



# Ombersley & Doverdale Parish Magazine

**February  
2026**



This on-line edition supports the printed version.

Please see the printed issue for full advertisements.

A list of advertisers plus their contact details is at the end of this on-line issue.



# Severn Parishes Service Rota

**February 2026**

February 1st	9.00am	HC-CW	Hampton Lovett
	10.00am	Sunday 1st	Hartlebury
	10.30am	FS	Elmbridge
	11.00am	MP	Doverdale
	11.00am	HC-CW	<b>Ombersley</b>
February 8th	9.00am	HC-CW	Rushock
	10.00am	FS	<b>Ombersley</b>
	11.00am	HC-CW	Hartlebury
February 15th	9.00am	HC-CW	Elmbridge
	10.00am	MP	Hartlebury
	10.00am	MP	<b>Ombersley</b>
	11.00am	HC-BCP	Doverdale
February 18th Ash Wednesday	10.00am	HC-CW	Hartlebury
	7.30pm	HC-CW	Hampton Lovett
February 22nd	9.00am	HC-BCP	Elmley Lovett
	11.00am	HC-CW	Hartlebury
	11.00am	HC-CW	<b>Ombersley</b>
	6.00pm	Stations of the Cross	Elmbridge
March 1st	9.00am	HC-CW	Hampton Lovett
	10.00am	Sunday 1st	Hartlebury
	10.30am	FS	Elmbridge
	11.00am	MP	Doverdale
	11.00am	HC-CW	<b>Ombersley</b>
	6.00pm	Stations of the Cross	Hartlebury

HC Holy Communion; CW Common Worship; BCP Book of Common Prayer;

FS Family Service; MP Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer: 9.15am at Doverdale on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb

Mid-week Eucharist at Ombersley at 6pm on 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February.

# Letter from the Rector

*Reverend Canon Tim Williams  
Rector of St. Andrew's, Ombersley and St Mary's,  
Doverdale (and five other churches in the Benefice)*



Dear Friends,

Can I begin by thanking you, on behalf of Mary and I, for your kind gifts and Christmas wishes as we celebrated our first Christmas here in the Benefice.

Here we are, barely over Christmas when we find ourselves headlong into Lent. The decorations have not long been packed away, the last carols still echoing in our minds, and yet on Ash Wednesday, 18th February, we are marked with ashes and invited into a very different season of the Church year.

Lent has its roots in the earliest centuries of the Christian Church. The forty days reflect Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, a time of prayer, fasting, and preparation before the beginning of his public ministry. From the beginning, Lent was a season of learning, repentance, and renewal - especially for those preparing for baptism at Easter, and for the whole community supporting them.

The ashes we receive on Ash Wednesday are a powerful reminder of our humanity "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." They are not meant to weigh us down, but to ground us – to remind us of who we are and who we depend on.

In today's world, Lent can feel awkward or inconvenient. Life moves fast, and we are surrounded by noise, busyness, and constant demands on our attention. Giving something up, taking time to pray, or choosing simplicity can feel almost counter-cultural. And yet, perhaps that is precisely why Lent still matters.

Lent invites us to pause and to notice. It asks us to look honestly at our lives: what draws us closer to God, and what pulls us away. The traditional disciplines of prayer, fasting, and generosity are not about punishment or deprivation, but about making space — space for God, for others, and for a deeper awareness of what truly matters.

Though we may feel we have arrived at Lent very quickly this year, it comes as a gift rather than an interruption. It is an opportunity to step back from the rush, to walk thoughtfully toward Easter, and to allow God to shape and renew us along the way.

As we begin this Lenten journey together, may it be a season not just of sacrifice, but of grace, honesty, and quiet hope.

With every blessing,



## **St Valentine, St Valentine's, and Saints of Love**

Just before Lent this year as with every year on 14 February, hearts, flowers, and declarations of love take centre stage. Yet behind the modern celebrations of St Valentine's Day lies a story that is far older, quieter, and more complex than the commercial holiday suggests.

The figure of St Valentine himself is wrapped in legend, and his story sits alongside other, lesser-known saints of love - among them St Dwynwen, the Welsh patron saint of lovers.

### **Who Was St Valentine?**

The name "St Valentine" refers not to one single, clearly documented individual, but likely to several early Christian martyrs named Valentinus. The most famous legend places St Valentine in 3rd-century Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II.

According to tradition, Claudius believed unmarried men made better soldiers and outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, a Christian priest, is said to have defied this decree by secretly marrying couples in Christian ceremonies. When discovered, he was imprisoned and later executed around 14 February, sometime around AD 269.

Another version of the story says Valentine befriended - or healed - the blind daughter of his jailer, and before his execution sent her a note signed "from your Valentine." Whether historically accurate or not, this detail has endured, shaping the language of love ever since.

By the Middle Ages, Valentine had become firmly associated with romance. The poet Geoffrey Chaucer helped cement this link, writing in the 14th century that birds chose their mates on St Valentine's Day. From there, the connection between the saint and romantic love flourished.

St Valentine's Day gradually evolved from a religious feast into a cultural celebration of love. In medieval Europe, lovers exchanged handwritten notes and small tokens. By the 18th and 19th centuries, printed Valentine cards became popular, especially in England.

Today, the day has taken on a global, commercial character - but at its heart remains the idea of love freely given, even in defiance of hardship, which echoes the legend of St Valentine himself.

I wondered if there was any recipe associated with Valentine.

While there is no single recipe directly associated to him, medieval Europe associated love with sweetness, spice, and warming foods. Honey, in particular, symbolised affection and abundance – hence the term “honeymoon”. Simple honey cakes would have been familiar fare during the period when Valentine's legends were taking shape. Also, during the Middle Ages, Europeans, believing that apples had aphrodisiac qualities, used the fruit in love rituals. If a woman wanted a man to love her, she would sleep with an apple under her arm and persuade the man to eat it the next day. The belief was that he would fall in love with her after consuming the apple. Mmmmm!

