

Mar 2026

Issue 19

The Milton Abbas Bulletin



Welcome!

Hello all, and welcome to our March edition!

There is so much to look forward to in March, the very first one being St. David's Day - celebrated annually on 1st March, honouring Dewi Sant, the patron saint of Wales, this stands as a proud expression of Welsh identity and culture. March 3rd is Holi, the Indian "Festival of Colours" that marks spring and renewal (anything that isn't rain and grey is very welcome)

World book day is on 5th March and our gorgeous Trevor Payne has his birthday on the 6th March, shared with the Howorth twins, Mally and Graeme. British Science Week is March 6 - 15th, and March 8th is International Women's Day - not only celebrating the achievements of women and progress made toward women's rights, but also brings attention to ongoing struggles for equality around the world. The Cheltenham Festival falls between March 10–13th and March 11th is Jill Jordan's monumental birthday! (not saying which one!)

March 17th is St. Patrick's Day and according to folklore, folks wear a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because the saint used its three leaves to explain the Trinity.

March 20th brings about the March equinox - also called the spring equinox, marking the beginning of spring here in the UK. On this day, the Sun stands directly over Earth's equator, and the date is determined by the Earth's tilt on its axis as it travels around the Sun. Wherever you are on the planet, the equinox occurs at the same moment. Should you find yourself south of the equator the seasons are reversed and the event marks the first day of autumn! Also, on this day, the Sun rises exactly in the east and sets exactly in the west - just in case you get lost!

15th March is Mother's Day, also known as Mothering Sunday, and is held on the fourth Sunday of Lent and is exactly three weeks before Easter Sunday

27th March marks the grand opening of our much missed pub, The Hambro. We wish the new owners every possible success!!

29th March marks the start of British Summer Time (BST), as we leap forward to warmer weather (YAY!)

Don't forget to move your clocks forward!

In March, there are two special birth flowers: the daffodil and jonquil. Daffodils stand for new beginnings and creativity, while jonquils, a kind of daffodil, represent starting fresh and being strong. People born in March are a lot like these flowers.

The birthstones are Aquamarine and bloodstone, very different in appearance, but they both share a similar reputation for protecting one's well-being.

I will leave you with the following weather proverbs, "If March comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb," meaning that if the month starts off stormy, it will end with mild weather. (The other way around predicts a cold spell at the end of March)

"When March blows its horn, your barn will be filled with hay and corn." "Blows its horn" refers to thunderstorms.

Happy March everyone, enjoy your gardens, there is plenty to do, the days are longer and warmer, and we can tackle the jobs to do in the garden, greenhouse and our vegetable plot and seed sowing needs to really start to get underway!

Best wishes
Mrs Ed x

Thought for the Month

My friends sometimes joke that a Master's degree in theology is about as useful outside the Church as a diploma from Hogwarts.

Theology, they say, is like studying magic - fascinating, but not terribly practical in the real world.

In much of our modern imagination, mystery may seem closer to fantasy novels than to ordinary life.

We live in an age shaped by the Enlightenment - an age that gave us the scientific method, a remarkable gift. We learned how to measure, test, and explain the physical world with extraordinary precision.

But in our enthusiasm perhaps we also narrowed our vision.

Reason became King. Progress became creed. Reality was reduced to what could be verified. Mystery was treated with suspicion. Transcendence, if it was allowed at all, had to justify itself in a laboratory.

And God? For many, God became unnecessary. Even the Church, anxious to sound sensible, sometimes tried to tidy God up - to prove, explain, and domesticate. In doing so, we risked shrinking something that was never meant to fit inside our arguments.

And yet the hunger remains.

We may call ourselves practical, but we still long for wonder. Not sleight of hand. Not superstition. But depth. Meaning. A world in which something more shimmers beneath the surface of things.

That longing becomes clearest in moments of crisis. Recently, a friend told me they are seriously ill. "Please pray," they wrote. When a message like that arrives, theory evaporates. You are left with a simple question: What do you ask for when time is short? Some pray for a miracle. Even those unsure about God often find themselves hoping for that. Others pray for strength - for peace, courage, and comfort. Both matter.

But I have found myself praying something else these past days:

If it cannot be happy, make it beautiful.

If this story cannot be extended, let it be deepened.

Let this be a season of fierce love. Of honest words. Of forgiveness spoken before it is too late.

Of gratitude that burns brighter because time is short.

This kind of prayer doesn't deny loss. It does not pretend death is fair. But it refuses to believe that meaning disappears when control does. It trusts that even in endings, something beautiful can be present.

Perhaps the exploration of God is not about escaping the real world after all. Perhaps it is about learning to see it - especially its hardest moments - as charged with depth we cannot fully measure.

