



Spring 2017  
*Issue 68*



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SPEEN  
& NORTH  
DEAN  
*News*

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# Welcome! to the Spring edition of the Speen & North Dean News.

I hope you're all gearing yourselves up for the whirlwind of events that whisk us through the summer, starting with Fun Day on 10th June, and including the Speen Masquerade Ball, fetes in both Speen and North Dean, and culminating in September in our wonderful Festival.

The theme for the Speen Fete this year is 'Vintage' and, following on from the huge success of last year's scarecrow-tastic event, we are all being asked to decorate the village in a vintage theme - with *lots* and *lots* of bunting. There will be a prize for the best decorated house.

Along with all the festivities will be a lot of marquee upping and downing in both villages, so if you are able to help out Greg Cook and his team of volunteers on any of the dates listed on page 19 do give him a call - there's usually beer involved! And please also see the important plea below for much needed help at the Fete.

Finally, if you are not already signed up to The Village Diary and The Village Messenger, do email [jholmes@nildram.co.uk](mailto:jholmes@nildram.co.uk) to be put on the mailing lists - they will keep you up to date via email on a monthly basis with all the latest news and dates for your diary.

*Jacqui Laing*



Preparations for our Village Fete are well under way and we are putting together a full programme of events and entertainment for everyone to enjoy. However in order to achieve this we need the support of at least 40 volunteers. Many villagers already help every year and their contribution is invaluable but July is a busy month and their commitment cannot be taken for granted. To enable us to put on the best possible event we must increase our pool of helpers. Will you be part of it? Would you be able to assist in setting up or looking after a sideshow during the afternoon or clearing away afterwards, even for only a couple of hours? It is not difficult work and is great fun.

We really need your help so please contact William at [summersw@btinternet.com](mailto:summersw@btinternet.com) or phone him on 01494 488344, we would love you to join our team.

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## Next Edition

Copy for the next edition is **due by 10th July** with a planned publication date of the end of July. Please send photos separately from text, together with captions and a consent form (downloaded from the SNDN website [www.speenbucks.org.uk](http://www.speenbucks.org.uk)) if any of the photos are of children. Please send to [editor@speenbucks.org.uk](mailto:editor@speenbucks.org.uk).

## Welcome Packs

The Good Neighbours scheme was set up many years ago and is now run by Pat Richardson in Speen and Judith Broadley in North Dean. One service is to provide new residents with a Welcome Pack of village information, so if you know of anyone new to the area please call: Pat Richardson (Speen) 01494 488627 or Judith Broadley (North Dean) 01494 563178 [cooljude@btopenworld.com](mailto:cooljude@btopenworld.com)

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# WHAT'S ON

## *in Speen & North Dean*

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### MAY

|        |                              |                         |                            |
|--------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 11 May | Speen v. North Dean Golf     | Ellesborough Golf Club  | Charlie Pearson/Peter Keen |
| 23 May | Speen Playing Fields AGM     | Pavilion 8pm            | Debbie Tilt 488733         |
| 24 May | Speen Helping Hospices Lunch | The Horse Trust 12 noon | Christine Symondson 488654 |
| 26 May | Village Pub Night            | Village Hall 7pm        | Cat Cook 488393            |

### JUNE

|         |   |                           |                         |
|---------|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 June  | WI 'Literary Luminaries of Bucks'           | Speen Village Hall 7.45pm | Jean Morris 488529      |
| 10 June | Fun Day                                     | Speen Playing Field 1pm   | Matt Davies 488847      |
| 10 June | Garden Group visit to<br>Thenford Arboretum | Coach from KWIV 12.30pm   | Marion Grimsdale 488722 |
| 24 June | Black & White Masquerade Ball               | Speen School Field        | Helen Davies 488847     |
| 30 June | Village Pub Night                           | Village Hall 7pm          | Cat Cook 488393         |

### JULY

|         |  |                              |                           |
|---------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 6 July  | WI 'RNLI'  | Speen Village Hall 7.45pm    | Jean Morris 488529        |
| 8 July  | Speen Fete   | Speen Playing Field 2pm      | Lesley Thorn-Davis 488851 |
| 12 July | Garden Group visit to<br>Wind in the Willows, Denham | Meet at KWIV 1.30pm          | Catherine Butler 488412   |
| 16 July | Horse Trust HHH Fete                                 | The Horse Trust              | 488464                    |
| 30 July | North Dean Fete                                      | North Dean Playing Field 2pm | Alison Kent 07887 963450  |
| 30 June | Village Pub Night                                    | Village Hall 7pm             | Cat Cook 488393           |

### SEPTEMBER

|               |                     |         |                 |
|---------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------|
| 2nd-18th Sept | Speen Festival 2017 | Various | Cat Cook 488393 |
|---------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------|

### NOVEMBER

|              |                     |                      |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 4th November | Speen Bonfire Night | Speen Playing Fields | Clare Morris 488553 |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|

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## Speen Village Presents



## Black and White Masquerade Ball

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# SPEENPRE-SCHOOL

*Helen Davies, Chair*

The Pre-school has had a wonderful spring term, which started with a surprise Ofsted Inspection. To insure the inspectors see a typical day at Pre-schools/Early Years educators they give just 24 hours notice of their inspection. The inspection went really well and we are both delighted and proud to be given a **"Good"** rating in all areas. With the inspection over we had a few nail biting weeks wait for the report. If you wish, you can view the whole report at **[www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk)**. Below are just a few of the comments made by the inspector:

"Staff make good use of their assessments and development to plan a broad range of play-based experiences that children find interesting and challenging."

"Children enjoy their time at Pre-school, Staff are kind and welcoming and help children build a positive view of themselves."

The children have had a wonderful time this term celebrating different festivals and trying a lot of new food. They celebrated the Chinese New Year with craft activities based around the dragon and had noodles, crispy duck pancakes and spring rolls as part of snack time. St David's Day was celebrated with fabulous paintings of daffodils, and making Welsh Cakes. The children were also treated to a story about playing rugby for Wales. The Pre-school is very lucky to have parents who once or twice a term, give up their time to come in and read with the children or help them celebrate certain festivals. As you can see the staff endeavour to provide a range of opportunities for the children to learn about different cultures and ways of living.

The staff team sets off each half-term with a plan of activities and themes for the children to get involved in and update these plans weekly in line with every child's needs and interests. The children have enjoyed a huge range of activities this term, from junk modelling to getting messy with coloured spaghetti to finding dinosaurs in sand. Each week the role play area is set up differently and has included a building site, vets surgery, hairdressers and offices. A very popular activity towards the end of term has been potion making, encouraging the children to mix lots of different coloured waters and sparkles. There were dragon potions, fairy potions and making frog potions!

