

# The Valley Diary

Binderton ~ Charlton ~ Chilgrove ~ East Dean ~ Singleton ~ West Dean

thevalleydiary.org ~ April 2026 Edition

## NO WORRIES

Under the new Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports and Attacks) Act, dog owners in the UK now face significantly tougher penalties if their pets worry or attack livestock. The legislation, recently highlighted by the BBC, marks a major shift in how the law protects farm animals and addresses the growing concern of "livestock worrying."



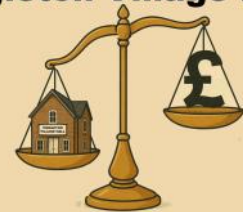
Previously, fines for such offences were often capped, but under the new rules, courts can now impose unlimited fines. Beyond financial penalties, the Act grants police enhanced powers to seize dogs suspected of being involved in attacks and allows for more comprehensive evidence collection, such as taking DNA samples from pets to link them to specific incidents.

The law defines livestock worrying not just as a physical attack, but also as chasing or being "at large" (off-lead) in a field where sheep or cattle are present. For farmers, these incidents cause immense distress and significant financial loss, often leading to miscarriages in pregnant ewes or fatal injuries.

To stay within the law, authorities and rural organisations urge dog owners to keep their pets on a lead around any livestock, regardless of how obedient the dog usually is. Even if a dog does not catch an animal, the stress of a chase can be enough to kill.

This updated legal framework aims to serve as a powerful deterrent, ensuring that the responsibility for a dog's behaviour lies firmly with the owner. **Information sourced from BBC News.**

### Singleton Village Hall



**The Results are in!**

See the analysis on Page 5. The future is in your hands, so check it out and see what **you** can do to help and not leave it all to other people.

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# Singleton Cricket Club Open Letter to the Valley Community - 2026 Season

As we look ahead to the 2026 cricket season, Singleton Cricket Club is proud to share an update with our community. This year marks an exciting new era for the Club – one shaped by generational change, renewed ambition, and a deep commitment to inclusivity, sustainability, and community spirit.

## Growing Cricket for All Ages

This season, the club will be expanding playing opportunities and field the following teams: Senior Sunday XI, Senior Thursday 20-20 XI, U14 Mixed Hard Ball, U11 Mixed Hard Ball, U11 Girls Incrediball, U10 Mixed Pairs Incrediball and U9 Mixed Windball tournaments. Our junior programmes continue to grow with practice sessions on our Friday evenings club night and Saturday mornings - visit our website at [singleton.play-cricket.com](http://singleton.play-cricket.com) for further information.



## Building for the Future

Over the next five years, the club will be investing in facilities and this season alone, we aim to be delivering: Improvements to patio area, upgraded grounds equipment including new covers, major enhancements to our junior programme with paid ECB Level 1 coaches, a new bowling machine, new practice nets and updated kit. These improvements reflect our long-term vision: a thriving, modern, community-centred cricket club that continues to serve the Valley for generations to come.

## Fundraising & New Sponsorship

To support this development, the club aims to raise money this year through grants, sponsorship, donations, and events. Our much-loved Duck Race, Race Tech Evening and Village Fete will all play a vital role. We are extremely grateful to **Charles Lewington**, who has once again made a substantial donation towards upgrading our buildings and facilities, ensuring enjoyment for all and helping secure the club's future for our junior members. We are also delighted to announce a **major new partnership with StoneX**, who will sponsor our junior teams for the next three years. This investment will significantly strengthen junior cricket at Singleton.

## Volunteering - Many Hands Make Light Work

To make our ambitious plans possible, we are introducing a new **volunteer rewards scheme**: for every hour contributed, members earn a £5 food or drink voucher. Roles are flexible, small and designed to fit around busy lives - from matchday help to coaching support, admin, hospitality and grounds care.

## Honouring Our Heritage - Supporting Women's Cricket

Singleton has a proud history of women's cricket dating back to 1747. With the inspiration of this year's Women's T20 World Cup in England, we are excited to expand opportunities for girls through our Girls Dynamos programme and junior pathway. Celebrating and rebuilding women's cricket in the Valley is an important part of our long-term vision.

## A Community Club at Heart

The club is incredibly grateful to everyone who has helped build, support and manage Singleton Cricket Club over the years. We would like to offer a very special thank you to Francis Ward, who stepped down this year after many years of dedicated service to the club. We are now entering a period of positive transition, and we are deeply appreciative of the continued support, patience and enthusiasm shown by our members and neighbours. With your help, we hope to deliver a fantastic year of cricket, community events and ongoing club development. We look forward to welcoming you to the ground throughout the season - whether as a player, social member, volunteer or simply a friendly face enjoying a summer's afternoon.

For more information, please visit our website at [singleton.play-cricket.com/home](http://singleton.play-cricket.com/home)

**Singleton Cricket Club  
Chair & Committee - 2026**





## Keeping Rural Life Alive with Something for Every Season

History is brought vividly to life rather than displayed behind glass. As spring arrives, the landscape reawakens with lambs, chicks and blooming period gardens. "We are proud to keep rural life alive; not as something locked in the past, but as a living, changing story that visitors can step into and be part of." - Clare de Bathe, Museum Director.

## What's On This Spring...

**Easter Holidays - Waking up the Wild:** Activities every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, plus a Flower Code Quest Trail until 12th April.

**Living History - The Toll House Reimagined,** see above: Discover restoration progress and meet specialists Tastes Through Time.

**Charcoal Burn Weekend** (2nd - 4th May): See the Museum's oldest working exhibit in action.

**Try-A-Trade** (9th - 10th May): A hands-on weekend for children to explore heritage crafts.

**Victorian Showtime** (23rd - 25th May): Experience a 19th-century travelling show by Melford Hys Companie.

**May Half Term - Saxon Life** (23rd - 31st May): An interactive Saxon trail with extra activity days from 26th - 28th May.

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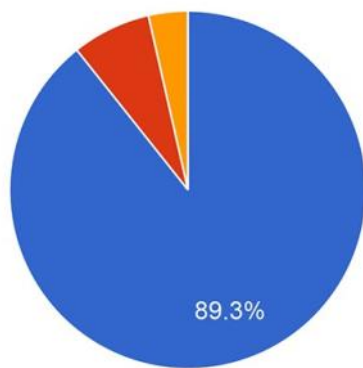
## Singleton Village Hall Survey Results are in!

