hildres Alderman. Missing you still, Mum.
- 25th Neil Westcombe, for giving us all such happy memories, so missed and loved always x Elaine, Christopher, Suzie, Helen, Chris, Tom and Oliver.
- Remembering Peggy and Alan Appleton. Mum and Dad, loved and missed x Richard, Elaine & Family
- In memory of Stewart Vaughan on Christmas Day, his favourite time of the year. Thinking of you today and every day, you are forever in our hearts. A very special husband, father and grandad. All our love Pam, James, Laura, Robin, William and Alex.

January

- 30th In loving memory of Gloria Olariu-Stead born sleeping 30 January 2019. Always in the hearts of Oana, Michael, Emily, Vasile, Cornelia, Gina and Andrew.
- 31st Remembering Paula Tait on her birthday. Loved and missed so much by her family and friends.

Saturday Coffee in the Kingsmill Room, St Mary's

Fresh brewed coffee, tea and delicious homemade cakes.

December - 6th, 13th and 27th - 10am - 12.00

January - 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th - 10am - 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 Mary's Kingsclere Ltd (FOSM)

A reminder of the opportunity now to renew membership or to sign up for the **FOSM 200 Club**. 'Buying' one or more numbers for £12 each gives the chance of winning £50 in each of the twelve monthly Draws in 2026. An ideal present for children or grandchildren! Please contact **Mark Wray** on **297555** or at **mark.wray55@gmail.com**.

Our first event in the New Year will be the **Quiz Night with Ploughman's Supper** at the **Fieldgate Centre on Friday 6th February**. Tickets, at £18 per head, will include two bottles of wine per table of eight, and will be available from early January either from Raj and Monika, or by contacting **Jane Royle** on **01635 297430** or at **jane.b.royle@gmail.com**. Either muster a table of eight, or book in smaller numbers and we will bring teams together, if possible, on the night. For the last several years, this very enjoyable event has been a complete sell-out, so early booking is advised!

The similarly popular annual **Plant Sale in St Mary's Churchyard** will be **on the morning of Saturday 30th May**. We hope to have a good selection of flowering perennials and annuals, and young vegetable plants. As ever, we should be most grateful for plant donations from any of you who are splitting plants or sowing seeds early in Spring. Details of who to contact will appear in future issues of The Tower.

Peter Turner, Chairman

Website: **friendsofstmaryskingsclere.org**.

For membership & FOSM enquiries contact **fosmkingsclere@gmail.com**



FOSM 200 Club

The winner of the November Draw was
Sally Walker– Number 23
Congratulations, Sally.

Next month's Draw will take place at Bel and the Dragon at about 7 p.m. on

Tuesday 2nd December.

Kingsclere Community Library



The Giant Book and Picture Sale

The Giant Book and Picture Sale was another huge success this year and we would like to thank all those people without whom the “show could not go on!” Our thanks therefore, go to The Kingsclere Community Association, The Kingsclere Tower, Raj and Monica at The Spar, everyone who helped with the sorting, sifting and transporting of the books before the sale, everyone who put up posters around the county, everyone who helped over the three days of the sale and everyone who made one of the delicious selection of cakes!

The remaining books were taken to St Michaels Hospice Shop and the remaining pictures were taken to various charity shops – so nothing went to landfill. We would also like to thank the lovely donor who paid for the van hire to take the remaining books to the Hospice Shop and everybody else who gave us donations – we are extremely grateful to all of you.

Jane Austen

December 16th 2025 is Jane Austen’s 250th birthday anniversary – we are therefore celebrating this famous author’s life for the month of December and have ordered a number of her books to mark this event, which will be in the library shortly.

Christmas Story Time

This special story time will take place at 2.30 on Thursday 18th December in the library – children of all ages welcome – so come along and join the fun!

