

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

TheVillageNews

DECEMBER 2024/JANUARY 2025



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Arena

Village Directory

THE VILLAGE NEWS

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Village Hall Secretary
Jordie 350992

Village Hall Bookings

Jordie and Andrew Wilson

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SOCIETIES

WESTON SOCIETY

WESTON WALKERS

FOOTPATH WARDEN

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GARDEN CLUB

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GOLDEN LEAVES

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Eric Bohm: 07531 703409

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NEIGHBOURS NATTER

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OCC

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From the editor

A huge congratulations to the SOS Committee for passing the PO interview and being ever closer to establishing the Community Shop (see p. 10 for details). They've worked so hard over the past 18 months and we owe them a massive thank you.

On a more sombre note, I was so sad to hear of Ann Holt's death. She was a wonderful woman who was a leading light of the WI, the Garden Club and the Arts and Craft group and will be much missed.

What won't be mourned is October's wild weather which saw Gallos Brook submerge the Bletchington road. The brook was running so high and was so strong that it managed to shift the wooden footbridge on the Oxfordshire Way by at least a foot. A true reminder of the force of nature.

Another force of nature is the inexorable turning of Time and thus we find that the clocks have gone back, we've witnessed another magnificent display of fireworks (as ever, a huge thank you to Mark, Mick and the Village Hall Committee for such an amazing display) and lo! Here it is again, the Christmas edition of the Village News.

December in Weston is stuffed full of festive delights from the switching on the Village Hall Christmas tree lights through to the Candlelit Carol Service and on into January when the Village Hall Committee is extending the revels by hosting a Wassail evening.

I hope you're able to attend some, if not all of these events to get yourselves into the Christmas spirit. In the meantime, here's wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Jordie Riches



Mario Eppinger

Deadline for February/March edition:
2nd JANUARY 2025



From the Rector

Gareth Miller
*Rector of the Akeman
 Benefice and Area Dean
 of Bicester & Islip*

Dear friends

It doesn't seem right to have a little rant as we approach Christmas, but perhaps you'll bear with me briefly? I want to say something about waiting. We're not very good at it. We have a habit of wanting everything NOW!

I despair every year (I expect many of you do too) when I see Christmas goods and decorations appearing in the shops in October, or even September. Not to mention Easter eggs before Lent has even begun. I might incur your disapproval here, but I also find it difficult that people start wearing poppies in the middle of October.

Christmas Day is on 25th December. Remembrance Day is on 11th November. As for Easter – well, I'll leave you to work that one out! Of course, a lot of it has to do with commercialisation. But I'm not sure

that retailers are entirely responsible. We have forgotten the value (indeed, the excitement) of waiting.

In days gone by, many workers were lucky to get one day off at Christmas. When I was doing my family tree research, I was surprised to discover that several couples got married on Christmas Day. When I dug deeper, I realised it was because they had no other free day!

Most of our holidays are, of course, based on the Church's year (which is why they are called holydays). Over the centuries the church has evolved a pattern of festivals and seasons (called 'The Liturgical Year'). Two of these in particular involve a period of preparation, namely Advent and Lent, which have a penitential tone. Another tradition is that of the octave (a period of celebration lasting eight days from the feast day itself).

This differentiation of times and seasons, to celebrate the major events in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, together with commemoration of the saints, gives texture, purpose, and variety to the annual cycle, symbolised by the changing of the liturgical colours.

We lose this when everything merges into one long celebration. I know I can't win the fight with commercial trends but I will go on reminding people that Christmas begins on 24th December and lasts until 6th January. I will not win the battle to persuade people to observe Advent, with its rather sombre themes of prophecy, judgment, and self-examination, but I will maintain my solitary habit of putting my Christmas tree up on Christmas Eve.

We live in a world which values activity and action over passivity and observation. But if we are wise, we will set aside time to pause, time to think, time for reflection and self-examination. So might I encourage you, ever so gently, to explore the value of waiting? We could use the time to re-acquaint ourselves with the scriptures, and to assess what difference God's coming in Christ can make in our lives, our communities, our world.

I wish you a happy (and thoughtful) Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and Candlemas!

Gareth

St Mary's Church, Weston on the Green warmly invites you to join in our services in December and January

1st December	11:00	Holy Communion, Kirtlington
8th December	15:15	Carol Service, Hampton Gay
15th December	11:00	Holy Communion
22nd December	18:00	Candlelit Carol Service
25th December	10:30	Morning Worship
29th December	10:30	Holy Communion, Chesterton
12th January	11:00	Morning Worship
19th January	11:00	Holy Communion
26th January	18:00	Evensong with the Akeman Church Community Choir, Wendlebury

Please note: the times are subject to change. The monthly schedule is posted on the front door of the church as well as the bulletin box at the East gate.

For other services across the Akeman Benefice please visit: <https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/church-services>

We look forward to welcoming you to our services

From the Register
 Funeral: 18th November 2024 Ann Holt

BENEFICE NEWS

Exhibition of Nativity Scenes from around the World by kind permission of Col Maw. St Mary's Church, Chesterton. Entry £1.00 to include a raffle ticket.

Saturday 30th November 10:00 – 17:00; Sunday 1st December 12:00 – 16:00

The Hampton Gay Train Crash 2024 marks the 150th anniversary of the Hampton Gay Train crash. There is a commemorative service at 12.00 pm on Christmas Eve at Holy Cross Church, Shipton on Cherwell, moving over to Hampton Gay (weather permitting).

Church news



We have had some notable services over the past few weeks. On Sunday 27th October we had a visit from the Akeman Church Community Choir. It was a pleasure to welcome them to St Marys and we very much enjoyed their singing. On Sunday 3rd



November we had a very poignant All Souls' service. Many thanks to Bob Wilkes for leading this important and moving service. As I write, the church has been beautifully decorated for Remembrance Sunday, many thanks to Mandy Jones and Sally Cole for all their hard work.

