

THE SPEEN & NORTH DEAN *News*



Summer 2025

Issue 93

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Welcome!

to our Summer Edition of the Speen & North Dean News.

We have been so fortunate up to now to have had glorious weather which has enabled us to get out and enjoy ourselves and long may it last into the school holidays as students and teachers equally deserve time off in the sunshine having sat through the exam season in the sweltering heat. Hopefully, their efforts will be rewarded when their results come out.

We still have lots to look forward to including Speen Festival 2025, so check out the What's On page for details of all upcoming events in Speen & North Dean. The organisers work very hard to put events on for us all to enjoy so please support them whenever you can.

As always, many thanks to our advertisers, without whom, we would not be able to produce our magazine in its current format. Please look out for the discount kindly offered by AVS and Briants. I'm sure all our gardens could use a revamp.

Best Wishes

Jill Roberts

*Front Cover Photo
Speen School's 'Colour Run' at their recent Sports Day*

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SPEEN & NORTH DEAN NEWS COMMITTEE

JILL ROGERSON (CHAIRMAN), TOM DENT (ADVERTISING/TREASURER), JILL ROBERTS (EDITOR), CHRISTINE RYMAN (NORTH DEAN)

Next Edition

Copy for the next edition is due by 21st November 2025 with a planned publication date of early December. Please send photos separately from text, together with captions and a consent form (downloaded from the SNDN website www.speenbucks.org.uk) if any photos are of children. Please send to editor.sndn@speenbucks.org.uk.

With grateful thanks

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www.speenbucks.co.uk

Welcome Packs

The Good Neighbours scheme was set up many years ago and is now run by Pat Richardson in Speen. The service is to provide new Speen residents with a Welcome Pack of village information, so if you know of anyone new to the area please call Pat Richardson on 01494 488627.

Village News

If you are not already signed up to The Village Messenger do email Village@SpeenBucks.org to be put on the mailing list, with the word 'include' in the subject line - they will keep you up to date via email on a monthly basis with all the latest village news and important dates.

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WHAT'S ON

in Speen & North Dean

REGULAR EVENTS

Sundays	Regular Service of Worship	Speen Chapel 10.30am	Speen Church 488 753 pastor@speenchurch.uk
Tuesdays Term Time Only	Speen & North Dean Tiddlers & Toddlers	Speen Chapel Hall 9.30am - 11.30am	speen-northdeantoddlers@gmail.com
3rd Thursday of each month	Memory Cafe	Speen Chapel Hall 10.00am - 12.00pm	trudi@ashridgehomecare.co.uk
1st & 3rd Sundays	BCP Holy Communion	St John's Parish Church, Lacey Green 8.00am	tony.bundock49@gmail.com
Tuesdays	Said Communion (Common Worship)	St John's Parish Church, Lacey Green 9.30am	
Sundays (1st Sunday All Ages)	Parish Communion with Hymns	St John's Parish Church, Lacey Green 10.00am	

AUGUST

Thurs 7th	Film Night	Speen Village Hall 7.30 pm	Jenny Pearce 07305188 093
Sat 30th - Sun 14th Sept	Speen Festival 2025	Speen Playing Fields and Other Speen Venues	speenfestival.org

SEPTEMBER

Thurs 4th	Summer Social - Cheese & Wine Party	Speen Chapel	Jenny Pearce 07305 188 093
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OCTOBER

Thurs 2nd	Charing Cross to China - Jo Laurie	Speen Village Hall 7.30 pm	Jenny Pearce 07305188 093
Wed 15th	Charity Bridge Afternoon	North Dean Village Hall	Grainne Suter 07778 803 260
Thurs 16th	Memory Cafe	Speen Chapel Hall 10.00am - 12.00 pm	trudi@ashridgehomecare.co.uk

NOVEMBER

Thurs 6th	Trench Humour in the 1st World War	Speen Village Hall 7.30pm	Jenny Pearce 07305188 093
Sat 15th	SHH Christmas Market	Speen Church 11.00am - 4.00pm	Grainne Suter 07778 803 260
Thurs 20th	Memory Cafe	Speen Chapel Hall 10.00am - 12.00 pm	trudi@ashridgehomecare.co.uk

DECEMBER

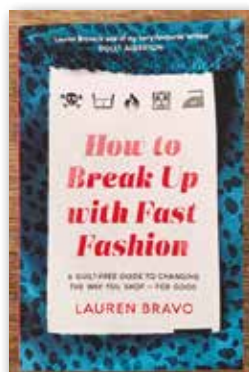
Thurs 18th	Memory Cafe	Speen Chapel Hall 10.00am - 12.00 pm	trudi@ashridgehomecare.co.uk
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BOOK REVIEW

Sarah Wilde

How to Break Up with Fast Fashion by Lauren Bravo

Clothing production has doubled across the world over the last 20 years, with some high street shops adding new items weekly. This book aims to be informative about our 'toxic relationship' with fashion. The author went one year without buying new clothes, and challenges the reader to do the same. Taking a supportive tone, Bravo offers practical



tips to encourage 'slow' fashion, with advice on thrifting, repairing clothes and, crucially, more conscious purchasing. The witty and lighthearted tone of the author might not suit everyone, but it feels like an encouraging and non-judgemental approach.

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SPEEN SCHOOL & LITTLE APPLES PRESCHOOL

Lisa Davies



What a fantastic and action-packed term we've had at Speen School!



Our commitment to charitable work continued this term, with money raised for Agape School in India. We held a colourful – and very messy – colour run during Sports Day, which was great fun for everyone involved!

Our School Council has been exploring democracy and, in preparation for our September elections, invited local councillors Robert Carington and Shade Adoh to visit. The children came armed with thoughtful questions and gave the councillors a real grilling! The visit sparked lots of excitement, and many pupils are now eager to stand for election to next year's School and Eco Councils.

