

Hambleton VALLEY

Group Magazine



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Aug 2025



The Hambleton Valley Group of Churches
"To see our lives and communities transformed by the love of God"



Cover: Bill and Lara Pollard on their Penny Farthings, Hambleden, Photo Karen Musgrave Hill. This page: Small white butterfly on spear thistle.

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Weekday Services

Wednesday - 9.30am, Zoom

Daily Prayer - 10.15am, Holy

Communion, Turville

Emergencies:

If you are unable to contact the Group
Priests, please get in touch with your
churchwarden. (see pages 26 and 27)

All contributions are welcome, to the
Editor, Penny McLeish

hambledenvalleyeditor@gmail.com

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Please keep articles within 350 words. Copy
deadline is 15th of the month.

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Group Letter



Water. After a dry winter and spring, the hose pipe bans started from mid-July, when I penned this piece. Three heat waves so far and virtually no rain. The harvests are stunted and the Earth is cracking open. I hope the Hambleden Brook does not dry up again as it has in many previous years. I think it is still fed by the 2014 winter (certainly not by the last one!).

And so, we are reminded again what a basic necessity water is for our very survival. In the heat, it is water that can cool us the quickest (I envy all those with swimming pools). Dehydration can cause more health problems in the summer than the cold does in our increasingly mild winters. I wish all those travelling abroad in August for the traditional school holidays will have the weather they hoped for, which is probably dry and sunny. May they have unrestricted access to the sea/pools; and may they be conservative with their use of water: drier countries have it worse than us.

For those staying in England for August, you will want it to continue warm and sunny for your staycation. Gardeners and farmers are praying for rain. Having said that, I note the forecast for St Swithin's day, 15th July, is rain. If 40 days of rain do then indeed follow, those farmers and gardeners should be relieved.

On hotter days, our grandson's favourite activity is putting his hands under the kitchen tap, delighting in the sensation of tepid water trickling through his fingers. There is an absolute magic about water, as well as it being life-sustaining.

So, if it rains this August, give thanks to God. If it remains sunny and warm, give thanks to God. And in all this, as we drink and enjoy our water, remember what Jesus said to the woman at the well: *"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

Andy Storch

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GROUP NOTES



Wild with Water - Wild Church by the river, Sunday 13th July

It was such a pleasure to be part of this wonderful and engaging service this afternoon. Being given the opportunity to worship outside, celebrating God surrounded by his creation, sparks a unique peacefulness that is so often absent from our daily routine. In particular on the riverside, it was a brilliant setting for passive outreach, with those visiting the river separately from the service choosing to join in too, including some canoeists who moored up to participate. For my mum, it was her first Wild Church service, and she said it was lovely to be part of a different type of worship in such a beautiful setting.

The setting of the trees, river and ducks brings home the importance of considering the world God has provided for us in all we do, and the hymns were perfectly chosen to cement this while also being great to sing (*Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer* is one of my favourites). But making water purifiers from simple materials also brought home the stark differences between our community and others elsewhere who are not so fortunate. It was a fantastic activity in which the children were able to actively participate and clearly saw the results of their efforts. My kids loved making them! And it provided an opportunity to demonstrate to them, and a reminder for all of us, how difficult it is for so many who do not have ready access to clean water.

I really would encourage you all, whatever age, to join us for the next Wild Church service in September - celebrating God outdoors certainly helps me find an island of peace among hectic

family life, and this unique and special form of worship makes me feel closer to Him than ever.

God bless,

Nicky, Jean, Lizzy and Alex



Do join us for our next and future Wild Church in 2025!

There will be no meeting in August as Wild Church takes a holiday. Join us again on:

Sunday 14th September 3pm:

Making Wild Harvest Sheaves, Colstrop

Sunday 12th October 3pm:

Wild Bread Making TBC, Harvest in Frieth

Sunday 9th November:

Wild Church at Remembrance

At Wild Church we meet outdoors at different venues on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Everyone is warmly welcome!

