



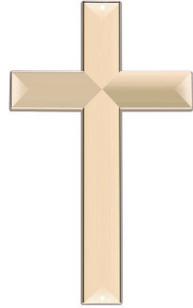
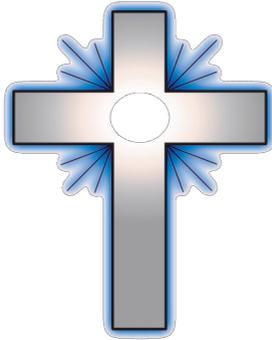
St Mary's Church Wargrave

With Knowl Hill

Our vision is to be a church
at the heart of our community

Parish Magazine

March 2021



Make a Cross for Holy Week... details on Page 5



St Peter's Church Knowl Hill
With St Paul's Warren Row

News Page 26

75p

Who's Who: Parish Directory

Vicar	The Revd. John Cook	johnrmcook@btconnect.com	0118 940 2202
Curate	The Revd. Steve Turville	Stephen.turville@ntlworld.com	0118 901 6720
Lay Minister	Andy Ferguson	andyferguson1@btinternet.com	0118 940 2925
PCC Secretary	Sheila Williams	sheilamarywilliams1952@gmail.com	0118 940 3587
PCC Treasurer	Jane Wills	paulandjanewills@btinternet.com	0118 940 2030

~

Parish Office

Address	St. Mary's Church, Station Road, Wargrave, Berkshire, RG10 8EU		
Administration	Lucy Bowley	lucy@wargravechurch.org.uk	0118 940 2300
Communication	Rosalyn Lane Heath	rosalyn@wargravechurch.org.uk	0118 940 2300
St Mary's Wargrave Churchwardens	Ian Matthews	matthic@talk21.com	0118 940 2049
	Peter Mayes	petermayes51@gmail.com	0118 940 2497
Director of Music	Peter Dart	peter@familydart.com	0118 940 1068
St Peter's Knowl Hill Churchwarden	Sandra Baker	sbakerdalc@hotmail.co.uk	01628 822402

What's On

Ladies Breakfast



Join us on Saturday 6th March at 9.30am for our next Ladies' Breakfast where we will be reflecting on 'The Journey'.

The journey Jesus took during his life on earth and our own journeys, especially during this unusual past year.

Contact Linda Caradine: lindacaradine9@gmail.com

Real Easter Egg

Mike Buckland will be selling the Real Easter Egg in March. The manufacturers have said that they won't be in the supermarkets this year, but they will be available via Traidcraft. If you let him know how many you would like, he will deliver them to your door if you wish.

Contact: mikebuckland54@gmail.com



Articles of up to 400 words are most welcome for publication in this Magazine and should be sent to the Editor: bobausten@wargravechurch.org.uk

The decision to publish material is at the Editor's discretion.

Views expressed in articles included in the Magazine are not necessarily shared by the Editor.

The Parish Magazine cannot accept responsibility for any products or services advertised in this Magazine.

Holy Week & Easter 2021

FROM LENT....



Maundy Thursday 1st April

Last year's service from Wargrave, led by Hugh Barne, will be reposted on YouTube: St Mary's Wargrave and available all day. There are also many other online services available including a service broadcast by the Oxford Diocese: a link can be found on the Diocese of Oxford website.

Good Friday 2nd April Walk of Witness... with a difference

Instead of walking around the village as a church we invite you to walk with your bubble to Mill Green for 11.00am and share music and readings for Good Friday. Bring your own chair or rug if you want.

For those who cannot join us for any reason, last year's Walk of Witness, led by Andy Ferguson, will be reposted on YouTube: St Mary's Wargrave from 8.00am.

Easter Sunday 4th April

St Mary's Wargrave

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Holy Communion with music from St Mary's Music Group

**It is essential to register for these services as spaces are limited.
www.wargravechurch.org.uk or call the Parish Office 0118 940 2300.**

St Peter's Knowl Hill

10.30am Holy Communion

TO EASTER....



Services Update

Although it has been permitted to hold church services during the current lockdown, more than half of the churches in the Church of England, including Wargrave and Knowl Hill, took the decision to move their services online.

Now that the rates of infection, hospitalisation and deaths are falling it has been decided to recommence physical services while continuing online services.

In March at St Mary's services will be held on:

Sunday 21st March: 10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th March: 10.30am Morning Worship for Palm Sunday

Space is limited so it is essential to register in advance for these services... go to www.wargravechurch.org.uk.

Every Sunday in March there will be an online service broadcast at 10.30am on YouTube: St Mary's Wargrave, followed by Coffee on Zoom - connect through the church website Weekly Notice Sheet.

Sunday Club @4

Continues on Sunday afternoons at 4pm on Zoom. And what better way to spend half an hour at the weekend: playing games, watching a drama sketch, singing and learning about Jesus!

If you are at primary school, Y1 to Y6, we'd love you to join us. Or perhaps you're reading this and have friends or neighbours who you could encourage to come along? If so, please get in touch with Camilla at camillacook@btconnect.com or Hugh at hughbarne@googlemail.com. We'd love to see you there!

Open Church

The church is open on Wednesdays and Sundays between 10am and 4pm.

All physical services are subject to continued improvements in the pandemic data.

Monthly Prayer Meeting

Thursday 11th March 8pm on Zoom.

Follow the link on the church website.

Butterflies

For those who haven't heard of Butterflies, it's our St Mary's mums and toddlers group... but with a difference.

If you are a new mother, or new to the parish, we would love to hear from you and to link you up with others! Or if you are aware of someone in your street or close neighbourhood who fits this category, please do point them in our direction.

Look out for further information on our Butterflies Wargrave Facebook page or do get in touch through the church office on office@wargravechurch.org.uk or with Camilla on camillacook@btconnect.com

**The Parish Office is operating restricted hours during Covid restrictions.
OPEN Wednesday and Thursday 10.00am - 1.00pm
Answerphone at other times**

Make a † Statement for 2021

Palm Sunday is 28th March and we are inviting everyone in Wargrave to consider displaying a cross from that day until Easter Day. We know, from our Advent windows, that there are a lot of creative people in our village.

Already people have come up with a range of suggestions from simply putting a palm cross in the window to building a crucifixion scene in the garden.