This is not a medieval recipe but my niece's award-winning recipe for honey cake.

- 250g honey plus about 2tbsp extra to glaze
- 225g butter
- 3 large eggs beaten
- 300g SR flour
- Heat oven to 140° (fan), line 20cm tin.
- Melt butter, sugar and honey slowly in a pan over low heat. Once liquid increase heat and boil for about 1 min. Leave to cool for 15-20 mins.
- Beat eggs into cooled honey mix. Sift flour into large bowl and pour in egg and honey mix, beat until the mixture is smooth.
- Pour into tin and bake for 50-60 mins. Turn out cake once cooked, warm 2 tbsp honey and brush over top to glaze and leave to cool

## **St Dwynwen: Wales Patron Saint of Love**

Long before Valentine cards crossed the Atlantic, Wales had its own saint of lovers: St Dwynwen. St Dwynwen lived in the 5th century and was a Welsh princess, one of the daughters of King Brychan Brycheiniog. According to legend, she fell in love with a young man named Maelon, but their relationship was forbidden. Heartbroken,

Dwynwen prayed for relief from her feelings. An angel is said to have appeared, granting her three wishes: that Maelon be released from his suffering, that true lovers be blessed, and that she herself never marry.

Dwynwen devoted her life to God and settled on Llanddwyn Island (Ynys Llanddwyn) off the coast of Anglesey, where a sacred well was believed to predict the fortunes of lovers. She is remembered not for romantic fulfilment, but for compassion, selflessness, and care for the happiness of others.

St Dwynwen's Day is celebrated on 25 January, and in recent years it has enjoyed a revival in Wales as a gentler, more local counterpart to Valentine's Day. There are no recipes associated with St Dwynwen, but Welsh cakes are good. There are any number of recipes on-line.

Whether through the defiant courage of St Valentine or the quiet devotion of St Dwynwen, these stories remind us that love has many forms - romantic, sacrificial, hopeful, and kind. Beyond the cards and chocolates, the saints of love offer a deeper reflection: that love is something worth protecting, nurturing, and sometimes even surrendering for the good of others. And perhaps that is a tradition still worth keeping.

### **PRAYING ROUND THE PARISH**

If you have a particular need or things to be grateful for, please let us know:

Fr Tim Williams (Rector) 01905 978431 [rector@w7b.org.uk](mailto:rector@w7b.org.uk)

Angie Randle 01905 620753 [angierandle@hotmail.com](mailto:angierandle@hotmail.com)

or Rev James Homer 01299 851637 [ajfhomer@btinternet.com](mailto:ajfhomer@btinternet.com) [Curate with pastoral responsibility for the Worcestershire Severn Parishes]



#### Areas for February:

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February - Apple Tree Walk, Holt Fleet Road, Parsonage Lane, Dough Bank

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February - Sinton, School Bank, Ombersley School, Hawford, Hawford School

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February - Boreley, Mutton Hall, Comhampton, Dunhampton

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February – Shops and businesses in our community

If you would like a place of quiet to pray, or think, or just rest, St Andrew's Church is open every day from 10am.

## St Andrew's News

Also find information on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) , YouTube: 'St Andrew's Church Ombersley' or Ombersley Church Worcestershire on Facebook

Welcome to the first magazine of 2026!

We are well into 2026 now and we hope you all enjoyed your various events around Christmas and New Year.

We had three new services last year starting with the Advent carol service, moving on to 'Carols around the Christmas tree' with refreshments. This was a lovely evening, many thanks to Artisan Joinery for sponsoring the tree, and the Kings Arms for supporting the refreshments. We had lovely time singing together and raised £170 for St Basils, which supports youngsters sleeping out in Birmingham. We will have more lights and gazebos for Christmas 2026.

The high point for many of you will have been the Living Crib service with Donkeys! On Christmas Eve, a good 170 people came, added to the crib, listened to the Christmas story, sung carols and admired the beautifully behaved donkeys. We need to work on more people dressing up next time. The earlier time for the First Communion of Christmas (at 10pm) was appreciated and numbers were up, so it is likely we will continue with this time for 2026.

If you still have a real Christmas tree waiting for disposal, don't forget we need some for our bonfire on Easter morning. Having been sunny and bright, then very cold and now wet and dull it is time to think of spring and new beginnings.

We have started our planning for events this year. We are just finalising dates and to start us off, as requested, we will have a Games afternoon in the Narthex on February 15th. Board and card games, a jigsaw while waiting, and of course Tea and Cake!

Easter is early this year, which means Pancake Day is during half term, and our first Lent lunch meeting in the Narthex will be on February 19<sup>th</sup> and then for the following five Thursdays. More details elsewhere. Let us look forward to an excellent year with friends old and new.

*Fiona and Chris*

**Stay and Play (Babes and Toddlers):** Each Monday Morning: 9.30 to 11am £2 /family  
Join our lovely group of children and adults, please pop in and see us.

We have had a lovely group of very little people this month, aged in weeks rather than months...so gorgeous! There's a comfortable space at the back of the church with

various toys, hot drinks and a snack finishing with circle songs. Last month we had a chance to decorate biscuits which I gather carried on at home...

Just drop in, or contact us via Facebook - Stay and Play Ombersley, or on 07837928531

### **Monthly Monday evening Bible study group**

Our next meeting will be at 7pm on February 2nd at Wisteria Cottage, Main Road (next to Dentist). We are starting 2026 looking at the prophets starting with Elijah and will continue after the Lent Courses and Easter. Do drop in you will be very welcome.

**Creativity Coffee, Company and Craft:** First and Third Thursday of each month, £2 per person. February 5th at 10.30 and February 19th at 10am. During Lent we will meet earlier to accommodate the Lent lunch discussion group at 12.30.