We've also enjoyed enriching school trips this term. Older children visited Kew Gardens, where they explored biodiversity and plant adaptations – the water lily house was a particular highlight, with the giant floating lilies sparking awe and curiosity. Meanwhile, younger children had a wonderful time at Hogshaw Farm, bringing their animal learning to life through hands-on experiences.



Sustainability remains at the heart of what we do. Our Eco-Councillors proudly represented the school at the ODBST Eco-Conference, sharing the many projects they've led – including food recycling initiatives to create 'worm tea' fertiliser for our garden.



As we say goodbye to our oldest pupils, we do so with immense pride. They leave us ready for their next chapter, and we know they will go on to do amazing things. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Home is where the heart is



THE BENEFITS OF HOME CARE

For many, the ideal future involves staying in the comfort of home, surrounded by cherished memories and familiar possessions. However, as families become more dispersed and health challenges arise, the thought of moving to a residential care facility can feel like the only option. Fortunately, there's a better solution: home care.

Living at home with personalised professional support is proven to not only promote independence but also enhance emotional well-being. Many people are surprised to learn that this level of care is more accessible than they might think. Whether it's just an hour of assistance each day or round-the-clock live-in care, tailored support can make a significant difference.

Home carers play a vital role in helping individuals maintain their lifestyles, enjoy social interactions, pursue hobbies, and stay connected with beloved pets. With the right support, staying home can lead to a fulfilling and enriching life.

Ashridge Home Care specialises in enabling individuals to remain in their homes by offering a variety of services, including 24-hour live-in care or hourly visits, medication management, personal care, meal preparation, housekeeping, shopping, welfare checks, and companionship. Choose home care and embrace the comfort and joy of living where your heart truly is.

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Tel: 01494 917344

Email care@ashridgehomecare.co.uk
or visit the website for further information
www.ashridgehomecare.co.uk



Quiz Night Brings the House Down at North Dean Village Hall

On the evening of **Thursday 28th March**, the North Dean Village Hall was buzzing with excitement as 65 locals across 11 teams gathered for a sold-out **Quiz Night** that delivered laughter, lively competition, and community spirit in equal measure.

Organised by the **North Dean Village Hall Committee**, the event was brilliantly hosted by **Nick Howard**, whose wit and energy kept the evening flowing seamlessly. Behind the bar, **Rob Howard** and **Steve Rogers** served up a wide selection of drinks — so much so that the ever-popular **Rebellion beer** sold out!

The quiz featured **seven themed rounds**, including:

1. General Knowledge
2. Name That Tune! (music round)
3. "Best of Bucks" (local knowledge)
4. In What Year?
5. Observation (sport)
6. Wipeout!
7. Picture Round: Name That Chocolate Bar

The **Wipeout Round** proved the most nerve-racking, with teams hesitating over their answers for fear of scoring a dreaded zero. The **Music**



Round was also tough, with an average score of just 10/20 — although **"D and the Fibs"** stood out with an impressive 16/20. The most popular round was undoubtedly the **Observation Round**, where everyone was on their feet, eyes glued to the screen for sporting clues.

Victory went to the aptly named **"Wooden Spoons"**, who took home a sparkling bottle of wine kindly donated by **Lloyds Wines**. Supper was included in the ticket and didn't disappoint — **delicious burgers from OMG Food** and **ice cream donated by Beechdean** kept everyone fuelled for quizzing.

A 50:50 draw raised additional funds for the hall, with lucky winner **Phil** taking home half the pot. Altogether, the event raised around **£600 for North Dean Village Hall**, ensuring its continued use and upkeep for the community.

Huge thanks go to **Lloyds Wines** and **Beechdean** for their generous donations, and to the **committee** for their hard work in organising such a successful evening. Judging by the smiles, chatter and full tables, this is an event the village will be talking about — and looking forward to — for some time.



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Speen Festival 2025 - Box Office Now Open!

30 August to 14 September 2025

Now in its 25th year, Speen Festival celebrates local talent and creativity. We have a fantastic programme of events to choose from, including this year's production, Annie the Musical, featuring local children singing their hearts out!

Whether you would like to create a work of art, listen to the latest developments in the fields of AI and medicine, see if your dog has the waggiest tale, test your pub quiz knowledge



or enjoy local musicians there is something for everyone. You can check out the full programme of events and book tickets for them here: www.speenfestival.org

This is a volunteer-run festival and we need volunteers! If you or someone in your family would like to help make the festival a success, please email volunteer@speenfestival.org

*Liz Patroe
Festival Coordinator*

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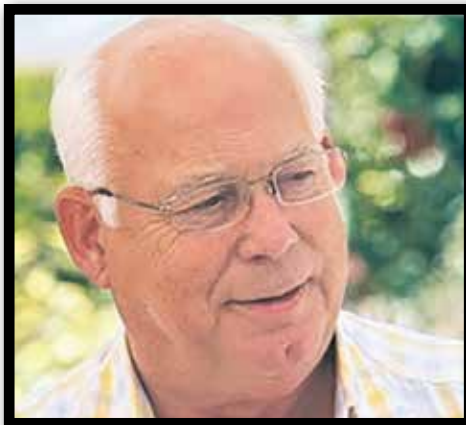
PETER BROWNRIDGE

1944 – 2025

Written by his family

Peter Norman Brownridge was born in 1944 while World War 2 was raging. He was the elder of twin boys, Peter arriving minutes before his identical twin David. The boys grew up in the then green fields of High Wycombe and became apprentices with the Southern Electricity Board before joining the family engineering business. Peter went on to have a fascinating engineering career which took him all over the world but spent his entire home life in Buckinghamshire.

Tragically he lost his first wife to cancer when his children were very young. He married Joanna several years later bringing two broken families together creating the wonderful blended and quirky family they all are today.