Get your children involved; get your parents and grandparents involved - a painting, a collage, a knitted cross, a wooden cross, a playdoh cross, a giant hot cross bun, a life size cross, a cross from flowers... you may have ideas of your own.



Let's make a
statement in 2021



24th February-24th March
Wednesday Evenings 8.00pm-9.15pm

By the time you read this, our five week Online Lent course will have just started, but you can join us at any time. To register, go to the church web site (www.wargravechurch.org.uk/) scroll down to 'Caring for Creation', then click 'More'.

The human race is facing its greatest challenge: global warming leading to climate change. This means that we all need to make radical changes to our whole way of life. Each week we shall look at God's wonderful creation, planet earth, and why it is under threat. We will settle down with a song on video, listen to thoughts from a panel of expert speakers and then discuss our response in breakout groups. The weekly topics are:

Wednesday 24th February: The Environment. Focusing on God's creation, planet earth, the place of humankind in it, and why it is under threat.

Wednesday 3rd March: Global Warming & Climate Change. Some facts and figures about climate change, and why faith in a Creator God should give us hope.

Wednesday 10th March: The Age of Humans. The Anthropocene Era: How we human beings can undo some of the terrible damage we have done and are doing to our planet.

Wednesday 17th March: Coming out of Denial & Facing Crisis. Many of us find it hard to face up to the reality of climate change, and make the necessary changes to our lifestyle. We need to understand why this is so, and how our faith can help us.

Wednesday 24th March: Faith, Hope & Love. We urgently need to be clear about our Christian response to the present crisis: it challenges what we believe; it is also about how we can live in hope and meet the demands of Christian love.

There is a Course Booklet to help us get the most out of the course. It is available in print at £3.80 and in digital format at £3.10. If you would like a booklet, contact Mike Buckland on 0118 9404960. If you prefer the digital format, go to: https://www.yorkcourses.co.uk/product/caring-for-creation-course-booklet/?attribute_pa_digital-non-digital=printed-version.

An Easter Tradition

Easter has its share of traditions: egg decoration and hunts; gift baskets and chocolate bunnies, simnel cake, hot cross buns, sunrise church services, bonnets, parades, and of course, the Easter Lily. Recently, with the church closure there has been no call upon the church flower arrangers and traditionally for the forty days of Lent, open or closed, there would be no flowers in the church. This Easter the team plan to display a profusion of flowers that can lift the spirits and serve as a reminder that through Christ there is life after death, just as the dreary winter gives way to the new life of spring. There is one particular flower that is used as a symbol of the Easter celebration - the lily. This flower also has particular significance in Christianity but there are many different tributes.

- The pure white of the lily symbolises chastity, innocence, purity and piety as well as hope and life. They have been called “the white-robed apostles of hope”.
- When Eve shed tears of remorse as she and Adam left the Garden of Eden, white lilies grew up where her tears fell.
- In early Christian art the white lily is associated with the Virgin Mary, typically depicted in a vase or held by archangel Gabriel in Annunciation paintings, or being offered to Mary at Jesus’ birth.
- White lilies sprang from the ground where Christ’s tears fell in the garden of Gethsemane.
- The blood/sweat/tears of Jesus, as it fell from the cross, was by a miracle transformed into snow-white flowers which filled heaven and earth.
- The bulb of the lily, buried in the ground, has been likened to the tomb of Jesus with the glorious white trumpet-like fragrant flowers springing from the bulb symbolising the resurrection and His life after death.

Easter Lily - Donations

At St Mary’s, we use lilies as a tribute to loved ones who have passed away so we invite the congregation to purchase a lily as a mark of remembrance and hope. As usual, a list of all those being remembered will be displayed. As Easter draws closer, please put your “donations for lilies” in an envelope in the post box at the lych gate adding your loved ones’ names.



Anglican Church of Paphos

The Chaplain from the Anglican Church of Paphos in Cyprus, the Rev'd Andrew Burt, wrote this in his weekly letter of 19th February.

The Liturgical year rolls on and Lent 2021 has begun with Ash Wednesday being marked two days ago. Ash Wednesday, in part, reminds us of what our culture largely denies, that our days are limited and that we have made a mess of things. We are not ageless - indeed, to remember death has always been good pastoral advice given by the church. St Benedict, for instance, advised his monks to 'see death before one, daily.'



In the fifteenth century - in Europe, in the face of the Black Death and the Hundred Years' War, much literature was written on 'the art of dying'. Manuals advised readers how to die well and clergy on how to help them do that. They were famous for their woodcuts - one version even ran through 100 editions.



Some contemporary writers have begun to pick up this theme. One writer, an American surgeon, Atul Gawande, writes that 'to acknowledge your mortality is a tremendous gift. It reorders your desires. It narrows your focus, and gives you a new perspective that's rooted in reality instead of vain hope for a medical miracle.' (From: *Being Mortal: Medicine and what matters in the end.*)

Gawande observes, what we perhaps already know, that elderly people often shift their priorities to being rather than doing, to giving rather than getting, to friendships rather than accomplishments, to family rather than to work. But, you might ask what accounts for this shift?

According to the Stanford psychologist Laura Carstensen, (see opposite) contrary to what we might think, it has nothing to do with how old you are. Rather, it has everything to do with what perspective you have - whether young or old - the wisest people understand that life is fragile and time is limited. She's conducted many experiments that support this conclusion. In other words, a healthy sense of mortality, no matter what your age, reorders your life in a positive way.



Carstensen knew something of this early in her life for at the age of twenty-one, an extended stay in hospital changed her perspective on life and led her to research on aging.

So, I hope that as a Christian you might claim, we 'remember death' in order to affirm life. Meditating on mortality helps us to live more fully in the present moment. So, Lent can be seen as a positive exercise and Christians are the ultimate optimists.

Well, I hope that's how you see it. After all, Lent can remind each of us that we don't need to be stuck in old ways of thinking and acting. I can clean my glasses, I can hit the reset button. I don't need to wait for old age to magically impart a new perspective on what matters and why.