We started in January making some Christmas decorations! It is good to be ahead!

**Ombersley Quilling and Paper Craft Group:** Second Thursday of each month at 7.00 pm. Next meeting, February 12<sup>th</sup>

Do come and try paper filigree / twiddling, card making etc. This year will give us an opportunity to work on longer projects and include other crafts for those who prefer not to twiddle!

As there is a short 6pm service before this group meets, the start time has been brought forward to 7pm to save a big gap between the two. Contact Fiona on 07837928531 for more information.

### **Forthcoming Event**

Sunday February 15th 3-5 pm - an **Afternoon of Board and Card games with Tea and Cake**

We will have a variety of games available, and players who know the rules if you don't. There will be a jigsaw available if you need a break or are waiting to join a table. It is £5 each for everybody over 8 years old.

As this will be in the Narthex, numbers will be limited to a maximum of 35. This is a new venture for us so do please come and support us...and suggest games. If successful we can run it more regularly.

Please send articles/reports for inclusion in the March 2026 Magazine by

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February



# Parish Register: St Andrew's Church

## Baptism

November 16th	Arthur William Powys & George David Powys
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## Wedding

November 22nd	Koran North & Ellen Loveridge
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## Funeral

December 4th	Alison Ryan
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## Rota for St Andrew's Church

Date	Service	Sidespeople	Intercessor	Lector
Feb 1st	HC-CW	Tony Checketts, Maureen Callow	Angela Randle	Robert Thornton
Feb 8th	FS	Chris & Kim Day	-	-
Feb 15th	MP	Gail & Phil Filer	Fiona Davies	James Martineau
Feb 22nd	HC-CW	Jenny Ransome, Tony Checketts	Jenny Batelen	Marjorie Workman
March 1st	HC-CW	Maureen Callow, Alison Want	Geoff & Audrey Axon	Howard Robinson

## Holy Dusters

Jan 30th	Liz Hooper, Heather Barningham, Fiona Davies
Feb 13th	Helen Daly, Liz Hooper
Feb 27th	Myra Cowdry, Marjorie Workman, Heather Barningham

If you'd like to help, please ring Liz 01905 620827 or Fiona 01905 621176

## Flowers

	Pedestal	Porch
Jan 3rd - Feb15th	Plant arrangements	

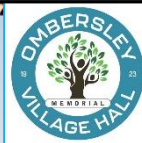
No flowers during Lent.

Decorate Church for Easter from 3pm on Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

If you'd like to help, please contact either Jan Berry or Heather Barningham. Jan: 07977 588682; [janeteberry@gmail.com](mailto:janeteberry@gmail.com)

Heather: 01905 620213; [hello@heatherbarningham.co.uk](mailto:hello@heatherbarningham.co.uk)

## OMBERSLEY MEMORIAL HALL EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY 2026/27



**7<sup>th</sup> February – Movie Night – The Critic**

**21<sup>st</sup> February – Murder Mystery Evening**

**7<sup>th</sup> March – Movie Night – Downtown Abbey –  
the Grand Finale**

**28<sup>th</sup> March – Easter Brunch**

**11<sup>th</sup> April – Movie Night – The Roses (2025)**

WORCESTERSHIRE WEDDING PROS

# WEDDING FAYRE

*Worcestershire Wedding Planner*

in association with

OMBERSLEY MEMORIAL HALL  
**SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**



Meet Lindsay,  
our dedicated  
wedding planner

**FREE ENTRY**

**DRINK ON ARRIVAL  
NIBBLES & CANAPÉS**

**12 – 4PM**



View the hall  
and meet local  
suppliers

SIGN UP AT [WWPOMH.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://WWPOMH.EVENTBRITE.COM)  
OR COME ALONG ON THE DAY!

Ombersley Memorial Hall

# EASTER BRUNCH

**28th March 2026**

**10am – Noon**

**Bacon Strata, Sausages, Tomato, Mushroom  
served with Tiger Bread**

**Hot Cross Bun**

**Unlimited Tea, Coffee and Juice**

**£8 per Adult**

**Sausage, Beans, served with Tiger Bread**

**Pancakes with Nutella or Maple Syrup**

**Unlimited Juice or Squash**

**£5 per Child (3–12)**

**PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

**Mimosa Brunch Cocktail available to purchase**

**Craft activity for children attending**

**To book your brunch, contact:  
[cherrytrees.1@btinternet.com](mailto:cherrytrees.1@btinternet.com)**

**Raising funds for Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust,  
Worcester**

**SEE YOU THERE!**

# Worcestershire Bombs

During the Second World War, the Luftwaffe dropped a total of seven bombs on Worcestershire. Most were dropped as aircraft returned from trying to bomb Birmingham and the Austin works at Longbridge. If they were unable to identify the target, they dropped their load randomly on the return to Germany. It seems that the Luftwaffe navigated to and from the industrial Midlands by using the River Severn as a way marker.



However, there was one deliberate raid on Worcester, during lunchtime on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1940. A single Dornier 17 bomber targeted the MECO (Mining and Engineering Company) works on the Bromyard Road. At a height of 300 feet, four bombs were dropped and the plane then machine-gunned the area around the factory, including a children's playground. Seven people were killed and fifty-six injured. The factory, which was making winding gear for barrage balloons shut down for five days.

The raid took place at the end of the Battle of Britain when German High Command issued the order that "nuisance raids on London and important industrial targets should be made in all weathers, by single bombers or fighter-bombers, in order to give the enemy no rest".



Of the seven people killed, one was Thomas Santler who, with his brother, is credited with making, in 1887, the first motor car in Gt. Britain. In their Malvern works, they produced a coal fired steam car, which still exists today.



