

# Aston Abbotts Chronicle

May 21 Issue 415

## Beautiful local Walks

Boris encouraged us to get out for a walk, jog or cycle. So here are some ideas in our rich beautiful local countryside. Perfect for blowing off those cobwebs.



### Whiteleaf Cross

A stroll up Whiteleaf Hill offers a stunning view of the surrounding Buckinghamshire countryside and the famous chalk-hill cross.

While the view from the top of the hill is the most well-known attraction, the whole area offers walking trails and routes, all depending on how briskly you want to take it.

### Coombe Hill



Coombe Hill Boer War Memorial overlooking Aylesbury Vale from Coombe Hill

Another great option for families is the famous Chequers Trail which takes you through chalk grasslands and woodlands, with the chance to climb Coombe Hill at the end.

There is plenty to see, including the hilltop Boer War memorial, and you can even grab a quick glance at the Prime Minister's summer residence at Chequers.



Aylesbury Vale from Coombe Hill (Image: Reach Plc)

## ***The Ridgeway***

The Ridgeway in Buckinghamshire runs an incredible 87 miles between Chinnor to Bledlow and takes in isolated woodlands and valleys on route. However, no one is expected to walk the full length, with shorter options available to allow you to take in the chalkland underfoot and the Chilterns backdrop.

## ***Woburn Deer Park trail***

The Woburn Deer Park Trail offers a relaxing stretch of 8.6 miles (14km) looped walking trail, aimed at both keen walkers and joggers.

With an abundance of greenery and calming ponds and streams it is an ideal place for a long walk or run, free from the bustle of nearby Milton Keynes.

## ***Great Missenden circular***



The countryside around Little Missenden (Image: Dan Kitwood/Getty Images)

This slightly shorter loop route, at 7.2 miles(11.7km), offers a relaxing woodland walk close to the famous Hampden Valley.

The floor to sky trees offer an almost ceiling of green impression to

walkers in the woods with a huge variety of native flowers now just coming into bloom throughout the area.

## ***Ashridge Bluebell walks***



Although just across the border into Hertfordshire, Ashridge is one of the best places in the country to see bluebells in spring. As you receive the Chronicle through your door, these should be in full bloom. This gentle walk takes you through carpets of this beautiful plant, and also looks at the history of the estate.

Parking and cafe are available at the National Trust Ashridge Estate Visitor Centre.

***In next month's Chronicle, I hope to feature the Ashridge Estate including its wonderful management college I had the pleasure of attending. A magnificent building.***

Buckinghamshire also has some of the best spots for bluebell photo opportunities in the UK.

At Cliveden, the woodland floor slowly produces a spattering of blue before a sea of flowers appears before you. From late April and



through early May, the Hughenden Estate boasts an abundance of blue beauties.

Finemere Wood, Aylesbury covers both Buckinghamshire and Berkshire leaving plenty of room for stunning displays of bluebells for the visiting public.

While parks such as the above possess beautiful swaves of bluebells, some of the best can be found simply dotted around the countryside - take a walk anywhere through the scenic Chilterns and you'll spot them! And then there is, **Wendover Woods. Another Bluebell site.** The woods are extremely popular with families, due to the regular spotting of local wildlife

and native birds across five designated walking paths.

The area is also a great spot for cyclists, with designated paths for those getting out on two wheels.

**Penn Wood.** Penn Wood has a long history as one of the oldest woodland areas in the Chilterns with plenty of chances for spotting wildlife and even the native cattle population.

The area is super popular with strollers and experienced walkers with routes available for everyone, including children.

### ***Do you know the countryside code? Do you know the difference between a restricted byway and a bridleway? A handy guide***



Your guide to enjoying parks and waterways, coast and countryside

**Respect everyone**

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
- leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
- be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

**Protect the environment**

- take your litter home - leave no trace of your visit
- take care with BBQs and do not light fires
- always keep dogs under control and in sight
- dog poo - bag it and bin it - any public waste bin will do
- care for nature - do not cause damage or disturbance

**Enjoy the outdoors**

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure - know what to expect and what you can do
- enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory

[www.gov.uk/countryside-code](http://www.gov.uk/countryside-code)



**Permissive Path**  
Follow advice on local signs as landowners voluntarily provide access to these paths and choose who can use them. Some open access areas are also made available in the same way.



**National Trail**  
National Trails are created for walking, with horse-riding and cycling possible on some trails or trail sections.



**Open Access**  
You can walk and explore away from paths.

[www.nationaltrail.co.uk](http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk)

[www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk)

## ***Editorial***

Don't forget local Councillor and police commissioner voting on Thursday 6th May. Candidates are listed further on.

Refuse, Garden waste and food bin will be collected on Thursday 6th May after the Bank Holiday.

I was thinking of listing the best Chinese, Indian, Italian, Burger Restaurants and the best fish & chip shops local to us as according to Tripadvisor. However, I quickly learned there aren't any listed. If you would like me to list the 'best' of these across Bucks, according to Tripadvisor, please let me know.

Later on in the year I will be looking at reviews of nearby restaurants visited by us residents, so please add your review when we can.

I do hope you enjoy this edition. There are loads of interesting articles to cover most interests, especially local history. I enjoy researching, writing and grabbing articles I hope are of interest.

***Pete***

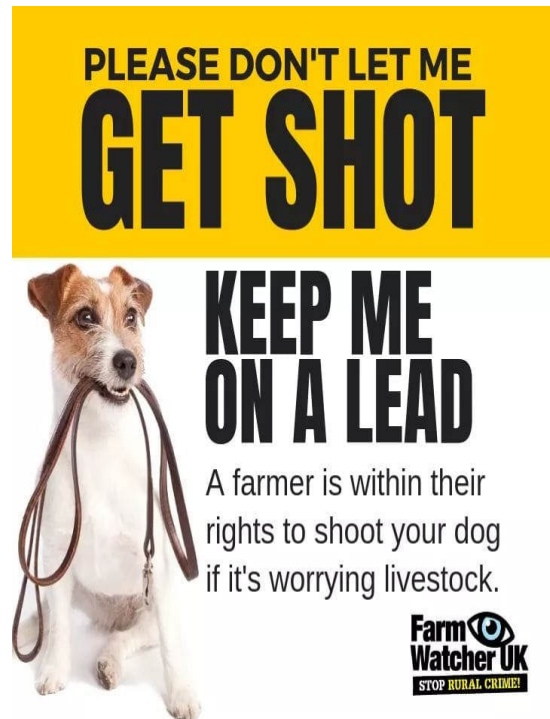


**Jeff Banister - 17th**

**Tom Manning - 22nd**

**Neil Chesher - 26th**

**Colin Higgs BEM - 30th**



# ***News from Aston Abbotts and around***

## ***May 6th Election***



Candidates hoping to gain your vote in our Ward on May 6. These will be the first elections to the new Buckinghamshire Council, which came into being on April 1, 2020. Because the local elections were scheduled in the midst of the worsening Covid-19 pandemic, the votes were postponed until this year instead. Also,

## **Aston Abbotts Parish Council Notice of Uncontested Election**

***Marisa Caroline Rebecca  
Albel-Smith***

***Jane Anne Baylis***

***Trevor Ian Hall***

***Richard Brian Lakin***

***Heather Jane Langdon***

***Sally Ann Palmer***

***Jane Susan Plested***

## ***Dates for the diary from Colin***

I'm hopeful we can resume our monthly bus trips. So anyone interested please book **Friday 25th June (09.08 bus to Leighton Buzzard).**

During lockdown I've seen lots of people walking our field footpaths but some have told me they were unable to complete the route because they were unsure what the route was. So book **Sunday 27th June 2pm on The Green for the footpaths walk.**

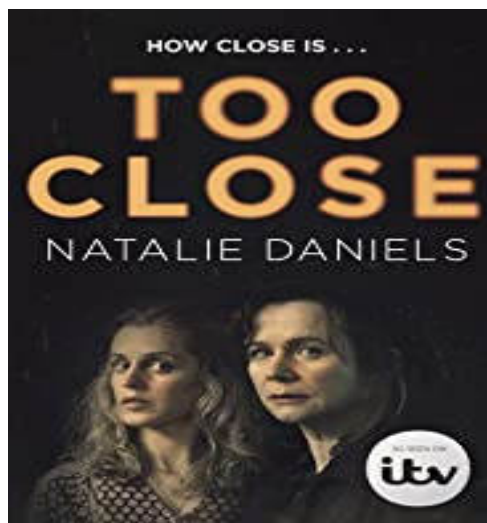
**Festival weekend Saturday 24th July (Fete & flower show) and Sunday.**

**Horticultural Show 4th September.**

***Wingrave Scarecrow Festival*** is an annual event that sees visitors flock to the village to tour the trail this Bank Holiday weekend

The trail is a fundraiser for the village primary school, Wingrave School. This year there are 38 scarecrows for visitors to enjoy and, as the theme is 80's, there's bound to be a number of familiar faces dotted around the route, including smurfs, Annie Lennox, ET, Madonna and the Ghostbusters. There is no particular order to the trail this year, in order to encourage social distancing. If you want to participate then maps can be picked up from the village shop for £2, and can be purchased ahead of the weekend, or upon arrival.

## TV Mini Series stars Wingrave girl



Too Close is an ITV mini series that follows forensic psychiatrist Dr Emma Robertson who is assigned to work with Connie Mortensen, a woman accused of a heinous crime but who claims she can't remember a thing. Filming locations were predominately in London and Kent, with the now closed Holloway Prison also being used for some scenes.

The cast includes Isabelle Mullally Young actress from Wingrave. You can catch up on the programme via the ITV Hub.



