

IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY- MARCH 2026



FROM IWERNE HILL TOWARDS CHILD OKEFORD (*John Goodliffe*)

REGARDING THE DINAH'S HOLLOW ROAD CLOSURE

As you will by now be aware, the C13 is closed in both directions from the Gore Clump to the B3081 and will remain so for most of 2026. As a result, more traffic is anticipated along the A350, down Tower Hill and Higher Street. To ease the impact of this, a 20mph restriction is in force on the A350 through the village (and through Sutton Waldron, Fontmell Magna and Compton Abbas). The junction of Higher St with the A350, i.e. by the War Memorial, will be controlled by traffic lights to allow the safe passage of vehicles joining the A350 and Clayesmore students crossing it.

Any queries or concerns you may have should be directed to the dedicated email address: dinahs.hollow@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk. This inbox is monitored, and enquiries will be triaged to the appropriate department for a response. It is also the best contact for reporting highways' maintenance issues relating specifically to the A350, C13, or through-routes from nearby villages. The relevant Highways officers will be informed and will address the issue. (Please feel free to copy Jane Somper, our District Councillor, into any correspondence.)

Any complaints regarding speeding or driver behaviour must be reported directly to the police, as Dorset Council does not deal with road traffic offences. Reporting these incidents helps build a record of problem areas, allowing patterns to be identified.

John Goodliffe

THE CHURCH PATH EXCAVATION TALK

Richard McConnell of Context One Heritage and Archaeology has kindly agreed to repeat the talk he gave last November for those who were unable to attend the last time. It is emphasised that this will be a repeat of Richard's original talk, not an update. If you've already heard the talk please don't come again! It will take place in St Mary's Church on Thurs 12th February at 19:30, and, as before, entry will be by ticket only. Tickets are available from the Iwerne Minster Village Shop.

Whilst the event is free, donations to the church will be much appreciated to cover the costs of heating, lighting and so forth. **John Goodliffe**

ABINGDON TAPESTRIES UNVEILED!

After three years of dedicated stitching by the lovely ladies of the village the date for the grand unveiling of the tapestries has arrived.

If you would like to come and see this bare arch covered with iconic images of our beautiful village, set amid the surrounding hills, please join us in the Abingdon Hall on Saturday 14th March at 11.30am.



Maggie Hale

OBITUARY FOR JEAN KENNARD 1941-2025



Jean was born in Cheshire but spent some of her childhood at Deolali in India where her father, who was in the Royal Artillery, was training Indian Army gunners. Jean always remembered those days very fondly: her beloved ayah, her chappal crossover sandals, the punkah fans on the ceiling and the fearful thunderstorms. When the family returned to England, they moved to Larkhill on Salisbury Plain which Jean also loved. As a young teenager, Jean sang in the Larkhill Garrison Church for several years. Although not overtly religious, Jean did develop an impressive command of the entire standard hymn repertoire which she knew by heart.

A final army move took Jean to Taunton where she got her first job as a touch typist and shorthand secretary. It was at her office that she met a dashing, young duffle-coated architect from the practice upstairs. This was Robin and they married in 1961 in Gillingham, Dorset where her parents had retired to run a sweet and stationery shop.

For the next few years, Jean and Robin lived in various places in England, Scotland and Canada. Robin loved to travel and Jean was supportive of his adventurous ideas. There were plans to go to New Zealand but with the arrival of a second baby, Jean wanted somewhere to settle. That home was Apple Tree Cottage on Shute Lane which she insisted was forever, and so it turned out.

Jean had many talents: she loved bell ringing, rarely missing weekly practice for over forty years and serving most of that time as Tower Captain. She was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers and was admired for her excellent style. She was a wonderful swimmer – elegant, fast and tough. She was a skilled knitter and dressmaker and a great believer in darning socks!

Her care for her family was practical, decisive and immediate and she took delight in her grandchildren and great grandchild. Jean loved family gatherings and had an especially close relationship with her sister Anne. She is survived by Robin, SarahJane and Andrew, Rowan, Will, Eric, Alice, Evie, Max and Flora.

