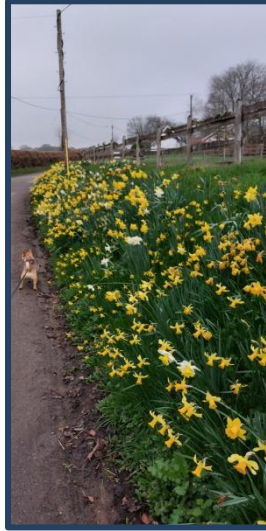




# The Parish Pump

A regular newsletter from Damerham Parish Council

April 2026



***Welcome to the April edition of The Pump!***

*The season has definitely turned, although I understand there might still be a small risk of frost, but oh, the lovely warm sunshine and the greening of the hedgerows bring hope!*

*In this edition of The Pump, you will find some updates, Paul's nature notes, some diary dates, including the Duck Race and an Easter Egg hunt. As you venture out from hibernation, why not pop into Coffee Pot on a Wednesday morning to see what is going on in the village? Important news about a road closure and thanks from the Parish Council to some wonderful litter pickers!*

*More photos of your events or our beautiful village please to include for future issues!!! Please email them to me at [mandysrobbins@gmail.com](mailto:mandysrobbins@gmail.com)  
Have a wonderful month and see you soon!*

## Regular Village Events:

***Mondays from 9am Pilates with Sandie***

Contact: [hello@sandiewillspilates.co.uk](mailto:hello@sandiewillspilates.co.uk)

***Mondays from 6 – 7pm Strong Nation with Carolina***

Contact [carolinatuc@gmail.com](mailto:carolinatuc@gmail.com)

***3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every other month from 7.30pm***

Parish Council Meeting - Contact [clerk@damerham.net](mailto:clerk@damerham.net)

***Tuesdays from 9.45am – Fluffy Chicks parent and toddler group.***

Contact: [fluffychicks21@gmail.com](mailto:fluffychicks21@gmail.com)

***Tuesdays from 6.30pm – Damerham AFC training***

Contact: Dylan – 07380 192020

***Tuesdays from 7.30pm – Badminton Doubles club***

Contact: [m.walter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:m.walter@hotmail.co.uk)

***Wednesdays from 10.30 – Coffee Pot at the Village Hall***

***Wednesdays from 6pm Zumba with Carolina***

Contact [carolinatuc@gmail.com](mailto:carolinatuc@gmail.com)

***1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month from 2pm – Tea and Chat***

Contact [ellawhitcher@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ellawhitcher@hotmail.co.uk) tel: 07986 650123

***1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month, Quiz Night at the Compasses Inn***

Contact: 01725 518231

***2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 9.30 – Walking Group***

Contact: [sarahings56@gmail.com](mailto:sarahings56@gmail.com)

***Every last Wednesday – Fish and chip van at the Village Hall 5 – 7pm***

***1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month from 7.30pm Royal British Legion Social***

Contact: [Jim.eames@btinternet.com](mailto:Jim.eames@btinternet.com)

***1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month from 7.15pm – Bingo at the Village Hall***

Contact: [info@damerham.org](mailto:info@damerham.org) NOT IN APRIL

***Every last Thursday of the month – Dam-Jam live music at the***

***Compasses.enquiries@compassesinndamerham.co.uk***

If you would like to book the village hall for a gathering or event, please have a look at the website at [damerham.org](http://damerham.org), where you can also see regular users, updates and fill in a booking form, or email the booking secretary, Stuart, at [info@damerham.org](mailto:info@damerham.org).

As we are now officially in the summertime, **St George's Church will be open** during the day for quiet contemplation or prayer during these troubled times.

You are very welcome to drop in during daylight hours.

As always, we are very grateful for donations of books, which can be left in the entrance. Thank you.

## Paul T's Nature Notes

### Weather February 2025

Another very wet month with 131mm of rain compared with the average of 68mm. The 12 month total is now 944mm. There were just 5 dry days. Wettest day was 18<sup>th</sup> with 24.6mm. Warmest day was 23<sup>rd</sup> at 16C and coldest night 15/16th at 1C. Just 2 frosts. Average maximum was 12C and minimum 6C.

### Wildlife

Another month dominated by the wet weather and I have very few records. It was made worse by having such a bad cough for 2 weeks that I had to get someone to do my Winter Bird Survey for me. One unusual sighting was a Barn Owl on a wet night. They usually sit that sort of weather out. I heard my first Great-spotted Woodpecker drumming on 8<sup>th</sup>. Cherry Plum was in flower on 18th but the blackthorn is not yet out in mid-March. I heard my first singing Great Tit on 15<sup>th</sup>, and saw the first Celandine on 24<sup>th</sup>.

