

MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

September 2026 Editor - Andrew Burnett Issue no. 21



Another active year

By Andrew Burnett

This newsletter brings you up to date with what the Society has done in the last 12 months and what is planned for the rest of the year.

In addition to our Spring and Harvest suppers, we held another successful cocktail party for our members which proved very popular and there have been three Speaker Evenings.

Although social events are an important part of our programme, our purpose is to protect the charm and scale of Wendover, and we include reports on what we have been doing in a number of areas.



Harvest Supper 2025

By Pat Riley-Page



The annual Harvest Supper event was attended by over 70 guests and it was delightful to hear their unrestrained laughter when listening to some of the amusing anecdotes from the life of our genial speaker MP Greg Smith. He obviously has an affinity with Wendover having lived in Grenville Avenue for some years and of course his office is now in our Village above Brown and Merry. Apart from his humorous side he showed a serious and caring persona and talked of his particular interest in energy and power. He told us he had a second appointment in Wendover the same weekend as he was helping Wendover Rotary with their charity duck race on the Heron Path Stream.

The welcoming restaurant at the Chiltern Forest Golf club was the venue for the evening and they provided a tasty two course meal with three options including a vegetarian option, followed by coffee or tea and a chocolate.

As Ron Peterson was unable to host the evening due to a recent knee operation Martin Chambers greeted the guests and he and his wife Jane entertained the top table.

Congratulations on an enjoyable evening were expressed by many attending.



Protecting Wendover

By Anita Duckenfield

WS Conservation Area project

The Wendover Society has been running a project for a while to try and enhance the attractiveness of the Conservation Area of Wendover for its residents, businesses and visitors. The Conservation Area includes the High Street, Pound Street, the town end of the Aylesbury and Tring Roads and South Street.

Members of the WS Committee have visited every business in the Conservation Area where the outside of the property needs some attention and talked to the owners/management to offer our help and support. We are now in the process of moving things forward in various ways, depending on what is appropriate for the business. It is often the case that the property is on a lease where the property owner, and not the business, is responsible for repairing the property which can lead to lengthy delays.

There have already been some improvements, most notably the outside of Brown & Merry, the Costa Coffee bins being outside less of the time and the removal of two rubbish bins left on the High Street.

We have also been discussing ways of getting more benches, including memorial benches, put around the village and trying to get some of the road furniture improved, however to progress projects like these we really need more manpower!

If you have any suggestions on these or other areas, or feel you can offer some time to help, please contact thewendoversociety@outlook.com.

FixMyStreet

WS Committee members have been reporting issues on Buckinghamshire Council FixMyStreet which has eventually led to some potholes being repaired and old litter bins being replaced, although there is more to do on this and many other fronts.

Any WS member can report issues on <https://fixmystreet.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/> as the more people that report things the quicker Bucks CC will take notice.

Purssell Path

Work has continued to maintain the Purssell Path and to ensure it remains safe — our thanks go to Dale Smith for organising this. The path belongs to the Wendover Society, but maintenance can require significant expenditure and so we are currently reviewing how this can best be continued in the future.

Wendover tidy up

There have been five Wendover tidy ups so far this year, including one with the Nationwide Spring Clean. Groups of volunteers have cleaned up street furniture, street signs and bus shelters, weeded along the sides of the roads and cleared up litter resulting in an improved appearance of the village. Our thanks go to all those who have helped. The Tidy Ups will start again in the Autumn when there is more work to be done.



Speaker Evenings

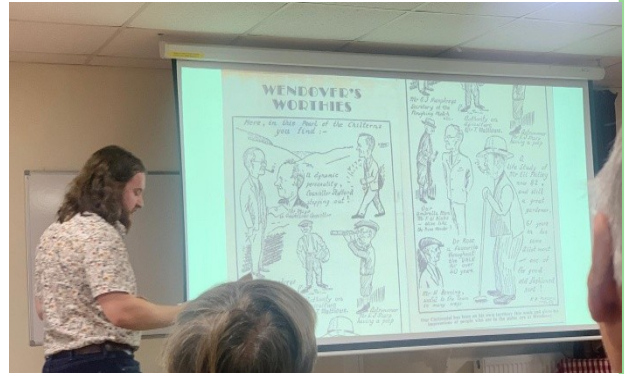
By Ron Petersen

On the evening of Friday, 5th September 2025, some 50 members of the Society (and a few guests) gathered at St. Anne's Hall to hear a fascinating presentation from Callum Walker, Senior Community Engagement Officer of the Buckinghamshire Archives.

