

Parish News

West Meon & Warnford

February 2025

A stranger's help

Jesus famously read from a scroll of the Prophet Isaiah in the synagogue and the people were astonished by what he said about it – sadly, we don't have his sermon, so we have to work out for ourselves what he might have wanted us to do. The text he read, and spoke about, included the following:

“The Lord has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to comfort all who mourn,
to provide the oil of gladness instead of sadness,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
the peoples shall till your land and dress your vines.”

These words based on Isaiah 61 remind all people of good heart, and certainly all Christians, that we are called to care one another, and, just as importantly, to accept the help of others. The richness of the original text reminds us of God's concern for those who are broken-hearted and those who mourn. God's concern is also for people in captivity, those literally imprisoned, those without the means to get and about, and those shut-in because of conditions of the



Sheep on the moors © Jacqueline Annabel



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mind, body or spirit. 'Captive' to a degenerative illness, 'broken-hearted' or 'mourning' might describe someone very near-by and any number of others across our communities in need of our kindness. Perhaps, we are one of the ones who needs some compassion or companionship.

The passage proclaims the good news of liberty, gladness, and hope for an ancient people in captivity, but it is good news for us too in our times that are certainly not without their worries.

In this real and broken world, we can often see both the challenges and the good news side by side. The sadness on the faces of those who have lost all belongings in the fires around Los Angeles and the miraculous rescue of an elderly grandmother in a wheelchair. The tragedies can sometimes be spontaneous and not entirely anyone's fault – a wildfire, an earthquake or a debilitating illness. But the good news events, the modern miracles, are almost invariably the result of someone's selfless courage, or kindness or just their willingness to act.

Christians, like those of many faiths, are called to love our neighbours. The Good Samaritan, a stranger and not a neighbour in the usual sense, did not walk by, neither did he just offer a kind smile and a cheery wave. He acted when faced by another human being who was suffering - he offered practical and life-saving help.

So THANK YOU to all those who sent in toys or money for families in need in Portsmouth – you made a real and precious difference, and thank you too for all those who made sure people alone at Christmas got a meal or had some human contact, thank you to all those who shop for others or just make the effort to chat. Thank you all for your commitment to friend and stranger alike.

We look to Jesus for the example, strength, and courage that it takes to be collaborative, generous, and resourceful. We shall pray that the arrival of spring will be accompanied by new joy and lasting hope.

Please be assured of our prayers for our whole community, and along with so many people of good spirit and conscience, we shall also do all we can to support the whole community. To those

who feel most vulnerable, please know that you are not forgotten and do let us know if we can help you in any way.

There will doubtlessly be further challenges ahead, but let's look to one another in a spirit of community solidarity and cooperation, whatever our faith. Let us try to share the load in making sure that no one is left feeling alone and broken-hearted. Fewer of us may have neighbours with flocks to feed, land to till or vines to dress than once was the case, but we can all share 'the oil of gladness' and do what we can to reduce any sadness that may be around us.

Fr. Tony



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Snowdrop events at Warnford Church - open on Saturdays in 2025

The organisers have decided that the Warnford Snowdrop events, held on Sundays in February for more than 50 years in aid of Warnford church, will be closed in 2025. There will however be a limited ticketed event open on Saturdays.

For more than 50 years a wonderful team of local volunteers have welcomed visitors to enjoy the remarkable display of Snowdrops in the woodlands around the church. Throughout this time it has been possible to park all the visitors' cars on the site – however in 2023 and 2024 the event appeared widely on social media and the number of visitors brought the traffic on the A32 to a standstill and blocked the local lanes with parked cars.

The Snowdrop Sunday events have never been advertised in the past however the advent of social media and visitors sharing information about their experience has created a level of interest that the current on-site parking arrangements cannot accommodate. The organisers have taken advice and have decided that the safest course of action to avoid the traffic problems that they have experienced is to close the Sunday events for one year.

Closing the Sunday events in 2025 will be disappointing news to everyone who has visited and supported the church in the past however there will be a limited opportunity to enjoy the Snowdrop display on Saturday afternoons in February using a ticketed system

with timed entry times. Details of how to purchase tickets for the Saturday opening will be available in due course on the Warnford Snowdrops website www.warnfordsnowdrops.org.uk - we would be grateful if you could share this information with your friends and family who have visited to see the Snowdrops in the past.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who has visited our treasured Snowdrop Sundays in the past – we very much look forward to welcoming you on Saturdays in 2025.