Thank you to Dan Clendenin for these thoughts taken from his 'Journey with Jesus, weekly webzine for the Global Church'. If you want to see the article from which they were taken, visit <https://www.journeywithjesus.net/Essays/20150216JJ.shtml>

Health Matters by Andy Ferguson

The article opposite may remind us how important our health is and as a Chaplain at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and chairman of the local surgery Patient Participation Group, it is obvious to me that:

- There are things we can do to help ourselves regarding health
- Locally we have an excellent health service



The Patient Participation Group in conjunction with the Wargrave Surgery is now running a seminar series on Good Health. In January Dr Jen Singh and personal trainer Lisa Sayers gave a very informative presentation on 'How to look after your gut' with lots of practical tips and ideas. This was followed later in the month with a Question Time seminar to Dr Jim Kennedy on the coronavirus. Dr Jim heads up the Covid-19 vaccination programme for our area (Wargrave, Twyford and Woodley) and could be described as our local expert!

On Wednesday 10th March at 7.00pm our own Dr Mark Puddy will be making a presentation with Head Nurse, Sharon Tanner, billed as 'Diabetes for Non-Diabetics', tips on how to avoid this illness and measures you can take to check for symptoms.

Currently all of these seminars are on Zoom and free of charge. To register for the seminar please email healthseminars@pursuitnha.com and submit any specific questions you have at the time of registering.

On the subject of the Covid Vaccination Programme, Wargrave is ahead of the game. Today, 20th February, over 90% of patients aged 70+ have received their first jab and 50% of patients aged 65 or having underlying health issues have been vaccinated. This programme has involved many volunteers - for each 3 hour session 10 are needed for car parking, administration and patient safety. Volunteers from St Mary's Church have been Steve Witney, Ruth Mary and Nick Vaughan, Chris and Helen Perry, Margaret Hall, Angie and Mike Buckland, Janet Ferguson, Pennie Withers and Jane Batting. Thank You!

The RBH has also managed the pandemic well. The supplies of PPE have been constant: referrals to other hospitals have been minimal: ambulances have avoided the extreme waiting times experienced at other hospitals. By using a combination of satellite operations, such as Townlands Hospital in Henley, which is part of the RBH, and private hospitals, such as the Dunedin Hospital in Reading, they have been able to continue with surgery and procedures in most disciplines.

The level of care throughout this has been exceptional, but the number of hospitalisations remains high. In September the hospital was Covid-free. Normally the hospital has 19 ICU beds. This capacity has been more than doubled with the majority of beds currently occupied. The age range of people with Covid-19 needing to be admitted to ICU has reduced... a clear indication that the vaccination programme is having an effect and a warning to younger people, especially in their 50's and 60's to observe social distancing, hand washing and lockdown rules!

The heroic Captain Sir Tom Moore said: 'Tomorrow will be better'... it will.

February Ladies Breakfast

On Saturday 6th February, Ladies Breakfast met via zoom for our regular monthly meeting. Lesley Turville led us on the topic of recognising the importance of our contributions to God's Plans no matter how small we might think they are.

We started by looking at the image below.



Some of you will remember Where's Wally from your or your children's childhood. When we had finally located him (next to the second tent from the left) we reflected on the fact that sometimes we can feel like this; a little insignificant and lost amongst all the other bigger, better, more important Christians we know. However, Wally, is the most important person in this picture. Without him there would be no point to the picture at all. We decided this is how God views us. No matter how insignificant we feel, God can use us in ways which are vital to his overall big picture.

To illustrate this we started by looking at the story of how Billy Graham came to attend his first ever Christian rally and accept Christ into his life. We all recognise his name but how many of us remember Albert McMakin his friend who only managed to persuade him to attend by allowing him to drive his truck! We used this to share our own stories about people who had been instrumental in bringing us to faith.

We then looked at the importance of speaking out when prompted by the Spirit no matter how scared we might be of doing so or unsure of the impact of our words. We used the story of Naaman, which can be found in 2 Kings 5, to lead our discussions about the courage of the young Jewish servant who told Naaman's wife about the prophet she knew who could cure Naaman of his leprosy. Her name is not known but the impact of her words was profound and is recorded forever in the Bible and Jewish history.

The next story we looked at was again from 2 Kings but this time chapter 4, the story of Elisha and the Shunammite woman which illustrates how a simple act of hospitality can begin a series of events that become life giving and changing.

Finally, we talked about the importance of prayer especially at a time like this when we can't meet with each other. This was illustrated by the story of the Hebrides Revival in 1949 which started with two ladies, aged 84 and 82, praying earnestly for their own parish.

We left feeling encouraged that no words, actions or prayers are ever too small, and all can be used for God's purposes.

News from the PCC by Sheila Williams

At the Zoom meeting held on 25th January 2021, a new format agenda was used. This included a breakout session where small groups were given time to discuss a particular topic and then feed back to the full meeting. For the January PCC meeting the topic was Mission to Young People in the Parish, and members of the PCC were able to discuss successes over the past years and future plans for this important group whose lives and connections with the Church have been so disrupted over the past year.

At the formal part of the meeting, approval was given for the 2020 Accounts to be passed to the Auditor, and a Budget for 2021 was received.

The revised Health and Safety Policy was ratified, and the Action Plan for Promoting a Safer Church was reviewed.

Sandra Baker, the Churchwarden for Knowl Hill, presented the plans for work to be undertaken at St Peter's, the likely cost of the project and her proposals for obtaining the necessary funding.

The PCC were updated on the furloughing of Hugh Barne and staff in the Parish Office; and the successful recruitment of a new Curate, Richard Eves, who would be joining the ministry team at the beginning of the Summer.

Finally the PCC passed a resolution for the closure of the Church during the current COVID crisis. This was sent to the Bishop for her authorisation in compliance with Canon Law.



Ken Wiltshire

Ken Wiltshire, a much loved former Director of Yeldall, will be known to a number of people in our church, passed away on 15th January.

The link to his memorial page is:
<https://kennethwiltshire.muchloved.com/>

He was a remarkable man.



Simple Tips on How to Live Lightly on God's Earth By Mike Buckland

This year, as in 2017, we mark Lent with a course on Creation Care. Since then, the Church of England and local councils have declared a climate emergency, with targets on everyone to reach net zero carbon by 2030. This will be the focus of the next UN Climate Change Conference, which the UK is due to host from 1st to 12th November in Glasgow, with a Reading MP as President. Life on earth depends on reducing of atmospheric carbon and the preserving biodiversity.

For Christians, there is a biblical mandate: God appointed humanity to be stewards of His earth and loves the world so much that He sent Christ to redeem it, at a terrible cost.

