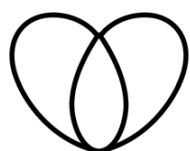


# THE WOODCHESTER WORD

Issue 78, Winter 2022

We wish  
you a  
happy  
Christmas

Photo by Szabo Viktor on Unsplash



**LONGFIELD**  
Community Hospice Care



## LOCAL HOSPICE LAUNCHES CHRISTMAS TREE CAMPAIGN, AND NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Longfield Community Hospice in Minchinhampton has launched its annual Christmas Tree Recycling Campaign, where, for a donation, local volunteers will pick up your tree at the end of the festive season and take it to be recycled.

The hospice is hoping to collect and recycle more trees than ever this year and needs volunteers with vans to collect Christmas trees from Sunday 8 to Tuesday 10 January 2023.

- Are you a local person with a van who can get involved?
- Can your business volunteer the use of vans and staff teams to collect the trees?

*continued on page 2*

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### Local hospice launches Christmas tree campaign, and needs your help! continued

This year, the Longfield fundraising team hopes to raise in excess of £35,000. In previous years, as many as 2,800 households from across Stroud District, Cirencester and Gloucester have taken part in the scheme. All money raised helps to fund the hospice's vital work supporting patients, families and carers across Gloucestershire.

Louise Cook, Longfield's Head of Fundraising and Marketing, is managing the campaign. She said:

*"This year we're hoping to make this the best Christmas Tree Campaign ever, but we need your help to make that happen. We're calling on local businesses and volunteers to support us again! Your help has a real impact on what we can achieve for local patients, their families and carers. Please get involved with our Christmas Tree campaign and help Longfield's Hospice to give free care and support, 365 days a year."*

**To volunteer either with your time or if you have a van**, then please contact the fundraising team on 01483 886868 or email [fundraising@longfield.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@longfield.org.uk).

To arrange collection of your tree, visit [www.just-helping.org.uk/register-tree](http://www.just-helping.org.uk/register-tree) and make a suggested donation of £10 or more. Registration opens on 15th November 2022.



Last year, volunteers helped collect trees from over 2,800 households across Gloucestershire.



## A letter from the Chairman

What difficult times we are living through, especially for those who may be struggling. Winter will soon be upon us when getting out and about may be difficult for many. Can I please ask that if you need any help, or know someone who does, that you contact, in confidence our clerk Mandy who will then direct you to someone who could assist.

Mandy Rossiter, our new Clerk, whilst living near Cam comes to us with good experience as she has been Clerk to North Nibley Parish Council for over 2 years. We look forward to benefitting from her knowledge and enthusiasm towards our Parish Council operating smoothly and efficiently.

Mandy's contact details are [clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk) or **07920 103 953**

After many years as a Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Parish, Dr Gervase Hamilton is retiring. We thank him for his dedication, skills and time spent as a Councillor and wish him well.

I would like to offer a special thank you to Cllr Iain Dunbar who is doing sterling work in our fight towards speed control. He is also instrumental in having our new play area developed. See Iain's latest reports.

It is great to see the Ram Inn open again. I popped in a while ago and enjoyed a pint with Phil, the landlord. Whilst there is no kitchen, and therefore no food at the moment, the bar, darts area and interior look very smart and welcoming. Hopefully, the re-opening of the Ram Inn is the start of a new and healthy era of socialisation in the heart of South Woodchester. Please support the Ram to ensure its long term success.

Finally, I wish you all a peaceful, happy and healthy Christmas and New Year and I hope to see many of you carol singing through the village.

Cheers, Peter Lead



# The Cost of Living Crisis

Here at Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts we are seeing an increase in demand for our services as a result of the cost of living crisis, particularly for help with fuel, food, and hardship fund payments.

We are very concerned about how vulnerable residents will cope this autumn and winter as temperatures drop and they need to turn their heating on. Many of our clients were unable to afford their essential costs during the summer months. We have already had clients on prepayment meters who do not have enough credit to run medical equipment that relies on electricity; clients who cannot afford to heat their water; parents who are skipping meals to feed their children and pensioners unable to afford their fuel bills. In our largely rural districts many residents rely on oil for heating and hot water and we have been contacted by people who cannot afford the cost of the minimum order.

## What to do if you are worrying about money

If you are worried about paying your bills there are a few simple things you can do:

1. Work out your budget. Find out exactly how much you have coming in, and what's going out, and think about where you may be able to make savings. There is a useful budgeting tool on the national Citizens Advice website (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>) to help you.
2. If you don't think you can pay your energy bills, contact your supplier. There are schemes to help customers but if you don't tell them you are struggling then they can't help you.
3. If you have debts, look at the guidance on debt on the national Citizens Advice website.
4. Check if you might be entitled to any benefits. If you have internet access you can use Turn2Us, Entitledto or Policy in Practice benefit calculators to check what you might get.
5. Make sure you have received any cost of living payments that you are entitled to. If you are in council tax Band A-D property you should have received a rebate on your Council Tax and if you are a pensioner, on benefits or disabled there are various payments that you should be receiving.

If you cannot access the internet please call us on our freephone number 0808 800 0510 to get advice - Mon to Thurs 10 am to 4 pm and Fri 10 am to 1 pm.

If you are really struggling and don't have enough food to eat you can call the Trussell Trust Help through Hardship Helpline on **08082 082138**.

### Please do ask for help – we understand that these are worrying times.

You can access advice by calling our freephone number **0808 800 0510** (see times above).

You can get email advice, energy tips, and use online benefit calculators through our local website (<https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/>) under the Get Help section.

We are also seeing clients by appointment in our Stroud and Cirencester offices and in the community at various venues across both districts – currently Dursley, Paganhill Community Hub, Stonehouse APT, Wotton-under-Edge, Moreton-in-Marsh and Tetbury.

We are also looking for new volunteers to train as admin assistants in both our Cirencester and Stroud offices – if you are interested please email [info@ca-scd.org.uk](mailto:info@ca-scd.org.uk).

We welcome donations to support our service – find out more on our website (<https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/>).



Picking Ashmead's Kernells apples in Orchard Pastures

## Orchard Pastures, October 2022

Oh dear, the nights are drawing in, hastened by the clocks going back. So it's time for allotment holders and gardeners to reflect with pride, or perhaps a bit of regret, on how the season worked out for them: 'Runner beans at the end of October?!' 'The drought did for me!' - and to start planning for next year.