Andrew Sellick

We are looking for volunteer stewards for both car parking and welcoming visitors. We ask for help for roughly one and a half hours on Saturday afternoons in February. If you are willing to help, please contact Angie Trenchard on 01730 829 545 or angietrenchard@gmail.com. You will be guaranteed a warm welcome.

Angie Trenchard



Snowdrops © by J Annabel

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West Meon Sports Club

Over the Christmas break the Sports Club replaced the fence on the east side of the top field. The materials were kindly donated by the Club President, who completed the work with fellow members of the club. I hope you will agree the new fence tidies up and enhances this part of the Recreation Ground.

Hockey Club Fixtures in 2025

For further information or to register an interest to play please contact Jo Copsey 07786 830881 or jocopsey317@hotmail.com.

Home matches are played at Winchester Sports Stadium, Bar End, Winchester at 1030am.

February

1	Salisbury	(H)
8	Portsmouth	(A) 13:45
22	Haslemere	(H)

March

1	Alton	(A) 1130
8	Romsey	(H)
15	Southampton	(A)
22	Andover	(H)
29	Winchester	(A) 10.15



Mary Edwards

Cricket fixtures to follow in March.

BIG thank you

A big thank you to the Clanfield Ladies Football club who, before Christmas, collected a lovely hamper of Xmas food to thank the West Meon Sports Club and residents for their support in providing pitches for their teams to play on. I know how hard it is to find a pitch and changing facilities.

I just hope the weather gives the girls a chance to keep playing, and from the grateful lady who was so surprised with the overflowing hamper, she hopes the ladies had a very relaxing Christmas and much success in 2025.

Nina Byles - Care Group Co-Ordinator

Churchyard Clearing Party dates

A big thank you for all your help and hard work in 2024, the Churchyard does look splendid and I have received many compliments.

As we look ahead to 2025, there is still much work to do, so I would greatly appreciate your continued support. Listed below are the dates for next year, please put them in your diary. I look forward to seeing you all.

22nd February, 22nd March, 12th April, 17th May, 21st June, 19th July, 16th August, 20th September, 18th October, 22nd November and 13th December.

Paul Wilcox

West Meon CE Primary School

The cold snap at the start of our Spring term meant children were wrapped in coats, hats and gloves when they undertook their outdoor learning and at playtimes. The short snowfall in our first week was very much enjoyed by the children as it gave them additional time away from the classroom. Our lunch time break gives children the opportunity to explore both physical and role playing activities in our secure space. This term we have invested in additional equipment to enable us to provide an 'Active Playtime'. With the help of trained 'play leaders' we set out construction, balance board and obstacle course activities on a rotational basis, always including some mindfulness drawing and colouring in our calm area for those students who like to be creative on paper. We are currently looking into how we can include a Den building activity.



As you read this we will be heading towards our half term break and World Book Day which takes place on Thursday 6th March. As a school, we will be organising a Book Week where we focus on reading and literature in the various forms it now presents itself. Although World Book Day traditionally falls on a Thursday, we will be dressing up on the Friday, so keep your eyes peeled for some unusual costumes around West Meon!

Last term, children at West Meon took part in performances and challenges which contributed to the building of confidence, self-belief and supports the development of resilience. With those tools, the children are now ready to be challenged and stretched. Year 6 have begun to look at the outcomes they need to achieve for their end of year assessment. Alongside new topics for the term, Owls class will be venturing out to the swimming pool for one of their PE sessions.

Since 1994, swimming and water safety has been a statutory element of the national curriculum for physical education in England. This means that every 11-year old child should leave primary school with the skills to keep themselves safe while enjoying swimming with friends and family. Swimming is the only sport to be included within the national curriculum physical education programme of study. All primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or 2. Since 2012 Swim England has monitored the provision of curriculum swimming and water safety in primary schools, and research has consistently shown that only half of pupils meet the required standards. There are many reasons why primary schools struggle to deliver swimming and water safety lessons. These include cost, time out of lessons, lack of confidence and a lack of understanding of the outcomes. At West Meon we are lucky enough to have access to Bedales' pool and some very experienced swimming teachers

to enable us to meet National expectations.