The last week of term there was huge excitement provided for them by the council. The children couldn't believe how big some of the tarmacking machines were. The walk to the village hall was a test in road safety and time consuming as the children all wanted to ask the workmen what each piece of equipment did. During the pre-school day a lot of time was spent out in the courtyard watching the big machines do their job.

The Pre-school is very lucky to have amazing outside space available to them. For many years we have taken advantage of the site in Ridgely's field to offer a Forest School based learning environment. A massive thank you goes to the Playing Fields Committee who have very kindly donated a shed to the Pre-school, placed on the Forest school site, that allows the staff to leave equipment on site and not have to carry everything over from the village hall.



The parents were very busy at the end of the term with our annual Easter egg hunt, with the playing fields playing host to nearly 80 children and their families on a treasure hunt for clues, which led them to their final destination, the village hall where their 'eggscellent' gift awaited. We were very lucky to have glorious weather. Parents and Grandparents were rewarded with Speen's finest home-made cakes, while the children turned their hand to an assortment of crafts. A big thank you to those who helped and attended.

We were again welcomed by Speen Church for our Easter Service. The children performed a brilliant story based on The Three Little Pigs. Who knew the big bad wolf was only after the pigs' Easter eggs! The children started the service with a parade of their homemade Easter bonnets, it was a very colourful display. The Church is undergoing major restoration and we are very grateful to Heather McIntyre and the church for allowing us to hold our service there as usual.

We attended several mornings at Speen School this term, allowing the children to see how a 'big' school runs and to meet the teachers in an informal setting. The staff of Pre-school and School work very closely together to make the transition to full time education as easy as possible for those children moving up. We are also very much looking forward to getting involved in SpeenSchoolFest again this year.

**Speen Pre-school is open to children aged from 2-5 years. We have spaces available during several sessions. To enquire about a place or receive a prospectus please call Pre-School on 01494 488160 during term time or email [office@speenpreschool.org.uk](mailto:office@speenpreschool.org.uk).**

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# SPEENSCHOOL & PTA

Alex Allen, PTA Chair

## *Spring has Sprung at Speen School*

This term has passed quickly but we have certainly been busy at Speen School. The term got off to a wintery start in January with a sprinkling of snow when the children enjoyed building snowmen in the school grounds.

Later in January the PTA funded a theatre group to come in and talk to the children about road safety as part of a fun and interactive show and in February the school held a Safer Internet day. All the children took part in activities to remind them how to keep themselves safe on line with advice provided to parents.

The children have also been on two school trips this term. Firstly, a trip to the Royal Festival Hall to watch the Bright Sparks concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and most recently the whole school paid a visit to Whipsnade Zoo to study the different animals that they had also been learning about in class.

On Shrove Tuesday the PTA joined the school at lunch time and organised various pancake and egg themed races for the children, great fun was had by all and of course pancakes were on the menu for school lunch!

Speen School celebrated World Book Day in early March. All children came to school dressed as a character from their favourite story and had to prepare a short speech about their chosen book. The best presenters won book vouchers to spend at the Usbourne Book Fair held in the school that afternoon.

It has also been an active term for the Key Stage One children, who have participated in 2 inter-school sports tournaments. In February several children played basketball at Risborough Upper School and in March we welcomed several local schools to Speen Playing Fields to compete in the annual cross-country race. The PTA supplied all the spectators with cakes and refreshments.

Speen's legendary Safari Supper organised by the PTA took place in mid March and was attended by well over 70 guests including both current parents and local villagers. It is wonderful to see so many continue to support our small school and particular thanks go to the families who hosted on the night, especially to those who no longer have children at the school.

We marked Red Nose Day at school with all children and staff coming in to school with 'crazy hair' and raised over £120 for Comic Relief. We saw a variety of bright hair colours, some amazing wigs and several whacky hair styles!



As part of a drive to raise funds for school in new ways that are less reliant on events, the PTA has started up a school lottery. Anyone can play and help support our local school at the same time. Tickets cost just £1 per week and 40% of all funds raised comes back to school to invest in new resources. Every Saturday one player in Speen is guaranteed to win up to £10. Match all 6 numbers and win £25K! Sign up for a minimum of 3 months or up to 12 months on

a rolling direct debit. Cancel at anytime. All data is held securely and not shared with anyone else.

Visit: [www.yourschoollottery.co.uk](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk). Play Now - Search for Speen

Our other key non-event fund raiser is Easy Fundraising – a simple click to raise funds while you shop online without costing you anything! Speen PTA registered for 'Easyfundraising' in the hope that whilst we all do our online shopping we can raise some funds for school. There are over 3,000 shops on board, ready to make a donation from 0.5% to 5% of your spend, including Amazon, John Lewis, & Sainsbury's – it doesn't cost you a penny extra! Sign up at: [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

Going forward we are delighted and extremely grateful to have received a generous grant from the Speen Shop Charities Fund to help towards the purchase of a touchscreen interactive TV to replace the faulty projector at school. This new technological investment will offer both staff and children some very exciting new learning tools.

You may spot that Speen School PTA are now hiring out crockery and cutlery. We invested in 120 place settings for the ball last year should you require any extra crockery or cutlery for a big social event. For more information please contact me on 489838 or [alex\\_bloor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alex_bloor@yahoo.co.uk)

Wishing you all a happy Summer. We are looking forward to a fun packed Summer term, in particular our annual SpeenFest, the Village Summer Ball and Speen Fete!

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# SPEENPLAYING FIELDS

*Clare Morris, Chair*

---

Having recently been handed the baton of Chair from Tony Bobroff, I have spent the last few months gaining an understanding of all that the role encompasses.

The Playing Fields sit in the middle of the village with Ridgeley's Field to the rear together or separately providing a common area for all kinds of village events and activities. Neither are council-maintained 'parks' but are held in trust for the village and managed by a group of volunteer trustees who contribute time and energy ensuring a safe, financially sustainable and pleasant space for all villagers to use.

Obviously for events such as The Fete, Festival, Fun Day and Fireworks the fields provide the ideal venue but the fields are also used regularly by the Pre-school, for events such as the multi-school cross country which Speen School hosts, and generally by our children and young people using the play equipment, kicking a ball about or making the most of the bike park's facilities.