Wild Church Team:

Rev Sue Morton 07808 517347 or
suemorton131@gmail.com

Mary Campbell
grandma.marycampbell@gmail.com

Magdalena Dabrowska
somd10206@gmail.com

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Community Matters

As the long school holidays approach, it can be a time of anxiety for parents as they face the demands of providing mid-day meals for their children which they would otherwise have had at school, in addition to finding ways of entertaining them that are cost free. Fortunately, because of kind donations from many people Community Matters has been able to offer four children a place on the holiday scheme which is run from Lane End Community Centre for two weeks during the summer school holiday. There are activities for children between the ages of 5-12 and this includes food and drink.

Recently we were given two children's car seats in perfect condition and they were just what were needed for a pair of young twins from one of our families, our grateful thanks to the couple who donated them.

As always, we thank you all for the donations you so generously give. It makes a huge difference in responding to the ongoing need from the 25 families we currently support.

Blessings, Judy Taylor



Having Fun for a Good Cause in The Hambleden Valley

Sunday 1st June was another fun filled day on our vintage tractors in the beautiful Chiltern Hills. After last year's Fawley Hill Vintage Extravaganza we were back to our more standard format, assembling early in the morning at Hanger Farm's splendid field with its amazing views. With thanks to James Jackson and his family.

We had **68 vintage tractors** taking part this year and the 80th Anniversary of VE Day theme was well represented across all participants, tractors and trailers. The weather was just perfect as we enjoyed bacon butties and hot drinks provided by Louise Meakes and her team. This year the social side of this long running event was clear to see. So many friendships were renewed across the community as every year the event brings together people from all walks of life.

Rev Andy Storch provided the tractor run blessing. Poignantly, Andy spoke about the loss of a long-time tractor run driver and supporter, Peter Warner, who sadly passed away the day before the run. Peter's family were in attendance and have been the backbone of the marshalling team since this event started. We are most grateful to them all.



Once the convoy of 68 tractors and trailers set off the familiar hum of the old engines filled the air and was a relaxing beat to the steady train as it trundled away following each other.



GROUP NOTES, WILDLIFE AND HAMBLEDEN

Our lunch this year was at Wycombe Air Park and what lovely hosts they were. To our thrill, the airfield's full operational activities continued throughout our stay. The photos below are at the airfield - tractor parking under the tower and Winston Churchill, aka Richard Best, calling the raffle after a wonderful Churchillian speech from VE Day.



There were a few small breakdown issues, a head gasket, a puncture, and a faulty coil on a Ferguson TEA20. Henry Anderson is seen below fixing the problem while the driver (Caspar Grundy) waits so he can continue the run. All the tractors got home safely.

The main objective is raising funds for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance. Another RECORD amount was raised this year - £10,087.55. THANK YOU to everyone.



Ben Hargreaves, Sam Newcombe and Paul Austin have provided the photos included in this article.

Gary Anderson

WILDLIFE

Frieth Natural History Society

FNHS do not have a meeting in August as, historically, we have found that too many of our members are away. We will be back in September with full details next month.

Meanwhile, during this hot, dry spell please spare a thought for our wildlife which suffers too. Leave out a dish of clean water so that visiting creatures can drink. If this contains a few stones above the water surface, or is topped up to the rim, bees and other insects can also drink.

Mary Webb

HAMBLEDEN

Musical Entertainment at Church Teas

Church Teas is fortunate this year to have more musical entertainment than usual. We started off with Jo, our musical director, giving us some lovely piano music. On 20th July she is giving an organ recital at 3pm, but this magazine might be too late to reach you before this date. On 27th July we have the wonderful violinist duo who have kindly entertained us for the past 3 years. Sadly, this is their only appearance this year.

August brings us a Ukelele group on 3rd August, and on 10th August Jo has kindly organised a jazz band. The musical entertainment finishes on 17th August with the Hambleton Valley Choir.

This is not, of course the end of Church Teas which run until 28th September. We also have the Revs Andy Storch and Sue Morton running the teas on 31st August. (I feel sure they would welcome any cake donations!).



On the hottest Sunday, Gareth and Arnaud ready

Continued on page 11



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to start serving a delicious array of cakes together with their famous quiches, which people wait to buy every year, photo Sharon Smith.

Penny Wright



In Hambleden Village

In Hambleden village, so lovely and fair,
With hollyhocks nodding in warm summer air,
The Post Office bustles with toasts and cheer,
And stories and laughter are shared through the year.

The church by the stream with its welcoming door,
Has stood through the ages and witnessed the war.
Now Rev Andy greets us with kindness and grace,
As worship and friendship fill this special place.

