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March 2026

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Naphill & Walter's Ash Gazette

March 2026

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Hughenden Street Association	Susan Bickerstaffe	07880 519323	
Tennis Club	Jenny Tench	01494 565406	jttench@gmail.com

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www.naphillvillagehall.org.uk

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Copy date for the April Gazette - 12 March

A warm welcome from the team at the Gazette as we begin navigating all the tasks that Sonia has spent years perfecting. It's only now that we fully realise just how much she did – but with her help and guidance, we'll get there!

The recent weather has been some of the most depressing I can remember. So, when discussing this issue with Sonia, we decided you all needed a reminder of what truly good weather looks like.

As I write this from my annual trip to Venice to photograph the Carnival and fashion, I can't think of a better place to demonstrate the pleasure that a little good weather brings. I am always amazed at how much difference sunshine makes to our lives – and to people's demeanour and interactions. It has led me to reflect on our own community and how this gloomy weather must be affecting the elderly and infirm who cannot easily get out and enjoy the fabulous place we are fortunate to live in.

So, if you do nothing else this month, please check in on your neighbours. Make sure they are OK. Stop for a chat. Let's bring our own sunshine to the villages on the hill.

I recently received an email from the chairman of the newly formed Hughenden Village Community

Association. The aim of this association is to bring together all the organisations in the village so that, rather than working independently, they can collaborate to create better events and support one another. I love this idea and wonder whether we might take a leaf out of their book. Could we establish something similar here? What do you think?

As you may be aware, last year the Lacey Green magazine, Hallmark, ceased publication. That is a great pity, though we all know these publications are not easy to run. Sonia, the committee and I have been discussing the possibility of bringing Lacey Green and its surrounding areas into the Gazette's fold. Do you know of any organisations or individuals there with whom we should be speaking? Your help in developing this idea and bringing the magazine to new readers would be greatly appreciated.

I must now sign off from a sunny Venice and head out to wander the quieter streets, away from the crowds, to enjoy the sunshine and glorious food. I will do my very best to bring some of that sunshine home with me for you all.

Jonathan

Editor Naphill & Walter's Ash Gazette



Naphill Village Hall and Playing Fields Trustee Committee - Chairman's Report

Registered Charity No: 300309

www.naphillvillagehall.org.uk



Chairman's report for February 2026 meeting

The village hall committee met on the 2nd February and there were 9 members present. Discussions took place on various items including next year's budget. There are a few maintenance tasks which should be done in the next month, and the website will be updated shortly with a revised Health and Safety and Safeguarding policy. Due to the incessant rain this last month the Crick will be left for a month or so to let it dry out before any work can be commenced. The guttering and downpipes are also going to be repaired.

The committee does not have a secretary or a maintenance person and would like someone to fill either role. If you are interested please contact me via the website or chairman@naphillvillagehall.org.uk

Clive Lawrence.

Village Hall Chairman



Photograph courtesy Peter Davis

Thank you Mike Leggett and Mike Mason
for 50 YEARS of lighting our village
Christmas Tree

Our spectacular tree lights once again brightened up the dark evenings! They are loved by everyone and widely considered to be the best in the area. Unfortunately this year we had an issue with the roadworks getting in the way which meant the lights were rather later than planned going up.

The good news is that you were incredibly generous with your donations through our Total Giving page and the collecting boxes and we raised an amazing £1634.83 – the second best total ever. This means that the necessary checks and repairs can be made before the lights go up again later this year.

As always, our thanks and admiration goes to the team, led by Mike Mason, who brave the elements each year to get the lights in place and bring us all such pleasure. They did a truly remarkable job. I'm sure you all join me in wishing Mike Mason and Mick Leggett a happy retirement from the tree lights team.

Thank you again for your generosity and we can safely say that our tree's future remains very bright indeed!

Cathryn Carter



Photograph courtesy Peter Davis

Lights Team 2025/2026

Lights team 2025/2026. Left to right: Matt Blamey, John Harris, H-P Verhoeven, Dave Perkins, Paul Hewitt, Mike Leggett, Stephen Fountain, Mike Mason, Gary Putnam, Peter Davis, John Camp, James Foster, Hamish Pearson.
Not in picture: Dan Smith, Glenn Gavin, Ron Collins, Neil McMinn.

From the Lights Team Captain

The team hope that you all enjoyed the lights, which were on until 2nd February. We took down the lights on Valentines Day, when there was a brief period of very fine weather amid the rain. We had a scare when we were told on the day the cherry-picker was to be delivered that it would not be provided. Luckily Clive Lawrence, Chairman of the Village Hall Council came to the rescue and a cherry-picker of the right size was at the tree next morning. Well done Clive!

Mike Leggett was the climber for the 34th Christmas. Dan Smith drove the cherry-picker and Stephen Fountain of Lacey Green was up on high with him. John Camp and H-P Verhoeven were up a tall ladder for a long time tying and untying ropes at the end of each garland to the tree. The team on the ground consisted of Ron Collins, Peter Davis, Paul Hewitt, John Harris, Gary Putnam of Lacey Green, Dave Perkins, Glenn Gavin, Neil McMinn, Matt Blamey, James Foster, Hamish Pearson and myself. We must thank Cathryn Carter for raising a near-record amount of money to pay for the

insurance, electricity and replacement equipment, and you, the public, who gave so generously.

This was the 50th time Mike Leggett and I have put up the lights. Mike Leggett climbed the tree four times this Christmas, and at 76 that was a remarkable achievement. He intends to carry on but, at 87, it is really time for me to retire. Hamish Pearson will be taking over from me as the communicator and James Foster will carry out my work on the day and at other times. Hamish and James will deputise for each other. They have been in training for two years and I feel sure that they will do a good job.

It was also the 50th time my wife, Marlène, has provided the essential tea, coffee, biscuits and hot, fresh home-made mince pies for the team. She will also be retiring!

Mike Mason



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Church News

It seems to rain most days, Main Road in Naphill is an endless journey through road works, and where there are no traffic lights there are pot-holes, but hey, the Churchyard is full of snow drops, the birds are singing, and as I write, interviews for our new vicar are about to be held! So not all bad!