These much awaited results have now been collated and presented to the community. This was a necessary exercise as the hall has reached a point where it cannot be sustained financially with its current usage and this survey gave villagers from both Singleton and Charlton the opportunity to give their views on all aspects of the future for their hall - from preferred use to future funding. There was an amazing response, so a huge thank you to all those who contributed. The overwhelming majority of the 112 people who voted (89.3%) clearly value and want the building to continue as a village hall for the community - as you can see from the chart.

You put forward lots of ideas for future events, from film nights to craft events and children's activity clubs. The Hall Committee will be working to bring these to life. The most popular sources of future funding were an increased precept (very small % on our council tax), gift aided donations and grant applications. 88.4% of villagers felt it important that the village hall serve as a resilience hub in times of emergencies.

In order for this to happen we need community support, in all sorts of ways, to maintain and develop the hall and increase the number of events, ideally returning it to a thriving community hub. It really can't happen without you! If we can build on this momentum, we can also apply for grants to improve the hall. To repair its roof, replace the book shed, install a generator and replace the heating

Do you feel there is a need for a Communal Space like a Village Hall?



- Yes definitely
- Not sure
- No, there is no longer a need for a community space

system. It currently receives no funding from the parish council, local council or sponsorship. Your village hall needs you!

The committee have planned some new events, including talks from Friends of the Centurion Way, Brent Lodge Wildlife Trust, Western Sussex Rivers Trust and an evening with The Shanty Singers - a shared initiative with East Dean Village Hall. Where we need your help is to start some regular events. Can you offer some time to help plan and run new events? Run a community group for children or adults? Serve refreshments or set up the hall? Join the committee? Help with maintenance? Social media/marketing? Fill our vacancy for Treasurer? All help, however small, will be appreciated and you will be contributing to our lovely community at the same time. **Please email us at [bookings@singletonvillagehall.com](mailto:bookings@singletonvillagehall.com)**



## Moonlight Walk 2026: Walk in-memory of loved one.

On **Saturday 13th June**, St Wilfrid's Hospice is holding its annual Moonlight Walk, inviting hundreds of walkers to take part in this much-loved walk across Chichester.

The walk takes place in the evening and explores a number of familiar places across the city, some of which are exclusively decorated for the event. The walk includes a stop at Priory Park Guildhall, where you can reflect and leave a message in memory of a loved one.

This is a wonderful way to remember those important to you, and by taking part and fundraising, you'll be supporting the expert end-of-life care and compassion the Hospice provides to local people. Get your tickets today...

[stwh.co.uk/moonlight](http://stwh.co.uk/moonlight)



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# Eight Different Crows? Caw Blimey!

## A Poem by Francis

When in London recently,  
We visited the Tower.  
Sid the Raven strolled my way,  
And we chatted for over an hour.

I asked why he walked so much,  
When he had the option of flight.  
He said he never flew,  
As he had no head for heights.

We caused quite a scene,  
People staring in their dozens.  
As I asked lots of questions,  
About Sidney's seven cousins.

"I'm not too keen on the Magpie,"  
I revealed to Sidney.  
"I'm not keen either," he said,  
"I prefer steak and kidney."

The Hooded Crow wears a hood,  
Sidney says, to hide a scar.  
He was attacked by a relative,  
Who was Carrion a crowbar.

He knew little of the Rook,  
He openly confessed.  
Not seeing him much these days,  
As he was so involved in chess.

He was very close to one though,  
Sidney's best friend of them all.  
His drinking pal in the Crow Bar,  
Was that chatty bird Jack Daw.

But Sidney seemed very envious,  
Of the very colourful Jay.  
"Why should he be the only one,  
With plumage so bright and gay?"

But with legs and beak so brightly red,  
The last crow had had enough.  
Sid said he'd be embarrassed too,  
If he was called a Chough!

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### Blossom Trail

Little adventurers can follow the Blossom Trail through our historic gardens and discover the beauty of spring with one of our two nature-themed trails.

**Ages 2-5yrs** A gentle blossom and flower hunt perfect for tiny explorers  
**Ages 6yrs+** A more challenging trail featuring blurred and pixelated images to uncover - with the chance to draw their discoveries along the way. Plus, all adventurers who complete their trail will be rewarded with a delicious egg!

### Create in the Gardens Classroom

Little adventurers can continue Easter activities in the Gardens classroom with a self-led leaf-and-bark rubbings, transforming natural treasures into colourful masterpieces.

### Garden Games

The whole family can enjoy the selection of games available in the event marquee, including a daffodil bean bag toss and giant Jenga.

### Arboretum Walk

Explore the beautiful 49-acre St Roche's Arboretum in its stunning spring colours. The Arboretum offers a brisk two-and-a-half-mile circuit walk that encompasses a fine collection of specimen trees and shrubs, as well as breathtaking views of the surrounding Sussex Downs.

### Food & Drink

The Shepherd's Hut will be open on the picnic lawn, serving a delicious selection of Easter-themed treats and drinks. The Gardens Restaurant will be open for lunch options.

**Tickets for a fiver at [tinyurl.com/2al2ns70](http://tinyurl.com/2al2ns70)**

*The Sussex Yeomanry Association Spring Service*



**Saturday 16th May  
Waymark Memorial in  
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Police & Crime  
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### Cracking Down on County Lines

Tackling organised criminal networks that move illegal drugs across county borders. Sussex is one of the most affected areas, bringing violence, anti-social behaviour and the exploitation of vulnerable people. We are determined to stop them.

Last year, Sussex Police made 150 arrests, disrupted 598 county lines and carried out 42 cuckooing disruptions. During one week officers made 65 arrests, conducted 113 stop-and-searches and seized 77kg of drugs and 19 weapons. Officers executed warrants, increased patrols in public spaces, delivered school inputs, and worked with hotels and transport hubs to help prevent exploitation.

Tackling county lines is a year-round commitment, delivered locally through a comprehensive action plan that focuses on prevention, protection, community resilience and the relentless pursuit of offenders. If you have concerns about county lines activity, please report it to Sussex Police on 101, text 65999 or visit the Sussex Police website at [tinyurl.com/2dbvqjrk](http://tinyurl.com/2dbvqjrk)

**Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner**

### Where's the Gym Jim?

#### A Poem by Francis

Did she hear him right,  
Was he really off to the gym?  
Well that's how she heard it,  
And was very proud of him.