Library Closures over the Christmas period

The library will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year’s Day as both these holidays fall on a Thursday

HOURS Tuesday and Thursday 10am – 5.30pm
Saturday 10am – 1pm

Nicki Lee, Library Phone 01635 297464

kingsclerelibrary@gmail.com

www.kingsclerelibrary.co.uk



Flags not flying at St Mary’s Church.

We’re sorry to report that we’re currently unable to fly flags from the tower of St. Mary’s Church.

This is due to a health & safety issue regarding access to the tower roof, which we’re working hard to resolve.

As soon as we’re able to, we will start flying the flags again!



My Tutu Went AWOL



Drawing on material from his best-selling memoir and making full use of his background in vaudeville, Iestyn Edwards describes being part of the Combined Services Entertainment 'experiment', sent out to entertain British troops in Iraq and Afghanistan during the conflicts, wearing what 42 Commando Royal Marines nicknamed a 'frock of many doilies'...

Join us for this talk on

Wednesday 17th December at 10 a.m.

St Mary's Hall, Overton

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

Kingsclere Village Bunnies Baby and Toddler Group

Where: The Village Club

When: Tuesdays 9am-11am



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

We are a friendly group of parents, grandparents and childminders with children from tiny babies to energetic toddlers! We love welcoming new visitors to our play sessions. We enjoy outdoor and indoor play, craft, toys and singing together.

Xmas Closures Bunnies will be closed on 23rd and 30th December. Stay warm in your burrows until we reopen on Tuesday 6th January.

The library will be opening especially for Bunnies on 2nd December and 6th January.

Thank you as always to 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

Nature notes

This month, the weather has felt like very mild for the season. As my husband filled the pond up with rainwater (at last!) from the water butts, he was delighted to see the newt back among the shallows. Newts would ordinarily have started hibernation by November, but presumably the warm days and nights have kept him out and about.



Another welcome return has been the Tawny owl that lives or hunts near our house. I last remember hearing him back in the spring, when I was camped out on the sofa in the wee hours of the morning, cradling my youngest daughter who was struggling with sleep. Months on, and we are still being woken at unsociable hours. One night, half-asleep and ascending back upstairs, Calpol syringe in-hand, I was jolted by the Tawny's loud, trilling hoot travelling so clearly into the house that I half expected to see him perched at the top of the banister. Male tawnies call to let other owls know the boundaries of their conquered territory. The structure of each individual's hoot is unique and it is thought that owls can recognise each other by their call, and can even broadcast information to each other, such as how big they are. This is important if a prospective mate is checking out the local talent or another male owl is deciding whether the rival is worth challenging.

We were lucky to catch the Beaver Moon just after Bonfire Night. Every full Moon in the calendar has an alternative name that reflects natural events during that month, for example the Strawberry Moon in June. The tradition stems from when societies used the Moon as their calendar to track the course of the year. During the month of November, beavers are particularly active as they prepare for winter, building dams and stocking up food. This November, the Beaver Moon was also a supermoon, the description for when the Moon reaches its closest point to Earth in its orbit. As I stepped out with the bins, my first thought was that the outside lights had been left on, the garden was so brightly illuminated. It lasted well into early the next morning, when my daughter and I were walking the dog and, though the moon was by then further away and looked much smaller, was a glowing pearl, framed by the trees' black silhouettes against the lightening sky, like the last white berry to be plucked from the bush.

Lydia Harley-Tomlinson lydia.harleytomlinson@gmail.com

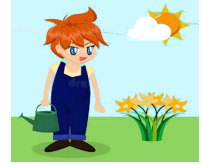
Kingsclere Singers

*Come and enjoy the Christmas spirit
with the Kingsclere Singers.*

**14th Dec - Yule Sing
4pm St Mary's Church Kingsclere.**



December in the Garden



As we head into winter, after an amazing autumn, there are still jobs that need attention. The last of the fallen leaves need to be picked up. There are different ideas on how to dispose of the leaves, the black bin bag works, but the filled bags with air holes need be stored for a year or more, and for most gardens, the problem is finding the space to store them. Some of the leaves can be put into the compost, and some hopefully, the worms will take into the soil. There are times when I wish the worms would take a lot more, as we have trees in our garden and surrounding area.