The Big Church Quiz was held at Princes Risborough Golf Club, and 90 or so people struggled with the tricky and very wide-ranging questions set by quiz master John Callow. There seemed to be some horse-trading at the outset as some teams jostled to gain younger members on their tables. (This proved a very good tactic as one round was composed of old 11-plus questions, that were impenetrable to most of the over 60s). In the end, the overall result was very close with only 2 marks between the first 3 teams, and not many more separating the remaining 8. Well done the teams, the Social and Outreach Committee and the golf club who generously supported the event!

Funds raised were to support Growing Hope High Wycombe, a charity offering free therapy for children and young people (0-18) with additional needs living within the High Wycombe area. It also provides support for parents, carers and siblings through its groups and courses. (For more information on this charity see: GrowingHope.org.uk from where you can also access information on the other areas in England covered by other branches of the charity).

During the month covered by this issue you will receive information about and an invitation to our Easter services. Whether you visit for a service or not, St Michael's is always open during the day for visits to this ancient building, redolent of Disraeli as well as the incumbents and parishioners who worshipped here. It is a useful accompaniment to a visit to the Manor.

Who knows, by the time you read this, you could also sit and enjoy some spring sunshine in the churchyard. We can always hope!



We are very excited to announce Youth work at St. Michaels is changing under a brand-new banner called Rooted. There are two streams to this:



Rooted Together:

A vibrant new initiative is taking shape in our church and community with the launch of Rooted Together, an exciting youth group created to support, inspire, and connect young people. Rooted is more than just a place to hang out—it's a welcoming environment where youth can feel safe, valued, and encouraged to grow into their best selves.

Designed with today's young people in mind, Rooted offers a mix of fun activities, creative expression, open conversation, and opportunities to build lasting friendships.

Rooted provides space for young people to explore who they are, what they care about, and how they can positively shape the world around them.

At its heart, Rooted is about belonging. It's a place where youth can show up as they are, feel heard, and develop confidence in a supportive community. With passionate leaders and a strong focus on positive values, Rooted aims to help young people stay grounded while navigating the challenges and opportunities of growing up.

As we open our doors, we invite youth from across the community to join us. Come be part of something new, make connections, and grow together—because at Rooted, everyone has a place.

Rooted Together takes place at St Michael's, Church House, Hughenden every first and third Wednesday, during term-time. Join us 7pm-8:30pm for lots of games and fun.

Rooted @ Church:

We are making a faithful move expanding the Sunday provision for youth in church, 'Rooted @ Church' will now run twice a month, every second and fourth Sunday during the 11am service. We hope that this will prove invaluable for the youth as they seek to deepen their relationships with Jesus.

For more information about either of our Rooted events please contact Chris, the Children's and Families Pastor on 07855389998 or email chris.stmichaels@gmail.com

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Thanks to all those who turned out for the AGM. They were treated to a fascinating talk by Vaughan Ward on the "Long March" undertaken by allied Prisoners of War in 1945 and its modern recreation by RAF members, including Vaughan himself.

The snow I discussed last month has long gone, replaced by rain that has seemed almost endless. As is normal for this time of year, this has left the Common as a bit of a quagmire, but the mild temperatures that accompany it have already triggered spring-like behaviour in nature. Most animals are pretty waterproof, but frogs especially so, and we've had to cease our winter maintenance work on the dew ponds in the Common because the frogs have already returned and are 'singing' away – this is over a week earlier than I've spotted them before.

Robins are one of the few songbirds that continue to sing through the darkest days of winter, but they've now been joined by their drabber cousins, the Dunnocks. Song Thrushes are making their repeated calls at first light and Skylarks are singing from the heavens on warmer days (a welcome return after a steep fall in their numbers). Great Spotted Woodpeckers can also be heard drumming (indeed, I heard my first in early January). If you hear a prolonged drumming (lasting more than a couple of seconds), this may be a much rarer Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. If you can catch sight of one, their markings

are quite similar to their larger cousins, but with a red cap similar to that of the juvenile GSW – however, the most obvious difference is in their size, about that of a sparrow, rather than a blackbird.

Walks

Our monthly walks – a shorter walk (about an hour) led by Chris Miller at 10:30am on the first Wednesday of each month; and a longer walk (roughly 2 hours) led by Ron Collins at 9:25am on the third Monday – continue to be popular.

FoNC Working Parties

If you wish to join in with either of our weekly working parties, on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, our web site (where our walking and other activities are also listed) has all the contact details:

<http://www.naphillcommon.org.uk/activities.html>

Because both working parties are dependent on the weather, it's always best to check with the organisers before setting off: Tuesdays – Peter Davis (HW 569303); Thursdays – Ron Collins (HW 562240).

Chris Miller

Chairman of FoNC



Shear Madness

Happy Birthday to us

I can't believe that we've been in the village for 15 years, lots of changes over the years. When we first opened there were two of us, myself and Lynn, actually the shop was her idea, she'd moved to a different barbers so I thought we were having a catching up with each other but no she suddenly announced "I've found a Shop" I didn't even know where Walters Ash and Naphill were ! She sadly died in 2014 after a short illness. So then it was just left to me to keep it going. Lots of customers have come and gone over the years and sadly I've recently lost our dear Keith Silver, my oldest customer who managed to get to his 99th birthday, always smiling and he had a naughty streak.

Today it's still myself and Dawn our ladies hairdresser but we now have Hannah our nail tech so lots of reasons to keep on going.

So this is really a shout out to all our loyal customers, many who have become great friends "My Hairy Family"

Take care

love as always

Mandy x





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2026 has not brought the breath of fresh air we all hope for in a new year. The Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority continue to persist with their proposed cuts to Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, seeing multiple fire stations close and almost a third of fire engines removed from the county. These plans would reduce vital emergency cover at a time when our communities are growing and demand is increasing. I have been clear that public safety must not be compromised, and I will continue to press hard for these proposals to be reconsidered.

I have also been pushing for clear answers on the sudden cancellation of the proposed new 152-place SEND school in our area. Families were promised much-needed specialist provision, and it is simply not acceptable for such an important project to be withdrawn without transparency or a credible alternative. I am continuing to raise this directly with ministers. I am utterly infuriated to find the Government replace this £18 million single year commitment with £8 million over three years - and the

audacity of Ministers and some other local MPs trying to say we should be grateful for that is just staggering.

