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Dear Reader

I cannot begin to tell you how happy I am it's November! While this time of year isn't everyone's cup of tea, as I explained in last month's issue I'm delighted to pull on my boots and cosy sweaters. Crunchy leaves, crisp air and a steaming bowl of soup, and Rachael is smiling.

And November begins with a bang – quite literally – with one of my favourite nights of the year: Fireworks Night! I know from the town's Facebook pages the whistles, crackles and whizz-popping explosions make the evening difficult for many people, and I'm genuinely sorry for that. Even so, on Friday 6 November I'll be out on the field in the darkness, wishing I had a sparkler in one hand and a toffee apple in the other. Oh how I miss a Catherine Wheel!

When you stop to think about it, celebrating the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605 is rather odd. Guy Fawkes was discovered beneath Parliament after he and his fellow conspirators planned to kill King James I. Marking that failure with dazzling explosions and sugary treats feels wonderfully British – although perhaps other countries have equally delightful eccentricities.



November is also a month of anticipation as our communities begin the countdown to Christmas. As you explore this issue, keep a note of the dates you don't want to miss, including Highworth's Christmas Lights Switch-on and craft fair, and with support from Highworth Emporium, the Scouts are once again organising their much-loved Christmas Post (page 7). But before the festivities begin, our local churches will hold several Remembrance Services; turn to page 38 for full details.

Whether you appreciate the wonders and peculiarities of autumn or prefer to hunker down until spring, I hope you're able to find a pocketful of joy in all you do.

Rachael

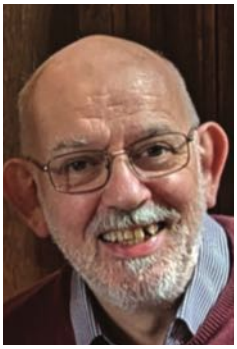




Front cover image: Highworth Scouts Oscar and Edison are getting ready to deliver your Christmas cards.

Remember, Remember

November is a month of changing seasons. The bright colours of autumn begin to fade, the evenings draw in, and the landscape around us becomes quieter. Yet November also invites us to pause and remember.



For many of us in Highworth and Blunsdon, Remembrance Sunday is an integral part of November. We remember those who have given their lives in war and conflict, and we think of the families and communities who have carried the consequences of those sacrifices.

Remembering is an important part of the Christian faith. The Bible repeatedly calls God's people to remember: to remember God's faithfulness, to remember those who have gone before us, and to remember the things that truly matter.

November is also a time to look forwards, and Christianity also encourages us to not live in the past. The Christian hope is that death does not have the final word. The resurrection of Jesus stands at the centre of that hope: a promise of life, renewal and God's presence even in the darkest circumstances.

There is something reassuring about the rhythm of the seasons. Trees let go of their leaves, gardens become dormant, and daylight diminishes. Yet we know that winter is not the end of the story. Beneath the apparent stillness, life continues and eventually spring will come again.

It is also a good month to notice the people around us. As the weather becomes colder, a simple act of kindness can mean more than we realise – a conversation with someone who is lonely, an invitation for a cup of tea, checking on an elderly neighbour, or simply taking the time to listen.

So as November unfolds across our communities, perhaps we can make space for three things: remembering with gratitude, caring for one another, and looking forward with hope.

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' – *John 1:5*

Rev. Phil Goodey

Big Thanks from Westrop to Wrde Up

Westrop Primary and Nursery School has received a £5,000 donation from the former Wrde Up committee. The school used this funding to purchase new playground equipment which was installed over the summer holidays.



The new equipment has updated the outdoor area and is already popular with the children during breaktimes and lunchtimes.



To mark the opening of the new facilities, Beth Holder, from the former Wrde Up committee, visited the school to see the equipment in use by the pupils.

The school extends its thanks to the Wrde Up committee. This donation has significantly improved the playground environment and will provide children with an active outdoor space for years to come.

Claire Kruse

Do you know someone who's good at selling?



We're looking for a local person to help us with advertising sales for Highworth LINK Magazine

LINK is distributed free to around 6,700 homes and businesses across Highworth and the surrounding villages, including South Marston, Shrivenham, Stanton Fitzwarren, Inglesham and parts of Lechlade.

We're looking for someone who enjoys meeting local businesses, making connections and bringing in advertising.

It's self-employed and commission-based (10%), so it could be ideal for someone who already works in sales, marketing or a related business and would like to add another income stream – or someone with lots of local business contacts who would enjoy taking on a new challenge.

If this sounds like you – or you immediately thought of someone who would be good at it – please email us at editor@highworthlink.co.uk

And please feel free to share this advert with anyone you think might be interested.

Highworth Community Larder and Café

The Larder had a busy summer with the hot weather providing lots of delicious fruit, including strawberries, pomegranates, papayas and homegrown apples, all of which were well received.

We are now into autumn, and with winter approaching we are planning to restart our café. This will be generously hosted by Highworth Library **every Tuesday**, between 11am and 1pm. Visitors will be welcome to a free hot drink, a biscuit, and possibly even cake! This will be an opportunity to relax and chat with our volunteers, as well as provide time to browse and borrow books. More details will follow in the December issue of Highworth's LINK Magazine, so watch this space!

None of this would be possible without a hardworking team of volunteers, with both the café and all those who generously give their time to collect from supermarkets and staff the larder each week. We are also grateful for the invaluable support given by Westrop School in providing us with a venue.

We are always looking for new volunteers, particularly those who could help with collections and for whom petrol expenses can be reimbursed. If you feel you could help us, or would like more information, please call in at the larder on **any Tuesday morning** between 8am and 10am at Westrop School, or contact us for more information at: highworthcommunitylarder@gmail.com.

Christine Lutman

To advertise in The Highworth Link contact
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or visit www.highworthlink.co.uk

Rotary Supports Nepal Appeal

On 26 August a major flash flood struck northern Nepal after a glacier collapsed near the Nepal/Tibet border. Mud, ice and rock surged into the Bhote Koshi River, destroying homes, roads, bridges and other vital infrastructure.

More than 85,000 people have been affected. As of 9 September this year, at least 1,375 people had been killed and more than 5,000 remained missing. To support the effort, Rotary Swindon North has sent £1,500 to ShelterBox.

Working with Islamic Relief Nepal and other partners, ShelterBox has already supplied families with emergency shelter materials and essential household items, and Rotary members in Nepal have helped ShelterBox understand local needs. They've connected it with affected communities and coordinated support in some of the hardest-hit areas.

ShelterBox is now delivering the next phase of its response in partnership with People in Need, extending support to a further 1,000 households. Strong local partnerships help ensure assistance reaches the people who need it most, combining local knowledge with global resources to support recovery and rebuilding.

Rotary Swindon North & Thamesdown

ShelterBox was founded in 2000 by the Rotary Club of Helston-Lizard, Cornwall. In the years since, it has grown into an independent international disaster-relief organisation, providing emergency shelter, essential items, tools and technical assistance to people affected by disasters. Its support is tailored to each community and delivered in collaboration with local people, supporters and partner organisations.