Although we have had mild weather in November, December could bring much colder weather, so protect any of the plants you grow that will not survive frosts .

Dalia's have flowered for longer this year, so if left in the soil, they need to be cut back to soil level and a mound of soil or compost placed over the plant to prevent the frost penetrating to the tubers.

If you have been delayed planting tulip bulbs, they still can be planted. If the soil is too wet or frozen, plant them into pots to sink into the soil in the spring. This works well as you can pop them into any space that is bare in the garden . It's amazing how bulbs catch up if planted late, as I discovered one year when I found a packet of bulbs that I had forgotten about. They didn't get planted till late December/early January.

Weather permitting, bare rooted trees and shrubs, may be planted this month. Some pruning can still be done, but do not prune spring flowering shrubs as the flowers will be lost. There are insects that rely on winter flowers for the nectar, and most winter flowering shrubs are highly scented to attract these insects to pollinate them.

There are varieties of broad beans that can be planted now, worth growing as I find broad beans are probably the most rewarding vegetable plants that grow in our garden. Earthing up brassicas will help protect them in the winds, some brassicas I stake as the trees draw them up, making them taller. Keep removing any yellowing leaves regularly as they look untidy and encourage fungal diseases. Dig over the vegetable plot if necessary.

As the gardening year ends, take the time to clean tools, and take them to be sharpened if necessary, ready to use again in the spring. When this is completed, it's time to look at the seed catalogues to ponder over what we will plan to grow next year.

Plant Hippeastrum bulbs for the house, lovely plants that grow very quickly, producing amazing flowers but remember not to plant them too deeply.

There are still a few plants that look good in the garden at this time of year. Elaeagnus (has yellow-edged leaves), mahonia (has scented flowers) and winter Jasmine. There are several plants with berries, including Holly, Conoteaster, Spotted Laurel and Skimia.

Kingsclere and Headley Woodlands WI

Our November meeting was enjoyable and informative with a visit from Jane Burrell telling us of the work of the War Graves Commission.



This month we have our Christmas celebrations when we will be having lunch at The Star in Kingsclere. Our members are looking forward to this.

Why not join us in January for our usual meeting? We would love to meet you and as you can see, we generally have a very varied programme. As our planned speaker is unfortunately not now available, we will be having a games afternoon with a cream tea on the 14th of the month, starting at our usual time of 1.45pm at the Village Club. Come along and join in the fun, chat and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee with our members, you will be most welcome. No competition in December but the letter for January will be M.

Also starting in January, we will be supporting a local Women's Aid by donating toiletries and new small items such as nightwear and slippers. A kind lady in the village has made 22 small/medium bags ready to fill and we would like the support of the community. Items must be new and unused. Often women seeking refuge arrive with very little so a few personal items are a great comfort. Donations can be dropped off at our monthly meetings from January, between 1.30 and 3.30pm or at the Community Library.

Margaret Geary, President 01635 297197

Wolverton Market

The next Market is **on Saturday 6th December** in the Village Hall, doors open from 9.30am until 11am. Entry is free and, by courtesy of Santa's Little Helpers, Tea, Coffee and Mince Pies will be served.

This is an excellent opportunity to come and find that elusive item that you have been searching for but didn't even realise you needed! Or perhaps a last-minute gift for that certain someone who seems to have everything.

Some of the items available for sale will be Handmade Garden Trays and Ornaments, locally produced honey, wood turned bowls and pens, Individually produced pictures and cards, hand printed tea towels, shell trinket dishes, jewellery and much more. Do come and visit the last Market of the year and as always, we thank you for your support. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you at our first Market of 2026 which is on the **3rd JANUARY** !