It is clear as anything that we need extra SEND provision here in Buckinghamshire, both in mainstream schools and specialist settings. Government is retreating from previous commitments made and it is unacceptable and unfair on the families and children who need the support.

Supporting our local businesses also remains just as important as ever. I have met with a number of hospitality businesses over recent weeks and months to hear first-hand about the pressures facing hospitality businesses - from The Lee to Butlers Cross, Ickford to Ford, Wendover to Princes Risborough - from rising costs to falling footfall the story is the same everywhere. I've raised this in Parliament and all we seem to get back from the Chancellor is taking with one hand and giving a tiny sliver back with the other. Our pubs, cafés and small businesses are the backbone of our communities, and I will keep making the case in Parliament for fairer treatment and meaningful support.

Whether it's standing up for emergency services, fighting for children with special educational needs, or backing the businesses that give our towns and villages their character, I will never stop working hard for Mid Buckinghamshire.

Greg Smith

Valley Players - Looking back and forward!

When you read this Valley Players will have had their 10th Birthday Party on 6th March.

The Pheonix like rise was the brain child of Sheelagh Jones. Sheelagh had been a member of the of an AmDram group in Hughenden Valley in the 1970s and felt that in 2016 it was time to start again. Alongside her were Judy Biggs and Diana Gibbons. Residents and friends of Sheelagh also came on board. The first production was "Dick Whittington". It actually starred a real Shetland pony! There followed two productions a year, one was our now famed Pantomime.

Now we have plenty to keep us occupied and next will be our summer Picnic and Play in June. We are presenting a quintessential summer play "The Wind in the Willows". Very appropriate for summer evenings with a picnic, especially as Kenneth Grahame lived in Cookham, where the river, countryside and buildings inspired the story. The "original" Toad Hall can be seen in Little Marlow.

Wind in the Willows



27/28 June

More details soon

Andrew Pitman, Chairman.

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Hughenden Parish Council – Update

As we move into spring, there are a few updates and notices to keep you informed about what's happening across the parish.

Annual Parish Meeting – Save the Date

We warmly invite all residents to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 5th May, which will be held at Great Kingshill Village Hall. This is an important annual opportunity for the community to hear about the Council's work, raise local issues, and meet your parish councillors. Further details will be shared closer to the time.

Allotment Plots Available

If you've been thinking about growing your own fruit, vegetables, or flowers, now is a great time to get involved. Plots are currently available at all our allotment sites across the parish.

To enquire or join the waiting list, please contact our Burials & Allotment Officer at: baofficer@hughenden-pc.gov.uk

New Areas at Four Ashes Garden of Rest

We're pleased to share that a new designated area for the under lawn pouring of ashes has been created at Four Ashes Garden of Rest. This offers families an alternative memorial option within a peaceful and well maintained setting.

In addition, a new memorial plaques area has been established inside the Book of Remembrance room. These plaques offer a meaningful way to commemorate loved ones including those who are not buried or interred at Four Ashes. Plaques are purchased through the Parish Council and installed by our team. Guidance and application information are available from the Council office.

Community Speed Watch – Volunteers Needed

Speeding remains one of the most frequently raised concerns in our villages. Community Speed Watch (CSW) helps address this by involving local volunteers in monitoring speeds and promoting safer driving.

If you can spare some time and would like to support road safety in your community, please get in touch by emailing speedwatch@thamesvalley.police.uk or visit thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-speedwatch/

Training is provided by Thames Valley Police, and volunteers play a valuable role in keeping our roads safe.

Get Involved

Your involvement matters! Share your ideas and views with your ward Councillors and attend Council and Committee meetings. You can also contact the Parish Office directly at admin@hughenden-pc.gov.uk or visit our website at <http://www.hughenden-pc.gov.uk>.

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Cllr Richard Wilding – richard.wilding@hughenden-pc.gov.uk

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4th March	Members show their work
11th March	Digital workshop
18th March	Themed assignment – 'The Every Day Made Strange'
25th March	Workshop – theme tbc – Small Hall
1st April	New members evening – all welcome. Come and see what we do.
8th April	No meeting
15th April	Themed assignment – 'Out of Place'

To see everything that is happening at Wycombe Photographic Society please visit our website at: -
www.wycombephotographicsociety.org.uk

Peter Davis

Membership Secretary

Wycombe Photographic Society



Photograph courtesy Peter Davis



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Anyone for Tennis? Our Junior Editor visits NLTC...

Naphill Lawn Tennis Club: the beating heart of sport in the village, where young people flock to train, play and develop. This month, I decided to find out just how this thriving community operates, as well as how it connects with other clubs in the area. To do this, I spoke to a well-versed player – James – who helped me to further my understanding of the club and learn how those interested can get involved.

Founded in 1921, the club has proved itself an excellent social hub for the residents, providing opportunity for new and experienced players alike. In the 1950s, it even included carnival dances held in the village hall, led by president Dr E. Bayley! These spectacles are still occasionally held to this day, most recently on the 31st of January, featuring the chairman – Robin Copper – on drums with his band, Red and Grey. The club enjoyed great success over the years and replaced their hard courts with Tiger turf (a professional synthetic turf for tennis) in 2016, allowing the beloved matches to be held year-round, and training to continue in the face of the unforgiving nature of British weather! The latest improvement to the club was in 2024, with floodlights being placed around the courts, helping visibility and comfort during dark winters and late training nights.

Naphill tennis club's men's teams include the first and second teams. The first men's team was the only team for players for around 40-50 years. However, a spike in popularity caused numbers to surge, therefore creating demand for a second team, in which players like James play their tennis and thrive. This team was feared by opponents and went by the name of "Rally Cats," before rebranding to the Bagel Boys in recent times. This is the team that James plays in, and also the very same that has inspired him throughout his tennis career. These teams play in the Bucks Babolat Shield, as well as the Aylesbury District League (played in by men), and finally the Farnham Common Winter League (Mixed). The first team plays around mid-division, and the second team is fiercely battling its way up from the lower ranks. The youngest teams span all the way back to age 10, making an inclusive and diverse range of players. There are even

players of 94 – although training is mainly attended for biscuits at this age! The more active seniors are aged around 86.