Get in touch to learn more about what we do, meet our members, and discover how you could be part of making a positive difference, locally, nationally and internationally. Find us at www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk, email rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com or telephone 07710 228697.

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Time to Thrive

Scouts Christmas Post

Stamps go on sale on the 1 November in Highworth Emporium, and the post box will also be there but not until 20 November. The cost of a stamp is unchanged from last year at 45p.

The last date for posting is **15 December**.

If you are unsure of the delivery area you can check in the Emporium, and please note we do NOT deliver to Lechlade, Faringdon or Marlborough.

We are grateful to the Emporium for selling the stamps once again and they are very happy to assist us:

'We're delighted to be supporting the Scouts Christmas Post yet again. At just 45p a stamp, it's a fantastic and affordable way to send Christmas cards locally, stay connected with family and friends, while supporting the Scouts at the same time.



Highworth Scouts Oscar and Edison with Aga Marsden

'It's always lovely to see how popular the Scout Stamps are with our customers, and we're very pleased to be selling them again this year. As a greeting card shop, anything that encourages people to keep sending Christmas cards and putting a smile through someone's letterbox gets our full support!'

We look forward to your usual support for what is our biggest fundraiser.

David Roblin



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800 Years of Shopkeepers

(…and why Highworth High Street is really close to our hearts)

The Market Square has been a place to sell, swap news and gossip since King John granted the town a charter for a weekly market and annual fair over 800 years ago.

Since then, the High Street has evolved. Businesses have come and gone, run by people whose lives became part of the fabric of the town.

Including ours. We're among the latest generation of shopkeepers to open a business here, quitting our jobs and following our dream of running a shop.

And there's lots to love about being part of the High Street. Saturdays are fab. The market makes the town come alive; it's the busiest day of the week, with people wandering around, meeting friends and hanging about.



Weigh It Up


Matt and Michelle Ahern

The vibe on the High Street is busy – but it couldn't be more different from an angsty supermarket aisle where people generally irritate one another.

There's a warmth to it. But why? Well, it's all down to you.

There are so many interactions happening all around. People catching up, meeting for the first time, finding common ground and exchanging thoughts, news and advice. Helping one another out of spillage situations (we've all been there!) or searching for a random item on the scales. It's social, fun and warm because of the people.

And human interaction isn't just nice to have. We need it. Growing research into the effect of social connection on our brains and bodies shows those everyday interactions can have a real impact on our wellbeing.

Which brings us to something we're in danger of losing. It's the human interaction that happens when you walk into a local shop. A chat with the person behind the counter. Seeing a familiar face. Asking how someone is. Having a conversation that wasn't planned, booked or delivered by an app. We're living more and more of our lives online. We order online, work online, talk online and increasingly even shop without speaking to another person. Convenient? Absolutely. But I think we need the other stuff too.

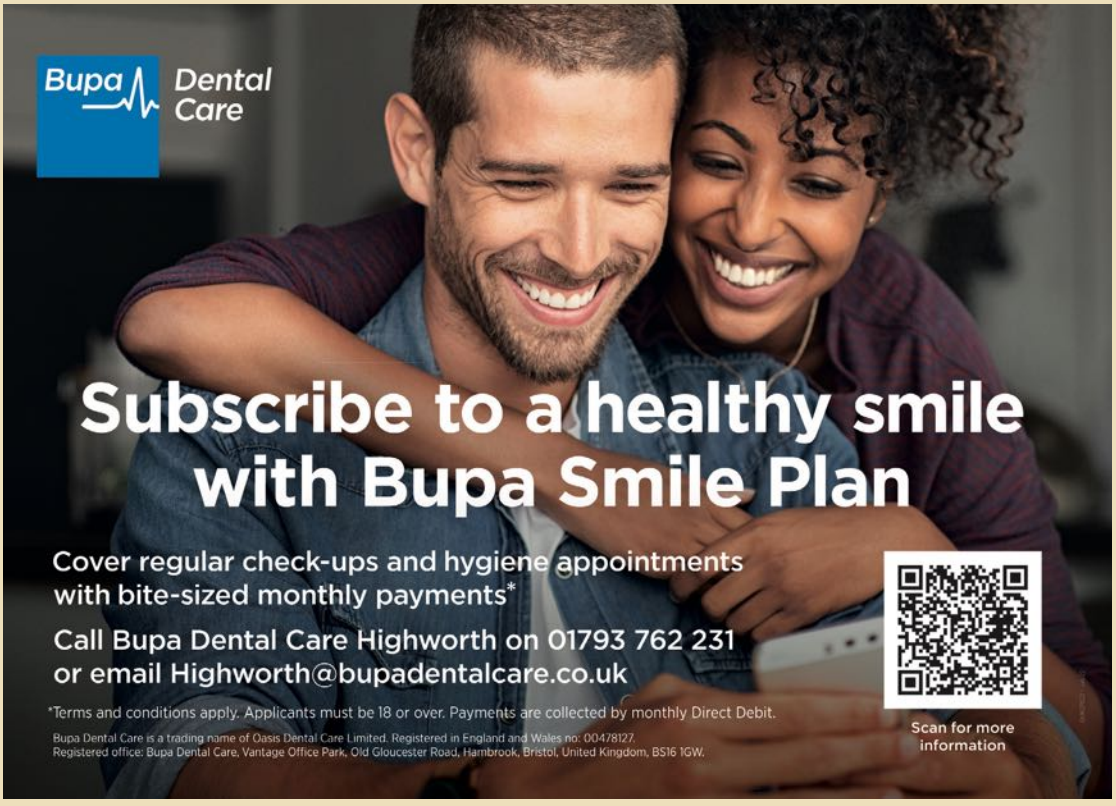
The little conversations. The familiar faces. The feeling that you belong somewhere. Our high streets aren't just somewhere to buy things. They're places where people meet, connect and feel part of something.

So yes, order the stuff online when that's what works for you. There's a time and a place for everything. But every now and then, leave the screen behind. Head into town. Pop into a shop. Have a chat. Say hello.

Because keeping our local shops alive isn't just good for shopkeepers. It's good for all of us.

Matt and Michelle Ahern, Weigh It Up Founders


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Group Camp Adventures

From 16 to 18 September, 96 young people aged 6 to 14 years from 1st Highworth Scout Group and Phoenix Archer Explorer Scout Unit joined 35 adult leaders and helpers at Cotswold Sailing Club for group camp.

Over 48 hours they enjoyed kayaking, paddleboarding, archery, tomahawk throwing, climbing and caving, alongside a silent disco, treasure hunt, Super Scout competition, friendship bracelets and *Thinking of You* cards from Highworth Emporium.

Campers shared some favourite moments:

Sophie, a Beaver, loved sleeping in a tent, hitting the archery target and the 'really, really good disco.'

Rebecca, a Cub, praised the range of activities and the lake view from the climbing wall. She especially remembered the water rockets landing in the lake and the Explorers retrieving them.

