



January 2025

Issue 1

Welcome to the first issue of the New Hurst Village Society newsletter. We plan to publish twice a year, in January and July.

Closing dates for publications are 12th December for the January issue, and 10th June for publication in July. Please send your articles to contact@nhvs.org.uk.

The AGM on 18th October was well attended, and we were able to introduce the committee members and chairman. Please take a minute to look at our web site where you will find minutes from the AGM along with lots of other information, including a list of all the committee members - <https://www.nhvs.org.uk>

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Message from the Chairman, Ivor Fiennes

Well! A new year and an almost-new Village Society, with a committee of 10 and a wide range of people willing to volunteer. We were delighted that 90 or so people crammed into the Cricket Club for our inaugural AGM. It really made our efforts feel worthwhile.

You will see from this newsletter that we haven't been entirely idle. The Society has a number of activities planned for the coming year. Our main focus, however, is on supporting the wide range of things already going on in Hurst and we hope that people will contact us if they feel we can help.

We would like more members! We currently have around 145 (220 email addresses). The Village Society can really help develop the 'common ground' within the community and increase the value that most of us feel from living in Hurst. People don't need to volunteer or join in – just sharing our community values is enough. Should you feel able to encourage neighbours and friends to join, it would be a great help.

Thank you all for your support and our very best wishes for 2025.

NHVS Finance, Robin West

The New Hurst Village Society is ending the first calendar year with just over £1,800 in the bank and in cash, a healthy position after a short period.

Income: £525 of this was earned on the Archery stall at the Hurst Country Show and Fayre in the summer, and the remainder is principally membership and donations from new members.

Expenditure: Apart from setting up the website we have not yet started incurring expenditure or making donations from funds.

NHVS Membership, Victor Boardman

The New HVS has had a fantastic start with an incredible amount of interest from all across the Parish of Hurst. With help from dedicated volunteers, we have run sign-up events at The Hurst Show, Horticultural Show and the Dinner Dance, run email campaigns to the old Society and Wooded Hill members, and hand delivered leaflets to parish residents. Our new online registration webpage [here](#) has been created and we have set up a new bank account and membership process using annual Standing Orders so simplifying the annual membership payments.

From a standing start we have experienced impressive registrations which currently stands at 145 members and 7 local companies listed on our Skills Register – these can be found at <https://www.nhvs.org.uk/skills-register> .

Our goal is to reach 200 registered members and 20 local companies on the Skill Register by mid-year, so please do inform your neighbours to sign up today – it's just £10 per year for each household!

<https://www.nhvs.org.uk>

Local Planning Update Autumn/Winter 24/25, NHVS Planning Group

Since the Planning Group's inauguration in October, we have been hard at work defining our role within the village. We've been delving into the intricacies of national and local government planning processes, frameworks, and updates. This is no small task, but we are committed to refining how we operate and how we communicate with you. Your feedback so far has been invaluable, and we truly appreciate it.

Our focus centres on three areas. First, we scrutinise proposals for large-scale developments in areas where infrastructure—particularly surface water management and sewerage—is inadequate. Second, we address developments that pose a threat to the rural character of Hurst. Finally, we keep a close eye on applications that attempt to bypass planning processes and laws through loopholes or questionable practices.

While we acknowledge that some limited development in Hurst is inevitable—as it has been for generations—we aim to promote sustainable growth. Our goal is to ensure that new developments do not adversely affect those who have chosen to make Hurst their home. As our village evolves, we strive to strike a balance that preserves its unique charm while meeting the needs of a growing community.

View from Hurst Parish Council, January 2025, Tony Robinson

New Hurst Village Society – HPC is very pleased to see the emergence of the New HVS and look forward to working closely with the new committee.

Proposed Community Hub (to replace the Scout Hut) – We have received and submitted the reports requested by WBC – i.e. Great Crested Newt and Heritage Survey, and now await validation of our planning application from WBC.

Details about the plans for the Community Hub were made available in the Autumn issue of 'Hurst Word' which is the Parish Council's newsletter. As and when further details are known, then the HPC website <https://www.hurstpc.org.uk> will be updated and in the next 'Hurst Word'.

2025 – It looks like being a busy year for HPC in 2025. Now that the WBC Local Plan Update (LPU) Regulation 19 consultation has closed and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been released, we wait to see the outcome of the LPU once it has been examined and how the new Government housing targets might affect the Parish. We have a full schedule maintaining green spaces and play parks etc. Parish Councillors are there to represent the community so please contact one of us and we will be able to advise you accordingly.

Vacancies at Hurst Parish Council – The HPC has 2 vacancies and if you are interested in joining, please contact our Clerk at Clerk@Hurstpc.org.uk for an informal chat and further information.