One of the worst jobs for the committee members is to empty all the bins across the playing fields – again these are not council fields, so this is another task undertaken by volunteers. Emptying bins is still better than litter so please do use them, however the bins are frequently filled with dog mess, despite signs saying do not use the bins for this purpose. Please take it home with you. Dogs may not be brought onto the main Playing Field and on Ridgeley's field, where much of it is used by Pre-school, please keep your dog on the lead to ensure they do not leave their mess where a toddler could be playing the following day. It is your responsibility to ensure you clean up after your dog and there are no excuses.

On a much brighter note we have recently been granted some money from Lacey Green Parish Council. This is to be used to upgrade the play equipment in the main field, which will go some considerable way to reviving this area. We are aiming to engage the children to give us some guidance as to how to spend the money wisely, ensuring that we install equipment that will be actively used. Watch this space...

Likewise we have the opportunity to apply for a grant to further provide new sporting facilities or activities to engage the wider community, not just the young. If you have any ideas, however daft they may seem, please let me know.

Although these two opportunities switch focus onto new facilities it is important to note that the majority of money raised for the playing fields through activities such as bonfire night and critically the village-wide draw provides just enough income for us to pay for the grass to be cut regularly, for insurance, for utilities, for the pavilion and for a fund for a replacement mower.

We rely on the Playing Fields Draw for over half of our income and so a huge thanks to the many of you who enter this draw. When your local draw seller knocks on your door selling numbers please respond generously, you may even be a winner. Thanks to Cristina Delgado and team for making this happen.

We hold bi-annual work parties, which we would be grateful if as many villagers as possible could attend to help. Jobs can involve cutting hedges, washing play equipment, trimming shrubs, weeding etc. These are not glamorous tasks and I know we all have similar lists waiting for us back home but as they say 'many hands do make light work.' Carrying out this work as a village saves us having to raise more money to employ people or the alternative is for the area to look neglected and unloved and a vicious circle begins where people use the fields less regularly for precisely that reason. We are giving you plenty of notice so please put the date in your diary now - the Autumn Work Party is on 7th October.

Finally two more dates for your diaries. Our Annual General Meeting will take place on the 23rd May at 8pm in the Pavilion and everyone is welcome to attend. Secondly with significantly more entertainment value, the Fun Day is on 10th June. When you begin to see coloured ribbons adorning the trees and lamp posts of the village in early summer, you know the day is nearly upon us when the various streets and neighbourhoods battle for the coveted first place. This is a free event (donations are welcome but not obligatory) so please do come along and join your team even if you do not participate.

Fingers crossed for a sunny summer season on our village's communal space and thanks from me to all the trustees for their continued support and commitment.

*Clare Morris*

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# SPEEN HELPING HOSPICES

Ann James, Treasurer

2016 was a very successful year for Speen Helping Hospices and everyone on the team would like to thank all those that continue to give their support and make the events such fun.

At the end of the year we were able to donate £6,800 raised from The Spring Lunch, The Bridge Afternoon and The Christmas Market. The money was split evenly between the four Hospices supported by the SHH – Florence Nightingale House, Helen & Douglas House, Rennie Grove Hospice Care and The South Bucks Day Hospice. They were delighted with the donations and in response the SHH received lovely letters and certificates of thanks from each of the Hospices. The SHH team do work very hard during the year to put on these events, giving freely of their time, but it is so worthwhile when the vitally needed funds we are able to donate are so gratefully received.

## *Spring Lunch - 24th May*

The Spring Lunch to be held on Wednesday 24th May in the beautiful Tythe Barn at The Horses Trust is the first event of the year and the team are already planning the menu. This is one of the most popular events run by the SHH and sadly as we can only seat 60 people it is already sold-out. There is a waiting list in the event of any cancellations so if you have missed out and you would like to add your name please ring Sally Codling on 488506.



The later part of year is going to be very busy for the SHH as we have events running in September, October and November.

## *Food Fair - 10th September*

In September the SHH have been invited to run a Food Fair as part of the Speen Festival and is scheduled for Sunday 10th September. The SHH

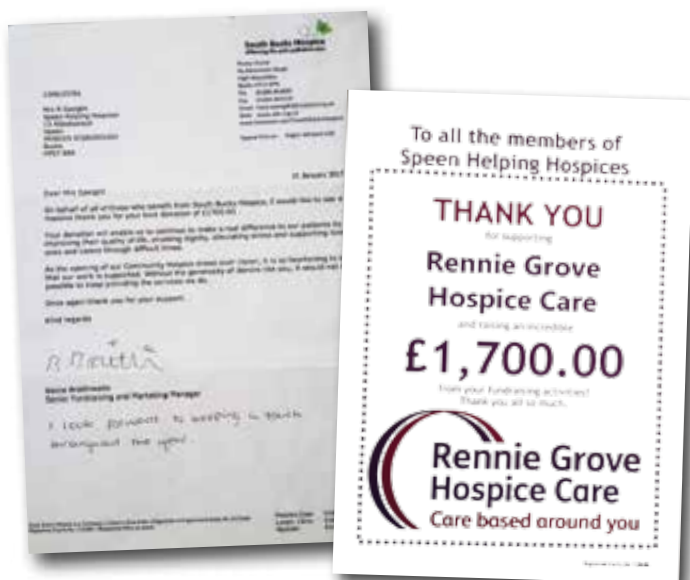
team are very excited and this will definitely be an event not to be missed, so please make a note in your diaries! If you know of any local producers of food or drink that might be interested in taking part would you please contact our Chairman, Christine Symondson on 488654 or email [christine@symondson.co.uk](mailto:christine@symondson.co.uk)

## *Bridge Afternoon - 11th October*

The Bridge Afternoon is scheduled for Wednesday 11th October at the lovely home of Judy Keen. This is the third year for this event which is proving to be very popular. There is limited space but if you would like to enquire about playing please contact Sally Codling on 488506.

## *Christmas Market - 18th November*

The final event of the year will be the Annual Christmas Market which after the great success of last year at its new venue will be held again at The Lacy Green Village Hall on the slightly later date of Saturday 18th November. We value the support we have always received from Speen residents and apologise for the Market not being in the village but hope that you will all still come and see us. It is always such a fun day with the opportunity to choose unique gifts from the work of local artists and designers and of course homemade cakes!



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Beyond your expectations

# SPEENVILLAGE HALL

*Bill Groves, Chairman Speen Village Hall Management Committee*



The Village Hall continues to host village organisations and events.