Dylan, a Scout, described camp as 'exciting, adventurous and brilliant.' From the cave bus and climbing wall to treasure hunts and paddleboarding, his highlight was spending time with friends.

Emily, a Scout, enjoyed seeing different bows, trying activities on the lake and walking around it while talking to people.



Group Camp Cave Bus

Thomas, a Scout, praised the food, night hike and treasure hunt, where Scouts practised map skills while the Beavers enjoyed their silent disco.

Matthew, an Explorer, was impressed by the turnout and activities for every age. The cave bus was a huge hit – even with leaders – and the water rockets were so popular that Explorers plan to use them again.

Julie, attending her first camp as a Scout leader, said the scale of the planning blew her mind. She highlighted the plentiful food, wide range of activities, fun and laughter, and thanked every leader and parent who helped make the weekend happen.

After camp, all leftover food was donated to Alternative Angels in Swindon for distribution to homeless people in the town.

A huge well done and thank you to the team whose planning and preparation created such a fantastic, memorable weekend for our young people.

If you're interested in joining any section of the Scouts, please contact me at glv@highworthscouts.org.uk.

Jane Dobson,
Group Lead Volunteer





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New Year Spaces at Bumps to Babies

Bumps to Babies began life on 4 May 2022. In the four years since we started we have hosted almost 170 local mums and babies, some of whom are now back for a second time – so they obviously enjoy it!

We offer a relaxed social environment where mums-to-be, mums (and dads) and babies can enjoy a wide range of activities all supported by a group of 10 volunteers, most of whom have child development backgrounds. We operate during school term time only and welcome those in their third trimester right up to baby's first birthday.



Activities include: craft, music, mindfulness, age-appropriate play, and use of our super sensory room. We also have visits from childcare professionals covering topics such as Baby Yoga, Weaning and Paediatric First Aid.

We cover our costs through very low session fees and a great deal of fundraising. This is to cover room rental, insurance, DBS checks and equipment purchases. Our current session fees are £4 per week, invoiced at the start of each term which secures your place.

Due to parents returning to work, we will have 10 spaces available from 6 January 2027. Please note that places fill fast so it is advised that you apply early. Places are allocated in the order that applications are received.

If you would like to join us, please go to www.bumpstobabies.club/contact-us and complete the enquiry form. We have active private Facebook and WhatsApp groups, which you able to join once registered and have attended your first session.

If you would like further information, please contact us at ask@bumpstobabies.club.

Jan Davidson, Founder and Group Leader

Highworth and District Probus Club

Highworth and District Probus Club will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in November!

We meet at The Cold Harbour in Blunsdon on **alternate Tuesdays** at 10:30am and welcome retired professional and business men with no upper age limit. We welcome visitors as guests at any of our meetings.

On **Tuesday 10 November** we will have a talk from Geoff King on *Thomas Jefferson*; John Farrow will present to us *Avebury through the Ages* on **Tuesday 24 November**; and on **Tuesday 8 December** Brian Barber will be giving a talk with the intriguing title, *Radio Station Under Fire*.

For further information please email info@highworthprobus.co.uk, or visit our website at www.highworthprobus1.wordpress.com.

George North



Experience Hydrotherapy

A few years back, my wife Lesley benefited from a miracle of modern medicine – hip replacement surgery. She found immersion in the Thamesdown hydrotherapy pool quite therapeutic and I'm sure it helped her speedy recovery from this temporary disability. Nowadays she's back swimming in the somewhat chilly open water, a pleasure I've never got the hang of!

To help me control persistent lower back pain, my physiotherapist referred me to the pool where I met the manager Neil Montgomery. Coming from a background at Swindon's Link centre, Neil has now been at the pool for 16 years where he oversees a team of pool attendants and volunteers. How does hydrotherapy work, I asked him.

'The critical ingredient is the temperature of the water, 34°C, which is 7°C warmer than a typical swimming pool. So it keeps you warm if you're not moving around much. Even if you just sit in the pool, you get the benefit of the water warming your body. And the warmth increases your blood flow, taking it to extremities like wrists, knees and ankles – in particular the joints where arthritis is annoying. It makes you feel lighter too.'

The pool is designed to accommodate a wide range of swimmers' ability to access it. For those not mobile, they have lifting hoists to help in and out of the pool. Meanwhile the more able bodied will enjoy the easy step access to the pool.

In my visits to the hydrotherapy pool I have met many swimmers. For those with learning disabilities, the staff are well equipped to assist carers. I have found most swimmers happy to talk, including a dairy farmer who invited me to visit his farm and to chat with his cows.

After serving schools, including pupils with special educational needs (SEND), the pool is open from 3pm to referred visitors. Once they establish those parts of your body needing hydrotherapy, they offer a range of generic exercises to help you get the best from your immersion in liquid paradise.

The Thamesdown Hydrotherapy Pool Association is a charity with volunteer trustees, some being pool users. The heating is expensive but offset by solar panels and copious insulation.

For the able bodied, a progression is the popular Aquafit classes at the Highworth Recreation Centre, where you'll find aqua aerobics leaders.

For more information, see www.thamesdownhydrotherapypool.com.

Adrian Young

Festive Fun with Visit Highworth

Visit Highworth had a fantastic fundraising gig in September and we wish to thank the Brewery Street Buskers (and Colin) for a great night's entertainment. Thanks too to all those who came, made merry and purchased raffle tickets.

We are now busy with our programme of seasonal workshops. Come and join us for some Christmas crafting and get into the festive spirit:

2 November: Hand-Stitched Christmas Cards
9 November: Star Decoration
16 November: Baubles with Decorative Paper
7 December: Vintage Paper Wreath

All these workshops are on Monday afternoons, 1pm to 2:30pm. Tickets cost £15 and materials are included in the price. Please check the website (www.visithighworth.co.uk) for more details. Call in to the Visitors' Centre on the High Street to book your place or email info@visithightworth.co.uk.

We are delighted once again to be hosting the craft fair in St. Michael's Church on **Saturday 28 November** from 10am to 4pm as part of the Christmas Lights Switch-on. We have some of our regular crafters and some new ones, all of them provide exceptional quality presents for family and friends. We will also have a range of Highworth-branded goods. So come in for a browse, check out the merchandise and refresh yourself with a tea, coffee and cake.

Can't wait to see you!

Iona and the VHL Team


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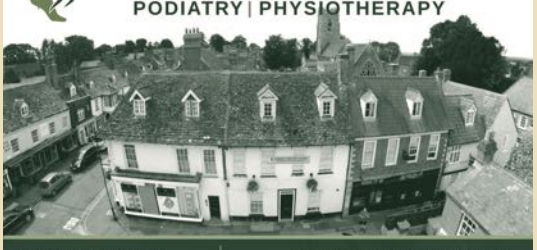
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Memories of Mair Huband

In August, Mair Huband, a veteran contributor to the LINK Magazine, died after a short illness. Mair loved the stories of people and places, firmly believing they deserved to be remembered. That conviction shaped her decades-long commitment to chronicling this community through the Highworth LINK magazine and local newspapers.