If you feel you'd enjoy the highs and lows of allotment life, we have a few plots available at very reasonable rents. See contact details below.

In the orchard we mostly have apple trees and find from year to year some trees do better than others. This year we have had a bumper crop of Ashmead's Kernells – a fabulous Gloucestershire apple, which stores well over winter.

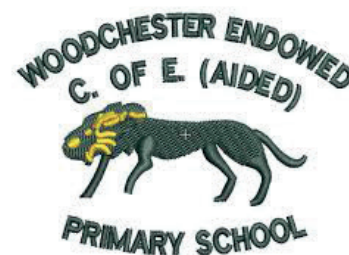
We will be holding our annual wassail in the orchard on **Sunday 29th January at 4pm**. Everyone is welcome! There's a bit of theatre, singing and everyone gets to join in. Once again the Rodborough Folk Orchestra, led by Fran Wade, will be accompanying proceedings. Bring something to rattle, ring or bash to make a lot of noise to drive evil spirits away! Join us in The Ram for more wassail festivities afterwards.

Orchard Pastures is the land below The Ram owned by a group of villagers. If you'd like to find out more or are interested in an allotment, please email: [swalt.org@gmail.com](mailto:swalt.org@gmail.com) or phone Bert Cossins on **872407**.



# Woodchester Endowed Church of England Primary School

We were delighted to welcome our new Reception children in September. They have settled in well and have been looked after by their Year 6 buddies.



The Year 6 children not only made sure our youngest children felt welcomed but also they loved the responsibility of being a buddy and took great pride in this role. Also, in September, Year 6 children travelled to Viney Hill Christian Adventure Centre for their residential visit. Being away from home brings its own challenges alongside tackling the exciting activities such as mountain biking and climbing; the children enjoyed this new experience. The weather was sublime and we were blessed to be in the heart of the Forest of Dean, making many new memories and cementing strong friendships along the way. Wandering through the forest as dusk turned to darkness on a still, warm evening was extremely special. There was great excitement as we spotted the space station flying overhead and marvelled at the beauty of Jupiter shining brightly in the night sky.

The first half term of the new academic year has been busy with lots of great learning happening inside and outside school, making use of our lovely grounds. We are so fortunate to have such an interesting outside space enabling us to continue to embrace Forest School. During the summer holiday, a significant amount of work was completed to improve this area including the installation of decking around the pond, new gates to improve access for maintenance and a wonderful new sweeping wooden staircase. Our dedicated Friends of Woodchester Endowed School (FOWES) and Forest School Leaders Mrs Holmes, Mrs Adams and Mrs Boulton organised a celebration event inviting families to come and see the improvements whilst enjoying hot chocolate and marshmallows. It was lovely to share this special learning space with our families.

Our sporting calendar has started in earnest with KS1 children taking part in a Sportability event at Archway School, a whole school 'Fun Run' on the school field, a Sports Hall athletics event at Stratford Park, the Small Schools' Football Festival and we look forward to even more events due to take place before Christmas. It is enormously important that all our children, regardless of their ability, experience sporting opportunities and the excitement and enjoyment that this brings. Taking part

is always the most important thing but it was exhilarating for everyone when our Year 3 and Year 4 footballers were crowned champions!

Another highlight of this term was the musical workshop which took place in the school hall by the Carducci String Quartet. Children in Hawthorn, Juniper and Willow classes were treated to forty five minutes of wonderful music making by four superbly talented professional musicians. Not only did they play a wide variety of music including compositions by Haydn, Beethoven and Phillip Glass, but they were also extremely engaging and went out of their way to ensure that our children were involved in and enthused by the workshop. They packed in lots of musical learning too, teaching music vocabulary such as 'glissando', 'pizzicato' and 'melodic theme'. During one piece of music, some children from Willow Class had to identify when an individual musician played the main theme by placing a large hat on their head. What a great way to learn and it was certainly very funny!

As we enter the season of Advent, we look forward to Christmas, and send prayers of peace and love to everyone at this very special time.

Mrs Lynn Pennington  
Headteacher



Learning new musical knowledge alongside professional musicians



Our improved Forest School area



An important team talk in preparation for the next match



Team work in action at Viney Hill



## Woodchester Village show 2022

We were blessed with a fine day for this year's Woodchester Village Show which took place on Saturday 10th September and was very well attended. It's always good to have an opportunity to spend time with friends and neighbours, to share news and experiences. Although some communities had cancelled events following the sudden death of Her Majesty the Queen, it seemed appropriate to us to gather together, and after a minutes silence and later, a short prayer, to go ahead with the long planned event.

The very dry, hot summer was not conducive to vegetable growing this year, and the number of entries for the Produce Show was disappointingly low. But this was offset by the high quality of the entries. Among other veg we saw some splendid and unusual tomatoes, perfect onions and a delicious selection of mixed vegetables beautifully arranged in a basket. The 'David Brown Salver', awarded for the most points in the Vegetables and Fruit classes, was deservedly won by John Willoughby from South Woodchester, who was also awarded the 'Best in Show' cup for achieving the highest number of points overall. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all those who took part.

The baking and produce judges, Claire Smith and Sarah Cooper from Minchinhampton thoroughly enjoyed tasting all the cakes, scones, bread, jams and jellies. They were particularly impressed by Muriel McTiffins Victoria Sandwich Cake! It seems fitting that such a devoted member of the WI

should win this class. Despite the wind and rain which had battered our gardens a few days earlier, Flower Judge Barbara Poulson still had a beautiful array of small flower arrangements to consider.

