

# Plumpton & East Chiltington News

## December 2025



*Merry Christmas to all our readers!*



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## **Happy Circle**

**Thursday 11th December**

**The Christmas Party**

Ukulele Band, School Children singing and  
Father Christmas What could be finer?

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Cherie 01273891592

## **Jumble Sale**

**Saturday 6th December**

Cricket Club

2pm

Please bring jumble to the Hall before  
10.30.

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***12th December for January***

***15th January for February***

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## **Plumpton Parish Council**

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

### **Parish Council Report** **December 2025**

#### **NOTICE OF VACANCY on Plumpton Parish Council**

Following the resignation of Graham Peacock, a vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Graham for his time, dedication, and contribution during his service on the Council.

Are you passionate about your community? Do you want to make a lasting difference and help shape the future of our parish? Do you have fresh ideas or concerns you'd like to see addressed? If so, we'd love to hear from you.

We are seeking enthusiastic individuals from all backgrounds to put themselves forward for co-option to the Council. This is your chance to get involved, make positive change, and help represent the views of local residents. If you are interested in joining us, please contact our Clerk, Anita Emery via

[clerk@plumptonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@plumptonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

#### **Make a difference — become a Parish Councillor.**

#### **Pocket Park**

The Parish Council would like to inform residents that work will soon be taking place in the Pocket Park (the area west of the allotments). While the area has largely been left to develop naturally for the benefit of wildlife, a recent inspection has identified the presence of Ash Dieback on several ash trees. This disease causes trees to become brittle and unstable, creating a potential safety hazard in a public space. As the Pocket Park is a Parish Council-owned amenity, there is a responsibility to manage these risks and ensure the area remains safe and accessible. In the coming weeks, the site will be professionally surveyed, and any trees identified as dangerous will be felled.

We recognise that the loss of ash trees threatens biodiversity, as many insects, birds, and plants depend on them for habitat. Moving forward the ReNature Plumpton project team are looking at strategies to monitor the wildlife and restore loss of habitat and the team will soon begin removal of an invasive species of rose to help restore balance to the park's natural environment.

#### **Nolands Site**

We would like to thank all residents for their vigilance and continued reporting of issues relating to lorry movements to and from the Nolands development site. The council appreciate your concern for safety, particularly around school times, and understand the disruption caused when Station Road is blocked. Please be assured that we are fully aware of the situation and have been in regular contact with the developers, Elivia, to address these matters. While it is recognised that not all incidents are directly the responsibility of the developers, they do have a clear duty to manage delivery traffic appropriately, and we will continue to work with them to ensure that routes and timings are better controlled for the safety and wellbeing of the community.

#### **Yellow Developer Signs**

The Parish Council has contacted East Sussex Highways regarding the growing number of yellow developer notices being attached to existing traffic signs within the Parish. We are pleased to confirm that action has now been taken and the unlicensed signs have been removed. If you notice any signage fixed to road traffic signs that appears out of place, please do report it — ESCC will review it and confirm whether it has the proper licence. Residents should also be aware that any sign displaying only the developer's name is considered commercial advertising, which is not permitted. Such signs will not be licensed and should be reported to ESCC Highways.

Please note the date of the next Parish Council meeting is December 9th, 19:45hrs in the Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend.





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With the leaves now nearly off the trees as we move from Autumn to Winter and with the bonfire season behind us, it's the festive time of year again as we get ready for Christmas. At this time of year, it's good to reflect all that has happened in the Parish over the last twelve months or so.

We've had our annual litter pick in March, once again keeping the verges around the parish as tidy as possible. Sadly, walking around the roads recently, it's clear that the litter is building up again despite our best efforts. We've installed a dog waste bin near Hollycroft to encourage dog walkers to keep the footpaths free of dog waste.

Earlier in the year, after months of badgering the folks at Highways, we managed to get them to put new road signs at the end of Honeypot Lane, and since then we have had no more cars ending up in the hedge across the junction with Novington Lane. It's extraordinary to think we had around eight cars in the hedge before the signs were put in place.

After much discussion, we've managed to get essential work done on our church, which hopefully by the time of publication, means it will be safe to use again. Discussions will continue as to how the church might be used to the benefit of the community and of course, funded.

Again, numerous discussions with Lewes District Council through our district councillor, will hopefully result in properly place flooding depth indicators around the areas where the river floods after heavy rains. It happens every year so it would be helpful to have an accurate indication of the depth of water.

The Monday Group have continued their work at keeping our footpaths, stiles, and gateways in good order making country walks through the Parish landscape something we can all enjoy - our thanks go to them for the work they do.

Back in July our pirate-themed Summer party

was a great success, and the weather gods were kind to us. A lot of work goes into organising this making it a true community event.

On Planning matters, we have visited, discussed and denied or approved planning proposals throughout the year, always keeping a mindful eye on developments that help the community. North Barnes Eton Town, remains undeliverable as determined by Lewes District Council and we see no reason why this would change. The Local Plan rumbles on slowly, and we are told should be in place around this time next year.

We have had discussions with representatives from the South Downs National Park which we border, as to how access on and off the park could be improved. We have also stressed with them, and they agree, the importance of maintaining the dark skies designation in our area, which of course means any large scale development would likely damage this.

And we work closely with the team at TECT who do so much to protect and enhance the TECT field which they report on separately in this magazine.

Finally, a heartfelt thankyou to everyone who has contributed to Parish life this year. We hope you have a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year and continue to enjoy life in the Parish.