She spent countless hours each week researching the everyday events that wove Highworth together: whether it was the planting of trees, a local club gathering, or the celebration of a life well lived. Large or small, Mair made sure every story was submitted to the editor, who at times had to hold pieces over for a month simply because of the sheer volume of content she produced. Her writing may not have aspired to high prose, but she was devoted to highlighting moments that, while not world-changing, were deeply important to record.

True to form, she also insisted on a 'quick' photo to go with every article, which frequently ended with a line-up of mildly unwilling participants posing for a group mugshot.

Mair moved to Highworth in 1966 with her husband, Syd, after growing up on the Llŷn Peninsula in North Wales. Her Welsh upbringing was shaped by long walks to school each morning and a strict routine of attending chapel three times every Sunday. Even after leaving Wales to pursue a career in nursing, she remained deeply connected to her roots on the Llŷn Peninsula, and a Welsh newspaper was always a fixture in her home.

Her involvement with the Christian community remained a cornerstone of her life, expressed through her devotion to flower arranging at St. Michael's. Her funeral at the church at the end of September provided a fitting farewell.

Want to Sing? Try Big Sing Thing!

Whether you've sung in a choir for years or only ever sung in the shower, you'll be warmly welcomed at Big Sing Thing (BST).

We are a friendly community choir that brings people together through the joy of singing. Our members come from all walks of life with a wide range of musical experience and abilities. Men and women, young and old – everyone is welcome.

There are no auditions and no requirement to read music; you just need to enjoy singing. We perform a wide variety of songs including pop, rock, country, musical favourites and classic songs, ensuring there's something for all our members and our audiences to enjoy.

Our Music Director, Val Weston, has a lifetime of experience in teaching music and leading choirs. She knows how to get the best out of a choir while ensuring rehearsals are relaxed, enjoyable and full of fun.

Singing has many proven benefits for both physical and mental wellbeing. Just as importantly, being part of a choir creates lasting friendships and a real sense of community. We also support local charities through regular cake and book sales, with all proceeds going to good causes.

We meet **every Monday evening** from 7:30pm to 9pm at the Bible Society, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7DG. Free parking is available in the large onsite car park.

Why not come along and try a free session? Simply turn up on a Monday evening, or visit our website at www.bigsingthing.org.uk for more information. We'd love to meet you!

To advertise in The Highworth Link contact

advertising@highworthlink.co.uk

or visit www.highworthlink.co.uk

You Don't Have to Face Debt Alone

For many families in Highworth and the surrounding area, Christmas brings more worry than joy. Bills pile up, the heating goes on and the pressure to give can push people further into debt. Poverty steals sleep, peace and hope, often without anyone noticing.

But it doesn't have to stay that way. Here, through Highworth Churches Together, we run a CAP Debt Centre, part of a church-based movement across the UK that has been walking alongside people in debt for 30 years. Our trained Debt Coaches visit people at home, work out a budget with them and help them on a clear path to becoming debt free. It's completely free, and open to anyone, whatever their beliefs. We have now seen 120 people become debt free!

One local family who have recently gone debt free said, 'We are just so grateful – everything has changed now. We have no debts or pressure and can sleep at night.'

Need help? If debt is keeping you awake at night, please don't wait until January. Call CAP free on 0800 328 0006 or visit www.capuk.org to book an appointment with our local team.

Want to help? We will be doing Christmas hampers for our clients again this year, so if you would like to donate food items please do!

You can drop off any donated items for the Christmas hampers between **30 November and 13 December** at either St. Michael's Church (open most days until 3pm) or The Bridge Centre on Sheep Street (open Monday and Thursday, 10am until 12noon).

We'd be grateful to receive any of the following, but make sure they are alcohol-free and within date:

Christmas pudding | Christmas cake | quality biscuits | boxes of chocolates | sweets | nuts | luxury crisps | quality snacks | mince pies | tea, coffee, hot chocolate | pasta/rice | cranberry sauce | jams, chutneys | biscuits for cheese | non-alcoholic drinks | stuffing mix | other sauces | nice toiletry items

Any questions contact me at kathrynford@capuk.org or on 07885 579876.

Kathryn Ford



Lechlade History Society

On Monday 16 November, following a brief AGM, Trevor Jackson will join us to talk about The Oxford to *Fairford Railway Branch Line (1861-1970)*.

Lechlade's own station was on this line and we will have a scale model of the station on show at our meeting.

All our meetings are held in Lechlade Memorial Hall (GL7 3AY) where there is free parking, and doors open at 7pm for a 7:30pm start. All are welcome, there's no need to book and refreshments are available.

If you'd like to become a member, our fee is £8 for the year plus £2 per meeting; visitors pay just £4 per meeting.

Marian Winckles



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Contact: Michele 07798 817249
www. www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk

Gin, History and Community

On Wednesday 23 September, Highworth Historical Society kicked off their programme of talks for 2026/27 with a fantastic talk by local resident and ginthusiast, April Thrush. The talk was also one of a number of Highworth events supporting Swindon History Month.

April titled the talk *The History of Gin*, but it was so much more. April guided around 60 members and guests through the heritage, botanical origins and chequered past of gin up to the current day. During the evening there were opportunities to try different gins donated by local distilleries: Abingdon, Cirencester and Ramsbury, and further afield, Orkney Gin. The meeting was well received by our members who were able to put their new knowledge to the test in a fun quiz. Thank you to all those who attended; it was a great start to a year of new talks that focus on the Highworth community and the surrounding area.

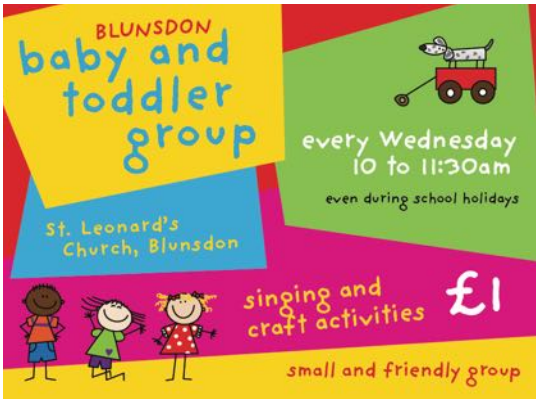




By the time you read this we will have had our October talk and be looking forward to the talk on **25 November**, *A Walk Around Faringdon (without going outside)*, to be given by Councillor Dr. Mark Wise, a Faringdon resident and town councillor. Faringdon is our nearest Oxfordshire market town, again with lots of interesting history to discover.

As mentioned in the September issue of Highworth's LINK Magazine, we are hosting an old-fashioned games evening in the church from 6pm to 8pm on **Wednesday 23 December**, which will be suitable for all ages. There will be a story corner and puzzle table, and some of the games our parents and grandparents and their families would have played on a cold winter's evening. The idea is to bring our community together, young and old. Look out for more information in December's issue and for posters around the town nearer the time.