And perhaps the most practical thing we can do is remain open to that depth, and call it hope.

Blessings

Rev'd Lewis

THE HAMBRO ARMS GRAND

6PM - LATE

27
MARCH

WINE/BEER
COCKTAILS
MUSIC
GOOD VIBES



SUPPORT
YOUR
NEW
LOCAL
FAMILY
RUN PUB

OPENING *
PARTY

THE HAMBRO ARMS
MILTON ABBAS
BLANDFORD FORUM
DT11 0BP



Coffee Stop

Every Tuesday St James Church opens up its south aisle to welcome villagers and passers-by in for a cuppa and a slice of cake

All are welcome!

It is a great way to meet other villagers and catch up on things.

The coffee stop runs from 11am until 12 noon and we charge just £1 for a drink and another £1 for a slice of cake!

All proceeds go to the up-keep of our beautiful church.



Milton Abbas Lunch Club

The February Lunch Club will be on **Weds 11th March at The Reading Rooms**. All villagers over 55 are welcome, and we provide something warming and hearty to fill your tummy!

Main will be Lasagne, followed by a scrummy Apple Crumble

The cost for the meal will be £5 per head, payable to Trevor Payne (birthday boy on the 6th March)

To book your place, please email Jennifer by 6th March:

hrrssnsup@aol.com



Milton Abbas Surgery

NHS App

At Milton Abbas Surgery, we're always looking for ways to improve our service and make the best use of our time, especially as GP practices are under increasing pressure. Each week, many hours are spent by our admin team handling medication requests, sharing blood test results, and answering referral queries. This is time that could instead be used to support our GPs and clinicians in caring for patients.

To help with this, we'd like to encourage our patients to sign up for the NHS App. The app gives you easy, 24/7 access to a range of NHS services on your smartphone, computer or tablet, including booking and cancelling appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions, viewing parts of your health record, and receiving test results - all in one place. Using the NHS App not only makes things quicker and easier for you, it also allows our team to spend more time caring for patients and supporting those who can't use online services.

You will need to sign up to Systmonline to be able to access the NHS app. To do this, you will need to bring in two forms of ID into the surgery – one needs to be photo ID and the other a utility bill showing your address – and then one of our admin team can set you up.

If you need help to set up and use the app, please contact Anna one of our Social Prescribers at the surgery who will be happy to talk you through it. We will also be running some support sessions in our surgery waiting room in the near future.

Medication Queries

If you have any questions about your medication, please could you send them to our dispensary using the online request form (previously known as eConsult) and select "medication query", rather than ringing the surgery to request a call back.

Using the online form helps us manage requests more efficiently, keeps a clear record of your query, and ensures we have all the information we need to help you quickly. This also applies to requests for medications that do not appear on your repeat list (acute prescriptions).

You do not need full online access to use this service as you can submit a request directly through our website – go to www.masurgery.co.uk and click on 'Contact Us Online'. However, we would encourage patients to sign up for online services if possible, as it makes managing your healthcare even easier.

Thank you for your support in helping us provide the best possible service.

Milton Abbas Surgery

Wednesday 11th March 2026 - Young Carers Action Day

#YoungCarersActionDay 2026 theme this year is 'Fair Futures for Young Carers'. A young carer is someone under the age of 18 who looks after or helps to look after someone. It might be their mum or dad, grandparent, brother or sister or a close relative.

In 2026, together we will highlight the support young carers need to reach their potential, from recognition in school and access to training and employment, to meaningful breaks, wellbeing support and opportunities that help them build brighter futures.

If you are a young carer, it is important that you let the surgery know so that we can understand the challenges you face and help you find the support you need. Give us a call on 01258 880210 or please send an email to miltonabbassurgery@nhs.net for the attention of Kelly.

Remember, you are not alone in this - it's okay to ask for help.

London Marathon 2026

We're incredibly proud of one of our partners, Dr Stephanie Shutt, who will be running the 2026 London Marathon to raise vital funds for Evelina London Children's Char-

ty 🙌

Every mile she runs helps support the amazing work they do for children and their families. If you're able to support this fantastic cause, please consider donating or sharing her page <https://www.justgiving.com/page/stephanie-shutt>

Good luck, Stephanie – we're cheering you on every step of the way!



Steeptonbill Farm Shop

Selling beautifully fresh, locally-grown produce all year round!

Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday: Closed

Friday to Sunday: 10:00 - 16:00



Contact Steve at steeptonbill@gmail.com for all your seasonal produce

Steve currently has a bumper crop of Purple Sprouting available - aside from being delicious, Purple Sprouting also has many health benefits:

“Purple sprouting broccoli contains the phytochemical sulphoraphane (thought to help prevent cancer) and may provide resistance against heart disease, osteoporosis and diabetes.