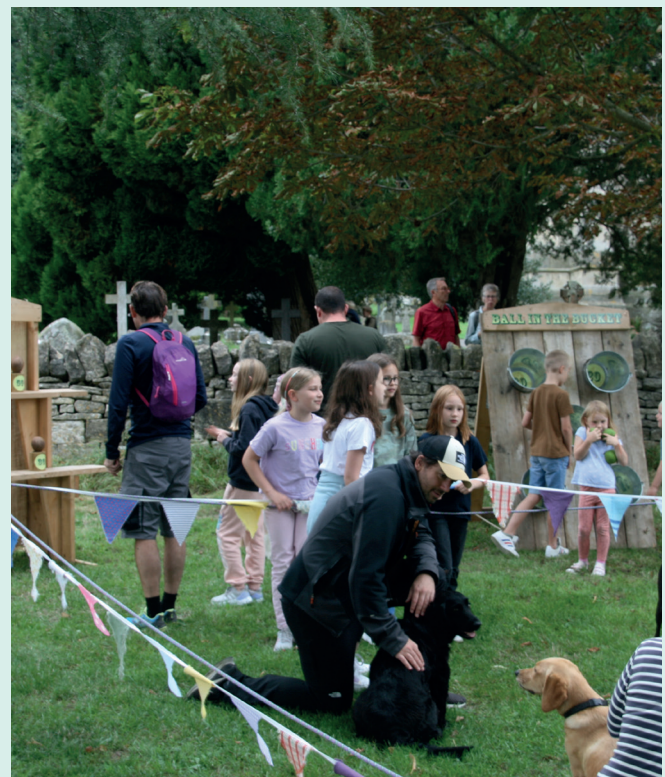
Children's entries were low in numbers again but we had some lovely miniature gardens on plates. The winner of the 'Junior Trophy' was Sofia Evans, just one point ahead of the runner-up, Felix Trusty who won a First prize for his impressive robot made from recycled food packets and yoghurt pots. Thanks to Sally Bull, Chair of Governors at Woodchester Endowed School who judged the children's classes.

The fun dog show is always a popular event, and is fun to watch too. It was organised by George Brooks. Thanks to Liz Warren from Stonehouse Dog Training Club who judged the Dog Show this year. There was a fabulous array of dogs from many breeds this year, with good class sizes. Gladys Dechenes gave an entertaining commentary as Ring Steward and Caroline Denny efficiently managed the table bookings.

Thanks to Rodborough Folk Orchestra for providing the music and to Woodchester Endowed School for allowing us to use their premises. We are grateful to Stuart Mitchell from Every Event Hire for loaning the PA system and providing some outdoor games. Thanks to the following who donated raffle prizes; Sofas and Stuff for their beautiful Botanicals Collection cushion; Fresh Brew Microbrewery; Woodchester Valley Wines; Woodchester Mansion Trust; Mr R Butler; Mrs H Latham.

Following the Show, it was decided to make a donation of £75 to the national charity 'Pets As Therapy'. The balance of funds raised goes towards the cost of the organising the Christmas Carols round the village with Nailsworth Silver Band on Wednesday December 21st. See you then, hopefully in good voice!

Events Committee 2022:  
Richard Butler, Andrew Pemberton  
George Brooks. Katharine McNealey.





## Changes to the Council

After sixteen years of service to the council, Councillor Hamilton has made the decision to retire. Cllr Hamilton's work and support to the council has been invaluable and he will be greatly missed.

Sylvia May, Clerk to Woodchester Parish Council has resigned from the council to spend more time with her family. The council are very appreciative of everything Sylvia has done and wish her all the best for the future.

As new Clerk to the council, Mandy Rossiter will be taking up the helm. Mandy has been clerking for another Parish Council for over two years and hopes that her learning and experience can be shared to the benefit of Woodchester.



Mandy Rossiter - Clerk to Woodchester Parish Council

## Events in the Parish

Thanks to everyone who supported Woodchester Village Show in September and to those who came to visit the Parish Council stall.

Then the festive ones! Starting with the Local Crafters' Christmas Fayre on the 19th November and then the Christmas Carolling event on December 13th. Look out for information on the website, Facebook and Noticeboards.

## You asked we did:

- A recent walkover ash tree dieback survey carried out by Treetation indicated no significant problems with ash dieback among the mountain bike track trees.
- The dog bin at the bottom of Bospin Lane has been replaced
- The overgrown handrail along the footpath at Berryfield has been reported to SDC property department
- Cllr Dunbar continues to work hard to promote road safety in the village. Further update to be provided in the PC January meeting

Full Parish Council Meetings are generally held on the first Thursday of every other month. The next scheduled meetings are 5th January and 2nd March at 7pm in the Village Hall. All are welcome.



Reminder....the village has both a website and Facebook page with information posted about local issues and the Woodchester Word will be available on the website too.  
[www.woodchesterparish.org.uk](http://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk)

## County Councillor's Report for Woodchester Word

### Highways

I am pleased to report that during the last year I secured funding from GCC Capital Programme for two major resurfacing schemes - Selsley Road and Culver Hill. A section of Church Road and St Mary's Hill were resurfaced from my Highways Local Budget. Unfortunately, this small pot of money does not go very far as it is distributed throughout the parishes in my Division.

The foliage on the pavement from the bottom of Culver Hill through to the Shell Garage was also cut back, allowing better access for pedestrians. This also came out of my fund.

### Parking on St Mary's Hill

The introduction of double yellow lines, which needs a Traffic Regulation Order, is taking longer than I had hoped but I have been assured by the Senior Officer that it is almost ready to go out to Public Consultation. It will also include making the 'hatching' on the junction of Gydynap Lane and the A46 legal.

### Report It

Please can I remind residents that they can go online to – Report it at Gloucestershire Highways.

You can report potholes, faults with street lighting, or blocked drains etc.

If any residents have any concerns regarding GCC service, please get in touch with me.

Cllr Steve Robinson

[steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
01453 834270

County Councillor for the Parishes of Amberley, Horsley, Kings Stanley, Nailsworth and Woodchester



# Notes from the Cotswold Playhouse

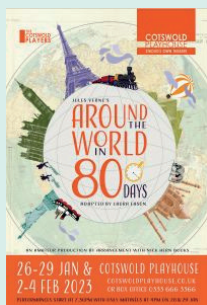
December and Christmas period performances



## Camp As Christmas

2nd & 3rd December at 7.30pm, with a matinee at 2.30pm on 3rd

The Glitter & Twisted Theatre Company present a selection of sweet and bitter songs and sketches drawn from both the contemporary cabaret scene and the world of musical theatre, with something to excite every palate. The show includes more than a sprinkling of Christmas but explores the tragic as well as the jolly aspects of the festive season. Alongside classic songs by Sondheim, Jerry Herman, Kander & Ebb and Tom Lehrer the revue features many brilliant and rarely performed delights. With outrageously funny numbers, glorious costumes, exciting choreography, dozens of laughs (and perhaps a few tears) this is an entertainment for grown-ups, presented with wit, style, panache, pathos and more than a touch of camp.