Miriam and Tracy





Prospect Hospice Celebrates New Charity Shop

Prospect Hospice has opened a new charity shop in Watchfield, bringing its total number of shops to 18 and raising vital funds for local hospice care.

The shop was officially opened by Swindon Town Football Club goalkeeper Lewis Ward and Debbie Robson, a Watchfield resident and Team Leader for Prospect@Home, Prospect Hospice's community-based palliative care service.

It is Prospect Hospice's first new charity shop in two years and its first physical presence in the area. The opening supports the charity's ambition to generate £1 million a year through retail, helping fund clinical expertise, practical care and emotional support in people's homes, in the community and at the hospice.

Stuart Necrews, Head of Commercial Income at Prospect Hospice, said the team was delighted to put down roots in Watchfield. 'We've been caring for people across the area for many years, so having a physical presence here gives us another way to connect with the community,' he said. 'People can come together to shop, donate, volunteer and support local hospice care.'

The new shop was made possible with support from Imagine Cruising, which gifted Prospect Hospice £30,000 in 2025 towards developing a new retail outlet. Stuart added that the donation, alongside support from STFC, helped turn the charity's ambition into reality.



Lewis Ward said it was rewarding to see the impact of funds raised through STFC's partnership with Prospect Hospice. Sarah Seddon, Legal and Compliance Director at Imagine Cruising, said the hospice held 'a very special place' in the company's heart and praised the charity's work supporting local people and families during challenging times.

The Watchfield shop sells good-quality pre-loved clothing, shoes and accessories, books, toys, homeware and more, giving shoppers the chance to find something special while supporting local hospice care.

It can be found at 4 Majors Road, Watchfield SN6 8TQ, and is open seven days a week. To find out more about Prospect Hospice and its charity shops, visit www.prospect-hospice.net.

Mandy Hooper

Highworth Community Shed

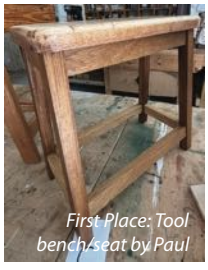
Over August and September, we held a competition for our members.

We had eight really lovely entries and, over the weekend of 26 and 27 September, the poll opened to determine the winner and runner-up. Every member who entered received a certificate to recognise their efforts.

In first place was a small tool bench/seat made by Paul, and our second place winner was Matt with his wishing well planter. You can see these brilliant items in the photographs.

If you are interested in joining the Shed, please contact Shed Manager Gary for further details.

Sue Dobbs, Chair of Trustees



First Place: Tool bench/seat by Paul



Second Place: Planter by Matt

Roald Dahl Celebrated at Southfield School

Our school was buzzing with excitement as we celebrated Roald Dahl Day in style on Friday 11 September!

Children and staff came dressed as their favourite Roald Dahl characters, books, or even Dahl's creative words. From the entertaining Mr. Willy Wonka to a wonderfully creative snozzcumber, the range of costumes was fantastic.

During assembly, the children proudly shared their costumes and talked about their favourite Roald Dahl stories, inspiring plenty of discussion about the characters and adventures that have captured readers' imaginations for generations.

Throughout the day there were a handful of mischievous Oompa Loompas spotted wandering the corridors, whilst jars of dreams appeared in classrooms bringing a touch of BFG magic to our learning environments. We also welcomed witches, a rather frightened mouse and several towering BFGs!





In the afternoon the children put their artistic skills to the test by sketching some of Dahl's famous characters in the distinctive style of illustrator Quentin Blake. The results were truly impressive!

It was a wonderful day filled with creativity, imagination and a love of reading. Great fun was had by all! Thanks to Mrs. Courtney for organising a super-fun day.

Kimberley O'Sullivan,
Head of School

ADVERTORIAL

Veale's Wheels Celebrates

On 31 July this year, Veale's Wheels Transfers celebrated its third anniversary of successful operation since the service's first customer was taken to Terminal 5 at Heathrow back in 2023.



Thanks must be extended to the wonderful residents of Highworth and the surrounding areas who have chosen to use Veale's Wheels Transfers this year. Simply put, without you the service could not have developed as it has during this third year of operation, which has seen the team of trusted associates I work with grow again.

It goes without saying that my team of trusted business associates and I look forward to being of service again in the year ahead, gladly welcoming new customers too, should you have an upcoming travel need of any distance. See our website to make your next booking: www.vealeswheelstransfers.com.

To Highworth and beyond!

Blessings, Peter

2,000 Cards, 2,000 Smiles

What an incredible Thinking of You Week we have had in Highworth!



Last year our community helped us write and deliver over 1,000 cards to people who might appreciate a little reminder that someone was thinking of them. This year we decided to set ourselves an even bigger challenge: 2,000 cards and 2,000 smiles.

And Highworth did it!

Throughout September, our writing station at Highworth Emporium was busy with customers choosing a free card and writing a few kind words to a complete stranger. Three Highworth schools – Westrop Primary School, Southfield Junior School and Eastrop Infants School – threw themselves into the campaign, with hundreds of wonderful messages written by their pupils. We were also delighted to have children joining us from Liden Academy in Swindon, St. Lawrence in Lechlade and The Elms in Faringdon, spreading our little Highworth initiative even further afield.



Our Scouts and Beavers once again got involved, not only writing cards but also helping us deliver them, spreading smiles throughout Highworth and beyond.

More than 600 cards were taken to patients at Great Western Hospital in Swindon, where NHS staff and volunteers helped distribute them across the wards. Others made their way to care homes, elderly residents and people throughout our community.

We were also delighted to have support from familiar local faces and organisations, including our Mayor, the Swindon Wildcats and Billy & Louie, who all took time to write cards and help spread the message.

But the most special part was seeing how something so simple could bring so much joy. A card costs very little, takes only a few minutes to write, yet those handwritten words can mean an enormous amount to the person receiving them.

A HUGE thank you to every pupil, teacher, customer, volunteer, Scout, Beaver, business, publisher and member of our community who helped us reach 2,000.

Aga Marsden, Highworth Emporium

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not die but have eternal life. John 3:16





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100-Year-Old Lion


Brian receiving the Melvin Jones Award from Mayor Julie

Highworth and District Lions celebrated with longest-serving member, Brian Bradbury Pratt, on his 100th Birthday!

Brian joined the Lions Club in 1976 and has been a dedicated part of the Lions family. Upon his retirement he was presented with the Lions International's highest honour, the Melvin Jones Award, in recognition of his long and active service. This plaque still takes pride of place on the wall in his bedroom.

Brian was instrumental in the opening of the Lions Charity Shop and still remembers when the shop was a hairdresser's. Thanks to its dedicated volunteers, the charity shop still thrives today enabling us to donate to local and international causes.

In September, 57 seniors from Highworth went on a coach trip to Weston-super-Mare. Everyone had a fabulous time enjoying the sunshine with fish and chips and ice cream, and even just watching the world go by. It was appreciated by all concerned.