(Adapted from Jean's eulogy: with thanks to the family for permission to do so.)

IWERNE MINSTER 100 CLUB RESULTS

November 2025

£15 John Westwell (90)
£12 Penny Wintle (92)
£10 Rod Major (15)
£5 Sue Le Prevost (75)

December 2025

£30 Debs Purdue (46)
£20 Helen Middleton (91)
£20 Phil Middleton (81)
£20 Monique Goodliffe (37)
£20 Graham Hale (23)

NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE CLUB

Our New Year began with a very happy coffee morning, well supported by a good crowd. Coffee and mince pies were enjoyed as well as a raffle raising £150 for club funds. The next event is the pantomime. "Mirror Mirror", a take on Snow White, has three performances 26th, 27th & 28th February. Tickets all at £10 are on sale at the shop from mid-January. Remember – they go fast!

In my last report I mentioned that we were in need of a new treasurer. Since then Tony Freestone has come forward and we welcome him on to the committee. We are still in need of a cleaner so, if you know of one, please let me know. At present ladies of the committee keep us clean and tidy. The snooker room seems to very busy these days. Anyone interested should contact Richard Andrews for details. We have a quiz coming up in March when hopefully the weather will be better.

The Village Club always welcomes new members: contact Penny Marsh.

Penny Marsh (Chair)

DOG OWNERS TAKE HEED!

Amendment to the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953

The new amendment passed into law in December 2025. Among other things, this new amendment empowers the police to take advantage of the technological and scientific advancements that have been made since it first became law in 1953. This includes allowing them to take DNA samples and/or mouth impressions from dogs they suspect of worrying livestock where there is nobody present to accept responsibility for the dog, as well as ensuring such offenders can be ordered by the courts to pay the costs incurred by seizing and detaining a dog.

Dog attacks on livestock in the South West alone were estimated to cost £273,000 in 2022, And this makes no account for the trauma of having to deal with dead or injured animals.

Please: Keep your dog well under control!

EXCAVATION AT CHASE COTTAGE

Steve Smale is not a fan of overhead electricity cables. He wants to move the cable supplying Chase Cottage underground and so improve the visual appeal of Watery Lane. This he has begun, in conjunction with Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), by excavating an access pit down to half a metre below the stream bed and then boring horizontally through the rock as far as the curb and the road. He's been in contact with the Environmental Agency and Dorset Council about this and they've raised no objections. The horizontal bore hole is lined with a steel pipe. To connect through this, SSE will need to dig a trench across Watery Lane, which will require a road closure for a week or so, sometime in the spring.

Whilst digging, he found many jumbled ammonite fossils in and on the surface of the Upper Greensand layer. He also found that his hole filled up with water very quickly and so he needed to use two submersible pumps to allow work to progress. This was not water from the stream but from an aquifer on a clay layer below the Upper Greensand. When the access pit is backfilled, he plans to create a small well to capitalise on this water for his garden.

John Goodliffe

IWERNE VALLEY WALKING GROUP EAST STOUR WALK - DECEMBER 2025



We were most fortunate to have lovely sunshine after days of rain. Starting and finishing at the King's Arms, walkers were prepared for muddy fields and 15 people, including two grandchildren, and four dogs braved the mud as well as awkward stiles among brambles and bridges across streams. This was why we allowed more time for a relatively short walk (2.2 miles). The fields themselves were dry enough but entering them after a stile or gate that was challenging. The sunshine more than made up for it as did the beautiful views towards Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Stour Provost. We were joined half way through by the children's father. Ten walkers stayed for lunch, joined by four non-walkers and we had a very pleasant meal, albeit not the Christmas menu, so no crackers!

Claire Watson



THE SHROTON OIL SCHEME

A local scheme exists for the bulk purchase of heating oil. It continues to deliver an excellent service using a local firm and at very competitive rates.