So how do we go about this in our daily lives? We all have ideas, but we could share them a lot more. To help that along, in this issue we have gathered a series of simple tips from church members on how to live lightly. Let's start with shopping.

- Get into the habit of taking a reusable mug with your wallet; use it at coffee shops instead of a takeaway one.
- Keep paper bags in your shopping bag; use them for fruit and veg; buy them loose and in season.
- Only buy what you need and consume what you buy; compost peelings, tea leaves etc; God does not do waste, and nor should we.
- Avoid tea bags that contain plastic; the packaging will say if they don't; better still, buy loose tea.
- Use your LOAF: buy local, organic, animal friendly and Fairtrade.
- Many products from cosmetics to biscuits contain palm oil. Try to buy products with packaging from a sustainable forest.
- Support zero waste shops such as the Willow Basket in Henley and True Food Co -Op in Emmer Green; most towns and cities have them now.
- Avoid single-use plastic – it's up to consumers to make it happen, and it's getting easier; even soap, shampoo and detergents can be bought loose.
- Recycle plastic carrier bags and batteries at larger supermarkets.
- Recycle medicinal blister packs at Fields Pharmacy in Ruscombe.
- Recycle crisp packets, confectionery wrappers, bread bags, cleaning packaging, toothbrushes, toothbrushes, pens and Tippex bottles at Terracycle points such as Sheplands Farm Shop, Bingham's Brewery and Haa Hoos in Twyford. Sheplands has a collection point for crisps, popcorn and nuts packaging. Volunteers empty the boxes, so please help them by folding bags and wrappers flat inside a big one. (Pandemic rules may cause some points to be closed at times.)



Wargrave From Your Armchair Quiz

1. What is the name of the type of gate which leads into St Mary's Churchyard?
2. In which county is the Wargrave & Shiplake Regatta held?
3. After what is Fidlers Walk named?
4. Also known as the Summer Snowdrop, what type of flower is named after the River Loddon?
5. By what name was Wargrave originally known?
6. What is the shape of the wooded garden in front of Hillands?
7. At which Manor did Cliff Richard give a fundraising performance?
8. Often confused with a house sparrow, what small brown bird has given its name to a local road?
9. Where should deliveries to Wargrave Manor be made?
10. After the Tag Lane turn, Blakes Road becomes Blakes what?
11. What is the local name for a buttercup?
12. A batsman may dig in on the cricket ground, but what might he dig in to the West?
13. What stream does Willow Lane cross?
14. What animal features at Holly Cross crossroads?
15. Now to finish –
If you take the first letter of each answer, you have an anagram of a local landmark.



The Answer to February's Add It Up Family Treasure Hunt was 263

The winners who will receive a prize are:

Janet Ferguson with Etta Arpino

Closed Church Buildings

It's almost a year since the UK went into its first lockdown. We asked a sample of our congregation to respond to three questions. Here are some of their responses.

(a) What have you missed most about church life during lock-down?

- Concern for those that one is not meeting and therefore not knowing how they are.
- Fellowship normally enjoyed when planning and attending events.
- The Tuesday Welcome Cafe missing friends and the older members.
- Bob's rambles and other gatherings.
- The physical attendance at church, being in the building, singing together and receiving Communion.
- Friendly faces, casual chats, wise words, kind words, the occasional hug.
- Not needing to dress up to go to church making it less special.
- Not meeting together for prayers and house groups.
- The stillness and peace when entering God's House, attending regularly, caring for and cleaning the church.
- Sharing the Peace before Communion.
- Sunday morning bell ringing- seeing everyone in the tower and the "keep fit" arm stretching from ringing bells up and down at the start and end.



(b) What have you most enjoyed about online worship/virtual church?

- Although we are all scattered in our own homes, we are still joined together through the online service and the Zoom coffee meetings afterwards allowing for face time and simple chat.
- Worship is brought into the home thus enabling those who do not go to church to listen in to the services thus nurturing any mustard-seed of faith.
- Exploring worship at a number of churches via Oxford.anglican.org/livestream, hearing different voices, without leaving home.
- I can be late for church and not miss a word of the service.
- The worship songs, their bigger variety and with fewer distractions ability to concentrate on the sermon.
- Having our telephone house group every week making Wednesday evening a night to look forward to.
- The range of songs, videos etc. used that enliven and change the presentation from week to week e.g. persecuted church videos, images to go with songs, new songs, hearing a range of styles and presentations.
- Have really appreciated the time spent by the clergy and numerous others in making the church videos. Also, seeing a range of readers and intercessors makes it feel like 'church'.

(b) What have you most enjoyed about online worship/virtual church? (CONT)

- The creativity of approach at special times, walk of witness last Easter, 'Follow the Star' planning, holiday club, Christmas Nativity, etc and being able to watch these at my convenience.
- Discovering that the music group can produce music remotely and in the process becoming more aware, through recording oneself, of aspects of singing technique that need some improvement.
- A rest from coffee making and other church duties.
- I have regularly 'attended' worship at Canterbury Cathedral and found that a great encouragement and blessing.

(c) What effect might church closure have had on our church?

- The building is closed and we might be missing the beauty of the colourful stained glass windows, the shining lectern and the sound of the organ but the church has remained active and is sustaining us with Zoom groups, telephone calls, emails, the parish magazine and Grapevine.
- Virtual church is a new way of connecting with people and enables us to reach people who otherwise would not come to church.
- During this pandemic many people are thinking more about spiritual matters, turning to prayer, looking for God, and virtual church helps to meet this need.
- Our church services are available any day of the week offering the opportunity for those who did not come to physical services because of work or family commitments to join in with us.
- There has been a growth in community spirit and this is reflected in the church community.
- The facility to tune in from home has enabled us to connect again with people who have moved away from Wargrave.
- There might be the desire to continue with online worship as it means people can tune in as and when they please which would mean a significant increase in work for clergy.
- Lots of weddings and memorial services to catch up on.
- There is some concern that over such a long period of non-attendance we may have lost people through inertia. On the other hand there may be an increase in church attendance once it is safe because people will be so pleased to be back, and maybe those who have visited us 'online' will come and see the 'real thing' when allowed.
- People may question why we do things the way we do, so there might be a call for change rather than just returning to the old norm
- Increased importance and understanding of health and safety issues.
- I think the youth groups are struggling and we are more likely to lose the younger generation who have not got into the routine of regular Sunday worship in church.
- The writer to the Hebrews advises them 'do not neglect to meet together and encourage each other'. Although Online Services have been an incredible blessing during lock-down, Church is meant to be 'gathered'. We are a family and maintaining that family bond is difficult unless we meet regularly. So I'm concerned that some people may have drifted away.