As we move into Advent we hope that many of you will join us for our upcoming events. On Saturday 7th December we are having the 'The Big Breakfast' from 9.00 am till 12 noon in the Village Hall. This is a great morning where you can enjoy Peter Driver's famous breakfast, as well as buy some Christmas gifts from various stalls. These include the village's very own BeccaLou Designs and Peck & Feather.

Our annual Crib and Carol Service is on Sunday 22nd December at 6.00 pm, please do join us for this very special service. Mulled wine and minced pies will be served from 5.00 pm to get you in good voice! We then have a family service on Christmas Day at 10.30 am and we look forward to welcoming you all.

Finally, we were very saddened to learn of the death of Ann Holt. She was such an important part of this village and will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers go to Tony and all of her family.

Nicky Donne
PCC

Flower powers

Our church is very appreciative of all the efforts of our volunteers. I would like to give special thanks to Jane Henman and Sally Brown who are stepping down from the flower arranging team. They have both worked so hard and helped to produced countless, beautiful arrangements.

If anyone feels they could join the flower arranging team then please do get in touch. We are also looking for volunteers for the monthly cleaning rota.

To join either team then please email us on:
westononthegreen.akeman@gmail.com



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Chair's comments

New Councillor



The Parish Council is pleased to announce that we have a new councillor!

His name is Michael Aldridge and he and his family have lived in the south end of the village for over six years after returning to the UK from living abroad. During the working week Michael is an IT Enablement Architect, designing and delivering training programmes on IT systems across the globe. Michael is looking forward to contributing to the village as a parish councillor and striving to improve our community and environment.

During his induction we discussed his concerns about traffic through the village. Fortunately, he has accepted the request to be the new Chair of the Traffic Calming Advisory Group. That team has been working very hard to progress the aim of lowering the speed limit on the B430. This has been a tiring and frustrating task over the past few years. We appreciate Michael's willingness to step in and take the stress off the current Chair, Graham Barnett.

Development Planning

The Parish Council is in the midst



of refreshing our development plan for the next four years. We've taken some time to review where we have succeeded in meeting our goals. We've also reflected on the issues that may have held us back from achieving others. We have several projects that haven't moved forward, for example, providing play equipment for children eight years and up. We had hoped to create opportunities in the spinney for exercise and play with natural materials. In order to do this, we need parents to join a Playground and Spinney working party.

There are many fine examples of how villages are doing this with natural materials. There are grants that might be available for such a project. If you would like to have more opportunities for children and young people in the

village, please contact any of the councillors or the clerk with your offer to help.

Cherwell District Council Draft Local Plan

We now have a Cherwell District Council Draft Local Plan! It will be going to the Cherwell DC Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th November 2024 and you can find it here: <https://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=116&MId=4166&Ver=4>

What's the benefit?

An up to date Local Plan is important for a plan-led approach to decision-making and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. This draft Plan has been informed by three formal public consultations, continuous engagement and cooperation and

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evidence gathering. The plan has policies for its key areas:

- Banbury Area
- Bicester Area
- Kidlington Area
- Heyford Park Area
- Rural Areas

The plan retains the focus of development on Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and it also details where the additional housing mandated by the Government will go.

The final version will be presented to the Cherwell DC Executive at its 2nd December meeting and then it will go out to public consultation for 8 weeks over the Christmas period. As soon as we receive information on how to comment we will add this to our website.

Upon later submission of the Plan for Examination, its legal compliance would be considered by an independent Planning Inspector in early 2025.

Budget Season

The Parish Council has a careful eye on the Chancellor's budget. Over the next weeks we will understand more fully how it will impact on us.

The Parish Council has now entered our budget season with discussion at both the November and December meetings. The draft budget will be presented at our meeting on January 8th 2025, and when passed will result in the

precept request for the financial year.

Community Bus Grant Received

The Parish Council have been successful in an application to Oxfordshire County Council for a community transport grant to support the running costs of the community van. We were delighted to have been awarded a grant of £4,000 to help cover the running costs for two years. The Parish Council would like to thank Graham Barnett for running the scheme for the village and the wonderful volunteers who provide regular support with driving the van - Nigel Allinson, Greg Milne, James Henderson and Graham Barnett.

Request to all property owners who have a ditch running through or beside their property

We politely request that property owners' clear ditches alongside or in their gardens so when the rains come, there is less flooding. The cost to do this across the village is formidable and so we ask for your assistance. There is little flow through the Thames Water sub-station leaving it unpleasant when effluent is released. We have several streams running through the village, and we'd like to be prepared for any heavy rain during the winter. Thank you for your assistance.

Praise for volunteers in the community

Reflecting on my article for the September/October issue where I wrote about the difference

between a village and a suburb, I've been going over the long list of volunteers that make this village great and create the glue that binds us together into a thriving community.

We owe a great thanks to many: the Traffic Advisory Group who have worked in a very frustrating environment but have been dedicated to sorting out the speed on the B430 plus other concerns, the Speedwatch team (rain or shine), those keeping the playing field mowed, Parish Council team - each one has an area of responsibility as well as overall responsibility for PC work and finances, specific experts in the village who advise the PC, the Memorial Garden and D-Day garden maintenance teams, those taking the responsibility for one of the planters, the *Village News* editor and staff plus the delivery team, the hardworking Village Hall Committee and supporters, those who volunteer to work in the shop, Golden Leaves chef(s) and team, leaders of Weston Society, SOS Committee, the Garden Club and those who volunteer their gardens to the public, the new Neighbourhood Watch team, litter pickers, the quiet folk who see a job and do it, i.e. oak tree pond clearance, the Neighbours' Natter leader, St. Mary's Church team including flower team, the bell ringers, 30 helpers who cleaned up the church yard - the list is long and I'm sure is incomplete but isn't it impressive?!

continued on page 8



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Vacancies for volunteer work

All of the above would benefit from more support. Volunteering is a great way to get to know people and to get that special feeling of accomplishment from doing a job, however small. If you have a skill or a wish to meet people and contribute to the community, please contact the leader of the group you are interested in (see the front of the Village News).