I am starting to plan the Aston Abbotts Fete for 2021 to be held on Saturday 24th July although there is

no certainty that we will be allowed to hold it, or if we do, whether people will be confident enough to come!

However, I have had an exchange of emails with the Bagman to the Aldbury Morris Men and the secretary to the Great Horwood Band and, although neither of these groups have been able to practice together for a year, they have nevertheless pencilled us into their schedule.

Normally at this time of the year I would hold a short meeting to get participants together and ensure that I know who has undertaken to do what and when! As this is not possible, I would like to hear from regular contributors and anyone who would like to help during the preparations in July or on the day so that I am confident that I have the necessary support again this year should we be able to proceed.

If you are willing to participate (regulations permitting) please drop me an email to [ukdavidgray@gmail.com](mailto:ukdavidgray@gmail.com) (or telephone 681952) and at least put Fete day in your diaries so that this year's event will be a success.

Having spent lockdown doing all those sorting out jobs you have been putting off, I hope you have put aside all those unwanted presents, bottles of drink, books, CDs, bric-a-brac, etc which we can collect and sell at the Fete. **David Gray**



## ***Village Hall opening again***



We've been cleaning, tidying and ready for action in May. We can't wait to open the door again. Come and see the inside of the hall again – your first chance is to vote in the local elections, Thursday 6 May, but read on for more...

**From 17 May**, sport and exercise classes are allowed. Look out for announcements on the return of yoga and other events.

**We are taking bookings now for any event from 21 June**, so please get in touch with Sally or Nigel if you'd like to pencil a date for a regular or one-off: a charity event, a social event, a party (remember those...?). They'll be happy to show you around & explain what you need to do.

**The hall complies with government COVID-secure guidelines**, and will continue to do so after lockdown restrictions are lifted.

**Booking:** email:  
astonabbottsvillagehall@yahoo.com

Or call: 01296 681152 (Nigel and Sally Palmer) Mobile: 07918-928897 (Sally) Mobile: 07547-604072 (Nigel)

## ***Caroline Lane - Village Hall***

### ***ASTON CLINTON TO BE HOME TO NEW APPLE TV STUDIO***

***Although not village news, I include this piece for any film or theatre residents interested or looking for job opportunities.***

Apple has reportedly signed a deal to use studios in Aylesbury to film some of its upcoming film and TV productions.

According to the Telegraph, the tech giant's streaming arm is set to take over two logistics facilities at the Woodlands Enterprise Zone site, on Symmetry Park, in Aston Clinton.

Last year Apple appointed California-based production support company MBS to hunt for studio locations in the UK. According to the report, MBS is understood to have struck a deal with property firm Tritax Big Box for the two facilities, which together provide 170,000 square feet of space for film studios and set workshops.

The new film production facility, which is the result of a "hunt for studio locations in the UK" last year, TVB-Europe claims, will provide a huge space "for film studios and set workshops".

A deal was struck in March this year, according to council documents.

# ***Aston Abbotts Parish Council April 2021***

The Parish Council met on 13th April 2021 for what may well be the last virtual PC meeting – guidance is very much erring towards Councils meeting in person from 6th May onwards. We very much hope that we will indeed be able to meet in person and more importantly open our meetings up to members of the village – in the flesh.

Recent matters of note include:

## **Parish Council Vacancy**

.... not anymore. We are delighted to say that 4 interested parties have stepped forward taking the list of nominations to 7. This means we definitely have a full council going forward into 2021 and beyond. We welcome the newcomers and look forward to working together.

Farewell to councillors Kate Curry, Phil Spooner and Colin Higgs BEM all of whom have contributed hugely towards the overall wellbeing of the village for many years. Thank you!

## **Playground & Aerial Runway:**

We are absolutely thrilled to report that the Local Community Board has approved our bid for funding. This has meant that we have been able to place the order for a replacement aerial runway and cover 50% of the overall costs. A huge thank you to Bucks Council for making this money available to us.

## **Cublington Road**

A parishioner from the Cublington end of the village joined us on 13th April asking that the Parish Council adds some weight to his campaign for additional signage and speed management measures along this stretch of road. He is also asking for further measures to combat fly tipping. Both speeding and fly tipping are issues we come up against continuously and we welcome involvement from residents. We will of course offer our support and lobby our Unitary Councillors, once elected, to address both these issues.

## **History Boards**

The village's long-standing association with the Czech's has secured a history board on this very relationship during the war. The Czech's have agreed to fund a History Board that we will site on the village green. We would like to compliment this with a matching Local History board and will present ideas on this at the Annual Parish Meeting – 20th May 2021.

Councillors also addressed many other items covering street maintenance, dog bin emptying, planning and finance - For a full set of minutes from each Parish Council meeting please visit the website

<https://astonabbotts-pc.gov.uk/>

And if you would like to contact us please do so through the Clerk [clerk@astonabbottspc.org](mailto:clerk@astonabbottspc.org)

The next full parish council meeting is scheduled for 11th May and you are welcome to join us.



## ***Your Emails***

**Hi Ed**, I'm new to the village with my wife and small (2 years old last month) daughter, taking up 12 The Green. Just received our first Chronicle and I absolutely love it -- things like this are the heartbeat of a community, a focal point. Wonderful to see. I wanted to put out the offer of potential help if you think there's anything useful I can provide in future. **Max Tatton Brown**

***Email answered . Ed!***

**Dear Peter**, I am sorry to bother you but I cannot believe what I have just witnessed. My neighbour found a very poorly lamb in the field. She had tried to find out who the lamb belonged to without success.

As an animal lover she stayed with this little lamb wrapping it in her coat to keep it warm and was kind enough to phone her vet to get this lamb some help. As her vet was not able to come straight away my neighbour picked the lamb up and was going to put it in her car and take it to the vet to get it some help.

As she was going to her car the owner of the lamb arrived and instead of being pleased with my neighbour being kind enough to try and help this poor lamb, he started shouting at her in a very aggressive manner .

There was no need for his attitude at all and as an animal lover I am absolutely disgusted by his behaviour.

Perhaps people cannot understand that there are those of us who are animal lovers and worry if we see an animal in distress and will do anything to help these animals.

This lamb was in the field on its own. The mother, nowhere to be seen. Any decent animal lover would have done the same.

No matter how rude and ungrateful these people are, animal lovers like myself and my neighbour will not stop caring about these animals whether the farmers like it or not.

I thank my neighbour for trying to do right by this poor defenceless animal. The attitude and ignorance of people never ceases to amaze me.

Sorry if you think I am making a fuss about nothing but I am absolutely disgusted at what has happened.

Thank you. **Lyn**

***Not at all Lyn. I wasn't there, so will not comment on the situation you write about but, as an animal lover myself, if I suffered a similar scenario with an owner, I would have shoved his 'Ewes Prolapse Spoon' up his @~#\*%.***

***Ed!***

**Dear editor,** I wondered when was the last baby to be born in Aston Abbotts?

Theo Samuel arrived on the 6th March at home in Aston Abbott's weighing 8lb 2oz. A planned home water birth taking just under 5 hours. Mother and baby are doing well.

Kind regards, **Charlotte**

***Congratulations. Ed!***

**Hi Pete,** Appreciate everything you do to keep the Chronicle running. We love receiving it every month! Thanks **Martyn & Jade Simpson**

***Many thanks Martyn and Jade. Ed.***

***Dear Villagers,*** When my wife and I were looking to move into the village a couple of years ago, we loved the look of all the activities put on in the village including the Fete, picnics, and Astonbury! Having now settled in and made some friends, I understand that Astonbury was stopped back around 2012 for various different reasons. I wondered if there was any interest in it coming back? Perhaps at a slightly smaller scale! I would love to get in touch with any of the previous organizers and hear thoughts from any of the villagers, positive or negative.

Please drop me an email  
[martynjsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:martynjsimpson@gmail.com)  
**Martyn Simpson**

To the person who decided to rip up the fencing in the Grove, done by my Son in law and his son (my Grandson)

**WHY?**

I don't know if you have children or Grandchildren but if you do and you have any decency about you at all, you will surely understand how I felt for my grandson, when he proudly took me into the Grove, to show me what he had been doing to help his Dad in the Easter school holiday, it was a complete shock to see the fence vandalised but I guess that was your purpose.

My guess is you struggle to communicate about what is on your mind so instead you use actions like these instead of words. I'd be happy to speak to you if that would help.

Meanwhile if anyone has any information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

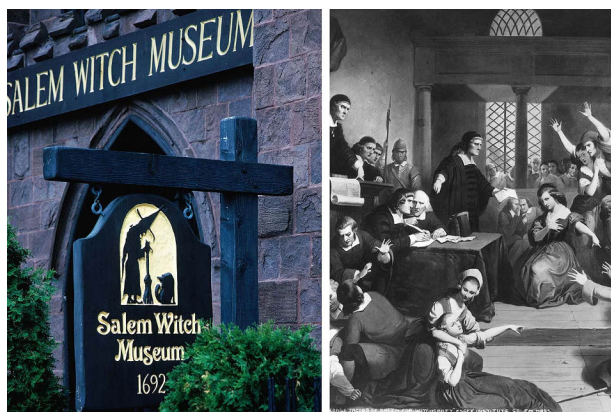
**Bridget Brandon**

***I believe an electric fence was also damaged around the same time. Ed***

# The Putnams and the Salem Witch Trials

*Following my piece on last month's, 'Aston Abbots and its links with the Salem Witch Trials', Jill & Mike Wenble add this excellent article of their holiday to the actual place the infamous period took place. Ed.*

In 2015, following a holiday in Massachusetts, we wrote an article for the Chronicle about the involvement of the Putnam family in the Salem Witch Trials. We wrote a follow-on article two years later after revisiting the area. After the very informative article written by Pete (aka the editor) in April's Chronicle he asked me to resubmit our articles so that he could include them for any newcomers to the village. Here I've condensed the two articles into one.