Friends of West Meon School (FOWMS) have been thinking about ways to raise money to support the school so keep a look out for events coming up in the next month or so; their aim is to include the local community when possible. Our school council raised £45 for Save the Children with their Christmas Jumper day in December and will be looking to arrange some school events to save up for a new Buddy Bench for our playground.

As you read this, we will be hoping to have arranged a visit to Warnford to view the snowdrops – what a great start to Spring!

Julie Slamaker, Headteacher

The Meon Valley Bus

The Meon Valley Community Bus Association is a registered charity that has been providing transport facilities in the villages of the Meon Valley where no public transport service is available since 1985. All our drivers are unpaid volunteers and certified by the Community Transport Association under the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme and we are delighted to announce the arrival of our brand-new community bus.



We operate a scheduled weekday service on Mondays to Fareham, on Wednesdays to Petersfield, and on Fridays in rotation to Winchester, Fareham, Hedge End or Waterlooville and our timetable is often published in the parish magazine (see rear). The bus stops in West Meon outside the Thomas Lord pub and at Warnford Village Hall (or George

and Falcon on Wednesdays) on our outbound journeys. On the return our drivers will usually try to stop as close as possible to where you live and will often help you with any heavy shopping.

In addition to our scheduled service, the bus is also available for private hire. For example, we work with the Active Retirement Association to arrange theatre trips; with gardening associations providing transport to gardens of interest, and with providing transport for school outings.

We aspire to deliver a better - and certainly more friendly and helpful - service than many commercial bus companies. We are always pleased to welcome new passengers, who we hope will enjoy meeting the happy community of users and become regular users themselves. If you have not used our service before, please give us a try. We are sure you won't be disappointed.

For further information about our service, how to arrange private hire, or any other questions you may have, here's the link to our website: <https://meonvalleybus.co.uk/>. Do get in touch because we'd be delighted to hear from you.

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
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Rainfall report for December 2024 to mid-January 2025

December rainfall ended with 61.4mm (2.42") giving a total for the year of 1090.7mms (42.9"). This compares with 1249.9mms (49.2") in 2023. The wettest months being February with 182.7mms (7.2") and September with 135.4mms (5.3").

2025 has started with quite a lot of rain in the first eight days (75.9mms) 2.9" and then a cold spell set in with some very low temperatures down to -7C on the 10th and 11th but nevertheless sunny, bright days when some brisk walking was required to keep warm or if you preferred, sitting in front of a fire and reading the paper!

Peter Short

New pet services

I am thrilled to now have the opportunity to start my own Pet Services business.

I have nine year's Veterinary experience, firstly working as a receptionist then a Vet Nurse Assistant. Previously I have also worked as an Animal Care Assistant at a local Cattery and Sparsholt College.

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Walking is another passion of mine, and I spend a lot of time enjoying walking in my local area with my own dog.

This is something your dog can enjoy too with us, whether staying for the day or boarding overnight.