It is packed with vitamin C and is a good source of caretenoids, iron, folic acid, calcium, fibre and vitamin A.”



A great recipe here:

<https://www.riverford.co.uk/recipes/roasted-purple-sprouting-broccoli-lemon?srsId=AfmBOoo8T77fw1qspXuRxUeuTuBL9GHsJEg2RAR6MHDXCsR6Wi4egfzb>

MA Football

MA Football kicks off on Friday evenings @ 6:30pm. We play on Milton Abbas Sports Field where we can see the sea and play on an excellent small sided pitch to suit 5,6 or 7-a-side games.

Our aim was to gather players of 50+ and get a little bit fitter each week. In truth we have some players in their 40's and had some younger ones too in their 20's as occasional visitors supporting their Dad.

Would you would like to play Football on Fridays? You don't need to be super fit and only need trainers with a grip for the grass pitch.

Contact Martin Kelly: Tel: 07802 260393

WhatsApp or Email: martin@redmailer.co.uk



Friday Quilters!



Fridays from 9:30 to 12:00 in the Milton Abbas Reading Room.

You do not have to be a quilter! Bring your knitting or anything else that you are currently working on.

We stop for coffee, tea & biscuits or, if you are lucky, a piece of cake!
We will be very pleased to see you.

Further details from **Anthea** - 01258 269348

Strawberry Cottage Studio



As Spring has started and flowers are beginning to poke their heads above ground, Strawberry Cottage Studio is awakening again.

Louise will be preparing for Dorset Art Weeks which is a fabulous event at the end of May, and will also be opening her studio during sunny days when she is home.

Please do get in contact if you would like to commission a miniature or would just like to pop in for a look around. Perhaps you might like a special gift or card for Mother's day?

www.strawberry.cottage.studio.com



Computer/Repair Cafe

Got an issue with your computer or mobile phone?

Come along to the Reading Rooms on a Thursday between 10am and 12 noon and we will see if we can help. We ask you to buy a drink and a piece of cake for £2 to cover our costs.



In the spirit of sustainability and community action we're considering joining the growing list of communities running Repair Cafes. We are looking at the idea of a once monthly Repair Cafe to be held alongside Computer Cafe on a Thursday morning - 10.00am to 12.00pm in the Reading Room, Milton Abbas.

As such we're scouting for volunteers who are willing to offer their time and skills to help advise on and repair: small electrical items, tools, clothing and textiles, small wooden items, ceramics, bicycles, etc - saving money and treasured items from going to landfill.

If you think you can help please come and chat to Richard at Computer Cafe or email Sara and Richard at: sara_and_richard@yahoo.co.uk

See <https://www.repaircafe.org/en/about/> for more information on Repair Cafes



#SMITHS DORSET

After their winter break , we are delighted to announce SMITHS Kitchens re-opening at **Langhams Wine Estate on 6th March 2026!!**

Our first FIZZ NIGHT happens on Friday 13th March, with Tapas, Pinxos sharing boards and a LIVE SWING JAZZ BAND



Mel has a Brand New Menu, with Small and Large plates, packed with seafood and vegetable dominant flavours! Firm menu favourites also remain! Also.....

MARIA Returns :)





Milton Abbas Riding for Disabled Group offer therapeutic horse riding to young disabled children on Tuesdays 5-6.30pm and Fridays 10-12 noon in term time. We are a charity (Reg. no. 1177691) entirely run by volunteers and we raise our own funds to enable us to operate.

If you would like to consider regular volunteering with us, please contact Sue Hodder on 07739 469946 or suehodder01@talktalk.net

Thank you so much.

<https://rda.org.uk/>

You can also find us on facebook:-

https://www.facebook.com/p/Milton-Abbas-Riding-for-Disabled-Group-MARDA-100067613680731/?locale=en_GB



Milton Abbas Local History Group

Milton Abbas Local History Group is bringing our village's rich past vividly to life!

At our February meeting in the Reading Rooms (and on Zoom), members enjoyed a fascinating talk by Bryan Phillips on Milton Abbas: Sense of Place. From medieval pilgrims and the mystery of St Catherine's Chapel to the drama of the 1309 Abbey fire and the hardships of the 14th century, Bryan brought to life the real people of Milton Abbas – peasants, monks, shepherds and scribes – whose names and stories survive in remarkable 14th-century documents.

We explored lost buildings, medieval barns, lime kilns, sheep-folds and even Tudor satire, all revealing how extraordinary our village's past truly is.

If you're curious about the hidden stories on your doorstep, why not join us?

Our next talk on Wednesday 4th March is "Surviving the 17th Century" by Pamela Phillips – promising another vivid journey into the challenges and resilience of bygone times.