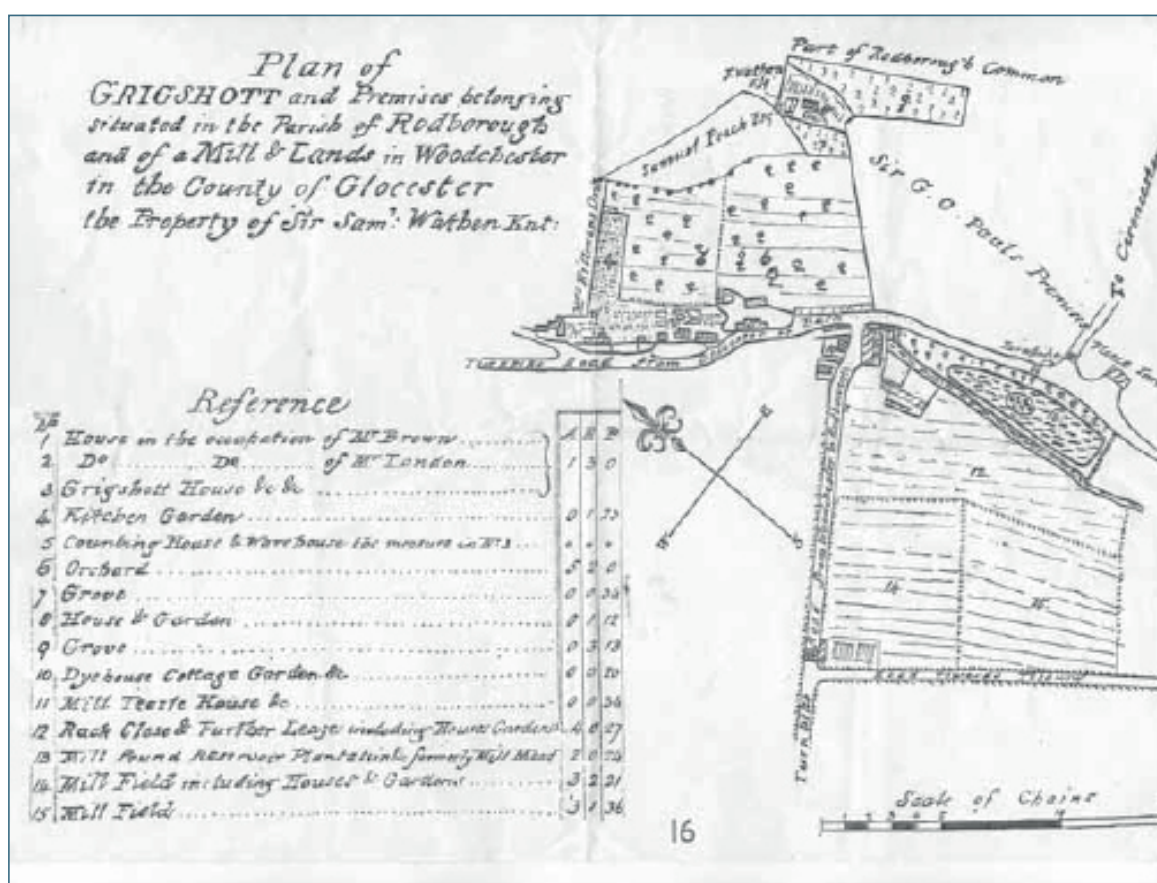


## Around The World In Eighty Days

Pythouse26th & 27th January & 2nd-4th February at 7.30pm, and on 28th & 29th January at 4pm

The fabulously wealthy Phileas Fogg wagers his life's fortune that he can circumnavigate the globe, without using aeroplanes, in eighty days. Along with his hapless valet, Passepartout, he sets out on a dazzling escapade that takes him from the misty alleys of London to the sub-continent and on to the Wild West as they race against the clock on a dizzying succession of trains, steamers - and elephants!

Laura Eason's adaptation of Jules Verne's classic novel was first seen in Chicago, then transferred to the New Vic Theatre and then to the West End. Packing in more than fifty characters, this imaginative version can now be seen in Stroud and makes the perfect alternative to a pantomime for families looking for a great night out.



I recently discovered an old map of the area of North Woodchester focusing on the bottom of Selsley Road and the A46 (as it is now) and Rooksmoor. There are several interesting features on this map – Hillgrove House, the building at the foot of Bear Hill, (an area known as the Spout,) and now converted to flats, was the Fleece Inn; Grigshott House (where the owners of the mill lived and King George III visited in 1788,) is called the Counting House; and the fields above the millpond (where now Millpond End houses are built) is called Rack Close, where I assume the cloth was laid out on racks to dry.



## Girlguiding Woodchester

Girlguiding Woodchester had a stall at the village produce show and it was lovely to see all the children enjoying the day. We would love for some of the girls to join us at Woodchester Brownies and Guides.

Much of this term has been completing activities designed to encourage girls to think about leadership skills, although we have found time to cook pizzas, have a games evening and a firework themed evening.

Plans for the remainder of the term include a Remembrance themed evening, attending Nailsworth Remembrance Parade and Church service, a pyjama party, Christmas craft evening and a Christmas party.

We have plenty of space to accept new members and girls aged between 7 and 9 (Brownies) and 10 and 13 (Guides) are very welcome to join us. Please email: [woodchesterbrowniesandguides@gmail.com](mailto:woodchesterbrowniesandguides@gmail.com) or phone Jackie on 01453 821258.



Old Priory in North Woodchester

## History Society

Meetings in 2023 have now been organised, all on Tuesday evenings in St. Mary's Church at 7.30pm:

**7th March** - 2023 is the 50th anniversary of the last opening of the Woodchester Roman Pavement. There will be a short film of the 1951 opening followed by a talk from Nick Humphris "The Artistry of Mosaics."

**6th June** - Kirsty Bingham from the John Moore Museum in Tewkesbury "Tasting the Tudors"

**11th July at 2.00pm** - Summer Outing Visit to Northleach with Peter Dawson, local historian.

**12th August** - Old Tracks in Woodchester, led by Mike Warnes. Meet on the Church Green, the walk will be no further than 3 miles.