2024 summary - a lot has happened in the past few months, so here is a quick round up.

Hurst Hookers

The group has been very busy creating amazing crocheted decorations for our village, and they even reached as far as Twyford with a beautiful Remembrance Day topper for the main post box. They continued with a colourful Christmas Display, although sadly the post toppers near the Christmas tree went missing.

They have also been busy making blankets for Buscot Ward at the Royal Berks – the ward cares for babies that are born early or unwell and consists of an intensive care area and three other nurseries. Thanks to a very generous donation the group has funds for more wool so can continue to make blankets for the babies.

If you came to the Christmas Fayre you may have seen the bobble hat Christmas tree they created – these were being sold to raise funds for the Cow Shed and the church.

Thank you to all the Hurst Hookers for your efforts and for making us all smile.



St Nicholas Night

This took place on Sunday 1st December at the playground on School Road, when a large crowd assembled to see the village Christmas tree lights turned on. It was a bit chilly, but the mulled wine kept the adults warm, while little ones had sweet treats courtesy of Chocoholics. Refreshments were available after the lighting up ceremony at both the Cricket Club and The Castle Inn.



Hurst Christmas Fayre

Despite the arrival of Storm Darragh our annual Christmas Fayre took place on 7th December. We are fortunate to have hall space, so all the stalls were safely inside, divided between the main village hall and the scout hut. We had various stall holders and we were delighted to see so many people coming out in the bad weather to support this event. Santa was very busy in his beautiful grotto meeting lots of children and handing out presents, ably assisted by his elves.



St Nicholas PTA / NHVS dinner dance



Once again the dinner dance was very well attended, with everyone turning up on 14th December in their finery to start their Christmas celebrations. The hall had been beautifully decorated by the committee members and everything looked very festive.

Guests were greeted at the door with a welcome glass of champagne (or a soft drink) and were able to chat and mingle before sitting down to dine.

There was a fabulous three course dinner with roast beef and turkey and all the trimmings for the main course. Dinner was followed by dancing to music provided by Daft!. Dancing carried on until late and everyone had a great evening. This is an annual event, so keep your eyes open for the date for 2025.





St Nicholas CE Primary School



It's been a very busy term, especially with all the exciting activities in the build up to Christmas. As always, everything we do is underpinned by our vision and values. It has been wonderful to see the children already demonstrating our value of kindness as they begin making new friends. Together, we aim to create an environment where every child can believe in themselves and achieve their best.

The children in Year 1 were recently visited by My Journey from Wokingham Borough Council to promote the safe use of scooters on the pavement and encourage sustainable travel to school. It also reiterated road safety messaging including helmet use and crossing the road. The children were able to learn scooter skills whilst having fun whizzing up and down the playground.



We have a variety of activities for the children to enjoy before, during and after school which include a variety of music lessons – Musical Theatre, Rock Steady Band, piano, drums and guitar – as well as differing sports and exercise – football, gymnastics and judo. Where possible, the children demonstrate what they have been learning by giving a performance to the school and their parents/carers. We recently held an assembly for the drummers and guitarists, as well as our new Rock Steady Bands.



We have a couple of trips being organised for the coming term with a visit to Reading Museum as part of a history lesson, where the children will take part in a Victorian Schoolroom session. Windsor Castle is another destination where the children will explore the castle, learn all about the life of the monarch and recreate a coronation ceremony using replica Crown Jewels.

Our school participated in visits to St Nicholas Church for the St Nicholas Day service and Christmas Carols and were joined by parents and families.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated and hardworking Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) that goes above and beyond to support our school community. From organising fun events, to fundraising for essential resources, they play a vital role in enhancing the educational experience for all our children. Activities such as a School Disco

where the children demonstrated their dance moves, a Christmas Bauble hunt in the playground, a visit from Father Christmas and their first Elfridges event where gifts were donated so that all of our children could 'go shopping' to select a gift for a special person at home.

Open Mornings took place at our school during this term for prospective parents for the September 2025 intake, where we enjoyed meeting new parents and showing them around our lovely village school. Our Year 6 children did tours and answered lots of questions.

As always, we are very keen to hear from any local residents who are able to come into school to listen to the children read or indeed volunteer in any capacity. We are always looking for help, from reading and art, to decoration and maintenance! Please do get in touch via the school office if you would like to be involved. It would be lovely to welcome you to our school.



Happy New Year from St Nicholas Preschool Hurst!