December Food Bank

Thank you for your wonderful

support at the pre-Christmas collection in November.

Please check the notices for what is really needed for the December Food Bank on December 7th. A few Christmas Day treats such as chocolate, small Christmas cakes, Christmas puddings (miniature), sweets for stockings will be welcome. We will collect items for children's gifts (wrapped and labelled by gender and age), Christmas paper to wrap items.

There will also be a gift collection

at St. Mary's Church on 22nd December at the Advent Carol Service. Please wrap and label the gifts by gender and age. You might consider a few gifts for adults this year. Thank you for your generosity.

Although it may feel early, we wish you a very Happy Christmas, a rest over the holiday and Good Health in 2025!

Diane



BICESTER FOOD BANK

EMERGENCY FOOD
FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS



A collection is held on the first Saturday of every month, 9.00 am–12.00 pm outside the Weston Pantry.

All donations of non-perishable food received with thanks.

Supported by St Mary's Church, the Village Hall, and the Parish Council.

Seeded by The Trussell Trust

Planning update

Planning applications relating to the parish are discussed at each Parish Council meeting and a report is placed on the Parish Council website. Full information regarding each application is available via the Planning and Building section on the Cherwell District Council website.



BUILDING APPLICATIONS:

Decisions Received – Permitted

23/03383/F – 2 Church Close

24/02337/NMA - Erlinstoun, Shepherds Close

24/02413/F - Home Farm, Church Lane

24/01969/F - Westfield Farm Barn, Shepherds Close

Applications – Awaiting Decision

24/01136/F - The Old Vicarage, Mill Lane

Renovation of existing detached garage to incorporate first floor home office space.

24/01572/AGN - OS Parcel 4658 North Of Shell Filling Station And SW Of The Chequers
Erection of a General Purpose Agricultural Storage Building (non-livestock) – Prior Approval Required.

24/02685/F – Southview, Northampton Road
Infill extension to existing bungalow and addition of first floor. Erection of garage and store with room in loft, including demolition of existing pole barn.

Join us for Christmas at The Chequers

CHEQUERS

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

Starters

Mushroom & Chestnuts Soup <i>crème fraiche, truffle oil, warm bread</i>	£9.50
Smoked Salmon & Prawn Mousse Ballotine <i>dill pickled cucumber carpaccio, tomato emulsion & squid ink coral</i>	£11.50
Crispy Bacon & Waterloo Brie Bites <i>shaved fennel, rocket pesto & red onion puree</i>	£10.50
Ham Hock Terrine <i>piccalilli gel, toasted focaccia, baby watercress</i>	£11

Main Courses

Thyme & Butter Roasted Turkey <i>cranberry and sausage bacon wrapped stuffing, duck fat roast potatoes, brussel sprouts and caramelised red onions, honey roasted carrots and parsnips, rich gravy</i>	£24
Slow Cooked Red Wine Beef Brisket <i>horseradish mash, sticky braised festive spiced red cabbage, rich gravy</i>	£24
Gruyere and Herbs Crusted Haddock <i>crushed new potatoes, creamy white wine sauce leeks, dill oil</i>	£22
Homemade Vegetarian Wellington <i>herb roasted potatoes, brussel sprouts and caramelised red onions, roasted carrots and parsnips, veg gravy</i>	£22

Desserts

Traditional Christmas Pudding <i>apple & Brandy compote, vanilla anglaise, candied lemon zest</i>	£9
Dark Chocolate & Cherry Torte <i>almond crème fraiche, chocolate soil, cherry & Kirsch fluid gel</i>	£10
Poached Pear Carpaccio <i>mulled wine gel, blood orange sorbet, stem-ginger granola.</i>	£9.50
Cheese Selection <i>Served with crackers, homemade fig chutney, grapes & celery</i>	£14

Tea, Coffee & Mince Pies

2 Course Meal £35

3 Course Meal £40

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Post Office Success!

At the time of writing this we've just received the news that Weston SOS has passed all stages of the application process with the Post Office – allowing us to continue operations of the Post Office as a community-owned Shop and Post Office within the village. As we've shared previously, this was the last outstanding major risk to our plan to bring the Shop and Post Office into community ownership, so it is fantastic and welcome news as the darker evenings and colder days start to draw in.

Allow me to fill you in on our progress over the last few months. At the beginning of August we submitted our application to the Post Office with the help of PO Talent, a company that specialises in supporting prospective postmasters through the application process. They took care of all the hard work of submitting the application forms and presenting our business plan in a 'Post Office friendly' way to maximise our chances of success and would also assist in preparing for our interview with the Post Office.

On the 21st October we received the news that our business plan had passed the financial assessment stage and would progress to the suitability interview stage, which was scheduled for the 5th November (I'm sure it was just a coincidence that it happened to be on Guy Fawkes night!). Linda

and I attended some preparation webinars in the weeks leading up to the interview, and we spent the weekend before preparing, having a meeting with the current owner over a drink in the Ben Jonson to pick her brains over Post Office operations and 'operational excellence' (!!) and we even had a 'mock interview' with a current



postmaster the day before to work on our 'double act' to impress the Post Office.

The interview itself was nearly two hours long – quite the grilling; Linda and I are in agreement that we were very glad when it was over – but we both thought that it had gone well and we had shared the passion from the community to 'Save our Shop' and demonstrate we had the skills, experience and desire to operate the Post Office.

In the meantime, we've been working with our solicitor to progress the purchase; we've

received the purchase report (as you would when purchasing a home!), and been working with our community funding circle to review and finalise the loan agreements and amounts, allowing us to raise the rest of the funding required to complete our plan.

On the 7th November, we received the news that we had passed the suitability interview and that our application would now be passed to the onboarding team who would work with us on our Post Office contract, training and setting a transfer date (as the date we would 'purchase' the Shop is set by the Post Office). This is expected to take around a couple of months so please look out for updates on our website, emails to our members or Facebook page as it's quite possible that at the time of reading this we'll have a date set for the re-launch of the Weston Pantry as a community owned Shop and Post Office – made possible by the generous support of our local community.