**12th September** - The Radical History of Stroud by Stuart Butler

**7th November** - "Those were the days – the Swinging Sixties" with David and Virginia Adsett.

Everyone is welcome to attend these meetings or outings.



Photo by David Beale on Unsplash

## Woodchester Christmas Carols

Come sing round the village with Nailsworth Silver Band, then enjoy mulled wine and mince pies at St Marys Church. Wrap up warm and bring a torch.

**Wednesday 21st December 2022**

Join us at any of these locations:

6.30pm                      Frogmarsh Mill (with the Band)  
6.45pm                      S Woodchester High Street (Tower House).

Walk along the candle lit path to North Woodchester

7.00pm approx          Village Hall  
7.15pm                      Church Green Christmas Tree  
                                    (with the Band).

Please bring a donation to help cover costs.

Further Information from Andrew 01453 872813



# Road Safety Report



## Woodchester Community Roadwatch

Woodchester Parish Council's Community Roadwatch Campaign is up and running! Having been signed off by District and County Councillors and our Neighbourhood Police team, a detailed proposal has now been approved by the Local Highways Manager for Gloucestershire County Council. This includes approval for the use of our mobile Speed Indicator Device (mSID) at six locations in the Parish – three on the A46 at Pauls Rise, Birds Crossing and Frogmarsh, as well as in Frogmarsh Lane, lower Selsley Road, and upper Selsley Road at Lawns Park.

The mSID devices will be deployed at each location for two weeks. During the first week, the display will be switched off, but data is still being recorded, including the speed of each vehicle in both directions. During the second week the display is switched on so that we can see what impact this has on speeding. This will be repeated four times during the year, so that seasonal variations in traffic flow and speed can be monitored.

Community Roadwatch reports will be presented at each Parish Council Meeting, and a detailed report will be issued once the first round of deployments is completed. Initial findings suggest a significant increase in the amount of traffic using the A46 since the last survey in 2019, which helps to explain the apparently increasing difficulty joining the A46 from side roads in the Parish. Interestingly, on Selsley Road, there is about 40 % more traffic travelling downhill than uphill!

Traffic volume data will be used to inform the Parish Council's future road safety strategy, and we will be passing information on traffic speeds to our Neighbourhood Police Team, with a view to enforcement programs being implemented at appropriate locations and times.

## Most accidents occur near home

A recent survey by What Car? magazine showed that 30 % of Road Traffic Accidents occur within one mile of the drivers home and another 35 % within 5 miles.

The research suggests that many drivers appear to be in a 'comfort zone' when driving close to home on familiar roads, leading to lack of mindfulness and attention.

We clearly all need to be more careful in those first few miles of each car journey, even if the roads are familiar to us. So, next time you jump in the car remember - it's important to keep a full level of concentration all the time when driving, whether you're just popping to the shops or starting or ending a longer journey.

## Older Driver Safety Awareness

I recently attended a meeting on the subject of Older Driver Safety Awareness along with around 45 other councillors from across the County. A presentation by the Gloucestershire Older Drivers Forum included some interesting data – for example 24 % of road traffic fatalities in Gloucestershire in 2021 were in the 70+ age group.

The Forum believes that older people who are still driving when perhaps they no longer have the appropriate faculties due to failing sight or hearing, medical issues and reduced reaction times, represent a major public safety issue, with no national strategy in place. (Did you know that it takes 7 seconds longer for the eye of a 70-year-old to recover from night-time headlight dazzle than at the age of 17?). They want a Mature Driver Assessment to be introduced by the Government to identify older drivers who are no longer safe to drive and point out that if you drive less than 2000 miles a year it's cheaper to use a taxi than to run a car!

The mobility provided by a car, particularly for those in rural locations, is a wonderful asset to older people. But we should certainly all keep an eye on our ageing friends and relatives and perhaps be more prepared to challenge when they might consider giving up driving for the sake of their own and others safety.

## Male drivers really are more dangerous than women.

Male drivers are almost three times more likely than women to be involved in road collisions that kill or seriously injure pedestrians in Great Britain, a gap that has widened over the past decade. Analysis of government road accident and journey data shows that in 2020 and the first half of 2021, 4,363 male drivers were involved in collisions that seriously injured or killed pedestrians, compared with 1,473 female drivers.

Although the overall number and rate of collisions has fallen over the last decade, with Covid lockdowns resulting in an all-time low, the disparity between the proportion involving men and women has widened over the same period. In 2010, a male driver was 2.2 times as likely to kill or injure a pedestrian as a woman driver. In the first half of 2021, that had risen to 2.8 times as likely. When men are behind the wheel, pedestrians are also more likely to be killed or seriously injured than receive a minor injury, compared with when a woman is driving, although part of this disparity could be down to the different vehicles used while driving for work. One in four pedestrian deaths on roads in 2021 was due to being hit by a van, truck or bus, which is more likely to be being driven by a male driver.

As well as being more likely to hit pedestrians, men are more likely to die in road collisions. Of people (including drivers) who died in all road accidents in 2021, 78 % were male, according to the latest Department for Transport report.

A survey for the road safety charity Brake in 2020 found men were three times more likely to drive above the speed limit than women. Nearly 30 % of male drivers admitted having driven above 100mph – more than three times the number of women (9 %) who admitted it.

*Cllr Iain Dunbar (Road Safety Lead)*





## Woodchester Villa, no, not the Roman villa!!

Woodchester villa, an 8 sided wooden house, is in Bracebridge, in Toronto, Ontario State, Canada. It was built in 1882 for Henry Bird and his family. The eight-sided design was inspired by the writings of Orson Squire Fowler, a 19th century architectural philosopher. Fowler believed that the octagonal design promoted physical and mental well-being, and was the most economical way to use building materials and living space.

Woodchester Villa was the first house in the area to have electric lighting. The home also had forced air heating and ventilation shafts to remove stale air. A dumb-waiter, that still works today, runs from the basement kitchen to the attic with access on each floor. The house may also be one of the earliest examples of a poured concrete house found in Ontario, with sixteen inch thick concrete walls.



## Woodchester WI – Welcoming New Members

**theWI**  
INSPIRING WOMEN

Over the last few months, several visitors have taken the plunge and joined our ranks and we have been very pleased to see our ranks swell despite the challenges of the last few years. Ladies who are interested in joining us are warmly invited to come along to three meetings before membership fees are due.