This is a composite advertisement. At the top left, the "JUST HELPING" logo is displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with a small graphic of a hand holding a heart. Below it, the text "Registered Charity number 1149068" is written. To the right of this text is a small tree icon and the name "St Peter &amp; St James Hospice" followed by the tagline "Hospice care in the heart of Sussex". On the right side of the advertisement, there are two circular inset photographs: the top one shows a person working on a tree, and the bottom one shows a smiling person's face. The central text "RECYCLE YOUR TREE" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the website address "www.just-helping.org.uk/register-tree" is provided. At the bottom left, the "giftaid it" logo is visible, and next to it is the "FR" logo with the text "Registered with the FUNDRAISING REGULATOR". The bottom right corner features a stylized illustration of a Christmas tree.

PLUMPTON VILLAGE SOCIETY

# NEW YEARS DAY WALK

Meet at Plumpton Station at 10.30am

The route will start at Plumpton Station,  
go out to East Chiltington Church and  
back to Plumpton via North Barnes Lane.

Mulled wine and blackcurrant squash at  
the half way point.

Dogs welcome

For any queries, contact: [plumptonvillagesociety@gmail.com](mailto:plumptonvillagesociety@gmail.com)





### **Daniel Stewart-Roberts, District Councillor**

I am working with the site managers of the Nolands Development to minimise the amount of lorry traffic on Station Road during the times it is full of schoolchildren and their parents. They do understand residents' concerns and I hope the situation will improve soon. One helpful step, which may already have happened by the time this article appears, is a change to the site entrance layout, so that lorries can turn left into the site. This will eliminate the need for them to turn round at the Riddens Lane junction, which has been a major nuisance as well as a heightened safety risk.

I know that I spend a lot of time publicising LDC consultations. Here is another one: Lewes District Council has launched a public consultation on its proposed new framework for ensuring that residents struggling with council debts are treated fairly, consistently and with compassion. The proposed Fair Debt Policy aims to strike a crucial balance between the council's legal duty to collect outstanding debts - such as council tax, rent, housing benefit overpayments, and non-domestic rates (business rates) - and providing effective support to individuals and families facing genuine financial hardship. The consultation is open now and will run until Friday, December 15. You can view the draft policy and share your opinion via the online survey at [www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/fair-debt-policy-consultation](http://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/fair-debt-policy-consultation)

A reminder to use the Love Clean Streets app to report fly tipping and similar problems. I was pleased to see a pile of tyres on the B2116 removed the day after I reported them recently.

Email: [daniel.stewart-roberts@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.stewart-roberts@lewes.gov.uk)

Telephone/text: 07966 338429

## **PLUMPTONFEST 2025**

It was a great evening at the Village Hall on Saturday 11th October, as 11 local acts took to the stage for PLUMPTONFEST 2025. This biennial event saw old timers and newcomers deliver a variety of music in front of an enthusiastic audience, while the Football club bar provided welcome refreshments.

The evening generated a profit of £473 from ticket sales, which has been donated to Plumpton Primary School to support an exciting project that widens access to learning brass instruments.

Thanks to all the performers who delivered such a great show and to everyone who supported the event. We are looking forward to the next one in October 2027 - so get practicing so you too can get involved.

**Saturday 9th October 2027**—Keep the date free!

To see more about Plumptonfest, visit our Facebook page!



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## **Jumble Sales Up-date on organising**

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

From 24 November 2025, you must book a slot to visit all household waste recycling sites in East Sussex. These are both Maresfield and Lewes. The quickest and easiest way to book is using the online booking system.

You can book to visit on the same day, and up to two weeks in advance.

The opening hours for Maresfield:

Monday	8am - 4pm
Tuesday	8am - 4pm
Wednesday	8am - 4pm
Thursday	8am - 4pm
Friday	8am - 4pm
Saturday	8am - 4pm
Sunday	9am - 4pm

Just a few reminders of how to organise a successful Jumble.

Ring the British Heart Foundation in Haywards Heath a week before the Jumble to ask them to collect the books, CDs, DVDs and any good quality bric-a-brac on the Tuesday following the Jumble. Telephone 01444 459526.

Clothes, bags, shoes and belts are put in black sacks and taken to the recycling bin at Plumpton Primary School.

Toys and any other items leftover on the stage and bric-a-brac tables are taken to the tip. It is a good idea to separate items into wood, plastic, glass, metal etc., as this makes it easier once you are at the tip.

Most importantly you need helpers – lots of helpers, especially in the afternoon.

Hope you have a successful Jumble Sale.

## **Jumble Sale in aid of Plumpton Cricket Club**

# **Saturday 6th December 2025**

At  
2pm

Refreshments and Tombola

Please bring Jumble to the hall  
before 10.30am

NO large items of furniture, electrical items, duvets or hospital equipment will be accepted.

## **Plumpton Primary School**

Plumpton Primary School have now got a **Second Hand Clothes Recycling Bin** situated by the school gate (next to the bike shed).

By donating your old items, you will be helping raise much needed funds for the school.

**The more you  
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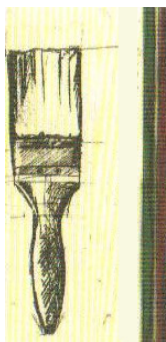
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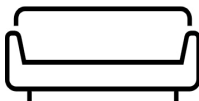
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**JOY TO THE WORLD**

These days our default setting seems to be to be stuck on 'gloom and doom' mode. Sure, we have a war in Europe, conflict in the Middle East, cost of living crisis, etc... I could go on, but there is a lot to be grateful for.