Many of you will be aware that there is a plaque in the church commemorating the donation of money in 1929 for the restoration of one of the church bells. The plaque states that the donation was made by William H Putnam of Hartford, Connecticut in memory of his ancestor John Putnam who emigrated to Salem, Massachusetts in 1634. (We now know this date to be incorrect; the family arrived in Salem in 1640). It is

believed John Putnam farmed at the now-vanished hamlet of Burston, just down Lines Hill. In an Aston Abbots church inventory of 1638 John Putnam is named as a churchwarden. He and his wife Priscilla had seven children, two of whom died in childhood and are buried in Aston Abbots churchyard. Their other children all moved to Massachusetts with them. Once there he acquired some 800 acres of farmland around Salem (it's believed at least some of this land could have been stolen from Native Americans). This made him one of the wealthiest men in the area. He was also a senior member of the Puritan church there and one of his roles was to walk through the village on a Sunday and round up anyone not in church. He died at the age of 82 in December 1662.

Salem, of course, was the location of a terrible event in early American history – 19 people were executed there in 1692, having been found guilty of witchcraft. When we visited Salem in 2015 we got chatting to a local guide. We mentioned John Putnam to him and he told us how important the Putnam name is in that area. We discovered that the Putnam family was heavily involved in the whole sorry saga of the witch trials. John Putnam died some 30 years prior to the witch trials but Ann Putnam, his great-granddaughter, was one of the girls who initiated the witch-hunt by making accusations of witchcraft against others in the village. In this she was goaded by her mother (also Ann) and her father Thomas, son of Thomas senior, and John's grandson. The accusations initially came about because of what is now assumed to be an attack of group hysteria amongst several local girls. By 1692, the Putnam



family fortunes were on the wane while other families were climbing the social ladder. Certain members of the Putnam family had bitter disputes with other families, mainly over land, and one way for them to take revenge on anyone they took a dislike to was to accuse them of witchcraft. Others joined in and so the “witchcraft hysteria” spread. Many of the accused and the accusers lived and worked in Salem Village; the so-called witches were then taken to Salem Town for trial and execution. Salem (Town) now makes the most of this episode and is full of tourist attractions, toy witches and other souvenir tat.

Of the nineteen people executed for witchcraft the Putnam signature is on fourteen of the accusations. There is one mystery surrounding the accusations. When Thomas senior’s wife died he remarried and had a son, Joseph, who he made chief beneficiary in his will and left very little to Thomas junior. The younger Thomas never forgave Joseph, who by now was a very rich man. Being a seemingly vengeful man it might be expected that Thomas junior would have accused Joseph of witchcraft, or directed his daughter to do so, but this never happened. The reason is unknown.

In 1706 Ann Putnam, then aged 26 and having survived both her parents, publicly apologised for the accusations she had made as a girl and stated that she now believed all those who had been executed had been innocent of witchcraft.

During our first holiday in the area we discovered that John Putnam of Aston Abbots is buried in a cemetery in Danvers, Massachusetts (formerly

known as Salem Village, around 6 miles from Salem Town) and that his grave states that he came from Aston Abbots. Unfortunately we were unable to visit Danvers at the time so didn’t get to see his grave. However, in 2017 we returned to Massachusetts and visited Danvers. John Putnam is buried in the Wadsworth Cemetery, directly across the road from where he farmed. Nothing remains of his farmstead but there is a modern building on the site called Putnam Farm Care Home. We found the grave easily – the gravestone is relatively modern, having been put there in the last century by a Putnam descendant. It is engraved on one side with the names of the four people buried there - John Putnam, his wife Priscilla, his youngest son, who was also called John, and John junior’s wife Rebecca. On the other side it is engraved: “In this plot rest the remains of emigrants from Aston Abbots, Co. Bucks, England 1640”. It’s likely that we were the first people from Aston Abbots to have visited John Putnam’s grave in the 350 years since he died. It didn’t seem right to us though that there was an American flag on the grave. At the time of their deaths all four people buried there were still British (or, strictly speaking, English) subjects, the American War of Independence happening many decades later.



We took the opportunity to have a look round Danvers. Although it was so important in the whole event, there is very little made about its role in the witch trials. There are numerous sites to visit including a moving memorial which says "In memory of those innocents who died in the Salem witchcraft hysteria of 1692". It lists the names of all those who died, including people who died of natural causes while in prison as well as those who were executed. You do have to hunt out these historical sites but once you find them they all have explanatory boards. In our opinion, this low-key approach made Danvers a much more interesting and pleasant place to visit than Salem Town.

Before our second visit I had been in contact with the Danvers Historical Society. We hoped to go to their office to see some of their records but the only day we could visit turned out to be Labor Day, so it wasn't open. Since then I've received their regular newsletter; maybe we'll return one day to visit them - and perhaps put the correct flag on John Putnam's grave.



## ***Places to visit in Bucks after Lockdown***

Now that we have entered stage two of lockdown restrictions being lifted across the country, many people are making plans for the summer.

This is because on May 17, the UK will enter stage three of restrictions being lifted. On June 21, the country should be lockdown free on the basis that coronavirus cases are kept a minimum.

So, now that people can start making plans again, we are going to look at a few places people can visit.

### **Ascot House - Wing**



Built on the site of Ascot Hall in the 17th Century was home to the Dormers and bought by Leopold Rothchild in 1874 as a hunting lodge. It was presented to the National Trust in 1950 and is normally open on various dates from May to August.



## Claydon House Nr Winslow



A country house in the Aylesbury Vale, near the village of Middle Claydon. Home of the Verney's since the 1700s and gifted to the National Trust in 1956, it has a strong connection with Florence Nightingale. Normally open from April to October 13.00 - 16.30 except Tuesday and Thursday.

## Nether Winchendon House



Off the A418 north of Cuddington Nether Winchendon House was built in 1533 and was originally part of the Notley Abbey Estate. Since the 18th century, it has been home to the Spencer Bernards. An avenue of ancient lime trees leads to the front entrance and the magnificent Tudor chimneys. Normally open everyday

in May from 14.30 to 17.30 and August Bank Holiday.

## Bekonscot Model Village & Railway, Beaconsfield

A popular attraction for parents with young children and railway enthusiasts, the model village is the oldest in the entire and it is located in Buckinghamshire.

The eye-catching display has been visited by more than 14m people since it was first built in the 1920s, and it has raised over £5m for charity.

Overall, there are six model towns, one model garden railway, a ride-on railway, remote-controlled boats, castles, lakes and several industries on 1.5 acre area.

The unique landmark in Beaconsfield has also made national attention as shows such as Blue Peter, Countryfile and the One Show have all featured the model village, whilst Bekonscot has also made appearances on programmes such as Midsomer Murders and A League of Their Own.





## Watermead Lake, Aylesbury

You may think that this is an odd suggestion to put on the list as in theory, it is just a lake.



However, on a beautiful day when the sun is shining and the heat is sizzling, it is a beautiful place to go to. The lake at Watermead is massive, and it is right next to a huge field where people can enjoy picnics.

There are also shops on the waterfront which sell duck food if you ever wanted to feed the countless amounts of swans, geese, and ducks that live on the lake.

People can fish on the bank and now that you can eat outside, there is a pub on the lake.



***Whatever we do after Lockdown let's make sure we support local attractions, businesses including our pub, farm, butcher and small shops. Not forgetting, where we can, BUY BRITISH!***

### PROTECT YOUR CAR, LEAVE IT:

**1. LOCKED**  
LOCK YOUR CAR WHEN YOU LEAVE IT

**2. LIT**  
PARK IN A WELL-LIT AREA

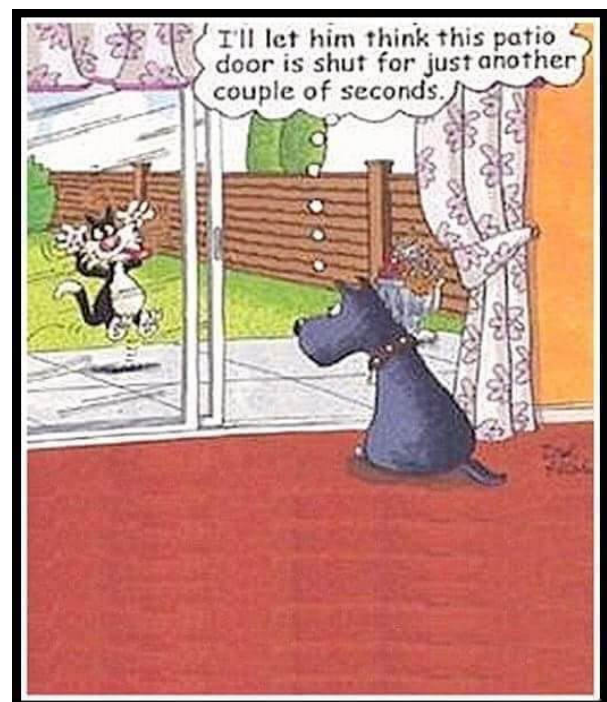
**3. EMPTY**  
HIDE ANY ITEMS ON SHOW

**SHARE THESE 3 STEPS  
WITH 3 FRIENDS**



[www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk)

Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales, CIO no: 1173349



# ***Aston Abbotts as it was. Crime Edition***

***My thanks to Buckinghamshire Archives for this story.***

AstonAbbotts might be a very rural village but it had its crime.

Joseph Hedges born in 1841 and son to Robert and Sarah. He was one of six children and like his siblings and father was an agricultural labourer.