At St Nicholas Preschool we provide a relaxed, happy and stimulating environment where children learn through play. We love being part of the village community and enjoy sharing in the success of village events, such as running the Strawberry Stall at the Hurst Show, which has been enjoyed by our preschool families for many, many years. Some of our staff and parents attended the preschool themselves too!

We are now taking registrations for September 2025 onwards. If you would like to find out more or come and visit us, please call us on 0118 934 3677 or visit our website [St Nicholas Preschool - Hurst](#) or follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

News from St Nicholas Church

Happy New year from all at St Nicholas. We wish you a happy, healthy and peaceful 2025.

It has been an interesting time for your parish church over the last couple of months. After repeated breakdown and repair, in October the end was clearly nigh and the boiler breathed its last 😞. The good news is that we have been awarded a grant towards the installation of a new and environmentally friendly heating system, so watch this space.

We are very thankful to all who attended our church services over the Christmas period, despite the cold, and who put on their layers, coats, hats and gloves (and in some cases brought hot water bottles) and sang heartily even though they could see their breath in the air 🙌. A special thanks to the Hurst Hookers who supported us by leaving spare woolly hats from the Christmas Fair at the church to keep our congregation warm (in exchange for donations to the church).

Thanks to all who supported the Christmas Fair in the village hall – the children who sang, their supporters, the stall holders, volunteers, everyone who came to this traditional village event and of course Father Christmas and his helpers. This is a major fund raiser for the church and we raised a magnificent sum of money.

The most exciting news for the village is that following a protracted period without a permanent vicar, we have appointed Reverend Hugh Thomas as our House for Duty Priest. Hugh will be living in the heart of the village in Sawpit Road and is very keen to get to know the village, its residents and its traditions. Hugh will be licenced at a special service on the afternoon of Sunday 23rd March. We are thankful for the support of Reverend Graham Theobald and Reverend Marina Brain who have covered our services over the last 18 months. We look forward to welcoming Hugh.

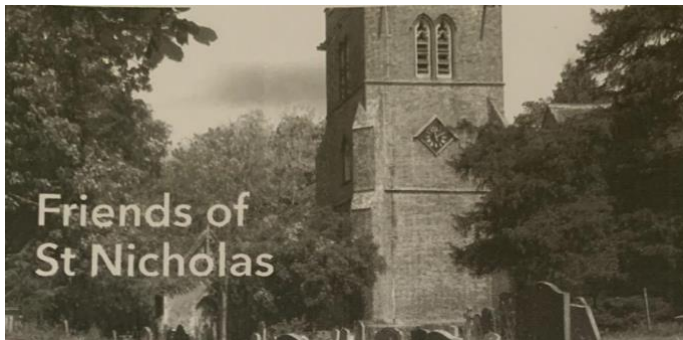
Just a reminder that we hold a parish communion service at 11.00 on the first, second, third and fifth Sunday of the month and that we currently provide a Book of Common Prayer service at 9.00 on the fourth Sunday followed by Messy Church at 11.00. You would be most welcome to join us.

Special services to mention are Mothering Sunday service on 30th March at 11.00 and believe it or not Easter is not far away. We would welcome you to our Easter Day service.

All good wishes

Jenny Beasley and Sue Payne
Church wardens for St Nicholas, Hurst

Friends of St Nicholas Hurst



We know that St Nicholas Church is very important to the village for worshippers and non-worshippers alike. It is a beautiful and historic landmark in our village along with the Castle Inn pub and cottages. But the upkeep of the fabric of the church and its surroundings is not funded by the Church of England and is the responsibility of the local community.

Very recently we have set up a Friends of St Nicholas community (FOSN) for those who would like to support their local church but don't wish to attend church on a regular basis. FOSN will not be involved with or raise funds for the day-to-day running of the church or the religious aspect of church business.

We are currently asking your views on the importance of the church and the role of our wider community in preserving this picturesque heart of the village. So we have prepared a simple on-line questionnaire which you can complete on your smartphone by scanning this QR code.



Hurst Gospel Hall

At Hurst Gospel Hall in Whistley Green, an independent church of Christians meet to praise and worship God and Jesus Christ His son in a simple way. We accept the Bible as the inspired word of God and seek to learn and follow what it teaches. All are welcome at the Gospel Hall and we have activities for all ages. There's a special Family Service on Sundays at 11.45am which is appropriate for everyone, and you would be very welcome to join us. This runs each week apart from the 3rd Sunday of each month when we have our C.A.M.E.O tea at 5pm instead.

Either service would be a great time to come along and meet us. We also have a Coffee and Toddlers group on Monday mornings at 10am and our JAM Children's Club takes place Monday evenings at 6pm. Please see our website (hurstgospelhall.org) for further details, or to get in contact if you have any questions.