Family was everything to Peter. As husband, father, grandfather, uncle and brother his pride in his children and grandchildren was constant, telling all who would listen how amazing they all were. He passed on the best of himself through his lessons, his love for life and his garden which are now carried forward in his family.

Peter died peacefully in his sleep in June this year after a long battle with Alzheimers. He will be sadly missed by his wife Joanna, his children Neil, Ian, Natasha, Alisdair and Stephanie, and by his much loved grandchildren.

SPEEN VS NORTH DEAN GOLF DAY

by Dick Pooley - North Dean Captain and Organiser

With a total of 33 players, 13 from North Dean and 20 for Speen, the result was, as always, pretty close, and calculated on the average stableford score basis.



First with 40 points Charlie Kent (ND)
2nd with 37 points (on count back) Sam Fisher (Sp)
3rd with 37 points (after count back)
Pete Symonds (Sp)
Nearest the Pin on the 4th was won by
Julian Matthews (ND)

Longest Drive on the 11th was won by
Jack Lane with a 3-wood!! (Sp)
The Gerry Cranley Trophy for the lowest gross
score was won by Francis Gater with 84. (Sp)
The Keen Cup was won by Speen with the average
of 30.6 points to North Dean's 29.6 points.

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60 PEAKS IN 60 WEEKS

by Kate Vale

"Let's do something different for my birthday", I said, and some 12 months later I have had the biggest and best present anyone could ask for to celebrate turning sixty. Spending over a year celebrating seems a bit indulgent so we decided to use the opportunity to raise some funds for a cause close to my heart; Breaducating Britain. This brilliant little organisation educates youngsters to bake by providing bread kits to charities, schools, youth groups and prisons and is run by local Watlington baker, Kitty Tait.

The sixty peaks we chose to climb were the high points of each ceremonial county in England and Wales. From 105m (Norfolk) to over 1000m (Caernarfonshire), we have visited high points from the Cheviots in the North to Cornwall in the south, from Norfolk in the east and west, to Pembrokeshire.

We have hiked over bogs, moors and stunning summits, from firing ranges requiring permits to access, to tranquil forest and fields. In all of these we have been joined by our lovely Bramble, faithful hound, who's probably slightly shorter than she was last year! When the going got boggy, steep, rainy or hot, David gently reminded me "Happy birthday!"



SNOWDON



FAN FOEL



CADAIR BERWYN

We discovered new gems; who knew the Lincolnshire Wolds were so beautiful? Or Cornwall could be so windy? But it was Wales that provided us with some joyous new places, mostly free from other hikers. Aran Fawddwy (top of Merionethshire), Fan Foel (high point of Carmarthenshire), and Cadair Berwyn (Denbighshire) are three peaks that will forever have a place in my heart.

So many beautiful places and yet, each time we returned home we were reminded just how beautiful our village and the Chilterns are, and how fortunate we are to live here.

Have we been to your favourite high point? Why not take a look at www.bramblebakes.com/60peaksin60weeks, and see where in England and Wales we've visited.

Thanks to the support of so many friends and family, we have raised over £1000 so far for Breaducating Britain. If you'd like to donate, it's not too late to donate just use the QR code to take you to my JustGiving page.



Replacement Parish Councillor for Speen Ward

Roger Craft had been on the Council for 20 years and the majority of the time served as Vice Chairman. He did not stand in the May election and over his period in office has done a lot of very useful work for Speen as well as Lacey Green and Loosley Row. Thank you Roger for all your hard work.

Graham Peart is now the second Councillor representing Speen. Graham brings a wealth of experience after serving for many years as a District Councillor at Wycombe District Council and then at Buckinghamshire Council. Graham has also been involved as a trustee with the Wycombe based food bank, One Can Trust and previously as a trustee of the county funding charity, Heart of Bucks and many years as a director of Wycombe Wanderers FC.

Hedges and Street Signage

As you will know it is the property owners responsibility to make sure that hedges are cut back from around street names. It only takes a few minutes every couple of months during the growing season and can really assist delivery drivers looking for a resident's address.



Bus Shelter

The bus shelter in Hampden Road has had a lot of repair work carried out this year. Part of the roof structure has had to be replaced. With Speen Festival just around the corner, it would be greatly appreciated if signage is not attached to the front of the shelter as has happened on a couple of previous festivals as the new fascia boarding could become damaged again.

RECIPE

No Churn Chocolate Ice Cream

by Mandy How

Chill the tins of coconut (cream or milk) in the fridge overnight before you make the ice cream.

Ingredients

- Two CHILLED 400ml tins coconut cream OR full-fat coconut milk.
- 64g unsweetened cocoa powder.
- 397-454g pitted dates (if not sticky and moist, soak in warm water for 10 minutes then drain).
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract.
- 120ml unsweetened almond milk.



MEMORYCAFÉ

The **Memory Café at Speen Chapel** is a wonderful, dementia-friendly space, lovingly run by a group of dedicated village residents. They're eager to welcome more attendees, and whether you're caring for a loved one with dementia or living with dementia yourself, you'll find a warm and supportive environment here.

Join us once a month, **every third Thursday, from 10 am to 12pm**, for a morning of friendship, support, and engaging activities. Our lovely team of local volunteers organises a variety of dementia-friendly activities, including music quizzes, word searches, crafts, planting, and even occasional bingo or chair exercises! Everyone is truly welcome.

A local resident who regularly attends with his wife shared, "The monthly Memory Café at Speen Baptist Church, provided by Ashridge Home Care and a lovely group of volunteers, enables my wife and I to meet staff and others for informal chats which have been informative and useful. An enjoyable morning with good company."

You can find us at **Chapel Hall, Speen Church, Chapel Hill, Speen HP27 0SP**.

We can't wait to see you there!