We are all witnessing first hand the effects of climate change, there are lots of global summits that may appear not to deliver much, but without them and the engagement of committed individuals, things would have been a whole lot worse, sadly change never comes as quickly as we'd like it to.

On a more positive note, we are much more knowledgeable and committed to addressing this than we were 20 years ago. Recycling has vastly improved, we are more aware of buying ethically sourced food, avoiding single use items, and striving for a greener future. There is so much to be hopeful for, as I write this the BBC are hosting 'Children in Need'. Despite all the economic issues of recent times, each year seems to achieve unbelievable amounts raised. It's not a one night wonder, it supports good causes all year.

Another doom buster is a greater sense of community, thanks in no small part to our lockdown experiences, a time when it became ok to check on our neighbours and discard our natural British reserve.

So, now for the fun stuff! As we do our Christmas shopping we can rely on good 'ol Noddy Holder's dulcet tones to tell us 'It's Christmas!' 'It's not what it used to be' the doom mongers love to tell us, we'll, we've been hearing that old Christmas chestnut for decades, before most of the doomers were even born. It's what you make it, remember this Christmas we're making memories that

our little people will cherish for years.

My dad loved to tell us of the parlour games they played and the joy of finding an orange and a new penny in their Christmas stockings.

We're hosting Christmas Day at DR Towers, there will be several little people present, there will be pass the parcel, ring on a string and squeak piggy squeak. There will be token prizes and the fun will not be confined to the little ones!

We all experience Christmas in our own particular way, some via the Christmas story and going to church, others join in the way they choose. If it involves joy and goodwill, that's ok with me.

I'm always amazed at the number of people that give time to others at Christmas.

By the time you read this we will know what was in 'Rachel from accounts' little red case, whatever it was, we still have much to be grateful for. To the doom mongers I say, 'be grateful for the half of the glass that's full!'

As for me, I'm hoping for an apple in my stocking... I could do with a new phone!

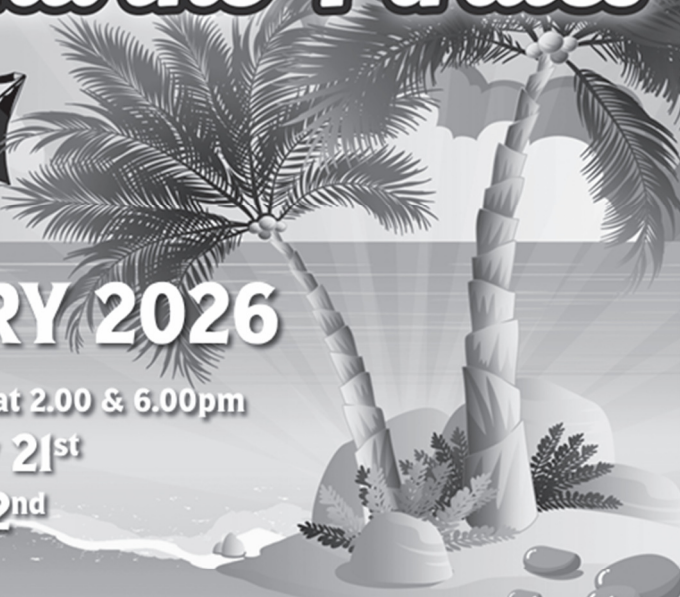
**PEACE AND HOPE TO EVERYONE.**





**Plumpton Pantomime Society** proudly presents

# Robinson Crusoe *and the Pirates*



**JANUARY 2026**

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> at 2.00 & 6.00pm**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> at 2.30 & 7.30pm**

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website: [jandbcleaning.co.uk](http://jandbcleaning.co.uk)

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## **Save Summer 2026: Plumpton Activity Scheme Seeks Committee Heroes!**

**After more than 35 years of summer fun, the Plumpton Activity Scheme faces closure. This isn't a funding crisis; it's a volunteer crisis. Without new committee members, particularly a new Chair, the scheme will not be able to run activities for your children in the Summer of 2026.**

The **Plumpton Activity Scheme** (PAS) has been a vibrant, essential part of our village life for over three decades. Every summer, we provide **affordable, fun, and educational activities** for children aged 5 to 11 at Primary School. It's not just a place for the kids to play; it's a vital, subsidised childcare option that keeps our community thriving.

Our Chairperson is standing down due to personal commitments and to allow fresh talent to take over which aligns to the PAS constitution.

This isn't a luxury role—it's essential. The small committee is now desperately searching for new volunteers to step up, take the lead, and secure the scheme's future. **Without a new Chair and immediate assistance on the committee, we simply cannot organise the 2026 scheme, and it will have to close.**

If the Plumpton Activity Scheme closes, the impact on our village families will be:

- **Loss of Affordable Childcare:** Parents will be left scrambling for alternatives that are often far more expensive or require travel outside of Plumpton.

- **A Staple of Summer Fun Ends:** Our children will lose the local, engaging, and educational sessions that have become a hallmark of their summer holidays.

- **The End of a 35-Year Legacy:** We will lose a deeply rooted community asset that relies on the generous contributions of local businesses and groups.

This is not a financial appeal—it's a plea for **your time and skills**. The jobs are vital, but they are manageable when shared.