£18,000 raised for Berkshire churches in 2020

Although on a slightly reduced scale, and with many necessary restrictions in place, Ride and Stride took place as usual last September, and on a beautiful autumn day some 50 rider and striders set out to visit as many churches as they could to raise money for Berkshire churches – and we're delighted to say that in 2020 we raised almost £18,000. In a year when income took such a hit, this will be especially welcome. Between them, our participants visited 200 churches, old and new, large and small, and at many they not only signed the visitors' sheet, but were welcomed by a steward and able to pop in and see some of the treasures that are such a feature of so many of our church buildings.



Welcome poster at Wokingham Methodist Church

Ride and Stride is a great way to see other churches, and in most years, to meet the people who worship in and care for them. And it's a great way to raise money too. Half of anything raised goes to the church of your choice, the rest goes to the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust, who will use it support repair and restoration work anywhere in the county, as need arises. Why not join us in 2021?

Ride and Stride 2021 will take place on Saturday 11th September.

Earth Hour - Eco Note

We celebrate 'Earth Hour' on 27th March from 8.30pm to 9.30pm when we switch our lights off for one hour to show we care about the planet.

In a symbolic show of support we expect lights to go out again on many of the world's most famous landmarks.





Dear friends,

In the 19th century, ships were often recklessly overloaded with cargo. As a result, ships sank, and crews and cargoes were lost. Samuel Plimsoll (1824-1898), Liberal Member of Parliament for Derby and engineer as well as coal merchant, led the charge for legislation to create a maximum cargo line on the side of all ships.

We know that 'load Lines' were used from the 12th century but became known as the Plimsoll line and are to be seen today on ships' hulls around the world.

Sometimes, like those ships our lives can seem overloaded with fears, anxieties, and struggles. The combination of the multiple challenges of the last eleven months, and hoped for changes during 2021, mean many are at a low ebb. Many I have recently spoken to have a sense that they are 'going under'.

Wonderfully we have the offer of someone who will help us to carry the load. Jesus Christ promises that as we come to him, he will carry our burdens. We do not need to struggle on alone. The Apostle Peter reminds us, 'humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.' (1 Peter 5:6-7).

The pandemic and ensuing lockdowns have caused a weariness amongst many of us. How encouraging that there is one who knows our load limits! We are not alone.

Corrie ten Boom was a courageous Dutch Christian, and the first Dutch female watchmaker, who with her family hid their Jewish neighbours from the Nazis. Her father and sister both died in concentration camps. In February 1944 Corrie ended up in Ravensbruck concentration camp in Germany. Later in her life she commented that, "worry does not empty tomorrow; but it empties today of strength".

So how do we off load our worries, our anxieties? By trusting the Lord and bringing our concerns to the foot of the Cross. This alone enables us to live in day-tight compartments, to live one day at a time.

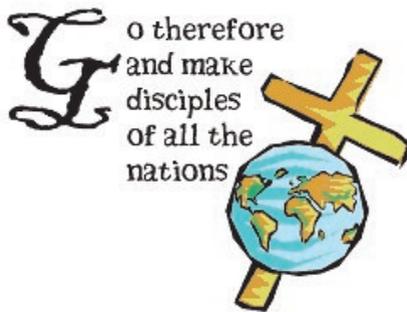
With my prayers,

John Cook

A Coronavirus Prayer

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and uplift all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



For our March feature we are focussing on the work of Mission and below is an insight into some of our mission partners here at St Mary's. We are called to serve wherever God places us, be that here or abroad, and we can see from this information how this is working out in practice.

LOCAL



Faith Christian Group is a Christian led charity based in Reading. The Charity has been involved in supporting those in need in Reading for over 20 years. They manage ReadiFood, Reading's Foodbank where they deliver emergency food parcels to the needy and vulnerable across Greater Reading, currently delivering on average 180 parcels a week.

ReadiStreet is their street outreach which, alongside St Mary's Church at The Butts, support those in need Tuesday-Friday and Sunday evening, serving hot drinks, sandwiches and offering support. B4N (A Bed for the Night) would without COVID be running a Churches Winter Night Shelter during January-March, which it has done for the past 6 years in Reading.



However for 2021 B4N is offering B4N-HUB, a day centre for those housed during the winter provision working alongside Reading Borough Council and St. Mungos. Clients can be fed a hot meal, pick up a snack pack and distraction pack and have support offered to them. Amanda Bayley is Assistant Director of FAITH. If you wish to support or donate to FAITH, please do call Amanda on 0793 684 5302, email amanda@fcg.org.uk or keep up to date on their website www.fcg.org.uk

Since 1977, Yeldall Manor, on the corner of Blakes Lane and Tag Lane, has been a home for men of all faiths and none who are recovering from addictions. It is based in 38 acres of Berkshire countryside and provides a therapeutic environment in which men can address deep-seated drug or alcohol addictions and the issues underlying them. Men who attend at Yeldall do so through bursaries and the programme takes them from recognising what has led to them becoming dependent through to grounding, growth, re-integration and after care. It literally saves lives and provides people with hope, self-worth and is grounded in the Christian faith. As well as expert counselling, the residents receive Christian teaching, and many come to Christ during their stay. Not every resident completes the course, and some relapse, but overall, Yeldall has built a track record of rehabilitating men into society that is recognised nationally as one of the best in the country. Residents start in the main house, before progressing in Phase 3 to a smaller house on the estate called the Lodge. Phase 4 involves living in local rented accommodation as the next step to full integration into society. This is particularly challenging under lockdown. At the time of writing this, there were 18 men in the main house, with more due in February, and 7 in the Lodge. The maximum residency is currently around 35, as shared rooms are no longer allowed under the pandemic rules.



Events planned for 2021 include the monthly prayer meeting for supporters on the first Monday of each month, their annual fundraiser the "Ride for Recovery" - you can take part by cycling, running or walking a distance of your choosing between 5th and 12th June - and their July Open Day, which we hope and pray will not have to take place entirely online, as it did last year. We also organise Christmas gifts for the residents every December.