Whilst looking up something recently I got drawn into reading about Common Cranes and found some interesting facts. What is thought to be an image of a Common Crane has been found on a Neolithic stone column in Turkey and is considered to be the oldest bird painting on earth. Homer refers to them in the Iliad, and this is the first written record of a bird in literature. In The Art of Falconry written in about 1200AD by Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor, a complete book is devoted to hunting Common Crane usually using the biggest falcon, a Gyrfalcon. This would try to force the Crane down to the ground where hounds waiting below would seize it. They were very popular for banquets and this predation plus the shrinking of their wetland habitat led to their decline and disappearance from Britain with the last breeding record in 1543. 453 years later a pair returned to breed in the same site and the population has grown to over 80 pairs. They have colonised an Oxfordshire site and been re-introduced to the Somerset Levels. These are very large birds weighing over 5Kg compared with White Stork at just over 3Kg and Heron at less than 1Kg. Cranes are mainly herbivorous but will eat just about anything that comes their way such as insects, worms and even mice and voles.

I mentioned last time about Goldcrests feeding on fat in Sweden and I have now heard that this was recorded last winter in Damerham.

Happy spotting, and do let me know what you see!

Paul.toynton@hotmail.co.uk

## Diaries and updates!

BINGO. No Bingo this month – all our efforts are going to the Duck Race – we'll be back soon.

The Damerham and Western Downland branch of the Royal British Legion has its next social meeting at The Compasses on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April from 7.30 – 9.30pm. Do come along to join us, everyone is welcome.



## Damerham Duck Race Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April from 12 noon

The Damerham Duck Race is nearly upon us. Get ready for the thrills and spills of 200 ducks battling the waves of the Allen River! There will be 6 races, where the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> placed ducks will go through to the Grand Finale. There's over £500 in prize money to be won and lots of delicious food, refreshments, bar and stalls to enjoy. The perfect Easter day out for the whole family.

A huge thank you to Woolley and Wallis, our main sponsor, and to our race sponsors: Steve Bateman Superbikes, R & W Langley, Jamie's Tyres, The Compasses Inn, Damerham Garage and Jubilee Camping.

If you feel willing and able to bring a cake for the tea and cake refreshments, we would be eternally grateful. See you there!



## Looking Ahead!

Village Hall 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June is the big day. Plans are afoot to invite the Village to mark 30 glorious years of this fabulous village facility. Please save the date, gather your memories, photos and records and help us celebrate!

## **Fordingbridge RFC Easter Camp and MHFA Training Fundraiser**

Ben and Fordingbridge Rugby Club are really excited to announce that the first of this year's junior rugby camps will be this Easter on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April at Fordingbridge Recreation Ground. Hopefully, this will be the first of many more fun and valuable events for younger players in the area.

Boys and girls at any level of experience will be welcome, and sessions will develop rugby skills through safe, fun and specific movement, speed, strength and conditioning, and skills coaching (no contact involved at all). Ben Bealey, a local Damerham born player and coach, is leading the camp, and has over 9 years' international experience at both club and professional levels.

Please also note that this is not exclusive to FRFC players, so if you have a friend or family member in the area who would benefit from the opportunity, feel free to share the link with them to register too.

- Ages 11 – 13 session will run from 9.30 – 12
- Ages 14 – 16 session will run from 1 – 3.30

Each group will be capped at 20 players to ensure attention and quality coaching opportunities, so please book early. £25 per player.

To register, go to: [coaching.benbealeyperformance.com/frfceastercamp-476492](http://coaching.benbealeyperformance.com/frfceastercamp-476492).

The team will be fundraising throughout the day to support the Fordingbridge Mental Health First Aid Training programme run through the team at The Branch on Fordingbridge High Street. Volunteers to help with the food stall and BBQ or donations would be most welcome. Please contact Sarah Bealey on [sarahbealey@c-dltd.co.uk](mailto:sarahbealey@c-dltd.co.uk) or call 01725 518021.

## **Damerham and District Horticultural Society.**

The April event is a talk by Brian Pettit about Wildflowers of Britain and Europe. It will be held at Damerham Village Hall on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 7.30pm. Refreshments will be served.

Membership reminder to those who haven't renewed yet – you will be able to do this at the April talk and forms are available on the website [www.ddhs.co.uk](http://www.ddhs.co.uk). New members can join at £12 per couple and £8 for single membership. We offer a variety of talks, self drive garden visits, a coach trip, summer garden party and our amazing Spring and Summer shows.

## **The Damerham Sportsfield Lottery**



Results of the March lottery:

George Pollard - £48

Bex De Pas - £29

Will Holden - £19

Just one more person joining will mean that the first prize will increase to a whopping £50, so don't delay if you're not already part of the lottery! The more people who take part, the larger the prizes, and the more money is raised for a hugely important village facility. You can do this by scanning the QR code on the posters dotted around the village, or get in touch with Mat Holden via email – [Mathew.holden@sky.com](mailto:Mathew.holden@sky.com)

## Tea and Chat

We had a really lovely game of bird bingo with the children from Maple Class at our March meeting. We had 26 children and only 24 Tea and Chat folk, as many were absent for various reasons. Everyone joined in and interacted well with the children. The children were trying hard to recognise the starting letter of the bird names and were quick to spot the British birds. We did have some unusual birds with funny names from all around the world on our boards, which was very entertaining! After the game, the class sang us their Easter song, which they are only just learning, and we all enjoyed their singing, especially the chorus about the spring chicken – complete with actions!