Callum explained the difference between 'archives' and a 'museum': an archive is solely for documents, while a museum is a repository for objects. The Bucks Archive, located in the much-maligned Buckinghamshire Council building in Aylesbury, contains "miles" of documents, freely accessible to the public. It houses documents from many centuries and from all parts of Buckinghamshire. Closer to home, Callum shared with us some early photographs of the Wendover area.

Callum described the plans to move the archives from Aylesbury to a new location, above Tesco in the Eden Centre in High Wycombe. This move – to a climate-controlled environment protecting the documents for decades to come – will allow for a more organised collection, more accessible to researchers, and an abundance of space to grow in the years ahead. According to news reports, this move will cost £11.26 million, part-funded by Tesco.

Callum invited everyone to visit the Archives, either now or after the move.



On the 22nd of November the featured speaker was Dr. Helen Farr, Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Southampton. Helen specialises in prehistoric submerged landscapes and early seafaring.

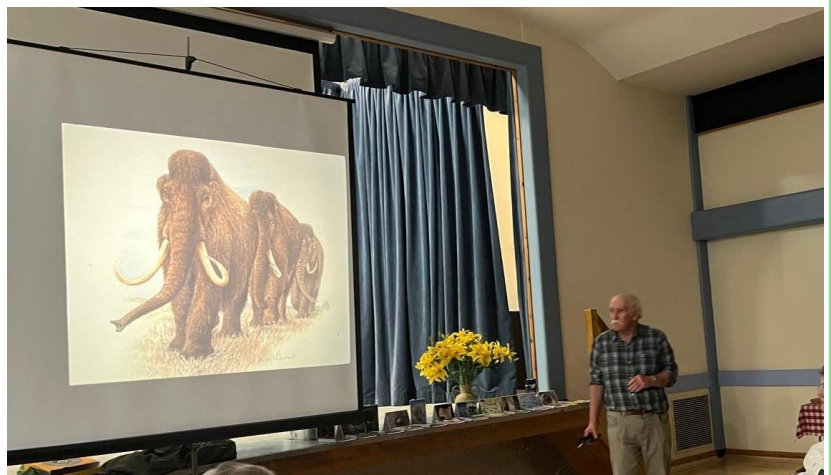
Helen has spent much of the past four years as a leader of the Black Sea Marine Archaeology Project (MAP) exploring the Black Sea for shipwrecks, the remains of which have largely been preserved by the anaerobic (oxygen-free) nature of the Black Sea. The lack of oxygen means that those organisms that would normally feed on wooden shipwrecks can't function ... and the shipwrecks remain

largely untouched, in some cases, for thousands of years.

Over the past four years, Helen has spent 100 days at sea, 40 of those days underwater. She and her colleagues have discovered 65 new shipwrecks from as recently as the 19th century to as ancient as the Greek Classical Period (500 BC). She shared with us fascinating photos and videos of those wrecks, some with features like masts and rudders still intact.

The Ukraine conflict and the ending of a major grant from the Rausing (Tetra Pak) family has brought the Black Sea MAP to a close and Helen is already exploring her next projects. She has recently returned from a dive in the Straits of Taiwan (another conflict zone) and is in discussion with the Saudi Arabian government about surveying their entire coastline. We'll have to ask for an update in a year or so!

On Friday 30th January our speaker was John Tyler who spoke about The Changing Wildlife of the Chilterns. The talk followed the story of the Chilterns and their wildlife from their birth over a hundred million years ago on the bed of a tropical sea, through Ice Ages, the return of forests and people, the arrival of farming and the impact of the furniture industry, through to the present day and ended with a brief glimpse of what the future may hold for our local wildlife.



At the heart of Wendover . . .