Up high in the tower—eight bells standing proud—
Ring out their music, joyful and loud.
Each Friday they gather, the ringers, good friends,
From quarter to seven until eight o'clock's end.

The bells ring for Sundays, for weddings and more,
For royal occasions, they peal and they roar.
And now for a moment both moving and grand—
To mark the war's end, bringing peace to the land.

Around us the village is lively and bright,
The Sports Club's events on a warm summer night,
With cricket and football and cheers from the crowd,
A wonderful community, friendly and proud.

So join us in Hambleden, bunting unfurled,
As the bells tell the story to village and world.
Eighty years on, may their echoes convey
Our thanks and our hope on this Victory Day.

Jon Broughton

West Wycombe Chamber Music Festival



It's just over six weeks until the West Wycombe Chamber Music Festival concerts, which will run from September 18th-20th in Hambleden Parish Church.

Festival director, the legendary viola player, Lawrence Power is currently finalising details of the five concerts, which are based on

the theme of homeland, travel and nostalgia. There will be an array of star performers of international celebrity and repute. Lawrence Power will be joined by the astounding violinist Vilde Frang (see photo) and the cellist Nicholas Altstaedt, as well as regular festival favourites: pianist Simon Crawford-Phillips, cellist John Myerscough, violist Tim Ridout and archlutenist Sergio Bucheli - to name but a few.

For details of the Festival, to learn about the Friends Scheme or for ticket information, please visit <https://westwycombemusic.org.uk>
Alternatively you can reach Carol Power on 01494 528659 / 07948 897148 or by e-mail to tickets@westwycombemusic.org.uk

Robert Morley

Theo's Epic Ringing World National Youth Contest Adventure

On Saturday 5th July, I joined the Bucks and Berks Young Ringers (that's B&BYR if you're cool like us) for a ringing-tastic day out at the Ringing World National Youth Contest in Birmingham. We had a full team of eight ringers – just enough to ring the whole set.

We set off from Marlow way too early, but that

HAMBLEDEN



was instantly forgiven when the party bus kicked into gear. There was a disco, and – most importantly – chocolate waffles.

First Stop: St Peter's, Harborne. This was a lovely ring of 8 – but the tenor bell had attitude. It just wouldn't stand properly! I liked

their pinboard – it had sticker charts to track your progress, which is a great idea. Also, ringing bell 4 meant standing in a little nook, which made you feel like a secret agent ringer.

Next Up: Bellstravaganza at St Martin's. This tower is BONKERS. It has sixteen bells – the only one like it in the UK! Ringing there is like being in a heavy metal concert. There are so many bells, the sound crashes in like a giant guitar strum. I rang the 8. Or maybe the 9? Hard to say when there are ropes everywhere. Our team leader was impressed – ringing on 16 bells is no joke, and this was a first for most of us!

Before our next tower, we had a go on two mini-rings – tiny bells you can ring anywhere. They're



fiddly: you have to twist your hands in a weird spaghetti pose, but I figured it out and managed 120 changes of Bob Doubles. The person running the ring said it was the nicest sounding ringing all day.

Game Time at St Barnabas. Now it was time for the real deal: the competition tower. Things got spicy. My tail end flew out during the practice, and in the real test, it came untucked halfway through. So I rang with a floppy rope slapping me in the face the whole time. Did I give up? NO. I powered through like a true tower wizard. Bonus drama: the 3 and 4 ringers had to stand way too close together, the 4 bell was shouting louder than the rest, and the 7-rope looked like it had blood on it. Mental metal. Afterwards, we strutted out of the church like champions.

Continued on page 17



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Church Services and Events

From The Registers

Holy Baptism

June 22	Matilda Jane Parsons	Hambleden
June 22	Thomas Parsons	Hambleden

Holy Matrimony

June 21	Charles Merefield and Hannah Miles	Hambleden
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Rest in Peace

June 20	Marie-France Field	Thanksgiving and Ashes Burial, Hambleden
June 25	(Roy) Ian Powles	Funeral, Hambleden
July 4	Iona Shearer	Ashes Burial, Hambleden
July 4	Professor Brian Bond	Funeral and Burial, Medmenham
July 10	Caroline Campbell-Jones	Cremation



