

Englefield Parish News

April - May 2026



Diary dates

Sunday 5th April: Easter Day, see page 8 for services at St Mark's in Holy Week.

Let's Talk Theology, 7.30pm, second Wednesday of every month, for more information contact Carol Boulter. Next dates April 8th and May 13th..

Evening Praise: last Sunday of every month, 6pm at Holy Trinity, Theale, next dates April 26th and May 31st.

Sunday 10th May: Annual Parochial Church Meeting, open to all parishioners and congregation, after the morning service and refreshments.

Tuesday 12th May: Annual Parish Assembly, 7pm, Village Hall (see page 18).

Sunday 24th May: Pentecost Sunday - come and celebrate the Church's birthday with cake and fizz after the morning service.

Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th June: Englefield Countryside Days for Schools.

Monday 22nd June: St Mark's PCC meeting, 6.30pm.

Sunday 28th June: Petertide picnic at St Mark's House following the morning service.

Local contacts

Englefield Estate Office	0118 930 2504; office@englefield.co.uk
Englefield Estate Yard	0118 930 2538 maintenance@englefield.co.uk
Englefield Stores & Tea Room	0118 930 2479 admin@englefieldstoresandtearooms.co.uk www.englefieldstoresandtearooms.co.uk/ https://www.englefieldvillagehall.co.uk/ info@englefieldvillagehall.co.uk
Englefield Village Hall	
Cobbs Farm Shop	0118 930 4064
Theale Medical Centre	0118 930 2513
NHS online coronavirus service	111.nhs.uk/covid-19 or call 111
Royal Berkshire Hospital	0118 322 5111
West Berks Community Hospital	01635 273300
Theale Pharmacy	0118 930 2542
Lloyds Pharmacy (Calcot)	0118 938 2265
NHS dentist Dentalcare, Pangbourne	0118 984 5894
West Berkshire Council	01635 551111 (out of hours 01635 42161) www.westberks.gov.uk/ www.englefieldpc.org.uk/ www.thealeparishcouncil.gov.uk
Englefield Parish Council	
Theale Parish Council	
Englefield Primary School	0118 930 2337; www.englefieldprimary.co.uk
Utility suppliers: Electricity - SSEN 0800 072 72; Oil - Ford Fuels 0148 872 829;	
Gas - National Grid 0800 111 999; Water - Thames Water 0800 714 614;	
Drainage - Total Drainage 0118 9421140	

Congratulations

To Stuart and Laura Hannington on the birth of Luca Ezra on 17th February, a brother for Freya and Noah.

To Alice and Charlie on the birth of Otto on 26th February, a first grandchild for Torquil and Katie Montague-Johnstone.

To Aaron Showler and Hannah Martin married at St Mark's on Saturday 7th March.

To Emma (nee Strang) and Richard Wills on the birth of Percy George McKay Wills on 8th March, a grandson for Meryl Bonser.

To Jean and John Rothery on their Diamond Wedding anniversary, celebrated at St Mark's on Sunday 8th March.

Baptism

Ivo William Benyon, baptised at St Mark's on Sunday 8th March.

A royal visit

Anyone out and about in Englefield one day in February might have spotted a very recognisable figure walking from the Estate Office, along The Street and up the drive past the church. His Majesty King Charles paid a private visit to the Estate to see the new office and discuss the housing projects in Theale and Burghfield with the team. He met Estate staff, maintenance, forestry, garden and House teams, as well as Julia and Paul and members of the family. A plaque on the wall of the office boardroom was unveiled and a hornbeam tree planted opposite the lych gate to commemorate the visit.



To mark the visit by
His Majesty
King Charles III
16th February 2026





Nigeria comes to Englefield

The World Day of Prayer is always on the first Friday of March and is written by women from a different country each year. The services are organised by local committees drawn from the participating churches. In our area the churches are Mortimer and Burghfield Common Methodist, St Oswald RC Burghfield Common, St Mary's Sulhamstead Abbots, St Mary's Burghfield, St John's Mortimer and St Mark's Englefield. This year was hosted by St Mark's Englefield. The women of Nigeria wrote the service

which told the stories of four women left to deal with insecurity, marginalisation, religious persecution, and poverty and despair. The theme of Jesus' words 'I will give you rest' wrapped around their stories, prayers and songs. The congregation of 45 enjoyed singing a praise song in Igbo, from southern Nigeria, with the bravest dancing on the spot or even venturing dancing from the pews during the offering! The offering raised £347 and will come to more than that with gift aid. After the service the Rector Julia Myles thanked the ecumenical team before the final Benediction and a tea was provided by the team from St Mark's. A Nigerian headdress, dress and fans had been generously loaned by a local Nigerian family and formed a most atmospheric display.

Carol Boulter



Urgent call to action

After over 60 years, it is with great sadness that we must announce that there will (most likely) be NO Englefield Flower Show this year. No flowers, no crafts, no cakes, no band.

Unfortunately, the future of this well-loved community event, which has been run for years by a small team of dedicated volunteers, hangs in the balance.

Whilst we have made tentative plans to progress with the organisation of the Show on 11th July, we have been forced to concede that there are simply not enough of us to organise it effectively and safely.

If anyone would like to get in touch with ideas or support for this year or for a plan to defer and run next year please contact Gordon on GFletcher1973@outlook.com or Mark on 07551 981587. Thank you.