MEMORY CAFÉ

SUPPORTING THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

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Everyone is welcome!





Method

1. Place a large mixing bowl in freezer to chill for 10 mins.
2. In the meantime, add moist, pitted dates in to a food processor and process until small bits remain. Then add hot water a little at a time until it forms a thick paste. Set aside.
3. WITHOUT TIPPING THE TINS, REMOVE FROM FRIDGE and scoop out the coconut cream from the top, reserving the clear liquid for other uses. Place in chilled mixing bowl.
4. Using a mixer, whip until creamy and smooth.

Then add most of the cocoa powder. Keep some back until checked for taste later. Add vanilla, almond milk and half of the date paste. Whip until fully incorporated.

5. Taste and adjust flavour as desired by adding some more date paste and cocoa powder.
6. Transfer to a freezer safe dish and cover. Place in freezer.
7. Eat in a couple of hours or freeze overnight.
8. Defrost for about 20 mins prior to serving. Will keep in freezer for up to one week, but best when fresh.

Credit: minimalistbaker.com

SPEEN VILLAGE HALL

Adrian Farley – Acting Chair Speen Village Hall

Our Village Hall – Use It, Support It, Be Part of It

At the heart of our Village lies a valuable but often underappreciated asset – the Village Hall. More than just a building, it's a space for the whole community: a place where friendships are formed, events are celebrated, and groups can gather.

The hall is available for hire by villagers and community groups at very reasonable rates. It's perfect for birthday parties, meetings, exercise classes, coffee mornings, craft clubs, and a wide range of other activities. With its simple layout and practical facilities, it can easily be adapted to suit events both big and small.

We are incredibly grateful to all those who continue to support the hall by using it. Every booking, no matter how modest, plays a role in keeping it open and well-maintained. Sadly, like many community halls, ours faces the challenge of reduced use. Without regular support, there's a real risk the hall could fall into disuse.

That's why we're appealing to all villagers: please consider the hall when planning your next event or group activity. It's your space – and the more it's used, the more it can give back to the community.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of committee members works hard to keep the hall running smoothly. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank them sincerely for all their efforts. From maintenance and bookings to planning



improvements and organising events, their work ensures the hall remains a clean, safe, and welcoming venue for everyone.

We are always on the lookout for new committee members to help shape the future of the hall. If you've ever thought about getting involved in village life, this is a great way to do it. Whether you can offer practical help, fundraising ideas, or just a bit of time, your contribution would be greatly appreciated.

We also welcome ideas from villagers on how the hall

could be used more widely. Are there activities or events you'd like to see in the village? Would you like to start a new group but need a space to meet? Let us know – this is your community, and your input matters.

To find out more about hiring the hall or getting involved, please contact Sue Taylor on 01494 488500. She'll be happy to provide availability, rates, or contact me on 01494 488749 for more information on joining the committee.

Let's work together to keep the village hall at the heart of our community – not just today, but for generations to come.



Speen Playing Fields didn't resemble a traditional British seaside resort on Saturday 12 July, with the sun blaring and temperatures rising, visitors were searching for shade rather than a windbreak or jumpers which resulted in visitors numbers being down slightly. Attending children were given a seaside windmill at the gate.

The Fete commenced with the reinstated children's fancy dress parade, featuring an array of mermaids as well as a giant flip-flop. This was followed by special guest, Peter Tebbutt, who officially opened the Fete. Peter represented our Charity of the Year, The Getaway Foundation, and outlined its goal to provide holidays for families in poverty across Buckinghamshire.

There was a Helter-Skelter for the kids to enjoy as well as a Hall of Mirrors, created by Peter Symonds and a Punch & Judy photo-board painted by Lucy Johnston. The ice-cream van was popular and was complemented by Kate's home-made waffles and candyfloss. The W.I had a slower than usual afternoon as tea and cakes were replaced by jugs of refreshing Pimm's from the bar. The Church team provided an impressive selection of food, with volunteers working diligently at the barbecue despite challenging heat conditions.



One of the highlights of the afternoon was the showcase of Annie, the musical, the festival show, which will be running in September and if the taster is anything to go by it will be a big hit with audiences. The arena events concluded with a country dancing display by Speen schoolchildren. Live music was provided by the Moderate Steps Jazz Quartet from R.G.S., and Simon Says Magic entertained children with a magic show.

A variety of side-shows completed the activities alongside the coin drop, golf game, skittles and coconut shy was a new human fruit machine game. The Helping Hospices stall was overflowing with beautiful hand-tied bouquets, produce, children's books and plants.

A key part of its financial success is the income generated from advertising in the program. Please support these local small businesses, and mention

the Fete, particularly if you are using them because of the advert you have seen.

A huge thanks also to all those involved in helping to make the Fete happen. Not just the committee members and village organisations, but the many individuals who sell advertising, deliver leaflets, collect tables, run stalls, count tokens and the other jobs beside.

This was the last year that Helen and I organised the Fete together. We would like to say a huge thanks to all those on the committee that have supported our

ideas over the past 5 years, and we wish them all the best in taking this much-loved village tradition forward. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch at the email address below.

We will provide an update on the distribution of raised funds to our charity of the year and involved village organisations in the next edition.