I wish to thank everyone for their patience and support – from the current owner for continuing to serve the community despite the delays, the rest of the committee for their support and faith in me as Chair, the current staff in the shop for their understanding, and to our members and community that helped make this all possible.

Sam Sharp – Chair, Weston SOS



hga

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Village Hall News

AS MENTIONED in the last edition of the Village News, the Village School Honours Board is now on display in the Village Hall as part of a three-year rolling loan from Oxfordshire Museum. Thank you to everyone who messaged and emailed us about the return of this piece of village history - it made all the form-filling worthwhile.



It was lovely to see the Hall busy with visitors to the Craft

Fair in mid-October. This day-long event saw a steady stream of people perusing the stalls and leaving laden down with a range of goodies, including some delicious food items. Our thanks go to Toddy for organising and promoting this event, and to everyone who attended. A big thank you, too, to village stallholders, Mandy, Rekha, Toddy, and Sariah. The teas, coffees and cake sale in aid of Macmillan raised, on the day, £438.85 so thank you so much to everyone who supported this event.

A big thank you as well to everyone who came along to the fireworks display at the end of October. The day started with donations of wood for the bonfire being dropped off at the playing field by Graham and then the bonfire being ably constructed by Paul, Andrew, Keyna, Jessica, Henry, Sarah, Ferris and Neil, ready for the evening's event. The rain held off and over four hundred people were treated to a fantastic fifteen-minute display.



This event wouldn't happen without the support of the village so thank you to Linda and Cherrie who collected the entrance fee on the gate, and to Alan, Tracy and Keyna who ran the bar (and who also provided the much-in-demand mulled wine). Of course, a huge thank you to Mark and Mick East, and the team, for this year's display. From the first rocket to the

continued on page 12



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finale, this year's fireworks were stunningly spectacular, and we were treated to a fantastic array of colours and explosion of sparkles. There is a lot of planning for firework night, and we very much appreciate the efforts and support of Mark in helping us put on this event.

Our next event will be the Christmas Tree Lights Switch On, raffle and visit by Father Christmas on December 1st, at 6.00 pm in the Hall. On offer will be mulled wine, nibbles and lots of Christmas cheer!

The popular Christmas raffle returns with a range of lovely prizes, ranging from chocolates, candles, accessories, and homewares to bottles of wine and spirits. We would like to thank the businesses that have supported us by donating prizes. These include Lakeland, Tesco, The Milk Shed, The Ben Jonson Pub, Blenheim Palace, The Flight House, Yankee Candle, as well as our private donators. Thank you so much!

A date for your 2025 diaries and calendars is our 'Winter Warmer and Wassail Drinks Evening' on Friday 17th January, 7.00 pm until 8.30 pm. We hope you can join us for complimentary canapes and drinks as we banish those post-Christmas blues. We will be offering mulled cider, whisky and other drinks on the evening (including non-alcoholic tipples). Although a Wassail is a traditional rural English celebration where people bless apple trees with cider for a good harvest, we're going for the more relaxed wassail of wishing 'good health' ('was hal') to all as well as bringing light and cheer to the long, dark winter months. We hope that you'll be able to join us at this informal event and we look forward to seeing you there.

It only leaves us to say thank you for your continued support of the Hall and the events we put on, and to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

250 Club Results

OCTOBER

1st prize: £18 No 131 Neil & Corinne Cunningham
 2nd prize: £12 No 246 Ben & Catherine Lanham
 2nd prize: £6 No 101 Debbie Obied

NOVEMBER

1st prize: £18 No 82 Jeet Taylor
 2nd prize: £12 No 27 Bharat Mistry
 2nd prize: £6 No 1 Jeet Taylor



PHONE BOX LIBRARY

Opening Times for 2024

The phone box is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, from early morning until 4.30-5pm when it is then locked up for the night.

Please feel free to borrow a book to read. We only ask that you return it in a good condition for the next person to borrow. Stock will be rotated on a regular basis.

Please could we ask that book donations are not left in the phone box. If you wish to donate books please email westonvillagehall@live.co.uk

Many thanks and happy reading



Christmas Library Closures

The library will be closed from the evening of December 21st and will re-open on 4th January.

Thank you to all our visitors & readers



Happy Christmas and
happy reading!!



Fireworks 2024

Well, never let it be said that Weston fireworks night was uneventful. This year 26th October was a memorable year. Not only was the A34 and the M40 closed but Mark had double booked and had gone to a wedding!

To recap, on Friday, Derek from skyline fireworks delivered all the kit and fireworks to the glamorous assistant's garage. Here Mark was able to sort and

and overhanging tree branches. We could hear the branches snapping from where we were in the far corner of the field.

Paul came over about 6.55 pm and asked us to delay the start as there was a huge queue of people trying to get in. The witches and Andrew did sterling duty on the gate with over 400 people coming in. At 7.10 pm the first 4" shell passed my shoulder and announced the



or possibly Pete, 'everything went bang, and we survived'. You can't get better than that!

We cleared up and loaded all the kit back into the van. Paul then dropped all the kit and dead at the garage before dropping Pete off in Kidlington and taking the van back to TVR. After a quick shower and change I went to the Ben to quench a raging thirst and have some vittals. The Ben was done out exquisitely with many moving and scary Halloween figures. My thanks to Jess, Kate and all the staff for making such an effort for us. Special thanks to Kieran who supplied the casserole, which was exceptional. It was good to see the Ben lively and once again centre of the village activities.

On Sunday in the sunshine I went to the playing field and collected all the bits I could from the pyrotechnic fall-out. Paul was raking over the nearly burnt out fire and two dogs (small affairs) barked at me as I collected detritus. Then back to the garage to dismantle the shell racks and clean the tubes. Derek collected the dead in the afternoon and the Kit on Monday.

Many thanks to the Village Hall committee for arranging this event and to everyone who made it a great evening - see you next year.