If you would like to....

- Save on the cost of heating oil
- Cut the number of HGVs in our village lanes
- Reduce your carbon footprint

then join the scheme by contacting Mike Scott for more information

Tel: 07815 617937 Email:
shrotonoilscheme@gmail.com

OASIS PLANT CENTRE

We hope that all of our customers had a great Christmas and New Year and that 2026 has started well. Needless to say, it would be great if the rain could relent a bit but at least we haven't had to contend with quite as much stormy weather as last season. Anyway, with that in mind, we have every intention of throwing our proverbial doors open again on Wednesday 4th February at 9.00am. Please note that we intend to open on Sundays again this year on 1st March from 10am-4.00pm until the end of August.

We look forward to seeing everyone in 2026 so mind how you go until then.

Andrew Davies

Hambledon Plants

Oasis Plant Centre 01258 861325/07584 90275

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Do you know anyone who has recently moved into the village who may not yet be receiving the newsletter? If you do, please ask them if they would like to be added to our distribution list and they can send an email to john@hairy-barbarian.com.

ADVENT WINDOWS



We are all used to the idea of Advent calendars during the period leading up to Christmas. Well, this year we were introduced to the concept of Advent windows. You may have noticed that during December, in addition to the traditional decorations, a number of houses in the village had windows decorated with a Christmas theme.

At the beginning of December maps of the village went on sale at the shop and the pub showing the location of 24 houses whose owners had agreed to decorate a window in aid of St Mary's. A new window was revealed every day until Christmas Eve, when a shining star appeared in the church porch representing the star that led the Wise Men to Bethlehem where Jesus, the saviour of the world, was born.

There was a fantastic variety of designs ranging from wise men on their camels and a panoramic nativity scene to the light display created by children from St Andrew's School in the window of the Village Shop and a number of smaller displays, including a sweet shop! All the designs displayed great wit and creativity.



Some of those who decorated a window issued open invitations to villagers to visit them and see the windows close up with a glass of something

warming. It was lovely to come together in this informal way.

This was a new departure for Iwerne, and one which we hope will be repeated next year. We don't have a final figure of the amount raised for St Mary's, (it looks as if it will be more than £400) but many people have enjoyed walking round with their families and visitors spotting the windows and enjoying the effort that had gone into them.

Huge thanks are due to all those who participated, to the Village Shop and the Talbot for selling maps, to Clayesmore for designing and printing the maps and to Charlotte Bowater, whose brainchild this was and who worked tirelessly to make it happen.

Looking forward to next year!

David Parkhouse

CHRISTMAS AT ABINGDON HALL

Following the redecoration of the hall, a small group of us (Maggie and Graham Hale, Heather and Jeff Overton and Jules Power) were able to put up some Christmas decorations in advance of the SWIM WI Christmas lunch on 10 December and the Village Christmas Dinner on 11 December.

With foliage donated from several gardens, we created some beautiful wreaths for each of the mirrors in the hall along with some festive lights around the hall. Lots of lovely comments were received from those attending the events at the hall.

Jules Power

SWIM WI CHRISTMAS LUNCH



Held on 10 December, we celebrated our WI Christmas with a bring and share lunch, which was enjoyed by our members and some guests. There was a lovely atmosphere with lots of chat and laughter.

The entertainment was provided by Anne Jones and her husband, who took us through the twelve days of Christmas, through music and tales from bygone days. The couple were talented singers and they played a range of instruments, some quite unusual. They provided song sheets for us to join in!

A lovely occasion, enjoyed by all.

Jules Power (SWIM WI President)

VILLAGE CHRISTMAS DINNER AT ABINGDON MEMORIAL HALL

On 11th December 46 villagers gathered in Abingdon Hall for the annual Christmas Dinner. A very enjoyable evening was had by all with a wonderful three course dinner and great entertainment from a barbers shop quartet.