## LOCAL NEWS

February 2026

- The Living Crib service in St Andrew's Church was very well attended on Christmas Eve with the donkeys, Gilbert and Dylan, proving to be one of the star attractions for all the young families who enjoyed the service. Sadly, I have to report that Gilbert went to Donkey Heaven a few weeks later.
- There was another sad event which I would like to mention, and that was the lack of the **Church Bells Ringing in the New Year**. This is a centuries old tradition and one which I sincerely hope we can continue. **Paul Marshall is the Tower Captain** for St. Andrew's Church and he has told me that they need to recruit more people to learn how to ring the Tower Bells. Apparently, there is a national shortage of bellringers throughout the country, so if you are interested or need to know what is involved, please contact Paul for a chat or to arrange to go along to the Church Tower on a Thursday practice night. Email [marshallpaul@btinternet.com](mailto:marshallpaul@btinternet.com)
- **Sytchampton Village Hall** are also looking to recruit some **volunteers** (see article in this magazine). If you would like to be involved and help out in your community then please email Andy [ajburge@sky.com](mailto:ajburge@sky.com)
- **The Hadley Bowling Monday Club** held its Closing Dinner on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The following members were presented with their trophies: SINGLES: Mike Lovatt of Hallow, PAIRS: Terry Westwood & Richard Vining, THE DENNIS ALLINGTON TROPHY: Tony Lloyd of Elmbridge. The 2025 season marked the start of mixed membership and the Club was pleased to welcome several ladies to the green during the summer. Contact [vernhouse@btinternet.com](mailto:vernhouse@btinternet.com) if you would like to join in the fun when the new season starts in April.
- **Ombersley Dramatic Society** is performing Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs in Hartlebury Parish Hall from **29<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026**. Contact 07725 304624 / 07977 991131
- **Movie Nights** continue in Ombersley Memorial Hall on **Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup>** with **The Critic** starring Sir Ian McKellen, Gemma Arterton, Lesley Manville. It is a dark and sharp-witted thriller set in 1930s London.

- **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February** 3-5pm - Join a Fun Afternoon of Board and Card Games with cake and tea in St. Andrew's church. £5 per person, pre-booking essential. Contact: fmdavies83@gmail.com
- There is a **Murder Mystery Evening** in Ombersley Memorial Hall on **February 21<sup>st</sup> 7pm**. Tickets selling fast - Contact email : [cherrytrees.1@btinternet.com](mailto:cherrytrees.1@btinternet.com)
- **Save the Date:** March 7<sup>th</sup> Movie Night showing **Downton Abbey - the Finale**.
- **Save the Date: Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup>** 3pm-4pm: Talk & Tea in St. Andrew's Church. A fascinating historical talk about 'Priest Holes' by Phil Downing, the manager at Harvington Hall. £10 per person to include tea and home-made cake.
- **Save your Perennials:** Shout out to all Gardeners when dividing plants this spring, please consider donating some to our Community Kitchen Garden. Call 07798 797095

If you have any snippets of local news, email [maxdiane@outlook.com](mailto:maxdiane@outlook.com) or phone 01905 620350



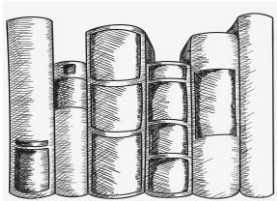
## Tea & Coffee Shop Ombersley Memorial Hall



**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**  
**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026**  
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026**

## Your Parish Magazine

We have advertised in the Parish Magazine over a period of several months for a volunteer(s) to become involved with editing, lay-out and advertising. Sadly, we have not had any response! Please consider if you are able to spare a couple of hours each month helping the current team. If you are interested please contact either Maureen Callow or Zillah Pickering (see page 3 of the magazine for contact details).



**Ombersley**  
History Group



## **The Hive Archives**

### **An illustrated talk by Adrian Gregson, County & Diocesan Archivist**

Adrian leads the archive team who provide access to and expertise on collections, and ensure the long-term preservation of the archive. Adrian's team are specialists in collections' management practice, archive digitisation, conservation, archival research & guidance and customer engagement & accessibility.

**Ombersley Memorial Hall: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 7 pm for 7.30pm**

Admission: members free; non-members £5 - includes a glass of wine/soft drink

## **Lent Discussion Groups**

Fr Tim will continue the custom of holding Lent talks as follows:

### **Ombersley Narthex at 1.30pm with lunch on**

19<sup>th</sup> February, 26<sup>th</sup> February, 5<sup>th</sup> March, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 19<sup>th</sup> March and 26<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Cutnall Green Tea Rooms at 7pm with soup and a roll on**

25<sup>th</sup> February, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 18<sup>th</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> March.

The study booklets will be provided at the time, and I hope will continue to encourage some lively debate as in past years.

*James Homer*



# Remembrance Sunday – your thoughts are welcome

Remembrance Sunday mornings in Ombersley have become a special time for many residents with crowds congregating on the main road opposite the War Memorial waiting to pay their respects to the men and women who died for us in two World Wars. The procession of Guides, Brownies and wreath layers that assemble at the Crown & Sandys currently march down the main road to meet the waiting crowds.

In the past, ex- service men and women would have been proud to be part of this walk accompanied by a full marching band. This way of paying our respects has served us well over the years, but as the years pass by, there are very few ex-service personnel, there is no live band, and we are very grateful that the young lady who plays the bugle is still able to be part of the service. Maybe it's now time to consider whether this tradition should continue in its present form.

We are very fortunate that St Andrew's Church is right in the heart of the village set in its own beautiful grounds, and which could be used to begin a new tradition of a very moving and respectful service.

The idea being considered is that residents would enter St Andrew's churchyard through the gate at the end of Church Lane past Ombersley Garage, passing graves of the young men killed, which would each be marked by a poppy or statue.