Yeldall is currently mourning the death of former director Ken Wiltshire, whose funeral took place on Tuesday 2nd February. He spoke at St Mary's several times and was known to many of us; we send our love and prayers to his family and loved ones. For more information, visit www.yeldall.org.uk



London City Mission exists to serve the Church in London in sharing the love of God and the good news of Jesus Christ with the least reached communities in London. We estimate that one in three Londoners are unlikely to hear the gospel in their lifetime. These are the people who are unlikely to have a Christian friend to invite them to church, or introduce them to the hope they can find in Jesus Christ. They are people who may be homeless, people from other faith backgrounds and people living on some of London's most deprived estates, including older people as well as children and youth.

London City Mission works alongside the churches of London to share the gospel with those least likely to hear it.

Previously we have supported the wives of staff at LCM and they have been able to retreat to Wargrave Court for a short while and re-charge their batteries in a more peaceful environment. For more information on this organisation, visit www.lcm.org.uk.

WORLD-WIDE



Tearfund has long been an organisation supported by our parish for over 30 years and has been the main component of our global mission giving. For 25 of those years, we raised money from Brass on the Grass at Wargrave Court. This was part of the Wargrave

Festival and attracted hundreds of people for an evening picnic to a background of easy listening in David and Verna Houghton's beautiful garden. Since the Houghtons sadly passed on two years ago, we have taken part in Tearfund's Big Quiz Night, which takes place every November. We held it in St Mary's Church Centre in 2019, and last year online, raising £680.

Nationally, the quiz raised an amazing £230,350. Even for us, going online brought the quiz to a wider audience than the Church Centre could accommodate, with family members and friends separated from each by the pandemic able to compete in the same team. Do join the next one!



Tearfund's overriding aim is to "follow Jesus to where the needs are greatest", by supporting some of the world's poorest people through church-based partners around the world, in agriculture, the provision of clean water and safe toilets, pandemic response programmes, the reduction of plastic waste, and education. Because the partners are church based, the money gets to where it is needed, without middle men. For more information, visit www.tearfund.org



Eco Church is an important part of Christian mission as it is the care of our environment. The Bible says the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it (Psalm

24:1). We say this is mission because when the world looks at the Church, it needs to see a people that cares, not only for the natural world of which we are part, and which God has entrusted to our care, but also for the poor, who cannot be rescued from poverty if we continue to pollute and heat the world, for the poorest are the worst affected. We do this too for the sake of our children and grandchildren, who will grow up in the world we leave them, and of every species, for all life is interconnected and, the Bible says, are precious to God.

In 2018, we registered with Eco Church to help us measure our progress. Over 2,000 churches in the UK have done so. The scheme aims to engage 4,000 (10%) of the UK's churches by 2030. Its core component is a questionnaire which covers every area of church life, including mission. When we have answered every question, we can submit for an award. We just have our carbon footprint to calculate.

Eco Church (CONT)

Aspects of the questionnaire which impact our mission in the community and across the world include the celebration of CreationTide in our autumn Sunday services, our Lent courses in 2017 and 2021, schools work, assistance with conservation work at the Chalk Pit and Mumbery Hill, the encouragement of biodiversity on church land, our Memorial Garden, church rambles, support of Tearfund, Toilet Twinning (in 2020, we twinned the toilets in St Mary's Church Centre with latrines in Africa and Afghanistan), reduced use of paper and plastic, recycling, green electricity and gas, better use of lighting and last September's energy audit at St Mary's and St Peter's.

The Eco Church scheme is managed by A Rocha, a Christian conservation agency with missions in the UK and all around the world, in partnership with Tearfund, Christian Aid, the Church of England, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church and the Allchurches Trust. For more information, visit ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

As well as supporting established organisations, we also have 'our own grown missionaries'

'Terry' (an alias name due to the sensitivity of his work) served in Central Asia for five years. He taught English at a private language centre to local schoolchildren, students and young professionals, as well as leading English conversation classes.

Outside of this he spent time with local guys and shared the Good News through friendships with them, while also working with the local church in different ways. In his last 2-3 years there, he was also the team leader and filled the field personnel role.

He has just finished his new training at the School of Language and Scripture at Moorlands College. This spring he plans to go back to Asia to work as a linguist in language development of minority languages, and support translation projects.



For more information on his ministry, or if you would like to support 'Terry', please email suewitney8@gmail.com and your details will be passed on to him.

Feature: Mission Partners

Nicky, Len and Jedidiah

Nicky grew up in Wargrave and now along with her husband and new baby son, Jedidiah, are currently working as missionaries in Australia although they are exploring the possibility of moving to Japan at the end of this year.

It has been particularly hard during the covid crisis for both families not being able to see their new grandson and also receive the support from families but they are finding that technology is a great support and help in this time.

Nicky and Len are working with YWAM (Youth with a Mission) and have been for 9 years, sharing the Gospel and reaching out to young people around them and whoever they come into contact with. One exciting new ministry which has just been started is something called JC Action Sports, a sports evangelism ministry in Australia. They set up and performed BMX tricks before sharing about teamwork, unity and Jesus.



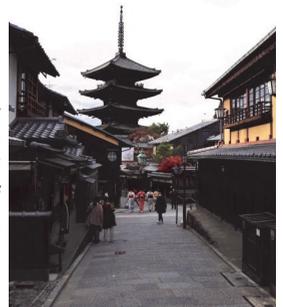
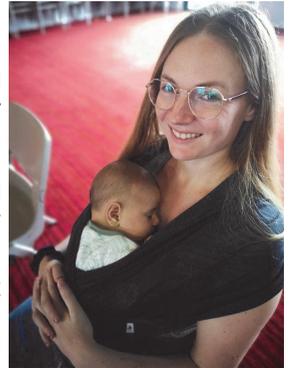
At the end of their tour they put on a big skate competition where they were able to share the gospel with all the young people and families that attended.

Besides these 2 ministries, staff serve in many ways around the community from kids clubs, youth groups and helping with Religious Education in the schools through to lawn mowing and food distribution. They have had an amazing time investing in their local area as well as building connections.

Nicky and Len are currently in the process of handing over their roles to a couple who are going to oversee the Discipleship Training School (DTS) and they are busy ensuring all necessary areas and tasks are covered. They have also just been able to run their first DTS since Covid restrictions came into being with 11 students which has been really exciting for them.