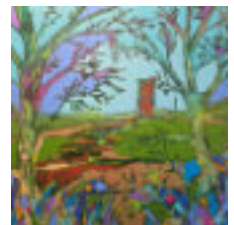
Flower Show Committee

Open Studios 2026

Following the success of last year's event, local artists Simon Pink and Kerry Webb will once again be opening Hilltop Studio for three weekends in May as part of the West Berkshire & North Hampshire Open Studios event. Located in Tilehurst, Hilltop Studio is only a short 10-minute car journey from Englefield.



The Open Studios programme for West Berks and North Hampshire has grown and developed since its inception over 30 years ago and now has over 100 exhibiting artists across a wide area, opening their doors to the public in May. It's always FREE to enter, there is no obligation to buy – artists taking part just like to see a friendly face and chat about what they do.



Kerry has lived near here for most of her life, and the surrounding countryside has greatly influenced her art. Kerry is recognised for her depictions of local landmarks (in particular, Wilder's Folly, top right), rural landscapes, and vivid seascapes in oils and acrylics. Simon has become well-known for his large contemporary colourful paintings.

Hilltop is a working studio, Simon and Kerry will be painting there every weekend throughout the Open Studios event. Original paintings, prints, cards and gifts will be available to buy direct from the artists. Hilltop will be open from 11am - 5pm, weekends 9th-10th, 16th-17th, 23rd-24th May and Bank Holiday Monday 25th May, 15B Berkshire Drive, Tilehurst, RG31 5JJ. Further details are available at: www.open-studios.org.uk/entry-2026/hilltop-studio.

Why give to your local Foodbank?

- 400% increase in take up since March
- 16 tonnes of food parcels a month (up from 4 this time last year)
- A growing need in Theale

DROP OFF LOCATION:
Holy Trinity Church, Theale

WHEN?
SUNDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS
10.30AM TO 4.00PM

West Berks foodbank



St Mark's Electoral Roll

The Church Electoral Roll holds the names and addresses of those eligible to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). If you are already on the Roll you need do nothing. If you would like to be added to it, are a regular worshipper, baptised and over 16, you have until 16th April to complete an application form. The new Roll is then published in church two weeks prior to the APCM. Forms are available from Richard Smith, our Electoral Roll Officer - richard.smith.ufton@icloud.com (0118 983 3258) - or can be downloaded from the website www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk (under Resources). All are invited to attend the **APCM** which will be held on **Sunday 10th May** following refreshments after the morning service at St Mark's.

From the School Poetry competition

Pebbles

*Pebbles is the tortoise,
Who lives around the school,
He really seems quite ordinary,
In the daytime hours,
But every night when we all leave,
He gets super powers!
So...
He flies around the library,
Reading all the books,
Then he flies into the kitchen,
To see what he can cook!
Next, he grabs some bread,
Makes himself some toast,
And add lots and lots of butter,
Because that's what he loves most!
Then onward to the staffroom,
For a lovely cup of tea,
But out through the window,
A ray of light he sees.
He realises he's out of time,
It's nearly morning light,
So he hurries back into his box,
And snuggles in tight!*
By Milla (Year 6)

My Small School

*Englefield is small but so great that's true,
Even when you have your least exciting lessons to do.
Woodland learning was the absolute best,
Way better I think than doing a test!
We built cool dens next to a big tree,
Visited the bunker – how interesting to see.
We crunched through the leaves that were crispy and loud,
With wind in our hair, feeling brave and proud.
We walked through the village knowing our way,
Then hot chocolate waiting – best part of the day!
We may have got quite muddy,
But now it's time to study.
Sometimes my words jump around the page,
Being dyslexic feels like a tricky stage.
Spelling's a real puzzle, ready's a fight,
But never give up, keep trying with all your might!
Now in Year Six my time's starting to fade,
But at least I can keep the happy memories I've made.
I know I can stand up tall,
Because I love my small school!*
By Felicity (Year 6)

HOLY WEEK AT ST MARK'S

**MARCH 29TH
PALM
SUNDAY**

Palm Procession
10.20am

**APRIL 3RD
GOOD
FRIDAY**

Prayers, Readings &
Music at the Cross
2-3pm

**EASTER DAY
SUNDAY APRIL 5TH
10.30 A.M.
FAMILY COMMUNION**

**CHILDREN'S
EGG HUNT**

ALL WELCOME!



Happy Easter!

We have had a busy few months in the Tea room, running our half price breakfast and lunches. We will be running this again next year.

Mother's Day was a big success and we celebrated with a full Tea room of mums and their loved ones.

We are now decorated for Easter and really looking forward to Easter Trail again this year. Please pick up your clue sheets from the Store or Englefield Garden Centre. Thank you to all the schools, nurseries and groups that have decorated the eggs and to Englefield Estate.

The Store is fully stocked with Carte D'or ice cream, as well as a supply of local eggs and honey. So many beautiful gifts created by local ladies, please have a browse when you next visit.

Happy Easter from us all here.

Liz and the team

Wedding bells

Those of you who were wondering why the bells were ringing on the morning of Friday 6th March may be interested to know that it was a team ringing a full peal as a pre-wedding compliment to Hannah Martin and Aaron Showler who were married at St Mark's on Saturday 7th March.