We are urgently looking for people to join our small, friendly committee to help with the organisation of the **2026 scheme**.

### **The Most Urgent Roles We Need to Fill:**

- **Chairperson:** To oversee and lead the committee.

- **Committee Members:** To share the workload and handle key tasks.

Committee work – it's less than you think! The committee work is done during the non-summer months and includes:

- Arranging staff and volunteers for the scheme.
- Booking activities and venues.
- Updating essential policies and procedures.
- Handling general correspondence and admin.

Meetings are predominantly on line so if your children are affiliated to the village but you live outside it would not prevent you from being on the committee.

### **ACT NOW! Don't Let the Scheme Close**

Please, if you value having affordable, local summer activities and childcare for your children, step forward today. We need new energy and commitment from parents and community members to keep this essential service going and preferably need to understand who is able to step forward prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is planned for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

**To learn more or to volunteer, please contact us immediately at:**

**PlumptonActivityScheme@gmail.com**

**The future of the Plumpton Activity Scheme is now in the hands of the community. Let's not let 35 years of summer fun come to an end.**

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07786615686

## Rev. Anne Dunlop

In the church there are a number of 'events' which seem to tumble out one after the other and, until they have been observed, I cannot turn my attention to Christmas. They are All Saints, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday and the final service in the liturgical year, Christ the King at the end of the month. Having reached the end of November things seem to come to a shuddering stop. Then we are straight into a new church year with the four weeks of Advent running up to Christmas itself. Advent requires that we slow right down.

This is, of course, in complete contrast with what is going on 'outside' of church. There it is all busyness and preparation. But even here, the church has influenced what is done. The last Sunday before Advent has an opening prayer which asks God to 'Stir up the wills of thy faithful people...' This became known as 'stir up Sunday' when traditionally the Christmas pudding was prepared well in advance and left to mature, to be heated (and lit!) on Christmas Day itself.

I have never been a Christmas pudding maker, but my sister is a stickler for traditions. We have an ancient diary dated 1891 passed through the family. In it, in faint copper plate writing, is 'Nanny's recipe' which is dutifully followed even though for years we never knew quite what 'brown ale' was and generally chucked in Guinness going by the colour rather than flavour. There follows the 'great stirring ceremony' (compulsory for anyone present) and the obligatory wish for the coming year. The small people put in money - carefully sterilised and wrapped in aluminium foil - no food poisoning ever reported although and much cheating reported by those taking a slice. Tragically this is now a dying custom, so few use coins. Back in the day, my father-in-law used to amuse the children by pretending to choke on an American Express credit card.

Back to Advent and the purposeful 'slow down'. The colour in the church changes to penitential purple, we have no flowers, and the hymns are reflective in tone. There is a sense of anticipation, a waiting, marked only by the growing number of candles on the Advent wreath as we count down the Sundays. For

four weeks the church seems to hold its breath despite all the increasing excitement.

C S Lewis captured this in his poem *The Turn of the Tide*. He pictures a 'deathly stillness' spreading from Bethlehem to Jerusalem to 'the islands of the North'. To Rome to Carthage and the Nile. He imagines the earth sending out a signal to the rest of the cosmos. He captures the moment at which the tide was neither going in nor going out, the moment of stillness before momentous change. Suddenly the tide begins to rush in, life returns and pulsates into space. Heaven dances and 'A shiver of re-birth and deliverance on the earth went gliding.' It is his way of saying that here, in this event, the birth of Jesus, something decisive has happened to the constitution of the cosmos. This is the hiatus of history and the turning point of time.

Breathless was the air over Bethlehem. Black and bare  
Were the fields; hard as granite the clods;  
...And the deathly stillness spread from Bethlehem. It was shed  
Wider each moment on the land...  
So it ran about the girth of the planet. From the Earth  
A signal, a warning, went out  
And away behind the air. Her neighbours were aware  
Of change. They were troubled with a doubt...  
...Then pulsing into space with delicate, dulcet pace  
Came a music, infinitely small  
And clear. But it swelled and drew nearer and held  
All worlds in the sharpness of its call...  
A shiver of re-birth and deliverance on the Earth  
Went gliding. Her bonds were released.  
Into broken light a breeze rippled and woke the seas,  
In the forest it startled every beast...  
So death lay in arrest. But at Bethlehem the bless'd  
Nothing greater could be heard  
Than a dry wind in the thorn, the cry of the One new-born,  
And cattle in stall as they stirred.



## **Church Services for December 2025**

<b>Sunday 7th December</b> All Saints	<b>Advent 2</b> 11.00am	Family Communion
<b>Sunday 14th December</b> All Saints	<b>Advent 3</b> 11.00am	<b>Gaudete Sunday</b> Family Communion
<b>Wednesday 17th December</b> St Michael's	<b>Christmas Fair at Plumpton College</b> 6.00pm	Carol Service
<b>Sunday 21st December</b> All Saints	<b>Advent 4</b> 11.00am 5.00pm	Family Communion Carol Service
<b>Wednesday 24th December</b> All Saints	<b>Christmas Eve</b> 4.00pm 11.30pm	Family Crib Service Crib Midnight Communion
<b>Thursday 25th December</b> All Saints	<b>Christmas Day</b> 11.00am	Family Communion
<b>Sunday 28th December</b> All Saints	<b>Christmas 1</b> 11.00am	<b>The Holy Innocents</b> Family Communion
<b>Sunday 4th January</b> All Saints	<b>Christmas 2</b> 11.00am	Family Communion

**Refreshments are served in the church annex after all Sunday morning services at All Saints church, Plumpton Green. Please do join us.**

A said service of Holy Communion is held in All Saints church, Plumpton Green, each Tuesday at 11.30am.