Members of the procession would collect their poppies inside the west door of the church. The procession would then proceed down the long path towards the War Memorial to music being played from the church. The service would take place by the War Memorial. Wreaths and poppies would be placed on the War Memorial from the churchyard side.

It is proposed that the cost of closing the road (approximately £10,000 over five years) would instead be spent making access to the War Memorial from the churchyard as safe as possible.

The Parish Council and St Andrew's PCC would very much appreciate your thoughts by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2026.

Parish Council: Email Angie Astley - [clerk@odpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@odpc.co.uk) or any member of the Parish Council whose details can be found on the Parish Council website [www.odpc.co.uk](http://www.odpc.co.uk).

St Andrew's Email: Chris Day - [chrisday567@outlook.com](mailto:chrisday567@outlook.com) or Fiona Davies - [fmdavies83@gmail.com](mailto:fmdavies83@gmail.com)





## Ombersley Gardening Club



We head into 2026 with a calendar full of interesting speakers and events. We started the year on the 15<sup>th</sup> January with a talk from Pip Smith on Garden Design and on February 19<sup>th</sup> we have our Annual General Meeting for members. Following this on March 19<sup>th</sup> it is the Gardening Club's Spring Show when hopefully, the Hall will be filled with the smell and colour of beautiful Spring flowers.

Heading into February and March is now the time to start getting your vegetable plants - carrots, broad beans, peas etc planted under cloches or in the greenhouse to prepare them for planting out when the soil becomes warmer. As March arrives and we celebrate the beginning of Spring, which is a good time to sow poppies, sunflowers and wild flowers. As the soil begins to warm up, incorporate compost and any other organic matter to feed and enrich it.

With snow and heavy frosts still around, keep water baths and bird feeders topped up and place a ball or something similar in ponds to stop the water completely freezing over.

We look forward to welcoming you at our next meeting and for anyone who hasn't tried the club and would like to, then feel free to come along. We meet at 7.30 on the third Thursday of the month at Ombersley Memorial Hall.

Take care in this cold weather and stay warm.

*Happy gardening! Ombersley Gardening Club Committee.*

### **Parish Magazine Subscription**

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2026, please let your distributor have £7 (cash) as soon as possible.

## Quarter Days and Cross Quarter Days

It was not that long ago that the cycle of our lives was regulated by the Church and religious festivals. Nowadays we are so used to paying (or receiving!) rent monthly and being able to buy fruit and vegetables from the supermarket whenever we want, that we forget that food used to be seasonal and rent was paid just four times a year. The regular punctuation of the year, based on the Church's calendar, was divided into "quarter days".

These quarter days were when rent was due, servants were hired and school terms started. They also ensured that debts were paid and unresolved lawsuits didn't linger on. Accounts had to be settled and a reckoning made and publicly recorded.

Roughly three months apart and near to the two solstices and equinoxes, they were: Lady Day, 25<sup>th</sup> March or the Feast of Annunciation; Midsummer Day, 24<sup>th</sup> June or the Feast of Nativity of St John the Baptist; Michaelmas Day, 29<sup>th</sup> September or The Feast of St Michael and All Angels; Christmas Day, 25<sup>th</sup> December or the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus.

Up until 1752, Lady Day, the 25<sup>th</sup> March, was the first day of the New Year in England when it was harmonised with Scotland, making the year change start on January 1<sup>st</sup>. A further complication arises because of the change in 1750 from the "Julian" calendar to the "Gregorian" calendar. This advanced the calendar by 11 days in order to make up for an inaccuracy in the Julian Calendar which did not reflect the actual time it took for the Earth to circle the sun. The end of the British tax year is still based on the quarter days, ending on April 5<sup>th</sup> which is 11 days later than the old Lady Day in the Julian Calendar. At some more traditional schools and universities, the autumn term would start on 29<sup>th</sup> September and is still known as the Michaelmas Term.

The Cross Quarter days are four holidays falling between the Quarter Days: Candlemass (2<sup>nd</sup> February), May Day (1<sup>st</sup> May), Lammas (1<sup>st</sup> August) and All Hallows (1<sup>st</sup> November). In the Celtic tradition, these dates mark the beginning of spring, summer, harvest season and Halloween.

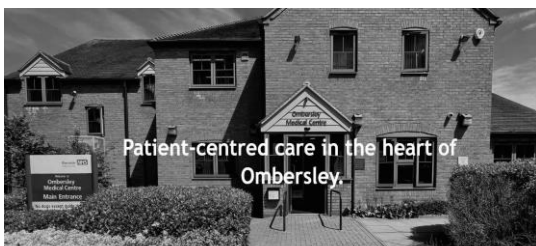
So far, so simple, but who can tell me when St Swithin's Day is and the significance of it? Here's a clue! Whatever the weather is on the 15<sup>th</sup> July will set the weather for the next 40 days.

*David Collier, Ombersley History Group*



In **December 2025** there were:

- 6,690 Face to Face appointments with clinicians (GPs, Nurses and Pharmacists)
- 783 telephone consultations
- 161 DNA (Did not attend)
- 17,708 medications issued
- 2,854 contacts regarding patient care requiring action



## YOUR NHS HEALTHCHECK

An **NHS Health Check** is a free check-up designed to help spot early signs of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and some types of dementia. It's quick, simple, and can give you reassurance—or early advice to help you stay well for longer. **You're eligible if you're aged 40–74 and haven't already been diagnosed with one of these conditions.** If you're in this age group, please contact the practice to book your Health Check and take a proactive step towards your long-term health.

## Ombersley 2026 Fun Charity Calendar



**OMBERSLEY**  
MEMORIAL  
**VILLAGE HALL**

We would like to thank all the people/groups who participated in making the Calendar. In addition, we would also like to thank everyone who purchased a Calendar or sent a donation.