By Jane Larkham

Why did you join The Wendover Society? Most of us love living in this wonderful part of the Chilterns Hills and cherish its history. Could you contribute to local knowledge in any way?

Every September the people of these Islands celebrate our varied history and culture. In recent years this has focused on Halton House and the RAF or Ride and Stride visiting our local churches but now Heritage Open Days are more community based. So this year, for the first time, the Society will be working with Wendover Parish Council and Wendover Community Library to engage with all local residents to show what has happened here over time. This year's theme is Wendover's buildings of interest and associated historic trades right back to the Drovers of Ancient Times.

Most of us have seen the Windmill from Aylesbury Road but do you know how it came to supersede The Watermill in Hale Road? Why did Wendover have so many watermills in Medieval Times?

Brook House next to the clock tower was built in recent times on the site of a much mourned and significant Tudor house but does it have any connection with that Tudor icon Anne Boleyn and her so-called Cottages on Tring Road also known as Coldharbour? Does Brook House have any connection with the clothes shop Brookes on the corner of Aylesbury Road and Tring Road. Which building features in many a First World War photo?

Where was The Old Post Office? The whereabouts of the Post Office in Wendover High Street has changed many times since the days of Roland Hill!

Do you know the story of why the York Buildings in Tring Road were built? At one time they were also home to many straw plaiters. Why was this industry so important for the town of Luton?

Another famous industry of Buckinghamshire was lacemaking for which good light was essential. Several old buildings in the commercial centre of Wendover have windows specially constructed to allow a lacemaker to work in daylight for as long as possible.

Wendover Community Library will be hosting an exhibition about the buildings and trades of Wendover in September – including Friday 11th, Saturday 12th, Tuesday 15th (including Chatty Café photo and memory sharing), Thursday 17th culminating in a special focus weekend on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th. These latter days will allow you to show relevant local artefacts including photos or physical items that you possess. The Clock Tower will also be open to visit on these two days, and Cracklewick Morris will be on the Manor Waste on the 19th. To share a piece of local history or loan your artefact please contact Phoebe Sharps, Estates Manager at Wendover Parish Council, estates@wendover-pc.gov.uk, 01296 623056. She is specifically looking for photographs of Wendover's historic buildings, and for volunteers on the 18th or 19th September.

This is an opportunity for you to join in with a Wendover Heritage Festival which will become an annual event as part of the Open Heritage movement at <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/>.

PS A little bit of Wendover Society History for you. These photos show some trees in Aylesbury which were well established by 1918 but were threatened with felling in the 1960s to provide more parking. Fortunately Dr Riley of The Red House rushed

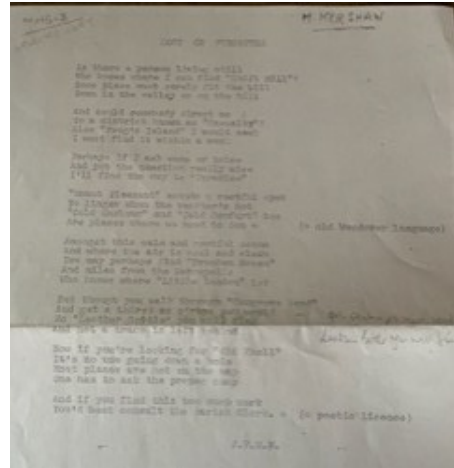


outside and stopped the destruction of the trees and with Farmer Tony Mogford founded the Wendover Society. The colour photo shows the trees more recently (2015) and still flourishing.

A Wendover poem

By Nicky Gregory

We have come across this poem, but unfortunately know little about its origins. The original has H. Kershaw written at the top of the piece of paper in pencil, but this could just be the name of someone who owned the paper copy. A mystery! If anyone knows the answer or knows who J.F.N.F. was please get in touch!



LOST OR FORGOTTEN

Is there a person living still
Who knows where I can find 'shift mill'?
Some place must surely fit the bill
Down in the valley or on the hill

And could somebody direct me
To a district known as 'Casualty'
Also, 'Frog's Island' I would seek
I must find it within a week

Perhaps if I ask once or twice
And put the question really nice
I'll find the way to 'Paradise'

'Mount Pleasant' sounds a restful spot
To linger when the weather's hot
'Cold Harbour' and 'Cold Comfort' too
Are places where we used to Goo *

Amongst this calm and restful scene
And where the air is cool and clean
You may perhaps find 'Drunken Green'

And miles from the Metropolis
Who knows where 'Little London' is?