A big thank you goes to Dianne Benfield, members of the Abingdon Hall committee and volunteers for organising the event. A team effort ensured the evening was a great success. A big thank you also to all the helpers for creating festive floral decorations, cooking the turkey, preparing the soup, all the trimmings and serving the customers.

A special thank you to Jackie and Amanda for doing all the washing up!

A total of £689 (including £160 from the raffle) was raised for the much-needed Abingdon Hall funds.

Heather Overton

THE VIEW FROM ST MARY'S

Christmas, and the period leading up to it, is always a joyous occasion at St Mary's. This year has been no exception.

In the last newsletter we trailed the Advent Windows. We were so pleased that so many people embraced the idea. There is a report elsewhere in this newsletter.

A good number of people attended our Christmas services, especially the carol service organised by Penny Marsh, as it has been for many years. We all enjoyed singing familiar carols and listening to familiar Bible stories.

In a new departure we celebrated our traditional Christmas Eve service at 8.30pm. This was partly for logistical reasons, but also because 9pm here is midnight in Bethlehem, so we were celebrating our communion at the same time as Christians in the place where Jesus was born. These services are known as Bethlehem Masses and are becoming increasingly popular as people are less willing to attend events that take place so late.

One highlight in December was the blessing of our new hatchment by Bishop Tim Thornton at the service on 14th December. Briefly, a hatchment is a painting on canvas in a wooden frame of the coat of arms of an eminent person. It was carried in their funeral possession and then hung on the wall of their church.

There were for many years three hatchments on the wall of the North Aisle of St Mary's. They represented the arms on the Bowyer-Bower family and dated from the 19th century. One of them fell into disrepair and had to be removed. However, at the request of the PCC, Judith Dutch has created a

replica of the original, now hanging in the North Aisle. The result is stunning and well worth a visit to the church. Judith was present at the service of blessing. A presentation was made to her, and she received the grateful thanks of the congregation. (see the February edition of Valley Views for more information regarding the hatchments).



THE HATCHMENT IN ST MARY'S (*John Goodliffe*)

And so we go into 2026. We have a number of events planned, including the popular Choral Evensong at 5pm on 30th Jan and 3rd April (Good Friday). In addition, the church is hosting a repeat of the talk by Richard McConnell on the Church Path excavations. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

In the meantime, all at St Mary's wish you a very happy New Year.

David Parkhouse

ANOTHER NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

Not all newsletters go out electronically; you may indeed be reading a paper copy. We print 140 paper copies alongside the electronic ones we send out, and these are distributed by kind volunteers without whom my job would be much more onerous. I would therefore like to thank in person the following people: Alwin Greder, Stevie Friend, Maggie and Graham Hale, Trish Neale, John Carter, Lionel and Pat Stickley, Debbie and Clive Giddings and Julie Lester.