With younger years – especially secondary and university students – workload is often a concern before beginning the endeavour of a new sport. Nonetheless, it is always key to embrace the sport, while prioritising work sensibly. For James, homework or revision is always done early in the week or the night it is set, "clearing time for dedicated play later in the week." Even with the highest demand of training, it is always manageable with care and dedication.

For James, playing tennis comes with many beneficial aspects, including an "improved hand-eye coordination with increased practice." For many tennis players, it acts as a key source of cardio, which can also support other sporting activities such as athletics which also focus on such elements, as well as overall improving tennis gameplay, like sprinting towards the ball. However, outside the physical areas, there is the socialising. "The club's community is extremely friendly and full of banter and jokes, creating the perfect environment for newcomers!"

So why support or join the club? It's always a fulfilling feeling to support teams in the area. Especially in the Naphill club, all members are welcomed with open arms and are guaranteed to progress along with a fellow player. Match play is consistently invigorating and intense, filled with nail-biting comebacks and great winning shots, just like Wimbledon – though an added coffee break is always included here! If you want to cheer on the Bagel Boys, look out for dates of matches on the website! It is always thoroughly appreciated and encouraged!

Overall, a wide age range and highly competitive and welcoming atmosphere makes the perfect space for learning or growing in the game, regardless of prior experience!

Huge thanks to James, without whom the article wouldn't have been possible.

Matilda Waters - Junior editor



Naphill Tennis Club

Rain, rain and more rain.... Ugh!!! Tennis might have gone on the back-burner in January/February but instead members enjoyed the music scene with the Tennis Club's Charity Music Night held in the village hall on 31st January. It was a great evening with some of the money raised going towards Tennis Club funds and £500 going to Cancer Research UK. *see photos above*

Hopefully, brighter days are ahead and we can all be back on the courts once more. In addition to our regular Monday morning group coaching and usual club sessions, we have the following to offer to everyone in the community:

TEENAGER TENNIS on Fridays 17.30 – 18.30 on 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th March.

Total cost: £32 members and £48 non-members

JUNIOR SUMMER COACHING a 10 week programme Friday 17th April – Friday 3rd July.

2 groups 16.45 – 17.30 and 17.30 – 18.30.

FREE-TO-ATTEND "FUN" TENNIS on Sunday 19th April at 2 pm for youngsters who haven't played before and might be interested. Balls and racquets provided.

6 WEEK XPRESS TENNIS COURSE for adults. Mondays 18.30 – 19.30 from 1st June – 6th July.

Do come and try out your village tennis club for good fun, good exercise and camaraderie. Our two coaches, Mel and Bees, provide some very enjoyable instruction to get you into the swing of things!

Jenny Tench

For further information on Naphill Tennis Club please visit our website: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/NaphillLTC or get in touch with our membership secretary at: naphilltennismembership@gmail.com



Bon Ami
at the Pavilion



We have had a very busy start to the year. It has been lovely to see so many regular customers and some new faces, all braving the wet and muddy conditions to join us at the Coffee Shop.

Unfortunately, we are going to be closed for the week beginning Monday 9th March and will reopen on Monday 16th March. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but we have some maintenance issues to address.

Best Wishes Ruth, Dorothy, Jackie, Rachel, Tracey, Ciara and Ella.

Our opening hours for March

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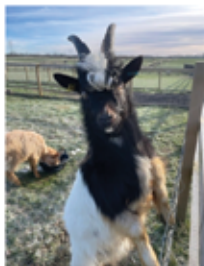
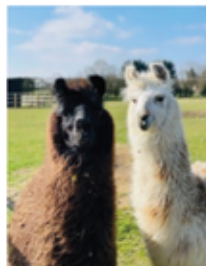
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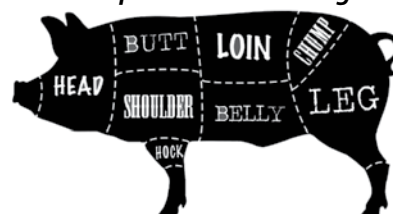
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Medical information, ready when it matters

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Location sharing for reassurance

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useful when walking alone, travelling, or simply letting someone know you've arrived safely — without needing to message.

Advanced Mobile Location Sending

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A small but important habit: battery awareness

Keeping a little charge in reserve — and knowing where Low Power Mode lives in your settings — matters far more than most apps. A phone that stays on is a phone that can help.

You don't need to set everything up at once. Even enabling one or two of these features can turn your phone into a quiet safety net you'll hopefully never need — but will be glad is there.

Part 2 next month: Discovering the World Around You

Chris Dadd

Chris also runs DADD.TV, where he helps local businesses and charities with websites and digital marketing.

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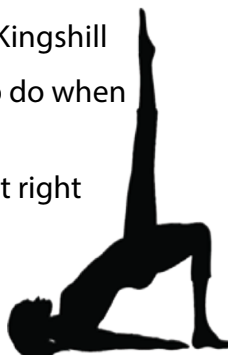
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Not from the Vicarage - *Marching on*

2026 is moving on apace, Marching on, as we enter the third month. Old weather lore has March 'arriving like a lion and leaving like a lamb'. The images used to illustrate the move from stormy to calmer weather throughout this month mirror the Christian images which also abound at this time of year.

March has always felt like a month of quiet transformation — a bridge between the lingering chill of winter and the tentative warmth of spring. It holds within its days the Spring Equinox and carries a sense of anticipation, as though the world is holding its breath, waiting for the full bloom of life to return. The early days of the month often still bear winter's mark: frosty mornings, bare branches and pale skies. Yet, there's a subtle shift in the air — a clean brightness in the light, a longer stretch of day, and the first signs of green pushing through the soil.

Sometimes March can be a time for recalibration. The year is no longer new, yet it's still young enough to reshape intentions and adjust course. Resolutions made in January may have faltered, but March offers an opportunity to begin again. The season of Lent, which is now in full swing, may offer us this chance.