We are looking forward to the Christmas Lights Switch-on when there will be many stalls along the High Street. The Lions are getting involved on the day and we'll have a tombola and games stall. There may be a visit from Father Christmas too! Come and see us on **Saturday 28 November** – it's going to be fun!

Our donations and pledges for this month:

Life Line Bags For Babies Relief	£800
Ukraine Generator LCI	£1,000
Nepal Disaster	£2,000
Nepal Military Nursing Student	£1,500


Day trippers head to Weston-super-Mare

Highworth and District Lions Club
Christmas Vouchers 2026

This festive season, Highworth & District Lions Club is once again delighted to offer Christmas Vouchers to residents across our local area.
These vouchers are our way of reaching out to those who may be facing difficult times, and we hope they will bring a little extra joy to make this Christmas feel special.

To be eligible, you must be aged 66 or over, and one voucher per household.

We know that for many, this time of year can bring extra worry, and we are proud to stand alongside our community to offer this small but meaningful gesture of care.

* NAME: _____

* ADDRESS: _____ * POST CODE: _____

TELEPHONE (For queries only): _____

* SIGNATURE: * DATE: _____/_____/2026

Please return this completed form to the Lions Charity Shop, Newburgh Place, Highworth before **Saturday November 7th 2026.** The number of vouchers is limited and Highworth & District Lions Charity Trust Fund (285690) reserves the right to close this offer early

Required *

Picture-Perfect Autumn for Camera Club

Now the darker nights are with us it is good to look back, and one of the best memories of the year for the Camera Club must be the club's Annual Exhibition.

In September the club welcomed just over 200 visitors to its Annual Exhibition. There was a display of over 100 of the members' pictures, with a raffle for selected pictures and a chance to vote for a favourite one.

We also held a private viewing evening for invited guests. Mayor of Highworth, Julie Murphy, was invited to select her favourite and she chose *No Room on Top* by Peter Osbourne. The result of the public vote was: 1st place, *Strawberry Splash* by Hilary Beach; 2nd place, *St John's Lock* by Christine Dunster; and in 3rd place, *Misty Coate Water* by Pauline Godwin. Well done to all!

The exhibition was generously sponsored by local businesses Highworth Travel, Hillier Funeral Service and Samuel Miles, so a huge thank you to them.

Each month there is a competition for members to enter. Three times a year we invite an external judge to give us feedback and constructive criticism on our efforts and to select a winner. This helps us to improve techniques and to give a different aspect to our pictures. The club also make trips out looking for photo opportunities over the year. Last month members made a trip to Wilton Windmill. The committee is now working on plans for next year's club programme and in December there will be the annual Christmas party and award ceremony.



Strawberry Splash by Hilary Beach

If you have an interest in photography or would like to improve your efforts or share your pictures using camera or phone, do join us. We meet **every second Tuesday of the month**, 7:30pm, at Highworth Community Centre. Outside of our monthly meetings, club members get together in smaller groups with special interests in various aspects of photography. These member groups meet up in person or online.

If you would like further information about the club, check out the club's website (www.highworthcameraclub.com), email us (highworthcamclub@gmail.com) or just come along.

Hilary Beach

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Ten Years at Cider HQ

This year marks ten years since Highworth Community Cider took over a dilapidated old workshop and gave it a major overhaul to make tasty and local cider.



After a decade of use, the building needed some important improvements and we are incredibly grateful to the local and national businesses that supported us.

Wickes donated £100 of guttering through its Community Programme. The application was straightforward, and we encourage other community groups to apply at www.wickes.co.uk/community-programme.

TileFlair donated grout and silicone to help transform our toilet and handwashing area. We sourced free tiles through Facebook Marketplace, and Jill – a cider fan and tiling apprentice – has been working hard to improve the space while developing her skills and confidence.

Swindon Signs generously printed, free of charge, our landscape scenery (complete with apple trees) on a Foamex board to cover an ugly boarded-up toilet window.

A huge thank you also goes to everyone who bought cider from us at Highworth May Day, FollyFest, South Cerney Duck Race and the Fairford and Gloucester Steam Shows. You helped make Summer 2026 a great success!

You can find us this Christmas at the STEAM and REME museums, as well as the Fairford and Highworth Christmas Lights Switch-ons.

We have now collected many sacks of apples and pears throughout September and October, given lots of apple scrats to Farmer Gow's and are busy planning for next year.

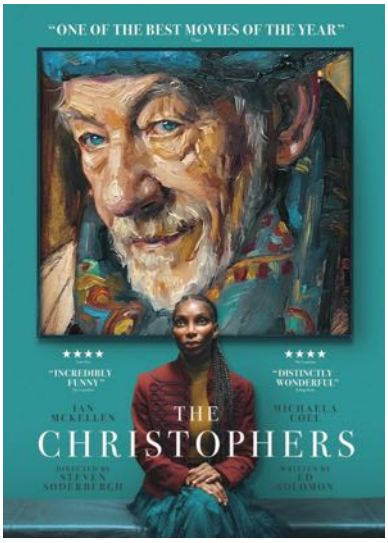
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Highworth Community Cinema

On Friday 27 November we will be holding our 20-minute AGM before we show this month's film. The agenda and papers will be available on the night and we will then show *The Christophers* (cert 15).



A mainstay of the London art scene since his starry breakout in the creative explosion of the 1960's, Julian Sklar (Ian McKellan) has drifted into a cluttered, self-imposed seclusion. His two estranged children enlist Lori, a young painter and sometime forger, to pose as a prospective assistant and gain access to a fabled series of unfinished canvases Julian has buried deep in his home studio, in a deceptive bid to secure an inheritance for themselves. Julian quickly figures out who Lori is and why she is there. Instead of a bitter clash, an unexpected friendship grows between the two artists as they discuss art, value and creation. 100 mins Cert 15.

There is no membership fee and admission is £6 on the door, with an extra 50p for tea, coffee and biscuits.

We meet at the United Reformed Church, High Street, Highworth SN6 7AG, where the doors open at 7:15pm for a 7:45pm screening.

For more information, please contact 01793 763907, email highworthfilms@gmail.com, or see our website, www.highworthfilms.org.uk.

Debbie

Highworth Am Dram Society Future Productions

It was fantastic to see such a great turnout at the auditions for Highworth Amateur Dramatic Society's (HADS) next pantomime, *Alice in Wonderland: Panto Blunderland*.

It was lovely to welcome both new and familiar faces, and we're delighted to announce that the cast has now been assigned. Rehearsals are getting underway as our talented cast and crew prepare to bring this wonderfully wacky adventure to life!

Join us on **Friday 5 and Saturday 6 February 2027** for a show packed with laughter, entertainment, mayhem and fun!

But that's not all! HADS is also busy planning a 1920s Murder Mystery Evening at Highworth Community Centre later this month on **Friday 14 November**.

Keep your eyes peeled for further details and ticket sales coming soon for the above productions. We've got plenty of entertainment in store, so make sure you don't miss out!