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Helen Fewkes



Services in 2025

Sunday 2nd February

8am Holy Communion - East Meon

9am Benefice Mattins - Warnford

10.30am Benefice Eucharist for Candlemas - East Meon

Sunday 9th February

8am Holy Communion - East Meon

9am Service of the Word - Langrish

10.30am Benefice Eucharist - West Meon

Sunday 16th February

8am Holy Communion - East Meon

9am Benefice Holy Communion - Warnford

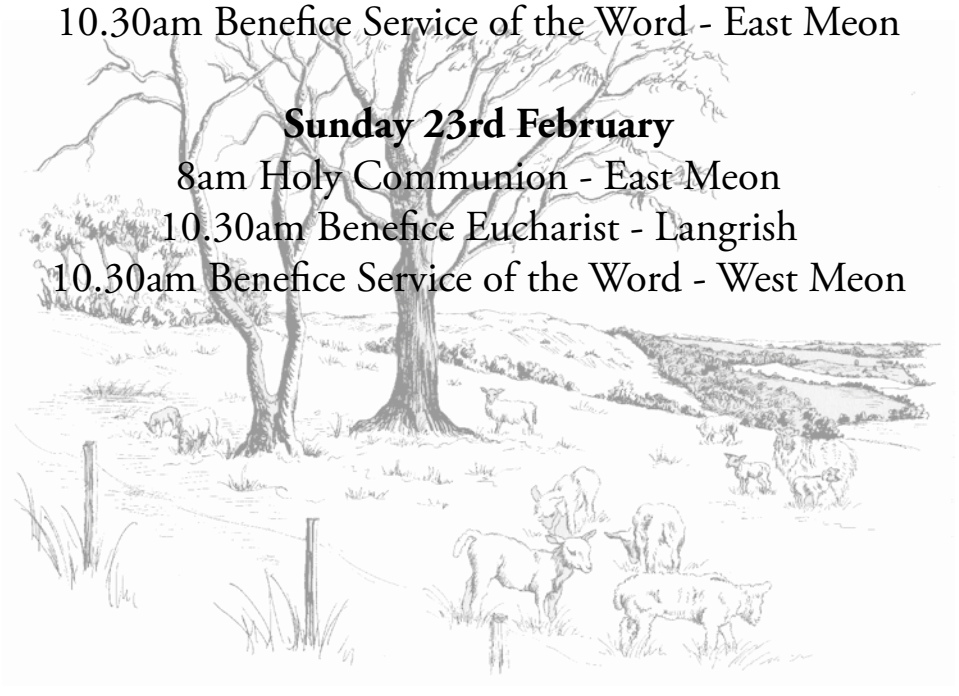
10.30am Benefice Service of the Word - East Meon

Sunday 23rd February

8am Holy Communion - East Meon

10.30am Benefice Eucharist - Langrish

10.30am Benefice Service of the Word - West Meon





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Romance comes to West Meon Community Cinema

As our February film night happens to fall on Friday 14th which is Valentine's Day we decided that a good old 'rom-com' would be an appropriate choice.

After some deliberation we have chosen to screen **"French Kiss"** 1995, starring Meg Ryan and Kevin Kline. It was filmed primarily in Paris, the Alpes-Maritime and Cannes and is generally acknowledged as being one of the best 'rom-coms' of all time with the two leads giving sizzling performances.

In order to continue the French theme for the evening we will be offering an authentic French buffet...

Tickets for the event can be purchased as usual from the village shop or online at ticketsource.co.uk/west-meon-village-hall. Film only (screening at 7.45pm) £7 - also available on the door. Film plus buffet

(from 6.45pm) £17. Film plus dessert only (during interval) £12. Tickets involving catering must be purchased by Wednesday 12th February.



Rosemary Morrish

PS. Future dates for your diary include:

Friday 14th March 7.45pm and Saturday 15th March 7.45pm ("Small Things Like These"),

Saturday 15th March 2pm ("Paddington in Peru") and

Saturday 4th April 7.45pm ("Conclave").

Further details to follow next month.

Silent hunters



Barn Owl © Russell Savory

The barn owl, with its ghostly white feathers and heart-shaped face, is one of the most iconic birds of prey in the UK. Known for its silent flight and stealthy hunting techniques, this magnificent bird is a true countryside symbol. Its haunting appearance has earned it the old country name 'hushwing,' which aptly describes its ability to glide noiselessly through the night in search of prey.

A remarkable combination of features allows the barn owl to be such an effective hunter.

The trailing edges of its wings are lined with soft, serrated feathers that reduce noise, enabling the bird to fly almost silently. Barn owls also have excellent night vision, perfectly adapted for hunting in low light. Their long legs, talons, and highly sensitive ears, aided by their distinctive facial discs, help them locate prey even in tall grass or underbrush. The facial discs act as a sound funnel, directing noises into the owl's keen ears, allowing it to detect even the slightest movement on the ground below.

In Hampshire, barn owls are an increasingly familiar sight, especially in the winter months when they extend their hunting hours to find enough food to survive the colder conditions. This time of year can be an excellent opportunity to spot these silent hunters as they venture out during daylight hours to hunt for voles, mice, and other small mammals. The best times to see them are at dawn or dusk, when their hunting is most active.