*Helen Davies & Clare Morris, Ex Co-Chair,
Speen Fete Committee - fete@speenbucks.org.uk*

The Grand Draw had numerous prizes generously donated by local businesses and our village organisations. A list of prize winners is below:

- £250 cash – June Elliott
- Stihl Tools, Briants – Roger
- Meal for 2, Hampden Arms – Tim Crossley
- Family Golden Ticket, Roald Dahl Museum – Sue Blois
- Meat Voucher, Darvills Hill Farm – John Radford
- Family Membership, Speen Tennis Club – Jill Roberts
- Barrow of Booze – Wood
- Basket of Fruit – Cat Cook
- Fish & Chip Shop Voucher – Al Bowyer
- Seaside themed Bag – Galley
- Toy Hamper – Antonia Winson
- Plant – Rachel Spier
- Hamper – Bryony Adams
- £25 M & S Voucher - KMJ
- Chocolates – Kate
- Speen T-Shirt – Peter Keen



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Members have enjoyed a varied programme of speakers and activities through the spring. In April our excellent speaker entertained members and partners with a talk on 'The Queen's Flight and Royal flying Today'. A lunch at Bourne End Garden Centre proved so popular that more of these events are being put in the diary. Our treasurer Jean Morris retired from her post and President Pat Anderson expressed her appreciation for the fifty years Jean has served Speen WI in a variety of roles. A presentation was made to Jean as a token of thanks.

Thank-you Jean Morris



Edwin Rye revisited us in May to demonstrate planting baskets and gave an inspiring talk about the charity he supports in Africa. The Annual Council Meeting was very successful and well organised at a good venue with interesting speakers. It is hoped this will encourage more members to attend next year. A visit to a spectacular Japanese Garden in Downley in bright sun shine was much enjoyed and strongly recommended.

Japanese Garden In Downley!



We were delighted to welcome 3 new members in June and "The Accidental Actor" was the subject of an amusing talk. Members who attended the talk at Great Hampden Church by the Chair of the John Hampden Society recommended the speaker to our programme planners. An interesting afternoon was had by members visiting St. John the Baptist Church in Little Missenden for a guided tour and cream tea.

Summer plans include Speen Fete where we will serve tea and cake whilst embracing the theme of the 'British Seaside'. Our garden party will be held at The White House when we hope the weather will be kind after the event got rained off last year.

We always welcome visitors to our meetings in Speen Village Hall at 7.30 on the first Thursday of the month. Come along, have a glass of wine, hear an interesting talk and meet our friendly group. There is no obligation to join until you have given us a go. As well

as monthly meetings we organise a wide variety of social activities and participate in local group and national WI events. If you would like further information contact speenwi@gmail.com.

Future Meetings

Thursday, 7th August
Film Night

Thursday 4th September
Our Summer Social - A Cheese and Wine Party (In Speen Chapel)

Thursday 2nd October
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SPEENCHURCH

God Blesses Summer Holidays

Tim Deller

Whatever you are doing this summer I hope that you get some time to unwind, refresh and enjoy the weather (I write this on the day of Speen Fete – one of the hottest of the year). If it's a busy work season for you, I hope these tips come in handy when resting time comes for you.

In the Gospel of Mark 6v31, Jesus saw that his disciples were busy and worn out, so he said to his disciples: "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." If you continue reading in the Gospel of Mark you will see it didn't work out quite as anticipated on that occasion – not quiet and not restful - although they did get a change of scenery, a few interesting boat rides and an unforgettable picnic of fish butties.

Perhaps holidays are not hugely relaxing for you either! But may I suggest you build periods of rest into your schedules. It is a God thing! God

rested on the seventh day. God built in festivals and holy-days (holidays!) into the pattern of life of his people.

So, from this: (1) Recognise the signs that tell you if you need a break. Friends might be able to advise! (2) Find quiet places when you can. (3) Take regular rest - weekly, and (4) take the occasional longer periods of rest (holidays) too if you can.

Make the most of these summer months to recharge your physical and spiritual batteries and we look forward to seeing you at our regular activities as summer moves into autumn (see Speen Church website).

Blessings

Tim



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Following the very successful Ladies Spring Lunch in May at the Horse Trust, Speen we are launching by popular demand an Autumn Ladies Lunch on Wednesday 1st October. Tickets are £40 per person for a delicious three-course meal and a complimentary glass of wine. Tickets are selling fast, come and check this out if you have not been before and bring a friend. You can buy your ticket at the SHH website.

SHH will be represented at Speen Festival 2025 with a 'Sip & Sparkle' luxury afternoon tea on Sunday afternoon 7th September. This event is sponsored by Dennis Cook of Village Environmental Services and tickets are available

at the Speen Festival website.

Elliot Wengler organised a great evening of comedy last year at Lacey Green Village Hall. For 2025 he has surpassed himself and this year's programme features five fantastic comedians and rising stars not seen previously in Speen or Lacey Green. Michael Akadiri as seen on ITV, BBC3 and Comedy Central, Kathryn Mather on Comedy Central along with Nick Byard, Caitriona Dowden and Phil Alexander will be performing on Saturday 11th October in Lacey Green Village Hall. Tickets are £20 each and available now from the SHH website, one of the few booking sites that does not charge you a booking fee!



Our annual Charity Bridge Afternoon will be held once again at North Dean Village Hall on the 15th October. Call on 07778 803260 to book your table now.

Finally, the SHH Annual Christmas Market will be at its usual home at Speen Chapel on Saturday 15th November. If you are interested in taking a stall please contact me at events@shh-shop.org or on 07778 803260.

On the 7th June local resident Clive Nicolaou took part in the Blenheim Palace Triathlon. He raised £1,100 for SHH which was a fantastic achievement. Many thanks Clive!

Every third Wednesday of the month The Hampden Arms holds a fundraising quiz night to raise money

for a charity. On the 18th June the quiz raised £115 for SHH. Thank you to Louise and the winning team for nominating Speen Helping Hospices for the prize money.

If you are interested in raising money by taking part in an event or finding out more about becoming part of our fundraising group at SHH, please contact me at events@shh-shop.org or on 07778 803260.

For detailed information about all our events check out our website www.shh-shop.org

Gráinne Suter, Chair SHH



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WILDLIFEWATCH

Peter Symonds

The main breeding period for our local wildlife has now passed. Year on year my impression is that our larger birds do quite well, as do any hole-nesting species, but our songbirds seem to suffer high rates of predation.