The Pop-Up Pub held on the last Friday of every month has proved very popular, with some 70 villagers turning up for a very

enjoyable evening, so why don't you come along and join them for the next one on 26th May.

The Bridge Club which meets every Monday at 2.30pm in the Village Hall continues to thrive. We have recently recruited four new members and we are also drawing in card players from surrounding villages.

With the recent resurfacing of Studridge Lane I have been asked to clarify the status regarding the car parking for the Village Hall.

The car parking area is owned by Bucks County Council Highways Department and is maintained by them. However in 1970 the space was allocated by the County Council for the exclusive use by visitors to the Village Hall.

During the week this is primarily the Pre-School and at week ends it is parties and other functions so regretfully we can not allow any parking by non visitors to the hall.

The Village Hall is available for hire at reduced rates to villagers and village organisations- if you wish to make a booking please call Sue Taylor on 488500.

## SPEENWI

*Jean Morris*

Our new year saw June Pilkington elected as President as well as some new Committee members. This year we celebrated our 57th year as an evening WI in Speen with a party to which members of other WIs in the area were invited.

We have continued to have interesting speakers on a variety of subjects. In June we shall be finding out about the 'Literary Luminaries of Bucks' which is very topical as Visit England is celebrating a Year of Literary Heroes. We all know of some of the famous writers of the area but this will reveal a much greater insight into their lives.

As well as monthly meetings we have a good programme of events over the coming months. These will include a Garden Party – with tea and cakes of course – at a member's home, a walking tour of Marlow followed by a boat trip on

the Thames will take place in the summer and a wine and nibbles evening in August is bound to be popular. There will of course be a pub lunch organised in the Autumn.



Our May meeting, held in the chapel this year due to elections, is always a discussion evening and this year the topics are fighting loneliness and the problem of microfibers in our oceans. These are the Resolutions to be voted on at the National AGM being held in Liverpool in June.

Our programme is always on the Village diary and there are posters around the village to keep you in touch with what WI is up to. There may be more to it than you expect!

*Tel: 488529 • speenwi@gmail.com*

# ALLIED HEALTHCARE

**A**s a population we are getting older and many of us will be faced with finding nursing or personal care for an elderly relative or planning our own future care if we become incapacitated. Bucks, residents are increasingly making a choice, where possible, of living in their own homes for as long as possible and the local branch of Allied Healthcare is aiming to make this option easier.

The local branch of Allied Healthcare has been operating for over 27 years, based just outside of High Wycombe, has a proven track record of providing domiciliary care in the community.

Increasingly there are fewer hospital beds and long term care homes that are accessible to those needing help, support and care, and most people, if given the choice, would prefer to be treated at home with their own possessions around them. We can offer a wide variety of Care calls from 15 minute pop-in call, once a day to multiple calls or indeed a full time Live In Care.

The offices of Allied Healthcare at High Wycombe are able to help with assessing your needs and advising on all aspects of your care. Before care starts you would be visited by our assessor to ensure that a comprehensive care plan was written and tailor made to suit the needs of the client. This can be for a basic care package to a more specialized and complex packages in the case of a serious illness. We will help you to consider whether you need a fulltime carer, perhaps a special bed or other equipment, or maybe additional carers at certain times of the day to help with lifting or turning. If needed you would have the advice of the 'In House' Trainer to advise on specialist Moving and Handling issues. Allied is willing to go the extra mile to provide the highest standards of care. They try to ensure clients build a relationship with a small team of carers rather than having a constantly changing set of faces. They recommend the use of a Keysafe which ensures a carer, can always gain access to a client's house to provide the care and raise the alarm if needed.

All of the Care workers are trained to the highest standard as required by our regulators, CQC and our stringent internal audit team. Many of our workers have training and expertise in specialist areas but if we needed to we would provide training to meet a specific need of a client.

**If you would like more information about Allied and the services we offer then call 01494 488040, and we can meet with you for a no obligation visit or provide you with details and costings of our services.**

## Work for Allied Healthcare

We always have a need for additional employees to support the services we offer. If you are interested or know of a friend who is interested in joining us as an employee we offer an attractive package. We provide care across the High Wycombe and surrounding areas.

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**Do you or a relative require care or support to live your life the way you choose? If so, Allied Healthcare can help. We have been offering an excellent dependable service in the Buckinghamshire area for over 27 years.**

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**Email: [highwycombe@alliedhealthcare.com](mailto:highwycombe@alliedhealthcare.com)**

If you are interested in becoming a Carer or working with Allied Healthcare then please call the numbers above for more information and an application pack. Allied Healthcare is an equal opportunities employer and is regulated by the CQC. Allied Healthcare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, adults and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



# SPEENCHURCH

Graham Peart, Restoration Project Manager

## PROJECT RESTORATION COMMUNITY LANDMARK REDEVELOPMENT

A few words from the site. It is looking very good indeed!

Eleven weeks have passed since the project commenced on 9th January.

Initial demolition and excavation work went to plan. A total of 41 large lorry loads of spoil were removed from the site, somewhat more than expected.

Construction of the retaining wall and the new building followed. Gary and his team made a beautiful job of the brickwork and pointing. Steve the carpenter constructed the roof, marking out the position of the roof joists, cutting the angles and notching and numbering the timbers and the following day assembling the entire structure within a few hours. Quite amazing skills.

National Power had a 'moment' when they arrived to connect a new underground power cable and then realised that they had arrived with no cable. It came 3 hours later, was fed into the duct and then found to be a few metres short. It was successfully sorted later that day.

At present, the focus is on the services within the building. Electrician and plumber are on site and making good progress.

Delivery of the windows and doors is imminent and when installed the building will be secure and watertight.

Scaffolding will be removed to allow this next phase.

The design team have completed the scheme for the kitchen facilities and decoration of the interior and the finishing trades will complete implementation.

Try to contain your curiosity for a few weeks more. Completion is on schedule for Friday 28th April, with only some external works to follow on.

Save the date! On Sunday June 25th, the new facilities will be officially opened at a service led by Rev Heather McIntyre, followed by open house and afternoon tea with music throughout the afternoon. Come and celebrate the restoration and revitalisation of our beautiful village chapel and important local landmark

The new halls are a tribute to the extraordinary skills of villagers who built the original church, by hand, in 1802. Not satisfied, the first extension and balcony followed in 1817. The masterclass build of the large extension doubled the size of the church in 1834. The team that constructed the essential hall facilities in 1965 literally built on those foundations. A pragmatic approach then, as now, that would undoubtedly have met with the approval of those church founders in the continuing story of Speen Church that began over 200 years ago.