Mick East



fuse the shells, whilst I fused the cakes and candles all as normal.

On the Saturday Paul Jarvis and Pete Taylor arrived at the garage at 4.30 pm where we loaded the van. At about 5.00 pm we drove to the playing field and made our way gingerly to the firing area. I say gingerly because the grass was quite damp, and we didn't want to invoke the wheel spinning sprites. The weather however was clear and calm as we unloaded the shells cakes and candles.

Paul Warren approached us at 6.20 pm and requested a hand with lighting the bonfire. This was duly achieved at 6.25 pm with the judicious use of some dry cardboard and a gas torch. The fire burned brightly, and the smoke rose almost vertically such was the calmness of the evening.

One of the highlights before we started the show was seeing an Amazon Prime artic trying to make its way along the Bletchington road whilst avoiding parked cars

start of the show. There followed a series of whooshes, crackles, whizzes and bangs culminating in a finale that contained twelve shells. In the words of the great Philosopher and thinker Confucius,



Bus Tracker

for
Weston-on-the-Green
Bus Service 24

Get the timetable
for this bus service
wherever you are:

bustimes.org

Just put in your
postcode to access the
full bus schedule

Weston on the Green Community Bus



Our generously donated Community Transport vehicle is an excellent service helping villagers get to their doctor and hospital appointments.

Equipped with a wheelchair hoist, residents can book this for trips in the local area.

To book please contact Graham Barnett on **01869 350707** giving as much notice as possible

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED!

Weston on the Green Community Transport is in need of additional volunteer drivers. If you are over 30 years of age with a clean driving licence, no accidents in last 5 years and have spare time during the day, please consider helping to maintain this invaluable Community asset.

Mainly local trips to hospitals or surgery

Contact Graham Barnett on **01869 350707**

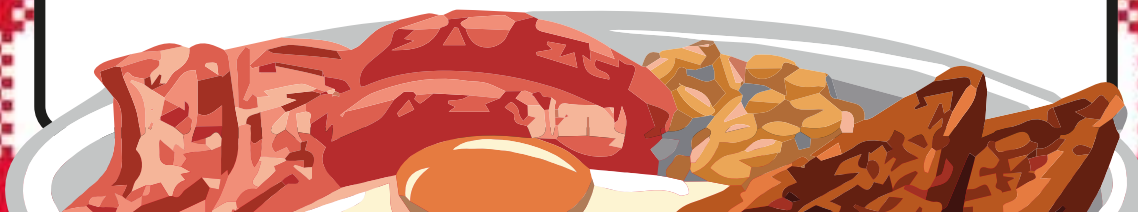
St Mary's Church Big Breakfast

Saturday 7th December

9.00 am – 12.00 pm

Come and enjoy a cooked breakfast and a chance to browse stalls including Peck and Feather for Christmas gift ideas plus a cake stall and a Tombola

£7.50 for adults £5.00 for children



WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN'S

Christmas Past and Present

COLLECTING CHRISTMAS traditions in Weston led me to some wonderful conversations with several older members of our community who were happy to share their memories of Yuletides past.

Christmas was celebrated in ways that would be familiar to us today – a party in the schoolroom; a tree erected there covered with presents; the singing of carols; the re-telling of the Nativity story.

The season was shorter – only Christmas Day and Boxing Day were holidays and farm workers still had to care for the animals. Advent was celebrated in the school with the daily singing of carols and the telling of Bible stories. If an Advent Calendar was in evidence it was probably a window for each day disclosing a picture of part of the Nativity story – not a piece of chocolate or (seen this year) a different piece of cheese each day. Recently in Weston we had Advent Windows – windows in properties each depicting a festive scene.

The events associated with the school include parties, concerts, bazaars and open assemblies. Nativity scenes appeared in the school and elsewhere. One year the Sunday School made a Nativity scene for the church.



Almost life-size figures of Mary, Joseph, kings and shepherds were made from large cardboard cones, decorated by the children with fabric, knitting wool, poster paints and sequins and staged just in front of the altar. The damp in the church worked its magic and by the next day the cones had collapsed and all looked as if they were bowing before the crib. There was much propping up before the service.

In many families the beginning of Christmas was the decoration of the tree and putting up streamers on Christmas Eve. Paper chains were often made from old newspapers, covered in poster paint and glued into links – not everything was shiny and glittery.

One Westoner remembered her father going to the Chequers after work closed on Christmas Eve and returning home, a little the worse for wear, and having to go out into the garden to dig up and bring in the tree they used each year. This he then decorated so that it was a surprise for his children on Christmas morning. The tree was then replanted in the garden



again after its short stay indoors. In wartime all lights had to be hidden behind blackout curtains and there was no chance to display your tree to the world each evening.

Within families it would often be the case that a new dress or jacket would be a Christmas gift. For one little girl there was always a new velvet dress each Christmas, made by a beloved aunt from items bought at a jumble sale and reworked.

One lady remembers benefiting from her father's close association with the more well-off in the village; she received gifts that were passed down to her: 'The most beautiful doll's pram I have ever seen ... under the seats inside were dolls' clothes with a beautiful china doll sitting on top with the most exquisite face and rosy cheeks dressed in fine clothes and I seem to remember she said "Mama" when lifted from the pram'. Another memorable hand-me-down was a tricycle with 'real rubber tyres and a basket on the front'.

Food, especially during war time, was far less exotic than that on offer today and it was the gifts of food that remained in the memory – buns, mince pies, cake, sweets and fruit. Living in a rural community, food was not scarce; there were plenty of seasonal fruit and vegetables but not the wealth of imported produce we



have today. Families would keep chickens, pigs and goats and one memory is of rabbit being the Christmas dinner. Another family always had beef, which was not their usual fare, on Christmas Day and it was the custom in one home to make two puddings and to keep one to be eaten at Easter.

One memory was of a Christmas stocking filled with a piece of coal, an apple, a pear, an orange, a 6d postal order and a couple of hazel nuts. Where did the orange come from during wartime?