The barn owls which nested on the outskirts of the village have not returned this year. This species has had a very poor breeding season elsewhere in the country, with the reasons not fully understood. Nevertheless, their box was used by Tawny Owls which raised two young. Both Barn and Tawny Owls have been reported from the music centre at Pigotts. A juvenile Buzzard appeared in my own woodland and allowed me to approach within twelve feet. (top photo).

I was also able to photograph the adult female (bottom photo) whilst the male has been recorded in gardens in Cherry Tree Close, Hampden Gate and Abbotswood. Local Red Kites may also find food more difficult to find in the hot weather. Residents in both Speen and North Dean have reported incidents of Kites swooping to take food from garden tables. An umbrella or a pole in the umbrella hole may discourage this behaviour. Stock doves have used nesting boxes in my woodland whilst it is also apparent that Jays have raised young successfully.

For the first time in about 10 years, we have no Ducks or Moorhens in our back garden. The mallard laid a clutch of eggs early in the season, but a predator removed the eggs at night. They must have moved elsewhere,

but a second clutch must have failed as they returned to our garden. A third clutch, which I had anticipated, failed to materialize.

The local Roe Deer gave birth in mid-May. A pair of fawns has been reported from Flowers

Bottom but with no mother evident, these young would be very vulnerable. Roe Deer have visited gardens on the outskirts of the village for some time, but some recent reports mention them at the heart of the village with similar reports referring to a male visiting the centre of the Pigotts complex.

Jeni Farey reported an interesting find of a Grass Snake unfortunately killed on the road near Devil's Elbow. I recorded a weasel crossing the road in Flowers Bottom and my Merlin App detected a Rose-Ringed Parakeet in the village in June. The most interesting recent local bird records relate to Crossbills seen near Hampden House in the conifers beyond the church, where flocks of up to sixty birds were recorded whilst a flock of some eighty birds in Wendover Woods in early July.

Some insects seem to be faring well in the warm weather.

Numerous reports of large numbers of Ladybirds have been received whilst villagers have also recorded Hummingbird Hawk Moths.



Please let me know of any interesting records - Peter Symonds
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DARVILLS HILL FARM

Charlotte Downing

Magic maps and green shoots (and newts) of change @darvills_hill_farm

This is our fifth growing season since we started on our mission to regenerate this small Chiltern farm. We have planted trees, dug ponds, coppiced hedges and been moving our livestock with more intention, to allow for longer rest of pastures and build soil. We have experienced joy and disaster in equal measure and there have been countless times when doubt has crept in as to whether we're making any progress.

Setbacks are too numerous to mention, many of them involve our flock of native breed sheep. We couldn't do this without the sheep, and they are an integral part of the farm team, but they have a penchant for trashing newly planted hedges and trees, being shrewd escapees when a gate is left open, bulldozing their human friends if they get between them and breakfast and at any opportunity knitting themselves into the hedgerow brambles. They are a generally healthy bunch, and I suspect our grazing practice minimizes the effects of worms and flies that sheep often succumb to, however a seemingly endless stream of ovine ailments earlier this year seriously tested my faith in our shepherding system.

As is often the case when things seem a little bleak, something comes along to nudge us out of our gloom. This happened in April when Natural England (if like me you are baffled by Government quangos this is the one responsible for protecting and preserving the natural environment) came to assess whether our meadows have met the benchmark for species rich grassland, a threatened habitat



important for invertebrates, birds and other animals. It is defined as a minimum of 15 or more flowers, grasses and sedges in a metre square. It turns out that five years of sheep-shaped shenanigans have all been worth it as the farm now supports at least

10 acres of this precious habitat. These fields will be marked on the Governments excitingly titled MAGIC map. Unfortunately, MAGIC turns out to be an acronym for the much less thrilling but extremely worthy Multi Agency Geographic Information Centre; still it feels like a win!

Along with our four-legged malfunctions we have also faced some aquatic glitches. Having scraped out a historic pond last October, we watched with joy as it filled to the brim with winter rain, for it only to evaporate in the summer heat. Fortunately, we were rescued from dejection on this occasion by ecologists from the Freshwater Habitat Trust undertaking the PondNet eDNA survey for Great Crested Newts. As we stood peering at what looked to me like an uninspiring muddy puddle, they couldn't contain their excitement about this pristine, if somewhat murky, new pond and what it offers in the way of habitat opportunities not only for newts but rare vegetation and insect life.

These feel like small but significant wins for nature. As for us, we are once again motivated to keep moving forward and build our resilience for all the unintended mishaps and mayhem that are waiting in the wings!

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SPEENPLAYING FIELDS

Matt Davies - Acting Interim Chair



Since the last update on behalf of all the SPFA committee of volunteer trustees, we've seen yet more typically busy seasons.

The time really does fly by! Casting the mind back to chillier times and shorter days, and following another successful and well-supported fireworks event, we undertook the almost traditional Christmas tree collection service. Both of these activities blend some crucial fundraising with large portions of fun.

We undertake each with eyes firmly on environmentally conscious outcomes. We're continually exploring ways to do things better, cleaner and greener and look forward to doing similar this year and beyond.

Our Spring work party was well supported by fellow villagers and once again we managed to tick off a decent chunk of the rather dynamic list of jobs, repairs and maintenance. Over the years we've explored and tinkered with the scheduling, timing and format of this biannual necessity, but are yet to fully crack the code. Suggestions from volunteers are always welcomed, so if there are any innovations we could consider (day, date, timing, catering permutations), please bring them on!

June welcomed the village ball and it was an

absolute joy to see the marquee decorated so spectacularly. It's been the highest of high bars for some years, but each time the creativity and quality of the decor boggles my mind. The team really are geniuses.