Several nature reserves managed by Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust offer great opportunities to observe barn owls in their natural habitat. Hockley Meadows Nature Reserve in Winchester is a known hotspot for these beautiful birds, where visitors can watch them glide over the meadows and hunt in the early morning or late afternoon. On the Isle of Wight, Arreton Down is another fantastic location, offering a mix of farmland and open grassland that provides their perfect environment. Meanwhile, Farlington Marshes Nature Reserve near Portsmouth is a must-visit for birdwatchers, with the reserve attracting not only barn owls but also short-eared owls, making it a great destination for raptor enthusiasts.

While watching barn owls, it's important to be respectful of their environment. Always maintain a safe distance, avoid disturbing wildlife, and keep dogs on leads. With their captivating beauty and incredible hunting skills, barn owls are a testament to the wonders of the natural world. For more barn owl information, visit the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust website: www.hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-explorer/birds/birds-prey/barn-owl

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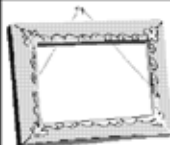
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West Meon Parish Council & Warnford Parish Meeting

West Meon Parish Council

West Meon Parish Council (WMPC) communication – all official communication from WMPC is through the website www.westmeon-pc.gov.uk, the village notice board in the high street and the Parish News. If you would like to contact the Parish Council, please email clerk@westmeon-pc.gov.uk or attend one of our meetings – you can find the meeting agendas and minutes on the website.

Winchester County Council notice of election – WCC issued the notice of election of West Meon Parish Councillors on the 8th of January. This has been displayed on our notice board since this date as per the directive of WCC. At the time of writing this, we do not know if it will be contested. WMPC are only permitted to distribute election information and documentation issued by WCC, this notice of election is the first official communication we have permission to publish.

Salt Bins – These are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council. You can report any issues or re-fill requests on their website: www.hants.gov.uk/report

Traffic Surveys – These have been received by the Chairman and are being reviewed.

Unitary Authority - The English Devolution White Paper that was published on 16th December 2024 and sets out the Government's intention to drive a programme of devolution and local government reorganisation across England. For our area, this could mean:

- A plan to replace our current two local authorities (Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council) with a single-tier Unitary Authority.
- A plan to create a new level of Local Government called a Strategic Authority, that covers several Unitary Authorities and is led by an elected mayor.
- Our Strategic Authority will likely cover the whole of Hampshire, plus Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.
- Upper Tier Councils, including Hampshire have put forward proposals by 10th January 2025, seeking to be a potential pilot authority, for inclusion in the Devolution Priority Programme, with wide ranging reorganisation plans to be submitted in the Autumn of 2025.

Gallops closed

The field north of West Meon recreation ground stretching in the direction of Marlands and known locally as the Gallops will remain temporarily closed so we can still control the pigeons. As before, the designated footpaths and bridleways will remain open and a further update will be issued next month as the closure is not intended to be permanent.

Thanks everybody for your patience.

Graham Silk

Warnford Parish Meeting

Information relating to WPM can be found on its website which also has details of local facilities and services, village news and events. Please do sign up for 'Alerts' so you will be informed of forthcoming events, planning applications in the area etc.

WPM has an email distribution list so that emails can go to parishioners (eg. relating to Parish Meetings, details of planning applications etc.) If you would like to be added to the list, please email the Clerk.

The AGM will be on 15th May 2025.

West Meon, Warnford, Winchester City and Hampshire CC Contacts

West Meon Parish Council

Tom Brindley locum Clerk to WMPC
clerk@westmeon-pc.gov.uk

Hannah Davies, Chair WMPC

Virginia Burke, Vice Chair WMPC

Robin Gedye, WMPC

Graham Silk, WMPC

Tim Main, WMPC

West Meon Parish Council website
www.westmeon-pc.gov.uk

Winchester & Hants County Councillors

Winchester City Councillors

Neil Bolton
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Jerry Pett
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01489 877633

Hampshire County Councillor

Malcolm Wallace
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07739 050224