Hambleden Valley Prayer Group

We have formed a contemplative listening and confidential prayer group, forming a circle round the valley with God at the centre. If you would like prayer please send a request to the email below:

hambledenvalleyprayergroup@gmail.com

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CALENDAR FOR AUGUST 2025

Pattern of Worship August 2025

Please see below for Sunday services. There will also be Zoom services at 9:30am on Wednesdays with Churchyard Prayers at Fawley at 12noon on Fridays. The 10.15am midweek Holy Communion on Wednesdays is at Turville. Please check our website

www.hambleden-valley-churches.org.uk for latest updates or contact our administrator Jenny Neagle on 07769 599616 – hambledenvalleyoffice@gmail.com with any query.

Sunday Services

	Fawley	Fingest	Frieth	Hambleden	Medmenham	Turville
3rd August		10am Group Service				
10th August	11am Holy Communion	9am Holy Communion		11am Holy Communion		
17th August			9am Holy Communion	8am BCP Holy Communion 10am Lay-led Morning Worship	11am Village Service	
24th August	11am Holy Communion	6pm Evensong	9am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion		9.30am Holy Communion
31st August			8am BCP Holy Communion		11am Holy Communion	
7th September				11am Group Service (note change of time)		

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HAMBLEMEN AND FAWLEY

We walked to Erdington Abbey to ring with other teams from literally everywhere: Bath, Birmingham, Cumbria, Cornwall, Wales, Winchester... I'd list them all, but we'd be here all day. It was a nice ring – though the ringing room was a bit squishy – and after all that, I was exhausted.

The results were announced in a packed church full of young ringers. I couldn't believe how many kids my age were into bells! Then came the news: B&BYR came 2nd! In a ringing world competition.

We climbed back on the party bus, celebrated like legends, and disco'd our way back to Marlow. I'll never forget the ringing, the people, or that stupid tail end that tried to sabotage me. Bring on next year. Bring on Nottingham. And bring more waffles.

**Theo Boughton, Age 10,
Official Tower Wizard**

FAWLEY

Midsummer Supper



The second, extremely successful, Midsummer Supper was held in Fawley Church on Saturday 21st June, organised very competently by Marsha George and Liz Downing again, ably assisted by a team of helpers.

It was a fabulous summer evening so there were drinks outside in the churchyard before going into the church for the meal. With the two front pews temporarily removed, several long tables were beautifully decorated and the table plan was cleverly devised to enable some different dinner companions. A delicious meal was provided by Steve Luscombe, and the wine was generously donated. This meant



a grand total of £2,380 was raised by the Friends of Fawley Church.

A most enjoyable evening.

Hilary Beck-Burridge

Tennis Tournament



Men's doubles photo Rolf Harrison

In Fawley, the last Sunday of June was dominated by the village's charity Tennis Tournament, which was first held some forty years ago.

Lavishly organised by Rolf Harrison, the players assembled in blistering heat at 10am on their various courts for their preliminary rounds of men's and mixed doubles. After lunch the four winning pairs gathered for the finals at Rolf's magnificent mansion,

FAWLEY AND FRIETH

where his wife Shareen had laid on a banquet with Pimm's by way of tea.

After two closely fought finals, Julia Ogilvy and Philip de Ayala emerged as winners in the mixed, over the Maskells; and Rolf himself, a former Davis Cup player, and Freddie Lait won the men's doubles, beating the previous winners Huttie Swinglehurst and my son James.

Generous prizes were presented by Lady Judy McAlpine, and everyone finally departed not only more suntanned but also considerably less sober.

William Ingram

FRIETH

Frieth School

Year 6 Residential

Year 6 children had the most fantastic time away at The River Dart Country Park. It was a week full of adventure, resilience, bravery and most importantly fun! The children were a credit to the school and let their light shine throughout.



Beale Park

Year 2 had an exciting time visiting Beale Wildlife Park. They saw a Ring-Tailed Lemur, Snowy Owls,



a Carpathian Lynx and had a train ride around the park which was the highlight of the visit!



Brooklands Museum

Year 1 had an amazing time exploring Brooklands Museum. There was so much to see and learn about transport through history. A big thank you to all the staff and volunteers for making it such a fantastic day!

