CONTACT

APRIL deadline
5pm 15th MARCH
For **all** content-
Editorial &
Adverts

The community magazine for Chickerell and Fleet No 575

MARCH 2026 – 50th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

SEE INSIDE FOR LOCAL NEWS EVENTS.. and Looking ahead to Easter

SPRING CLEAN! Litter pick 14th March

SUMMER TIME! Clocks go forward one hour March 29th

Picture shows: March flowers at the Peto Memorial Gardens, next to Chickerell Community Library in 2024. The garden was officially opened in June 2005.
FACTS ABOUT CHICKERELL DOWNS AND THE FLEET LAGOON INSIDE THIS MONTH!

From the editor:

I am standing in for John this month as he is away on deadline day; he will be back by the time you are reading this.

Apologies for the picture from March 2024 on the front page this month, but the weather has not been suitable for taking pictures! I am sure we are all hoping for some warmth and sunshine soon. Here in Chickerell work is progressing, despite the weather, on the Wessex Water build in the football field and the town council's Willowbed Hall extension. The giant turquoise crane in the football field has become quite a feature of the skyline, and it will be strange when it finally leaves. Another change at the top of the football field has been the final disappearance of what was the old play area. Everything to do with it has now been removed and fresh soil covers what was the only public play place until the Willowbed play area opened in 2011.

We remember those who have lost loved ones, especially in recent weeks, including the Scource family, who lost Diana, wife of the late Alfie. With Mother's Day coming up this month it is a particularly difficult time for many. Our thoughts are with you all.

Finally, volunteers work hard every year on the annual Chickerell litter pick, due this month. Many sacks are collected each year, whatever the weather; a big thank you to all those who take part.

Caroline

DIARY DATES - MARCH

For more see local group entries

2nd: Coffee morning, Charlestown Victory Hall, 10am-11.30am

3rd: Colour & Chat (adults) library 2-4.

4th: Craft & Chat, Methodist Church Chapel, 2pm.

4th : Chickerell Community Library AGM, 6pm in library.

5th: Chickerell Luncheon Club.

6th: Coffee morning, library, 10am to 11.30am.

6th: Walkers Club meets, 10am, Dorchester.

6th: Bingo, Charlestown Victory Hall, doors open 6.30pm eyes down 7pm.

9th: Peto Book Club, library, 2pm.

10th: Walkers Club meets, 2pm, Sandsfoot.

14th: Litter Pick, meet 10am, Willowbed.

17th: Colour & Chat (adults) library 2-4.

18th: Craft & Chat, Methodist Church Chapel, 2pm.

20th: St Mary's Coffee morning in the church, 10am-12noon.

20th: Bingo, Charlestown Victory Hall, open 6.30pm, eyes down 7pm.

21st: Walkers Club meets, 9am, Lugger Inn. One-hour social walk.

21st: Life & Soul village café, 10am to midday, Lugger Inn.

23rd: Walkers Club meets, 10am, Overcombe.

25th: Craft Group library, 10.15-12.15.

26th: Rhymetime, (babies & toddlers) library, 10-10.30am.

28th: Coffee morning, Methodist Chapel & hall, 10-11.30am.

WHO TO CONTACT: **Editor: John Dean**, 4 Rashley Road (01305) 785895. **Treasurer/Advertising Manager: David Tattersall: (**01305) 761643. email: **davidtattersall2003@yahoo.co.uk** Please contact David if you wish to place an advert or renew an advert. **Compiler: Caroline Tomlinson:** Email: caroline@elephantsears.org

Please send all letters to the editor, articles and editorial to the compiler. When sending an email, you need to put 'Contact Magazine' & the appropriate month in the subject heading, or it will be regarded as 'spam'. You need to add a phone number for queries. Letters and editorial contributions, which **may be edited**, are welcome but anonymous letters will not be published. Note: the views and opinions expressed by the contributors in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor, compiler or publisher. Every effort is made to ensure all information provided is correct at time of going to press. **Closing date for articles:** 5pm on the 15th of the preceding month. **Closing date for adverts:** (including amendments to current adverts) 5pm on the 15th of the preceding month. PLEASE SEND ADVERTS AS EITHER A JPEG OR BITMAP AND SIZED ACCORDINGLY. Thank you. All artwork is accepted on the strict condition that permission has been given for its use in this publication. Adverts are accepted in good faith in the strict understanding that goods and services described are both fair & accurate. Adverts will not be placed in Contact without prior payment. Copies of Contact (if not delivered to your door) available at: Chickerell Library; Chickerell Pharmacy and hairdresser next door; Wessex Pharmacy; Sgt Bun Bakery, Lanehouse Rocks Road; Codfathers. Online in colour on the Chickerell website.