At our April meeting we are having a talk from Cyber Bobby which is part of the Blue Lamp Trust. This should be very informative about cyber crime and how to recognise and protect ourselves from scams, fraud, identity theft, phishing emails and how to keep our devices safe. This talk is aimed at the over 60's, but anyone of any age is welcome to join us if you want to find out about how to keep safe when using phones, tablets and computers.

Our first outing of the year is a trip to the Regal Cinema in Fordingbridge. This will be on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Everyone will make their own way to the cinema to meet at 1.30 to get a drink and a snack before the film starts at 2. We will make the final decision on the film at the April meeting, but at present The Penguin Lessons and The Ballad of Wallis Island are the two choices with the highest votes. We would love it if we could get a full house of 30 people, so please get in touch if you would like to come along. The cost is £5 for members or £7 for non members.

For more information, contact Ella Whitcher on 07986 650123 or [ellawhitcher@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ellawhitcher@hotmail.co.uk)

## FREE!!

*That is how much your bottomless cup of tea or coffee will be when you make your first visit to Coffee Pot. Add a slice of cake for just £1! Where else would you find such a bargain?*

*From young folk to senior citizens, everyone is welcome, whether you come just once or every week. We are not a club, so there is no subscription to pay.*

*Why not pop down to the Village Hall on a Wednesday morning from 10.30, you'll be sure of a warm welcome, not to mention that free drink!*

## **Notes from the Parish Council**

### **Church Lane Between the School and The Church**

Hampshire County Council has officially declared this stretch of road closed to traffic as it is deemed to be dangerous.

Please be advised that if you damage your vehicle whilst driving on this road your insurance company will not pay any claim since your insurance is invalid.

The repairs to the bridge nearest the school will happen once the water level on the meadow has receded. There is also considerable damage to the road cause by the recent flood which will require repair.

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THE SIGNS AND BARRIERS WHICH THE COUNCIL HAVE ERECTED. The Parish Council have repeatedly tried to re-erect them, but they continue to be taken down. They are there for your safety and to avoid further damage. Thank you.

### **Litter Picking on Court Hill.**

The Parish Council wish to thank those villagers (you know who you are!) who have used the road closure on Court Hill to go litter picking in safety. This is community spirit at its best!

**The Footpaths Officer** has received a complaint regarding dogs being walked off-lead on Green Close. There is a notice at either end stating that dogs should be on leads. Although your dog may be perfectly well behaved off lead, other dogs on leads may be nervous or traumatised by past events. Thank you for your consideration. Annie Bellows.

### **Free Lunches**

The last of the free lunches was once again well attended, despite the sun making an appearance.

The general consensus was the attendees would love it to continue next year. Thank you to all those who donated soups and crumbles, and to the Fair for sponsoring the event. A special thank you to Sarah for staying on after Coffee Pot and being a great help in the kitchen. Overall £430 was donated to the local food bank. See you next year!

### **ADVERTISEMENT:**

***Damerham Self Catering at Greenbanks.*** We have 2 separate self catering apartments that are designed for couples only. Each apartment has its own designated parking space. We are only a short stroll to the village hall, which makes us ideally situated if you are attending a wedding or visiting friends or family in the area.

To make a booking, our website is [www.damerhamselfcatering.co.uk](http://www.damerhamselfcatering.co.uk), where you will see our latest availability (with no booking fees for booking direct), or you can ring on 07787548294 or email [cavincent@btinternet.com](mailto:cavincent@btinternet.com)

# **Rubbish!!**

## **Household Glass collection**

All glass bottles & jars  
Metal lids only  
No loose or plastic lids  
No broken glass  
Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March and 28<sup>th</sup> April from 7.00am



## **Garden Waste**

Collection for existing customers will be on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April.  
For more information about collection days for household waste, recycling and more, see [www.newforest.gov.uk/recyclingandrubbish](http://www.newforest.gov.uk/recyclingandrubbish)

**Blister pack recycling** – take your empty blister packs along to the Repair Café at Avonway in Fordingbridge on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month. A donation of £1 per 50 packs is requested please.

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*Do you have any ideas, comments, or suggestions for the future of The Parish Pump? Photos of past or upcoming events, or just lovely views of Damerham? News to share, updates or a village event to publicise? Please get in touch! If you would like to be added to the emailing list, or you have anything you would like to include in the April edition, please email me at [mandysrobbins@gmail.com](mailto:mandysrobbins@gmail.com) by Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April.*

*Space permitting, we are also looking at including small adverts for local businesses and services – please get in touch to find out more.*

Lots of information on the village is to be found on the Damerham website [www.damerham.net](http://www.damerham.net) and on the facebook page.

A welcome pack is available from the Clerk – [clerk@damerham.net](mailto:clerk@damerham.net) for newcomers.  
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