Lady Ryder Memorial Garden

Kites class braved the heat and had a wonderful morning at the Lady Ryder Memorial Garden. Linking with their science topic, they learnt all about the functions of different parts of a plant.



Sports Day and Sports Week



Higher, faster, stronger... Frieth's Sports Day 2025 was a vibrant event, peppered with determination, excellence and joy. Our new Champions belong to Rowling house. The memories will live long for us all.

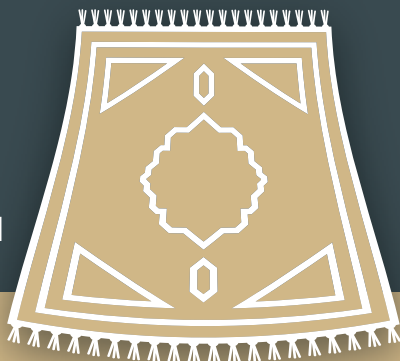
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What a sports week it was! The children enjoyed a full week of wonderful experiences including lacrosse, skateboarding, a climbing wall, fencing, cheerleading and we even had a visit from an Olympic athlete and a Gladiator! They definitely achieved their 60 minutes of exercise per day!



Tag Rugby

What a fantastic opportunity for our girls' rugby team who took part in a rugby festival at Northampton Saints home ground, Franklin's Gardens. The children did the school proud, playing some beautiful rugby and showed skill, determination, respect and sportsmanship throughout the day. We also enjoyed a tour of the stadium, met an England rugby player and learnt all about the tactics Northampton Saints use to get a competitive edge over the opposition! Well done girls!



Martin Gosling, Headteacher

FINGEST

Fingest Great Barn Opera

We are delighted to be welcoming Diva Opera to perform in the Great Barn at Fingest for the twentieth year. This year's operas will be Don Pasquale by Donizetti on Saturday 6th September and The Marriage of Figaro by Mozart on Saturday 13th September. Tickets are still available for both operas, but Premium tickets (£115) for Don Pasquale have already sold out.

There are many people who tell us how much they look forward to coming every year from London and Oxford as well as locally. Last year a regular supporter from Dulwich wrote: "We have come with different friends each year and all have loved the historic barn and high standard of performance as well as the welcome and friendly atmosphere"

The operas raise funds for three wonderful charities: Child Bereavement UK, Action Medical Research for Children and Médecins Sans Frontières. Last year we raised £25,000 for the charities!

We hope you might come and join us for one of the operas. Please see our website: www.fingestgreatbarnopera or email fingestgreatbarnopera@gmail.com

Sylvia Crowther, 01491 638474

DIVA OPERA

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

MANOR FARM, FINGEST

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Saturday 13th September 2025 at 6pm

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Tickets £115 / £100

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(01491 638474)





In aid of Child Bereavement UK
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and Médecins Sans Frontières

TURVILLE AND MEDMENHAM

TURVILLE

The Artists at Turville Studios are having a 'Late Summer Exhibition'!



Do join us for a weekend of art and some sparkling (and non-sparkling) refreshments over the weekend of 6th and 7th September from 11am-4pm each day. All six professional artists will be open in their studios showcasing a diverse array of contemporary works including printworks, paintings, photography and pottery.

Come and browse limited edition and original works from local artists, two of whom have recently been exhibiting in the Saatchi Gallery and Royal Academy, London. All works are available to buy and commissions can also be taken.

Plenty of parking, dogs welcome.

Rachel Wallace

MEDMENHAM

Music in Medmenham

On 21st June 2025 a second sell-out concert was presented by Music in Medmenham this time



featuring the Harmony Belles Choir.

On the most beautiful summer solstice evening in the perfect setting of St Peter and St Paul's Church, Medmenham, the talented Harmony Belles choir treated the audience to a joyful, uplifting selection of catchy well known musical theatre and movie songs. Led by their musical director Anne Fairbrother, the choir sang with passion and gusto. Special guests - a male quartet from the Thames Valley Chorus - also entertained us with a selection of numbers topped off with Frank Sinatra's *New York, New York*.

On this warm, balmy evening guests were able to enjoy barbecue food and drinks before the concert. It was a fabulous event bringing people in the community together and at the same time raising funds for Dementia Action, Marlow. We are delighted to say that over £1,400 was raised for the charity and a smaller donation was given to the church and the First Responders who provided first aid cover.