A substantial lunch is provided in the church annex each Tuesday meeting at 12.30pm. All are welcome. Suggested donation £5.00.

For general church matters please contact Rev Anne Dunlop 01273 890006 [revannedunlop@gmail.com](mailto:revannedunlop@gmail.com) in the first instance or one of the Churchwardens.

East Chiltington - Janice Doran 07484 348341 [jncdoran@gmail.com](mailto:jncdoran@gmail.com)

Plumpton Howard Wood 07794484373 [hawood167@hotmail.com](mailto:hawood167@hotmail.com)

Mike Middleton 07977 942167 [mike@middleton.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:mike@middleton.eclipse.co.uk)

**Want to hire the Church Annex?**

**Please speak to Bob Doran on 07484138203**

**Christmas Greetings to everyone from the Parish of Plumpton  
with East Chiltington cum Novington**



# VILLAGE EVENTS CALENDAR



**VH** = Village Hall

**HQ** = Scout HQ

**TC** = Tennis Club

**StM** = St Michael's

**ANX** = Church Annex

**PAV** = Pavilion

**ECC** = East Chiltington Church

**Sch** = Plumpton School

**ALC** = All Saints Church

## BOOKINGS

Village Hall & Pavilion:

Jane Donovan 07747 050903 or 01273 891036

## 2025

**6th Dec** - Cricket Club Jumble Sale

VH

**17th Dec** - Christmas Fair at Plumpton College

## 2026

**1st Jan** - New Years Day Walk

**28th Feb** - Horticultural Society Jumble Sale

VH

Plumpton & District  
Footpath Society

## PROGRAMME FOR DECEMBER 2025



**Wednesday 3rd December** - A 4 mile circular walk from Firle Charleston Farm House, starting at 10.30

Walk Leaders: Geoff and Gill Medhurst 01273 890055

**Saturday 13th December** - Meet at the Village Hall at 10.30 for a short circular (3m) followed by a cup of tea and Christmas nibbles in the Village Hall (12 till 1). All members welcome, whether you walk or not.

Walk Leaders—Judy and John Lawrenson 01273 472277

**Sunday 28th December** - This will be a 4 mile local circular walk starting at the Village Hall, at 10.30

Walk Leaders: Geoff and Gill Medhurst 01273 890055

## Early plea!!

If you get any Christmas presents that you don't want or need, please save them as tom-bola prizes for our Macmillan Coffee

Morning on **31st January**.

They could make a real difference to our fundraising for this important charity.

Drop off at 16 Chapel Rd, Plumpton Green, BN7 3DD or we're happy to collect.

Thank you and Happy Christmas!

Liz Platt-Wood and Angela Spinks

[lizplatt2011@gmail.com](mailto:lizplatt2011@gmail.com)







## Beeline to Success

An exciting new wildlife project was reported by Alex Waterfield, Grounds and Garden Manager at Plumpton College.

Alex reported as follows: "Plumpton College secured a grant from the South Downs National Park Trust to create a BeeLine, wildlife corridor running through the College on an east – west axis, with spurs to the north and south along the route. The BeeLine is almost a kilometre in length, meaning the project will have impact on a landscape scale, connecting with other landowners in the ReNature Plumpton area".

Alex sent an invitation to the village "If you'd like to join the activity, you'll be involved in preparing the ground and then sowing a seed mix containing native species of perennial flowers and grasses to support pollinating insects throughout the year, so as with the tree planting project earlier in the year, it would be great to have you join us."

So, on 30<sup>th</sup> October, a dozen volunteers helped to create a new wildflower corridor from the front of the College to the front of St Michael Church. We look forward to watching the flowers growing next Summer!



## All Saints Churchyard Clear Up

The Churchwardens would like to thank all of the 20+ villagers who turned out in force to help the end of the year churchyard clear up on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October. The weather was kind and a great deal was achieved. Many favourable comments have been received including, "looking its best ever." As always we are grateful for David Dawson for supplying the bacon and beer and for Rev Anne Dunlop supported by Angela Spinks for preparing the delicious bacon baps once our work was complete.

We would also like to thank David Stokes, David Hibberd and Robin Burberry who do so much to support the graveyard management plan throughout growing season.

## Christmas Cracker Jokes:

Q. What is white and minty?



Answer. A Polo bear!



# CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2025

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## **Plumpton & East Chiltington Good Neighbours**

### **Telephone Contact 07478 524152**

Do you need help or someone to talk to? We are a group of local volunteers who offer a befriending service and help with everyday things such as shopping and simple household jobs, to anyone needing support. We can help on a regular or one off basis and, there are no charges associated with our help, with the exception of travel costs if we transport you somewhere such as to the doctors or another similar appointment. All our volunteers are DBS checked.

It doesn't matter what age group you are in or whether your family is local. If you feel you would like our help or, to talk about how we may help you, please phone Gina or Alison on the above number or, you can email us at: [pecgoodneighbours@gmail.com](mailto:pecgoodneighbours@gmail.com)

New volunteers are always needed and very welcome. If you are interested in joining our team please get in touch on the contact details above.