Many more pictures and videos can be seen at  
[www.speenchurch.org/project-restoration](http://www.speenchurch.org/project-restoration)



Pictures by Andy Thomson

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# SPEENTENNIS COURT

Philippa Lane, Membership Secretary

With the prospect of spring easing into summer and with warm days and light evenings on the horizon, now is the ideal time to consider becoming a member of Speen Tennis Court.

The village is very fortunate to have the wonderful amenity of our well-maintained all-weather tennis court. Situated at the top of the playing fields, our court should be looking spruced up after its spring clean to clear away the build up of moss over the winter.

The court is administered by a group of volunteers from the village and membership is open to anyone living in Speen, North Dean or neighbouring villages. About 50 local families are current members.

Our annual rates remain at £30 for an adult or £55 for family membership, which allows unlimited use of the court throughout the year, subject to the booking system. These funds allow us to maintain the court in

good condition and we are keen to see as many locals as possible making use of the facility.

The court has very good availability even during weekends and school holidays.

In addition, as a club affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association we receive an annual allocation of tickets for the Wimbledon Championships which we distribute to eligible members through a ballot held in the spring.

We organise friendly open tennis mornings with our neighbours at Lacey Green Tennis Club during the summer. We are also able to put players in touch with local coaches for private lessons.

If you are not already a member but would like to join, or simply want more information about playing tennis in the village, please contact our membership secretary Philippa Lane at [lanetribe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lanetribe@yahoo.co.uk) or by phone on 488453.

## SPEENMARQUEE

Greg Cook



### *Marquee Upping - dates for your diary*

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| FUN DAY         | <b>Up</b> Friday 9th June 1700 at the Playing Fields for Funday - Beer and BBQ Friday evening - bring your own drink<br><b>Down</b> Sat 10th June after Funday |
| SPEEN SCHOOL    | <b>Up</b> Friday 16th June 1800 at Speen School for School Fest (Kids) and Speen Ball<br><b>Down</b> Sunday 25th June at 1500                                  |
| SPEEN FETE      | <b>Up</b> Friday 7th July 1800 at Playing Fields for Speen Village Fete<br><b>Down</b> Sunday 9th July 1800  |
| NORTH DEAN FETE | <b>Up</b> Friday 28th July at North Dean village playing field for Fete on Sunday 30th July<br><b>Down</b> TBC   |
| SPEEN FESTIVAL  | <b>Up</b> Friday 25th August 1800 at Speen Playing Fields for Speen Festival<br><b>Down</b> TBC after festival   |

As always there will be free beer for those adults assisting with the upping and downing and this is not a men only event, more hands are always useful and we are seeking volunteers to learn how to co-ordinate and lead erecting and striking so the knowledge can be passed on and the tradition of our own marquee maintained.

*Please contact Greg Cook on 488939*

# SPEENFESTIVAL2017



## Who's running Speen festival this year?

Hello, just wanted to say hi and introduce myself as I'm the one who is pulling together the Speen Festival this year. I want to go public for a few reasons; I want to introduce the Festival for those who might not have had the pleasure of seeing a Speen Festival in the past, I want to demystify my role, I want to highlight why I think it is worth my time and how I'm playing my role.

'You must be mad' they said, and maybe I am, but the bottom line is I've only been in the village for 8 years and I have seen 4 amazing festivals, my children have participated in brilliant things, I have had lots of fun, I've learnt new skills volunteering and now I could not let this year slip away because there was no-one to run it. Maybe I'm just being selfish, I want there to be another festival to enjoy and for my children to enjoy and there are so many people ready to assist. Now this is where I want to dispel a myth ... the Speen Festival is not controlled by crack committee who brow beat community individuals to deliver events on their behalf. There are a vast array of talented people in Speen who want to share their skills with their friends and neighbours, the festival is an amazing forum where you can think of an event and make it happen. It is wholly delivered by volunteers.

The role of the Festival core team is to provide central functions (like the marquee, logistics, box office, marketing) so that the community can deliver their various events. Put them all together and hey presto we have a Festival! In fact this year we have a BIG festival. We have no committee meetings, we have pop-up pub nights. I have no grand artistic vision for the programme as I consider myself to be an enabler not the arbiter of taste for what you do and don't want to see. It is truly a reflection of the

skills, passions, enthusiasm of the local residents who have stepped forward to share. Since the Festival started for the millennium it has been cited as a Festival 'celebrating local talent and creativity in the heart of the Chilterns' and it will continue to do that in many forms, including this year a Dog Show!

For me the Festival is more vital for us than ever as it is a great meeting place for our village. With the loss of our pub we lost a major forum for meeting people in the village, particularly for new residents. If you don't have Speen pre-school or school children or haven't yet jumped at joining a committee the opportunities to meet your fellow villagers are more difficult and the Festival fills this gap. When I left the community of the RAF, Speen was a wonderful new home because I quickly found a new community, and this was partly because I volunteered to help with the Festival marketing creating a whole new network of people for me. So if you don't really know what it is all about don't be daunted by The Speen Festival, it is organic and evolving and is no less or more than the residents are able to deliver. That said, what I have seen to date proves the villagers to be amazing! Please think of the Festival as an opportunity, for you, your children, (or their CV), your friendships, your community; and be sure to block out 2-18th September in your diary.

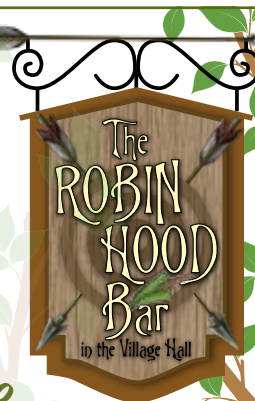
*Cat Cook – Speen Festival 2017 Coordinator*



The Robin Hood Bar  
will be open at The Village Hall  
from 7pm on the following dates:

**26th MAY • 30th JUNE • 21st JULY**  
**25th AUGUST • 29th SEPTEMBER**

*All welcome*



## Speen SchoolFest

Since Kate Laughton first created SpeenSchoolFest in 2009 it has become embedded into the School calendar as an annual explosion of arts, craft, dance, music and creativity for the children of Speen School, Speen Pre-School and, importantly, other local schools. Made possible by funds from Speen Festival, this annual creation is a glorious opportunity for the children to not only take part in a huge variety of activities but also interact with children from other schools, aiding the transition as they move on to 'big school'.

