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<b>Ash Croft Veterinary Surgery</b> 169 St Neots Rd, Hardwick	<b>01954 210250</b>
<b>Baptist Church</b> Church Office	<b>264707</b>
<b>Benefits Agency</b> Chesterton Road, Cambridge	<b>545200</b>
<b>Comberton Catholics</b> (Fr John Minh)	<b>832397</b>
<b>Comberton Library</b>	<b>0345 045 5225</b>
<b>Comberton Playgroup</b>	<b>262373</b>
<b>Comberton Village College</b>	<b>262503</b>
Adult Education	<b>264721</b>
<b>Cambridge Water Emergencies</b>	<b>01223 706050</b>
<b>Anglia Water Sewerage Emergencies</b>	<b>03457 145 145</b>
<b>Environmental Health Services (South Cambs)</b>	<b>03450 450500</b>
<b>Meridian Primary School</b>	<b>262423</b>
<b>Nursery Way Sheltered Housing</b>	<b>264434</b>
<b>Parkside Police Station</b>	<b>01480 456111</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>364455</b>
<b>Social Services</b>	<b>264466</b>
(emergency out-of-hours)	<b>01733 561370</b>
<b>St Mary's Church</b> (Curate Chris Westgarth)	<b>07710 661003</b>
<b>Street Light Failure reporting helpline</b>	<b>01954 233330</b>
<b>Village Help Scheme</b> (Chairman Barbara Mitton), See panel on page 7 for transport bookings	<b>262073</b>
<b>Wood Green Animal Shelter</b>	<b>01480 830014</b>
Stray dogs (South Cambs DC)	<b>443000</b>

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You are invited to join us this

# Easter

Maundy Thursday, 17th April - Communion Service at 7.30pm

Good Friday, 18th April - Reflection on the Cross at 10.30am

Easter Day, 20th April - Easter Celebration at 10.30am

Comberton Baptist Church

[www.c-b-c.org.uk](http://www.c-b-c.org.uk)

## Regular dates for your diary

Day	Time	What	Where
Monday	Morning	Monday Studio	VH
Monday	9.30am - 11am	Messy Play (term time only)	CP
Monday	9.45am - 11am	Comberton Walkers	BC
Monday	3.40pm - 5.35pm	Children's Street Dance Classes	MS
Monday	6pm - 7pm	Tang Soo Do Junior 6-11	MS
Monday	7pm - 9pm	Tang Soo Do	MS
1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	7pm - 9pm	Carpet Bowls	VH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	7pm - 9pm	Comberton Winemakers	VH
Tuesday	10.30am - 12 noon	Cafe	VH
Tuesday	1.30pm - 4pm	Fabric and Yarns	BC
Tuesday	6.45pm - 7.30pm	ChaSamba Adult Fitness	MS
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	8pm (Except Aug)	Comberton WI	VH
4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	8pm - 9:30pm	Comberton Antiquarian Society	VH
Wednesday	10am - 11:30am	Comberton Baby & Toddler Group	VH
Wednesday	2pm - 3:30pm (term time only)	Bumps & Babes	BC
Wednesday	5.30pm-6.30pm	Pilates Class - book via <a href="http://www.faybpilates.co.uk">www.faybpilates.co.uk</a>	MS
Wednesday	6.45pm-7.45pm	U15 Football Club	CVC
Wednesday	7pm - 9pm	Tang Soo Do	MS
Thursday	9.30am - 11am	Messy Play (term time only)	CP
Thursday	5.45pm-6.45pm	U8 Football Club	CVC
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	2.30pm	Comberton Friendship	VH
4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday (not Dec & Aug)	2.30pm - 4pm	Oasis Teas	VH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	7pm (7:30pm start)	Bingo Party	VH

VH = Village Hall                      CVC = Comberton Village College  
 BC = Baptist Church                MS = Meridian School  
 CP = Comberton Playgroup



## Parish Council

Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

We welcome public attendance and the agendas and minutes can be found at <https://comberton-pc.gov.uk/decisions-meetings/agendas-and-minutes>

## Wheelie Bin Collection Dates

Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Blue & Green
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Black
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Blue & Green
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> April	Black
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Blue & Green
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> May	Black