Our target was £2,000 and the final figure reached was an amazing £2,400, which was shared between Droitwich Foodbank and Maggs Day Centre for the Homeless.

Thank you once again.

*Ombersley Memorial Village Hall Committee*

Please send articles/reports for inclusion in the March 2026 Magazine by

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February

## **Bromsgrove, Droitwich & Redditch Weekly Messenger**

### **17 July 1875**

#### **Case of Over-crowding at Ombersley**

Samuel Hancocks, of Sytchampton, labourer, was summoned for allowing his dwelling-house to be over-crowded. Mr Parking, the Inspector, said the defendant had two sleeping rooms in his house which, according to the Government rules, were capable of accommodating four adults and one child only but which in reality were occupied by ten persons – three men, three women and four children.

The Bench made an order for the abatement of the over-crowding in fourteen days, by the removal therefrom of defendant's son, wife and children, and a lodger.

## **Worcestershire Chronicle, 25 May 1901**

#### **BEGGING**

Benjamin Hollis, a miserable looking dirty old man who said he was a labourer but admitted that he had done no work for two years, and had no fixed abode, was fined 10s and costs or 14 days for begging at Ombersley. Sergt. Hanley said he had been looking for defendant for some time, having received complaints of him sleeping on hayricks and in farm buildings. He had been abusing people when they refused him.

#### **AND THE EDITORIAL COMMENT**

The Ombersley police manage to get hold of some funny specimens of humanity in their endeavours to compel His Majesty's subjects to obey the law.

A unique example was brought before Mr. P. S. Williams at the County Magistrates' Office on Thursday on the usual charge of begging.

He was shockingly dirty, and not by any means sweet smelling. He claimed friendship with the Magistrate and his clerk, addressing them as his "dear friends". He was alleged to be a labourer, but admitted that he had done no work for two years. Perhaps this was why Mr Williams sent him to prison for fourteen days. At any rate it will do him good "if it is only to get a wash," as one spectator remarked, "and it would not do to send him for less as he might catch cold if he were turned out too soon after such an unusual operation".

*Transcribed by Pat Niner, Ombersley History Group*

# OMBERSLEY WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Thursday Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

7.00 for 7.30pm



## Alzheimer's Society

Join us for a friendly and informative Dementia Friends session with the Rachel Freeman, ambassador for the Alzheimer's Society, where we'll learn more about what it's like to live with dementia and how we can all make a difference in our community.

In just an hour, you'll gain practical insights, challenge common myths, and become a Dementia Friend - helping to create a more understanding and supportive society for everyone.

Members: Free; Guests: £6:

Contact Marie or Ann or Di 07901522412 / 07712 811552 / 07714 844938

## Ombersley Main Road Speeding

At the request of the Parish Council, Pat Holland, our PSCO (Police Community Support Officer), has provided the latest data for the number of speeding fines issued from the speed van located opposite Ombersley Medical Centre over a four-month period.

Month	Number of times van was present	No of fines issued	Highest speed recorded
September 2025	8	75	60mph
October 2025	7	65	43mph
November 2025	4	35	39mph
December2025	6	34	46mph

There were also 9 seat belt offences!

# **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**from**

## **Ombersley Endowed First School**



We were very excited to welcome everyone back after Christmas and the New Year. Each class had some wonderful topics and activities for the New Year.

Pre-School are having an exciting term learning about Traditional Tales. Reception class are learning about Winter this term and have been looking at the frost that has been around us a lot this month.

Year 1 are enjoying their topics about Kings, Queens and Castles. They are learning about everyday materials in science.

Year 2 have enjoyed learning about the famous explorers in history and discovering Mexico in geography.

Year 3 are very excited to be learning about forces and magnets in Science.

Year 4 have been finding out about the Ancient Greeks and the myths and legends surrounding them.

Year 4 are looking forward to a trip to watch the musical about Percy Jackson, the Lightning Thief, which will be an exciting part of their Greek topic.

### **Sports Enrichment**

All classes are enjoying lots of different PE this term. We have been lucky to have an outside coach in to teach us some amazing dances in PE lessons. Each class has been learning a new dance that they will perform to another class.

Scooters club continues to be busy before and after school and will be open during the February half term holiday for lots of fun and special activities.

### **Links with Ombersley Church.**

We continue to enjoy very strong links with Ombersley church. Before Christmas we enjoyed hosting The Posada for a week; the children loved reading the Christmas story and sharing new Christmas books.

As always, our Nativity and Carol Service in Ombersley church was a wonderful start to the Christmas celebrations.

The children always look forward to their 'Open the Book' assemblies, which they are always encouraged to take part in, and to learn a new Bible story and song.



We have enjoyed an exciting start to the new term.

**Snow Dome:** Our pupils enjoyed a fantastic end-of-term trip to the Snowdome in Tamworth, which was a wonderful way to finish the term together. The children had an amazing time playing in the snow, watching a lively pantomime and exploring the festive Christmas village. There were lots of smiles, laughter and excitement throughout the day, and it was a memorable experience for everyone involved.

**OPAL Play:** We have also recently launched our new OPAL play initiative at lunchtimes, and it has been a huge success. Children have loved exploring the new play opportunities, including dancing to music on our new speaker, drawing on the playground with chalk and splashing about in our fantastic new mud kitchen.

To help us continue developing OPAL play, we are always grateful for donations including: old toy cars, used soft furnishings, pallets or tyres, things for a mud kitchen (e.g. old saucepans, bowls, spoons etc)

## Coming this term...

We have lots of exciting things coming up this term including: a trip to Cosford Air Museum, a KS1 gymnastics festival, a D&T day and a whole school STEM theme week.

In addition, we are trialling the first unit of our new curriculum this term – we're excited to see how this goes.