Come down the rabbit hole with us… and keep your wits about you!

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HBC Celebrates a Thrilling Finals Weekend

Highworth Bowls Club's 2026 Club Competition reached an exciting conclusion during a sun-filled finals weekend, with excellent bowling and plenty of closely fought matches. Many contests remained undecided until the final end, keeping players and spectators absorbed throughout.

The club thanks everyone who entered and extends special appreciation to the helpers and markers who gave their time, some at very short notice, to help the weekend run smoothly, and especially to Andy Sears who managed the competition entries throughout the year.

2026 Club Competition Winners

Over-55 Singles Champion	Kevin Brown
Ladies' Champion	Linda Young
2-Wood Singles	Keith Latimer
Men's 4-Wood	Shaun Hicks
Open Plate	Bill Hogg
Open Handicap	Linda Young
Beginner Trophy	Sam Cheesley
Open Pairs	Mark Richman & Steve Leighfield
Men's Pairs	Paul Barrow & Chris Pomfrey
Open Triples	Chris Mussen, Bill Hogg & Maggie Jordan

Congratulations go to every finalist and, in particular, to this year's champions.

Kevin Brown

Wrag Barn Ladies Finish Top of the League

While the Europeans and Americans were battling it out in the Solheim Cup in the Netherlands, our Wrag Barn Ladies were contesting the Wiltshire League final at home.

The weather was very wet, requiring the players to adapt as the bunker sand became heavy and the greens slowed in the damp conditions. Despite the challenging weather, the matches against Marlborough were hard fought; but Wrag Barn won the day, meaning the Wiltshire League title will remain at the Barn.

Marlborough finished second in the Wiltshire League, and several of the ladies pictured also join forces to represent Wiltshire Golf at regional events. On those occasions, players who compete against each other for their clubs become teammates, which is one of the things that makes county golf so enjoyable. The competition and companionship are a great example of how clubs can come together, compete against one another and enjoy the game. Well played, everyone!

Verity Manners



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Shrivenham Park Golf Club

Whilst we await our fate following the hearing with the housing development company, the club has very much been business-as-usual.

Spoils for September saw Harry Williams win our September Medal whilst his brother lifted the Stableford trophy. During that same month, our Social Putters supported a MacMillan coffee morning, raising in excess of three figures (and growing). The Social Putters' coffee mornings have now reverted back to the previous 10am to 12pm timetable, the next being held on **6 November** – all are welcome.

Our Christmas planning is now well under way with a gathering for seasonal coffee on **4 December** to enjoy nibbles and hot drinks. Entertainment will be delivered by Graham on the keyboard along with a choral interlude from Bourton's Village Voices.

Our Juniors will come together on **5 December** to form teams of three players with the adults to enjoy the successful format of last year. Celebratory meals and a presentation will of course follow.

Our Ladies will no doubt be planning to celebrate with a Christmas lunch, and the club's main Texas and Seniors game is also being planned at the time of writing.

SPGC has hosted various societies this year that have enjoyed fresh air and good friendships long after the last putt on the 18th hole has been sunk; we would dearly love this to continue next year. Everyone is welcome on our course and we, along with most of Shrivenham and Watchfield, hope our beloved green space will remain.

Carole Lee

Highworth Town Walking Football Club

Our Over-60s played in a tournament in Maidenhead in September which was run as two small leagues, the top two teams from each league then progressing to the semi-final and then final. Highworth ended the league games finishing on top and progressed to the semi-final against the second-placed team from the other league.

Sadly we lost 1-0 in the semi-final, but all in all it was a good performance from the team, especially as we didn't have an out-and-out striker on the day.

For anyone wishing to join in the recreational sessions, there are both outdoor and indoor sessions available. Outdoor sessions can be enjoyed on **Thursdays and Sundays** from 11am to 12pm held at Stratton's Grange Leisure Centre on 3G pitches, and an indoor session is available on **Friday mornings** at The Highworth Rec from 11:30am to 12:30pm.

All sessions take place on a 'pay and play' basis: £4.50 for the sessions in Stratton and £3.50 at Highworth, all payable by credit/debit card (no cash) directly to the sports centre. If you are over 50 and interested in finding out more, please do get in touch with me at highworthwfc@outlook.com or 07769 703702.

Graham Seeley



To advertise in The Highworth Link contact
advertising@highworthlink.co.uk or visit
www.highworthlink.co.uk



Courtesy of Fraser Haines

Highworth Town Football Club

Saturday 26 September saw the opening of the refurbished SaveOnTyres Stadium with a league fixture versus Cribbs. A bumper crowd of 377 saw Highworth Town win 1-0, to extend their unbeaten run to seven matches and rise to 11th in the Hellenic League Premier Division. A huge thank you to all involved in the project, including everyone who carried out the work. The finished arena is something Highworth can be mightily proud of.

Derek Lloyd

Highworth Town Juniors Thank Sponsors

As we move through the 26/27 season, Highworth Town Juniors Football Club would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our incredible sponsors. Your support continues to make a genuine difference to every child who pulls on a Highworth shirt and we are truly grateful for the commitment you show to grassroots football in our community.

A special mention must go to HTC, whose hard work, persistence and dedication have been instrumental in progressing the 3G project for Highworth. Their efforts behind the scenes have been non-stop and the positive impact this facility will have on local football for years to come cannot be overstated. Our teams are already enjoying playing on the pitch and we hope to give many more children the opportunity to play.

This season has also seen fantastic growth across our development pathways. Our Hawks are still going strong, welcoming our youngest players into football with fun, structured sessions (ages 3 to 6). Alongside this, our Wildcats programme continues to thrive, offering girls (ages 5 to 11) a brilliant introduction to the game in a supportive and enjoyable environment.

As a volunteer-run club, we are always looking for more coaches, helpers and supporters to join us. Whether you can give an hour a week or help at events, every contribution strengthens the experience we provide for our players.

Thank you once again to all our sponsors and supporters. Your backing helps us grow, improve and continue delivering football for the children of Highworth.

Kelly Preston


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Highworth
Remembrance Service
SUNDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2026
The procession will take place at 9.30am followed by a service at St Michael's Church at 10am.
Everyone is welcome
"Through battles fought, through lives laid down, their legacy lives on. In every poppy worn, in every moment of peace, we honour their memory"
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28 NOVEMBER
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News from Highworth's Mayor



As I write, the air is definitely feeling autumnal which can only mean one thing – it's event season in Highworth!

Our annual fireworks will open at 6pm on **Friday 6 November** at the Lower Rec, with stalls, funfair and refreshments. Tickets are available from Highworth Town Council, Visit Highworth and the Co-op Post Office. November is also a time of remembrance, and I will be honoured to join the community at the Remembrance Service at St. Michael's Church on **Sunday 8 November**. We are also looking forward to our Christmas Lights Switch-On on **Saturday 28 November**, from 10am to 5:30pm, bringing the community together to celebrate the start of the festive season.