## Advertising Rates

	Size (w x h)	Annual (10 editions)	Single Edition
<b>Whole page</b>	122mm x 183mm	£475	£60
<b>3/5 page</b>	122mm x 109mm	£285	£36
<b>2/5 page</b>	122mm x 72mm	£190	£24
<b>1/5 page</b>	122mm x 35mm	£95	£12
<b>1/5 page</b>	60mm x 72mm	£95	£12
<b>Back page (colour)</b>	122mm x 183mm	One-off only	£90

## Comberton Contact Team

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Distribution Marian Dymott 01223 263292

Please supply copy via email in a plain text format and images in jpg, png or pdf with 300 dpi. Please send any submissions for the May magazine by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Submissions will only be acknowledged if requested and this may take up to a week.

# From the Editor

Thank you to those who responded to my plea for more contributions - new in this issue is the first in a series of articles on Comberton Village College as well as news from Comberton 1<sup>st</sup> Brownies and Comberton Playgroup.

Now that Spring is truly here we can celebrate by attending two village fayres towards the end of this month - as advertised on the front and rear covers. See you there !

James Gilbert 07768 421049 [editor@combertoncontact.org.uk](mailto:editor@combertoncontact.org.uk)



## Comberton Village Website

Regular updates are available at [www.comberton.org](http://www.comberton.org)

## Local Government Contacts

Parish Council Chair

Jennifer Martin  
[jen.martin@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:jen.martin@comberton-pc.gov.uk)

Parish Council Clerk

Jessie Brewer  
[clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk)

Comberton Parish Council  
PO Box 1549  
CAMBRIDGE DO  
CB1 0ZS

District Councillors

Ariel Cahn 01223 232186  
[cllr.cahna@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.cahna@scambs.gov.uk)

Dr Lisa Redrup 07855 324580  
[cllr.redrup@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.redrup@scambs.gov.uk)

County Councillor

Michael Atkins 07968 264637  
[michael.atkins@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:michael.atkins@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# Village Help Scheme

## Volunteer Drivers Schedule

To book transport please see the dates below and call the appropriate number

For the following weeks:

31 March 2025	Angela Donnelly	01223 263283
07 April 2025	Angela Donnelly	01223 263283
14 April 2025	Joan Wells	01223 262746
21 April 2025	Joan Wells	01223 262746
28 April 2025	Gill Redman	01223 262246
05 May 2025	Gill Redman	01223 262246

### Please Note

With the closure of the Butchers payments should now be made at the pub.

More drivers are **URGENTLY** required for this essential service.

For more information please contact

Mrs Gill Redman on 01223 262246

Mrs Barbara Mitton on 01223 262073



## Comberton Luncheon Club

2 May - La Pergola, Harlton

30 May—Green Man, Shepreth

27 June—The Hoops, Bassingbourm

All lunches are at 12:30 pm

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Andrina Baldock, Foot Health Practitioner, SAC Dip, FHPP FHPT  
Register for Foot Health Practitioners Member

# The Parish Church of St Mary, Comberton

In the Benefice of The Lordsbridge Team



**Saturday**  
**26th April**  
**2-4pm**



**Spring**  
**Fayre**  
**at St Mary's**

## Activities



Every Wednesday at 11am - **Men's Shed** at Madingley Hall  
Thurs 24th Apr at 2.30pm - **Oasis Teas** in Comberton Village Hall

## Easter events at St Mary's



Sun 13th Apr at 9.30am - **Palm Sunday Holy Communion**  
Sun 13th Apr - Tue 15th Apr at 8.00pm - **Compline at St Mary's**  
Wed 16th Apr at 8.00pm - **Compline on Zoom**  
Thurs 17th Apr at 7.30pm - **Maundy Thursday Holy Communion & foot washing**  
Fri 18th Apr at 9.30am - **Good Friday Meditations**  
Sun 20th Apr at 9.30pm - **Easter Day Family Communion**

## Regular Services in St Mary's Church Building



Sun 6th Apr at 9.30am - **Morning Worship**  
Sun 13th Apr at 8.00am - **BCP Holy Communion**  
Sun 27th Apr at 9.30am - **Morning Worship followed by Annual Parish Meeting**

## On-line Services



Zoom Church: Sunday at 11am - ID: **8231 1473 640**  
Tuesday Morning Prayer on Zoom at 9.30am - ID: **495 061 1016**  
Wednesday Compline on Zoom at 8pm - ID: **899 215 191**

## Quiet Prayer



Our church building is usually open from  
7.30am-3pm for visits & individual prayer.