Each bell sounded 5152 times and the eight bells were all rung in a different order (or change) at every pull during the ring which lasted just under three hours.

The method chosen for the occasion was Wedding Delight Major and we were very grateful to be given permission to ring this celebratory peal.

Hannah was a pupil at Englefield School from 1999 to 2004 and we were regular attendees at the church before moving to Devon. The peal band included myself (the bride's father), two of Hannah's godparents and a ringing friend from Hannah's time at the University of Leeds in addition to four others who have known Hannah since childhood.

John Martin

Note from St Mark's tower: we were delighted to welcome the Martin ringers and this was the first full peal rang on our new bell ropes.



Spring in the air 🌱

It feels like spring is finally on its way after a lovely few days of sunshine. If you haven't already, now is the perfect time to get your first early potatoes in the ground and start prepping for your second earlier and main crops.

Top tips for your garden this week:

- Mulch those beds: Apply a good layer of mulch to your flower beds now to suppress weeds and retain moisture.
- Lawn care: If we get a dry spell, give your lawn a light trim in the late afternoon.
- Summer colour: It's time to get your summer bulbs planted!

What's happening in-store:

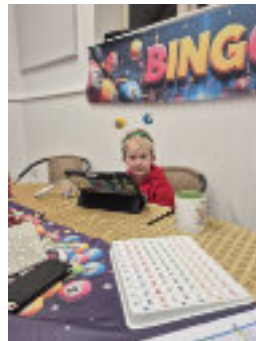
The team has been flat out in the tunnels! We've just finished potting up our herbaceous plants, which will be ready for your garden in about 6–8 weeks.

Our first batch of veg plugs has arrived and is already flying off the shelves. We've also taken delivery of our first fuchsias and geraniums. With weekly plug deliveries scheduled for the next couple of months, the team and I will certainly be kept out of mischief! Stop by and see us soon to get your garden ready for the season ahead.

Austin, Garden Centre Manager

Bingo in the Village Hall

A big thank you to Liz and all who helped organise the Bingo and Fish and Chips evening in the Village Hall in March. The Hall was packed and Cindy, ably assisted by Rohan, did a fabulous job calling the numbers. Prizes had been generously donated and a great time was had by all. Here's to the next village event (sign up to the Village Hall Community Events whatsapp group to make sure you get to hear what's on).



Learning from the birds

One of my passions is to feed the birds. We have three large squirrel-proof feeders and feed a big bucket full of sunflower hearts and peanuts every two days. A friend was sitting in our kitchen watching the frenzied activity of masses of birds around our McDonald's flyby. I said, 'The weather is on the change, it's getting colder.' He replied, 'Do you think they know?' Of course they do! They are out there, that is where they live!



Recently the speaker in church was referring to the passage where Jesus says 'Do not worry'. We can learn from the birds, who neither sow nor reap, and the flowers, dressed more beautifully than in the finest robes. He reflected on the way birds migrate and sing. They are now going about building nests and laying eggs, totally unphased, it seems, by the cars rushing along the M4, the price of wheat or international conflict.

At the same time the bluebells are pushing forward, growing daily in the woodlands. Two weeks ago, some of those sites were covered in bracken. This suddenly disintegrates ready for this year's carpet of flowers. And with the bluebells there are the yellow celandines, white wood anemones, woodruff and orchids and clumps of primroses, though not so prominent this year. The created world continues to do its thing.

I did work out that if the world is 4.6 billion years old, and that period is represented by a 24-hour clock, the dinosaurs occupied about one hour - about 200 million years. By the same token the first settlers at Rushall Farm came 10,000 years ago, which represents 0.19 of a second. How far we have come and how much we have done in this tiny fraction of the history of the world. Even 2000 years ago, when Jesus said these words, is no time at all.

'If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers - most of which are never even seen - don't you think he'll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.' (Matthew 6 v30, The Message)

John Bishop OBE
www.rushallfarm.org.uk



From Englefield Primary School

'Sowing the Seeds for a Flourishing Future'

Here at Englefield CE Primary School, we have been enjoying the early signs of spring and basking in the beautiful countryside that surrounds us. What a blessing it is to have our school set in such a wonderful environment. We were thrilled to have been named the 7th Best Primary School in West Berkshire and to have featured in the Top 100 Schools in the country according to the Sunday Times. An achievement that truly reflects the efforts of our wonderful school community.

The children have been busy taking part in lots of competitions and events recently, including our school Poetry Competition, where all the children wrote or learnt a poem and performed it to their classmates. The top performers from each class then went into our 'final' in the school hall, where we were joined by guest judges Rev Julia Myles, Catherine Haig and Phillipa Woodward, who had the incredibly difficult job of choosing the final winners to receive poetry book prizes. All the children did an amazing job and we were proud of everyone's efforts. Two of the entries which were enjoyed by all are printed on page 7.

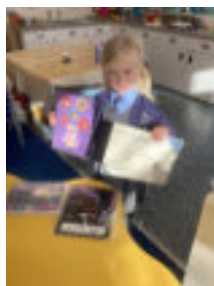


We have been lucky enough to compete in several sporting events this term, where our children continued to make the school proud with their enthusiasm, perseverance and teamwork. Some children represented us at the Cross-Country running event at Elstree where our school came 6th.