Food rationing affected more than cakes and puddings and many growing up during the middle of the 20th century did not regularly have chocolate and sweets in their stockings. After the war, one recollection is of a box of chocolate bars being delivered to the school and distributed according to the number of children in a family. Who provided the chocolate isn't recorded, possibly it came from America.

After the end of the Second World War there are memories of dancing. The village had resident

dancing teachers – David and Margaret Beecroft – and 'young and old would take part together in modern and old-time dancing'. Pantomimes and concerts were organised and many took part in entertaining the village with their assorted skills – even the vicar was a renowned contributor to these concerts.

Many could play musical instruments and would accompany carols 'with gusto' and the tradition of singing carols around Weston as a way of raising money for charity had its roots in previous generations singing carols in church and chapel and in school and again at parties in the village.

And a final reminder of how times have changed – one Christmas the lady living at the Old Vicarage gave a drinks party for those who had worked in the church or churchyard during the year. At one point she offered a cigar to one guest – who was shocked to see her take one herself and smoke it!

Paula Hessian





Weston Walkers

Our September walk was a circular from Stoke Lyne, taking in Tusmore Park, containing the very impressive Tusmore House and the 25-metre obelisk erected to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee.

The weather was against us again in October forcing us to cancel the planned walk, so our final walk of the year was on 11th November, recommencing on Monday 10th February next year.

All are welcome to join in as and when, there is no commitment to every month so if you wish to enjoy sociable company, conversation and exercise please come along and join in or speak to me.

There are now also several local walks to enjoy published on the

Weston on the Green Parish Council website, under Health and Wellbeing.

If while out walking you encounter any problems with overgrown



vegetation, damaged stiles or footbridges, or any other issues, please let me know for Weston Parish or Katie Holt (01869 350219) for Bletchington Parish, in order that they can be reported to the County Council for repair.

Graham Barnett 07974 774159



Weston Society

Weston Society met on Monday 9th September when our own Paula Hessian gave a fascinating and informative talk on the history of certain houses in the village.

At the time of writing, the Society is due to meet on Monday 11th November when Pete Seaward from Bletchington is giving a talk entitled 'House Arrest in Woodstock'.

The next meeting after that is scheduled for Monday

13th January when the excellent speaker Maurice East will be talking on 'Motopolis vs the Meadow', the saga of Christchurch Meadow and the most famous Oxford road that was never built.

We meet on the second Monday of alternative months; all are welcome free of charge to their first meeting and there is an annual subscription currently of £20 per person for anyone who then wishes to join, which enables us to pay for use of the Hall, pay for speakers and to share wine and nibbles after the meeting.



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It is with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Ann Holt. For many years she had lived in Westlands Avenue with her family and was an ever-present member of our community.

Ann was a Lancastrian by birth, one of five siblings and after school she first found work in a local factory and then, aged 18, she joined the army. Her time in the forces was curtailed by the then ruling that a married woman could not continue to serve and so, having met and married Tony Holt, she left the army. She and Tony had two sons and Tony's service in the army saw tours of duty to Germany where Ann took work in a local supermarket. Their final posting was to Bicester, where they set up home after Tony's retirement. It was here, living in Priory Road, that Ann became associated with St Edberg's school where she was a caretaker and cleaner.

Ann and Tony moved to Weston in 1999 where Ann's life experiences stood her in good stead as she joined village organisations and took on committee roles. In the WI she served as both Treasurer and then President



Ann Holt 1948 - 2024

for several years. Her willingness to help was evident – she would always volunteer to 'man the kitchen' and fulfilled this role on behalf of other organisations as well.

Ann cultivated an allotment at Middleton Stoney for many years, was knowledgeable about horticulture and was a member of the Gardening Club committee. As with all her contributions to village life, she loyally supported this club, taking on tasks as and when required.

Her ability to knit and crochet was well known and she would offer help and tuition to those who were struggling. She was generous with the items she made, often giving them away or donating to a cause. Within the Art and Craft group she quietly took on roles, in the kitchen or as the link between the group and the Village Hall committee – that was Ann, quietly volunteering, helping where she saw the need.

We will all miss her support in many ways and offer our heartfelt condolences to Tony and her two sons, Anthony and Robert.



Farewell to Daisy the Cow and the Golden Hen

After 29 years, it is time to say farewell to Daisy the Cow and the Golden Hen. They were both bred by Janome for the specific purpose of starring in the 1995 pantomime, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, which was performed by the Weston Players at the Village Hall.

Following a life pushed to the back of a wardrobe, they have finally gone to meet their maker courtesy of Cherwell's green bin. Daisy would have made a few steaks (possibly a bit tough now) whilst the hen may well go on to be goujons or nuggets.

The animators of these star animals are still going strong. Daisy's two are now both in their forties and run their own companies. The Golden Hen's animator is now a pensioner, but can still run around the garden shouting 'Unhand me you big varlet' - clucking hell!

Much hilarity was had in 1995 when they performed on the stage. We still have the Golden Egg laid by the hen (this goes a long way to explaining her pained expression).

Mick East



Neighbours' Natter News

Everyone is welcome to ...

Neighbours' Natter



Bring your Magazines to Swap

Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall
Thursday 9th January 2025, 10am - Noon
Join the chat over coffee or tea and a biscuit.

We have had a great year of Natters! Thank you to everyone who has made these sessions such fun.

As we have other activities to distract and entertain us in the approach to Christmas, there will be NO Neighbours' Natter in December. However, come and join us again in 2025 starting on 9th January (10.00 am – 12.00 pm) to have a cup of coffee or tea and a biscuit. We chat about anything and everything: the weather, holidays, crafts and books we've read – or want to. There's no agenda, just friendly conversation.

There are magazines to swap, too. Take whatever interests you, and if you have magazines a few weeks (or even months) old that you think others may enjoy, please bring them along and leave them on the table.

I do hope to see all you 'regulars', as well as some new faces, in 2025.