## On-line Giving

We can now accept on-line donations;  
more information on our website.




Find us on Facebook:  
St Mary's Church, Comberton

**For information about Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals,**  
please contact The Rev'd Chris Westgarth

**Associate Priest: The Rev'd Chris Westgarth**

chris.westgarth1@btinternet.com  
Tel: 07710 661003

http://

 [www.stmaryscomberton.org](http://www.stmaryscomberton.org)

**Team Curate: The Rev'd Barnabas Leeke**

barnabasleeke@lordsbridge.org  
Tel: 07787 800888

## Churchwardens:

**Michael Edwards**, 01223 262748, michael@kentings.co.uk  
**Teresa Taylor**, 07717 001429, ptc.taylor@btinternet.com



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# Comberton Parish Council Bulletin - April 2025

The programme for the **Comberton Summer Festival (Saturday 5th July, 2pm-11pm)** is progressing well. We are building a programme that holds something for everyone and hope to see all parts of our village community joining in.



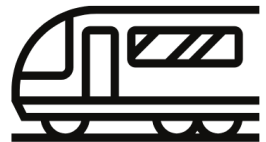
There is a great range of local performers scheduled for our main stage, including Village voices, PQA drama, several bands, an evening ceilidh and DJ! The food vans and pub-tent are confirmed. We have secured approximately half the target number of stalls for the day. In the centre field, we have a fun schedule of “wacky races” such as “kids egg & spoon”, “Dad’s sack race”, and “Women’s 50m sprint” to which everyone will be invited to sign up on the day.

We are currently seeking:

- an additional 10 stalls
- volunteers to serve as event marshals on the day
- event sponsorship (with marketing opportunities online, in print and on-site).

If you are interested in any of the above, please contact us [clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk)

The Parish Council invites all residents to a public meeting on **Wednesday, June 4th at 7 pm in the Village Hall**. This meeting will provide important information about the



East West Rail (EWR) project. Join us to learn about the proposed route and understand the potential impact on our village from this significant infrastructure development.



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## Parish Council Bulletin (continued)



We plan to host a “pink bin” in April or May to collect small electrical items for recycling. The bin will likely be located on the recreation ground car park and will be available for a month.

We kindly remind all residents that it is a legal obligation to pick up after your dog when walking around the village. Parishioners frequently report the unpleasantness of encountering dog waste on paths and greens, and even worse, finding dog poo bags attached to hedges and trees. Please take your responsibilities seriously: carry dog poo bags with you and dispose of them properly in designated dog poo bins or your own bin.



Please also avoid littering the village with wrappers and bottles. Numerous bins are available to help keep our surroundings clean and pleasant. We appreciate residents who voluntarily pick up litter. Litter pickers can be borrowed from the Parish Council.

The Parish Council attends quarterly police briefings to discuss crime and anti-social behaviour and keep updated on police operations in the area.



*Cllr Claire Michel, Vice-chair*

The Parish Council meets on the 2nd Wed of each month at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall. Agendas and minutes are published on our website. Residents can attend the full meeting and the first 15 min are reserved for their comments.

**Parish Council clerk: [clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk)**

**Website: <https://comberton-pc.gov.uk/>**

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# News from 1st Comberton Brownies

Brownies is a safe, girl-only space in which girls from 7 to 10 years old can build confidence, learn new skills and have lots of fun trying out new adventures with good friends.

In the past year Comberton Brownies have had adventures at PGL in Lincolnshire, Hautbois activity centre in Norfolk and Disneyland Paris in France! We took part in the Cambridge Giraffe Trail in the summer. We have raised money for charity through the annual Ice Cream Parlour and Tombola Stall at the Christmas Fair, taken part in St Mary's cleaning rota and helped replenish the bug hotel in the graveyard. We have been to the panto in Stevenage by train, learnt about first aid, space and Parliament, gone for a walk in the dark with torches, as well as trying our hands at many games and arts and crafts.