Music in Medmenham's next event is a Jazz Concert on 20th September hold the date!

Diana Anderson



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CHURCH AND VILLAGE ACTIVITIES AND CONTACTS

HAMBLEDEN VALLEY GROUP OF CHURCHES

Rector: The Revd. Andy Storch,
07811 430898, Revandystorch@gmail.com

Associate Priest: The Revd. Sue Morton,
01491 639286, suemorton131@gmail.com

Director of Music: Jo Hutchins
07909 608654 johutchins27@gmail.com

Organist Emeritus: Christine Wells BEM,
01491 571588, c@wells.vnworks.net

Group Treasurer: Stephen Sidders, 01491
639271 stephensidders@sky.com

Group Administrator: Jenny Neagle, 07769
599616, hambledenvallyoffice@gmail.com

Weddings and Blessings: Jenny Neagle,
07769 599616,
hambledenvallyoffice@gmail.com

Tea Club: St. Katharine's, Parmoor,
Tuesdays, 3 - 4.30pm
Wendy Duerden, 01491 638297,
wendy.duerden@techademic.net

Barney's Toddler Group: Frieth Village Hall,
Currently suspended

Hambleden Valley Garden Club:
Meetings October-March on the first Tuesday
of the month, Frieth Village Hall.
Clair Honnor 07773 387195

Website:
www.hambleden-valley-churches.org.uk

FAWLEY (ST MARY THE VIRGIN)

Churchwarden:
Vacant

**Clerk to Fawley Parish Meeting and
Village Hall booking:**
David Burton - davidburtn83@hotmail.co.uk

FINGEST (ST BARTHOLOMEW)

Churchwardens:
Brian Barnes, 01494 882613,
brianbarnes346@gmail.com
Jill Dean, 01491 638678,
jill@sundawn.uk.com

FRIETH (ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST)

Verger: Judy Hunt, 01494 882227,
ajh.claypit1@btinternet.com

Village Hall Bookings:
website www.friethvillagehall.org
email friethvillagehall@gmail.com
Tel 01494 880737

Frieth Natural History Society:
Mary 01494 881501, Andy 01494 881586,
FNHS2023@gmail.com

Frieth Village Society: Caroline Walker
01494 882333

Frieth Cricket Club: Ben Smiley
friethcricket@btinternet.com

Frieth Lunch Club: meets on last
Friday of the month at the Yew Tree Pub.
Judy Hunt, 01494 882227
ajh.claypit1@btinternet.com

HAMBLEDEN (ST MARY THE VIRGIN)

Churchwarden:
Vacant

Deputy Churchwarden:
Vacant

Bell Ringing: Fri 6.45pm practice, Helen or
Karen, hambledenbells@mycomputer.email

Village Hall Bookings: Jamie Baker,
01491 410669, www.hambledenvillagehall.org

Pilates: Mondays 11 – 12 Fran Presho,
07951 019594

Bridge Club: Fridays 1.30 – 4.30
Frances Cugnoni, 01491 576409

Hambleden Social and Sports Club:

Open daily from 8pm Pat Eldridge, 01491
576067

Tennis Club: Heather Symons, 01491
577344, heathersymons16@hotmail.com

Tennis Coaching: Chris Marshall,
07801 999230, chrismarshall20@hotmail.com

MEDMENHAM (ST PETER AND ST PAUL)

Churchwarden:

Vacant.

Village Hall Bookings: Emma Tentori,
07759 014396

Uniformed organisations:

1st Danesfield Scouts, Cubs and

Beavers: leader Nick Currie,
enquiries@danefieldscouts.org.uk

Medmenham News:

medmenhamnews@icloud.com

SKIRMETT

Village Hall Bookings:

Bookings via the website:

skirmettvillagehall.org

Other enquiries:

skirmettvillagehall@gmail.com

TURVILLE (ST MARY THE VIRGIN)

Churchwarden:

Caroline Sants, 01491 638994

turvillechurchwardens@gmail.com

Bell Ringing: Wed practice,

Rachel Wallace, 01494 883025

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smfaragher@fastmail.fm

Yoga: Tuesdays 7pm, Andrea 07496 281341

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Medmenham: Parish Clerk Carole Burslem
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Turville: Parish Clerk Lorna Coldwell,
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