## Wonderful Inventions

### Toilet Paper

Joseph Gayetty, an American, is widely credited with the invention of modern commercially available toilet paper. First introduced in 1857 and available even until the 1920's, Gayetty's Medicated Paper, complete with a watermark, was sold in packages of flat sheets. It contained aloe as a lubricant and was originally sold as an anti-haemorrhoid medical product.

### The Modern Toilet

Although water closets had been around for a while, Thomas Crapper, whose name has been overly associated with toilets, did invent the floating ballcock and improved the S bend in 1880 by inventing the U bend. He received several Royal Warrants and manhole covers in Westminster bearing his name have become a minor London tourist attraction.

# Sytchampton Village Hall needs you!

Join Our Village Hall Trust & Management Team – Volunteers Needed! Do you care about the heart of our village? The Village Hall is more than just a building – it's a vital community space that brings people together, supports local activities, and helps make our village a better place for everyone. To keep it thriving, we need passionate, committed volunteers to join our Trust and Management Team. Flexible Commitment: Whether you can spare a few hours a month or take on a regular role, every bit helps. Who Are We Looking For? We welcome volunteers from all backgrounds and walks of life. Whether you're a seasoned professional, a student, retired, or simply want to give back, your contribution is valued.

## Why Volunteer with Us?

- **Make a Real Difference:** Your time and skills will help shape the future of our village hall and the community it serves.
- **Develop New Skills:** Gain valuable experience in teamwork, finance, communications, and more. Improve your CV skills and experience.
- **Meet New People:** Connect with fellow residents, make friends, and be part of something meaningful.
- **Social media volunteers** – help promote the hall and the community activities.
- **Charity Trustee volunteers** -- No previous experience is necessary.
- **Committee secretary and vice chair volunteers** - No previous experience is necessary.
- **Fundraising grant volunteer** – apply for grants to help finance the hall.
- **Contribute to decision-making** about the hall's future.

If you'd like to find out more or have a chat about how you could help, please contact us at Together so we can keep our village hall at the heart of our community!

Please contact Andy Burge: [ajburge@sky.com](mailto:ajburge@sky.com)

## Wonderful Inventions

### The Hoover

In 1908, James Spangler suffered from severe asthma, which was exacerbated by the dust spread from beating carpets to clean them. He came up with the first crude but portable and effective vacuum cleaner by combining a fan motor, soap box, broom handle and pillowcase. He patented his device but later sold it to his cousin's husband – William Henry Hoover.



## **THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, DOVERDALE**

CHURCHWARDEN:	Mr. R. Coppini	Tel: 620963
LICENSED LAY READER:	Mr. Richard Jeynes	Tel: 07553 810080
TREASURER:	Mrs. L. Tarleton-Hodgson	Tel: 07748 968992
SECRETARY PCC:	Mr. G. Crow	Tel: 772850
SIDESMEN:	Mrs V. Harris, Mr. C. Harris, Mr G. Crow, Mrs S. Crow, Mr J. Chapman, Mrs A. Chapman	
ORGANIST:	Mrs L. Moyse	

### **FLOWER ROTA:**

February 1<sup>st</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> – flowers

March – Lent: no flowers

### **PARISH REGISTER: ST. MARY'S CHURCH**

### **INTERMENT OF ASHES:**

November 21<sup>st</sup>: Max William Francis Hemming

### **PEWPOINTS**

### **DIARY DATES:**

WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY. Mid-week Morning Prayer Service at 9.15a.m.

### **LOOKING AHEAD:**

Sunday March 15<sup>TH</sup> MOTHERING SUNDAY SERVICE AT 11.00a.m.

Monday March 30<sup>TH</sup> COMMENCEMENT OF HOLY WEEK

### **CHRISTMAS AT ST. MARY'S**

St.Mary's Service of 9 Carols and Readings was held on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 11.00a.m. Despite the cold, damp weather, the church was packed and the traditional

holly, ivy and greenery together with the twinkling lights on the Christmas tree, made for a very warm and festive scene within.

The service started with the processional carol “Once in Royal David’s City” and then, after the Bidding Prayer, given by Curate James Homer who led the service, the penultimate candle on the Advent wreath was lit; the fourth (pink) candle of joy, remembering Mary, Mother of Jesus.

The lessons were read by a delightful mix of children and adults and as the Christmas story unfolded, the children were invited to place the lovely figurines in the crib. When all the animals, shepherds, wise men and Mary and Joseph with Baby Jesus were in place, Rev’d James blessed the crib and everyone sang the well-known and much-loved carol, “Away in a Manger”.

After the recessional carol “O Come all ye Faithful”, everyone was invited to stay for a glass of mulled wine, mince pies and savouries; and a festive tin of chocolates for the children.

A huge “Thank You” to the church decorators, readers, organist, refreshment makers and indeed all those who came along to support us and helped to make the service so enjoyable and memorable.

It was particularly heartening to see so many families with their children, grandchildren and friends coming together to prepare for and celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ at this very special time of the year.

Our Christmas Day service of Holy Communion was held at 11.00a.m. and led by Rev’d Canon Tim Williams. The last (central) candle was lit to celebrate Christ’s birth.

Thank you to everyone who came to support St. Mary’s over Christmas.

### **MORNING PRAYER SERVICE**

St. Mary’s first service of 2026 was Morning Prayer on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January. A bitterly cold day to venture out, but it was well worth it to enjoy the lights and decorations in church for one last time before the traditional 12<sup>th</sup> day when Christmas is “tidied away” for another year.

January and the celebration of Epiphany mark the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem after their long journey in search of the Baby Jesus. They brought gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh as we all know.