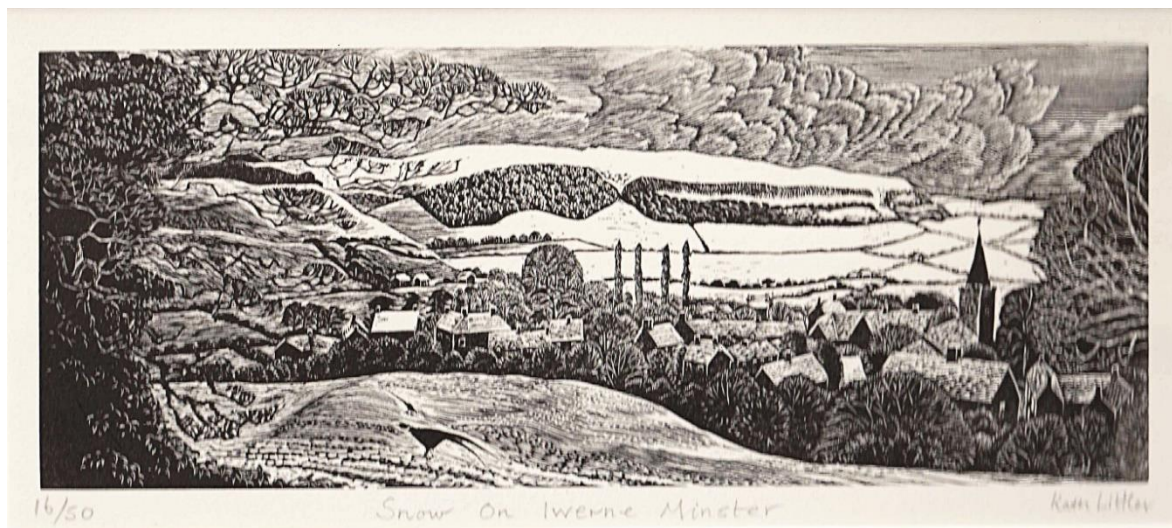
Monique Goodliffe

“SNOW OVER IWERNE MINSTER”

Do you remember a couple who used to live in ‘Swiss Cottage’ up Tower Hill, the Littlers, Kath and Tim? They lived in a house is now called ‘Vale View Cottage’ which seems to have been its original name prior to Peter Egli, a Swiss man, buying it and building a shed in the garden which looked like a cuckoo clock and accordingly renaming the house!

Egli was the last manager of the Co-op shop at Heddle House which closed in the late 1970s. After Peter Egli came Marion and Alan Eaton, then the Littlers. All of them were next door neighbours to Joyce MacDonald at Fushia Cottage. Kath Littler was, and still is, a fine wood engraver, who now lives and works in Monmouthshire. You can see examples of her work (on sale) at the shop Folde in Shaftesbury (opposite the Oxfam book shop).

Here is an engraving she did whilst in Iwerne called “Snow over Iwerne Minster”, looking across from their house towards Hambledon Hill:



©2026 Kath Littler; Reproduced by kind permission of the artist

It seems appropriate for the time of year even though we haven't had any snow to speak of ... yet!

John Goodliffe



IWERNE MINSTER SPEED WATCH

Below are our results for December for your consideration.

December 25 DND022	Time	Place	Minutes	No Vehicles	Speeding	%Speeding	Av Speed	Top Speed
Tuesday 2nd	1100	CL	Missed					
Monday 8th	1400	CL	Rain					
Friday 19th	1100	CL	60	305*	9	3	38	42
Monday 22nd	1100	CL	60	218	13	6	38.6	47
Totals			120	523	22			

* Indicates C13 closed.