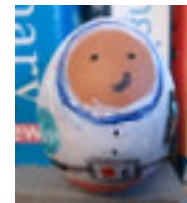
A team of our Year 5/6 children also went to a football tournament in Kennet, where they played 10 minute seven-a-side matches against five other local schools. 'We rotated the people who played up front and I think we were successful because we get to play as a team often and have had lots of training. This was definitely an advantage,' said one of our goal scorers, Pharrley. The team managed to win four games and draw one game, all without conceding a single goal and making them the tournament winners. Well done everyone!

Our children's artistic skills were on display at the Pangbourne Art Exhibition this month in the Village Hall. The beautiful display of artwork included FS2's

Kandinsky inspired flowers, Year 1/2's Polar Landscapes, Year 3/4's reflective landscapes and Year 5/6's space explorers. All the work on display was fantastic, and we were so pleased for Ollie and Frankie who were awarded a prize from the Rotary Club judges. I'm sure you'll agree their paintings were worthy winners!



During this year's Book Week the children (and staff) had great fun dressing up as their favourite literary characters. The children also took part in different activities such as our 'How Do You Read Yours?' reading challenge where children had to read to a pet, read on the move and even in secret! The children loved exploring different books, hearing stories from different adults and reading with children from other classes. A lovely time was had by all as you can see from these photos!

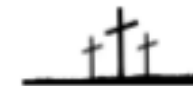


As part of our preparation for Easter, some of our children took part in an egg decorating challenge. There were so many fantastically creative entries, it was difficult to choose winners. However, the final prize for KS1 went to Freddie's 'Tiger Who Came to Tea' and Evalyn's Astronaut took the top spot for KS2.



The children have loved taking part in our special events over the past few weeks, and are looking forward to more to come, including our Easter Egg Hunt and the Year 3/4 production of The Bee Musical. We are also busy preparing for our annual Easter Service at St Mark's church, where we will take time to come together as a school community, sing, pray and reflect on the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for all of us. Happy Easter everyone!

Kate Galvin, Headteacher





Willow and workshops

Garden: Life is getting busy as the gardening volunteers return. The garden is looking very smart as everyone has worked hard cutting and sorting the willow in readiness for our plant support workshops which we are proud to say are fully booked! We sold lots of daffodils, willow baskets and rings and may have some

remaining bundles of willow to sell. Please ask or email us to enquire. Everyone has been busy preparing the beds, sieving compost and weeding to name a few of the jobs being carried out between spells of sunshine.

Thyme Together: Both groups took place in the Village Hall mainly during February with a few trips to the garden when the weather allowed. They have been busy making scarecrows, planting seeds and taking part in other crafts. Thyme Together continue to run their free sessions on Thursdays – 10am to 12pm and 1pm to 3pm. For details please contact Ali on ali@fiveaday.org.uk or 07555 184343.

Volunteers: We recruited five new volunteers so welcome to you all! Once again, we are always looking for volunteers who may be able to support us at workshops, gardening or to help at the sessions during the week. You could have some very useful talents/skills to offer! Everybody is good at something!

Schools and uniformed groups: The Ella's Explorers groups returned to the garden in February after a year long break and we welcome them back.



Workshops and events: We held the first of our willow plant support workshops for this year which have been sold out. We are organising another Bat Walk on 17th April. Please check the website, posters, social media and our noticeboards in the garden and the gazebo at the garden centre for details. If you can think of anything you might like to see take place at the garden please email 5adayevents@gmail.com with

suggestions and we will do our best to think how to set up a session.

Finally, if you shop online, please consider using **Easyfundraising** to help us raise funds for Five a Day. It costs you absolutely nothing and all you have to do is join and nominate Five a Day Garden as your favourite cause. If the seller you are purchasing from (such as Amazon) is registered on the site we get a percentage of your spend. We have already raised over £200 this past year in this way.

If you are interested in any of the items mentioned, volunteering or know of a business which supports staff volunteering please email info@fiveaday.org.uk or call **07555 184343**. You can also visit our website at Fiveaday.org.uk, follow us on Facebook and find us on Instagram on Five A Day Garden!

Wendy Cadman

Five A Day Management team member and trustee

Schools Days 2026

Time is flying by this year, and we are once again busy preparing for the annual Englefield Estate Schools Days. This year's dates are Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th June 2026.



Classes are diverted away from roads where possible to maximise safety but please note they will be accessing the Five A Day Market Garden throughout the event. Please also note there will be a Control Point at the end of The Street so that access to the Garden Centre is maintained but all vehicles will be stopped before the main drive. We ask that residents and visitors take extra care and be patient when driving on these dates. Please avoid parking along The Street and make use of the village car park if needed. Following the morning school run, essential areas will be coned off to ensure access.



The event provides a day trip for children aged 7-11 on the theme of Sustainability. Children learn about a range of local work and organisations, including flood management with the Pang Valley Flood Forum, beekeeping with the Reading and District Beekeeping Association, recycling with Hills Waste Solutions, woodland and wildlife management with Estate foresters and gamekeepers, arable farming with HBH Farming and the John Simonds Trust and livestock farming with Newbury & District Agricultural Society.

We are really looking forward to welcoming schoolchildren from across Berkshire to our beautiful surroundings at Englefield. Once again, we are fully booked with over 1,500 children due to attend. Fingers firmly crossed for fair weather, and we hope this will be a rewarding event for everyone helping and visiting.