Covid permitting, they are currently aiming to make the move to Japan at the end of this year/early next year.

They are continuing in prayer for what life will look like once they arrive and where they will settle. They ask for prayer as they seek God for direction and details, as well as for their planning and preparations going forward. If you would like to support them in this work, please contact <http://www.paypal.me/NickyandLen>. This link is for one off payments and regular payments can be made through the church, marked Nicky and Len.



The Parish Magazine...

...has now been edited by Bob Austen for eight years and as a result of a truly wide team effort, the production has become a sleek operation.

The idea is to deliver the magazine before the 1st of the month but the process kicks off with an editorial meeting a month earlier. This is how the March magazine was created:

Friday 29th January... Zoom meeting to discuss content for March magazine and think about April 'Feature'. Chris Wood, Hugh Barne, Jim Hadden, Michael Carver and Andy Ferguson Zoomed with Bob having had ideas from Christine Walker and apologies from Sandra Baker. A list of around 25 items were suggested with contributors and a chaser, e.g. a Ladies Breakfast article needed to be submitted by Linda Caradine and Bob would chase her for the text.

We also talked about advertisers for 2021 - we still could do with another 2 full pages to produce a 40 page magazine. The financial contribution that the magazine makes to the parish, around £2,000, is as a result of the generosity of advertisers. Jim and Bob were tasked to look for new customers!

Monday 1st February... Jim follows up invoices sent to 2021 advertisers.

Friday 19th February... Bob has badgered everyone to get their contributions.

Saturday 20th February... Andy works out what will go where and looks to pull articles together - topping and tailing where necessary. Having done this for so long he knows roughly how much space each article requires and can complete the process in under 2 hours. There's never the right level of contribution - either too much (there were an additional 6 pages available in February) or too little, in which case he has some resources as fillers.

Monday 22nd February... Lisa, Andy's PA, typesets the magazine. Where there are gaps she is very creative at finding, expanding or shrinking images to fill a page. Within six hours it's all done and sent to Bob and Chris Wood to proof read, within a 36 hour period.

Wednesday 24th February... The magazine is sent digitally to Higgs the printers in Henley.

Friday 26th February... The magazine is delivered back to St Mary's Church and broken into 34 distribution rounds and dropped off to them by Julia Freeman and postal copies left for Ros to dispatch from the Parish Office.

Saturday 27th February... or as soon as the distributor is able, you receive your Parish Magazine.

This means that at least 45 people are involved in this endeavor, and that's excluding the contributors, and possibly we have omitted somebody!

We always welcome volunteers, so if you would like to get involved contact Bob Austen on bobausten@wargravechurch.org.uk

Archive copies of the magazine are stored in the Berkshire Records Office in Reading who are proud to hold a complete run of the magazine that was first produced in April 1861.

Helen and Jan Vonka



Helen and Jan have lived in Wargrave for almost fifteen years having moved into the village from Knowl Hill, where they had lived next door but one to St Peters for the previous five years. Both Hannah and Dominic were born whilst they lived in Knowl Hill and were baptised at St Peters by the Rev. Pam; Dominic with water from the River Jordan which the Rev. Pam had brought back from a recent trip (before the days of no liquid in your hand luggage!) which all the family thought was very special.

Jan was born in the former Czechoslovakia but his parents fled across Europe to England with just a car full of belongings including a one and a half year old

baby Jan when the Soviet tanks rolled into Prague in 1968. They based themselves near relatives in Essex and so Jan grew up in Harlow. Helen had been brought up in South London; Croydon and then Kingston but with a couple of years in between living in a village by the sea just outside Plymouth which she remembers fondly. She spent many afternoons at the beach after school and really would like to live by the sea again one day! They were both brought up in Christian families, Helen as a Methodist and Jan in a Catholic family.

Having originally studied Geography at Exeter University, because the beach was close by, and then Helen worked for a couple of years at the National Rivers Authority (precursor to the Environment Agency). She then studied for an MSc in Engineering Hydrology at Imperial College where she met Jan through the hot air balloon society. Jan had graduated from Imperial with a MSc in Software Engineering a few years earlier and was working for Oracle but often returned to fly students in the college balloon at weekends.

Jan has continued flying and they both love to take friends out with them in their balloon in the Berkshire countryside when the weather is favourable.

Back in 1995 they decided to leave their UK jobs and travel around the world for 6 months, heading down to New Zealand via New York and then travelling back around the Pacific Ring of Fire through Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Hawaii and finally to California. There they stayed with Helen's cousins and both found jobs in the Bay Area; Jan with Oracle and Helen with an environmental consultancy. Having come back home for their wedding they then headed back to their jobs in the US where they lived for about 5 years enjoying the Californian lifestyle but with very little holiday time!

Helen and Jan Vonka (CONT)

Their eldest son, Thomas was born in Mountain View, very close to the home of Google. By the time Thomas was one, Helen, in particular really missed British life and they decided that they wanted to raise their children in the UK and so they moved back and have lived in this area since then.



In addition to helping within the Wargrave Scout Group and the Wargrave Wolves football team, Helen and Jan have also been active members of St. Mary's since moving to Wargrave. Helen and the children were original members of St Mary's Butterflies group and Helen continued to help with the group for a number of years before she returned to work. Helen has recently taken on the job of Electoral

Roll Officer for the church. Thomas joined John Drake's original Tuesday Group when they were a group of just 4 boys. When they were old enough Hannah and then Dominic joined what has become over the years, a highly rewarding Christian teenage group. They have all enjoyed the Sparkford holiday camps, which several members of the Tuesday Group have attended together. Thomas is currently on a placement year at Deloittes in Reading (aka online from his bedroom) which is his third year of his Accountancy & Finance degree at Lancaster University. Hannah has just begun studying Theology & Religion at Exeter University (the beach attracted her too), and Dominic is in Year 11 at Ranelagh studying for his GCSE's this year.

Update on Sunday Club @4



Sunday Club @4 is now up and running! We've been immersed in 'Meals with Jesus': discovering the amazing range of people that Jesus encountered and how much they need him. We've learned that Jesus came for the sick and not the healthy and that we are all sinners and need his forgiveness. We've also seen how wonderful it is to follow him and what it looks like to obey him. Life is so much better with Jesus!