Wendy Morgan 01635 297538

Kingsclere CE Primary School – Autumn Term 2



As the festive season approaches, life at Kingsclere CE Primary School is filled with excitement and joy. The school community is eagerly anticipating a range of Christmas events, including the beloved Nativity, the Christmas Cantata at St Mary’s Church, Christmas Jumper Day, the Santa Fun Run and Fair, and the whole school Christmas dinner. This truly is a magical time to be part of the school.

Last month, the school hosted its annual Fireworks Festival, welcoming over 950 attendees. The event was a spectacular success, lighting up the skies and bringing the community together. Special thanks go to the Firework Committee, the Friends of Kingsclere CE Primary School PTA, and Mrs Jayne Verney for coordinating the event. The ongoing support from local residents is greatly appreciated and helps make such memorable moments possible.

The school also participated in the village Remembrance Service, where pupils laid crosses to honour each fallen soldier. Annie and Scarlett represented the school by reading ‘In Flanders Field’ by John McCrae. A reflective Collective Worship was held in school, focusing on peace and remembering those who served.

Staff have been engaged in professional development, focusing on PE teaching skills, Religious Education, and embedding spirituality across the curriculum. Ongoing safeguarding training ensures that pupil wellbeing remains central to the school’s mission.

Pupils have enthusiastically taken on the ‘Reading in Unusual Places’ challenge, with photos showing children reading everywhere from a king’s throne at Warwick Castle to the top of Pen y Fan in Wales. Reading is celebrated as a vital part of learning, supporting comprehension, spelling, grammar, imagination, and wellbeing.

The school is proud to have received two recent awards: the Music Mark for dedication and improvement in music education, and a Bronze Award for Road Safety as part of the STARS approved School Travel Plan. Congratulations go to the dedicated staff and children for these achievements.

Families considering places for Year R 2026–2027 are warmly invited to visit the school. To arrange a visit, contact the school office at **01635 298583** or email **adminoffice@kingsclere.hants.sch.uk**.

From everyone at Kingsclere CE Primary School, best wishes for a peaceful and joyful Christmas with family and friends.

Jo Messenger
Headteacher

Kingsclere Preschool

We would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the community who have got involved in a variety of ways. The children enjoy helping, meeting new people and love being out and about in the village. -If you see us, give us a wave!

Kingsclere Pre-School always have lots of events planned, so be sure to look at our various posters you will find around the village.

We have spaces for 2–4-year-olds available!

We are currently recruiting for a Deputy Manager/SENCO. If you would like more information, please contact admin@kingsclerepreschool.co.uk

Kingsclere Preschool Needs Trustees!

If you're interested, email: committee@kingsclerepreschool.co.uk to learn more.

Nathan's Christmas Cabaret Is Back!!



Come and join us and our West End friends for an evening of songs and festive fun, featuring the students of AVA and NLS Tuition. You will not want to miss it! This year, our cabaret is fundraising for **PAWS** - a wonderful local non-profit organisation providing animal-assisted wellbeing, education, and emotional literacy support for children and adults across West Berkshire.

The Fieldgate Centre
13th December

2.30pm matinee or 6.30pm evening.

Get your Tickets at:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/kingsclere-community-association

Tickets: Adults: £15.00

Children: £12.00

There will also be a raffle with wonderful prizes including West End theatre tickets, Spa treatments and many more.

All proceeds going towards **PAWS, West Berkshire.**

Whitchurch Silk Mill – Winter News

As the year ends, Whitchurch Silk Mill is bustling with creative activities and opportunities for community involvement. Whether your interests lie in textile art, heritage preservation, volunteering, or crafting, there's something for everyone this season.



Visible Threads: Jane Sanders Exhibition

The winter exhibition, Visible Threads, runs from December 6 to February 22, 2026. It features textile artist Jane Sanders from Newcastle upon Tyne, known for her unique portraits of iconic musicians. Using a 1960s Singer sewing machine and a mix of materials, Jane Sanders creates vibrant, imaginative works that combine fabric, thread, and mixed media. Her internationally recognized art brings famous faces to life in a distinctive style. For more on her techniques and inspirations, visit the Mill's website.