We continue to meet in Woodchester Village Hall, normally on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30. Contact the Secretary, Sally Bull, on 873003 if you would like more information.

Membership provides access to monthly meetings where we have a varied range of speakers, food and craft activities. Over the summer months we have enjoyed our annual Fish and Chip supper, an evening of board games and a talk from one of our members on Aromatherapy. Our most recent speaker from the Vale Wildlife Hospital, delivered a very informative talk about their life-saving work with creatures from swans to deer. His conclusion that virtually all injuries are the result of human activity encouraged us to think about our own gardens where pesticides, netting and trimmers poison, trap and maim wildlife. In November, it is Woodchester's turn to welcome members from Nailsworth and Minchinhampton. We will share a soup and cake lunch before enjoying a number of Christmas themed craft activities.

In addition to the monthly Woodchester meetings, WI members have access to a good range of activities organised by WI House at Gloucester which include guided walks (followed by a home-made lunch), bowls, archery and croquet taster events and craft tuition, all at reasonable cost. Two Woodchester ladies recently enjoyed a woodblock workshop session at Gloucester. Others took part in a WI coach trip to the Black Country Museum, a good day out in the company of members from across Gloucestershire. The WI continues to campaign on issues of national interest: this year the focus is on the underdiagnosis of women with ADHD and Autism.

As the Woodchester Produce Show returned this September, we set up our stall on the green once more, selling a variety of home-made and home-grown produce and a number of textile items. The hook-a-duck game was again popular, attracting a steady stream of youngsters who still enjoy some simple fun. This term we have enjoyed the opportunity to make links with our school where we ran a sewing club for a few weeks; we hope to return for more sessions next year.

We are now looking forward to our Christmas Party and another opportunity to share food, friendship and lively conversation.



The Convent of Poor Clares, in Convent Lane, South Woodchester, closed in 2011. Left to right, Sister Susanna, visiting nun Sister Margaret, the Abbess Sister Irene, Sister Pemphero and Sister Marie Therese. What is the convent's future now?



## Woodchester Play Area finally gets go-ahead

The play area planned by Woodchester Parish Council has been subject to extensive delays while a suitable lease was agreed with Gloucestershire County Council. GCC have kindly agreed to be responsible for all tree inspections and maintenance for the Woodchester Mountain Bike Trail and Play Area, and the new lease was signed at the beginning of October.

National Lottery Funding was unfortunately not forthcoming for the project, so the Parish Council has scaled back the initial plans to fit the available budget, though it is hoped that additional equipment may be added in future if the play area proves popular.

The Parish Council are now in active discussion with various providers and a timetable for the construction of the play area will be agreed shortly.



## Please be a responsible dog owner!

Walking a dog in our beautiful countryside is a pleasure for many local people, the vast majority of whom are extremely responsible when it comes to controlling their beloved pets. However, a number of incidents of dogs not being kept under control have been reported to Parish Councillors recently.

In one case two terriers were seen attacking and killing a Muntjac deer in a field in Woodchester, with the owner nowhere in sight. A collie and a brown terrier were reported chasing deer recently, again with no owner in sight. A dog running off the lead spooked some cows which stampeded and smashed down fencing in Water Lane and dogs have been seen chasing cows in Villa Field.

The Control of Dogs Order (1992) states that the owner of a dog or the person in charge of a dog is responsible for controlling the dog's behaviour in public. It's against the law to let a dog be dangerously out of control anywhere in a public place and you can get an unlimited fine or be sent to prison for up to 6 months (or both) if your dog is out of control.

Dogs must be kept on a lead in designated pedestrian zones and on land where livestock is present. And don't forget that the cycle path is subject to a Public Space Protection Order made by Stroud District Council, requiring dogs to be under control and on a lead at all times.

Dog fouling consistently ranks as one of the things councils get most complaints about. You must scoop dog poo in public places. Canine faeces can contain parasites which, if ingested, can cause pregnant cattle to lose their young, illness in wildlife, and blindness in humans. If you can't find a dog poo bin while you are out, you need to take the poo bags home with you and use your own bin. Owners can be issued with a £100 fixed penalty notice for not clearing up after their dogs.

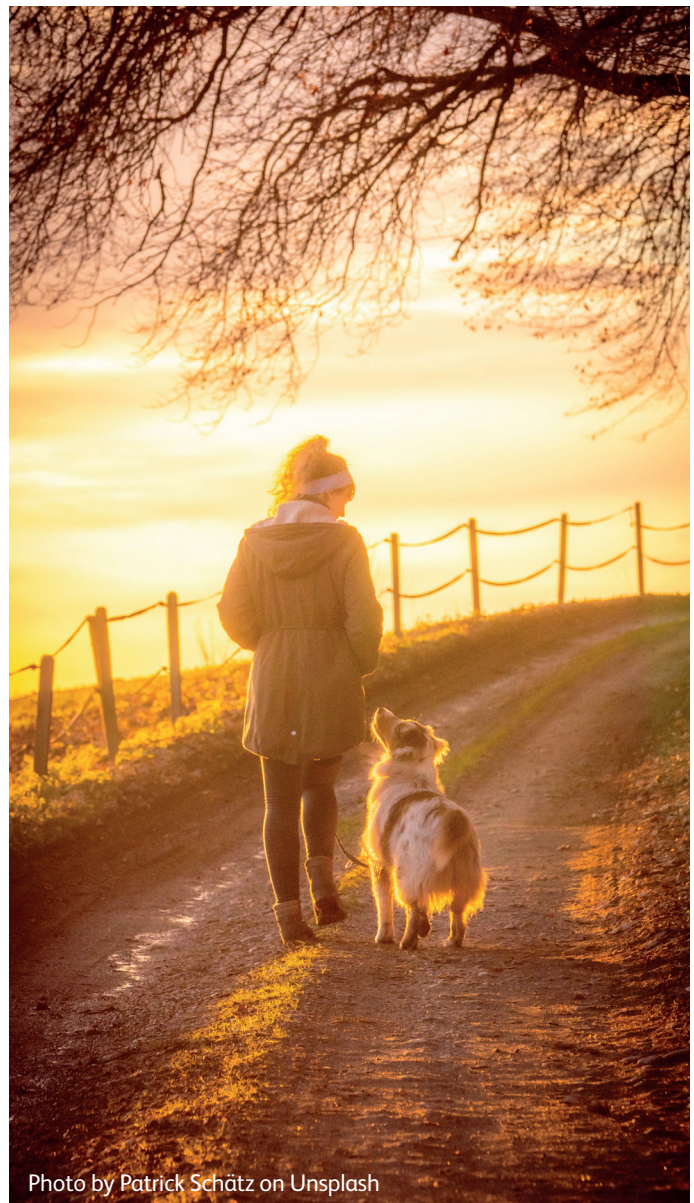


Photo by Patrick Schätz on Unsplash



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Gloucestershire Carers Hub is a commissioned service by Gloucestershire County Council and NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.