Over the three days of this year's SpeenSchoolFest the children will attend the 'Everyday Superhero Academy'. For day one the children will be welcomed into the academy and start their superhero training exploring what is meant by the Academy's motto 'The Best Me I Can Be'. On day two the children will attend the Helping Hands HQ to explore the work undertaken by Everyday Superheroes. Their final day is graduation day and the children's everyday superhero skills will be put to the test, culminating in their graduation ceremony.

## What Happens to Festival Money?

So who benefits from the Speen Festival? If we are to focus on purely the financial elements of the Festival you might not be aware that the Festival endeavours to support local charities.

Although not a charity itself it does not aim to make significant profit, only to be self-sustaining for the following festival and to be able to give something to other charitable organisations.

In 2015 over £1,000 was given to charities, including Speen Helping Hospices and Agape. This year the Festival is generating funds for the Village Hall by holding monthly pop-up pub nights, a proportion of proceeds raised at events held in Speen Chapel will go back into Project Restoration and any charitable organisation hosting an event will be able to benefit from funds they raise.



Whilst the Festival funds support the delivery of this event, it is the creativity and drive of talented parents at the school who continue to make it happen. In this way the Festival delivers an amazing opportunity for them to use their own creativity and share those skills with the children. The core team is supported by volunteers and through their engagement other parents sometimes discover new skills, rekindle old ones and enjoy working alongside the children. Additionally, SpeenSchoolFest

is supported by volunteers from the wider community, further strengthening community links and cross-generational engagement.

*This year's SpeenSchoolFest – The Superhero Academy will run 20-22nd June.*

## WATCH OUT FOR ...

### Returning Favourites:

Martin Hart Jazz Night  
Questions Worth Asking  
Bike Park Challenge  
Science Matters

### New for 2017:

Pop-up Cinema  
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Comedy Night  
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The theme for this year's Fete is  
 **Vintage** 

Following the success of last year's Scarecrow theme, this year we want to decorate the whole village in a **vintage theme** - with LOTS of bunting so get creative and design your own masterpiece outside your home. Let's see who can create the best display and win the Best Decorated House

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# LOCAL VOLUNTEERING

Many people in Speen enjoy helping with local charities, here are just a few:

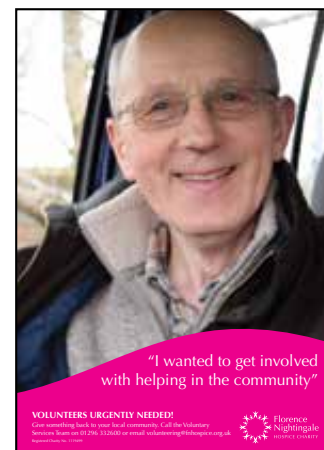
## *Florence Nightingale Hospice*

Many of you will already know, through the activities of the 'Speen Helping Hospices' group or otherwise, about the wonderful work which our local Hospices do, supporting patients with life-limiting illnesses – and (very importantly) their families. I am a volunteer driver for the Florence Nightingale Hospice, based at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. I've been doing this for about four years. My work involves collecting a patient at their home about 9.30 in the morning, delivering them to the Hospice for a 10am start, and then collecting them again at 3pm and taking them home. On a typical day there will be up to ten patients in the Day Hospice, where they get a range of practical, medical, emotional and therapeutic support.

The nurses and volunteer staff in the Hospice are exceptional people – cheerful, positive, good-humoured, wonderfully caring and loving. Every patient I have driven over the years finds their day at the Hospice a godsend, a place where they are cared for body and soul and where they receive and give support to others. It is a privilege to be involved with this work and to see at first hand the great benefits it brings to patients and their families.

Florence Nightingale need more volunteers – drivers for the Day Hospice, but also volunteers to work in their shops, especially in Thame. If you would like to know more, please contact Tracey O'Hara, Voluntary Services Manager, on 01296 332600, [TraceyOHara@fnhospice.org.uk](mailto:TraceyOHara@fnhospice.org.uk)

*Christopher Boyce*



"I wanted to get involved with helping in the community"

**VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY NEEDED**  
For more information, please contact Tracey O'Hara on 01296 332600 or email [volunteering@fnhospice.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@fnhospice.org.uk)



## *Life In Full Trust Charity (LIFT)*

Some years ago Moira McLure, a member of Speen Baptist Church, had a 'calling' to a remote and poverty stricken area in South Gondar in North West Ethiopia where she founded a Mother and Child Project now supported by the LIFT Charity (Life in Full Trust)

The Charity supports a team of eight staff working with the neediest families in the community providing pre-school education for 3 to 6 year olds, a Health Care Clinic and Income Generation training and has transformed the local community bringing hope where there had been only hunger and despair.

Many people in the village support LIFT, including Alison Janes and Vera Lennard, who respectively knitted this lovely hat and blanket.



[www.lifeinfulltrustorg/motherchild-project](http://www.lifeinfulltrustorg/motherchild-project)

See page 27 for more information on how to support this project

## *Hearing Dogs for Deaf People*



When they are one year old, Hearing Dogs start a 12 week training programme at the centre in Saunderton before they go on to meet their recipient, and during that time they need volunteers to look after the dogs in their homes in the evenings and at weekends.

All you have to do is commit to dropping them off in Saunderton each morning before 9am and picking them up after 5pm.

The two little Poodles that I have enjoyed looking after have been a joy and great company. So eager to please and we enjoyed lovely walks at the weekends. The dogs will all have been socialised well in their first year, so they enjoy company and can handle any activity that you have planned.

Of course, it is very hard when they have to move on, but I have had very nice e-mails from their recipients. And it's good to know that lives have been changed for the better due to these dear little dogs.

For more information visit [www.hearingdogs.org.uk](http://www.hearingdogs.org.uk)

*Maureen Laing*

If you are interested in finding a volunteering position, have a look at [volunteeringbucks.org.uk](http://volunteeringbucks.org.uk). The website provides general information about volunteering, access to a newsletter and, most usefully, a search engine which will suggest opportunities potentially suitable for you.



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# NEWS FROM SOUTH GONDER

Kate Vale

The South Gonder Mother and Child Project works in a remote highland village in Ethiopia to provide healthcare, education and income

generation opportunities to the poorest single mothers and their children. The project was initiated by long term North Dean resident, Moira McLure, and is supported in the UK by a team led by Louise Wilson.