He's listed in the Bucks Chronicle and Bucks Gazette on the 17th October 1857 as being imprisoned for assault in Aylesbury Gaol for 21 days. The following year in October 1858 Joseph was up before the courts in Linslade on a charge of using the 'most disgusting and profane language to a man in the street'. Joseph stated that he and the man had been drinking in the Royal Oak and the man refused to leave. The man wouldn't take a drop so Joseph got frustrated and used profane language.



By summer 1859 Joseph's in trouble again and sensational reports of him were printed in all the local papers. He's reported in the Bucks Herald as trying to obtain money by false pretences: on 3rd August 1859,

Hedges, now a harvest worker for Aston Abbotts farmer Daniel Elliott went to the village draper's shop and asked Sarah Mackerness for 10shillings in silver for the farmer. However, it transpired that the farmer had not asked to borrow the money.

Later that evening Hedges was apprehended at the Hartwell Festival, having spent most of the 10s. He at first denied the charge but then asked if he could work the money back and not be prosecuted. The jury found him guilty and he was sentenced to 6 months hard labour.

It would appear that it was the second time that he'd used this trick. Previously he had been imprisoned for a month for obtaining bread, meat and drink from Mrs. Hitchcock of the Stanhope Arms Inn, Hogstone, by claiming he was driving cattle for a farmer in Wing and that the farmer had insisted that Joseph have the food and drink and he would settle the account!

I am not sure what happened to him, or if his life of crime ended in Aston Abbotts in 1859 but Joseph Hedges was certainly a colourful character.

## ***And an extra piece on the village during the war.***

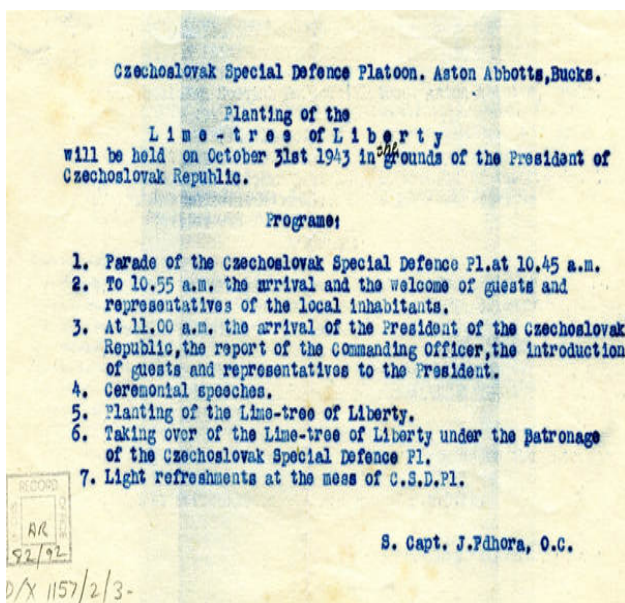
Because of the importance of Aston Abbotts' wartime guests, the Czechoslovakian Government in exile of Dr Eduard Benes and his guard of Czech soldiers, there were many extra defences built in the village, ranging from light machine guns, roadblocks and anti-aircraft

batteries. There was also a German prisoner of war camp at Norduck Farm that held over 250 prisoners.

I did mention this a couple of months ago but thought it relevant to this extra piece of information about the village during the war.

It should be remembered though that the Second World War had already touched the village before the new arrivals had taken up residence. The records of the District Valuer show that on the 20th September 1940 at 1.05 am three High Explosive bombs landed 50 yards behind Church Row Cottages causing a fire, the 4th bomb did not explode. All the occupants were evacuated to safety.

Here we have the schedule for the planting of the Liberty Lime in 1943, marking 25 years of Czechoslovakian independence, The planting of the Liberty Lime in the grounds of the Abbey was apparently filmed.



## ***Rhoda Abbott Aylesbury resident Titanic survivor***



Abbott was born Rhoda Mary Hunt in Aylesbury, on 14 January 1873, the daughter of Joseph Hunt and his wife Sarah Hunt. She grew up in Aylesbury, and spent her early adulthood in St Albans with her family, before moving to the United States in 1894. Upon her arrival in Providence, Rhode Island, she met London-born middleweight champion Stanton Abbott, whom she married soon after in 1895. The couple had two children, Rossmore (born 21 February 1896) and Eugene (born 31 March 1899).

She settled as a housewife and mother and was active at the local Grace Episcopal Church.

In 1911, Abbott was divorced from her husband, returned to England with her sons on the RMS Olympic, and



started supporting herself and them by working as a sewer as well as becoming a soldier in The Salvation Army.

However, she quickly realized that the boys were not happy living in England and booked a return to America in April 1912. The family boarded the RMS Titanic as third-class passengers in Southampton on April 10. On board, she befriended Amy Stanley, Emily Goldsmith, and May Howard, who had cabins nearby.

On 15 April 1912 the family was already asleep when the Titanic hit an iceberg. By 12:15 AM, they were alerted by a steward to put on life jackets and retreat to the ship's deck. After waiting in line to follow other third-class passengers to the deck, Abbott and her sons waited at the second-class saloon area. There, her son Rossmore is said to have knelt in prayer asking that his mother's life be spared even if he and his brother were not saved. Even though only women and children were allowed past the gate, Abbott's sons were able to accompany their mother to the lifeboats. They arrived when one of the final remaining lifeboats, Collapsible C, was already being loaded around 2:00 AM. When it was her turn to enter the lifeboat, she realised that her sons would be denied a spot, and stepping back, refused a place in the lifeboat.



When the ship sank, Abbott was swept away from the deck into the water. She tried to clasp her sons, but to no avail. Having given up finding them, and about to die of hypothermia in the freezing water, she was able to reach Collapsible Boat A, which was washed off Titanic at 2:15 AM. Hours went by before Fifth Officer Harold Lowe returned to the site with lifeboat 14 to retrieve survivors in the water. Several occupants of Boat A had either succumbed or slipped back into the icy water; of the people on board, Abbott was one of only thirteen who survived. Her two sons were lost at sea, and only Rossmore's body was later identified.

According to Stanley, Abbott had no regret about remaining on the Titanic until the very end, because it allowed her to stay with her sons. On board the rescue ship Carpathia, Abbott received special care in the smoking room. Her legs were badly damaged by the cold water that she could not move until arrival in New York. There

she was hospitalised for two weeks in Manhattan's St. Vincent's Hospital. She was one of the last survivors to be discharged.

### **LATER LIFE**

As a result of the sinking of the Titanic, Abbott had respiratory problems, including severe bouts of asthma, for the rest of her life. She was not able to comprehend the loss of her sons, and grieved for months. On 16 December 1912, she married longtime friend George Charles Williams, and the couple settled in Jacksonville, Florida. By 1928, they had returned to England to settle Williams' father's estate in London. Abbott took care of her husband until his death in 1938. For the remainder of her life she tried to immigrate back to America, but was always refused.

Abbott died in London of heart failure as a result of hypertension on 18 February 1946, at the age of 73.

### **IN POPULAR CULTURE**

Rhoda Abbott makes a possible cameo appearance in James Cameron's 1997 blockbuster *Titanic*, while Caledon "Cal" Hockley is attempting to board Collapsible A. He gives the woman a little girl that he used to gain entry into the boat (as the "women and children only" protocol was still being enforced). She is the only surviving woman in the boat, much like Abbott's actual story of survival. The character later reappears in a deleted scene, having apparently taken in the little girl (who was presumably orphaned).

## ***The Soulbury murder. The Killing of a Gamekeeper***

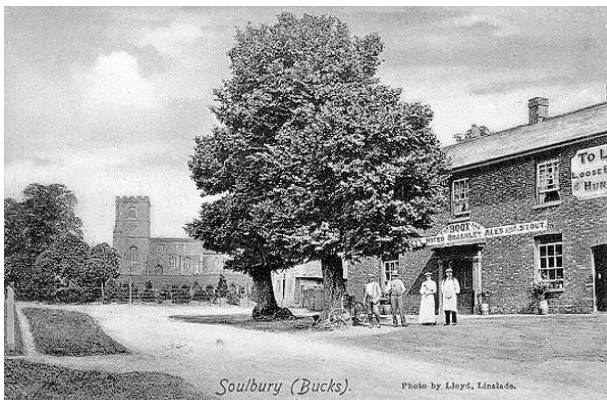
On 29th August 1836 Colonel Hanmer's gamekeeper was killed at Bragenham Warren. The case was tried at Aylesbury. The perpetrator was from Heath and Reach. Our knowledge of this brutal crime comes from newspaper articles such as the following, from the Northampton Mercury of 3rd September 1836.

"Murder of Colonel Hanmer's Gamekeeper. - On Tuesday morning last, about ten o'clock, the neighbourhood of Leighton Buzzard, Beds and Great Brickhill, Bucks, was thrown into a considerable state of alarm by the information that James Giltrow had been found dead on the south-west side of Bragenham Warren, half way between the above places. The forehead, eyes and nose of the deceased were completely beaten in, apparently by some blunt instrument, and the whole of his features were so completely disfigured, that his most intimate friends recognised him with difficulty. He had not been home during Monday night, and his wife went up on Tuesday morning to Stockgrove House, the residence of Colonel Hanmer, M. P., and an immediate search was set on foot.

Jonathan Chew, the Colonel's gardener, went in a south-west

direction, and found the body on the spot described. He gave the alarm, and summoned to his assistance some labourers who were at work in an adjoining field of Mr. Mortimer's. In a short time several persons were collected to witness the melancholy spectacle.

This corner of the warren is covered with high fern and small oak trees, with their boughs almost bending to the ground, and is a spot well selected for the perpetration and concealment of the desperate and horrible deed. A small piece of stock of a gun, with the guard and percussion lock, was picked up by John Adams about seven or eight yards from the body, and were immediately recognised as belonging to a gun which a man, named Thomas Bates of Heath and Reach, had in his possession the previous night. This of course led to the immediate apprehension of Bates".