Weather put paid to the first attempt at full-on Funday, but we managed a rather impromptu pop-up pub instead (purely to make use of the commestibles, you'll appreciate). Funday 2.0 went ahead later in June and delivered a typically boisterous affair, albeit with possibly slightly reduced numbers (and once again, no fatalities). Geoff Smith dug out his black and white stripes and whistle and ensured there was literally no cheating. Big thanks to him and the full team of chefs, bar staff, kiddie kurlers and general lifters and shifters.

A scorching July afternoon had the field host the village fete and thankfully cool refreshments and some shaded benches were available to allow people to enjoy the attractions in traditional fashion.

With the summer season fully upon us, we are very much looking forward to some downtime before throwing ourselves wholeheartedly into the festival and beyond. Bring on the second half!

Alternative experiences of a garden

Jane Farley, SEAG Committee

The lawn was left unmowed for May, so buttercups, dandelions and myriad other flowery weeds took their chance to shine and pollinators to thrive. Come early June sharing a garden meant that this oasis of wild beauty in its extravagance would be mown. While there was a sadness there came a new gift – the sweet fragrance of cut grass – which in its turn aroused a new appreciation in me, – the amazing scents and perfumes around and about – some that grace the table or flavour foods – oregano, basil, mint, rosemary, thyme, bay laurel and coriander were within the kitchen or clustered in pots so close to facilitate easy cropping.

Reading that our sense of smell can be so easily dismissed and undervalued, there was a real purpose to further flowery exploration with the aim of identifying the plants and furthermore spending time inhaling their perfume. The most delicate, pink rose with a gentle, sweet scent was a china rose, (*Rosa chinensis*) flowering abundantly near our front gate. Surrounding a small lawn and apple tree vibrant lavender (*Lavandula*) plants wave gently in the breeze. Run a hand across the florets and breathe in an intoxicating yet relaxing scent.

In the back garden there was a pale-yellow dog rose, (*Rosa canina*) offering a more lemony, fragile perfume. High above, a Japanese honeysuckle, (*Lonicera japonica*) had just begun to flower over an arch, a sweet exotic smell with more buds to follow especially intense on an evening walk around the garden. Hidden deep in a back border is a jasmine (*Jasminum officinale*) with its tiny white buds, not yet open, hinting at the intense perfume to come. Close to the back door a trough of sweet peas (*Lathyrus odoratus*) with tangled stems and leaves flowering with a sweetness to warrant its name.

I always marvel at the beauty, the colours and textures enjoying the bees and insects that dance about these flowers. But now I marvel at the chemistry I am



experiencing as scent molecules reach my nose, triggering electrical signals to my brain. There, in the limbic system—the very seat of memory and emotion—scent becomes feeling. It's remarkable to think that a single inhale can awaken a long-buried memory, soften a mood, or brighten a tired spirit. How wonderful it is that a garden or even a pot or two can offer invisible gifts, a sensory experience

and awakening to change a mood and enhance every aspect of our lives.

Nature is so precious to me and to so many of us in Speen – which is why I have continued to support the Climate and Nature Bill by writing to our MP, Mr Greg Smith. I have asked him to support an Early Day Motion (EDM 1184) tabled on 1st May 2025 calling for an emergency debate and vote on the Climate and Nature Bill which was previously adjourned on 24th January 2025.

This is so important because although the UK government has a statutory commitment to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (Climate Change Act 2008) other aspects of the climate change commitments such as the National Determined Contributions (NDC's) are not legally binding and could therefore be more easily reversed by a less sympathetic government.

I hope by the time you read this there will have been some positive news to share with you.

News from SEAG

Save the Date - As part of Speen Festival SEAG are running a Nature Walk around Speen on **Saturday 6th September 2025 9.00am**. Free with a donation to BBOWT. Booking as per Speen Festival booking system. Maximum 20 places

Speen Litter Pick 2025

This annual event was organised by SEAG with support from Buckinghamshire Council, Lacey Green Parish Council and Speen Playing Fields. It was held on a Sunday afternoon in April to co-incide with the Great British Spring Clean Campaign.

Despite the damp weather and competition from other village events that weekend, 15 volunteers



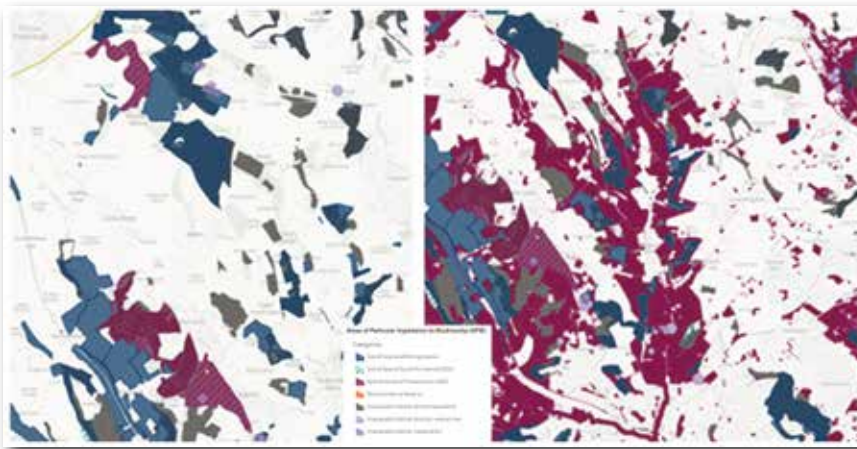
from Speen and North Dean joined in picking up litter from roads into and around both villages. Almost 20 bags of litter were collected including, most notably, 16 or more large nitrous oxide canisters, a window frame, and a few used & abandoned dog poo bags.

Thank you to everyone who took part.

Monica Dent - SEAG Committee

Our Local Nature Recovery Strategy: what is it and why do we need it?