Dr Liz Mattison, Education & Environment Officer



Englefield Lecture

Berkshire Historic Churches Trust is hosting a lecture in the Long Gallery on Monday 20th April. Dr Adrian Ailes will be speaking on 'Elias Ashmole's Church Notes of Berkshire 1665-66'. Ashmole (1617-1692) was Windsor Herald of Arms, politician and astrologer, and is perhaps best remembered today as an antiquary and collector. His extraordinary collection formed the basis of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. His church notes of Berkshire are an extremely valuable record of church monuments many of which no longer exist. Tickets are £17, to include a glass of wine, available from TicketSource at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/berkshire-churches-trust>. Doors open at 7pm, lecture starts at 7.30pm.

Sunday	Sidesperson	First reading	Gospel	Prayers	Sacristan	Server	Sunday Club and crèche	Cleaners
March 29th Palm Sunday	Liz Marillier	James Bamforth	Meryl Bonser	Penny Savage	Denny Hollands	Torquil MJ	Liz McKean	Pete and Carole Ford
April 5th Easter Day	Penny Savage	Peter Haig	Harry Benyon	BCP	Catherine Haig	Paula Fenwick	Saffy O'Sullivan	Graham and Pauline Harvey
April 12th 1st Sunday of Easter	Richard Benyon	Graham Harvey	Linda Price	Peter Haig	Sue Smith	Denny Hollands	Meryl Bonser	Saffy O'Sullivan Penny Norris
April 19th 2nd Sunday of Easter	Pauline and Graham Harvey	Mike Kimber	Aldo Guiducci	Saffy O'Sullivan	Penny Norris	Peter Haig	Denny Hollands	Anji Higgins
April 26th 3rd Sunday of Easter	Paula Fenwick	James Meade	John Rothery	Catherine Haig	Penny Savage	Saffy O'Sullivan	Liz McKean	Liz McKean
May 3rd 4th Sunday of Easter	Peter Haig	Paul Myles	Kahlen Spaulding	BCP	Catherine Haig	Penny Savage	Saffy O'Sullivan	Catherine and Peter Haig
May 10th 5th Sunday of Easter	Torquil MJ	Torquil MJ	Saffy O'Sullivan	Linda Price	Sue Smith	Paula Fenwick	Meryl Bonser	Pete and Carole Ford
May 17th 6th Sunday of Easter	Linda Price	Lorraine Dehn	Carole Ford	Paula Fenwick	Penny Norris	Torquil MJ	Liz McKean	Graham and Pauline Harvey
May 24th PENTECOST	Liz Marillier	Harry Benyon	Ronan O'Sullivan	Penny Savage	Penny Savage	Peter Haig	Saffy O'Sullivan	Saffy O'Sullivan Penny Norris
May 31st TRINITY SUNDAY	Penny Savage	Peter Haig	Graham Harvey	Saffy O'Sullivan	Sue Smith	Saffy O'Sullivan	Meryl Bonser	Anji Higgins
June 7th 1st Sunday of Trinity	Graham and Pauline Harvey	Denny Hollands	Richard Benyon	BCP	Catherine Haig	Penny Savage	Denny Hollands	Liz McKean
June 14th 2nd Sunday of Trinity	Richard Benyon	Jean Rothery	Meryl Bonser	Denny Hollands	Penny Norris	Paula Fenwick	Liz McKean	Catherine and Peter Haig
June 21st 3rd Sunday of Trinity	Paula Fenwick	Mike Kimber	James Bamforth	Catherine Haig	Denny Hollands	Denny Hollands	Saffy O'Sullivan	Pete and Carole Ford

Bible readings will be emailed to readers beforehand. If you swap duties, please email catherinehaig@gmail.com and the churchwardens (paulapaloalto@yahoo.co.uk and torquilmj@newburyweb.net). An up-to-date version of this rota, including any swaps, can be found under the Resources tab on the church website.

Englefield Annual Parish Assembly



— Tuesday 12th May 2026 - 7pm —
Englefield Village Hall

Parishioners are invited to the annual community meeting

An opportunity to hear from local organisations and representatives, and the perfect platform to ask questions, express your opinions and put forward any suggestions you may have.

We encourage everyone to come along and make their voice heard.
Light refreshments will be served.

Enquiries to clerk@englefieldparishcouncil.gov.uk



Starting out at the Old Fire Station

Nestled in the heart of Englefield village, our wonderful preschool offers a warm, welcoming environment where young children can learn, grow, and thrive. We are proud to provide high-quality early years education for children aged two and above, combining a nurturing atmosphere with exciting opportunities for discovery and development.

A key part of what makes our preschool so special is our strong focus on outdoor learning. Surrounded by the beauty of the local countryside, children enjoy regular time outside, exploring nature, building confidence, and developing their curiosity through hands-on experiences. From seasonal activities to imaginative play, the outdoor environment is an extension of our classroom.

We believe every child deserves the best possible start, which is why we offer funded places through government childcare schemes, making our setting accessible to families in our community. At our preschool, we value kindness, creativity, and a love of learning. We are proud to be part of village life and to support our youngest members as they take their first steps on their educational journey. Please contact me on sophie@theoldfirestationnursery.co.uk for more information.