But after a couple of months,  
She felt something wasn't right.  
He should look so much fitter,  
Going to the gym every night.

And was he overdoing it?  
She thought that he must be.  
Staggering in each night,  
Ever so weak at the knees.

He only does arm exercises,  
That's what they say around here.  
Lifting a pint mug to his lips,  
Full to the brim with beer.

Well I don't fancy his chances,  
For him it will be a disaster.  
Well she finds out that it's not 'Gym',  
But 'Jim' at the old Star and Garter!



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## LAVANT HALL HAPPENINGS

### LAVANT FRIENDLY CLUB

Our club meets every 1st Wednesday in the month to have a chat, tea or coffee, a short game of Bingo and then enjoy a variety of entertainment. The Magician in March was particularly good and this month we're back to a **Solo Gent Singer, Dave Harris, on 1st April**. We have a minibus to collect people from all over the place, it only costs 50p and runs from 2 to 4pm. Selsey Shantymen, a talk on Arundel and a Strawberry Cream Tea are coming soon! Come and meet some lovely Friendly people!

### CHICHESTER COUNTRY MUSIC CLUB

We have a nice **quiet atmosphere concert** the 2nd Friday in every month. You do not have to be a member, or book - it's simply £10 on the door. First time is free, too, for people wishing to see what it's like. **On 10th April we have Stubby** who is travelling from Essex to play for us between **7.30 and 10.30pm**. Bar, Snacks and a Raffle too! Traditional Country Western at it's best. People come from up to 30 miles to attend our Shows, so don't miss out! We also have a **Freestyle Dance** (sorry, no Line) at **North Mundham**, every 4th Saturday and we guarantee that you will be welcome - and get a dance or two, even if you are single! **Next one is on 24th April**. It costs £11 and we have a lovely duo called **Barhoppers**, from Norfolk, providing the music.

**Details on all of the above from  
Tony Bleach  
tonybleach@talktalk.net  
01243 527439**



## Sahara Trek 2027

Looking for your next big adventure while fundraising for your local Hospice? We're offering you the opportunity to take on a bespoke trek across the Sahara Desert. Over 6 days from 14th to 19th October 2027, you'll experience the incredible landscape of ancient, dried riverbeds, rolling dunes and sun-baked plains. By taking part and fundraising you'll be helping to raise vital funds for St Wilfrid's Hospice. Find out all the information here...

[stwh.co.uk/sahara-trek](http://stwh.co.uk/sahara-trek)

## Calling All Bluffers!

**Is CERIUM a special sash worn by the Archbishop of Canterbury during the coronation of a monarch? A metallic element, silver in colour and named after the asteroid Ceres? Or the urn in which the embalmed heart of an Egyptian Pharaoh was placed, during his entombment in the Valley of the Kings?**

Is CONCATENATION a series of events that coincide and link together? Or the decorative finish at the top of an ancient Greek or Roman pillar? Or the finale of an Italian opera, sung by the entire company?

The answer to these any many other questions will be made clear at **East Dean Village Hall on Saturday 18th April at 7.00pm**, when a crack team of East Dean's finest lexicographers will take on a similar group of long-word experts from Boxgrove for what will hopefully be a fun evening of **Call My Bluff**, at the end of which we may all have learned something we didn't know before – entirely appropriate, given the Village Hall's original use as a school.

Unlike the television version, the audience for this show will each be given a red and green card, so they can vote for what they believe to be the correct definition. Then it will be up to the opposing team to decide whether to be guided by the wisdom of the crowd, or follow their own judgement.

**Tickets for this evening will be £8.00 each, with all the money raised going to the hall's ongoing maintenance costs.** On top of the various jobs we already had listed we will now have to cope with the sharp increase in the price of electricity, made more acute for us since the VH has to pay commercial rates for its power. So we need all the money we can get to keep this important village facility open!

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be included; if you'd rather have something stronger please feel free to bring whatever you prefer, or join us in the Star and Garter afterwards.

To buy tickets and reserve your place call or text me on **07503 282528** or email [eastdeanhall@gmail.com](mailto:eastdeanhall@gmail.com)  
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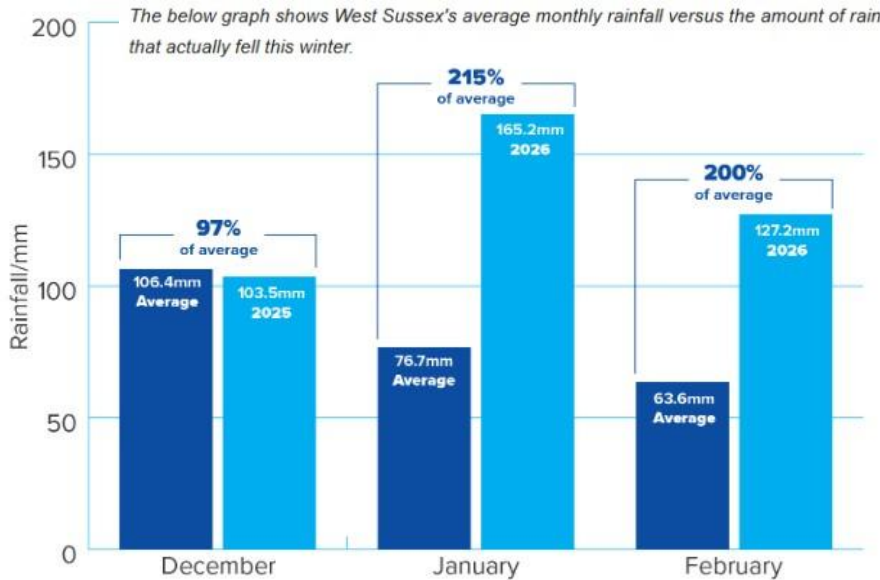
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## A very wet winter, and what it means for the network

Six months' worth of rain fell in **January** and **February**. This has been one of the wettest starts to the year on record. Relentless heavy downpours pushed groundwater to extreme levels, meaning we've needed to act fast. We're sorry for the impact emergency operations like this can have. Although we understand they can cause disruption, we must use tankers to protect communities from internal sewer flooding.