In the last five years, over 20 families have been given the chance to be part of income generating activities such as silk spinning and baking. The children are moving onto state schools at age 7 reading and writing in both Amharic and English as well as having a good command of basic maths. This provides a real opportunity for the families to escape the poverty they have been trapped in.



Moira will be coming back here at the beginning of May to update us on the progress of the project. She will be bringing some of the

Ethiopian supporters with her and you are cordially invited to join us for a light lunch in the newly built Speen church hall on the 7th May to find out more about this life changing project.

As the project evolves, we will be looking to create a purpose built kindergarten to support other children within the village. This will require significant funds so we're starting early with some fundraising activities. See the ads below! Every penny raised goes directly to supporting the project in Ethiopia.



For further information about this inspiring project and the opportunity to sponsor a South Gonder family for a year please go to the website at [lifeinfulltrust.org/mother-child-project](http://lifeinfulltrust.org/mother-child-project)

**Join us for the first  
Speen Spring Knit & Crochet  
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Workshops start at 10.30am and finish at 4.30pm  
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A day of spring themed crochet and knitting workshops  
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providing healthcare, support and kindergarten education  
to single mothers and their children.

With four different workshops to choose from, all with morning  
and afternoon sessions, you'll have the opportunity to possibly  
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**For more details contact Kate on 01494 488622**  
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# WILDLIFEWATCH

Peter Symonds

## Spring 2017

A flock of ten Rose-ringed Parakeets seen by Sue Newton in her garden situated up towards Turnip End on 12th December was the best winter record. They settled in a large tree at the end of her garden and flew down to the bird feeders below. Ten of these large green parakeets had been reported in Hughenden Park on 25th November so this might have been the same group. They may become a more common sight as they spread their range. Large numbers were seen in Beaconsfield and Flackwell Heath in December with one observer counting 900 on his property. Most of the birds return to the Thames at night and fly down river to Esher where thousands roost together. These naturalised escapees have adapted very successfully and pose a threat to our indigenous hole nesting birds like Owls and kestrels. Nevertheless they are a very colourful, exciting and exotic addition to anybody's garden list.

Less exotic but quite fascinating as well are "murmurations" of Starlings in the area. Huge numbers of these birds flock together and form acrobatic displays before roosting. Jeremy Symondson reported a murmuration in Great Hampden and on 19th November over 1000 birds were seen murmuring over Speen. In early December huge flocks of winter thrushes, mainly Redwings and Fieldfares, passed over the village. As conditions hardened many of these birds raided berry bearing trees or sought out fallen apples in people's gardens.

Ravens are being seen and heard increasingly around the village. Alistair Blundell reports sightings from Ridgleys Field, whilst they have also come down in one of the

large gardens in Grubbins Lane to feed on dead squirrels. I heard a Raven "cronking" both in January and March from over College Plantation. Their deep call carries a long distance. Both Buzzards and Red Kites have been busy preparing their nest. I had five Buzzards over our house together on 6th April. A white headed bird of prey (not a kite) photographed over the winter period by Paula Cox defied identification. Two separate sightings of Woodcock were interesting records on 7th January. Despite having extensive building work carried out we have three pairs of Mallard nesting in the garden and the first clutch has hatched today (8/4/17) with ten ducklings now present on our pond. Summer visitors are also appearing with my first Chiffchaff seen on 25th March followed by a Blackcap in early April. The newly improved pond in Studridge Lane attracted a Grey Wagtail seen by Chris Dunnington and now large numbers of frogs have returned to breed there.

Small groups of Roe Deer have been reported during the winter period with sightings of six by Jeremy Symondson and four by Ian Waterman and Johnny Thirkell in different parts of the village. Nick Knight photographed mating Muntjac in his back garden and also had Sooty and Sweep, the long surviving black and brown rabbits regularly in attendance. A small colony of Long Eared bats was reported from the Studridge Road area.

Please let me know of any interesting sightings.

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# A LETTER FROM THE QUEEN

The villagers and children of Speen were delighted to receive a letter from Her Majesty thanking them for their birthday wishes and in particular the 'splendid' card by Beth Downing, the winning submission selected at the birthday celebration held after the Fete last summer.



## STUDRIDGE LANE RESURFACING

Andy Thomson

Here are some pictures Andy Thomson took with his drone whilst the recent resurfacing work was being carried out.



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# BEECHDEAN DOWN ON THE FARM

Gill Kent

Many industries in the UK are worried about the effects that Brexit will have on their trading arrangements, agriculture is no exception. However, the situation for farming is even more complicated as the industry is kept afloat by large support payments from the EU which will cease after 2020.

It is worth noting that every government in the developed world supports its agriculture; the one exception being New Zealand, where the grass grows all the year round and there is no need to house stock in winters. The net effect of the support has been to keep the prices lower for the consumer. Since the last war various payments have been made to support farm products, resulting in butter mountains and wine lakes, but sensibly, more recently, payments have been targeted on environmental work that farmers do (often to the detriment of crop yields)

Large scale farmers on good land can manage without the support and many choose to make changes to their management that will improve the environment for wildlife, as seeing a thriving flora and fauna is one of the rewards of farming. For the smaller farmers on the poorer Chiltern soils, the support keeps their businesses viable.

Readers will have noticed some of the changes which have taken place; 'wonky' hedgerows being obvious from Speen to Chequers. The road side of a hedge must be trimmed every year for road safety; the field side hedge should only be trimmed every two or three years to allow fruits to develop as winter food for birds.

There are ten other options which qualify for payments, for example field edges in grass and arable fields must not receive any fertiliser or sprays to allow wild plants and insects to thrive, individual large trees in arable fields must be protected so that insect populations can develop to feed the birds, floral meadows must never be fertilised, hay must not be cut before July to allow plants to seed and ground nesting birds to fledge their young.

Let us hope that Brexit can be sensibly resolved and that some form of support for farming will be forthcoming from our government.





## TEAM GO FOR FITNESS

*Take responsibility for your own Health and fitness*  
*Exercise and Eat plenty of Fruit and Veg*  
*Avoid cakes and sweet drinks but drink plenty of water*  
*Moderate consumption of meat, fish, eggs, beans, cheese and remember:*  
*'An Apple a Day keeps the Doctor Away'*

### OBESITY

The U.K. Is experiencing a huge rise in obesity, leading to a large increase in the number of people with weight related medical problems. Much current nutritional advice about healthy eating is very negative - do not eat/drink sugary foods etc. I suggest that POSITIVE SIMPLE MESSAGES emphasising what we SHOULD eat or drink would be more effective, like the above eye-catching message.