***In autumn 1836 the Coroner held court in the Boot pub, determining that local gamekeeper James Giltrow had been murdered; legend has it that the suspected murderer***

***Thomas Bates was held prisoner in the pub's outhouse***



"On Wednesday afternoon, at three o'clock, the Coroner for Bucks. J. W. Cowley, Esq., impanelled a respectable jury from the neighbouring parishes, at the Boot public house, at Soulbury, Bucks, the parish in which the warren is situated. The body having been brought to the cottage close by, it was viewed by Mr. Penrose, the Surgeon, and the jury. The first witness called was Bernard Fossey, a lad about 14 years old, who deposed that he saw Giltrow on Monday evening, between seven and eight, near Baker's Wood Gate, south.

Thomas Line, the next witness, stated that he took a gun down the village at the request of, and gave it to, the prisoner, on the Common, near Rushmere Pond, about six o'clock, and several witnesses proved that they saw the prisoner go in the direction of the warren about the same time, and that part of the gun found near the body was part of the prisoner's gun.

During the examination of the witnesses, the prisoner's wife asked leave of the constable to see her



husband, who was in a small room at the other end of the public house, which, being granted, the constable retired, and for a few minutes left the prisoner with his wife and the guard to whom he was handcuffed. When the constable returned Bates cried, and said, "come here, and I will tell you all about it". He then detailed the particulars, nearly in the following words:

"When I left Rushmere Pond, I went through the warren into Mr. Chew's wheat stubble field. I sat by the gate a little while, thinking to see a rabbit. I saw a cock pheasant coming towards the hedge. I waited till it got near enough, and then I shot at it. I thought I hit it but it flew into the warren. I then went into Six Acres, under the hedge. At that instant I saw Giltrow running towards me, as fast as he could, and I popped through the hedge into the warren, and squatted in the ditch.

Giltrow passed me; he went into Mortimer's field, and soon came back again. When he saw me in the ditch, he said, "I've got you at last; I have been looking for you a long time, and now have got you". I said it was the first time, and hoped he would forgive me. He said no, he would not; he told me to come out of the ditch. I said I would not, but I soon got out of the ditch, and we walked up by the side of the freeboard and I again asked him to forgive me several times but he said no.

I then raised my gun, and knocked him down with the butt-end. He said, "oh dear!" and I kept hitting him. I then left him, and went home, and got to bed about half-past eight. I got up early the next morning, and went to look for the piece of gun. The moon shone bright, but I could not find it. I was there an hour, and then left, for fear somebody might see me, as it was getting light, and went to work on the railway, where I was taken"".

"The prisoner afterwards told the constable where the other part of the gun was; the Coroner directed a search to be made for it, and at half-past eight adjourned till Thursday morning, at ten o'clock.

Bates is about 22 years of age, and is a strong, active young man, very fond of a gun and poaching; he stated that no one but himself was implicated, and that he had no previous thought of committing the rash act.

The inquest was again resumed on Thursday morning, when the pieces of the gun were produced, having been found in a pond described by the prisoner. After some further evidence as to the identity of the gun, the Coroner summed up, and the jury, after a few minutes' consideration, returned a verdict of "Wilful Murder" against Thomas Bates, and he was committed accordingly for trial".

Bates' fate is described in the Northampton Mercury of 18th March 1837.

"MURDER. - T. Bates was indicted for the murder of James Giltrow,

game-keeper of Colonel Hanmer, M. P. on the 29th of August last, at Soulbury. We noticed this case at the time of the apprehension of the prisoner and a gun, which was proved to belong to the prisoner, was found in a pond where it had been thrown by the prisoner. He also admitted that when the deceased discovered him in the act of shooting a pheasant, he threw himself on his mercy, but the deceased said he would not pass it over, for he had caused a great deal of trouble; on this he struck him with the butt-end of his gun, and continued his assault until the stock broke".

"The evidence of the surgeon who examined the body showed that there was a severe wound on the front on the head; there was also a great loss of the frontal bone; all the bones of the skull were severely broken; the nose was beaten flat; and he had no doubt that death ensued from the wounds inflicted".

"The prisoner was found guilty, and the Learned Judge passed sentence of Death on him".

"During the passing of the sentence the prisoner manifested no peculiar emotion, although his whole demeanour was marked with calmness and attention to the proceedings".

Thomas Bates was hanged at Aylesbury Prison on 31st March 1837. He was 23 years old.

## ***THE VIC SCOTT MEMORIAL ORCHARD***

For some years before the pandemic we were in the habit of having a social evening at this time of year to report on progress at the orchard, but for the second year running this is not possible. In truth I think the 'social' element of these events outweighed the 'business' side, and even in the 'Chronicle' it is hard to replicate the effect of a glass of wine. However I thought I would provide a few notes: I should be glad to hear from anyone who wants to know more at [gordon.smith53@btinternet.com](mailto:gordon.smith53@btinternet.com).

The orchard was started in 2011 in memory of a much-loved and admired friend and neighbour who had lived for his entire life in Aston Abbots. We now have 133 trees. A full list of trees planted and their sponsors is normally available in the shed in the corner of the orchard. Many have thrived, and in particular last year saw more blossom and fruit than in previous years. Some have been slower to get established than we would have liked, and we have in particular experienced some mysterious problems with plums/gages. We have over the years made changes in planting methods and this seems to have worked well. Last year was a good year and we hope this will be replicated in 2021. We were delighted to see that a number of village groups used the orchard for meetings last year and hope this will continue.

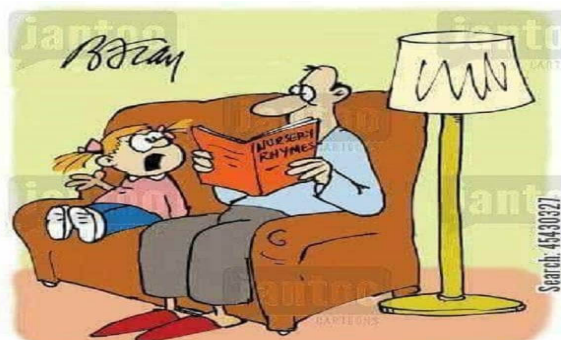
Over the winter we have planted eight new or replacement trees and all are thus far doing well. Peter did a huge amount of work in the early spring

digging out squares and, with Alex, digging in slow release organic fertiliser. The early blossom of the plums and damsons has been wonderful. As with last year, we are now apparently facing a spring drought.

### **Things we would be glad of help with.**

It would be very helpful if tree sponsors would keep clear the square around 'their' trees and could water them during dry periods. We do recognise that a number of people find it difficult to get to the orchard and of course some tree sponsors have moved away altogether, so we do keep an eye on all trees, but if you can help, that would be greatly appreciated. It has become clear that keeping squares clear, so that the tree roots get the full benefit of rain, does make a difference.

We have in the past had some very enjoyable social events in the orchard and hope to do so again when allowed. At the moment we are lacking an organiser for these events and I would love to hear from anyone who would like to take this on. Also, we have often thought that it would be excellent to have a photographic record of the orchard throughout the year. Again, if anyone would enjoy tackling this, let me know. **Gordon Smith**



Grandpa  
"SO, THESE THREE LITTLE MICE ARE BLIND AND THE FARMER'S WIFE COMES ALONG AND CUTS OFF THEIR TAILS WITH A CARVING KNIFE!? WHO WRITES THIS STUFF, STEPHEN KING?"

## **ALLOTMENT DIARY**

As I write this, it is becoming apparent that – probably due to global warming – April showers are a thing of the past. We are now in the middle of a drought which has lasted for 2 or 3 weeks, and I have recently realised that some of the plants in containers in my garden are looking sorry for themselves, because of the lack of rain: and a new plant which I bought on a whim when visiting a garden centre recently, and planted out, has died, probably for the same reason. It was supposed to be frost-hardy, so I do not think the frosts we have also experienced can be the cause).

No doubt for the same reason, there has been no sign of my first early potatoes popping their first shoots above the ground yet. The only good news is that my lawn does not seem to be growing much at the moment.

So far I have planted in the allotment my first and second early potatoes, my onions and shallots, and parsnips. In the greenhouse I have started off in pots and seed trays tomatoes and sweetcorn; in the kitchen some peppers; and in a seed tray near the greenhouse my crop of leeks.

Although the recent frosts in France have been catastrophic for wine-growers there (and no doubt for wine-growers in this country, although I have not read much in the press about it), let us hope that they will continue to kill off many of the pests that afflict vegetable growers.

I read an extraordinary headline to an article in my paper recently, which grabbed my interest, as it was designed



to do. The headline was “Swiss bury their pants to help plants”. Apparently a thousand people in Switzerland are panting identical pairs of underpants in vegetable patches, flower-beds and farmland throughout the country in an experiment to measure the health of the country’s soil. After a few months, the pants will be dug up, photographed and perused by scientists at Zurich University for signs of decomposition. They will also examine the surrounding soil for traces of DNA, to work out what microbes are eating away at the underwear – and the team of scientists hope to produce a map showing what is happening below the surface throughout the country.

Why underpants? The professor in charge says it is because they are widely available (but, I suspect, it is because it will get the test more publicity than would otherwise be the case). The University team has previously demonstrated that by adding the right type of fungal spores to the soil, they can increase crop yields by as much as 40%. It seems that the fungi collect around the plant roots, and feed them nutrients in exchange for sugar. It is hoped that the pant experiment will help decide what is the best mix of fungi for each different soil type, and what role bacteria play in increasing the productivity of the crops being grown.

In the past, the health of soil was frequently determined by burying tea-bags, and checking how quickly they rotted: the faster, the more healthy the soil. But tea-bags are not nearly as amusing as underpants!