With the ground saturated and aquifers brimming, crews have been on duty 24/7 to protect homes and businesses and manage sewer flooding. At its peak, we had to deploy over 130 tankers across more than 30 sites.



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## Bin for the Win – Blockages in Chichester drop 62%

Did you know almost two-thirds of sewer blockages are caused by flushing period products and wet wipes? These hidden troublemakers block pipes, back up drains and can cause flooding. Pipe blockages are a real problem.

But we've achieved some amazing results thanks to our work with The University of Chichester and TheFabBagCo.

Together, we've been working directly with students to reduce unflushable items that end up in the sewer systems. Because of this partnership, blockages in the area have dropped by an incredible 62% between September and December!

This means less risk of sewer flooding in local homes, fewer disruptions and emergency repairs and a cleaner, more robust network for the whole community.




## Duck Race & River Fest 2026

Sunday 19th April, 1 - 5pm  
Lavant Village Green




### Fun Family Activities

**What's in the Water?**  
Discover our amazing freshwater life

**Join a Guided Walk**  
Meet at the WSRT stand at 1pm

**Refreshments**  
Provided by Lavant Primary and St Anthony's School.

**Wear blue to support your local river or dress as your favourite river creature!**

**Duck Race - 2pm**  
Get yourself a quacking friend to win the race from Pot Nore Bridge!



Find out more at [www.wsr.org.uk](http://www.wsr.org.uk)

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# The Valley Parish

[www.facebook.com/ValleyParish](http://www.facebook.com/ValleyParish)

Find out more about our services and events at the A church near  
you website



**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April**

11am at West Dean

Join us for bible stories, songs and  
games.

(oh and of course cakes and biscuits)

## Happy Easter

*It seems odd to be writing about Easter Sunday when I wrote about Palm Sunday last month, because the two Sundays are so inextricably linked. They are the beginning and end of Holy Week, the most important week in the Christian year, and indeed I believe the most important week in history.*

*In Holy Week Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph, riding on a donkey. He overturned the tables in the Temple to remind people that it wasn't a place of entertainment or to make money, but the House of God. He washed his disciples' feet to show that he came to serve, not to be served, gave the New Commandment – Love one another as I have loved you – and presided at the first Last Supper, the first Holy Communion. He was whipped, stripped, hung on a cross to die, and then placed in a tomb. And then, just as he had ridden into Jerusalem in triumph, so he rose in triumph, overcoming the power of death to bring us all the promise of eternal life. Like I said, the most important week.*

**Christ is Risen, Alleluia, Alleluia**

## Services and Events

2nd April



6.30pm **Maundy Thursday**  
Said Holy Communion  
West Dean

3<sup>rd</sup> April



12pm **Good Friday**  
1 hour of quiet prayer  
and reflection at Singleton  
Come and go as you wish.

5<sup>th</sup> April



10am **Easter Sunday**  
Holy Communion  
East Dean

12<sup>th</sup> April

10am Holy Communion  
Singleton

19<sup>th</sup> April

10am Holy Communion  
West Dean

26<sup>th</sup> April

10am Said Holy Communion  
West Dean

11am Children's Church  
West Dean

### Contacts -

#### Parish Priest

**Rev Sarah Manouch**

[priestvalleyparish@gmail.com](mailto:priestvalleyparish@gmail.com) / 07468 854864

(Working days Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Not available on Thursday)

#### Churchwarden

**Sarah John** - 07769 887546 / [sarance@btinternet.com](mailto:sarance@btinternet.com)

**John Holt** – 07787 567140 / [john@drokefarm.co.uk](mailto:john@drokefarm.co.uk)

#### PCC Secretary

**Susie Holmes** - [pccsecretaryvalleyparish@gmail.com](mailto:pccsecretaryvalleyparish@gmail.com)

# The Diary

Here's a quick overview of what's actually going on, in and around the villages of the Lavant Valley in the coming months. Do please let us know if we've missed anything and we'll add it next time for the benefit of all.

## thevalleydiary.org

### April 2026

**Mon 13th** Singleton Community Cafe:  
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village Hall  
**Tue 14th** Ladies Night at The Star &  
Garter at 7pm  
**Thu 16th** Singleton & East Dean WI:  
The River Lavant: Kate Whitton:  
Singleton Village Hall  
**Sat 18th** Call My Bluff Evening: Star &  
Garter: 7pm  
**Sat 25th** Clay Shoot: The Fox Goes Free  
**Sat 25th & Sun 26th** The Toll House  
Reimagined: Weald & Downland  
Museum  
**Mon 27th** The Valley Diary Copy  
Deadline: 12noon

### May 2026

**Fri 1st & Sat 2nd** Goodwood  
Horseracing  
**Sat 2nd - Mon 4th** Charcoal Burn  
Weekend: Weald & Downland Museum  
**Sat 9th & Sun 10th** Try a Trade: Weald  
& Downland Museum  
**Mon 11th** Singleton Community Cafe:  
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village Hall  
**Sat 16th** Sussex Yeomary Spring  
Service: Waymark Memorial, Charton:  
11.30am  
**Sat 16th & Sun 17th** Goodwoof!  
**Wed 20th** Singleton and Charlton  
Parish Council Meeting and AGM, 7pm,  
Singleton Cricket Club  
**Thu 21st** Singleton & East Dean WI:  
Handbags to Handcuffs: Sheila Willis:  
East Dean Village Hall  
**Fri 22nd & Sat 23rd** Goodwood  
Horseracing  
**Sat 23rd - Mon 25th** Art Fair: East  
Dean Village Hall  
**Sat 23rd - Mon 25th** Victorian  
Showtime: Weald & Downland Museum  
**Sat 23rd - Sun 31st** May Half Term:  
Saxon Life: Weald & Downland Museum

### June 2026

**Fri 5th** Goodwood's Three Friday  
Nights  
**Sun 7th** Goodwood Horseracing  
**Mon 8th** Singleton Community Cafe:  
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village  
Hall  
**Fri 12th** Goodwood's Three Friday  
Nights  
**Sat 13th & Sun 14th** Midsummer  
Fayre: Weald & Downland Museum  
**Thu 18th** Singleton & East Dean WI:  
Cross-Dressed to Kill: Vivienne  
Morgan: East Dean Village Hall  
**Fri 19th** Goodwood's Three Friday  
Nights

### July 2026

**Tue 7th** Selsey Shantymen at The Star  
& Garter  
**Thu 9th - Sun 12th** Goodwood's  
Festival of Speed  
**Mon 13th** Singleton Community Cafe:  
10.30am - 12noon: Singleton Village  
Hall  
**Wed 15th** Singleton and Charlton  
Parish Council Meeting, 7pm,  
Singleton Village Hall  
**Thu 16th** Singleton & East Dean WI:  
Summer Party: East Dean Village Hall

**Got something  
to add to the  
Diary?**

*Please let us know...*

*Lots more dates and  
events can be found in  
the Diary Online at...*

**thevalleydiary.org/diary**

Deadline for the...