We are now trying to future-proof our leadership team, as Alison, Rachel and Diane will be retiring at the end of the summer term. Between us we have nearly 90 years of volunteering with Brownies and it is time to hand over to the next generation.

Please can you spread the word that we are actively recruiting leaders and helpers to start training as soon as possible. No experience is necessary, just enthusiasm and a wish to empower the young women of the future. You'll have the chance to develop your leadership skills and help girls to have lots of fun trying out new adventures.

Whatever your skills and interests, whether it's volunteering with girls directly in the weekly meetings or supporting behind the scenes with admin and finance, there's a role to suit everyone.

If you are interested or would like to know more contact Alison on [combertonbrownies@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:combertonbrownies@hotmail.co.uk) for an informal chat.

The Girlguiding website has information for volunteers: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/volunteer-roles-in-guiding/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/volunteer-roles-in-guiding/)

and for girls interested in becoming a Brownie: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child/)

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# **COMBERTON OPERA**

**At the Village Hall**



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**London Philharmonic Orchestra & Mark Elder  
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**Recorded at Glyndebourne in 2010**

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# Comberton Village College 1979-99 and its impact on the village

## A series of reminiscences by Terry Wall

I had taught maths in Ankara, Turkey then at a large new comprehensive school in Lincoln and was looking for a change of direction when I saw an advertisement for "A senior community tutor" at Comberton Village College near Cambridge. I knew something of the widely respected "Village College" system pioneered by Henry Morris. I applied for the post and was appointed. What I was not told was that previously there had been an adult tutor and a youth tutor and that "cuts" meant that these two were now combined in my role. The Warden (which was the title given to what are now school Principals) was Keith Foreman, one of the most charismatic characters I have ever met. Keith was tall, handsome, had a great sense of humour and most importantly saw Comberton Village College as the centre of the community.

My first role was to supervise the adult education programme. I needed to do little as the secretaries Barbara Wallace and Sue Daniels made sure that everything ran smoothly. Keith wanted me to put a youth club in all of the fourteen villages in the catchment area, run the youth centre, which was on site, five or six days a week. Write, direct and perform in a staff panto called "Christmas at Comberton" (this is worth an article of its own). There was also an adult disco on Saturday nights and a youth disco on Friday nights which I was expected to run.

The new swimming pool had opened the previous year with money raised from the community with "Mac" McEvoy who was Head of P.E. and later Principal of Meldreth Manor special school as lead fundraiser. Mac had just left as I arrived but we became great friends. The pool was a normal "pay to enter" facility and was making a considerable loss. Keith wanted me to solve the problem (more later as to how that happened!) Mac also organised a 24 hour trampoline Marathon. I would need to borrow 24 trampolines from somewhere.

The new head of P.E. Ian Rigg wanted me to open the sports facilities, sports hall, youth centre, gym etc. on Sunday morning to the community for a very tiny "contribution". "Sunday Sports" was formed with many families taking part in what developed into community sailing, skiing, hill walking and many other "off site" activities.

The new squash club used the one court which was given to the youth centre by a previous Chair of Governors. They wanted to build two more

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courts and thought I should be very involved. Squash was very popular at the time and Bob Mason and Derek Fuller were, among many who were keen to see these courts built.

The college had a brilliant dance team which entered, and usually won, many competitions. It was run by choreographers Theresa Kerr and husband Partrick who went on to found "Bodywork" which now runs degree level dance courses in Cambridge.

So began my seven day a week twelve hour days of fun at Comberton Village College with its amazing staff who I soon got to know. More of them and the pupils I got to know very well in the next article.

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**Third Monday of the month**



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# Comberton Allotments & Gardens Association

## Spring Plant Sale: Sunday 11th May - 10.30 am - Village Hall

Our Plant Sale this year will again be on a **Sunday** and in the **Village Hall**.

We should have lots of fine flower and vegetable plants to sell at very reasonable prices and, if you carefully cultivate them throughout the summer, they may win you prizes at the Autumn Show!

This is a '**bring and buy**' event so if you have surplus vegetable or flower plants or shrubs please bring along and add to our stalls; or if you are sowing seeds or taking cuttings please think of us and sow or root a few extra.

