

# Winter InDownton

**FREE**

## Tony Pike, Cuckoo Fair Founder and Chairman

Long time Chairman of the Cuckoo Fair, Tony Pike, died at his home on 11 January. He was one of the villagers who planned its regeneration in 1980. With his wife, Edna, Tony oversaw the fair as it developed from a fair centred on the Moot, to the largest free community event in the county attracting around 20,000 visitors a year.

The fair has raised over £1 million for local groups. Despite the complexity of running such a large event, Tony steered the organisation through many challenges including the aftermath of the covid pandemic and the new legal requirements to ensure the safety of so many visitors. As well as his work with the Cuckoo Fair, Tony supported and helped lead other village groups including being Chairman of the scouts, when he led the efforts to get the scout hut built. His funeral service is at 2.30pm on Wednesday 4 February at St Laurence Church, and afterwards at the Sherwood Rooms in Wick Lane. All are welcome. Donations in his memory can be made to St Laurence Church.



*Tony (above) at the Moot during the early years of the Cuckoo Fair and (below) dressed in costume*



### In this issue...

We're celebrating some exciting achievements in this issue including Hannah Porter's selection to attend the world scout jubilee (page 4) and Mark Gulliver's heroic run in aid of Young Minds (page 12) who both deserve support. And Downton Football Club are in the last 16 of the FA Vase! We've included a local walk on page 3 for the first time, and if the response is positive, we'll aim to publish more walks to build up a library to inspire us all to get out and enjoy the lovely countryside around us. Our round up of Christmas in the village in pictures is on pages 8 and 9. Finally, if it's not too late, Happy New Year from InDownton!

## DOWNTON FOOTBALL CLUB FA VASE SUCCESS

Downton Football Club have an important game coming up on 7 February. The club has reached the last 16 of the Isuzu FA Vase competition, the furthest that they have ever reached. They beat Slimbridge AFC on penalties (4-3) after the match finished without score on 17 January. The competition is for teams playing in specified lower levels of the English National League, and this year over 600 teams entered. Downton's fifth round match is at home against Essex League club, Lymore Gardens. More information from [downtonfc.co.uk](http://downtonfc.co.uk) or from FaceBook, where you can watch the penalty shoot-out which put the team into the next round.



## VALENTINE'S DANCE AT THE BLUE JAY WITH SALISBURY BIG BAND

After their packed concert at the start of the Christmas Tree Festival in December, Salisbury Big Band are returning to the village for Valentine's Day when they will be creating The Blue Jay Club, at the Memorial Hall. This will be a prohibition-era themed night of music and dance featuring singer, Damian Hayes.

There will be prizes for the best Gangster/1920s fancy dress and for the best dancer. Tickets are £20 or £140 for a table of eight which includes light refreshments. There's a licensed bar (so no prohibition here!) and a raffle in aid of the Salisbury Hospital Stars Appeal. Doors open at 7pm and the show begins at 7.30pm on Saturday 14 February.

Tickets are available online using the QR code.



*Salisbury Big Band at the Christmas Tree Festival*



## HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Horticultural society starts the year with a visit from Mike Read, a freelance nature photographer specialising in birds, flowers, mammals and other wildlife as well as landscapes. His presentation, 'Wildlife of a Working Forest' is at the Memorial Hall on Thursday 19 March at 7.30pm. Mike will be showing some of his photographs, many of which have been published commercially. He will also be bringing some small items to sell. More information about Mike from his website: [mikeread.co.uk](http://mikeread.co.uk).

April's meeting, an illustrated talk by Chelsea Gold Medallist, Darren Everest, is entitled 'Growing Sweet Peas for Showing', and will be on the afternoon of Wednesday 8th, in the Memorial Hall, at 2.30pm. More details in the next Issue.

All horticultural society events include refreshments, a raffle and a sales table. Items for the sales table are welcome.

Events are open to all, and donations are gratefully received from non-members. Annual membership of the society is £6, which enables expert speakers to be booked and contributes to venue hire and insurance.



*Early spider orchid © Mike Read, used by permission*

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## A WINTER WALK FROM DOWNTON: JUST OVER 3 MILES

Start at the Avon Valley path fingerpost near the Moot recreation ground in Moot Lane. Location: [///W3W.wound.galaxy.stirs](http://W3W.wound.galaxy.stirs)

Follow the footpath up the hill, keep a look out for the newly planted electric fence whilst the cattle munch on mangle wurzels!

Walk to the top, and turn right along the hedge, walking towards a gate. Cross over the lane and over a stile and walk down the hill, looking at the beautiful pines on your left. Its very boggy at the bottom!

Go over the stile and up a steep little hill and go over the stile, turning right to walk along a sandy path. You will soon come to Lodge Farm. Carry on down the track, looking at the beautiful folds of farmland and little pockets of trees. In the summer, adders frequent the woodland to the side of the track, but remain hidden and cosy in the winter months.

At the end of the track you will come to Moot Lane - turn right and walk along the road.

When you get to the road bridge by the sewage works, turn left down that track. To the left of the sewage works is the old railway line and Pile Bridge, through woodland. This will bring you out into Millennium Green, walk along the Avon with the willows, swans and the occasional flash of a Kingfisher.

Carry on toward the Moot along the Avon, and go through the Moot gate. Follow the paths around the Moot looking at the Snowdrops and then exit.