### May 2026 Edition

All information for to arrive by  
**12.00hrs (noon)** please on...

**Monday 27th April**

**editor@valleydiary.org**

*Submissions, news, reviews, event  
information, photos and anything you  
have to share with your community  
should arrive **as soon as possible**.*

## The Team

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## Useful Telephone Numbers

CDC Councillor, Henry Potter	07792 857973
East Dean Football Club	07944 036709
East Dean PC Clerk	07710 098512
East Dean Village Hall	07785 740625
Goodwood Security	07909 876823
Lavant Road Doctors Surgery	01243 527264
Lavant Road Pharmacy	01243 380185
Local Police	101
Singleton & East Dean WI	07770 822067
Singleton Fete	01243 818037
Singleton Parish Clerk	07702 240126
Singleton School	01243 811679
Singleton Tearooms	01243 811899
Singleton Village Hall	07711 573276
Weald & Downland Museum: Office	01243 811363
Weald & Downland Museum: Shop	01243 811020
West Dean College	01243 818300
West Dean Gardens	01243 818318
West Dean PC Clerk	07596 884847
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### Albert says...



Her pie was as tough as old leather,  
 Giving mouth and tummy much pain.  
 I know the reason why,  
 She's using choux pastry again.

## Register of Local...

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**Hunters Lodge**, Lavant - or indeed another Helen!  
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**B&B - Ring Sophie** on 01243 811465  
**Harper's Cottage**, East Lavant. Ring Caroline 01243 278659  
**Flint Cottage**, 47 Mid Lavant, Lavant Road, PO18 0AA: Sue Kemble 01243  
 785883 / 07814903541  
**The Shepherds Barn**, Chilgrove: Lucy 07775 934999  
[www.shepherdsbarnsussex.co.uk](http://www.shepherdsbarnsussex.co.uk)  
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## Culture and Comedy Take Centre Stage at Chichester Fringe 2026

[chichesterfringe.co.uk](http://chichesterfringe.co.uk)

The cultural heart of Chichester is set to beat a little faster this summer as the Chichester Fringe officially unveils its 2026 programme. Spanning two weeks of high-energy entertainment from Saturday 30th May to Sunday 14th June, this year's festival promises an eclectic tapestry of music, theatre and comedy - plus a historic addition to the city's streets.

In a bold first for the festival, the city centre will morph into a "playground for the imagination" on Sunday 7th June. The brand-new Street Performance Festival will host a world-class international line-up of professional performers from 11am to 5pm, bringing a carnival atmosphere.

The comedy slate is particularly robust this year, featuring national heavyweights and rising stars alike. The laughter kicks off early with the eerie yet hilarious Every Ghost Story Ever Told and the apocalyptic Improv the Dead on 30th May. Fans of stand-up can catch sets from Phil Green, Kate Lois-Elliott and Abbie Edwards, while the New Park Centre Studio welcomes back 2025 winner Piran Armes for a highly anticipated "Work in Progress" show on 10th June. Musical comedy also finds its voice through Hajar J. Woodland, who explores dual identities in Hajar, Like Badger and Aidan Jones, who pairs Chopin's nocturnes with bearded Australian wit.

Dramatic Heights and Family Fun Theatre enthusiasts are spoilt for choice, with the festival opening at The Nest (Chichester Festival Theatre) with Best Wishes, Kind Regards. From the poignant storytelling of local playwright Olivia Coppin's Just to Say! to the ambitious, interlaced short plays of Tapestry on the final Saturday, the dramatic range is vast. Younger audiences haven't been forgotten. The 2026 programme features a dedicated "kids' corner" of theatre, including the UK Kids' Comedy Festival nominee Slugageddon!, alongside charming tales like The Smallest Sardine of the Seven Seas and The Magic Crayon.

The soundtrack to this year's Fringe is equally diverse. Music lovers can find Laura Page returning to the JAM Cafe, while the Driftwood Troubadours offer a multi-sensory experience with projected backdrops. The festival also continues its commitment to emerging talent, spotlighting 18-year-old singer-songwriter Oli Patient at the Chichester Canal Cafe.

Whether you are looking for an improvised undead apocalypse, a soulful folk session by the canal, or world-class circus acts in the city square, the Chichester Fringe 2026 is shaping up to be the most ambitious edition yet. Tickets and full scheduling information are available now. Support local and international talent!



Sussex  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner

## Operation STOP

The pilot scheme using electronic tagging to tackle persistent shoplifters. We were staggered to learn that just 138 offenders caused 1,782 charges of shop theft across Sussex last year resulting in more than 500 weeks of imprisonment. This really demonstrates how a small number of persistent offenders cause the most harm and why tagging is so important as a means to alter behaviour.

**Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner**

## The Eagle Has Landed!

**A poem by Francis, with apologies to Harper Lee**

I laughed out loud at the eagle,  
When he was out hunting today.  
Crash landing on the ground,  
Completely missing his prey.

It really was hilarious,  
Well at least it was to me.  
However, the funny side of it,  
That eagle could not see.

I stopped my giggling instantly,  
When I saw his angry stare.  
That was when I realised,  
I ought to get out of there!

Whilst flapping his massive wings,  
His talons soon grabbed me.  
"Can anybody down there," I cried,  
"Please get me out of this tree!"

The moral of this tale is,  
In case you haven't heard.  
It is always very dangerous,  
To Mock a Killing Bird.



Chichester city centre 9am - 2pm  
1st & 3rd Friday of every month



[www.chichester.gov.uk/farmersmarket](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/farmersmarket)

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Celebrating  
950 years of  
Chichester  
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**Chichester Cathedral  
Programme announced  
for the 2026 Southern  
Cathedrals Festival**

The programme has been announced for the annual Southern Cathedrals Festival 2026, which this year will take place at Chichester Cathedral from 16th - 19th July.