BLUEBELL WALKS AT RUSHALL FARM

Come and enjoy a family walk
in the bluebell woods at Rushall Manor
Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th April
Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th April
11am - 5pm



Walks up to 3 miles
Wheelchair access to bluebells
Family fun in the Barn
Free treasure Hunt for Kids
Refreshments - home-made cakes
Hot & cold food
Donation of £5 adults/£3 children
(sorry, no card payments)
All proceeds to the
Reading Multiple Sclerosis Society



Rushall Manor is off Back Lane, Bradfield RG7 6DS



Thoughts for the week

These reflections are from the short commentaries compiled by Aldo Guiducci each week on the readings in church. They are all available, week by week, on the pew sheets and on the church website.

‘Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”’ (John 11 v 25-26)

Death is the great enemy, which causes enormous pain and misery in the world. Many of us know this all too well from our own experience; if we don’t yet, we will find out in due course. In this passage, we see that Jesus knows this pain himself. On hearing of Lazarus’s illness he deliberately stayed away in order that he could reveal a greater miracle than merely curing Lazarus, yet even knowing the miracle he was about to perform, Jesus was ‘deeply moved’ (v33, 38) and openly wept (v35) due to the grief and pain Lazarus’s death had brought.

The raising of Lazarus from the dead was a vivid demonstration of what Jesus had said a few verses earlier. Though death is the great enemy, it is not the ultimate reality – God is. Jesus has conquered death, and all those who trust in him will live on with him in eternity. When we are confronted by death, we must cling to Jesus’s words and trust that what he tells us is the truth. He has given us plenty of evidence and reasons to do so. Jesus asks us the same question he asked Martha: “Do you believe this?” Living as we do in the days after Jesus’s resurrection from the dead, we have even greater reason than she did to put our faith in him.

Dates for your diary

The Newbury Spring Festival (9th - 23rd May) events at Englefield House are on Tuesday 12th May - Loyd Grossman speaking on his book about Bernini (3pm, tickets £25), and Wednesday 13th May - a concert by the Foyle-Stsura Duo, featuring three of the most popular violin sonatas by Beethoven, Brahms and Franck (7.30pm, tickets £28). Booking details from <https://www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk/>.

On Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June there will be two very special evening concerts at St Mary's Church, Aldermaston, in aid of church funds. Please put the dates in your diary, more information to follow in the next issue.

Burghfield Bowls Club Open Days are on Saturday 18th April and Monday 25th May, details from www.burghfield.bowls-club.co.uk.

Pangbourne & District Bowls Club Open Days are Saturday 18th April and Saturday 2nd May. Contact Sue Jones on 07803 927767 for details.



GUIDED BAT WALK

Friday 17th April
at 7pm

Five A Day Garden
The Street, Englefield
Berkshire RG7 6EL
Tel. 07555 184343
Email: info@fiveaday.org.uk
www.fiveaday.org.uk
Reg. Charity no. 1202446
Find us on Facebook
and Instagram



Book your place by either
emailing
5adayevents@gmail.com or
call 07555 184343

Please leave a contact
name and number



Come and join us for another Guided Bat Walk as these interesting creatures emerge from hibernation. Charlotte Alchin from the Bat Conservation Trust will be presenting an evening session to tell you all about the various species local to the area. Charlotte will accompany you on a walk around the Englefield Estate instructing on how to listen and identify them and their habitats.

The session is suitable for children over 8 years of age and adults. There are 20 places available at a cost of £5 for children up to 14 and £10 for adults. A donation will be made by 5ADAY to the Bat Conservation Trust.



The New Park

If the origins of the Old Park on the hill behind Englefield House are somewhat lost in the mists of time, we have no such difficulty with the New Park (or Bottom Park) in front of it. Englefield House is late Tudor in period, dating from the last decade of the 16th century at a time when the main estate of Englefield was leased by Queen Elizabeth to trustees for her favourite, Robert Devereaux, the 2nd Earl of Essex – not for long though; he bit the hand that fed him and was executed for treason in 1601. Englefield is just a little later than Highclere Castle and Burghley House (which it somewhat resembles, though only after three renovations) so might be expected, like them, to be surrounded by a 18th century landscaped park and ornamental lake by the likes of Repton or Brown. Englefield is more modest than these though and rather than sticking up brashly out of a flat parkland, the House nestles with its back comfortably against the hillside and a cloak of trees around its shoulders in much more demure fashion.

The park as we now know it is much later and at the height of landscape fever in the mid-18th century Josiah Ballard shows it mostly as enclosed farmland with the sole concession to the grand house of Powlett Wright being a grass area to the south and west of it and a straight tree-lined grass avenue running down to the end of Cranemoor Pond. Cranemoor House, the old home of the Englefield family, at that time still stood on the banks of the Pond, which originally served it as a fishpond for Friday meals. What became the lake then appears as an elliptical string of ponds in the centre of which are two straight intersecting canals looking for all the world like the crossed runways of a watery airfield. Perhaps these canals were work in progress towards the conversion of the fishponds into a single sheet of water.