But though you walk through 'Coxgrove Wood'
And get a thirst as p'haps you would
No 'Leather Bottle' you will find
And not a trace is left behind

Now if you're looking for 'Old Knoll'
It's no use going down a hole
Most places are not on the map
One has to ask the proper chap

And if you find this too much work
You'd best consult the Parish Clerk**

J.F.N.F.

(*old Wendover language)
(**poetic licence)

Silent auction

By Andrew Burnett

We are planning to hold a silent auction next year on 12th February. This would be a fund-raising event, needed as we had significant exceptional outlay last year, on the production of the new Town Map which is now installed on Manor Waste and on necessary maintenance (tree work) on the Pursell Path.

There will be a number of items offered for sale, and beside each will be a slip of paper on which bids are recorded. You will be invited to look at the items and place your bid on any you are interested in. There will then be a fish and chip supper (options available for anyone with dietary requirements) and drinks will be available from the bar. After the supper, you have a chance to rebid if necessary to secure the items you want. The winning bids will then be read out and if yours, you will be able to take your items home and pay on the way out (credit cards accepted).

We are looking for donations for both the auction and as raffle prizes. We would be grateful if you could advise us if you would be willing to make a donation by emailing us at thewendoversociety@outlook.com. Anything which might be desirable will be accepted, here are some suggestions, though please don't feel bound by these:

- Bottles of wine, beer etc.
- Non-perishable food items or a hamper.
- Pictures or objets d'art.
- Furniture - please supply a photograph for display, the buyer can collect later.
- A service (e.g. two hours gardening, a music lesson).
- A meal in a local restaurant.
- A trip or stay in a holiday home.
- Gardening or DIY tools.

Spring Supper and AGM

By Anita Duckenfield

The Wendover Society's 58th AGM and Spring Supper was held on 13th March 2026 in the Memorial Hall.

During the AGM the Society's 2025 accounts were adopted, the finances were reviewed and found to be in good shape.

The Chairman highlighted the Society's commitment to keeping a close watch on planning processes, the large amount of work done on the Pursell Path and the installation of the finished WS Wendover Town Map on Manor Waste. Dale Smith was thanked for all his work on the Pursell Path and he and the other volunteers for maintaining it.

After the formal AGM there was a buffet meal. Dr Stephen Goss, historian, lecturer and podcaster, then gave an interesting and informative talk on Churchill and how a collection of basement rooms under the Treasury building served as the centre of Britain's war effort and came to be known as the Cabinet War Rooms. The talk took us around the top-secret corridors of the War Rooms and provided an insight into what life was like in the bunker, the vital work carried out there, and Churchill – the man and war-time leader.



Cocktail Party

By Andrew Burnett

Following last year's successful event, we again hosted a cocktail party on Friday 21st August. This year our thanks go to Nicky Gregory for holding the event in her garden. There were a selection of delicious canapés available, as well as cocktails, Pimms and non-alcoholic drinks, and everyone seemed to enjoy the evening.



Planning

By Andrew Burnett

The Society has recently been reviewing the new Bucks draft Local Plan and our comments can be found on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/WSPlanComments>. While we were glad to see that no major new development is proposed for Wendover, we are concerned about the cumulative effect on our infrastructure from development proposed at Halton, Aston Clinton and other local communities. We also have seen two recent speculative developments proposed (the Land West of Halton Lane and Wendover Springs) with more to be expected, taking advantage of the window before the new plan is approved. We will write to our members when any of these proposals is formally submitted, so that you can comment. We are also concerned about a change in the National Planning Policy Framework in favour of developments close to a well-connected railway station.

Wendover map

By Anita Duckenfield

After much work by the Society, the Wendover Society's Wendover Town Map was installed by the Parish Council on Manor Waste in January 2026.