The Festival brings together the combined choirs of Chichester, Salisbury and Winchester Cathedrals for four days of exceptional musicmaking in Chichester Cathedral and other distinguished settings throughout the historic city centre. Audiences are warmly invited to enjoy a vibrant programme of concerts, recitals and services that showcase the depth, history and creativity of cathedral music.

The Southern Cathedrals Festival is one of the most enduring collaborations between English cathedral music foundations, representing many decades of shared artistry, friendship and commitment to musical excellence. Public booking opens on 5th May.

[chichestercathedral.org.uk](http://chichestercathedral.org.uk)



**Petworth House & Park**  
[nationaltrust.org/petworth](http://nationaltrust.org/petworth)

**Spring Festival:  
Saturday 4th -  
Sunday 19th April:  
Petworth House  
and Park will be  
celebrating the  
arrival of a new  
season with the  
annual Spring Festival...**



**Makers Market  
Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th**  
Browse the stalls to find a range of artisan gifts and beautiful handmade products, held in partnership with Petworth Pop-Up.

**Garden Talks  
Thursday 16th - Sunday 19th**  
Join a variety of horticultural experts for talks in the Garden Theatre Marquee. Speakers include Arthur Parkinson, Professor of Biology and author Dave Goulson, local expert Beverly Exall, National Trust Senior Gardener and author Robyn Booth, and Petworth's Head Gardener Martyn Burkinshaw. These talks are free to attend, no booking required. The full schedule and timings can be found on the website.

**Garden Demonstrations  
Monday 13th - Wednesday 15th**  
Gardening enthusiasts can join a live 20-minute demonstration. Topics include bee keeping, composting, plant staking and wormery making. Free with admission. Check the website for the full schedule.

**Workshops  
Tuesday 14th - Sunday 19th**  
Book your place on one of our creative workshops, including botanical drawing, foraging basket making, glass fusing and willow bird house weaving. Booking essential.

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## Spring Wildlife Briefings



We are now entering 'baby season' here at Brent Lodge, meaning our team have all hands on deck to care for any precious babies that are found sadly orphaned or harmed that come into our care. At this time of year, we are in particular need of puppy mousse, kitten/puppy food, live waxworms (found in reptile pet shops or online) and puppy pads. Please see our website for our full Wish List of items that can be dropped off at our Main Reception, and Amazon Wishlist where items can be sent directly to us. We are so grateful for any and all support possible. As always, please call us anytime if you need advice/assistance with wildlife enquiries or wish to know how you can support us. Thank you!

This delightful little hazel dormouse came into us a little while ago following an accidental nest disturbance. She had quite a lucky escape due to the quick-thinking and kindness of her finders, who spotted her little face amongst shrubbery during garden maintenance and rescued her just in time! Although her finders tried to reunite her with her nest, as her hibernation had been interrupted and she was quickly cold and needing ongoing support, so they did the right thing by contacting us. Now in our care, she enjoys sleeping in a cosy, hollowed-out tennis ball and climbing around her enriched enclosure. She was reluctant to eat much at first but has now settled in and is gaining weight nicely. Although it is unfortunate that she ended up in our care, it is such a privilege to help and see her up close! We will liaise with other rehabilitators to ensure she is reared and released under a specialist programme.

**brentlodge.org**  
**01243 641672**



## CHICHESTER NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Wednesday 1st April** Illustrated Talk by Susie Robson, Environment Adviser to the South East Region Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group on 'How Profitable Farming can be good for the Environment' at The Pallant Suite, Masonic Hall, South Pallant at 7.30pm. Members free/visitors £3: 01243 786079: wheelchair access

### BRANDY HOLE COPSE

**Tuesday 14th April** Working Party at Brandy Hole Copse Local Nature Reserve from 10am until 12noon. Please call 07788 140698 or email [fobhc@treesinchi](mailto:fobhc@treesinchi)

### RSPB

**Thursday 23rd April** AGM followed by an Illustrated Talk from Stuart Malcolm on 'Gulls Are Great – Honestly' at The Pallant Suite, Masonic Hall, South Pallant, Chichester at 7.30pm. Members free/visitors £5: 07402 375257: wheelchair access



**St Wilfrid's Hospice**  
Making a difference to local lives

### St Wilfrid's are the chosen charity partner for the Bognor 10k

This is an iconic flat run, perfect for all levels. Starting from West Park in Aldwick, you will follow the gorgeous Bognor Regis esplanade, run through Felpham, and then return along the sea front to West Park. By taking part in this run and fundraising, you will be helping to support local people in your community who are living with a life-limiting or terminal illness.  
[stwh.co.uk/bognor-10k](http://stwh.co.uk/bognor-10k)

## History talk at the Record Office in Chichester

### TRANSFORMING THE WEALDEN GARDEN - THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'PLANTSMEN GARDENS' BY INCOMING COUNTRY HOUSE FAMILIES C.1840-1920S.

We imported plants for centuries but, from the 1840s into the interwar period, a group of families bought old or built new country houses in the Weald and began to create gardens with an emphasis on plant collections from abroad.

Several families co-funded professional plant hunters. Some of the schemes survive today as an important part of the Wealden landscape.

We will explore where the family money came from - mainly from innovations in industry and finance and what may have influenced their interests.

Our speaker, Sue Berry, has published on aspects of the history of Sussex in the important Sussex Archaeological Collections, Journal of Garden History, Journal of the Georgian Group etc.

She is also interested in persuading people to value and to use the wonderful archives for the county in our two record offices and elsewhere.

She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and of the Royal Historical Society.

The talk will be held at **West Sussex Record Office in Chichester** (and online) on **Monday 27th April at 3pm.**

Booking essential at [wsro.org.uk/events](http://wsro.org.uk/events)

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# GOODWOOD RAISES RECORD AMOUNT FOR CHARITY

Goodwood is proud to announce that over **£1.9 million** was raised for charity across its events and Estate in 2025 - a record amount and an extraordinary achievement made possible by the generosity of guests, participants, partners and the local community. Supporting charitable causes remains central to Goodwood's purpose, with fundraising woven throughout its motorsport, horseracing and Estate calendar.