## **Uckfield, Lewes & Newick Arts Society**

December 3rd 2025

2.30 in the Civic Hall, Uckfield

Lecturer: Dr Graham Griffiths

### ***Joy and Energy in Unique Music of the Latin American Baroque***

We always try and do something really special for the Christmas lecture, and this will be no exception. I am sure you will remember the film 'The Mission' starring Robert de Niro. By invitation of UNECO Dr Griffiths held concerts in Bolivia and went to many of the Jesuit communities portrayed in the film. It was in these communities that the real music of the Latin Baroque was born. Solemnity religiosity somehow combined with popular South American beat.

Dr Griffiths is a lecturer, pianist, composer, conductor and writer. Through his research and visiting Bolivia he uncovered truths not depicted in the film. He contributes to musical broadcasts in Britain, Denmark and worldwide. He is also a member of our society. Enough said!

Guests are always welcome at our lectures, £8 on the door but do think about joining us. Bookings are now being taken for our Christmas Lunch at the Picture House Restaurant in Uckfield, but of course this is for members only.

Do contact me for membership details. Happy Christmas!

Annette Shelford  
[annette@shelford.net](mailto:annette@shelford.net)

### **East Chiltington TECT Update:** **TECT Field Fencing Update**

The fencing has been fully installed through the field and we are so grateful to all who worked to put it up so quickly. There was also a wonderfully successful turnout with over 40 lovely people helping to plant an amazing 260 trees into the new hedge! All of these trees have been grown from seeds collected locally.

We hope to have some livestock grazing on the field sometime this winter and will inform everyone of dates when we know.

### **Ecology Walk & Talk**

We had a brilliant afternoon on our \*Ecology Walk & Talk\* on 9th November with freelance Ecologist and Knepp Guide Tom Forward. We saw over 35 different species of birds in and around the field, many of which are on the conservation concern list. Examples included the grey wagtail, meadow pipit & the kestrel - so this is very encouraging! Tom left everyone with lots of ideas of how to work with the land to promote biological diversity.

The TECT committee will be arranging some work days in the coming months to carry out work, such as coppicing the willow trees & tidying the orchard. Details will follow.

### **TECT Tree Survey Work**

A recent tree survey around the field found that some were in need of attention. Work to remove dead and potentially dangerous trees/branches near to footpaths has already started and will continue over the next few months. An ash has been felled adjacent to the stream and logs from this tree have been used for log pile habitats for small vertebrates, arthropods.

**TECT Quiz Night** - Tuesday 10th February 2026 from 7pm @ The Jolly Sportsman

**Want to be involved?** If anyone is interested in getting involved in TECT and/or becoming a trustee do get in touch with the Chairman Mark Marsh - [markmarsh1@mac.com](mailto:markmarsh1@mac.com)

## Christmas Crossword. December 2025

1			2			3		4				5		6
		7						8						
9														
				10						11				12
13										14				
				15										
16								17		18		19		
							20							
21		22				23				24				
				25										
											26			
27								28						
29					30									

### Clues Across:

1. Date in December, one day after Christmas Eve (11)
5. Tree which might be found after it's burned down? (3)
7. It is worth 50 in darts (5)
8. This might reduce your car insurance (7)
9. "Christmas —, mistletoe and wine" (4)
10. Part of a horse's neck (7)
13. The most popular ever is a red heart (5)
14. "The Book —", international best seller and 2013 film (5)
15. Followed by Magi (4)
16. 3 down and 12 down. Opening words of a popular Christmas carol about the gifts of a true love (2,3,5,3,2,9)
18. A deciduous conifer (5)
20. Persian fairy , perhaps (4)
21. Rub out (5)
24. Sour rice (5)
25. Worn with a shirt and collar , esp in USA (7)
26. Stay behind, like carol singer of old? (4)
27. Piece of wood on the railway line (7)
28. Essential (5)
29. Our French numbers? (3)
30. Key Changes (11)

### Clues Down:

1. 2 of these in the 16 across carol (6,5)
2. This many ladies dancing... (4)
3. See 16 across (5,3)
4. Joseph was legally this to the boy Jesus (6)
5. Having a high pH (6)
6. The female pronoun (3)
7. Bring in (6)
10. Followers of 15 across (4,3)
11. Depict unrealistically (7)
12. See 16 across (2,9)
17. Time of celebration, like Christmas! (8)
19. Mischievous person or likeable rogue (6)
22. Bearers of good news when Jesus was born (6)
23. Like written music, achieved by the likes of Harry Kane? (6)
26. Dry riverbed in the desert (4)
27. "How that in Bethlehem was born the — of God by name" (God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman) (3)

Andy Starling, 2025

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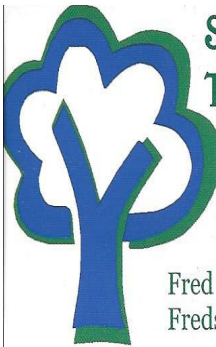
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## **Plumpton and East Chilton Wildlife Group**

### **Report of the Group's Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 4th November 2025 at the Church Annexe, Plumpton Green**

Welcome. The Chair welcomed everyone to the AGM

1.2 Apologies for absence. None received

1.3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th November 2024. These were agreed and signed as a correct record of the Meeting. Proposed - Jenny Greening, seconded - Peter Baker.