The concept was to have a beautifully illustrated town map available for people to locate the retail, hospitality and main amenities in Wendover and which can also be used for a leaflet in the future. The town map was drawn by a local artist and there was much consultation and proofreading done to make sure there was a fair representation of everything on it that was possible. The map is designed so it can be updated with overlays as businesses change over time.

Free Trees

By Nicky Gregory

Bucks Tree Mission are endeavouring to encourage more tree planting across the County, giving benefits in terms of climate mitigation and benefiting the ecosystem and biodiversity. Although this was originally aimed at larger land owners the Society has managed to obtain the offer of free trees for our members. The trees are available in packs which will be too large for most people's gardens, so we have been investigating the possibility of splitting a pack across several members. Unfortunately there has not been sufficient interest from members for us to arrange this.

So if you are interested a direct approach may be the best option. Should you be successful, but have more trees than you require, the Parish Council may be able to take them. The deadline for application is the end of September, <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/campaign/tree-planting/> is a link which will tell you about the Bucks Tree Mission campaign .

Wendover's own chalk stream

By Jane Larkham

Has this long, dry summer made you think more about water? Did you know that the Chiltern Hills are internationally famous because it has so many chalk streams? A rare sight on a global scale.

We are very lucky that Wendover has its own chalk stream now canalised into the Wendover Canal, formerly the Wendover Arm as it is a feeder to the Grand Union Canal at Bulbourne near Tring and Marsworth. Chalk streams are a globally unique habitat because the water is filtered through chalk aquifers, it is extremely pure encouraging species that would find it difficult to thrive in less clean water. The food webs are unique but very fragile and particularly susceptible to pollutants.

As a Buckinghamshire child, my brother and I used to swim and "fish for minnows" in the Chess near Latimer back in the 1950s when the nearby trout farm bore witness to the cleanliness of the water. After all, watercress from the Chess was prized as a healthy green vegetable in earlier times. Unfortunately respect for rivers no longer exists and even that small stream is polluted with sewage from time to time nowadays.



Not all the water from Wendover goes into the Grand Union Canal but that waterway is still worth observing and preserving ecologically. The geographical direction of flow is approximately north making it unique among the chalk streams of the Chilterns which otherwise flow approximately south. It flows via Weston Turville into Bear Brook in Aylesbury and thence to the River Thames on the west side of Aylesbury before that empties into the River Thames near Dorchester-on-Thames in south east Oxfordshire.

By definition, a chalk stream moves with the aquifer water table and parts of a stream will become shallow or dry up in the summer months. This is regularly observed as the River Misbourne which rises in Great Missenden often disappears in summer as it passes through the Chalfonts. Climate change and extreme weather conditions will have a major impact on chalk streams and we need to monitor them closely. Most are not commercially important so get very little government monitoring hence they depend on volunteer groups such as the River Thames Conservation Trust.

Hence local groups have sprung up to safeguard these precious assets. Our local group is the River Thames Conservation Trust, www.riverthame.org.

There was a meeting in Wendover on 13 May concerning Bear Brook, Stoke Brook and Wendover Brook. They considered

- Hydrology, water quality, ecology
- Watery connections between Wendover and Aylesbury
- Key pressures including water quality, habitat loss and wider impacts such as developments
- Any local groups following any of the above

Now might be the moment to set up a group to watch over our very own chalk stream – Wendover Brook – all the while supporting the efforts of our friends in the Wendover Canal Trust who are keen to restore the canal but also to care for its ecology.

Please let me know if you are interested in joining or leading such a group.

Thank you to Sean McCarthy for his input to this article.

Apple Jelly

By Sandy Smith

Dale and I noticed last year that fruit from the Community Orchard needed picking. There were lots of windfalls from a crab apple tree. We need to get folk out to harvest!! As I have been making apple jelly since 2006, I thought I would share my method with you.