Most recently, in the Sunday morning Family Service we have been enjoying working sequentially through Mark's Gospel, which details the amazing events of the life of Jesus - things He said and did. You'd be very welcome to join us as we continue learning from this Gospel each week.

We very much look forward to seeing you at one of our activities soon.



Thames Valley Police

Currently your local Neighbourhood Policing Team consists of two Police Constables and two Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). PC Young, PC Bogdanova, PCSO Brown and PCSO Emmett cover the so-called 'Twyford neighbourhood' but we are responsible for looking after Hurst, Twyford, and all surrounding areas up to Remenham.

Below are some of the things we have been up to in between jobs and regular patrols.

At the end of September, the team carried out checks in some of the hotels in the area with the help of two young volunteers. We executed a test purchasing exercise to help educate the local premises on the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Free training for staff is available and offered for those premises that require development.

On Sunday 17th November 2024, PC Young and PCSO Brown attended King George V playing field in Twyford to talk ASB issues and help plant some bulbs.

In October, we executed a Section 23 Misuse of Drugs Act warrant on an address in Sonning after intelligence suggesting the property is being used for cultivation of Cannabis. One male was located and arrested at the property. He was dealt with by the Courts and given a custodial sentence of 36 weeks.

As most of you have probably heard, Thames Valley Police responded to a robbery in Twyford on Monday 9th December 2024. Multiple units attended the incident and with help from witnesses, a suspect was identified and arrested within 50 minutes of the initial call. He is currently being dealt with by the Crown Prosecution Service.

PC Young has been dealing with a series of thefts from motor vehicle offences in the Charvil area. A male was identified and dealt with for these offences within two weeks. On this note, we would like to remind you to always check your vehicle is locked and reduce the risk of becoming a target by not leaving any valuables in your vehicle overnight.

PCSO Emmett is looking to organise a bike marking event after the Christmas period, so if you get a new bike from Santa, be sure to come along and get it marked for free.

PC Bogdanova will be attending one of the local schools to meet the children and talk about the role of the Police in our community. If you have contact with any nurseries or schools that would like us to attend and deliver a talk, please pass on our email address.

PCSO Brown is currently in contact with the local authorities and looking to agree a date for a 'Walk and Talk' in the area. This is open to anyone to join and is focused on gaining a better understanding of the local concerns. We are hopeful members of the public will join us for the walk and point out concerns in the area that make them feel unsafe. We will be posting the dates for these events as they are confirmed. Look out for the announcements on our Facebook page and TVP alerts.

We would like to take the opportunity to remind you that you can complete the survey for your local area through the QR code at the foot of this section. We are aware that some of you may be hesitant to report things but rest assured that you can do so anonymously as you are not required to put your details when completing the survey.

You can also follow us on Facebook at TVP Bracknell & Wokingham, which gives you regular updates on what is happening in the policing area of Bracknell and Wokingham. Alternatively, you can sign up to TVP Alerts which will ask you to put in your postcode as well as to select the topics you are interested in. This way, you will only receive information you are interested in.

Alternatively, if you would like to get in touch with us, you can do so via our web site WokinghamNHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk.

PC Julie Bogdanova



Village Stores and Post Office

You may have all seen the sad news about the sudden closure of the village stores and post office. We're sure you will all join us in thanking Jayne Ovington and her team for all their hard work over the years and wish them all well for the future.

The freeholders of the property, C & J Paxton, have posted on the Hurst Facebook page and we have copied their post below in case anyone has not seen this information.

Dear Hurst residents,

My wife and I are the Freeholders of Hurst Village Shop premises and flat above.

Our solicitors are currently negotiating the repossession of the whole from our lapsed tenants Bestway Retail after they ceased rental payments and closed the shop down without explanation or the legal notice required. This is typical of them as we have found them tricky and not straight forward to deal with over the length of our relationship.

We are therefore actively looking to re-Lease or possibly sell the shop in a way that would allow the current tenants of the self-contained flat above to remain in residence if at all possible and preferably to another shop keeper so that the residents of Hurst can continue to benefit the conveniences of having a shop in the heart of the village.

[Alternatively, we ask you the residents, what would your wishes regarding the best use of the premises in the future be if not a convenience store?]

We believe that in order for the shop to be viable to a new convenience store business owner or as a community owned store, it would need to be able to keep all or most of the facilities and stock the items that have made this a profitable and viable shop for the last 110 years or so, this would also need the continued support of the villagers.

We ask the residents to please be patient as the negotiations and legal paperwork is likely to take a little time to process. Hopefully our solicitor can persuade Bestway /Central stores not to continue being difficult and obstructive, then with our best efforts Hurst will not be without the business of their choice for long.