In many cultures, March is tied to themes of rebirth and growth with festivals, equinox celebrations, and

seasonal traditions. Hindus celebrate the arrival of spring with the vibrant festival of Holi. Celebrated in India and amongst Hindu populations in other countries, it not only marks the arrival of spring but also the victory of good over evil. The word vibrant is well-used as a descriptor since it involves throwing coloured powders amid singing and dancing at festive gatherings.

In Mexico, the spring equinox is marked at the Kukulkan Pyramid by Chichen Itza, where returning sunlight creates the illusion of a serpent descending the pyramid's 365xsteps, symbolizing the return of the feathered serpent god. The fact that the serpent appears at both Equinoxes is testament to the Mayan civilization's knowledge and use of astronomy.

In Japan, the arrival of spring is celebrated with cherry blossom festivals, where people gather for picnics under blooming trees, enjoying the beauty of nature and the fleeting nature of life. The Japanese name for cherry blossom is Sakura – I'm betting it's the one Japanese word we all know from the packaging on boxes of oil pastels much beloved by school art teachers.

March's Equinox celebrations in our hemisphere are rich in cultural significance and diverse in practice, but they all mirror the ancient tradition of celebrating rebirth and the return of the sun after the dark days of winter.

In the Christian walk, spring can be seen as a symbolic season of renewal, hope, and forward movement in faith. It is a time when nature itself preaches a sermon: what was once dormant begins to stir, and what seemed lifeless begins to bloom again. Nature's transformation in March preaches the sermon of Christ's resurrection, which we will fully celebrate in early April at Easter.

May you know God's special blessing this month and always

Rev Jenny Ellis



Our monthly lunches continue on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, but in February we had a temporary change of venue to the Black Horse in Lacey Green due to the temporary closure of the Spindle and Thread for their revamp.

In March we'll be back at the Spindle and Thread for lunch on the 18th at 12 noon for 12.30pm. Please contact Susan a few days before if you're planning to come.

Our Social Afternoons take place on the 4th Monday afternoon each month, 2 till 4pm, although in January and February we've been finishing at the earlier time of 3.30pm.

We meet in the back room of Bon Ami for table games. All are welcome, so why not join us over a cuppa and cake on the 23rd March when we'll be back to our usual time of 2-4pm - no need to book.

Susan Bickerstaffe

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Naphill & Walter's Ash School News

Goodbye to Miss Gwynn - Our School Headteacher



Photograph courtesy Paul Goby

As you may be aware, Miss Gwynn is sadly leaving our school at the end of this term, so we have asked her a few questions about her time here. We are all very sad to see her go, but we will embrace the memories that we have of her time with us at NWAS.

Q: If you had not become a Headteacher, what job would you have chosen?

A: I have no idea what job I would have done, I always said I never wanted to be a teacher as my mum was one! However, she did point out I enjoyed sport and often helped at her school with swimming etc. So why not do PE? (I hate to admit it, but she was right!). If I could wind the clock back and had I been better at science and maths I would have loved to have been a vet or worked with animals.

Q: What will you miss the most about this job?

A: The children! Talking to them in the dining room, taking them for football, giving assemblies, going to Rhos, all those things are the best part of the job. I have worn many hats and have continued to learn new things. Last year I became very acquainted with the drains around the school, I can test emergency lights, use a probe to test for Legionnaires disease and unblock toilets, I'm quite good with a plunger!

Q: What will you not miss?

A: Paperwork, Ofsted, Health and Safety training, Government reviews and having to write letters about parking!

Q: What do you think makes NWAS so special?

A: The children and staff, I have been very lucky to have had good people around to support me in my job.

Q: How has your job changed during your time being a headteacher?

A: Paperwork has increased, the money available to schools has decreased and demands on the budget

have grown. There is less specialist support available for children and families and as a result, schools are having to do more and more with less money. Social media also causes issues – children didn't have phones when I started teaching all those years ago – life was easier without them!

Q: Do you have any stand out memories during your time here?

A: The football victories, particularly winning the boys' and girls' leagues last year, the girls' cup last year and the boys' cup in 2019, which was the first time NWAS had won the cup. There have been too many productions to pick out a single memory but there have been many brilliant performances. The last Ofsted report, as it showed how much hard work everyone here had done. Rhos has always been enjoyable - we nearly got snowed in one year, I've watched shorts float away in the lake, tied hundreds of shoelaces and I still don't eat the soup!

Q: What inspired you to become a headteacher?

A: I would not say I was inspired as such, but the longer I taught, the more I realised I wanted the responsibility as I could then have more influence over decisions in school. Eventually it became the natural next step, it felt right, and I was lucky for it to be here at Naphill and Walters Ash School.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: Back in the day, I did a B.Ed (Hons) with primary PE as my specialism. As I ease into my retirement I have always wanted to study history but am not keen on writing essays! I have seen some online art history courses so I may do some of those next.

Q: What was your dream job as a child?

A: A professional footballer for Ipswich Town! What else?

Q: Can you sum up your time here in one sentence?

A: I can't sum up my time here in one sentence, it would be a very long sentence!

We all wish Miss Gwynn well in whatever she goes on to do next. We will all miss her but we are grateful for the life skills she has taught – as well as the top football coaching, of course!

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When we came to Naphill in 1973 I was able to obtain an allotment right away since only about half the plots at Walter's Ash were being worked. My plot was completely overgrown, mostly by couch grass, and it took me about 3 years to bring it all under cultivation. I had two principal reasons for taking on an allotment, my interest in gardening and the need to feed my family (we had three hungry children). All vegetables for the year were "free" as was about half our fruit. So we ate a lot of vegetables and fruit. As it transpires, that was a very healthy diet, but one brought on by necessity rather than a desire to have a particular diet. Now, in 2026, the scene has changed. One is battered by TV programmes on "What Not to Eat", where the modern diet of fast food, sugar, salt and fat is castigated.

After 50 years I had to give up my allotment (the weeds were growing faster than I could deal with them) but I have continued to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden. Not in the quantities I was able to grow on the allotment of course but important nevertheless. Throughout the 50 years we ate healthily because that is how we started. Now, people are taking appetite-suppressing drugs in order to do something about their excess weight. How the world has changed. What is needed is a return to "Growing Your Own" in your garden or allotment.