CHICKERELL WEBSITE By James Bennett: Find us at www.chickerell.com and view Contact Magazine including past issues.

HEALTH INFORMATION

WYKE REGIS AND LANEHOUSE MEDICAL PRACTICE: (with Chickerell Surgery) Registered patients are requested to use the internet site: www.wykeregisandlanehousemedicalpractice.co.uk for any medical query or appointment request. If unable to access this: Tel: 01305 782226. **Emergency Care Service: Dial 111. If critically ill call 999.** For critical conditions: DORSET COUNTY HOSPITAL Accident and Emergency Department, Dorchester. Urgent, less critical: WEYMOUTH URGENT CARE CENTRE, Weymouth Community Hospital. Open 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.

CHEMISTS: Chickerell Pharmacy 779054: Open 8.30-5.30pm Monday to Friday (closed lunch 1-2pm). Wessex Pharmacy (Lanehouse) 783287: Open 9-5.30pm Mon to Fri (closed lunch 1-2.15pm) Sat: 9-1pm.

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Contact is printed by Print Shop Express, Chickerell.

NEWS……NEWS…..NEWS…..NEWS

ANNUAL LITTER PICK: Chickerell Town Council is inviting everyone to mark the **Great British Spring Clean** by joining in the annual community litter pick at 10am on **Saturday 14th March,** meeting at the front of the Willowbed Hall. Equipment will be provided and the council adds all that is required is a community spirit, suitable clothing and sturdy footwear.

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PAYING FOR POLICE in Dorset: The amount of council tax residents will be paying for the county's police will be an extra £15 a year (from April) on the council tax for the average Band D property in Dorset. The increase, the maximum allowed, was approved by Dorset's Police and Crime Panel. The decision follows a survey by the Office of the county's Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) that found 74 per cent of those who responded agreed there should be more funding for the force. Dorset's PCC David Sidwick said there was little choice but to ask for the rise, following confirmation of the Government grant settlement, which he says does not take into account the extra costs of a rural county and the millions of extra visitors Dorset sees each year. He said the budget was very challenging and even with the increase, savings will still be needed.
See town council news for the town council's precept on the council tax for the coming year.

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ROADWORKS REMINDERS: Coombe Valley Road in Weymouth is due to be **closed from 9.30am to 2.30pm from March 2nd to March 6th** for highway maintenance. Diversions will be via Sutton Poyntz. **Roadworks along the harbourside** and around Weymouth Pavilion are due to continue **until next month (April).** Roadworks between Osmington and Poxwell include traffic lights until the end of March. The traffic lights needed for the repairs at Ferrybridge were due to end at the beginning of March.
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PLEA TO SUPPORT FAMILIES IN CRISIS: Mickey Jones of local family firm DJ Property is urging businesses to support a Granby-based charity that helps families with under fives after he donated new mattresses for donated cots and bed frames. The volunteers at **Family Matters Baby Bank in Cambridge Road currently provides free, good quality donated children's essentials to 30 families in crisis.** Its volunteers have helped more than 2,500 families since opening in 2019. The charity relies on donations but cannot take second hand mattresses; they must be new. Mickey Jones of DJ Property said he was pleased to help: "If you or your business wants to give to a great cause, I can thoroughly recommend this charity. Like Weymouth Foodbank, it is volunteer run with very low overheads, so nearly every pound donated makes a difference. South Dorset needs charities like these, and I would encourage anyone who can to support them."
Families in need of help can be either referred by the professionals that support them or can self-refer in person (form to be filled in) on Tuesdays between 10am and 3pm at 14 Cambridge Road. Donations can be dropped off on Mondays from 10am to noon. For more details see familymattersbabybank.org or email info@familymattersbabybank.org