Warnford Parish Meeting

Chair: Vacancy
warnfordchair@gmail.com

Lucy Hutchinson, Clerk
warnfordclerk@gmail.com
07717 296610

Warnford Parish website
www.warnfordparish.gov.uk

Member of Parliament for Winchester

Dr Danny Chambers
danny.chambers.mp@parliament.uk
01962 868586



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Penn House, Wheely Down Forge, Wheely Down Road, Warnford SO32 3LG



Spring Show

Where:

Meon Hall
Pound Lane
Meonstoke, SO32 3NP

When:

Saturday 29th March 2025
13.30 - 16.30

Displays of:

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The Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery

OPENING TIMES Tuesday to Sunday Curtis 10am – 4.30pm. Allen 10.30 – 4pm

www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum

www.hampshireculture.org.uk/allen-gallery

Allen Gallery:

Clay Make & Take, a family pottery session. Tuesday 18th February, 11am - 12pm. Our popular clay workshops give the whole family a chance to enjoy an hour of making a small pot or other creation. Please bring an apron or old clothes. We kindly ask parents or guardians to remain on site, or they can join in the activity. £6 per person.

Weaving Workshop. Wednesday 19th February, 11am - 12pm approx. An introduction to the art of Backstrap Weaving - a traditional, loom-free process where you will learn how to construct a beautiful wall-hanging or table runner. Led by Karen Parkin of the Hampshire Weavers Guild. £15 each, or £12 unwaged/children aged 8+. Book on the Allen Gallery website.

Friends of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery Monthly Talk - the History of the Basingstoke Canal. A talk by Roger Cansdale of the Basingstoke Canal Society. Thursday 13th February, 7.30. FREE, donations welcomed.



Barley Mow bridge <https://basingstoke-canal.org.uk/about/the-canal/the-canal-today/>

Curtis Museum:

Museum by Torchlight. Tuesday 18th February, 5.30 -7.30pm. Our ever-popular torchlight tour of the Museum. £4 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult - adults are free. Bring your favourite torch, or use one of ours.

Free trails. 8th February - 2nd March. See if you can spot all the toy dinosaurs (younger children). Or complete the Natural History quiz (older children). Pick up a sticker if you win.

Jill Line

Meon Valley Bus Timetable

Volunteer bus service of the Meon Valley and the surrounding area for all residents. Available for private hire at other times including weekends and evenings. Contact info@meonvalleybus.co.uk For hire: hire@meonvalleybus.co.uk Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. £6 return, £3 single journey.

Every Wednesday **SOBERTON to PETERSFIELD** 9:24 Warnford George & Falcon Return

11:55 Petersfield Tesco 12:00 Petersfield Square

First Friday of the month **SOBERTON to WINCHESTER** 9:26 Warnford Village Hall Return

11:55 River Park Leisure Centre 12:00 Winchester Broadway

Every Monday plus second and fifth Friday of the month **WEST MEON to FAREHAM**

9:00 Thomas Lord 9:03 Warnford Village Hall Return 12:00 Fareham Sainsbury's 12:05

Fareham Library

Third Friday of the month **WEST MEON to HEDGE END** 9:00 Thomas Lord 9:03 Warnford

Village Hall Return 12:00 Hedge End Marks & Spencer

Fourth Friday of the month **WEST MEON to WATERLOOVILLE** 9:00 Thomas Lord 9:03

Warnford Village Hall Return 12:00 Waterlooville Sainsbury's 12:05 Waterlooville Waitrose

No service on other days or Bank Holidays.

Bus will not wait after scheduled time. Dogs allowed subject to driver discretion. Bus passes accepted on all routes. Under 16s half fare. Under 5s free.

Care Group Co-ordinators

Nina Byles 829028/07778 679922

Virginia de Cosson 829362

Parish Directory

Rector: Fr. Tony Forrest

The Vicarage, Church Street, East Meon

642 115 (usual working Sun to Wed)

Verger for West Meon:

Michael Johnson 829 105

PCC Secretary for West Meon:

Louise Clay 829 235

Churchwarden for Warnford:

Andrew Sellick 07973 344 906

Stephen Short 829 261

Verger for Warnford:

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The Parish News is published by the Parochial Church Councils of West Meon & Warnford and delivered free to every home in the parishes.

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