Licensed Lay Reader, Richard Jaynes, who took our service, surprised us all by bringing a little bag of frankincense and a charcoal kit. After lighting the charcoal and letting it

get very hot, he invited us to sprinkle a little frankincense on top and watch as it burnt to emit a perfumed fragrance. Frankincense is an aromatic resin from the Boswellia tree and is used in incense and perfume and is a symbol of deity. Gold is a symbol of kingship and myrrh (an embalming oil), a symbol of death. Scholars thought that these three gifts were chosen for their special spiritual symbolism: Jesus' Kingship, his Priestly role and his Death.

Thank you, Richard, for a very interesting service and for reminding us of the story of The Three Kings which we all sing about every Christmas in the lovely carol " We Three Kings of Orient Are".

## SERVICES

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> February: 4 <sup>th</sup> of Epiphany: (CANDLEMAS)	11.00a.m.  MP(BCP)	Lectors: Mr.R.Coppini, Mrs.V.Harris  Sidesperson; Mrs.V. Harris  Readings:- 1 Kings 17(8-16) & John 2(1-11)
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> February  Sunday next before Lent	11.00a.m.  HC(BCP)	Lectors: Mrs.A.Chapman, Mrs.S. Crow  Sidesperson; Mr.J.Chapman  Readings:- Exodus 24(12-end) & Matt.17(1-9)
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> March  2 <sup>nd</sup> of Lent	11.00a.m.  MP(BCP)	Lectors: Mrs.S.Crow , Mrs.V.Harris  Sidesperson: Mr.G.Crow  Readings: Genesis 12(1-4a) & John 3(1-17)
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March  MOTHERING SUNDAY  4 <sup>th</sup> of Lent	11.00a.m.  MOTHERING SUNDAY SERVICE	Sidespeople: Mrs.V.Harris, Mrs.A.Chapman  READINGS AND LECTORS: T B A

Lent Discussion Group meeting dates appear earlier in the magazine.

Also, please see the article regarding Remembrance Sunday at Ombersley

- Adverts 2026

- AJ's Window Cleaning Services – windows, gutters etc. – 07809 730085
- APM Decorators – 07784 483192
- AY Services – general maintenance – 01905 759151 / 07876 308058
- Alena Morton – ladies' personal trainer – 07857 753340
- All-inc-Cars – taxi service – 01905 826261 / 07739 109590
- Andy Johnson – chimney sweep – 01886 821933 / 07798 790913
- Andy Pritchard – painter and decorator – 01886 889001 / 07973 783240
- Bedwardine Funeral Services – 01905 748811
- Bluebird Care – care visits at home – 01386 764830
- Bowbrook Gardens – landscaping etc. – 01905 937852 / 07792 613020
- CdbC Home & Property Maintenance – 07706 166816
- CW Home & Garden Maintenance – 07821 044507
- David Ward Firewood – 07866 441154
- Doorbars – chartered surveyors/land agents – 01905 27288
- Droitwich Spa Hospital – private consultations - 01905 79333
- Elgar Kitchens – independent kitchen retailer – 01905 640013
- Elite Sweeps – sweep/log burners – 01905 700701 / 07712 220671
- Fusion Plumbing & Heating – 07773 395803
- GLM Property Maintenance – building and garden – 07399 024702
- Graham Pugh – decorating/carpentry – 01905 621147 / 07967 883121
- E J Gumery – funeral services – 01905 22094
- J & A Tree Services – trees, hedges, fencing etc. – 01299 250575
- Jeremy Billingham TV Aerials – 01905 799152 / 07850 969307
- Jones & Associates – Estate Agents – 01386 291010 / 07496 625205
- Karol Kleen – carpet/upholstery cleaning – 01299 404275
- Kemble At Home – live-in, visiting and respite care – 01432 382017
- Kidderminster Roofing Ltd – 01562 748270
- Lee Russell Independent Funeral Directors – 01905 347588
- MG Domestic Heating – 07870 498879
- MSB Plumbing & Maintenance Ltd. – 07769 342897
- Mark Foster Podiatry/Chiropody – 07941 138957

- Me..Time..Pilates – communal exercises – 07791 873 870
- Dr Moore Aesthetics – professional beauty treatments – 07870 273378
- Mick Miles Pest control & Gardening Services – 01905 620394 / 07732 223825
- Ombersley Golf Club – 01905 620747 (restaurant 01905 620621)
- Ombersley Memorial Hall – 07936 467390
- Oven Magic – oven cleaning – 01905 700500
- Phillip Serrell Auctions – 01684 892314
- W Roberts Tree Care & Landscaping – 01299 250664 / 07772 456692
- S. Fox Services – property & garden maintenance – 01299 851388 / 07711 162464
- S. Fox Services – registered chimney sweep – 01299 851388 / 07711 162464
- S J M Locksmith Services – 01905 570999 / 07871 442011
- SMB Electrical Solutions – 01905 428892 / 07917 182945
- Salt Way Silver – silver jewellery classes – 07845 826415
- J Sanders Countryside Services – commercial/domestic ground maintenance 07837 181920
- Shelter-Adams Ltd – home heating experts – 07990 523790 / 07922 548915
- Sparkle & Clean – cleaning & ironing services – 07471 672988 / 07790 03128
- Spice Fusion – award-winning Indian restaurant – 01905 622 222
- Steve George of Ombersley – landscaping etc. – 01905 621427 / 07745 597050
- Studio Smith Architects – 01905 622373 / 07921 623709
- Sytchampton Community Centre – 01905 620943
- Tails of Sinton Green – dog grooming etc. – 07941 606194
- Taylor & Co Architects – 01905 621600 / 07831 146738
- The Ear Clinic – earwax removal – 07731 474750
- The Tranquility Tree – holistic therapy – 07848 865709
- Whitlunge Gardens – tea rooms/gardens – 01299 250669
- Worcester Business Services Ltd – book about a Ukrainian in Ombersley – at village store
- Worcester Computers – custom build, repairs etc. – 01905 759111
- Worcestershire Imaging Centre – MRI scans – 01905 771500