The Parish Council have a statutory duty to provide allotments to those who need them. In Naphill and Walter's Ash we have the allotments at Louches Lane and at the top of Clappins Lane. They are usually fully tenanted with short waiting lists. In theory, if six residents demand an allotment then the Parish Council would have to provide more allotment gardens. But

I said "in theory" since there is very little land left in Naphill and Walter's Ash to create new allotment gardens, and demolishing houses to create allotments would be unthinkable.

The present allotments were created on 4th August 1862 by the Inclosure Commissioners, who gave the land in trust as "Allotments for the Labouring Poor". The Naphill allotments were Field 55 and the Walter's Ash allotments were Field 129. The initial trustees of the charity were the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, part of Hughenden Church which carried out local administration in those days. In 1894 parish, town and district councils were created and Hughenden Parish Council took over as trustees of the charity. The charity now has independent trustees and has been renamed "Hughenden Community Support Trust". The charity has leased the allotments to Hughenden Parish Council for 99 years so that the Council can carry out its statutory responsibilities.

So, you have a possibility of an allotment to supplement what you can grow in your garden. Grow your own, eat healthily. Go for it!

Good gardening!

Mike Mason



If you wish to become an allotment tenant, please contact the parish council office for more information.

Tel: 01494 715296

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CLASSICS



ON THE CRICK

Naphill - 7th June 2026

Classics on the Crick 2026

A summer favourite is back
again at the Crick!

Taking place on Sunday 7th June 2026, Naphill's own popular classic car show promises another spectacular day of chrome, craftsmanship and community spirit as we once again raise money for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

A Celebration of Motoring Heritage, visitors can expect a diverse display of vehicles spanning all decades of motoring history from the early 1900's to the latest supercars.

After 15 years, the show has established itself as one of the premier classic cars shows in Buckinghamshire with owners attending from all over the region.

In addition to 500 cars and bikes, we shall have a selection of great food outlets, a fully stocked bar and lots of retail stalls.

There will be live music throughout the day. This year we shall be joined by local band Obviously Aliens and our favourite Elvis impersonator, G-Elvis.

If you have a Classic car, bike, van, scooter, commercial, trike or even a tractor that you would like to bring along, you can now enter your vehicle at our website;

classicsonthecrick.co.uk

Due to the popularity of the show, all cars and commercials must be entered in advance.

Spaces are expected to fill quickly based upon previous strong turnouts, so early registration is encouraged.

The show will open to the public at 10am and will finish at approximately 4pm. Public entry tickets will be available on the gate or again via the website a few weeks before the event.

If you have any questions about the event, please contact classicsonthecrick@gmail.com.

Finally, we are always looking for volunteers to help at the event. If you can spare a few hours on Sunday the 7th June, again please send us an email. No previous experience required, all welcome!

All profits from the event go directly to the Thames Valley Ambulance, so it's an opportunity to contribute to this essential charity.

The Classics on the Crick Team



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Opening Hours

Drinks

Tuesday - Saturday:
12pm - 11pm

Sunday:
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(Bank Holiday Mondays)
12pm - 8pm

Food

Tuesday - Saturday
12pm - 2:30pm then 6pm - 9pm

Sunday
12pm - 3:30pm

(Bank Holiday Mondays)
12pm - 3:30pm

Last food orders are 15 minutes before the advertised closing times.

The Wheel, Main Road, Naphill, Buckinghamshire, HP14 4QA Email: contact@thewheelnaphill.com Tel: 01494 562 210

The Wheel News

By the time you all read this hopefully spring will be properly on its way, the weather will be better and the nights longer (here's hoping for less mud and rain)! The start of 2026 has still seen the support of so many of you and it has helped keep us sane on these long, damp, dark nights. Thank you to everyone who have ventured out.

I would like to thank Julia for helping with the kitchen over the last 2 months while we have been looking for a new chef. Julia and I have been on full chef duties and the staff have done amazingly out on the bar. We are still doing our homemade specials and have Pie Week coming up 3rd March – 8th March. Sunday March 15th is Mothering Sunday one of the busiest food days of the year, so please remember to book your tables early. We do two sittings one at 12.30pm and then at 2.30pm so we can accommodate you all.

We had our first TWOOG's lunch in January which was such a lovely day. We really hope that everyone who came along enjoyed themselves and that it helped with the long dark damp days that we are all dealing with. February's TWOOG's will also have been and gone, so we hope a few more have joined

us. The next TWOOG's is Sunday 29th March at 2pm, please remember to book.

The Six Nations rugby has been well supported as usual, and we still have more games to go. The sweepstake that we run is getting competitive but as always, it's been a great tournament. Just after it's all finished, we then get to celebrate St Patricks Day on the 17th March.

Thank you all very much for making the effort to support us and coming out during the miserable days we truly appreciate it.

Thanks

Claire, Mark and Team



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During the latter part of 2025 members collected children's books, drawing paper, colouring books, pens, pencils and crayons for the speaker that joined us for our meeting on 9th February 2026. Her name was Veronica Snoxell and she talked about her voluntary work over her lifetime, including teaching and a headship.

She showed us a picture of a huge box full of our contributions that was flown out to some of the most disadvantaged children in the Philippines to help with their education and development.

Veronica came to our meeting dressed in attire from the Manobo Tribe of the Philippines, from which she is descended. She is proficient in English, Cebuano and Tagalog, together with French, German and Spanish, plus Hausa - a North African language.

Her volunteering started when she was teaching at a secondary school in Claveria in the Philippines. She went on to open health clinics in rural areas of Africa, where there was previously very limited access to primary health care services.

At this point Veronica met her husband and they returned to be near his family in Great Missenden, but he was later sent back to Nigeria to work as a consultant on a plantation. Veronica joined a charity founded by American psychiatrist Elizabeth Torey, which helps those suffering with mental illness, and abandoned babies. She supported an orphanage and managed to raise money for girls, as young as 12 or even below,

who were married to much older men and suffered terrible consequences. Veronica helped fundraise for support such as specialist surgery for conditions like vesicovaginal fistula resulting from child marriage.