Nature is in crisis. We are living through a mass global biodiversity extinction event, with biodiversity declining faster than at any time in human history. In the UK, around 41% of the UK's species



recovery and selected potential measures, or actions, to achieve them, and shows the best-placed locations to take those actions in a Local Habitat Map. A draft version of the interactive map is now

have declined in recent decades and a quarter of the UK's mammals face extinction. Our natural world faces significant pressures at all scales, and we are beginning to see tangible impacts of climate change with increased flooding, more storms and rising temperatures. The dramatic loss of biodiversity means we stand to lose important habitats and species - and with them, the significant nature benefits that they provide and that we all rely on, including cleaner air, clean water, food production, absorbing carbon and helping to reduce climate change impacts, flood risk protection, access to nature, and its education, health and wellbeing benefits.

Improving, or recovering, nature means we all benefit, and nature itself provides part of the solution to the threats we face. As required by the Environment Act 2021, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes are working on a local nature recovery strategy (LNRS, one of 48 across UK): a spatial strategy for nature mapping both areas for protection and opportunity areas designed to make up a national picture across the country. The LNRS is the culmination of shared creation involving hundreds of people over 2 years responding to surveys, workshops and webinars, many of which SEAG has attended or contributed to. The strategy has now set out a shortlist of priorities for nature

available to view, indicating mapped areas that are of particular importance to biodiversity. The map also aims to demonstrate spatially where action to recover nature would be most effective. The snapshot below shows the area around Speen and North Dean indicating both what has been mapped and recorded, but also the areas identified as opportunities for biodiversity

Success will rely on its implementation: so the LNRS is also a call to action. We all have a part to play – and much to gain – from nature recovery in our community. By working together, we can create more, bigger, better and more joined up habitat and wildlife areas at the landscape scale in order to tackle and adapt to the enormity of the pressures that nature faces.

<https://bucksmknep.co.uk/nature-strategy/>
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership – Local Nature Partnership (Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure, Planning & Development)

If you wish to comment on any matters to do with our environment, flooding etc do please consider contacting the new BC Cabinet member Carl Jackson carl.jackson@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Naomi Proudlove, SEAG Committee

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NORTH DEAN HOGS & HERITAGE

Sarah Booth, Sportsman's Corner, North Dean

After a recent record breaking heatwave during the months of June/July the HOGS & HERITAGE day proved to be a fairly typical summer day of constant rain in the morning followed by intermittent rain showers and sunshine. However, that didn't deter the villagers of North Dean who gallantly attended their first HOGS & HERITAGE day, enjoying a Hog Roast - supplied by the lovely Sammy and her young son Jamie, who were working tirelessly since 3am.... a lively bar - run by Rob, and Beechdean ice-cream of course, devoured by us all!

The children had such fun playing on the bouncing castle, and playing skittles too and a host of other games. Nick organized the golfing games which turned out to be a huge success, with almost all in attendance participating.

The main attraction - the vintage vehicles & bikes was admired by all. Here are some examples of fine vintage bike/pedal power:

1999 Ducati 748s. A stunning 1999 Ducati 748S is a fine example of Italian engineering and design - fast, focused and unmistakably Ducati. With its signature V-twin engine, razor-sharp handling, and striking lines, it's built for riders who appreciate precision and passion.

1967 Triumph Tiger T100S. A beautifully restored Triumph Tiger T100S, a shining example of classic British motorcycling heritage. With its classic twin-

cylinder engine and timeless styling, this T100S captures the spirit of post-war British biking at its best.

A charming NSU Quickly S began life as a humble day-to-day commuter runaround before eventually finding its way into a museum in Wales. Displayed, returned to its original owner, sold to a collector, re-registered and then forgotten it eventually ended up as a potential first bike for a novice rider in North Dean.

1985 Honda Trike. 'Nedie' is a trike with bags of character and a hint of mischief. Originally designed for utility and off-road fun, this three-wheeled classic is as tough as it is nostalgic.

1960's Moulton Mini Classic. Beautifully preserved example of British cycling design and still proudly wearing its original paint work. It exudes vintage charm and practicality and remains a shining testament to timeless engineering and a well-loved local life on two wheels.

1950 Ladies Raleigh. A bike of vintage charm but also of family history and village tradition. Tucked away in a shed for most of its life it was eventually used in the Millennium celebrations in North Dean.

So all in all a most joyful day spent outdoors at the beautiful picturesque village hall of North Dean. A huge thanks to all who supported us on our very first hog roast & heritage event, we do so appreciate it. Also to Rob & Nick who really were responsible for organizing such an event - a job well done!



WHO'S WHO

North Dean Village Hall - Chair	Andrew Howard	07850 789 212
North Dean Village Hall - Bookings	Jeremy Mudie	07880 785 983
One Can Food Bank Trust - Trustee	Graham Peart	01494 488 327
Pigotts 7 '48' Musical Evenings	Jeremy Hamilton	07834 224 589
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Speen & North Dean News - Chairman	Jill Rogerson	01494 488 315
Speen & North Dean News - Advertising	Tom Dent	01494 488 943
Speen & North Dean Toddlers	Sandy Mitcheson	07747 635 974
Speen Baptist Church - Pastor	Rev. Tim Deller	01494 488 753
Speen Environmental Action Group (SEAG)	Jane Farley	07889 433 630
Speen Festival	Liz Patroe	07976 329 953
Speen Fete - Chair	Clare Morris/Helen Davies	01494 488 553
SHH (Speen Helping Hospices) - Secretary	Maureen Laing	01494 488 397
Speen Heritage Group - Chairman	Peter Symonds	01494 488 016
Speen Marquee	Greg Cook	07917 775 116
Speen Playing Fields	Tony Bobroff/Matt Davies	07768 330 273
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