## DOWNTON NATURE

We're keen to promote all that's good about Downton and work is continuing to develop the "Discover Downton" website which informs visitors (and reminds locals!) about some of the great things to do locally throughout the year.

The Parish Council is now a Visit Wiltshire Partner and plans are being developed to promote the village and support local businesses. Visit [www.discover.downton.uk](http://www.discover.downton.uk) for more information and do send the newsletter any local wildlife news and special photos.

The photo of swans and signets by the river at the Millennium Green was taken by Sarah Price in January.



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## SEEDY SUNDAY 22 MARCH

Downton Green Network are holding Seedy Sunday on 22 March at the Memorial Hall, from 2 - 4pm. As well as being a chance to pick up or swap surplus seeds and plants, the event will host several stalls from eco-conscious organisations and businesses, including:

**MoreVeg** - Seeds in small quantities, meaning lower prices, and less waste. Seeds come with full organic certification: no synthetic chemicals / fertilisers; hand-tended crops; supporting soil health and bio-diversity [moreveg.co.uk](http://moreveg.co.uk).

**William Wright Tool Sharpening** - Bring your gardening tools along to keep them in tip-top condition, ready for the new gardening season

**Littleford Farm Flowers** - Specialising in natural, seasonal flowers grown locally and delivered in the local area. More details [flowers@littlefordfarm.co.uk](mailto:flowers@littlefordfarm.co.uk)

**Wildlife: what to see locally** - Information about swifts and swift boxes and what you can do to encourage these birds to nest locally

**A Tail of Yarn** - Liz Tanner, recycled yarns for weaving, knitting, crochet. Liz will be bringing some kits with her and information about her workshops.

**The Garden** - DBC's community garden, open to all to help, produces food throughout the growing season which feed into the Community Larder.

**Sculpture by Katie** - Katie uses recycled wire to sculpt into garden ornaments - hares are a speciality (see picture right)

**Children's activities** - Stone painting and seed planting



## HANNAH PORTER'S POLISH ADVENTURE

15-year-old Explorer Scout, Hannah Porter, formerly of Downton Scout Group, has been selected to attend the World Scout Jamboree in Poland next year. Hannah will need to raise funds to finance the trip and her first fundraising event will be a Quiz Night at the Sherwood Suite, Wick Lane on Saturday 28 February.

The suggested team size is 5 - 8 people and the cost is £10 per person, paid on the night. A ploughman's style supper is included, a bar will be available, and there will be a raffle, with prizes provided by local businesses, including The Goat and Downton Leisure Centre.

Hannah says, "This is an amazing opportunity, both personally and for representing our local Scouting community, but it does require a significant amount of fundraising. Attending the World Scout Jamboree is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It will allow me to develop leadership skills, learn about global issues alongside young people from all over the world, and bring those experiences back to benefit our group and the wider district."

To book a table scan the QR code. For more details, email [hajporter@icloud.com](mailto:hajporter@icloud.com) or [ian.porter@downtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:ian.porter@downtonscouts.org.uk).



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## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Could you help make 2026 the year of volunteering? The Parish always needs handy people to help keep it looking its best including footpath maintenance and lots of other jobs like sanding down and repairing our benches. Why not join the Downton Parish Council (DPC)? Help influence and make decisions for the parish.

Steve, the Parish Steward's next visit will be 11-12 February. Email Susan Parsons if you spot any jobs which are needed. DPC and Wiltshire Council are making sure the Parish is winter ready and resilient – contact DPC if you see any blocked gullies.

Traffic survey equipment is still being placed around Downton, 11 locations in total, forming evidence-based data on vehicle numbers, size and speed.

One of the gates to the Memorial Gardens is now completely off its hinges plus another one also needs attention – DPC is obtaining a quote for the work.

If you experience anti-social behaviour or any crime or disturbance, the DPC has emphasised how important it is to report it to the local Police. The Police do not respond to crimes reported on Facebook. In an emergency always dial 999 if: there is an immediate danger to life, someone is using violence or is threatening to be violent, a crime is happening right now, like a house burglary or a theft, the suspect is still at the scene. If the problem is a non-emergency, dial 101: for example, if you are experiencing anti-social behaviour, door knocking etc.

The local PC is Marc Evans, and our local police can be reached through dialling 101, or his mobile 07876 817927 which is active when PC Evans is on duty.

The Parish Council meetings are held on the second Monday of the month in the Bonvalot Room in the Downton Memorial Centre. Meetings start at 7pm. There is always a public question time at the beginning of the meeting, so do come along and have your say. It is our Parish after all!

Susan Parsons is the Administrative Officer and Tree Warden for the Parish Council. She can be contacted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 07483 344035 [admin@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## TELEPHONE BOX PURCHASED FOR THE VILLAGE

The Parish Council has purchased the disused telephone box next to the library. Its an example of one of the iconic model K6 kiosks designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the coronation of King George V in 1935. Over 60,000 were installed around the country and around 11,000 remain. DPC are deciding on its future use shortly.



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## DOWNTON BEGINNERS BRASS

If you or your children want to learn to play a brass or percussion instrument, Downton Beginners Brass offers everyone the opportunity with lots of fun along the way. They provide tuition, music and expertise and will even lend you an instrument. It's designed for people who wish to start playing and no musical experience is necessary. It is also ideal if looking to pick up after a break, or to try a new instrument. People of any age are welcome and they particularly encourage families to learn together.