1.4 Chair's Report - Carole Nicholson provided a summary of the Group's activities, starting with the annual Big Garden Bird Watch in January and including botany, bird and insect surveys, walks and talks throughout the year. A copy of the presentation is available on the Group's website:

**[plumptonwildlifegroup.weebly.com](http://plumptonwildlifegroup.weebly.com)**

In March there was the first consultation evening for the Re-Nature Plumpton initiative, where the Group is working with residents, the Parish Council and the College to identify where biodiversity improvements could be made throughout the Parish. This year volunteers helped to plant trees at the College and sow a wildflower trial as part of the College's Beeline for Success project. A Re-Nature Plumpton presentation was included in the Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting and a further consultation evening is planned for 26/11/25.

1.5 Adoption of Chair's Report - proposed - Anna Phillips, seconded - David Phillips

1.6 Treasurer's Report - presented by Kate Gold. The Group's financial situation remains positive with monies from Member's fees, funds raised from activi-

ties and welcome charity donations. The Group has acquired some bat detectors for surveys and monitoring.

1.7 Adoption of the Treasurer's Report - proposed - Paul Nicholson, seconded - Carole Nicholson

### **2. Election of Officers**

Chair - Carole Nicholson. Proposed - Jean Stewart, seconded - Kate Gold  
Vice-Chair - Simon Harding. Proposed - Kate Gold, seconded - Min Smith  
Treasurer - Kate Gold. Proposed - David Phillips, seconded - Lin Baxter  
Secretary - Jean Stewart. Proposed - Simon Harding, seconded - Chris Chapman

### **3. Election of Committee Members**

The following Committee members were re-elected, Chris Chapman and David Phillips. proposed - Carole Nicholson, seconded - Kate Gold

### **4. Any other notified business**

None

### **5. Date of next AGM**

November 2026, date and time to be announced.

The formal AGM closed at 19.30 and was followed by a very detailed presentation by Dr Dan Danaher which outlined his leading various initiatives in the Brighton area to improve grassland habitats for biodiversity, in particular increase the number and variety of invertebrate species.

### **Christmas Cracker Jokes:**

Q. What's the most popular Christmas wine?



Answer: "But I don't want brussel sprouts"

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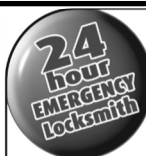
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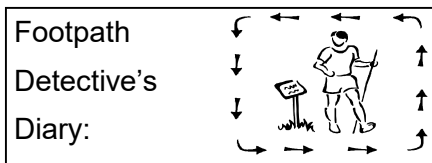
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## **A Footpath Detective's Diary December 2025 A little bit of Ilkley Moor**

It was the very end of October and I was returning from Nepal via Yorkshire, as you do, when I had a chance for a wander in one of my favourite places Ilkley Moor. The colours were very autumnal but it was still quite warm. I parked near Grove Road to the west of the town centre but this walk could be equally well accessed from the station. This walk is about 6.5 miles.

I worked my way up in a southerly direction through residential roads and small steep footpaths until I was on the northern edge of the Moor and a path marked on some maps as the Millenium Way. I turned east and followed this well established track towards White Wells, crossing Willy Hall's Spout along the way. The name makes me laugh but its just a small stream that tumbles off the moor making a little waterfall. White Wells cottages are a collection of connected whitewashed buildings on the north side of the moor above Ilkley. Outside stands a signpost helpfully showing the directions North, South, East, and West in typical plain straightforward Yorkshire style. In around 1700, at the back of Spa Cottage landowner Peter Middleton opened an openair spa bath for the use of the people of Ilkley. In 1791, Robert Dale built two baths on the current site, enclosed by walls on three sides but not roofed over. What remains now within one of the buildings is a plunge pool that is sometimes open to the public including on New Year's Day. The water is COLD!

I passed around the back of the buildings and up a few steps to join the Dales Way Link path in a SE direction and up to nearby Ilkley Crags a smallish outcrop of millstone grit rock. At this point the Dales Way heads east toward the larger outcrop of Cow and Calf but I opt for the Dales Way Link that turns south. I followed that path onto the higher part of the moor as far as the Twelve Apostles a stone circle dating from the Bronze Age. The stones are only

about two foot above the ground. They sit where Ilkley Moor and Burley Moor abut. To continue south on the path would have taken me onto Bingley Moor, too far on this occasion so I turned west on a clear path over White Crag Moss and to the high point of Ilkley Moor at 402 metres. The view to the northeast includes the white 'golf balls' on Menwith Hill, an RAF station, and to the northwest the beautiful Yorkshire Dales.

I continued west on the path to Whetstone Gate where Ilkley Road comes up from Riddlesden and East and West Morton in Aire-dale. East Morton is where my ancestors farmed and back then in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries Ilkley was their parish church so they would have had to walk over the two moors for marriages and burials. At Whetstone Gate I turned north to follow the track known as Keighley Road passing Cowper's Cross a large stone cross that is thought to have been erected in the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century. Close by is The Badger stone said to be the site of pagan spring equinox gatherings.

Ilkley Moor has been a place frequented by humans for very many centuries and the grit stones bare the markings from ancient times including the cup and ring carvings from Neolithic or Bronze Age and the Swastika mark of similar era. It's a swirling design with a dot or 'cup' in each loop. I saw swastika designs in Nepal and learnt that they have an ancient and much more peaceful significance than what we tend to associate it with following the appropriation of it by the Nazi party in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I followed the track NNE to head back down towards Ilkley seeing a few startled red grouse enroute but not the golden plover, curlew, lapwing, ring ouzel, short eared owl or merlin that can sometimes be seen on the moor. It is a rich and beautiful habitat and holds a very special place in my heart. As I descend the track becomes tarmac a little before meeting the Millenium Way. I wend my way back through the ginnels and residential roads of Ilkley town where many a refreshment opportunity awaits those that want.