Profits help to support the cost of staging the Village Autumn Show.

FREE ENTRY so come early and bag the best bargains.

## Best kept Allotment Competition

A reminder to all Long Road plot holders that this year's trophy will be awarded to the Best Kept allotment on the Long Road site; judging is expected to be in July.

Robin Worship; CAGA Secretary ([robin.worship7@gmail.com](mailto:robin.worship7@gmail.com))

# Comberton Antiquarian Society

## Annual General Meeting

Our Meeting this month is on Tuesday 22nd April.

There will be no speaker but a social event after the conclusion of the AGM.

## March Challenge Winner

The winner is **Lynn Crompton** of Harbour Avenue.

The March Challenge solution will be published next month.



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**Wednesday 16th April 2025**

**Doors open 7.30 Film begins 7.45**

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**AIP Approved 12/02/2024**



If it's been a few years, you may be surprised by how libraries have changed. Of course, we still have hundreds of books, fact and fiction, for all ages to choose from. We also have free Wifi and computers you can use to research family history, look up homework topics or even watch a National Theatre play. And we have lots of events in libraries - children's rhymetimes, workshops/talks for adults, knit, sew and natter and more. Whether you want to read, use a computer or meet new people, you might find just what you are looking for at the library. They are relaxed, friendly places and staff will be happy to help you.

### Coming Up!

The **Easter Hunt** takes place over Easter Break on **April 7<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**. All are welcome. Children will also have the opportunity to design and decorate their crowns on **Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**, during Shakespeare Week.

Local author, Bhanu Kapil will offer a poetry workshop on **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April** from 11.30am – 12.45pm. Come with something to write on. The event is free open to all, regardless of age or background, though donations to the library would be very welcome. Book in Comberton Library.

### Weekly activities

**Knit, Sew and Natter** group meet in Comberton Library at 10.30am – 11.30am. April dates: 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. May dates: 5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. June dates: 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Then every other Monday onwards. **Newcomers** are most welcome to complete your own projects, start a new or participate in group activities. There is always tea, coffee and biscuits available.

Come sing along and have fun, **Rhymetime**, 10.30am – 11.00am (except during the school holidays) for children between 0 to 4 years of age. April dates: 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. May dates: 12<sup>th</sup>. June dates: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Then every other week. Also, come and join the **First Steps Library Club**, aged 0 – 4 years. Free event.

**It's Lego Time** with Duplo. Every Saturday from 10.30am. Come and have fun using your imagination. All children must be accompanied by an adult. **This is a free event.**

### Opening hours (excluding bank holidays etc.)

Monday	10am – 5pm	<b>(from 31<sup>st</sup> March)</b>
Tuesday	10am – 1pm	<b>(from 31<sup>st</sup> March)</b>
Wednesday	10am – 1pm and 2.30pm – 5.30pm	
Friday	2.30pm – 5.30pm	
Saturday	10am – 1pm	



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# April Challenge

## Sponsored by the Comberton Co-Op

The letter block below consists of a single, well known passage from a famous book. The extract snakes around the block (no diagonal movements) with some question and exclamation marks included, which should help, but it is up to you to find the starting point (if that is the route you wish to take). Also included is the title of the book and the authors initials. These initials need to be highlighted to complete the puzzle. Clue: Set off from a W.

H	W	N	I	R	G	R	N	A	H
A	?	N	E	R	H	E	O	I	T
T	R	E	V	D	A	H	T	W	D
D	E	H	T	A	E	C	H	I	L
O	Y	O	O	N	H	I	A	S	!
E	M	U	M	Y	T	D	D	N	E
A	N	!	W	O	W	H	A	O	N
E	R	E	H	H	A	R	E	N	?
W	E	O	R	W	S	E	V	E	R
E	R	B	N	?	Y	O	U	H	T
Y	O	U	E	N	O	P	R	M	O
W	R	E	V	D	T	S	Y	U	N
A	S	E	R	E	H	B	I	L	C
O	B	P	S	T	B	A	N	E	T
R	N	!	I	S	S	C	S	M	O

Entries to the box in store no later than the 14th April please . First correct entry out of the hat scoops a prize generously offered by the CO-OP.

After many years it has occurred to me that to have either a telephone number or email would be helpful in contacting the winner.