Rehearsals are Tuesdays during term time, 6.15-7.15pm for complete beginners upwards! The cost is £1 per week, which includes tuition, instrument loan and music.

If you already play a brass or percussion instrument, can read music and play independently (approximate grade 1 standard or above), then Downton Training Band is seeking new players, especially cornets/trumpets. Rehearsals are Wednesdays during term time 6.15-7.15pm and cost is also £1 a week.

Email [downtonband@gmail.com](mailto:downtonband@gmail.com) for information and to join Beginners Brass or the Training Band.

## THE LOVER VALENTINE POST IS ONLINE

The Lover Community Trust's famous Valentine Post Online Shop set a new record in first week sales this year. Cards are sent around the world with the iconic Lover post mark in support of the community trust which owns and runs the Old School community building. The post office closed in 2008 but the Valentine's Day service was transformed in 2015 to what it is today, a pop-up Post Office to keep the village's reputation as the most romantic village in the UK. The supply of some of the cards is already limited. The Darling Cafe alongside the Pop-Up Post Office opens between 7th - 14th Feb from 10am-4pm, where the local bakers bring their confections to sell whilst visitors purchase and post cards all adorned with the new artist designed heart sticker and cachet stamp. For more details and to order cards go to [lover.org.uk](http://lover.org.uk).




*The Darling pop-up cafe*

## BOOK FAIR PLUS AT WOODFALLS METHODIST CHURCH

Woodfalls Methodist Church are holding a "BookFair plus" on Friday 20 and Saturday 21 February 10am - 5pm at the church. As well as books, there will be DVDs, games and CDs for sale. Refreshments will be available.

## TALKABOUT

At TalkAbout on Thursday 5 February at Woodfalls Methodist Hall, The Ridge, 10 for 10:30 am, Richard Hutley will be posing the question: "Who Shot JFK?" According to the billing: "There are many questions still unanswered, and serious doubts about some of the official answers already on file. Join us to hear a sideways view." Admission: £4, includes tea/coffee and biscuits. Call 07760 224990 for more information.



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## DOWNTON DOWNTIME

Downton Downtime is a weekly gathering for people living with dementia, their carers, older adults, and others seeking social and creative activities. It takes place during term time every Tuesday from 10:15am to 12pm at Downton Baptist Church, South Lane.

The sessions provide opportunities to meet others, share experiences, and take part in a range of activities. These include music, gentle movement, crafts, games, puzzles, and creative activities, which are intended to support wellbeing and engagement.

Carers are welcome to attend and participate or spend time with others in similar situations. Doors open at 10am with refreshments available. Each session begins with time for conversation before moving on to planned activities. Some weeks include sessions such as Move & Make Music with Sounds Better CIC, while others focus on different activities.

Participation is optional, and attendees may choose to take part in activities or observe. Volunteers and facilitators are present to provide assistance and guidance. Sessions end at approximately 12pm.

For more information, contact [jackieb@beyonddementia.org.uk](mailto:jackieb@beyonddementia.org.uk), or turn up on the day.



## RAY AVERY, CHARITY CARS OWNER & CHAUFFEUR

Ray Avery, who restored, maintained and chauffeured the charity cars in aid of Downton4Family, died suddenly on 21 January. He founded the family vehicle servicing and repair business and was a stalwart of Downton Baptist Church. He supported the newsletter from its earliest days using it to advertise his business.

After retiring from running R D Avery, he continued to enjoy working on cars and offered to use his small fleet of classic cars for events including weddings and proms to provide a glamorous mode of transport and raise funds for the Downton4Family charity.



*Ray with Daisy, one of his cars*

## VERONICA TAKES CHARGE

Veronica Batchelor will be licensed as the Team Rector of the Forest and Avon Team on 4 February at St.Birinus Church, Morgans Vale at 7pm.

This is the lead clergy role of the Forest and Avon Team of Churches, of which St.Laurence is a part. There will be a vacancy for a Team vicar but meanwhile the Forest and Avon Team are also grateful for the wider ministry of retired vicars and others within the Team who lead worship and provide ministry and care in other contexts in our community.



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## CHRISTMAS IN DOWNTON 2025

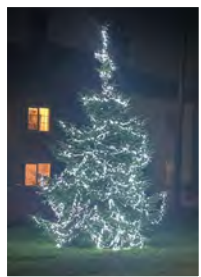
The first weekend in December was packed with Christmas events in Downton. It was a special festive period, which the windy and wet weather didn't stop!



*Selling Christmas Trees in aid of The Moot*



*Primary School Christmas Fair was very busy and very warm!*



*The Christmas Tree light switch on was cancelled but it still lit up The Borough*



*Salisbury Big Band played to a packed concert at St Laurence Church*



*Downton Brewery's Christmas Craft Fair*



*Despite the weather, members of Beginners Brass, Training Band and Downton Band were out carolling around the village throughout December. The bands played in Salisbury, Charlton-all-Saints and Downton, culminating in a very well-attended Christmas Concert with Downton Community Choir in St. Laurence Church. Christmas is a vital time for fundraising, and the generosity of the people of Downton and beyond funds the bands all year round. This year they raised over £3300 which will go towards music & instruments for all the bands, insurance, band hall upkeep and much more.*



### MEET THE DOWNTON FREEMASONS

**About the Freemasons**

We are a members' organisation which has thrived for over 300 years.

We have no political connections, we have members of all ages, races, religions, cultures and backgrounds.