Finally, I read that developers are including allotments (or, as I am sorry to say they are calling them, “grow

gardens”) on their developments to tempt would-be buyers. Three sites were mentioned in particular: Salt Cross Garden Village, near Oxford; a site on a disused gas-works at Fulham; and Elephant Park near the Elephant & Castle. A second attraction for developers is that they believe that councils are more likely to grant planning permission for developments which include such allotments. However, this is bucking the trend: Sheffield University researchers have found that since 1960, land set aside for allotments has decreased by 65%!

**Peter Shorrock**

## ***Population growth? I think I’ve found an Answer.*** Bill Rushton. Aston Abbotts

***I’m probably going the right way for a smacked bottom for allowing this piece in Chronicle but here goes. Ed!***

A few nights ago, at about 1.30 am., unable to sleep I got up, tottered downstairs, tripped over the dog and made a cup of tea. After stumbling over the bemused animal again I sat on the sofa and turned on the television for some early am and, hopefully, soporific viewing. BBC 1 and 2 were showing the same programmes as earlier in the evening and most of the commercial channels had either shut down or sunk into TV gambling. So I wandered up the tuning scale past some unavailable SKY channels, (I

pay enough for the licence I won't pay to view as well) then past the various News channels and then I came across something called Babestation. Now I'm not a complete hermit; I was aware that these channels existed but I had not seen them before and consequently was not prepared for what was presented.

I young(ish) lady with nothing on but a pair of black underthings was rubbing herself down with some goose grease or axle oil, I'm not sure which, after which she proceeded to gyrate and shimmy around the set is what I can only guess was meant to be a provocative fashion. Whilst most of her well oiled torso vibrated and quivered, her obviously plastic top bits remained unmoving and about as yielding as the rocks at Stonehenge from which they might have been hewn. It was all about as erotic as a small tin of Pilchards and considerably less satisfying. Next stop up the Scale is Babestation 2; oh yes I kept going, purely in the pursuit of journalistic accuracy you understand. On this station there were two models similarly engaged. One gesticulated suggestively with one hand whilst holding a telephone to their ear with the other. And this is how the station gets its revenue. Providing a show while encouraging telephone calls at premium rates when callers can request within specific boundaries certain actions. The models must either keep their drawers on or if not must never

show between their legs. A year or two ago one of the stations was fined many thousands of pounds for a brief accidental view of what lies beneath.

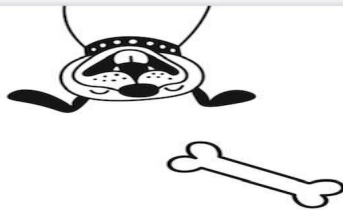
Apparently while most of the calls are from middle age presumably lonely inadequate men a not insubstantial number are from women.

I am told that another channel has ladies of an indeterminate age, about forty- five to fifty-five (around the waste that is, not years) jiggling around the set, presumably in their girdle, as a spectacle for gentlemen of a certain predilection.

Oh dear; that British television has plumbed such depths.

So, switching the set off I tripped over the now properly fed up Collie and returned to bed. I lay here and considered it for a while, well you would wouldn't you?

I would not ban these channels; obviously they satisfy a need in some members of our society. I thought that there should be perhaps some kind of child lock on. But then again, I thought no, leave it open so that the little treasures can watch it. Even show it in schools: The spectacle is so un-erotic it might put teenagers off sex for quite a long time. This would help to cut population growth at a stroke. (no pun intended).



# Wingbury Paws



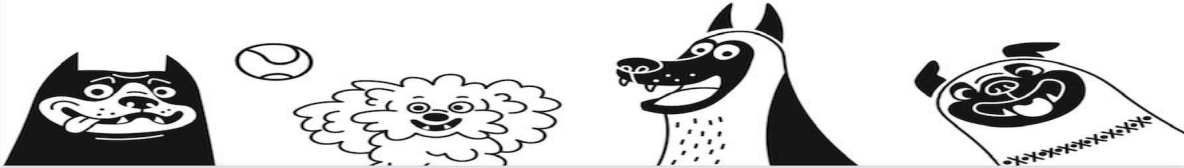
## Professional Dog Walking in Wingrave & Surrounding Villages

Wingbury Paws is committed to providing pet owners with peace of mind knowing that their beloved pets are safe, happy and taken care of.

DBS Checked  
Fully Insured  
K-9 First Aid Trained

£12 per hour walk

Call Lucy today on **07912 207 887**  
or email [lucy@wingburypaws.co.uk](mailto:lucy@wingburypaws.co.uk)



the nail barn  
FABULOUS FINGERS AND TOES

The Nail Barn offers manicures and pedicures in a tranquil countryside setting. Located in Aston Abbots, our professional, friendly service uses high quality products. Covid-19 compliant salon.  
By appointment only.

[www.nailbarn.co.uk](http://www.nailbarn.co.uk)  
[hello@nailbarn.co.uk](mailto:hello@nailbarn.co.uk)  
Tel : 07857 667474





# **MOUNT TABOR**

## ***Wingrave's Old Manor House***



As an addition to '*Aston Abbots as it was*' I thought I would include this article which includes, where the Czech cabinet and diplomats stayed whilst the Czech President was exiled in the Aston Abbots Abbey.

Take the footpath to Crafton from Mill Lane and shortly you will see to your left the handsome country house now known as Mount Tabor House but which was formerly the Old Manor House. A recent controversial planning application, as yet undecided, to erect 5 new dwellings in the lawn area of the house has attracted a very significant number of objections on various grounds. Prominent amongst these is one by Heritage-Buckinghamshire Council that the application is not acceptable in heritage terms "due to the position, scale and design of the proposed dwellings".

Mount Tabor House along with the former stables, the lodge cottages and the gates and gate piers are all Grade II Listed as designated heritage assets and all are set within the Wingrave Conservation Area. The purpose of this

article is to briefly trace the history of the site and to explain why it remains so important historically.

Hannah de Rothschild, born in 1851, lived with her father Mayer Amschel Rothschild at Mentmore Towers. In 1874, her father died leaving her the house and valuable contents, two million pounds and an estate of 4500 acres. She was the wealthiest woman in the country apart from the Queen. She also had a social conscience and became a great benefactress to the people of Wingrave. She bought 200 acres of farmland there, she demolished cottages in chronic disrepair and embarked on an ambitious project to build 35 new ones in the usual "Rothschild Tudor style": white rendered walls, black timbers, tall Elizabethan chimney pots and memorial plaques bearing her monogram and the date (H.de R.1876). She also built an Infant School in Moat Lane, Wingrave.

Between 1876 and 1878, she built the Old Manor House on the farm land she had recently acquired. She did not occupy it herself but intended it to be used as a hunting lodge- it included a six-stall stable, 8 loose boxes, a harness room, a cleaning room and two coach houses. In March 1878, Hannah married the Earl of Rosebery and the couple lived at Mentmore. She leased the Old Manor House to Mr William Russell Stewart Freeman and he improved it and bought it from her in 1898.

In 1905, there was a great scandal in the county when Eveline, the oldest of the Freeman girls, eloped one moonlit

night with the dashing 21 year old 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Essex, whom she had met at a hunt ball. It was a classic elopement complete with a ladder up to the bedroom window. The lovers soon returned and were duly married. Eveline gave birth to a son Reginald, who later became the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Essex and who lived with his wife at Floyds Farm in Mill Lane until his death in 1981.

In the meantime, Eveline, now divorced, remained at the Old Manor House, breeding dogs. On the outbreak of the Second World War, she leased the house to the Czech Government exiled in England under their President, Dr Edvard Benes. It served as a safe house for the close Chancellery and Cabinet staff of Dr Benes and it also included a weekend flat for Jan Masaryk, a prominent diplomat and politician. Heads of state of allied nations, including Winston Churchill stayed there when meeting President Benes (who lived at the Aston Abbots Abbey), if curfew prevented them from returning to London. The Czechs remained at the house until 1945, and they provided a tangible reminder of their stay in the parish by building the bus shelter at Wingrave crossroads in thanks for the kindness shown to them by the villagers of Wingrave and Aston Abbots.



The link with the Czech Republic and Slovakia remains strong to this day, with frequent visits by their Ambassadors both informally and for important commemorations.

Eveline did not return to the house after the war but leased it to the Sisters of St Mary of the Cross, a community of Anglican nuns from Edgware, who looked after young people with learning difficulties. They gave the house the biblical name of Mount Tabor and added a chapel. In 1972, the work became too much for the nuns and the house and gardens were offered free of charge to Macintyre School, provided it continued to educate and care for children with disabilities. Permission was granted in 2003 for a purpose-built school building to be constructed at the rear of the house, which was converted to residential use.

Thank you to the following for their source contributions:

**Heritage section of the Directorate for planning, Growth & Sustainability-Buckinghamshire Council. His Excellency Libor Secka-UK Ambassador of the Czech Republic.**

**Mark Bowman- resident of Mount Tabor Stables.**

**Wingrave- a Rothschild Village in the Vale" by Ken and Margaret Morley**

**Richard Keighley - Chairman of Wingrave with Rowsham Heritage Association**





## ***Parrott Brothers Butchers Whitchurch.***

### **Local Quality Butchers**

***Beechmoor Farm, Whitchurch, Aylesbury HP22 4LG***

***Opens 7AM Tuesday to Saturday***

***Phone: 01296 641207***

An advertisement for A J Waring Carpentry Services. The background is a light grey with a fine grid pattern. At the top, the text "A J Waring" is in a large, serif font, and "Carpentry Services" is below it in a slightly smaller, similar font. Below the text, there is a black and white illustration of carpentry tools: a hand saw, a hammer, and a piece of wood. To the right of the tools, the text "All aspects of carpentry & joinery" is written. Below that, "Doors, windows, wardrobes, kitchens & bespoke carpentry" is listed. Further down, "Local & reliable" and "NVO Qualified" are written. At the bottom left, it says "Established for over 15 years". At the bottom, there are two lines of contact information: "07468 041680" and "ajwcarpentry2@gmail.com".