In 2025, £20,791 was raised at Goodwood for Wild at Heart Foundation. The Festival of Speed and Goodwood Revival raised £963,766 for King's Trust International, whilst The Markel Magnolia Cup at the Qatar Goodwood Festival delivered an outstanding £834,170 for King's Trust International's Project Lehar. Across the wider Estate, over £61,000 was raised for The Aldingbourne Trust, supporting adults with learning disabilities and autism in West Sussex. Other fundraising at Breakfast Clubs, staff events and more contributed to the total raised.

The Duke of Richmond said: "Raising nearly £2 million for charity in a single year is a remarkable achievement for Goodwood, and one of which I am immensely proud. Our events have long been a force for good, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who has supported our charitable partners. The impact of this generosity will be felt both locally and internationally."

Looking ahead, Goodwood is pleased to confirm its 2026 charity partners:

Goodwood – Battersea Dogs and Cats Home, Festival of Speed presented by Mastercard – Mission 44 Markel Magnolia Cup – Education Above All Foundation, Goodwood Revival – The Goodwood Education Trust

In 2026, Goodwood Revival's support of The Goodwood Education Trust will be particularly special, as the Trust celebrates its 50th anniversary. Founded by the 10th Duke of Richmond, the Trust was created to connect young people with farming,

food production and the natural environment - a legacy that continues today, helping many children to experience, understand and care for the countryside.

The Goodwood Estate will also continue its partnership with The Aldingbourne Trust, reinforcing its long-standing commitment to supporting local charities and communities. With an inspiring group of partners for the year ahead, Goodwood looks forward to building on the success of 2025 and continuing to make a meaningful difference through its events.

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# WE'RE NEARLY THERE!

**Essential work on the tower at West Dean is hoped to begin this September - but we still need to raise the final £12,700 to make it happen.**

The total cost of the project is £126,000. So far, we've raised £86,000 through fundraising, generous donations and support from the Archdeacon of Chichester.

We have also been awarded grants totalling £27,300 from The Benefact Trust, The Garfield Weston Trust and The Wolfson Foundation. That means we're just £12,700 away from reaching our goal.

### Can you help us get there?

Every donation, no matter how small, truly makes a difference. Please help by spreading the word. If you know anyone who cares about history and the preservation of ancient buildings like St Andrew's, please share this with them. They may not worship here or even live locally, but they may still want to support the protection of this special place.

treasurer.valleyparish@outlook.com is the email address to find out how to pay direct to the appeal.

## This Month's Meeting was our AGM, full of all the important details to close our 25/26 year!

We kicked our meeting off with the Treasurer's report and a breakdown of the numbers that keep us running. Janet then gave us our Annual Report, a whistle stop tour of our highlights this past year, from inspiring speakers to wonderful parties and a reminder of our 110th birthday dinner! Finally we wrapped up with some heartwarming words from our President, Zoe, that reminded us all of how amazing this group of women really are, and the importance of continuing what was created back in 1915, our own little community, one that brings ladies out in all weathers once a month to learn something new and indulge in our fair share of cake! I am so thankful to each and every one of the women involved in this lovely group, from members to committee, it is truly a privilege to play a part in this beautiful WI.

Our next meeting is 16th April at Singleton Village Hall, titled "The River Lavant, Our Chalk Stream" with Kate Whitton.

It will be the start of our new year, so if you have ever thought about joining now is the perfect time to start! I hope to see you there, and that you can come along with us for another sensational WI year. **Jess, Treasurer**



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## Singleton and Charlton Parish Council

March's Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 18th March at Singleton Village Hall, attended by both the Parish Council and members of the local community.

The Parish Council is pleased to announce that **Mark Rawlings-Smith has been elected as the new Parish Council Chairman** after Deborah Harwood has stepped down. The council would like to thank Deborah for all of her hard work in the parish over many years, and wishes her well for the future.

The council agreed the **allocation of responsibilities** within the Parish Council, and updated those present on progress of the resilience plan project. Positive news was shared that tankers dealing with recent localised flooding have now left the village and plans are underway to restore any damage caused.

Village matters discussed included agreeing to hold a **village clear-up** later in the year, and a **meeting to give the local community the opportunity** to say what projects they would like to see the Parish Council undertaking. Both dates are to be confirmed. It was also agreed to add a **parking sign at The Leys** to clarify that electric car bays are not restricted to charging vehicles only.

After the Public Open Forum, representatives from the West Sussex Rivers Trust and Goodwood spoke about the exciting **proposed River Lavant Restoration Project**.

The next meeting is the Parish Council AGM, **20th May at 7pm at Singleton Cricket Club**, with guest speaker Clare de Bathe from the Weald and Downland Museum. See [singletoncharlton-pc.gov.uk](http://singletoncharlton-pc.gov.uk) for further information, or contact the Clerk on [clerk@singletoncharlton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@singletoncharlton-pc.gov.uk) to find out more about the Parish Council.



## East Dean Art Fair Spring Bank Holiday: A Chance For All To Shine!

**The Chichester Art Trail has been a popular event in the local calendar for several years, giving people the chance to visit artists in their own homes and studios, view their work and possibly buy some pieces.**

This works very well for artists who have houses large enough for visitors to circulate through them or completely separate studios, but there are a lot of creatives who don't come into those categories. Perhaps they don't have a large enough portfolio of work to hold an exhibition, maybe they don't have the confidence to feel they can put themselves forward like that. Or perhaps they just don't want lots of strangers walking around their house, for fear that their interest might not be entirely aesthetic!

Either way, there are a lot of very creative people in this area who have had little opportunity to show their work to anyone other than friends or family. With that in mind we have decided to turn **East Dean Village Hall** into an art gallery for the **Spring Bank Holiday, 23rd-25th of May**. All artists living in or near The Valley Diary distribution area (Cocking – Boxgrove – Lavant) are invited to submit three or four paintings, ceramics, sculptures or craftworks for display and possible sale over that weekend. All you need to do to take part is to **email us at eastdeanhall@gmail.com before Sunday 10th May** with a description of what type of work you've made (e.g. painting, pot, sculpture) and its size, so we can plan in advance how we're going to display them all.