Freemasons have met in Downton for over 30 years and currently meet at the Downton Football Club.

[L9064@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk](mailto:L9064@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk)

[wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk](http://wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk)

**Our Principles**

Integrity  
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Service



*Christmas Tree Festival entertainment with DADA under the musical direction of Liz Weager, Downton Beginners Band and Downton Community Choir*



*Before Christmas, Trafalgar School's choristers joined others for a Christmas celebration in Salisbury Cathedral. Trafalgar students were proud to represent their school at such a prestigious venue, with many describing the experience as "unforgettable". A group of students also sang at the village carol service. They reported feeling proud to be a part of this local tradition.*



*Students at Trafalgar were invited to make Christmas cards for residents at Ashley Grange Nursing Home. Pictured are residents and staff from the care home along with Baptist Minister, Katy Ulliyatt - and Chaplain Harry with the students, delivering the cards in person.*

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## REPAIR CAFE

Don't forget that you can visit the Repair Cafe on the first Saturday of each month at Downton Baptist church between 10am and 12pm. Up-coming dates are 7 February and 7 March. The team has experts who can repair furniture, ceramics, electrical goods, clothing, books & old treasures. A team spokes person says, "Now could be your ideal time to sort out those broken items you wanted to keep. We are here to help with any item you can bring us."

The team recently repaired an old wall barometer - replacing the octagonal glass, restoring the delicate internal workings and revitalising the casing.

More information from [downtonrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:downtonrepaircafe@gmail.com) or website [loverrepaircafe.org.uk](http://loverrepaircafe.org.uk).



## WARDROBE

The Wardrobe Clothing Exchange continues to draw in customers. In January, approximately 80 people attended within the first ten minutes of opening. The organisers are very appreciative of those who volunteer regularly and of those who donate. Please remember that donations of electrical items and bric-a-brac are not accepted, as these items cannot be recycled. The Wardrobe is open once a month, on a Friday, at Downton Baptist Church, 2 - 3:30pm. The next 2 dates are: 27 February and 20 March.



## GOOD COMPANIONS

The club meets in the Memorial Hall on Tuesdays from 2 - 4pm. Regulars pay £2, visitors £2.50; refreshments are included. Highlights from the programme are: 3 February Nigel Revill, playing acoustic guitar and singing songs from all eras; 17 February: Presentation from Salisbury Hospice explaining their work in caring and supporting life-limited patients; 10 March: Salisbury pluckers ukulele band entertain; 24 March: Carol Watson, presenting photographic illustrations of her journey to Japan.

In between times there are games and quiz sessions, as well as a biscuit decorating afternoon on 10 February. Contact Julia Whitmarsh 510601 for more information.



*Nigel Revill above and Salisbury Pluckers below*



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## SKY AT NIGHT BY MICHAEL F. BARRATT FRAS

Now is a good time to be viewing the winter constellations, with Orion (the Hunter) dominating the south-eastern skyline. Also visible are Auriga (the Charioteer), Gemini (the Twins) and Canis Major (the Great Dog). Within these constellations are many open star clusters which can be spotted using binoculars including Messier 44 (the Beehive), which will be found in the constellation of Cancer (the Crab) and is a large bright open cluster about halfway between the constellations of Gemini and Leo.

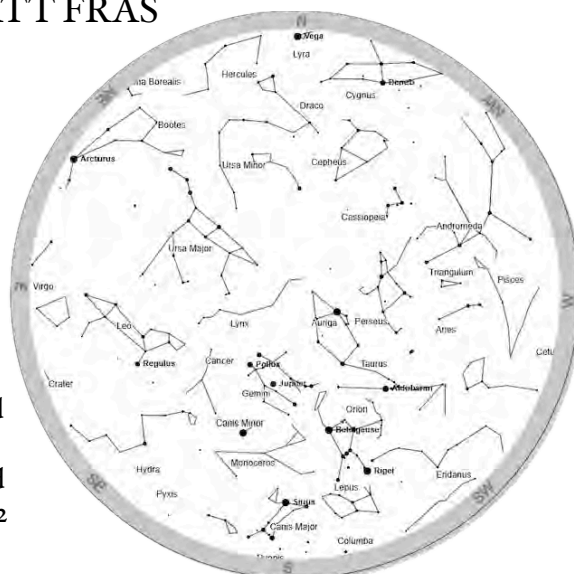
A bit further away (around 12 million light years!) and more of a challenge, in Ursa Major (the Great Bear) will be found two galaxies which are just visible through good binoculars – Messier 81 (the Cigar Galaxy) and Messier 82 (Bode's Galaxy).

Saturn is the only planet now clearly visible in the western sky and from 8 February will act as a good guide to finding Mercury, which will be just below it. Mercury is putting on its best evening performance of the year but gradually fading. There is only a short window of opportunity to see it as by 19 February, it will be setting at around 7 pm. If you do see it, you will have done something which the famous Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus never managed to do.

Venus will have appeared by the middle of the month and on the evenings of 18 & 19 February, the crescent Moon will “play tag” with Venus, Mercury and Saturn – a great photo opportunity to “bag” four solar system objects together with a smart phone camera. Jupiter continues its all night “residency” in the constellation of Gemini (the Twins) and is easily found close to the first magnitude stars Castor and Pollux setting around 7.45 pm. If you have binoculars, Uranus (with its greenish tinge) will be found in the constellation of Taurus (the Bull) setting at around 1.30pm

Neptune and Saturn are both in the constellation of Pisces, setting at around 8pm This month they will appear very close together, and Neptune (the outermost planet) will be clearly identified by its greenish glow.