## Woodchester village Shop and Post Office

We look forward to seeing you in the shop and hope that you come and buy some of your Christmas shopping with us - we have lots of lovely things. Once again we are able to offer a full range of Noel Tatt Christmas Cards including many Charity Cards, multipacks and single cards. We also have a range of fully recyclable gift wrap, fabric ribbon, bags and tape, together with suitable post and packing materials.

Our Advent Calendars this year include traditional, vegan, gluten and dairy free and Yogi Teas Advent Calendars that are very decorative. We have some lovely Christmas Crackers - Racing Reindeer, Santa and Rudolph and also Tom Smith Crackers that support the Trussell Trust Food Banks. We also have some lovely Advent Candles. We are stocking some amazing Christmas treats and have some lovely stocking fillers - Glove Puppets, Jingle Bells, Clockwork Hoppers and Eco Santa Torches and Divine Chocolate Coins and Ginger Thins, Raw Chocolate Company, Conscious Chocolate Figs, Brazil Nuts and Dates, Yogi Christmas Tea, Zaytoun Chilli Almonds and Caramelised Almonds. We have a choice of Faith in Nature toiletries gift packs and stocking filler boxes that are an amazing £2.99, which are eco and skin friendly with no SLS or parabens, and Zaytoun Rose and Olive Oil Soaps.

Dangerfield's are supplying their delicious Bread, Christmas Cakes and Mince Pies and we have a choice of cake boards and cake frills to display them. You can also be environmentally friendly by reducing your food miles with our local products including Woodchester Wine, Woodchester Honey, Stroud Brewery Beers not forgetting Woodchester Meats. Miss Daisy is again offering vegan, gluten and sugar free Christmas Puddings to order and her delicious Gluten Free Brownies you really don't have to be gluten free to love these. Don't forget our Lodge Farm frozen ready meals to give yourself a break from the kitchen over the festive period.

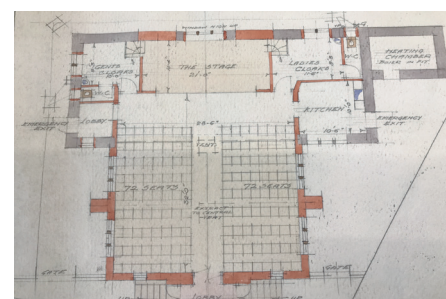
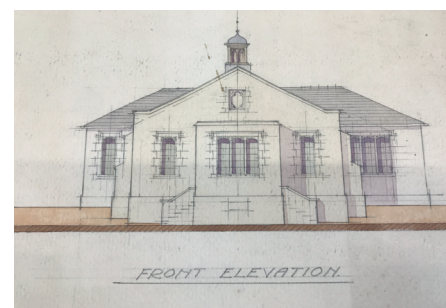
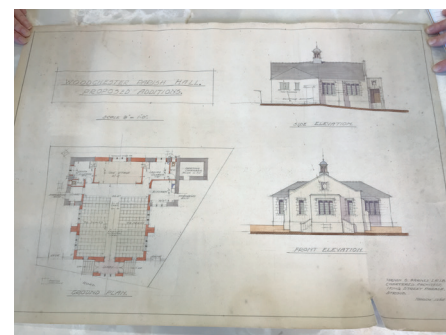
In the Post Office - Christmas Stamps are now available together with details of the latest recommended posting dates. Several recommended dates have already been brought forward so the message from Royal Mail this year is to post early. Don't forget we also offer a drop off for online returns and Amazon collection point. We also have our Amazon and One4all Gift Cards that can be used in over 130 High Street Stores, Garden Centres and online so a great way to send a gift.

The Santa Post box will be in the shop. Letters should include the writers name and address, be addressed to Santa at Santas Grotto, Reindeerland, XM4 5HQ and placed in the box by Friday 9th December so that Santa has time to reply. Don't forget to put a stamp on the envelope.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Delving into the village archives recently, the editor discovered plans to develop and expand the village hall. Our village hall, of course, is a valuable asset for the village and is regularly used by local groups and organisations, as well as for private events. These plans are dated 1935, and of course, were not implemented!

The village hall needs your support – the management committee is short of members. Meeting twice a year, the committee is responsible for overseeing the hall's management and care. Please contact Rod Harris on 872317 if you would like to help.



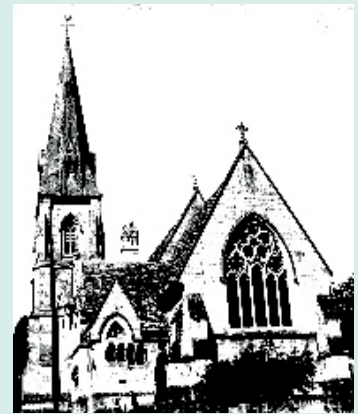


# St Mary's Church - is not just a place to turn up on a Sunday morning

**Teams4U Shoebox Campaign:** generosity has again been shown by so many people and in early November many dozens of Christmas gift boxes were shipped out from church on their way to families in Eastern Europe who are facing dark times. Thank you!

**Little Stars:** our term-time Monday morning toddler group goes from strength to strength.

**Wild Worship** is our monthly outdoor event for families and all-comers, celebrating God's creation with activities you can't do inside a church building. Our Christmas-themed Wild Worship is on Sunday afternoon, 18th December.



**Messy Church** continues one Wednesday afternoon each month in term-time. Open to any child up to School Year 5, with their carers, St Mary's Messy Church offers something for everyone with snacks, tea and squash, games, craft activities and much more.

**Cake Bar** is a monthly after-school gathering for parents, carers and children, raising funds for the Endowed School governors' target. The choice of cakes is amazing. Look out for the posters on the Church Green noticeboard.