It was fantastic to attend the first football match at our new 3G pitch. Reaching this stage is a great achievement, and it is wonderful to see people of all ages enjoying this fantastic new facility.

I was also honoured to attend Brian Bradbury Pratt's 100th birthday celebration. Brian was an active member of Highworth Lions for many years, dedicating his time and service to our community. It was a privilege to celebrate this wonderful milestone with Brian and guests.

I enjoyed attending the Highworth Artists' Society and Highworth Camera Club exhibitions, both showcasing the incredible talent and creativity within our community. Choosing my favourite pieces was no easy task, particularly as my own photographs are usually out of focus and include my thumb!

I hope everyone enjoyed our Halloween/Autumn Market and Ghost Trail, which helped raise valuable funds for the Mayor's Charity, the Roxi Foundation.

The Council remains busy delivering major projects and we hope our Highworth Neighbourhood Plan 2 will proceed to referendum in December. Thank you for your continued support.

Highworth truly is a wonderful community, and I am proud to be your Mayor.

Julie Murphy, Mayor

HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

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Highworth Community Church



You're invited

come as you are

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Sunday Gatherings

Warneford School Hall, SN6 7BZ

Refreshments from 9:45am

Main Gathering starts at 10:30am

Remembrance Services

On Sunday 8 November, you're welcome to join with your local church for the annual Remembrance service.

St. Leonard's Church,
Broad Blunsdon, 10am

St. Michael's Church,
Highworth, 10am

St. John the Baptist Church,
Hannington, 10:30am

Highworth's Roll of Honour 1939-1945

William Thomas Edward ALEXANDER
James William ARKELL
Cecil Robert ASHTON
Colin Abbott BONNER
Albert G. BROWN
David Jesse CHEESLEY
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Herbert John SMITH
Stanley George SMITH
Albert Lionel TAME
William Henry WOODBRIDGE

www.highworthhistoricalsociety.org.uk



St. Leonard's Parish Church Stanton Fitzwarren

1 November	Morning Worship, 9:30am
8 November	Remembrance Service, 10:55am This will be a short ceremony at the war memorial with a silence at 11am, followed by a quiet reflective service in church. Join us for either or both.
15 November	Team Service at St. Margaret's, 10am
22 November	Holy Communion, 9:30am
29 November	Team Advent Service at St. Leonard's, 10am

Join us for our Stanton Coffee Morning on **Wednesday 18 November** at Stanton House Hotel. We will meet at 10:15am for coffee and chat, and then Jo Mowatt will reflect on her work as a Rehabilitation Officer for Visual Impairment (ROVI).

Thank you to everyone who gave food at our Harvest Festival. It has been donated to the Swindon Food Collective to help local families.

The church building will be open every Wednesday in school term time from 10am to 4pm, or telephone Liz and Roger on 01793 762935 to organise for the building to be open for you to visit.

Please go to www.stantonchurch.info for updates.

St. James' Church, Sevenhampton

22 November	Evensong, 4pm

St. Leonard's Church, Broad Blunsdon

29 November	Candles for Remembrance, 4pm (No 10am service this day)

St. Michael's Church Highworth

The church is open daily for private prayer.

10:15am Sunday Service

We meet in St. Michael's Church and groups for children and youth are held during this service, with refreshments being served after the service.

First, third and fifth Sundays are Morning Worship, second and fourth Sundays are Holy Communion.

The live service can be found on YouTube by searching 'St. Michaels Church Highworth'.

8:30am Holy Communion (BCP)

First and third Sundays

11am Midweek Communion

On the **third Wednesday of each month** from 11am. Coffee and cake served from 10:15am.

Prayers

Tuesday Prayers at 9:30am.

Friday Blessings from 9:15am.

The **second and fourth Mondays** see Prayer Hour in the Church Room at 7:30pm (excluding bank holidays).

We remember those we love and miss

Mary (Mair) Huband

We welcome in Holy Baptism

Percy Fortescue-Smith
Etta Peake

Praying for the roads in the town

1 November	Stranks Close and Stroma Way
8 November	Swanborough and Swindon Road
15 November	Swindon Street and Turnpike Road
22 November	Vicarage Lane and Vorda Road
29 November	Wessex Way and Westhill Close



With thanks to all those who have sponsored the floodlighting of St. Michael's Church



5/10/2026

Eric Ryder

Remembering a dearly loved Dad, Bamp and Great Gramp on his birthday.
Forever in our hearts and thoughts.
Janice and Pas, Louisa and Chris, Pep,
Amy and Carina xxxx

15/10/2026

George Sheikh

On your birthday. Thinking of you always.
Love you, Lina, Chris, Jacob, Thomas and Jasper x

3/11/2026

Seven years have passed, we miss you every day.
Lindsay, Mark, Ben and Lucy xxxx

25/11/2026 – 27/11/2026

For Jean and Bryn

26/11/2026

Joyce Ryder

Remembering a special Mum, Nan and Great Nan on her birthday.
Loved and missed every day,
Love Janice and Pas, Louisa and Chris, Pep,
Amy and Carina xxxx

26/11/2026

Maureen Trollope

Treasured memories of someone so special and so loved.
Always in our hears and missed every day.
John, Sara, Paul, Danny, Becky and grandchildren x

27/11/2026 – 29/11/2026

Brian Moody

Sadly missed, thinking of you always.
Love Chris, Dawn, Simon, Barbra, Rich and families xxx

Floodlighting forms are available from St. Michael's Church office, Vicarage Lane, or the church website at www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk/floodlighting. Your dedication will appear in an issue of Highworth's LINK Magazine.


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Root & Branch (Mental Health Therapeutic Centre)	01793 782999

Highworth LINK magazine

Published under the auspices of Highworth Churches Together.

Published by Highworth LINK Magazine Community Interest Company, which operates to provide a benefit to the community it serves.

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Highworth LINK magazine is published monthly except in January and August.

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Contributions:

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Email is preferred, otherwise deliver to The Bridge Centre, 8 Sheep Street, Highworth.

Make sure you are writing for a general audience, not just your own organisation. News stories should not exceed 200 words. If it's too long we will ask you to cut it. Articles may be longer but get in touch first to save the inconvenience of a rejection. Photographs and advertising artwork should be clear, with good contrast. JPEG electronic format is preferred. The print process requires images ideally to be 300dpi for best results. Low resolution images, that appear clear on screen, will print blurred depending on the size and resolution of the image supplied.

Make sure any people in photos agree that the photo can be published in the magazine and on the web. Get parental consent in the case of minors.

Please indicate if you are using AI for any image/photo creation. All images generated in AI will require a caption noting the fact.

Submission Deadlines:

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23 December

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HIGHWORTH FORGET-ME-NOT CAFÉ

HIGHWORTH FORGET-ME-NOT MEMORY CAFÉ

WEDNESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2026, 2-4PM

Music by Highworth Ukulele Club



HIGHWORTH COMMUNITY CENTRE
THE DORMERS SN6 7PQ

www.highworthforgetmenot.org
info@highworthforgetmenot.org
07771853337
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