Veronica's mission was always to help the local population. Education was key, and she held Bazaars, made handicrafts, and cooked food to raise funds. She described herself as an 'international beggar', contacting influential companies throughout the world. Veronica was proud to be given a Chieftaincy title in recognition of her work, and was invited to Malacanang Palace by the President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. At the encouragement of her eldest daughter, Veronica wrote her memoir during the Covid pandemic.

Our donations of pens, papers, and other school supplies have just arrived in the Philippines. Veronica was so thankful to our members for their support in collecting all the necessary items for these children. We know this is only 'a tiny drop in the ocean', compared to the amazing work and fundraising she has accomplished over the years, but we were pleased we were able to help.

Our next meeting is on 9th March 2026, 1.45pm for 2pm start at Naphill Village Hall. There has been a change to our programme, and we will be shown how to make our own birthday or Easter Cards.

Jo Keattch



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Rotary is a global movement with a rich history. It was founded in 1905 by an American lawyer as a small professional group built on fellowship, friendship, and mutual support among business people. The name comes from its earliest days, when meetings were held in rotation at members' offices. Today, Rotary has grown into a truly worldwide force for good. With around 46,000 clubs in over 200 countries and approximately 1.4 million members, it has evolved far beyond its professional roots. Its modern vision is to create lasting, positive change in communities locally and worldwide. Its most famous achievement is its leading role in the near eradication of polio globally, one of the greatest public health successes in history. Alongside this, it continues to work tirelessly in areas such as disease prevention, education, and community development.

We are proud to be part of this global organisation, and we support national and international Rotary projects, but our main focus has always been close to home. serving the people of Princes Risborough and surrounding area. We are especially proud of our work with young people and the elderly. Our support extends to the town's Youth Club, numerous primary schools, Princes Risborough Secondary School, and the Royal Grammar School. We also have links with the Princes Centre, a day-care centre for older residents. In fact, our

club was instrumental in its creation and continues to play a major role in its success, including providing four of its Trustees.

We have around 70 members, men and women, and are delighted that our next Vice-President will be our first woman President, taking up the role in July 2027. At the heart of everything we do is friendship. We are a vibrant, welcoming group who believe that doing good should also be enjoyable. We make a real difference in our community, and we have a great time doing it. If you're looking for a meaningful way to give back, meet new people, and make new friends, we'd love to meet you. Visit our website or get in touch to join us at one of our Monday evening meetings at Whiteleaf Golf Club and see what we're about. And, if you know of any causes that could benefit from our support, please don't hesitate to get in touch using the contact details below. Together, we can continue making a real difference!

You can contact us at: rcpr.org.uk or use the QR code below: or contact David White on 07787 750889 - email: dwhite2025@hotmail.com

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This month, a roundup of our u3a Groups whose meetings take place at Naphill Village Hall.

Rummikub - 1st Monday of the month 2pm

Why not come along on the first Monday of the month to Bon Ami (at Naphill VH) to have fun playing one of the Nation's favourite games. We welcome both beginners and more experienced players.

Art Group - 1st Wednesday of the month 9.30am

This Group offers members the opportunity to paint in various mediums. In a recent meeting, some Van Gogh black and white drawings were supplied and the task was to reimagine them in colour. This challenging task was greeted with enthusiasm. Every year the Art Group has a session outside. In August 2025 we met on West Wycombe Hill and sketched/painted whatever took our fancy.

Computer Group - 1st Thursday of the month 10am

Following on from a wonderful humorous look at computers at the Christmas meeting which included sampling Angelika's wonderful homemade stollen, the Group recently discussed artificial intelligence.

Quiz Group - 1st Thursday of the month 2pm

This is a friendly group of around twenty people of varying skill levels. Teams are formed randomly to ensure all the best players do not always get into the same team! It is a fun afternoon and usually you can expect to learn something. If you think you would like to join, get in touch or just turn up

on the first Thursday of the month and we will be pleased to see you.

Discovering Art - 2nd Wednesday of the month 2pm

Meetings include illustrated presentations covering all aspects of art. They are often by group members, with some visiting speakers and videos. Our most recent session was by Christa Webber on 'How Textiles moved from Handicraft to High Art.' For most of us this was a totally new area of art to discover, and Christa guided us through a wide range of stunning works, from the Bayeux tapestry to the gigantic installations at the Tate Modern by Abakanowicz of different fabrics including discarded ropes. We usually have a trip to an arts related venue in June.

Whist - 3rd Thursday of the month 2pm

Our numbers have continued to grow steadily, and we are making every effort to ensure newcomers stay with us. It would be wonderful if we could attract even more! You do not need to have played before as our regular members are only too happy to show you. Strangely, the ladies win most prizes at each meeting. Do we need more men to challenge them? With Spring approaching, this is a thought worth considering!

All our u3a groups in halls or private homes have brilliantly interesting programmes. For further information, please contact Paul Gilliam gilliamph@aol.com or visit <https://highwycombe.u3asite.uk> or Facebook pages.

Paul Gilliam



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A special mention this month to a reader who got in touch after my roundup of baby and toddler classes to tell me about Tiny Tots at St Michael's. This is a group for babies and under 5's who meet on Thursday mornings in term time, 9.30am - 11.30am in the North Room at Hughenden church. There are hot drinks for the parents, toys for the little ones and the session ends with some songs. Everyone is welcome, and it is already attended by some Naphill residents. Thank you to the organiser (also a Gazette distributor!) for sending me the details to share here.

At the time of writing we are still in the doldrums of the everlasting rain, and the thought that March may bring a glimmer of Spring sunshine is very cheering. Embracing the puddles and mud as their own form of fun can be a way to get through the wet weather, but I for one am looking forward to being able to enjoy being outdoors without the constant damp.

When March and April bring the warmer weather, I am usually filled with good intentions of trying to get my kids more involved in the garden. When I read the very entertaining 'Growing Your Own' column in this magazine, I am always so impressed at the depth of knowledge and expertise of our community, and inspired to do more in our own garden. Then I remember that we just about managed a couple of bean plants and a few potatoes last year, and it's actually quite difficult to find the time to invest. But the benefits of getting children involved in growing their own fruit and veg are self-evident, and the kids LOVED the potatoes in particular. The beans went in under the watchful eye of their grandfather so it was a true family affair.