Each week we meet on Zoom. The sessions start with games (incredible how much fun you can have interacting with each other on screen!), followed by a drama sketch, singing, a Bible teaching slot and often a craft to do at home. At the end we split into two

breakout groups for chat and an opportunity to discuss what we've learned from the Bible that day.

If you'd like to join us, we'd love to see you there. You do need to be age 5-11 though. Please contact camillacook@btconnect.com for details.

If you're reading this and don't fit our age profile, then we'd love you to pray for us:

- Give thanks for those who have attended, for the fun we've had and all that we've learned about Jesus so far
- Pray that more would join us
- Pray that we keep Jesus and what it's looks like to follow him right at the centre of our sessions
- Pray that the IT will run smoothly (this has been a challenge in several of our sessions)

St Peter's Update by Sandra Baker

I received an interesting email yesterday which included a link to a YouTube video ref v=WVLmK4ReTKs about St. Peter's links to Jane Austen. Her nephew, James Edward Austen-Leigh, was the first vicar at Knowl Hill and sat on the board charged with building a church between Reading and Maidenhead. He wanted to build the church at Kiln Green which was nearest to Scarletts which he had inherited from his great aunt. However, he wasn't present at the meeting when the decision was made to build the church on land donated by Sir Clayton East. Before taking up his post he travelled to Scotland to research his aunt's work in the library at the home of the late Sir Walter Scott, a great admirer of Jane Austen.

In 1840 the brickworks was expanding and the population growing creating a need for a school which James built and presented to the parish in 1847. He engaged a curate paid out of his own income who was also a doctor. The next curate was Simon Sturgess and it was for him that James built The Grange on Knowl Hill Common. The gallery was added later and was where his butler led the singers and the Sunday school children sat. The organ was a gift from James' wife Emma Smith funded by the sale of her diamonds. He later moved on to become Vicar of Bray for 22 years.

If you watch the video you will see a lovely picture of Ann Griffin, a stalwart of St. Peter's with her husband Brian, now moved to Somerset.

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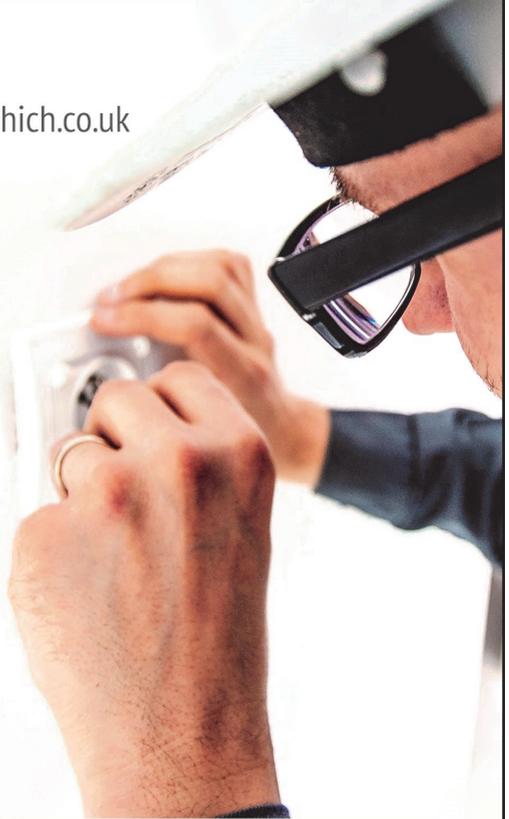
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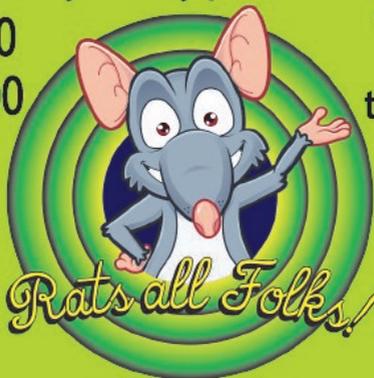
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We are a local, family business that has provided quality care since 1968.

Our experienced team are ready to help you in whatever way you need.

Such as:

- ✓ Companionship
- ✓ Washing & dressing
- ✓ Overnight stays
- ✓ Support with medication
- ✓ Variety of household tasks
- ✓ Social outings & appointments

We can support you to maintain your independence in the comfort of your own home.

Our visits vary from one hour to overnight stays. Please call to chat about how we can help you.

www.gardinersnursing.co.uk

10 Church Street, Caversham, Reading. RG4 8DZ



Community Carers Wanted!

£9.25 per hour weekdays £11 per hour weekends,
Paid Travel Time, Full or Part-time.

Come and join our excellent team providing practical help and support to elderly people in their own homes.

- Full training given, so experience not required
- Existing skills and experience valued
- Guaranteed work, local area
- Paid travel time
- Flexible hours or shifts available

Find out more contact **Bonny or Wendy** on **01491 578758**
or email **bonny@bridgeshomecare.co.uk** visit **www.bridgeshomecare.co.uk**

An independent company with 18 years experience of care in the community



Oxfordshire Association
of Care Providers

Hot Meal Delivery Service

Our trained staff now deliver fresh hot meals to your area, Wargrave and Twyford. Our specially designed van delivers the delicious hot meal you want just when you want it.

- free delivery 365 days a year by trained caring staff
- supplied when needed, no long term contracts
- wide choice such as hot roast, cottage pie, curry
- also special diets such as gluten free, vegetarian
- plus easy to swallow texture modified meals
- quality accredited for service and food quality.



For further information contact: **01491 578 758**
Email: **wendy@bridgeshomecare.co.uk**

Bridges Hot Meal Delivery Service, Oxford House, Highlands Lane, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 4PS



Majesticare
Luxury Care Homes

The Mount Care Home

Beautiful on the Outside Caring on the Inside



The Mount has been purpose built behind an impressive house in the heart of the gorgeous village of Upper Wargrave, two miles from Twyford, four miles from Henley on Thames and six miles from Reading.

Our residents also benefit from experienced staff who provide professional personalised care and a whole range of services to enhance their lives. We provide high standards of Nursing Care and also Specialist Dementia Care. There is no better way to get a feel for the luxury and quality care we offer at the Mount than to come for a visit -



Reservations for Nursing and Dementia care are now being taken. Our rooms are affordably priced; we accept Private, Social Services, CHC funded residents and Direct Payments.

www.majesticare.co.uk/carehome/the-mount



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**