In 1762 Cranemoor House belonged to the 'Widow Powell', her husband John having died the previous year, as did much of the land that now forms the New Park, and until the turnpike from Bostock along what is now the eastern edge of the park was created in 1771 the road that runs between Parker's Corner and Appleton's Corner was a public road. Powlett Wright was able to close this road once the turnpike opened

but nothing else seems to have been done towards creating the park although in about 1775 Powlett did have his portrait painted standing on a path in a small copse on some high ground and gesturing towards his recently remodelled house in the background. While the depiction of the house and its owner may be realistic, the rest of the painting appears to be a fantasy and it appears that rather than standing on a mound amongst trees Powlett would have actually been standing in Cranemoor Pond. Powlett died in 1779 and his heir, his uncle Nathan Wrighte, let Englefield House to the widow of Robert Clive (Clive of India). Wrighte died ten years later

and Powlett's half-brother Richard inherited, but he stayed mostly at Gidea, the house that his father had bought on his return from India, and at Grosvenor Square in London so it was not until his son (another Richard) inherited in 1796 and made Englefield his home in 1802 that there was any more work towards making the park.

Once installed at Englefield, Richard Benyon did not waste time and as we know (Feb-Mar 2025) started by straightening and extending Blyth's Hill and building a wall to enclose his new park. He also removed the old village with its Three Dagers Inn from along the road that led up to Englefield House although that road remained the public road to Bradfield until the year after his death. Unable to close the road and repurpose it as a private coach road to his house, Richard Benyon made a new one alongside it. This private road left the public one at the point where the turnpike joined it at the north-eastern corner of the park as it is today, where a lodge was built. The coach road ran along the side of the new park up to the front of Englefield House (where the entrance then was) and then across the new park to Parker's Corner. At Parker's Corner was another lodge that initially stood just inside the park but by 1844 had been replaced by the current building across the road. Although the original road across to Appleton's Corner remained, the gate with its stone gateposts was oriented to Richard Benyon's new coach road, leaving a sharpish kink to the right to be negotiated just inside the gate in order to use the old (and current) road. An identical pair of pillars stood at the bottom of The Street until they succumbed to the dictates of late 20th century traffic.

Richard Benyon had more alterations made to Englefield House and in 1832 he commissioned John Constable to paint it. Constable didn't appreciate the commission much, complaining of the endless windows and chimneys. He indulged his taste for the bucolic by including cows in the foreground, to which Richard Benyon objected, saying it made it look as if he had a farmyard in front of his drawing-room windows. Constable duly obliged by painting out some of the beasts and converting others into deer but the cows are having their revenge for when viewed from a certain angle they remain visible. The irony is of course that there may well have been cows until only a few years previously and sheep, and their shepherd, remain in the picture. Cows made a return to the park in the 1950s.

By 1829 the lake had become a single expanse of water but still within the perimeter shown by Ballard, though a number of islands are shown dotted about. By 1844 the lake had been extended to its current boundaries, indeed beyond them, for there was a section at the northern end with an island in it that is no longer present. This was filled in in the late 20th century after problems with leaks. Sadly, for the same reason, the original part now only holds water in very wet weather. In the long, cold winter of 1962/3 skating on the frozen lake was popular, even by night at the full moon. This gave a then rare opportunity to tour around the islands that could today be reached dry-shod in the summer.

Richard Smith



Tigers at Theale have moved to bigger premises that are still in Theale village. An amazing building that offers more space that will enhance the wonderful learning environment for our children.

Each age group has rooms which include sleep areas, cosy areas, dining areas and kitchens.

Our chef prepares and cooks all meals daily for the children, catering for all allergies.

There is plenty of outdoor space and a drop off area for the parents.

Our Curiosity cove is an indoor play area where the children will have yoga, dance, gym and space to free play.

We would love to show you around our new nursery. Call us to book a show round or book via our website

www.tigersdaynursery.co.uk

Beaumont House, 59 High Street, Theale, RG7 5AL — 01189 303000



Drain & Able

Independent Family Run Drainage Service Established 20 Years



Whether unblocking, clearing and cleaning, surveying, repairing or replacing, we will handle the job promptly and effectively.

Honest & Reliable.. It's In Our D&A!

- 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE • GUARANTEED ARRIVAL
- ALL TELEPHONE CALLS ANSWERED PERSONALLY

CALL ANYTIME ON 0118 957 6244
www.drainandable.co.uk



Your life story in a book

A perfect family gift

I will turn your unique story into a beautiful book for your family and friends.

- Professional biographer
- Friendly, personal service
- Short & long book options

Contact Katarina 07982 465351
katarina@lifestoryinabook.com
www.lifestoryinabook.com

LIFE STORY  IN A BOOK



For information about advertising your business in Englefield Parish News please contact parishnews@stmarksenglefield.org.uk or call 07880 701138



Did you know...

RG8 8HG

We are only 3 miles away!

Our Tidmarsh garage location makes us your neighborhood experts for your vehicle. Supporting local business has never been easier!

Call us today for more information.