The full moon on February 17 is called the “Snow” Moon.



*Map of Sky at night-February 2025 (around 2100hrs GMT)*

## DOWNTON BREWERY EVENTS

The Tap Bar is open every Friday night along with Quiz nights on the first Thursday of the month and a Thirsty Thursday club on the last Thursday of the month. There will be an Apres Ski Disco on the 28th February.



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## SUPPORTING YOUNG MINDS

In October Mark Gulliver, the Downton Football Club manager and groundsman, decided to do a charity run for Young Minds, the club's chosen charity with the aim of raising £1,000. The club started fundraising in December and had held several charity football matches, raising £5,800.

On Saturday 24 January, Mark and his team took to the roads and tracks running from Brockenhurst Football Club to Downton Football Club, a total of 19.5 miles in just under 4 hours. Mark was joined by Laura McGregor, Robbie Loader, Karolina Korys-Jones and Owen Haviland. For the final push they were joined by reserve team players Luke Charity and Tom Williams and youth team players Zoe McGregor, Sophie McGregor and William Loader. So far £4,393 has been raised from the run, well over original £1,000 target.

The overall total raised by the club is now over £10,000. Those who wish to donate can do so on the Just Giving website (search for "Mark Gulliver"). The next Charity event is a match between Downton Vets and Fordingbridge Vets on Sunday 22 February, kick off 11am.



## LIBRARY NEWS

2026 is a National Year of Reading to encourage all ages to read for pleasure. Downton Library are celebrating with its own very relaxed reading challenge called "A Year of Books". Each month discover a new theme to inspire your reading. You can pick a book from the display or choose your own. "A Year of Books" is suitable for all ages (there's adult and children's versions) and everyone can dip in and out as much as they like. To get started, pick up a bookmark at Downton Library.

The February theme for adults sees the return of our Blind Date with a Book display. Why not treat yourself to a mystery book handpicked by library staff and wrapped by the library volunteers. And for children, why not learn something new or explore a favourite topic through a non-fiction read? Children can also take part in the "Love Bugs" trail with lucky dip prizes! Find the bugs hidden around the Children's Library and learn some creepy crawly facts along the way. It's on throughout February.

A Year of Books Challenge and inspire your reading this year!	A Year of Books Challenge and inspire your reading this year!
January A Funny Story	January Debut Novel
February Non-Fiction	February Blind Date With A Book
March Has an Animal Character	March Award Winner
April Nature/Outdoors	April Inspired by Nature
May Set in the Past	May Historical
June Has a Cool Cover	June Translated to English
July Escape Your Comfort Zone	July Set in Another Country
August A Magical Story	August Children's/Teen Book
September Book to Screen	September Escape Your Comfort Zone
October A Classic Children's Book	October Book to Screen
November Comic Book/Graphic Novel	November Judge a Book by its Cover
December Something Short	December Something Short

*The year of books bookmarks for children and adults.*

### ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE!

1,900 copies of InDownton are printed five times a year. It's delivered to every house in Downton and Charlton All Saints villages and also distributed through local shops and pubs. Adverts can be for a single issue or a year's run of 5 issues in black and white or in colour, including changing the advert each time to advertise seasonal offers. More details at [indownton.org.uk](http://indownton.org.uk) or email [adverts@indownton.org.uk](mailto:adverts@indownton.org.uk)

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## DOWNTON SURGERY

Downton Surgery is continuing to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community, and one of the most positive developments has been the increasing use of Primary Care Additional Roles professionals within the practice.

ARRS roles allow the surgery to broaden the clinical team beyond GPs and nurses, bringing in highly skilled professionals such as clinical pharmacists, Care Coordinators, social prescribing link workers, Pharmacy Technicians, and GP Assistants. These colleagues are skilled within their fields and play a vital role in supporting patient care.

For patients, this means improved access to the right professional at the right time. Many concerns can be addressed more quickly and thoroughly by a specialist clinician, often resulting in longer, more focused appointments and better continuity of care. Patients may also benefit from a more holistic approach, with support that looks beyond medical symptoms to wider health and wellbeing needs.

The Practice Manager says, "As a practice, we are extremely enthusiastic about the contribution ARRS staff make. They strengthen our team, enhance collaboration, and allow GPs to focus on complex medical cases while ensuring patients receive high-quality, personalised care. We believe this model is already improving patient experience and we look forward to introducing these roles to our patients."



## DOWNTON MUSIC FESTIVAL

St Laurence church will be hosting a five day music festival from 9 - 13 June. There will be a concert every evening which will feature local choirs and bands. Admission will be free but there will be a retiring collection with the funds going towards maintaining the church.

Veronica Batchelor said that she is "really looking forward to the event and hopes that it will attract lots of local people into the church, so that they can experience what a wonderful venue it is, and one that they will cherish in the years ahead".

Details will appear shortly in posters and flyers which will give information about who is performing each evening. However, you are encouraged to put the dates in your diary now.

## BOWLING CLUB

All scheduled work on the green for 2025 has been completed. Maintenance planning and preparation for the outdoor season, which begins in April, will start soon. The club is planning to hold some additional coffee mornings, open to all, and will post details of these on their website. For further information about the club or the sport of bowls, contact Ivan on 07910 290735 or by email at buib7@icloud.com, or visit downtonbc.com.