We've never done this before, so in that sense it will be an artwork in itself! But on the purely practical level, if anyone knows where we can borrow a number of large free-standing display boards from please contact us, either on the above email or call **07503 282528**. Ars gratia artis! **Tim Weeks**

## How dogs are shaping West Sussex Property trends...

**Increasing numbers of homebuyers in and around West Sussex are starting their property search with one very important companion in mind - their dog.**

With miles of rolling countryside, winding footpaths and beautiful coastline to explore, it's hardly surprising that four-legged family members are playing an increasingly important role in property decisions. For many buyers, it's not just about the kitchen size or the commute, it's about the walkies!

Since around 3 million UK households acquired a dog during the pandemic, our furry friends have become even more central to daily life. A dog friendly home isn't simply a 'nice to have' anymore, it's firmly on the priority list.

Outdoor space is more important than ever. Fully enclosed gardens are a must, particularly for homes backing onto farmland or open countryside. After all, no one wants an unexpected sheep-chasing adventure. Pools and ponds are perfectly welcome provided they are safely fenced to keep both pets and little ones out of mischief.

Inside the home, practicality rules. Utility rooms are having a moment, doubling as paw-washing stations after muddy woodland walks or salty swims at the beach. Some buyers are even looking for built-in dog showers with hot water, dedicated pet areas or cleverly designed feeding stations. Luxury living, canine edition.

Location matters just as much as layout. Quiet roads, scenic walking routes, dog-friendly beaches and welcoming village communities all add serious appeal. Easy access to vets, and dog-friendly cafés or pubs are also on the list. After all, what's a Sunday stroll without a pub stop that offers water bowls and biscuits at the bar? The Kennels Goodwood even have a yearly dog festival, Goodwoof!

Dogs have always been loyal companions, but today they are influencing lifestyle choices more than ever. For many buyers, finding the perfect country home isn't just about ticking boxes, it's about choosing a place where every member of the family feels at home, paws included.

**Jennie Hancock [propertyacquisitions.co.uk](http://propertyacquisitions.co.uk)**



## Did you know...? Chichester Community Development Trust has officially made it onto the brand new Monopoly Chichester board!

**CCDT now has its very own Community Chest space in the game, sitting proudly alongside some of the city's most iconic locations. It's a lovely recognition of the role our community plays in Chichester life, and we're very excited about it.**

If you'd like to see it for yourself - or even, try your luck at landing on our square - come along to **Games Club at Graylingwell Chapel**. We meet from **2pm to 4pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month**, and it's the perfect chance to enjoy a relaxed afternoon, meet new people and test out the Chichester edition of Monopoly! Whether you're a board-game fan or just curious to spot CCDT on the board, you're very welcome to join us.





## SPRING FOR THE NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME

Daffodils offer a wonderful sunny face to the world and help lift our spirits as spring arrives. Many West Sussex National Garden Scheme gardens have hosts of daffodils, some in drifts, some scattered among orchards or in borders, beds and pots. Here's a taster of what's in store in 2026. Eleven beautiful West Sussex NGS gardens will be opening their gates for charity this April.

**The Old Vicarage, Washington**  
**Peelers Retreat, Arundel**  
**Rymans, Apuldram**  
**Chalk Farm Flowers, Findon**  
**Fittleworth House, Fittleworth**  
**53 Cedar Drive, Chichester**  
**25 Parklands Road, Chichester**  
**Manor of Dean, Tillington**  
**Newtimber Place, Newtimber**  
**Denmans Garden, Fontwell**  
**Highdown Gardens, Goring-by-Sea**

To learn more about the National Garden Scheme, discover your perfect garden or find out how to open your own garden, visit [ngs.org.uk](http://ngs.org.uk)

For gardens opening across East and West Sussex, pick up a copy of The National Garden Scheme Sussex Booklet, available free from many local stores, garden centres and libraries and as an online Flip Book...

[galleries.co.uk/NGS/sussex26](http://galleries.co.uk/NGS/sussex26)

1st Prize was Donated to East Dean Fabric Fund  
 2nd Prize was Donated to East Dean Fabric Fund  
 3rd Prize... Lesley Callaway, East Dean

**100 CLUB**

March dawned wet and miserable, but our three lucky winners shared prize money of £110. We thank you all so much for your support. It is lovely to see the valley gardens looking so bright and cheerful. Hopefully, our next draw on Sunday 5th April will be held on a lovely sunny day, and we can look forward to a drier spell of weather. **Wendy (811608)**



## All That Glitters...

### A Poem by Francis

He starred in the movie Golden Boy,  
 A huge hit on the big screen.  
 Especially when he swam a lot,  
 In one particular scene.

Golden coloured speedos,  
 Were essential for him to wear.  
 Testing the wardrobe lady,  
 Who didn't have a pair.

But she was very creative,  
 And here's the reason why.  
 She treated a pair of old Yfronts,  
 With some very out of date dye.

After filming the scene,  
 He then went to disrobe.  
 That's when he found out,  
 He'd got two Golden Globes.

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# Gallery

Wild Daffodils in West Dean Woods by Richard Pailthorpe, Café & Lake at the Museum, more lovely flowers, Red Sky and a Mono Walk in the Woods by HG. Why not share your local photos with our readers? Send them in to [editor@valleydiary.org](mailto:editor@valleydiary.org)



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Please note, applications can only be considered from people and groups from Singleton and Charlton.

Any individual or group wishing to be considered for a grant should contact the trustees at [trusteehenrysmithsc@gmail.com](mailto:trusteehenrysmithsc@gmail.com)

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## Endurance Dog Sledge

**Local WI's Zoe Mann is heading off to the Arctic to complete an endurance dog sledge across the wilderness. From Lavant to Lapland!**

Zoe says "two Years ago I climbed Kilimanjaro with some brilliant people to raise funds for the utterly wonderful team at Mountbatten Hospice on the Isle of Wight, who cared for my Mum in her final weeks and who made her cancer suffering a little more bearable.

Now I've signed up to dog sled over 240km across Sweden in the Arctic Circle with a small team of others to raise more money and awareness for them. I hate the cold! On this adventure, I can expect temperatures dropping to -20C, excessive snow as well as having to put up a tent - I mean what could possibly go wrong?!"

Please, please, if you can, support this amazing charity and me. I promise to keep you updated as I go along. Should anyone be feeling incredibly generous, there will be opportunities for more significant donations to convince me to even take a plunge into an icy lake - but you will need to make it worth it! Here's the JustGiving link, with Gift Aid options too, and more information about the venture!

[justgiving.com/page/zoe-mann](https://www.justgiving.com/page/zoe-mann)



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