Support Silk Weaving – Big Give Campaign

Whitchurch Silk Mill is participating in the Big Give's Christmas Challenge, aiming to raise £5,000 to train future silk weavers. This initiative is crucial for preserving endangered heritage skills and keeping historic looms running. Donations made online via the Big Give website between December 3 and 10 will be doubled through match funding, maximizing the impact of every contribution. Supporters can find the donation link on the Mill's website or by searching for Whitchurch Silk Mill on the Big Give platform.

Volunteer Opportunity: Board Meetings Secretary

The Mill seeks an organized, community-minded volunteer to serve as Meetings Secretary. This role supports the Chair, Director, Board, and Committees, helping arrange and facilitate meetings about two days per month. Board meetings occur quarterly on Saturdays, while committee meetings are held online during the week. It's a chance to join a friendly team and make a meaningful impact on local heritage. Interested individuals are encouraged to reach out.

Join the Flower Festival Knitting Challenge

Looking ahead to summer 2026, the Mill will host its first Flower Festival from June 19–21. The event will showcase real and handmade floral art, inviting knitters, crocheters, and pom-pom makers of all ages to help create a vibrant garden of daffodils, tulips, roses, and more. Patterns and guidance are available from the Mill, welcoming both experienced crafters and beginners to contribute to this special community celebration.

**Contact: info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk –
www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk – 01256 892065**



St Michael's Hospice



Huge thanks to the Kingsclere Crafts Club and Community. You raised an incredible £2,972.66 for St Michael's Hospice at your September Craft Fair. Your support is amazing!

Kingsclere Tennis Club



Although the evenings are drawing in, there is still plenty of daylight at the weekends for social play as long as the rain keeps away! There have been some beautiful days in November when it has been so good to get out and play in the sunshine.

Of course, if you are at home during the week, you would be welcome to join Daphne's stalwarts on Thursday mornings from 9.30am to 11am (dsnook339@gmail.com).

For all information and events, keep in touch through the Kingsclere Tennis WhatsApp, also our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/kingscleretennisclub

Happy Christmas to all our members and let's make 2026 a good one with lots of new friends!

Kingsclere Gardening Association



Kingsclere
Gardening
Association

The members enjoyed a very nice lunch at the Vine in Hannington. We found it more convenient to have a lunch rather than an evening meal, as it is more difficult to travel in the evenings with the shorter daylight hours.

The association does not have a meeting in December.
January 8th 2026 will be our ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
7.30pm The Village Club

This will be followed by refreshments of cheese and wine.

This meeting is for members only. We would welcome any member who would like to join the committee. A larger committee helps alleviate the workload and makes their work more enjoyable.

We look forward to another busy year. We are already planning garden visits, interesting speakers, and enjoyable social events.
Wishing everyone a happy Christmas

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

kingsclerecharities@iname.com

Dial-a-Ride 01256 462101

CHURCH CONTACTS

St. MARY'S CHURCH:

Vicar Peter Williams vicar@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk

Church Warden:

John Price johnsaprice@hotmail.com 01635 297780

Administrator:

01635 299528

administrator@stmaryskingsclere.co.uk 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	Swan Street P O	01635 297035
Buses	0345 8101000	Dentist	01635 299981
Trains	0845 7484950	Age Concern Local Agent	0800 3287154
Gas Emerg.	0800 111999	Kingsclere Vet	01635 896330
Chemist	01635 298419	Berkshire Vet	01635 896333
Kingsclere Library	01635 297464		

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

David Conquest 07887 871105 cllr.david.conquest@basingstoke.gov.uk

Mike Bound 07833 612735 cllr.Mike.Bound@basingstoke.gov.uk

Kerry Morrow 07725 819021 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