You will need:

- 4 lb apples (16 large – the fresher and tarter the better)
- 2 pints of cold water
- 1.5 kg sugar
- Large preserving pan (steel, not aluminium)
- Jelly bag and stand
- About 10 glass jam jars
- A pack of labels, wax discs and cellophane covers

Method:

1. Cut up the apples (no need to peel or core).
2. Add to the water in a large pan.
3. Bring to the boil and simmer until soft (30 minutes).
4. Remove from heat, let cool slightly and mash with the back of a wooden spoon.
5. Transfer to the jelly bag and strain for at least 2 hours (can be left overnight).
6. Transfer liquid to the (clean) preserving pan, add the sugar and stir until dissolved.
7. Bring to a brisk boil.
8. Boil for about 15 minutes until the setting point is reached (1 tsp on a cold saucer should wrinkle when pushed).
9. Pour immediately into hot, sterile jars and fill to the brim.
10. Cover with a waxed disc (wax side down) and cover with the cellophane top.
11. Will keep for years if kept hidden (too good to resist) and in a cool, dark place.



Roger of Wendover

By Andrew Burnett

The Society had an interesting approach earlier this year from a researcher who was interested in the legend of the Wandering Jew, which was first documented by the medieval English chronicler Roger of Wendover in his *Flores Historiarum*. He describes a man formerly called Cartaphilus who claimed to have been Pontius Pilate's doorkeeper and had struck Jesus on his way to Calvary. Jesus replied that he should wait for his return, and as a result he was condemned to live for ever.

Roger of Wendover was a prominent 13th-century English chronicler and Benedictine monk at St Albans Abbey, who died in 1236. Unfortunately we were not able to provide any more information than is available online, though if any of our readers knows more about him or Cartaphilus, please get in touch.

Wendover Society Committee

By Jane Larkham

Our new Committee member this year is Jane Larkham, who will be well known to many in Wendover. We asked her to tell us a bit about herself...



I was born and educated in Amersham. After university I served two years of VSO up country in Ghana teaching Chemistry to A-level without electricity or running water. This was a definitive life experience and when I returned to England I wanted to help encourage community life back home following the excellent examples I had observed in what was described as a Third World Country. My first job on return was as a bench chemist at Amersham International.

I moved to Wendover when I married Peter in 1981 by which time I was a Product Manager for a specialist Swedish pharmaceutical company KabiVitrum. When my first child was born I worked freelance but mostly for a Wycombe-based PR company specialising in the pharmaceutical industry. I was also making programmes for Chesham Theatre Society selling adverts to local businesses and writing all the content. In 1989 I started Wendover News and edited it for 35 years developing it from a black and white A3 folded to A4 to a much larger glossy colour version. I also retrained as a teacher and taught Chemistry at Aylesbury High School for 15 years. Through my work on Wendover News I was able to support many local organisations. My mother became frail so I retired from teaching in 2010 and supported her (and a brother) until she died in 2020. Wendover News Ltd has now transitioned to Wendover News CIC and is run by a group of volunteers.

The Wendover Society would welcome more new committee members. If you think you could help us please get in touch and we'd be happy to talk to you about what is involved.

The Wendover Society

The Society's Aims are:

- To protect and enhance the character, charm and scale of Wendover
- To support the maintenance and improvement of features of all kinds that can contribute to a pleasant quality of life in Wendover
- To pursue these aims in co-operation with other local, national and statutory organisations

The Society is a registered charity which does not engage in any party political or religious activities and is non-profit-making. The Society organises social and informative events, monitors planning applications and often consults members on relevant issues.

The Wendover Society warmly welcomes new members. If you would like to join us, you will find all the information you need on our website at <https://www.wendoversociety.org.uk/AboutUs/JoiningUs.aspx>

You might like to make a note of future dates planned for the Society's events in the next few months.

16th October 2026	Harvest Supper at Ellesborough Golf Club. Our speaker is Helen Fry who will be talking about Latimer House.
13th November 2026	Speaker Evening. Mike Senior will be giving a talk about the disastrous attack on Fromelles during the First World War when many local young men (some from Wendover) were killed.
8th January 2027	Speaker Evening. Sally Goodsir Curator of Decorative Arts at the Royal Collection Trust will be speaking about Buckingham Palace over 260 years from house to monarch's HQ.
12th February 2027	Silent Auction. See page 5.

One of our members has offered to provide first aid at any events she is at, but if any other members who are trained in first aid would also be willing to help with this, that would be greatly appreciated — please get in touch.