

Since restarting the Iwerne Minster Cricket Club (IMCC) in 2023 the past few years have been challenging since we took on the task of developing a pitch that saw it returned to the levels achieved over 10 years ago and, most recently, when we were given the go ahead by the Iwerne Estate to reignite interest in village cricket in Iwerne Minster. We are extremely grateful to the Iwerne Estate for their support.

The past few years have resulted in the levels of interest growing slowly, not helped though in 2025 by the severe weather, too much sun! The events of one day in June 2025 were also challenging when we discovered how quickly the emergency services were able to find the pitch helped by the "what three words" location which is "handrail - wicket - happy". The dry weather resulted in games being lost though this year we are aiming to be better prepared for the games currently scheduled to take place from Tuesday the 26th May, an evening game against Wessex Internet, starting at 6pm. The village social media network (and notice boards) will carry more details.

One benefit from the incident in June was the delivery of a defibrillator based first aid course organised by John Sutherland (IMCC Committee Member) which was attended by 12 members of our village community. Those who attended found the course very helpful and professionally delivered in a way that all felt they benefited from time spent, growing their skills and confidence in dealing with trauma.

The challenge at present is to develop and grow the number of people interested in playing, currently more than enough for a team, as well as finding a larger machine to cut the outfield. At present and as some will have seen, this is a task we undertake using a John Deere cutter, provided through an agreement with Fontmell Magna PCC, with past support from the Iwerne Estate. We are at present exploring ways in which we can fund the machinery required whilst also making a contribution to the costs of running the pavilion and ground itself.

Players are "encouraged" to pay a one-off fee for the season ahead, with no match fees due other than when cricket teas are on offer, IMCC supporters are welcome particularly if able to offer financial support of any amount in order that we can achieve our objective of seeing cricket return to our village. All offers of help are very much appreciated, whether financial or practical. Thank you to those who have already been generous and available to help us.

Work on the square is underway and will include the use of some form of deterrent to reduce the potential damage to the square from inquisitive Jackdaws etc who have been interested in digging for grubs on the square, an issue that we really need to address.

The season will be starting then on the 26th May with more games to follow in what we hope will be a challenging and exciting period of growth for the IMCC.

The congregation at St Marys continues to support the challenge of attracting new members, new residents and visitors to the services centred on the churches that form the Iwerne Valley Benefice and St Marys in Iwerne Minster, our village, our church. Over the past year we have increased the service schedule to include Choral evensong events with more planned during 2026 and another opportunity to share an evensong or similar service with the pupils and staff from Clayesmore School and their choir. By the same token members of St Marys choir also sing with Clayesmore School choir with concerts planned throughout the year.

This increase in events has helped in terms of raising the spiritual need for any and all who attend whilst also helping to raise much needed funds to support the fabric of our village church. In addition to the choral services and concerts there have also been a number of talks recently, covering a range of topics such as the archaeological work carried out in 2025 and very interesting talks provided by the Dorset archaeological team, requiring two presentations so that as many as possible could attend. Two other events have been a talk from our Vicar the Reverend David John, based on his career in the Metropolitan Police and, most recently, a talk on Forensic Pathology given by Dr Basil Purdue. Further talks are being considered. The Christmas Advent calendar window event organised by Mrs Charlotte Bowater was well received with homes around the village being visited by many, no matter what the weather at the time.

Plans for the remainder of 2026 and beyond will potentially include the return of a “family” related service, the intention being to reintroduce a service for younger members of our village whilst, at the other end of the spectrum, the need to improve the audio systems for our church via a wireless loop system is currently a work in progress.

There are working parties on the second Friday of the month the task being to maintain the church grounds, graveyard, trees and general fabric of the exterior of the church itself, using approved tools to reduce any risk of damaging the ancient stonework. Helpers are welcome to join in with the tasks required covering both the exterior and interior, with refreshments on offer, including locally made flapjacks or similar.

Please look at the notice boards for events which of course are also promoted through the increasingly used village social network and remember that St Marys is our village church, a focal point for us all. The church is open for all to enjoy, appreciate and support in so many different ways.

NB please note that Reverend David John is currently on a sabbatical until the 22nd July and that our Curate the Reverend David Sinclair will be responsible for the pastoral care of our village. It was David Sinclair who conducted the memorable marriage ceremony of Spunky and Katie in August of last year.