All welcome at the Reading Rooms, if you can't join in person, but could on Zoom, please email simonmartin@btinternet.com.



Milton Abbas Art Group

Spring into creativity with Milton Abbas Art Group!

After a restorative winter break, the **Milton Abbas Art Group** is delighted to announce we are soon back in session. As the evenings get lighter, we're ready to dust off the palettes, pastels, and collage materials, and get inspired once again.

Our first meeting kicks off on **Monday, 2nd March**, and we would love for you to join us.

- When: Monday, 2nd March 7:00 PM – 9:15 PM
- Where: The Reading Rooms, Milton Abbas

Our theme for March is "Creating Atmosphere", and the first night back will be a relaxed evening focused on catching up and diving into the "Atmosphere" theme using any media you like. Whether you're a seasoned painter or just looking to pick up a brush for the first time, you'll find a warm welcome and plenty of inspiration.

Join Us! New members are always welcome to drop in. For more information, please feel free to reach out via email at: miltonabbasart@gmail.com.

We can't wait to see what you create!



MA Street Fair

Milton Abbas Street Fair – A Potential Crisis

Milton Abbas Street Fair was created in 1973, based on the original St Sampson's Day Fair granted by King Alfred. In the current Fair the village has tried to recreate the flavour of a country occasion using costume, rural crafts and entertainment. The Fair is held every two years at the end of July, close to St Sampson's Day. The Fair generates funds which are used to support local good causes which also benefit the communities in the surrounding villages. In 2015 the Street Fair became a Charitable Trust.

The Fair is set up and run by an Organising Committee. The Committee do the hard work of producing the event.

The Street Fair Charity is administered by a Board of Trustees who among other things consider and disperse the grants to local good causes.

The most recent Fair was held in 2025 and over £16,000 was allocated for grants to local organisations. The next Fair is due to be held in 2027, **but that date and the continued future of the Fair is now at risk.**

Following this year's Fair, key members of the Organising Committee and the Trust have retired. The Organising Committee is short of at least 4 members, including, importantly, a Chair and a Treasurer. The Trustees are also in need of a new Chair and Treasurer.

Work on the 2027 Fair should already be underway, but with the above shortfall in volunteers has been unable to start. Unless new volunteers can be found very soon the next Fair will have to be postponed at least until 2028.

The Street Fair Annual General Meeting is to be held on the 29th April. This is an opportunity to learn more about the Fair. Please save the date and come along.

If you are able to give some time to the Fair either in the Organising Committee or as a Trustee please contact the Trust Secretary, John Widdowson, by email at masfrust@gmail.com.

We would be particularly pleased to have new members of the village assisting our teams.

2025 Street Fair Overview:

The income from the 2025 Street Fair was £39,211 vs expenditure of £29,188.

The income was down on previous fairs due to reduced attendance. As a result of the reduced income the Street Fair Trustees had to make the decision to reduce grants by 10%. Nevertheless, an allocation of £15,948 for Grants was approved using a proportion of the reserves. The Annual Report is being prepared for the AGM in late April - this will provide greater detail.

CHURCHES IN THE WINTERBORNE VALLEY & MILTON ABBAS

SUNDAY 1ST MARCH

- 9am - Turnworth (Communion)
- 10:30am - Winterborne Stickland (Morning Worship)
- 10:30am - Winterborne Whitechurch (Communion)

SUNDAY 8TH MARCH

- 9am - Winterborne Stickland (Prayer Book Communion)
- 10:30am - Milton Abbas (Communion)
- 10:30am - Winterborne Clenston (Prayer Book Communion)
- 4:30pm - Winterborne Houghton (Cafe Church)

SUNDAY 15TH MARCH

- 9am - Milton Abbas (Prayer Book Communion)
- 10:30am - Winterborne Stickland (Communion)
- 11:30am - Winterborne Whitechurch (Cafe Church)

SUNDAY 22ND MARCH

- 10:30am - Winterborne Houghton (Communion)
- 10:30am - Turnworth (Morning Worship)
- 6pm - Milton Abbas (SoulSpace)

PALM SUNDAY 29TH MARCH

- 10:30am - Turnworth (Benefice Service)
- 2:30pm - Messy Easter



February Picture Quiz Result:



Well, maybe this was a bit of an odd one!

The picture is a crop of one of a few signs representing walkways around the village! This specific one was adjacent to the Lower Lodge at the start of Monks Path

March Picture Quiz:

Do you know where this was taken?

Recognise the image?

Drop us an email and let us know!

The first correct responder gets their name in next month's MA Bulletin.



Articles and Feedback Gratefully Received:

MiltonAbbasBulletin@GMail.com

or contact:

Paula Driver

Stuart Driver