**A J Waring  
Carpentry Services**

All aspects of carpentry & joinery

Doors, windows, wardrobes,  
kitchens & bespoke carpentry

Local & reliable

NVO Qualified

Established for over 15 years

07468 041680      [ajwcarpentry2@gmail.com](mailto:ajwcarpentry2@gmail.com)



## **New life ahead; let's not waste it on past comfort zones**

Greetings and warm wishes to you all in this season of Eastertide.

At the point at which I was writing this contribution we were on the eve of the mid-April landmark for the new wave of restriction lifting, and there was clearly a strong sense of *déjà vu*. My mind was therefore drawn to something that was written back in May 2020 as the restrictions from the first lockdown were being lifted. The writing in question was from a book written by former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, in a book called *Candles in the Dark: Faith, Hope and Love in a Time of Pandemic* (the book that our Benefice Lent Group was focussing on back in February and March).

Writing on the eve of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day Williams notes that, after six years of the deprivation and uncertainty of war, a sense of rest, a return to 'normality' and to something people could 'cope with' was clearly a top priority. However, it didn't stop there, because many people did not consider it sufficient simply that the immediate threat was over. As Williams puts it, 'for them, victory was about *opportunity*: something new had become thinkable.' He notes the big changes that resulted in the social landscape of Britain as a consequence and speculates on what the modern-day possibilities for such a sense of opportunity might be, not

least given the ongoing environmental urgency of our time.

As he too was writing in Eastertide, he was sure to relate this important focus on opportunity to an emphasis on Easter as a new beginning and not as an end – what he calls 'an event that changes forever the landscape in which we live'. The key question, for him, is then whether we are ready and willing to take part in 'whatever creative newness lies ahead' so that we triumph not just over past dangers but also over our own longing for a restored sense of the usual and familiar. We can be liberated from a dependence on past comfort zones and open to new possibilities looking forward not backwards.

As this seems to ring true just as much, if not more, this year than last, it seemed only right to mention it again here – and I commend the book in question to any who may be interested in reading it.

With prayers and best wishes as we move forward together

**Rev' Dr Andrew Krauss**

### ***Church Duties May***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Cleaning</i>	<i>Flowers</i>	<i>Mowing</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Colin/David</i>	<i>Colin</i>	<i>AS</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>Anita /Alex</i>	<i>Colin</i>	<i>PER</i>
<i>15</i>	<i>Ann/Caroline L</i>	<i>Donated</i>	<i>MARKS</i>
<i>22</i>	<i>Colin/Gay</i>	<i>Donated</i>	<i>ROTA</i>
<i>29</i>	<i>David</i>	<i>TBA</i>	

## Services at Saint James Church Aston Abbotts May

Programme subject to change to meet any future COVID restrictions.

Look out for further announcements on the village POSTBOX or the Church Noticeboard at the gate.

2 <sup>nd</sup> May	6.00pm	Evening Prayer
9 <sup>th</sup> May	10.30am	Parish Communion
16 <sup>th</sup> May	10.00am	Lay led, informal service
23 <sup>rd</sup> May	10.30am	Parish Communion
30 <sup>th</sup> May	No service at Aston Abbotts but you can go to:  Cublington 9.00am  Wingrave 9.30am  Stewkley 10.30am	

### Church Matters



#### The diary of St. James's

We have now returned to something like normal in Church, apart from social distancing, masks and no singing! We are very pleased with the audio system installed in March.

An amateur photographer took a video of the inside of the Church last

weekend so you will soon be able to view St. James online.

The Church is a popular over wintering place for butterflies and we are always worried as to how they fair when we release them in bright but cold conditions such as we have now. Other wildlife that is less welcome are the moles and the badgers who tunnel and dig for food all over the graveyard at this time of the year. I can at least use the soil from the molehills to fill in the holes made by the badgers! Stay Safe

**David Gray. PCC Aston Abbotts**

# ***The Beautiful Mentmore Towers***



***This beautiful mansion remains on the 'at risk' register.***

Batman, Ali G and other films shot at Mentmore Towers. Christian Bale, Rowan Atkinson and Tom Cruise have all filmed there.

## ***Emily Craigie***

Mentmore Towers is one of the most impressive buildings in Buckinghamshire and it's no wonder it's been chosen as the backdrop for A-list films.

It was built in the 19th century for the Rothschild family in the village of Mentmore and was designed to be a country retreat, as well as a spot to showcase his fine art collection.

The impressive Grade I listed building was used to house important artworks during WWII, including the Gold State Coach of the Royal Family.

There were a number of attempts to bring the museum under national ownership, however, the

government was not prepared to pay the amount requested for the property.

In 1999 the home was purchased by investor Simon Halabi who had plans to expand the property and turn it into a hotel.

However, while waiting for the outcome of a planning dispute the collapse of the housing market seriously affected Halabi's business and the works have been put on hold ever since.

## **Batman Begins**

Christian Bale's first outing as Batman was in Batman Begins where he fights to stop Gotham from being overrun with chaos at the hands of Ra's al Ghul and the Scarecrow.

It starred A-list actors including Bale, Michael Caine, Liam Neeson, Katie Holmes, Gary Oldman, and Cillian Murphy.

The film was named one of the most influential of the 2000s and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Cinematography.

Bruce Wayne's family mansion in the film was actually the grand Mentmore Towers.

## **Eyes Wide Shut**

Thriller Eyes Wide Shut was directed by Stanley Kubrick and is based on the 1926 novella Traumnovelle - the final cut of the film was shown to Warner Bros six days before Kubrick



died. The 1999 film starred Tom Cruise and Nichole Kidman in the leading roles and the pair were married at the time.

Cruise's character Dr. Bill Harford embarks on a night of illicit activities after being shocked that his wife Alice (Kidman) considered having an affair.

Mentmore Towers is the Long Island Mansion where Cruise goes for the night after his wife's confession.

### **The Mummy**

Classic adventure flick The Mummy follows the story of adventurer Rick O'Connell and librarian Evelyn Carnahan as they accidentally wake up a cursed high priest called Imhotep.

The 1999 film stars Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz and John Hannah who desperately scramble to fix their terrible mistake.

The inside of the Museum of Antiquities in Cairo in Egypt in the film was actually Mentmore Towers.

### **Ali G Indahouse: the Movie**

Ali G was a hugely popular Sacha Baron Cohen character in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

He appeared on Da Ali G Show and then the [film](#), Ali G Indahouse.

In the film, the leading character becomes involved in a plot to overthrow the Prime Minister by the Chancellor, however it becomes increasingly clear that the plan has backfired.

Mentmore Towers was used in the film which was shot at Bray studios in Berkshire.

### **Johnny English**

This hilarious comedy-adventure [film](#) starring Rowan Atkinson follows the hapless spy Johnny English.

After an attack on MI7, killing all of the other agents, he becomes Britain's only spy.

The plot sees him trying to track down the Crown Jewels after they're stolen from the Tower of London under his watch.

He stars alongside Natalie Imbruglia, Ben Miller and John Malkovich.

Mentmore Towers is in the opening scene where English breaks into a mansion during a dream.



**That's a load off your mind!**

## **Ironing and Laundry Services**



- **Ironing**
- **Laundry**
- **Dry Cleaning**
- **Duvet & Pillow Cleaning**
- **Curtains Cleaning**
- **Alterations**

**Free Collection & Delivery**

 **01296 422 500**

 **info@steam-on.co.uk**

 **www.steam-on.co.uk**



HOLY COW



## WE ARE OPENING!

Use code **CHRONICLE10%** for 10% off first online order!

Handmade, fairtrade, unique  
Gifts for him, her, them, home and me!  
Now stocking loose-leaf tea in earth-friendly  
packaging

**COVID-safe click & collect**

[www.holycowhome.co.uk](http://www.holycowhome.co.uk)

6 Cambridge Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1RS - T 01296 640507



# ***Advertise to our readers***

***(11 issues) Annual Advertising rates***

Full Page Inside	£100
Half Page Inside	£50
Quarter Page	£35
One Offs Full	£25
Half	£15
Quarter	£10

Contact John Whyte 14 Bricstock, Aston Abbotts Bucks HP224LP.