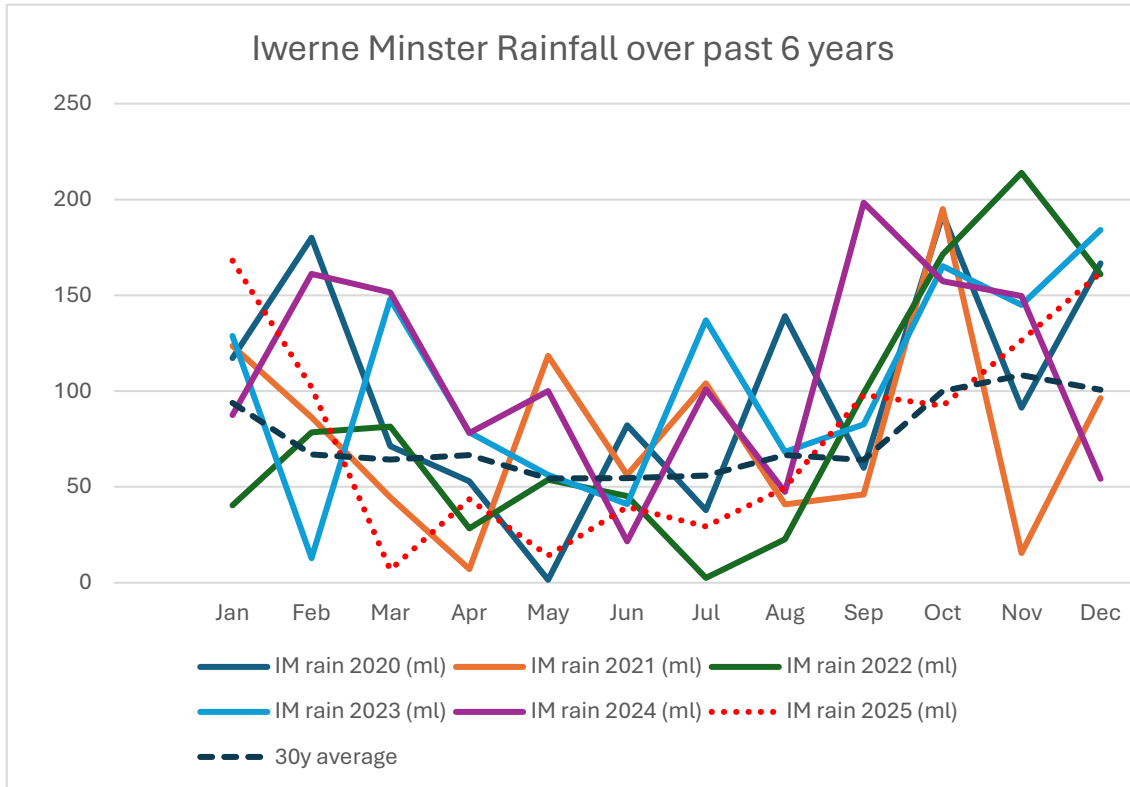
Due to the closure of the C13 as of January we have cancelled Community Speed Watch until advised by the police to restart; this will give time for the temporary road modifications to settle.

CSW Annual Summary of totals countywide for 2025 showed 1615 sessions; 13954 letters sent; 521537 vehicles monitored. There were 399 deployments of Trucam (where we work with police in attendance) of which there were 4261 offences. **Interested? We are still recruiting!**

Contact Geoff Peters: geoff.peters13@hotmail.co.uk

MONTHLY RAINFALL DURING 2025

Thanks again to Ron Benfield for his readings. Ron sends his daily readings to the Met Office.



Note the dotted red line which shows last year's rainfall, and the dashed green which represents the 30 year averages. Compared with the 30 year averages, recent summers seem to be drier and winters wetter. However, 2025 appears somewhat more typical of the 30 year averages.

IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

Published every two months.

Next issue: April 1st, 2026.

Contribution deadline: March 20th, 2026.

Editor

Monique Goodliffe

The Corner House

Church Hill

Iwerne Minster DT11 8LS

monique@hairy-barbarian.com

Contributions are welcome from residents of Iwerne Minster or anyone with an interest in the village.

Please get in touch if you know of anything that is newsworthy.

Please send any contributions by email or hard copy by post/through the letter box.

Digital photos are best if they are high resolution (i.e. direct from the camera and not downsized). If you can, send the image separately rather than attached to the article. Copyright should be agreed with the photographer.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor.

Village diary

The Village Diary is produced monthly by Paul Le Prevost and is separate from the newsletter. It is mainly to advertise what is happening in the village in the month to come and comes out on the first day of every month. To include information in the Diary, contact Paul: paul.leprevost@btinternet.com

Printer

Parish Magazine Printers



Create a Copper Flower – Beginner Silversmithing Workshop

What will you do?

In a relaxed environment, you will learn simple silversmithing skills to help you create a beautiful copper flower to take home. As a complete beginners or curious creatives, this hands-on workshop, will teach you how to saw, texture, shape, and assemble the copper. With lots of flower designs to choose from. Everyone will go home with a unique flower they have handcrafted.



- No prior experience needed
- All abilities welcome
- All materials and tools provided

There are two separate events- one for adults and one for older children aged 12-16 years.

For further information, any queries, booking costs and date choices - Please contact Kerry O'Connor on: kerrylouiseoconnor@googlemail.com or 07974972716

*Please note 10% of funds raised at this event will go towards the new children's play park fundraising pot.