Happy Nattering!
Patsy Parsons

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Sunday 1st December 2024, 6pm

**Join us for the turning on of the Christmas Lights, mince pies,
Christmas Raffle, and festive cheer!**



**Enjoy a glass of wine, and mince pies as we turn on the Christmas lights and
officially start the festive season in Weston!**

**Children will also receive a small gift from our special visitor, Father
Christmas!**

**(Gifts from Father Christmas are for children of the village aged 11 and under.
To register your child for a gift please email westonvillagehall@live.co.uk
with the name, age and address of your child)**



Please join us for the

Candlelit Crib & Carol Service

*On December 22nd 2024
at 6.00 pm*

*Starting with Mulled Wine & Mince Pies
From 5.00 pm*

*Retiring collection and gifts (toys) received will be donated to the
Bicester Food Bank*

*Please contact Peter Driver 01869 350 569 or Eric Bohm 07531703409
for further information.*

ALL ARE WELCOME



Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

A warm welcome awaits villagers at our



Winter Warmer & Wassail Drinks Evening

Join us for drinks and canapes

Friday 17th January 2025

7pm-8.30pm

All welcome



Drinks & canapes free of charge but donations on the evening welcome

RSVP: westonvillagehall@live.co.uk by 10th January 2025



Give as you Live Online

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

By using **Give As You Live online**, or via the **Give As You Live App**, you can raise funds for the Village Hall for free! Choose Weston on the Green Village Hall as your chosen charity and then shop online at over 6,000 stores. It's as simple as:



Browse

Over
6,000 stores!



Shop

Visit the store via
the website or
App, then shop as
normal



Raise

Give As You Live
make a free dona-
tion to the Village
Hall

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall, **registered charity no. 264754**
Thank you for your support



Cherwell lottery

Supporting
Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall

Play Cherwell Lottery and support our cause!

- Make a difference to the community and support the Village Hall
- Sign-up for only £1 a week!
- You get the chance to win cash prizes up to £25,000 every week!
- We get 50p from every £1 ticket and a further 10p goes to other good causes
- Join your community in making where we live an even better place

Just visit CherwellLottery.co.uk and search for
Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older





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BeccaLou Designs

Individually hand-decorated Christmas cakes available at the end of November
4-inch square and 4-inch hemisphere - £18 | 6-inch round - £26 | 8-inch round - £35
2-inch round (gift size) - £7

Various traditional, cute and contemporary designs

A limited number of bespoke Christmas cake requirements can be catered for on request if ordered by 1st December

Other celebration cakes available. Allow at least 2 weeks prior to date required.

Please order direct from Mandy Jones:

Email: mandy@cobi.co.uk

Tel: 01869 351771 or 07941 949743



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HCS Oxford Ltd, Unit 6, Oddington Grange Farm Industries, Weston-On-The-Green, Bicester, OX25 3QW

This issue, the Wood Fairy seems to have morphed into the Christmas Fairy ...



Santa's Visit Application

Please Note: You better not pout, you better not cry, you better be good, I'm telling you why. Santa Claus is coming to town, and he hasn't got much time. To assist in the efficient processing of all children's requests please fill in this form clearly and truthfully because, he **does** know.

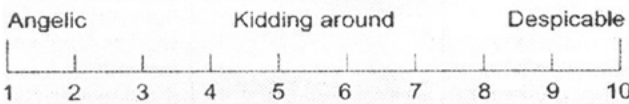
Applicant details

What did your parents name you?

Where do you live?

Have you been good?

On the scale below please indicate (tick) your level of behaviour over the past 12 months (*Remember he knows*)



If you ticked between 1 and 4 inclusive:
 What would you like for Christmas? (*Please print*)

If you ticked between 5 and 7 inclusive:
 What would you like for Christmas? (*Please print*)

If you ticked between 8 and 10 inclusive:
 What would you like for Christmas? (*Please print clearly*)

Access details

What is the pitch of your roof? degrees
 If the pitch is more than 30 degrees please attach a roofing diagram indicating at least two (2) anchor points. (eg. TV antenna, spire, chimney etc.)

Does your roof have a minimum load bearing capacity of 1 ton per square metre? (9 reindeer, a full sleigh, plus a big bloke in a funny suit)

- No On the night please ensure that your driveway is clear of all objects bigger than a cat.
- Unsure Please attach a certified engineer's report clearly outlining the average load bearing capacity of your roof.
- Yes

Do you have a chimney?
 Yes When was it last swept? / /

Approx. diameter of stack opening centimetres
 Please ensure on the night that the hearth is clear of burning embers and sharp objects.

No On the night please leave the back door or a large window ajar.

Gift placement details

Where would you like your gifts placed?
 Stocking (*Please specify stocking size*)
 End of bed
 Under the Christmas tree
 Hidden (*Please indicate level of difficulty*)

All day to find	Half day to find			Ten minutes to find
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Refreshment details

Will refreshments be provided? Yes
 What type of refreshments will be available? (*Tick more than one*)
 Brandy Rum Gin Scotch Whisky
 Vodka Bourbon Beer Wine
 Other (*Please specify, including percentage proof*)

<input type="text"/>	Alc./Vol.
<input type="text"/>	Alc./Vol.
<input type="text"/>	Alc./Vol.

Where will these refreshments be found?

- Liquor cabinet (*Please leave unlocked, or a key in an obvious place*)
- Bar
- Fridge
- Cupboard (*Attach a house plan indicating which cupboard/s in which room/s*)
- On the kitchen table (*Preferred option*)

Declaration

I the abovementioned child living at the abovementioned address, declare that the information provided herein is true and correct in every detail. Furthermore, I authorise Santa to contact my parents of the same address to confirm the details set out herein. I understand that in the event that my story does not correspond with that of my parents, especially the bit about my level of behaviour, it could be a lean Christmas. I also promise to be asleep when Santa arrives, because, he **does** know.