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## CUCKOO FAIR: FURTHER THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

1). It takes 22 volunteers over six months to plan for and run the annual Cuckoo Fair. This is not including volunteers who help around Event time. This is to provide just six official hours of a safe and enjoyable Cuckoo Fair.

2). Planning for the Cuckoo Fair runs from early October right up to Fair day, This year, its on 2 May.

3). Every year it has to satisfy requirements from the Wiltshire Council's Event Safety Advisory Group, Government GDPR regulations, Event Insurance policies, the Parish Council, Safeguarding regulations, DBS checking, Event Industry Forum (Purple Guide), Health & Safety Executive, Wiltshire Police and UK Counter Terrorism, by updating the plans to also include Medical Cover, Security cover, our Event Management Plan, Welfare Centre arrangements, Training Roles and Responsibilities, Terms and Conditions and our Risk Analysis.

4). 88 individual issues/ improvements were raised post Cuckoo Fair 2025 which have been used to improve the Fair.

5). A new "Village Liaison Team" has been recruited to deal with queries from local residents, clubs, schools, charities and local businesses. They will also deliver important information regarding the Fair.

6). There will be open stakeholder meetings in the village before Cuckoo Fair 2026 where residents and interested parties can come along, contribute and ask any questions. The next one is on 18 February at 7pm at Downton Baptist Church.

7). Last year, Toomers Ltd designed, built and positioned new Hostile Vehicle Mitigation barriers free of charge. This year they will provide the barriers again and sponsor the Fair. Batt Broadbent Solicitors have contributed to the printing of the Day Leaflet.

8). In 2024 10 new Core Team members were recruited with defined roles and responsibilities to enable the 2025 Fair to run.

9). The Cuckoo Fair is run on a Not for Profit basis. The aim is simply to cover costs.

10). This year there are Cuckoo Fair Business Cards for possible future Stallholders and Entertainers to help provide a supply of new attractions.

To find out more about volunteering, contact us at [cuckoofair.co.uk/contact-us](http://cuckoofair.co.uk/contact-us).



### ROAD CLOSURE FOR DOWNTON CUCKOO FAIR SATURDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2026

ORDERS UNDER SECTION 21 OF THE  
TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT 1847

Dear Resident

I wish to advise you that I have applied for a Road Closure Order under Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 as detailed in the Schedule below:

#### SCHEDULE

STREETS	DATE	TIME
Downton - B3080 The Borough from The Headlands to Church Hatch including Gravel Close, South Lane and Green Lane	SATURDAY 2 <sup>ND</sup> MAY 2026	0830 - 1800 hrs

I attach a map showing the extent of the closure.

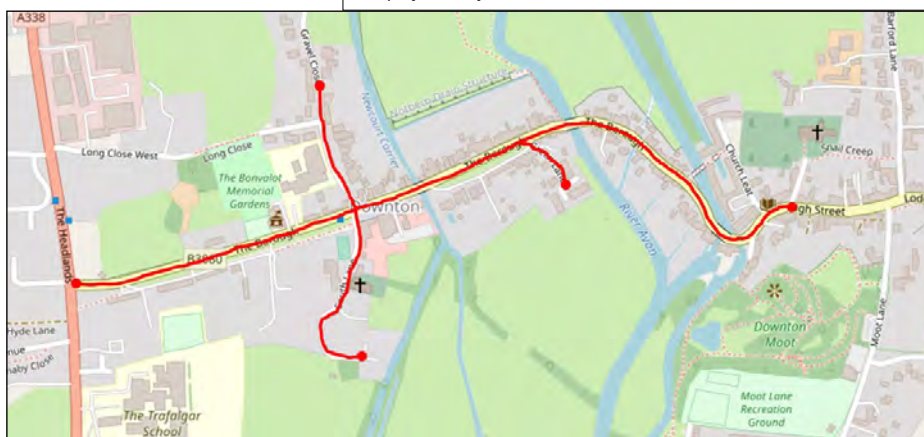
If you have any objections to this road closure request, please send them by 27<sup>th</sup> March, to:

By email [trafficorders@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:trafficorders@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
By post Traffic Orders Team, Sustainable Transport, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Note: your objections must include your name and address or they cannot be considered. However, you have the right to request under the Data Protection Act 1998 that your name and address be withheld from public inspection or inclusion in any published report.

Yours faithfully

Bev Cornish  
Company Secretary, Downton Cuckoo Fair Ltd



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2025 Gardeners' World - air Spring PLATINUM AWARD 2025

2025 Gardeners' World - air Spring BEST SHOWCASE GARDEN 2025

## THANK YOUS!

Hannah Porter would like to thank The Borough Dental Practice and Downton Football Club for their support for her fund-raising to attend the World Scout Jamboree in Poland next year.

Mark Gulliver would like to thank those who joined him on his charity run in aid of Young Minds: the runners, the support team that kept the runners hydrated and cheered them along, Karolina and Darren from the Goat for the food and finally all the supporters who welcomed the team back to the club.

Do you have someone in the village that you would like to thank? Let us know: [editor@indownton.org.uk](mailto:editor@indownton.org.uk)

Lozer Baby Bank would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the organisers of the St Lawrence Church Christmas Tree Festival for supporting the Baby Bank this year. "It was a truly wonderful event, beautifully organised and enjoyed by so many in the community. The money raised will make a significant difference to our operations, enabling us to reach and support even more families in need. We are incredibly grateful for your generosity and support. We would also like to thank everyone in the local community who attended and donated toiletries and other items to help restock our shelves. We were overwhelmed with your generosity and kindness. With love, all at Lozer Baby Bank."