*Kind regards,
C & J Paxton*

Coming up in 2025

We're already looking forward and putting together plans for 2025. We'd like to hold 3 to 4 events each year but are very aware we should avoid conflicting with other events that may be happening in the area.

Two regular events are already in the calendar with the Hurst Show and Country Fair taking place as usual on the last weekend in June, and the Horticultural Show in August – see below for more information on this.

Easter Trail

In 2025 we plan to have an Easter trail, starting on Sunday 13th April, finishing with a grand finale at the Cricket Club the following week on Easter Monday, 21st April.

We will devise a map of properties that have an Easter themed display, for families to find and take a photo. Any family that completes the course and has a photo of all displays will be eligible for a prize at the grand finale.

If you are willing to create a display to be included on the map, please tell us using the email address below. The display doesn't have to be on a massive scale, just something that is Easter related that can be photographed from the road.

To avoid little legs having to go on a route march and for safety where there are pavements, we would like to keep the route limited to properties in the area covered by Wokingham Road (between Orchard Road and Hogmoor Lane), the top end of Hinton Road (as far down as the Green Man), Tape Lane, and School Road up to Tape Lane. Ideally a maximum of 20 properties to visit. This will be a great activity for families during the Easter holiday and a fun way to get little ones out in the fresh air.

Please let us know if you would like to set up a display to be included on the map - email contact@nhvs.org.uk

CPR/Basic Life Support Training

We are fortunate to have a public access defibrillator (PAD) in the village, but we know some may be wary of using one. Jacqui Watts is a Community First Responder with the South Central Ambulance Service and has offered to run some basic life support training sessions, where she will cover how to recognise a cardiac arrest, how to perform CPR and how to use a defibrillator.

We will run sessions both during the day and in the evening to suit as many people as possible, but we do have to set a minimum age limit of 9 years for attendees.

Each session will be at the cricket club and will last around 90 minutes - and there will be an opportunity for everyone to practice CPR. Cost will be £10 per family (up to 4 family members). This will cover the cost of renting the cricket club, with any surplus being put into NHVS funds.

To ensure everyone has the chance to practice there will be a limit of 20 people at each session. To help gauge uptake, please email NHVS if you would be interested in attending one of these sessions – contact@nhvs.org.uk.

The first two dates we can offer are:

Friday 7th March, 7:30pm start

Sunday 9th March, 4pm start

Additional dates can be arranged if there is a demand.

Hurst Show and Country Fayre

Our 2024 Show took place as usual on the last weekend in June. The weather was pretty much perfect and there was an amazing turnout. The show featured many events and activities including the classic vehicles, craft stalls, a fun dog show, Sports Quest, terrier racing and the ever-popular hobby horse jumping. Over £25,000 was raised and is now being used for the benefit of many local charities, including St Nicholas School, Hurst Scouts and Alexander Devine Hospice. Donations have also been made to Hurst Bowling Club towards their new club house, St Nicholas Pre-School towards a new climbing structure and Red Diamonds to subsidise activities. Further donations have benefited ASD Family Help, Rock Academy, and South Central Ambulance Service.

Planning has already started for our 2025 show to take place over the weekend of 28th -29th June. Look out for further updates via Facebook or on our web site <https://hurstshow.uk>

Hurst Horticultural Show - Saturday 30th August, 2025 (two weeks later than usual),
Frank Whittaker

This will be the 112th year of this marvellous village event which has become a firm local favourite. Here are just some of the comments made about the 2024 show:

- *"In such a hectic and fast-moving world, how do you manage to create this wonderful relaxed atmosphere each year - we love it."*
- *"It's our first year and we've just realised what we've been missing."*
- *"Our children loved entering and were over the moon with their winners' medals."*
- *"Of all the shows I go to, Hurst Horticultural Show is my favourite as it still retains that lovely village feeling of yesteryear, something we seem to be losing in this beautiful country of ours."*

The 2025 show will be held in the usual place, the Hurst Village Halls, the Scout Hut and orchard in School Road.

While the Hurst Horticultural Society which stages this show, does not have a formal membership list, it does have a list of supporters who receive periodic emails about its plans and activities.

Anyone is free to join this list of supporters which can be done by contacting: secretary@hursthorticulturalshow.org, as new supporters are always made welcome.

For more information, cup winners and photographs of past shows, visit the website: www.hursthorticulturalsociety.org

That's it for this issue, but please do let us know if you have anything you would like to publish in our newsletters.

Closing dates for publication are 12th December for the January issue, and 10th June for publication in July.

Please send your articles to contact@nhvs.org.uk