Perhaps every year I can add one or two crops to our list. In this green-fingered mentality, I found a couple of blogs and resources for easy guides to what to do in the garden now that will appeal to the little ones. 'What to grow with children in March and April' on the website gardeningforkids.co.uk and 'What seeds should I plant in March' on twinkl.co.uk are full of useful info for the mildly-green-fingered-but-not-really-experts among us. Last year it was beans and potatoes, this year maybe we'll add carrots and peas. Before you know it we'll have a family allotment...

Harriet Clark

Assistant Editor

THE NAPHILL AND WALTERS ASH GAZETTE

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Naphill and Hughenden Scouts

By the time you read this Christmas and New Year will be a distant memory but the Scouts had a busy schedule of activities leading up to Christmas. This included making advent decorations and minced pieces, and culminated in the annual carol concert at Hughenden Church, with each group presenting in turn for the parents.

The short days and dark evenings have not prevented more adventurous activities like trampolining, click and climb, visits to PACCAR adventure centre, as well as activities at the Scout huts in Naphill and Speen such as pancake making for Shrove Tuesday.

The calendar is already filling up for 2026 with plans in place for two group camps and another group hike. As well as the Scout troop, the two Beaver colonies and two Cub are also building their own individual programmes to keep everyone occupied.

There has been a change in leadership with Tony Bobbin taking on the role of group lead volunteer

from John Huddleston. Many thanks to John for keeping the group operating over the past couple of years. We also welcome Keri Alvarez as a cub leader for the Monday pack.

Naphill and Hughenden are the largest Scout Group in the district with over one hundred young people regularly taking part and others wanting to join. We look forward to continue growing and offering our young people the opportunity to join Scouts and enjoy similar experiences, but in order to do so we need more adult leaders and volunteers to join us. Not only is this great for our young people but also enjoyable, rewarding and a chance to do new things and make new friends. If you have children who would like join Scouts or you would like to join the volunteer team then please reach out to: groupleader@naphillscouts.org.uk

Martin Beddows

ASL and QM Naphill and Hughenden Scouts

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Paws, Pause & Sniff

It can be frustrating when you're short on time or battling poor weather and your dog insists on stopping to sniff every few steps during a walk. But have you ever stopped to think about why dogs do this?

Dogs experience the world primarily through their sense of smell — in ways we can hardly imagine. Allowing them time to sniff and explore helps them gather information, much like catching up on the local news. Sniffing isn't just informative; it can also be calming and mentally enriching for your dog.

Many things can cause stress in dogs, including changes to household routines — something many dogs have experienced in recent years — as well as visits to the vet or groomer. One effective way to reduce stress and build resilience is to vary the types of walks your dog enjoys, particularly dog-led walks. On these walks, your dog chooses the direction and sets the pace. Not only is this beneficial for them, but it can also encourage us to slow down and enjoy a more relaxed stroll.

Tips for successful dog-led walks:

- Time: Allow extra time whenever possible so your dog can explore without pressure.
- Safe space: Choose locations that are secure and free from potential hazards.
- Treats: Bring your dog's favourite treats or toys to help with recall if they are off the lead.
- Long line or lead: If your dog's recall is unreliable, a long line allows freedom while keeping them safe.
- Stimulation: Physical exercise is important, but mental stimulation — especially using their sense of smell — is just as valuable. Dog-led walks, training, and classes all help engage your dog's mind.
- All dogs welcome: Dogs of all breeds, ages, and abilities can benefit from dog-led exercise. It's especially helpful for senior dogs, those with medical conditions, or dogs with high energy or anxiety levels.

So, what are you waiting for? Grab the lead, head outside, and enjoy some dog-led adventures together. And remember — there's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing!

Charlie Hughes



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The Art of the Insane: Joining the Arctic Convoy

What do you do when you buy a 1996 short-wheelbase Land Rover Defender 90 that has covered just 7,000 miles in 17 years — and whose air filter was last changed 24 years ago?

If you're John Hajdukiewicz of Hughenden Valley, the answer is simple: you take it to the Arctic Circle.

When John spotted a post from The Orange Defender about an organised convoy heading to the furthest navigable point north in Norway, something clearly clicked. The plan? A winter expedition from Rotterdam to Copenhagen, on to Oslo, and then north through Scandinavia to the Arctic Circle. Around 30 vehicles are taking part — mostly Land Rovers, though intriguingly a Smart car and caravan have also signed up, proving that bravery (or madness) comes in many forms.

As John calmly explained the route and logistics, one detail stood out: temperatures in Finland are currently sitting at around -32°C . At this point, I began to question his sanity.

The Defender 90, wonderful though it is, was never designed for this. There's minimal insulation, barely a heater to speak of, no bed, and all its fluids are intended for the gentle climate of the UK — not the frozen extremes of the Arctic. Participants will be living in their vehicles and sleeping in them along the way. For most of us, that's less "adventure" and more "endurance test".

So what's been done to prepare?

John has undertaken a full and meticulous service of the vehicle, replacing every fluid with Arctic-grade equivalents capable of operating well below -30°C —

diesel, coolant, oils, and windscreen wash included. The famously underwhelming Defender heater has been supplemented with a dedicated diesel heater and its own fuel tank, transforming survivability in sub-zero conditions.

The vehicle itself has been insulated with three layers of thermal material, along with proper sound insulation — a small luxury that may prove invaluable during long, dark hours on frozen roads. In a moment that will make Defender purists smile, John has even fitted a radio — a first for this particular vehicle.

Which brings us neatly to the next essential piece of preparation: the Arctic playlist. Still a work in progress, but a strong start has already been suggested:

- Led Zeppelin — Kashmir
- Rolling Stones — Gimme Shelter
- The Doors — Riders on the Storm
- Johnny Cash — God's Gonna Cut You Down
- Arctic Monkeys — Do I Wanna Know?
- Kaleo — Way Down We Go
- Queens of the Stone Age — No One Knows

John set off on Friday 30th January, and we wish him every success on what promises to be an unforgettable journey. We look forward to seeing the photographs — and proof of survival — on his return.

It's always reassuring to know that, here in our corner of Buckinghamshire, there are still people quietly getting on with extraordinary things... even if they are slightly mad.

Jonathan Hilder



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