## MOOT EASTER EGG HUNT ADVANCED NOTICE

The Moot Easter Egg Hunt will be on Monday 6 April at 11am or on 11 April if bad weather.

## A FAMILY NIGHT AT THE PANTOMIME

On Friday 9 January The Travelling Players returned to the Memorial Hall to perform the story of Pinocchio, a wooden marionette who seeks to become a real boy. We caught up with cousins Luna James-Wright (5) and Oscar Wright (7) and their Auntie Imogen Wright who went along to enjoy the Pantomime.

"Dun dun duun, Monstrous Fish!" giggled Luna and Oscar, recalling their favourite scene where the titular puppet was swallowed alive. "His swimming was very funny" said Luna. "My favourite was the Cricket" said Oscar, "he was brilliant". Both agreed that it was a full house, with a turn out of mostly adults and some familiar little faces from the local schools. "There was a break in the middle with ice creams for kids and grown up drinks for adults," recalled Luna. Auntie Imogen said, "It was a really innovative three-man show, they were so clever to capture all the characters". Luna gave Pinocchio "100 out of five stars" and Oscar gave it "2,000 out of ten stars."



Reviewers, Auntie Imi,  
Luna and Oscar



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## YOUR LIFE STORY IN A BOOK!

Celebrity biographies are a global phenomenon, but Katrina Sherbourne claims that the lives of 'ordinary' people are no less fascinating. She argues that a book about your life - your hopes and dreams, your struggles and achievements - is far more interesting, especially to your family and friends and those close to you. It could be a very special gift for your loved ones, something they will treasure and remember you by.



Katrina is a professional writer with a passion for real-life stories. Over the years, she's written books about many people who aren't rich or famous but have remarkable stories nonetheless. A grandmother wanted a book about her childhood in war-torn Berlin. A retired businessman was keen to recount his life in India, Kenya and the UK. A devoted mother wanted to preserve precious stories about bringing up her children and running a shop.

Katrina said, "I pride myself on providing a caring and personal service, taking away all stress or strain and making each project a relaxing, enjoyable and life-affirming experience."

Contact Katarina for information about her services and costs.

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LIFE STORY IN A BOOK

## Miss Wiggledownton's Lifestyle Column



In my quest to review our local wellbeing activities, I hope to encourage you to get outside, get active and try new things in 2026.

I've signed up to Pilates with Penny Peers at the memorial Centre on Wednesday mornings 9.15 - 10pm. I must say 45 minutes is an ideal amount of time for fitness activities - much less daunting than a full hour. I know and love Penny from Clubbercise and Group PT, and was delighted when she recently qualified as a pilates matwork instructor. Her class did not disappoint, with a full body workout of classic pilates moves, and all of the classic Penny fun and charm. It was doable but challenging, and my abs were grumbling the next day - which apparently is a good thing...

*Mondays 6pm Downton, Tuesdays 7:35pm Fordingbridge, Wednesdays 9.15am Downton, Thursdays 7:20pm Fordingbridge. Email myhhfitness@gmail.com.*

I have also enjoyed a couple of terms of Colourwheel art classes at the Memorial Centre and discovered skills that I (and my art teachers of yore) were certain I did not possess. The classes are fun, welcoming and perfect for all abilities. Led by experienced artists and art teachers, a different medium or technique is explored each week, covering all the basics and more. There's no expectation or exams; everyone is supportive, building skills and confidence and coming away with something they are proud of. The next term starts in April and is £350 for twelve 3-hour classes, with all equipment included, some of which you can keep.

*Mondays at 9.30 or 13.30 in Downton and more classes run in Salisbury and Fordingbridge. Email cami@colourwheelartclass.co.uk to try a free taster session this term.*

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**What, Where, When****February**

Wednesday	4	7pm	Licensing of new Team Rector, St Birinus Church	Page 7
Thursday	5	10am	TalkAbout: Who shot JFK? Methodist Church, Woodalls	Page 6
Thursday	5	10am - 12 noon	Hearing Aid Clinic, Downton Baptist Church	
Saturday	7	10am - 12 noon	Repair Cafe in Downton, Downton Baptist Church	Page 10
Saturday	7	3pm	FA Vase competition: Downton Lymore Gardens, Football Club	Front page
Saturday	14	7:30pm	Valentine's Dance at the Blue Jay, Memorial Hall	Page 2
Friday	27	10am - 12 noon	"Fridays" Community Cafe, Memorial Hall	
Friday	27	2 - 3:30pm	The Wardrobe, Clothing Exchange, Baptist Church	Page 10
Saturday	28	7pm	Quiz Night for World Scout Jamboree, Sherwood Suite	Page 4
<b>March</b>				
Thursday	5	10am - 12 noon	Hearing Aid Clinic, Downton Baptist Church	
Saturday	7	10am - 12 noon	Repair Cafe in Downton, Downton Baptist Church	Page 10
Sunday	15		Deadline for contributions to Spring InDownton	
Thursday	19	7:30pm	Horticultural Society: Wildlife in a Working Forest, Memorial Hall	Page 2
Friday	20	2 - 3:30pm	The Wardrobe, Clothing Exchange, Baptist Church	Page 10
Sunday	22	2 - 4pm	Seedy Sunday, Memorial Hall	Page 4
Friday	27	10am - 12 noon	"Fridays" Community Cafe, Memorial Hall	
Saturday	28		Spring InDownton publication date	

**ASHLEY GRANGE  
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Jane Abel musecic@gmail.com

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Memorial Hall

**INDOWNTON NEWSLETTER**

Sponsored and supported by Downton Baptist Church

Spring Issue: Deadline for contributions: 15 March 2026  
Publication date: 28 March 2026

Distributed to every house in the village, 5 times a year.