Name / Postal Address.....

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# Comberton Playgroup Spring Update

This half term at playgroup our Blue and Green room groups have been using 'The Gruffalo' by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler and 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen & Helen Oxenbury as a basis for their activities. The children painted their own Gruffalo and had fun with messy play (Gruffalo crumble, Scrambled Snake, Roasted Fox & Owl Ice cream!). Fine motor skills were practiced by sewing on a bear shape, and the children made no-bake Gruffalo paw cookies and Bear paw cookies. Delicious!

Our Pre-school groups have been reading the Julia Donaldson book 'A Squash and a Squeeze'. We have made puppets of the characters from the book, and worked as a group to create a wall picture to illustrate the story.

Our younger children continue to enjoy 'Outdoor Explorers' once a week- a morning session outside in our playground and garden areas, where we use only natural, repurposed or upcycled resources during our activities.

## **COMING SOON... FOREST SCHOOL!**

We are proud to announce that our Deputy Playgroup Leader Julia Chandler is now a Forest school Leader, and we will be starting Forest school sessions once a week after Easter for the Pre-schoolers – we can't wait!

## **WE NEED TRUSTEES**

Can you help? Comberton Playgroup is a charitable organisation and relies on volunteer trustees to be able to keep the playgroup doors open for all. No previous experience is necessary. If you would like to get involved please get in touch: [chair.combertonplaygroup@gmail.com](mailto:chair.combertonplaygroup@gmail.com)

## **AND FINALLY...**

We are thrilled to confirm that Comberton Playgroup has been judged 'Good' overall by Ofsted in our recent inspection. This is no small feat by any means!

Huge thanks to all the playgroup team who work so very hard, and parents and carers for their continued support.

Even BIGGER thanks to Rachel Lowing for her incredible hard work, fantastic team leadership and unwavering dedication. We are incredibly proud of this achievement.

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# Big Beef in Bazas!

Recently, Jane and I drove down to South-West France just beyond Bordeaux to Bazas. Every year, since 1283, this city has held 'La Fête des Boeufs Gras de Bazas', just before Mardi Gras and the careful eating time of Lent, to celebrate their special beef breed. This year we were there in the Place de Cathedral. There were 18 bulls competing for the title of 'Le Roi Boeuf'.

The whole city had been closed by road barriers since first light. We walked down after breakfast. The bulls began to arrive from 10.00. Although castrated as a calf, each competing, fattened bull is very strong with a show-weight of about 900Kg. The bulls had completed a six-month training programme which included fattening-up, exposure to recorded 'crowd noise' and periodic close-tethered walking behind a slow-moving vehicle.

The bulls were transported in twos and threes from their farms to be held a stoutly railed area of carpark up-town. After two hours watching the bulls and trailers arriving we decided to go down-town to find some cooked beef for lunch. The program showed that the competition for the Le Roi Boeuf would happen in mid-afternoon; we had a rendez-vous with a shop en-route for a tasting of a red wine called Roi de Boeuf!

Bazas has a great gothic cathedral dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. The magnificent, heavily-carved West door entry was nearly destroyed in the uprising of French Protestants, the Huguenots, in 1566. They had already blown up parts of the cathedral with gunpowder and the West Door was set to blow. Thankfully, when the Bishop agreed to pay a ransom of 10,000 Gold Ecus the Huguenots removed the charges. On-line, today's value of one gold Ecu of the time – King Charles IX of France - is £6,782. The ransom, in today's money, could be equivalent to about £6million! All this history stood as a backdrop to La Fête des Boeufs Gras.

Along the route and in the Cathedral Place there were large crowds. We found lunch in the Artisan market from a van with a wood fired oven. Their special beef 'pasties' were individually hand made on the spot and long queues had formed. Our moment arrived and we tucked in, washing the pasties down with local wine and beer!

Soon the procession into the Cathedral Place began with drum and fife bands, local herders on stilts and women in costumes red, white and blue. In one dance the women interwove through the stilt-legs of the herders – country fashion - like Morris dancers! The herders on stilts then took up their serious role, leading in the bulls.