**07988001843**

**Deadline for Chronicle contributions is the 24th of each month.**

**Please send articles to: [editor@aachronicle.co.uk](mailto:editor@aachronicle.co.uk)**

## **Painting & Decorating**

Brighten your Home with a Professional Decorating Service

Clean & Tidy Workmanship Guaranteed



To Discuss Your Idea's & Arrange

A Free Quote    Contact: Adrian



Tel: 01296 688429

Mobile: 07986 597013

E-Mail: [bystra@btinternet.com](mailto:bystra@btinternet.com)

# Who's Who

Service	Name	Contact Details
Chronicle Editor	Pete Lucas	01296 681387
Chronicle Advertising	John Whyte	07988001843
Chronicle Distribution	Sally Palmer/Jill Wenble	681152/681877
Parish Council	<i>Marisa Caroline Rebecca Albel-Smith</i>  <i>Jane Anne Baylis</i>  <i>Trevor Ian Hall</i>  <i>Richard Brian Lakin</i>  <i>Heather Jane Langdon</i>  <i>Sally Ann Palmer</i>  <i>Jane Susan Plested</i>	
County Councillor	Netta Glover	01296 688357
Vicar	Revd Howard Robson	01296 688593
Church Warden	Carolyn Abel-Smith	01296 681001
Church Secretary	Caroline Lane	01296 681373
Book Club	Sally Palmer	01296 681152
Village Hall Hire	Nigel & Sally Palmer	01296 681152
Men's 630 Club	Andy Bystra	01296 681690
Women's Gnomes Club	Carol Spooner	01296 681544
Post office & shop Wingrave	Deva	01296 682964
Baby & Toddler Group	Kim Gayler	01296 681123
Royal Oak Pub & Restaurant	Teri Moulton	07809395463
100 Club Treasurer	David Gray	01296 681952
Bingo	Pam Dixon	01296 681626
Rambling Club & Whist Drive	Colin Higgs	01296 681343

# Community Services

NHS Direct 24hr Advice	111
Doctor Out of hours Surgeries	01296 331511
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	01296 315000
Police Non-Emergency	101
Buckinghamshire Council	01296 395000
Citizens Advice	08701264056
MP Greg Smith (Con)	01296 714 240
Anglian Water	01296 385995
Pre School Wingrave	01296 681127
Wingrave School	01296 681436
Cottesloe School Wing	01296 688264

## Wingrave Diary MAY 2021

Sat 1-3 Scarecrow Festival

Mon 3 1800 Roll-up & try bowls  
Bowling Green, The Rec.

Wed 5 1030 WI: Try bowls with  
Wingrave Bowls Club Bowling Green,  
The Rec.

Thu 6 0700 Local council elections  
Community Centre

Sat 8 0930 Men's Breakfast Talk:  
Climate change: what needs to be done  
to save the planet? via Zoom

Mon 10 0930 Weekday Walking Group  
The Green

Mon 10 1800 Roll-up & try bowls  
Bowling Green, The Rec.

Sun 16 0930 Local ramble Nup End Lane

Mon 17 1800 Roll-up & try bowls  
Bowling Green, The Rec.

Fri 21 2000 Friday Night Social Evening  
Community Centre

Mon 24 0930 Weekday Walking Group  
The Green

Mon 24 1800 Roll-up & try bowls  
Bowling Green, The Rec.

Fri 28 1800 Village barbecue and Social  
Community Centre

Mon 31-7Jun School half term holiday

Mon 31 1800 Roll-up & try bowls  
Bowling Green, The Rec





The tennis courts at Cublington are open again

New members welcome. Singles and doubles play allowed

Online booking system, two hard courts. Low annual membership rates.

Free floodlights. Orchard Ground, Stewkley Road, Cublington

More information from Caroline Lane, 681373. [carolinelane@btinternet.com](mailto:carolinelane@btinternet.com)



Registered Charity number 1151925



**Now we are open again  
come and see our wonderful  
NEW PICTURE BOOKS  
and give your children a  
passion for reading.  
(175 new items)**



**Our revised opening times until  
further notice:**

**Tuesday 1400 – 1600**

**Wednesday 1000 – 1200**

**Saturday 1000 – 1200**



**Our new  
selection of  
adult Reading  
Well titles will  
soon be joined  
by ranges for  
children and  
young adults.**



**Want to add  
7+ years to  
your life?  
We have  
FREE  
wellbeing  
packs to give  
away  
(Whilst stocks last)**

**Also, you can join the library here  
[www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/libraries/library-membership/join-library/](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/libraries/library-membership/join-library/) to access a wealth  
of FREE online services.**

**Follow us on social media for latest updates**



**@wing.community.library**



**@wing\_library**



# Explore... Dream... Discover...



Travel Impressions are specialists in tailor-making holidays to destinations worldwide. If you are thinking of travelling to Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Southern Africa, South America, Asia, India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan or within Europe, please call or email us.

We can help you create the best itinerary, as we offer:

Personalised planning - we take the time to get to know you

Friendly, honest advice from an independent travel agency

Extensive experience to arrange every detail

Using fully bonded tour operators • No booking fees

## Travel Impressions

*A World of Experience*



**01442 890265**

[enquiries@travelimpressions.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@travelimpressions.co.uk)  
[www.travelimpressions.co.uk](http://www.travelimpressions.co.uk)

Suite 4, George House, 64 High Street, Tring, Herts. HP23 4AF



# Buckland Landscapes

Nursery Tree sales Planting Moving Landscape supplies

Rooted in more than 20 years of landscape design, construction and maintenance experience, Buckland Landscapes Ltd can bring creativity and expertise as well as long term maintenance solutions to your landscapes.

In addition, we have our own 50 acre open grown tree nursery based in  
Bushmead Road, Cublington, Nr Aylesbury.

Our website is comprehensive and very user friendly. Please take a look to see the full range of services we are able to offer.

Whether you require garden design, hard or soft landscaping, or garden maintenance, please do not hesitate to contact our office to arrange a consultation on: 01296 680350 or email: [info@buckland-landscapes.co.uk](mailto:info@buckland-landscapes.co.uk).

01296 680350

[info@buckland-landscapes.co.uk](mailto:info@buckland-landscapes.co.uk)

[www.buckland-landscapes.co.uk](http://www.buckland-landscapes.co.uk)

Home Farm, 61 The Green, Aston Abbotts, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 4LY







# ANDERTON ELECTRICS

*Keeping you wired up*

- ✓ Free quotations, no obligations
- ✓ Emergency Work – day or night
- ✓ Domestic or Commercial
- ✓ A name you can trust

FREE NO  
OBLIGATION  
QUOTATIONS

Contact James direct on:  
Mobile: **07771 698 151**  
Office: **01582 343 123**

Email: [james@andertonelectrics.co.uk](mailto:james@andertonelectrics.co.uk)

Proud members of  
**Checkatrade.com**  
Where reputation matters

**See our feedback on Check a trade**  
[www.checkatrade.com/andertonelectrics](http://www.checkatrade.com/andertonelectrics)



City &  
Guilds



[www.andertonelectrics.co.uk](http://www.andertonelectrics.co.uk)

## ***Red Kites over the Vale***



This magnificently graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail.



***Martin Rance Photography***

It was saved from national extinction by one of the world's longest-running protection programmes. It has now been successfully re-introduced to England and Scotland. Red kites are listed under Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The Chilterns is one of the best places in the UK to see red kites, thanks to a successful reintroduction project between 1989 and 1994.

Red kites were driven to extinction in England by human persecution by the end of the nineteenth century. A small

population survived in Wales, but there was little chance of these birds repopulating their original areas.

Between 1989 and 1994, kites from Spain were imported and released into the Chilterns by the RSPB and English Nature (now Natural England). Red kites started breeding in the Chilterns in 1992 and now there could be over 1,000 breeding pairs in the area. The reintroduction has been so successful it is not possible to monitor all the nests, so the overall size of the population can only be estimated.

Since 1999, chicks have been taken from the Chilterns to reintroduction sites in other parts of the country. The red kite reintroduction has proved to be one of the greatest conservation success stories of the 20th century.

Latin name: *Milvus milvus* - Size: 60 - 65cm long (Males are slightly smaller than females)

Wingspan: 175 - 195cm - Weight: 0.9 - 1.3kg - Colour - Body - russet - Head - grey / white

Wings - red with white patches on underside. Tail - grey / white tipped with black (deeply forked). (Juveniles are duller in colour than adults)

Voice: Mew-like "weoo-weoo-weoo", rapidly repeated



***Martin Rance Photography***

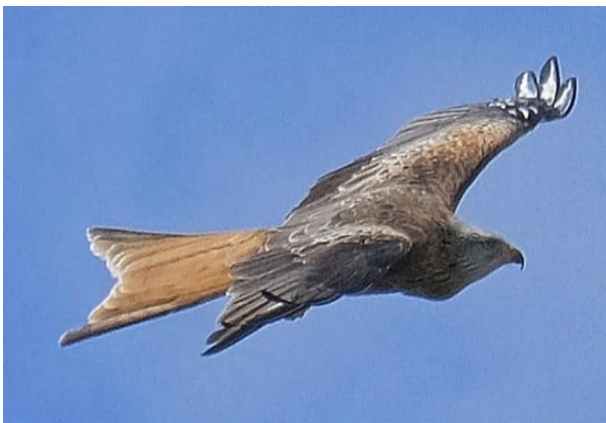


*Martin Rance Photography*

## Breeding

In March, kites begin to spend more time in potential nesting areas. They will use nests abandoned by other birds, or will build their own in tall trees. The nests are made from large sticks and are normally lined with wool, which the birds collect along with other unusual items such as pieces of plastic, and sometimes even items of clothing.

By mid-April the female lays up to four white eggs, flecked with light brown, of which one to three usually hatch after 34 days. The young birds fledge in about six to seven weeks and will remain with their parents for a further week to ten days.



## Feeding habit

Red kites eat mainly dead animals that they are able to find (carrion), being too weak-footed to kill any prey much bigger than a small rabbit. They will also feed on chicks, small mammals and invertebrates such as beetles and earthworms. The kite hunts by flying low over open country, using the forked tail to steer, twisting it like a rudder. Live prey is usually caught by surprise rather than speed, although kites sometimes make fast, twisting chases.

**Please DO NOT feed Red Kites** – this can encourage birds to become dependent on scraps which will not give them all the nutrients they need. Large numbers, attracted to food can become a public nuisance and may encourage persecution. There is also an environmental health risk if scraps of cooked or uncooked meat are left lying around or dropped by birds. Further, it is likely that high numbers may discourage song birds and other wildlife.



## Monitoring the population

In June each year, a number of young kites are fitted with coloured plastic wing tags, marked with an individual letter, number or symbol. A different colour is used each year, so the birds can be aged. This work is carried out by [the Southern England Kite Group](#). A second colour on the tag indicates which part of the UK the bird is from (yellow for the Chilterns/southern England).