EJH



## Bird Watch

One of the most interesting aspects of birdwatching is migration. At times mind boggling as to how small birds, weighing just a few grams, can traverse ocean and deserts under their own strength and effort. Migration, the movement of millions of birds to and from different continents twice annually has occurred as long as there have been birds so that they can get away from parts of the world that, at times of the year are too cold to support a food source. During the summer months, however, in northern regions, with the long hours of daylight, lack of human activity and an abundance of insects, for many species it is a bonanza. Many species that do not breed or spend the winter in Britain, do pass through in spring and autumn. Many use regular places to re-fuel before continuing their journeys.

We can understand how a small bird taking perhaps a couple of hours to cross the Channel can wend its way across the Continent, feeding as it goes. The staggering thought is about those that reach Greenland, needing to cross many hundreds of miles of open sea with nowhere to alight or find food for hours on end. Many navigate by the stars at night and during clear weather. Some years ago, we went to Norway, crossing the North Sea on a big hotel-like ship that devoured the coach. During the afternoon, the sun went in and there was cloud cover. Almost immediately, birds appeared on the ship's rail. A Redstart and three Willow Warblers settled and a few House Martins circled above. As soon as the weather brightened up, they continued their migration. This happens regularly on oil rigs where huge flocks of birds come down according to the conditions. How many are lost during their travels no one knows but it is certainly the survival of the fittest.

The interest in Firecrests continues. I will be delighted when one of the local enthusiasts calls me confirming that they have identified one. One problem might be their similarity to the Goldcrest, which people do recognise. However, they are very much alike, and until you see the black line through the eye and white above and below, you may not realise that it is a Firecrest. They are often found together, so scanning through a group could prove to be the answer. Many years ago, the first one I saw was in a wood near Beachy Head and we made a special journey to see it. In those days they were very scarce. In the recently published, excellent Sussex Bird Report, it is estimated that, now, up to a thousand pairs breed in this county. This is not the bird news we are used to, an increase of a population instead of a decline and all achieved by themselves, not introduced.

Not being able to get out as much as I used to, I try to see bird action on the television, not just the excellent wildlife programmes, but incidental observations. It was interesting to see, during a race meeting, gulls following the horses and alighting where their hooves had disturbed the ground, making worms and other food available. As far as I could make out, they were Black-headed Gulls which of course don't have black heads at this time of year and when they do, their heads are brown!!

**R.J.L.**

### **Christmas Cracker Jokes:**

Q. Why do birds fly south in the winter?



Answer: Because they can't afford the train



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## **Chailey Commons Society**

**[www.chaileycommons.org.uk](http://www.chaileycommons.org.uk)**

Once again, we are having unseasonal warm and damp autumnal weather and the rainfall has been light with most of the heavy rain by -passing our corner of England. My local rain recording showed a total rainfall of 5.24 ins in October giving a year total so far of 24.67 in. compared with 36.62 in. at the same point in 2024.

During October and part of November the Exmoor ponies have been grazing the fields next to the commons in order to keep them away from the very abundant crop of acorns on the heathland this mast year. We are very grateful for the continued support of our neighbours, and everyone involved. We are awaiting advice from the conservation grazing experts from the Moorland Mousie Trust who own the ponies, about when to release them back onto the common. You may see them grazing inside an electric fenced enclosure on Red House Common with minimal oak trees as the next stage before their release.

Our November talk was on the Dragonflies of Sussex by Simon Linington. Other activities this Autumn included our annual Fungus Walk with Martin Allison and the final bird walk with Adrian. We spotted some seasonal passing birds such as Canada Geese, Greylag Geese and Egyptian Geese and a Little Egret and a Cormorant. We also enjoyed a talk by Barney Tremaine, Fam Manager at the Cowdray Estate Midhurst, who told us about the Regenerative Farming on the estate and how it includes all aspects of the local flora and fauna and care of the soil.

There is no meeting in December.

### **Forthcoming Events in 2026**

**Thursday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2026. Talk by  
Sasha Turnbull, a commons  
neighbour, who will tell us**

**about how she enjoys the  
commons and will illustrate  
with paintings and images.  
Chailey Village Hall 7.30pm.  
Visitors welcome.**

**Saturday January 11<sup>th</sup> Birch  
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follow. If you would like to  
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If you would like to take part in the birch cutting, please contact us using the email ([mail@chaileycommons.org.uk](mailto:mail@chaileycommons.org.uk)) in advance so that we can get you registered as a volunteer.

We always welcome new members so please come and join us. It's now easy to join online through our website.

For further information, visit our website – [www.chaileycommons.org.uk](http://www.chaileycommons.org.uk) or our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/chaileycommons/](https://www.facebook.com/chaileycommons/) or [friendsofmarkstakescommon.weebly.com](http://friendsofmarkstakescommon.weebly.com).

The Society wishes you a very Happy Christmas.

William Coleman      01444 831098

### **Christmas Cracker Jokes:**

Q. Why is it getting harder to buy advent calendars this year?



Answer: Their days are numbered!



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