It was nothing like the run of bulls in Pamplona! Each of the competition

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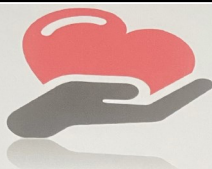
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bulls was closely roped to a trailer tail-board, walking at slow tractor pace. The trailers were decked with green willow wands and some carried the farm families. The final transfer happened as each bull was loosed from the trailer with three strong men on the ropes, quickly shortening the tethering ropes again onto stout rails in the Cathedral Place.

The final ceremonial was the arrival of the red-Robed members of the Confrérie Bazadaise du Boeuf and the blessing with holy water by the bishop! We greatly enjoyed this 'fête traditionnelle' but it was a long day for everyone. The winning bull did get a fancy head-dress but our final thought as we walked back to our hotel was of sadness for the bulls – but that's Brits for you!

We had come to enjoy a spectacle and special food and we certainly did that. We enjoyed Tomme de Bazadaise cheese but most of all - the beef! During our stay, at different times, we ate beef terrine with mustard sauce 'a la ancien', pink succulent Beef Wellington and delicate beef Carpaccio. We had a little French caviar from a sturgeon farm in the Bassin d'Archachon, southwest of Bordeaux. Our hoped-for annual Diner-Dansant in the Salle Polyvalent had been cancelled. What a shame!

For our final meal-out in Bazas we chose 'El gato en la cocina' (the cat in the kitchen) for Sunday lunch in the Place de Cathedral. In full spring sunshine we ate a delicious spiced Columbian recipe of – you guessed it - Bazas beef. Yum!

On the day after the Fete, the regional paper was full of details. Public attendance may have exceeded 5000. One tourist had commented, 'Ce n'est pas la fête de végétariens ici!'

During our time in Bazas we kept finding scallop shells set into the pavements. These mark a pathway for pilgrims or Pelegrins walking on the 'Chemin', or 'Camino' de Santiago de Campostella in north west Spain. This is one of the great pilgrim destinations in Europe. We found

some useful information inside the West Door. In a following Contact article I will talk more of the Camino and of my fascination for roof gutters and 'spitters'!

David Hughes



# Comberton Village Hall Lettings Charges

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Saturday eve.	£70	£85	£20 *	£30 *	£145 *	£165
	Meeting Room		Meeting Room		Meeting Room	
All sessions	£17.50	£22.50	£17.50	£22.50	£30	£32.50
	Community Room		Community Room		Community Room	
All sessions	£15	£20	£15	£20	£25	£27.50

Unless otherwise stated, charges are per session. Sessions are 9am to 1pm, 2pm to 5:30pm and 6pm to 10:30pm (midnight on Fri/Sat/Sun).

A refundable deposit of £50 is required at the time of booking.

Prices for commercial lettings and weddings are available on request.

\*Additional information for groups:

- Affiliated Community groups holding evening group social or fundraising events will be charged the residents evening rates. Non-affiliated groups holding similar events will be charged the non-residents evening rates. **Local/Non-franchised Community Commercial lettings can be reduced from £145 to £70 at the discretion of the Trustees, if the event is for a suitable charity. Groups should write to the Lettings Secretary with their request, including information on the charity, and this will be considered by the Trustees.**
- Groups working with children and/or vulnerable adults will need to have child protection and vulnerable adult policies & procedures in place
- Annual affiliation fee of £10 is due on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

More information, including hall availability, can be found at [www.combertonvillagehall.org](http://www.combertonvillagehall.org)

To make a booking contact the Village Hall Administrator, Janice Sutton at [combertonvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:combertonvillagehall@gmail.com) or on 07435 324408 (9am to 9pm). Please note that this is a part-time role carried out around my job. If I am unable to answer your call please leave a message and i will phone you back, or send me an email.

**E D G E**

**COMMUNITY YOUTH CLUB**

**THURSDAYS. 4 PM TO 6 PM.  
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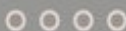
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# SPRING INTO SPRING

at

## St Mary's Church Fayre

**Saturday 26th April**

**2pm - 4pm at**

**St Mary's Church  
Comberton**

### REFRESHMENTS



### STALLS

cakes, books, craft  
raffle, tombola  
Leprosy Mission cards

### PLANTS



### FUN & FRIENDSHIP

And thank you for supporting St Mary's Church