More detailed information about a healthy lifestyle is available on a website called Change4Life, produced by the NHS.

As a caring community we could encourage our local schools and GP practices etc. to display this simple poster as a visual REMINDER to all to look after our health and fitness.

Gloria Holmes

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# THE GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN

Gloria Holmes



Our Great British Spring Clean in March was a really successful event, with more than 35 villagers taking part. Everyone worked extremely hard collecting a huge amount of litter from Speen and the surrounding areas, and the tea and cakes in the Village Hall afterwards was very much welcomed. Thanks to everyone for the tremendous effort, the delicious cake contributions and no charge from Bill for the Village Hall.

Wycombe District Council collected the loads of rubbish before 9am next day. The Waste manager was very appreciative of all our efforts, as was the Chief Executive of the Keep Britain Tidy Group who organised it, and hopes we'll take part again next year! BIG THANKS TO EVERYONE.

*Pictures: Jo and Andy Thomson cleaning all the village signposts*



## SUNDAY ROAST

Anthony Palmer

49 people attended the sell out Sunday Roast at North Dean village hall on 5th March. All generations of the village were present and thoroughly enjoyed roast pork, stuffing, roast potatoes and veg, followed by chocolate brownies and Beachdean Ice Cream.

It was great to see old and new faces and the clean up afterwards was a village effort as well, with everyone helping with the washing up and clearing away.



Viewers of the popular TV series Midsomer Murders will have been excited to see them filming in North Dean for two days last November.

Lucky fan Ellen Sandford had her photo taken with DCI John Barnaby (Neil Dudgeon), "He was really nice and very chatty!" she said.



The challenges you must be prepared for when walking! Speen villagers out on a walk are seen here rescuing a sheep trapped by brambles in a hedge.

Hugh Poulton, David Flynn, John Holmes.  
*Photo by Stephen Peake*



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# LETTERS PAGE

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## *Lost on the Playing Field ...*

Dear Editor

I am not sure if you or any of your readers can help.

Last Sunday we were on the playing field by the tennis court in Speen with our baby granddaughter in our old Royale pram. We did not notice that she had unscrewed the chrome screw that holds the pram hood in place but she must have done and dropped it on the ground.

We have been told the chrome screw was found and put on the bench by the tennis court and then again it

was found on the bench and put on the roundabout. We have searched the area many times but there is no sign of it. Has anyone kindly picked it up ?

This pram has been used by lots of babies and we would really love this to be found as we are very fond of this pram and replacement parts are very hard to find.

I would be so grateful for any help

Gillian Balmforth, Pye Corner, Chapel Hill, Speen  
Tel: 01494 488595

## *Walking in Monkton Wood ...*

Dear Editor,

As most local residents will know, Monkton Wood has been split up into a number of smaller woodlands and about 20 of these have so far been sold to new individual owners.

Nearly all of these owners are keen to be on good terms with local walkers but would respectfully ask them to stick to the designated public footpaths in order to avoid damage or disruption to the environment and to owners'

activities. To facilitate this, and with wonderful help from the Chiltern Society Footpath Maintenance Volunteers, we have recently completed comprehensive way-marking of one of the public paths that was previously ill-defined. This public path goes diagonally through Monkton wood from its junction with the bridle path on the southwest side in a north easterly direction towards the drive to Coppice House and we do hope you will enjoy following this route for some future walks.

Yours sincerely, C. M. Jackson-Houlston

*On behalf of multiple wood owners within the old Monkton Wood*

## *Speen Centenarian*

My mother, Mrs Muriel Groves (Topsy), celebrated her 100th birthday at her home in Speen on Friday 3rd March.

She moved from Broadstairs to Speen in 1992. Her move meant that there are now four generations of our family living here, forming 1% of the population! She has 3 children, 12 grandchildren and an amazing 26 great-grandchildren spread around the world.

My mother joined the W.I, the Speen Chapel where she is still a member and regularly baby sat for many Speen children. My mother has all her mental faculties and still does crosswords, word puzzles and knitting but is virtually house bound because of severe arthritis. She has professional carers four times a day, but also has a regular procession of visits from friends and neighbours, for which the family are very grateful.

At her birthday celebrations Richard, our village postman, hand delivered her birthday card from the Queen.

My mother was told that she will get another card from the Queen when she is 105 so here is wishing her many more birthdays to come.

Bill Groves



## *New Residents in Studridge Lane*

Welcome to Mr and Mrs George and Gill Grey who have moved to Studridge Lane. Speen wishes them all the best for many years to come.

Pat Richardson, *Good Neighbours*

# WHO'S WHO

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| Hughenden Parish Council - Chairman                            | Roger Beavil          | 01494 715296     |
| Lacey Green Parish Council - Chairman                          | Cathryn Davies        | 01844 342800     |
| Lacey Green Parish Council - Councillor for Speen Ward         | Roger Craft           | 01494 488343     |
| North Dean Good Neighbours                                     | Judith Broadley       | 01494 563178     |
| North Dean Village Hall - Bookings Secretary/Fete              | Jez Wicks             | 01494 563517     |
| North Dean Village Hall - Chair                                | Alison Kent           | ath@bfarms.co.uk |
| Pigotts 7 '48' Musical Evenings                                | Nick Wheeler-Robinson | 01494 562167     |
| Riding for the Disabled  | Gloria Holmes         | 01494 488420     |
| Speen Good Neighbours  | Pat Richardson        | 01494 488627     |
| Speen & North Dean Guides                                      | Pauline Hall          | 01494 488372     |
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| Speen & North Dean News - Chair                                | Gloria Holmes         | 01494 488420     |
| Speen & North Dean Toddler Group                               | Laura Chapman         |                  |
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| Speen Fete - Chair   | Lesley Thorn-Davis    | 01494 488851     |
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| Speen Playing Fields - Chair                                   | Clare Morris          | 01494 488688     |
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| Speen Tennis Court - Secretary                                 | Philippa Lane         | 01494 488453     |
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| Speen Village Hall - Chairman                                  | Bill Groves           | 01494 488180     |
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A photograph of a garden path made of light-colored gravel, leading from the foreground into the distance. The path is flanked by green grass and various plants. On the left, there is a large, dense bush of roses with many red and white flowers. A low, neatly trimmed green hedge runs along the left side of the path. In the background, a white structure, possibly a greenhouse or a pergola, is visible through the trees. The overall scene is a well-maintained, lush garden.

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