Your name in running writing What's today? / /

Please send this completed application by Air Mail, arriving no later than, the night before Christmas, to:

Mr. S. Claus
C/o Mail Service HOHOHO
North Pole



Community Help and Information Point

Join us as a CHIP Volunteer

We are looking for friendly, dedicated people who have 2 or more hours per week to spare and would like to help others within their community

**Make a real
impact in your
community!**

Interested?

Email:
recruitment@cawnac.org.uk

What are CHIPs?

Community Help and Information Points (CHIPs) are the front door to our services, providing face-to-face support in community locations.

What will you do?

Support clients
Provide information
Refer for assistance

**citizens
advice**

**West Northants
& Cherwell**

Not being able to
get online in the
digital age is
isolating.

We can help get
you connected

Please call
☎ 03000040401
✉ email connect.info@cawo.org.uk
to book a visit or find out more


Connect!



PENSION CREDIT

How do I apply?

Pension Credit could give you around **£3,900** a year, on average, to help with your living costs if you're over State Pension age and on a low income. Plus, you could get the **Winter Fuel Payment**.*

STEP 1

Check eligibility

Use the quick **online calculator** to check eligibility and how much you could get.

STEP 2

Have the following information ready

- ✓ National Insurance number
- ✓ Information about any income, savings and investments you have
- ✓ Bank details

STEP 3

Apply online

Visit **gov.uk/pension-credit** to apply online.

Alternatively, you can call the **Pension Credit claim line** on **0800 99 1234**.

STEP 4

Wait to hear from us

You will be notified by post when your claim has been assessed.



Launton and Otmoor Update

October/November

Full Council, 21st October 2024

The full council of Cherwell District Council took place on Monday 21st October. There were four motions passed:

- A motion asking the Leader of the Council (Cllr David Hingley) to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking her to reconsider the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance and to look at how Cherwell can support residents more.
- A motion looking at how we improve Primary Care within Cherwell
- A motion looking at how we can make Cherwell more accessible to neurodiverse residents and councillors
- A motion calling on the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary urging her to cancel the plans to re-open Campsfield House.

You can find more information about the full council as well as the full text of the motion on the council website.

In relation to the motion on Winter Fuel Allowance, we are aware that many pensioners are anxious about meeting the costs this winter. Please do explore whether you would be eligible for help from



using the following:

- Pension Credit or Savings Credit (Pension Credit: Eligibility - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) Advice on both of these is available here: Pension credit advice | Age UK If you qualify for either credit, you will get the Winter Fuel Payment.
- Warm Home Discount (Warm Home Discount Scheme: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))
- Residents Support Scheme, from Oxfordshire County Council (Oxfordshire Residents Support Scheme | Oxfordshire County Council)

Local Plan

You may remember that Cherwell is currently in the process of updating their local plan. This went to consultation last year and officers have been working to pull all opinions from the consultation together and adapt the plan accordingly. We believe that updated local plan will now be going to Overview and Scrutiny committee in early November and you should then be able to read the updated version. The plan will then go to consultation again and you

will have your opportunity to have your say. We will keep you updated about when the consultation goes live.

Flooding

Unfortunately, much of Launton and Otmoor has been affected by flooding over the last couple of weeks and we have been working with officers and parish councils to understand the effects of this flooding and how we can prevent or lessen it in the future. Please do get in touch if you have been affected and we will see what we can do to help! There are also help pages online at the Oxfordshire Flooding Toolkit. More information can be found here: <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/>

Get in Touch

As always, please do get in touch! Our emails are gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, alisa.russell@cherwell-dc.gov.uk and julian.nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or phone us on 01869717712.

All the best,
Gemma, Alisa & Julian

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Dates for the Diary

1st December	6.00 pm	Christmas Tree Lights Switch On with Father Christmas
4th December	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
7th December	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	St Mary's Big Breakfast and Christmas Fair in the Village Hall
7th December	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Pantry
10th December	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch
22nd December	6.00 pm	Candlelit Carol Service (preceded by mulled wine and mince pies at 5.00 pm)
4th January	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Pantry
8th January	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
9th January	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
13th January	7.30 pm	Weston Society
17th January	7.00 – 8.30 pm	Winter Warmer/Wassail Drinks and Canapes



**WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN
VILLAGE PANTRY & POST OFFICE**

CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

Christmas Eve: 9.00 am–2.30 pm

Christmas Day: Closed

Boxing Day: Closed

27th December: 9.00 am–4.00 pm

28th December: 9.00 am–12.30 pm

29th December (shop only): 9.00 am–11.30 am

30th/31st December: 9.00 am–4.00 pm

1st January 2025: Closed.



FRIENDS' PRODUCE

FRIENDS' PRODUCE: As ever huge thank you to Mick, Corrinne and Toddy to keep this initiative going in aid of St Mary's Church and the Village Hall. The amount raised since the last edition of the news is £265.68.

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas & a peaceful New Year

Thinking about letting your property?

Get in touch with your local experienced agent.

We recently let this beautiful 4-bedroom detached property in Weston-on-the-Green on a long-term basis, to a family relocating to the area.

With our detailed local knowledge and physical presence in Woodstock, our dedicated team is here to help you find a reliable tenant for your rental property.



woodstock@finderskeepers.co.uk

Get in touch:



01993 848090

Working alongside:



16 Oxford St, Woodstock



WESTON MANOR HOTEL

Christmas

MARKET

SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER

FREE ENTRY

12.30PM-4.30PM

Find Gifts, Goodies, and Mulled Wine!

NORTHAMPTON ROAD, WESTON ON THE GREEN



WESTON MANOR HOTEL

JOIN US FOR A

NEW YEAR'S EVE

BLACK & WHITE GALA EVENT

31 DECEMBER 2024 | 7.30 PM - 1.00AM

FIZZ / DINNER / DISCO / CELEBRATION

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ACCOMMODATION FROM £170.00 B&B

CONTACT US: 01869 350621
EMAIL: EVENTS@THEWESTONMANOR.COM

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WEBSITE @

WWW.THEMANORWESTON.COM