Mary and Mark are part of our valued team

Email: enquiries@prmotors.biz Web: prmotors.biz
Tel: 0118 984 4889

Opening times: Mon-Fri: 7:30am - 5:30pm



Miles & Daughters

THE FAMILY FUNERAL SERVICE

Owned & Run By The Miles Family
Male & Female Funeral Directors Available
Free Home Visits, Advice & Assistance
24 hour caring service
Pre-paid Funeral Plans
Memorials

OFFICES:
READING
WOKINGHAM
CROWTHORNE
BRACKNELL
TWYFORD

"Our family serving your family"



0118 959 0022
www.milesfunerals.com



ARBOCARE TREE SURGERY LTD

Qualified and Experienced Arborists

- Established over 25 years
- Contractors to the National Trust
- Crown reductions
- Thinning
- Felling
- Hedge Trimming
- Stump Grinding
- Decay Detection & Tree Reports

Free phone: 0808 1555815

Mobile: 07778811136

www.arbocare.co.uk



- Osteopathy & Cranial Osteopathy
- Podiatry & Chiropody
- Sports & Remedial Massage
- Acupuncture
- Reflexology
- Counselling - Adults & Adolescents
- Hypnotherapy & NLP
- Thai Yoga Massage
- Homeopathy
- Nutrition

Some of the conditions we treat at the Centre:

Back Pain Headaches Neck Pain Sports Injuries Foot Problems
Sciatica Muscle Tension Whiplash Smoking Cessation
Weight Control Stress & Phobias Dietary advice for IBS



Visit our website to see what else
we can treat

www.thealewellbeingcentre.co.uk



37 High Street, Theale,
Reading RG7 5AH
0118 930 3535
www.thealewellbeingcentre.co.uk



BRADFIELD COLLEGE SPORTS COMPLEX

Swimming · Fitness Classes · Sports Hall · Gym · Wellbeing

FALL INTO FITNESS

Make use of all of our facilities

Fitness suite & golf memberships available



0118 964 4600 or email frontdesk@bradfieldcollege.org.uk

*Terms & Conditions apply



COBBS

EAT GOOD. FEEL GOOD. DO GOOD.

Visit **Cobbs Farm Shop** for a unique shopping and dining experience. Explore fresh, seasonal produce, sustainable meats, artisan goods, and handcrafted drinks. Savour a delicious breakfast or lunch in our café—including our popular Sunday roasts! **Open seven days a week**, it's the perfect spot for family and friends to gather. Be sure to book a table online for peace of mind!

Come see us!

FARM SHOP | CAFÉ | BUTCHERY | DELICATESSEN

0118 930 4064 | englefield@cobbsfarmshops.co.uk
Wickcroft Farm, Pangbourne Road, Theale, Reading RG7 5EA

COBBSFARMSHOPS.CO.UK



ENGLEFIELD UNKNOWN DONOR CHARITY

Are you a resident of Englefield parish, aged under 21 and in need of financial help with your primary, secondary or further education?

We may be able to offer a small grant towards apprenticeship, university or college, costs such as books, travel, equipment or tools.

For more information contact the Trustees:
0118 9302504
office@englefield.co.uk



Professional, family run carpet & upholstery cleaning service

Friendly & reliable service

Solutions are 100% safe for pets & children

Domestic & commercial work undertaken

Fully insured

**Call David on
07887 565009**

info@peacockcarpetcleaning.co.uk
www.peacockcarpetcleaning.co.uk



Englefield Garden Centre

The Street, Englefield, RG7 5ES

0118 9304898

Monday - Saturday 9am-5pm
Sunday 10am-4pm

Managed by Affinity Trust
Supporting People with Learning Disabilities
www.englefieldgardencentre.co.uk

Theale Taxis

Established 1962

0118-930-2345

E-mail-thealetaxis@outlook.com

www.thealetaxis.info

Local or Long Journeys Unit 7
Eight Seat Minibus Hewins Wood Farm
Airports Docks Bradfield
Prop: RJ & DA Brown Reading
Text: 07795840115 RG7 6DH

THE PETS LODGE



- Overnight boarding - cats & dogs
- 121 Dog walking • Puppy parties
- Secure field • Pet taxi

Lambdens Hill, Beenham RG7 5LG

Tel: 0118 9302053

www.petslodge.com

LOGS FOR SALE

£120 PER PICKUP LOAD

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY,
STACKING £10

KINDLING £7 PER SACK

TELEPHONE: ROGER on
0118 9744577
mobile 07809 182329



DO YOU RUN A BUSINESS?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADVERTISE HERE?

Contact parishnews@stmarksenglefield.org.uk or call 07880 701138 to find out about availability and page rates

THEALE GOLF CLUB

18 Hole Golf Course
10 Bay Driving Range
Society Packages
Membership Available
Visitors Welcome

0118 9305331
www.thealegolf.com

Englefield
Stores & Tea Rooms

ENGLEFIELD TEA ROOM

BOOK TO
AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT

TEA ROOM OPENING HOURS : MONDAY TO SATURDAY 10AM - 3PM

ENGLEFIELD STORE

The Store has a fantastic range of cupboard essentials as well as

Fresh Bread
Take Away Hot Drinks
Fresh Sandwiches

Fresh Fruit & Veg
Local Honey & Eggs
Homemade Cakes

SANDWICH PLATTERS

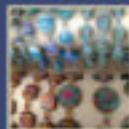
We are now offering fresh, made to order sandwich platters for any function, occasion or meeting and can cater for special dietary requirements.

Contact us to see what we can do for you

Booking required at least 48hrs before

THE
CARTE
D'OR

Bespoke
Englefield
Gifting



All hand crafted locally in Berkshire



THE STREET, ENGLEFIELD, READING, RG7 5ES | 01189 302 479

ADMIN@ENGLEFIELDSTORESANDTEAROOMS.CO.UK

WWW.ENGLEFIELDSTORESANDTEAROOMS.CO.UK