For information about contributing or advertising, email:  
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Whilst we make every effort to avoid errors, we're human!  
We apologise for the mistakes we missed.

Production Team: Rosemary Leo, Paul Leo, Natalie Wright

## VILLAGE INFORMATION & REGULAR EVENTS

### PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Melanie Camilleri  
 Telephone: 07798 698199  
 Office Hours: Monday - Friday  
 10am - 3pm  
[clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
[admin@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
[downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR

Cllr Richard Clewer  
 53 Highlands Avenue, Whiteparish,  
 Salisbury SP5 2SZ  
 01794 884550  
[richard.clewer@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:richard.clewer@wiltshire.gov.uk)

### MOBILE POST OFFICE

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 Moot Lane 9am - 10am  
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### HIGH STREET PHARMACY

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 Tuesday 2pm - 5pm  
 Wednesday 2pm - 5pm  
 Thursday 10am - 1pm  
 Friday 10am - 5pm  
 Saturday 10 - 1

### LEISURE CENTRE

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 Sat & Sun 9am - 5pm  
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### LOVER REPAIR CAFE

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 Wednesdays / Fridays 10am - 12pm  
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### MEMORIAL CENTRE

To book hall or meeting rooms  
 contact Hilary Mace 07760 415818  
 email: [bookingsecretary@downtonmemorialcentre.co.uk](mailto:bookingsecretary@downtonmemorialcentre.co.uk)

### VILLAGE WEBSITE

[downtonvillage.co.uk](http://downtonvillage.co.uk)

### DOWNTON BAPTIST CHURCH (DBC)

South Lane, Downton SP5 3NA  
 Sunday Service: 10.30 am (check website for latest details)  
 Rev Philip Rhoades: [philip@downtonbaptist.org](mailto:philip@downtonbaptist.org) 07468 491143  
 Rev Katy Ulyatt: [katy@downtonbaptist.org](mailto:katy@downtonbaptist.org) 07786 248880  
 Church Office open Monday - Thursday, 9am - 1pm 512971  
 Email: [office@downtonbaptist.org](mailto:office@downtonbaptist.org) Web: [downtonbaptist.org](http://downtonbaptist.org)

### ST LAURENCE PARISH CHURCH (C of E)

Church Hatch, Downton SP5 3PU  
 Sunday Service: 10.30 am (check website for latest details)  
 Cafe Church 4th Sunday 10.30 - 11.30am  
 Forest & Avon Team Rector: Revd Veronica Batchelor 513878;  
[veronicaforestandavon@gmail.com](mailto:veronicaforestandavon@gmail.com)  
[stlaurencedownton.co.uk](http://stlaurencedownton.co.uk)

### CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD (ROMAN CATHOLIC)

Barford Lane, Downton SP5 3QA  
 Mass 3rd Thursday of the month 6.30pm  
 Service of the word Tuesdays 6.30pm (via zoom on weeks when no mass on Thursdays). To join, contact John Elliott 07980 921558  
 Telephone: 01722 333581; [office@salisburycatholics.org](mailto:office@salisburycatholics.org)

### NEW LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH (NLCC)

3rd & 4th Sunday of the month Word & Worship Service: 7pm  
 Memorial Centre (upstairs), The Borough, Downton SP5 3NB  
 Refreshments from 6.30pm  
[office@newlifecommunitychurch.co.uk](mailto:office@newlifecommunitychurch.co.uk)

### ALL SAINTS' CHURCH (C of E)

Lower Road, Charlton All Saints, SP5 4HQ  
 Parish Communion 4th Sunday 9.30 am (check website for latest details)  
 Chalke Valley Team Rector: Revd Dr Ruth Howlett-Shipley 01722 697022  
[achurchnearyou.com/church/9472/](http://achurchnearyou.com/church/9472/)

### THE PLAYROOM (DBC)

Toddler Church  
 Toys, stories, singing.  
 Wednesdays term time 9 - 11am

### BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP @ DBC

Wednesdays 11am - 12.30pm  
 Wiltshire Breastfeeding Support

### LITTLE BUDS (NLCC)

Free postnatal group  
 Tuesdays term time 1 - 2.30pm  
 Bonvalot Room, Memorial Centres

### THURSDAYS (DBC)

10.30am coffee/cake  
 11am short church service  
 2nd & 4th Thursdays lunch @ 12pm

### THE GARDEN (DBC)

A garden for everyone to grow food and flowers for The Larder  
 Open for gardening or to share tea in the garden  
 Sundays 2.30 - 4.30pm

### THE WARDROBE (DBC)

Free Clothing Exchange  
 Usually 3rd Friday 2 - 3.30pm  
 See article to confirm dates

### THE LARDER (DBC)

Free food, every week.  
 Open for donations and collections  
 Monday 6 - 7pm  
 Wednesday 9 - 10am