**Lunch with Friends** is our monthly gathering for senior members of our community, who welcome the chance to share conversation with neighbours around a hearty home-cooked meal. Please contact Christina (07968 159779) or Liz (872287) if you would like to join us.

Apart from all the above, there are our regular 11am Sunday Services – but please note that on Christmas Day itself our service is at 10.30am.

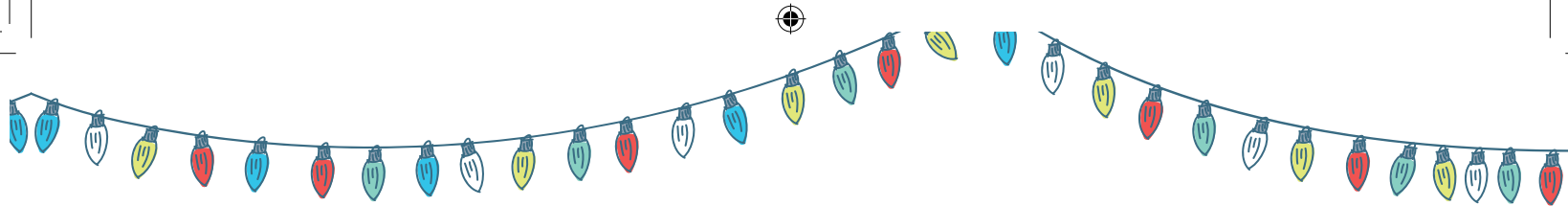
If you would like to keep yourself informed about these events, and our smaller home-based groups and other occasional activities, please sign up to receive a weekly **What's On** email and/or the monthly **Common Ground** magazine which you can receive electronically or on paper. Please email [cground101@gmail.com](mailto:cground101@gmail.com) or speak to a church member.

## Christmas Services

Date	Time	Service
Wednesday 30th November	3.20 – 4.45pm	Messy Church Christingle and Christmas. <i>Welcoming all pre- and primary school children and their carers.</i>
Sunday 4th December	7.00-9.00pm	Christmas Craft Evening for the ladies! <i>Find out more by emailing <a href="mailto:cground101@gmail.com">cground101@gmail.com</a></i>
Sunday 18th December	11.00am 3.30pm	Our all-age Christingle service. Wild Worship Nativity Trail with activities. <i>Wrap up well and bring the family!</i>
Saturday 24th December Christmas Eve	3.00pm	Crib Service <i>With dressing up for children (and adults), and followed by mince pies.</i>
	6.30pm	Candle-lit Carol Service. <i>The church will be packed and warm, come and celebrate Christmas with us</i>
Sunday 25th December Christmas Day	10.30am	Christmas Praise with Holy Communion <i>A peaceful and welcoming Christmas service which is open to all ages</i>

Wishing all our readers  
a merry Christmas.

Rev. Peter Francis and all at St Mary's



## The Traditions of Christmas

Christmas is full of delightful traditions, some originating in pagan times, some from Christian beliefs. Yes, we know about the manger, the stable, the Wise Men and the shepherds but do you know why we have Norwegian Spruces in our houses, shops, churches and in Trafalgar Square, why do we eat mince pies, why do we use holly and mistletoe at Christmas.....?

The Christmas tree, usually a Norwegian Spruce, but sometimes a different species of coniferous tree, was first used by St. Boniface as a symbol of Christianity – it is evergreen representing Jesus' everlasting love for us, it is triangular in shape representing the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit,) and it points to heaven.



Holly is used because it reminds us of the crown of thorns worn by Jesus at his crucifixion and mistletoe was used by the Romans as a sign of peace, love and understanding and from this came the tradition of kissing your loved one (and others!!) at Christmas time.



Mince pies are meant to be eaten in silence as you make a wish. Their shape reminds us of the crib in the stable. Christmas puddings, sometimes called figgy pudding or plum puddings (mistakenly, because the Victorians used raisins which they called plums,) according to the old tradition, should contain 13 ingredients, to remind us of Jesus and his 12 disciples. I remember my mother making the Christmas pudding well before Christmas and placing three or four silver sixpence pieces in the pudding for us to search for on Christmas Day.



The day after Christmas Day of course is called Boxing Day because this was the day when tradesmen were given a "Christmas box" and the alms boxes in churches were opened and money shared with the poor of the parish.



Best wishes  
for Christmas  
and the New  
Year from the  
Woodchester  
Word team





**Calling the Women of Woodchester!**

You are invited to join us for an  
**Evening of Christmas Crafting!**

Sunday December 4th  
7.00 - 9.00pm  
in Woodchester Church

Soup/rolls will be served followed by  
coffee and cake - to book a place email  
Helen (agentjackson50@gmail.com)  
and please mention any dietary  
requirements!

or scan here! 

There is no charge - donations would  
be very welcome

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## Useful Village Contacts

### PCSO:

Steven Phillipson  
T: 101  
or visit [www.gloucestershire.police.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.police.uk)

### Neighbourhood Warden:

Chris James,  
T: 01453 754512, 07753 725185  
E: [chris.james@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:chris.james@stroud.gov.uk)

### County Councillor:

Steve Robinson,  
T: 01453 834270  
E: [steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

### Village Hall:

Mrs. Kath Gay,  
T: 01453 873348  
E: [wvh888@btinternet.com](mailto:wvh888@btinternet.com)

Bookings: Rod Harris  
T: 01453 872317/07775 652379  
E: [WVH2021@gmail.com](mailto:WVH2021@gmail.com)

### Parish Council:

Mandy Rossiter, Clerk to Woodchester Parish Council  
T: 07863 098710  
E: [Clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk](mailto:Clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk)  
[www.woodchesterparish.org.uk](http://www.woodchesterparish.org.uk)

### Gloucestershire Highways:

[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/)  
T: 08000 514514  
E: [gcchighways@amey.co.uk](mailto:gcchighways@amey.co.uk)

### Woodchester Post Office and Village Shop:

Shop: 01453 873218  
Post Office: 01453 872581

### St Mary's Church:

Rev Peter Francis,  
T: 01453 759680

### Church of the Annunciation:

T: 01453 832120

Letters, articles and items for publication should be sent to the editor, Rod Harris, at [woodchesterword@gmail.com](mailto:woodchesterword@gmail.com)  
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