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NEWS FROM DORSET TRADING STANDARDS: Buying goods from overseas: People buying goods online are being warned by the county's trading standards to check if the product is coming from abroad. A recent survey by Which? found more than 40 per cent did not know their item originated outside the UK until delivery. Then if the item was not what was expected, returning was either impractical or too expensive with postage: "For online orders UK consumers generally have the right to cancel within 14 days of receipt and must receive refunds within 14 days of returning the goods. For faulty goods, consumers should have a full refund within the first 30 days of purchase. Alternatively, there is a right to repair or replacement within six months, or a refund if those options are not feasible."
Shoppers are advised to carefully check seller detail and delivery origin before purchasing and remember the protection offered if paying by credit card for an item worth more than £100. For advice visit citizensdavice.org.uk/consumer or call the Citizen Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.
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WESSEX WATER offers community drop in with face-to-face customer advisers at The Dry Dock in St Thomas Street, Weymouth (Kings Statue end, near road down to Weymouth Library) on a regular basis. The aim is to help with questions about water bills, further support if struggling to pay; advice on saving water and preventing blockages and help with questions about water quality, plumbing and drainage. The next dates are **March 25th** and May 27th from 10am to 12noon and 1pm to 2pm.

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NEWS FROM LOCAL GROUPS, CLUBS & SOCIETIES – more overleaf

NEWS FROM ST MARY'S – Chickerell's historic, listed church in North Square

The 100 Club winners for February were numbers: 26, 65 and 92. Our next **Coffee Morning will be on Friday 20th March** from 10am-12noon in the North Aisle Café with a raffle, jigsaws, books and homemade cakes. Entry is £1 to include drink and biscuits and free refill, if required. The January coffee morning raised £163.50. Thank you to all the visitors, staff & cake makers, and for all the donations given. The collections for the Children's Society at our Christingle service, carol singing at Moonfleet Manor Hotel on Christmas Eve and one private collection box, amounted to £237 which has been sent to the Society. Our 100 Club starts again in March and costs £12 for the year of monthly prize draws. If you have participated before and have not received a form to fill in, please contact Hilary on 01305 772817 or email to johnben33@gmail.com

COMMUNITY LUNCH on **17th March.** Please ring & leave a message to book your place on 07591851075. This is very important to ensure we have the correct amount of food. Thank you.

NEWS FROM THE LIFE & SOUL COMMUNITY TRUST

This month The Lugger will once again host the **Life & Soul café** on **Saturday 21st March** from 10am to midday. The Trust is aware some customers may have difficulty getting to The Lugger for the café and, if this affects you, then please contact the pub directly on 01305 766611 to arrange travel assistance on the day. For those able to make their own way, there is parking available. For the popular Life & Soul Walking Club walk which is before the monthly café, see **details below.**

LIFE & SOUL WALKERS CLUB: Group walks organised each month for those who like walking

The countryside is still soggy, so this month's walks are still on hard surfaces:

Friday 6th March - Interesting walk around Dorchester. Meet 10am at Top of Town Car Park entrance. Via Roman Villa, Hangman's Cottage, Riverside and two parks. Easy walk - four miles.

Tuesday 10th March - Nothe Walk. Meet 2pm at Sandsfoot Castle Gardens via Rodwell Trail, harbour and The Nothe. Easy walk - five miles.

Saturday 21st March - The One Hour Popular Walk. **Meet 9am** at the Lugger - suitable social walk for most people, dogs, prams & mobility scooters. Good views of the Fleet. At the finish pop into the Village Cafe at the Lugger.

Monday 23rd March - Seafront & Bird Sanctuary Walk. Meet 10am at Promenade entrance, Overcombe Corner. Easy walk; three to four miles.

CHICKERELL LUNCHEON CLUB – First Thursday of the month at the Turks Head pub, East Street

What a great meal we had. Roast gammon carvery and all the trimmings followed by apple crumble and custard. How talented the chefs are. Thank you to everyone at the Turks Head.

On **March 5th** we are having one of our favourites, home made beef steak pie, chips and vegetables followed by gateau. We do have some space if you would like to join us; please phone 07387 223339. For any queries/cancellations please phone Ann 07387 223339 or Ruth 775364.

CHARLESTOWN VICTORY HALL, PUTTON LANE venue for classes, clubs and events

DIARY DATES Monday: pm: Ballet; Modern Tap* (WSB) Evening: Dorset Phoenix Folk Dancing (telephone 568674 for more details). **Tuesday:** am: Move it or Lose it, 10am-11am. Pm: Ballet; Modern Tap* (WSB). **Wednesday:** pm – WHIST. **Thursday:** pm - Gymnastics* (WSB) **Friday:** Evening - BINGO (fortnightly). **Saturday**: am Cygnets Ballet* (WSB). *additional dance sessions available with WSB (Weymouth School of Ballet) contact: Lisa 07703463974.

NEWS: Bingo: Dates for March: 6th & 20th. Whist continues every Wednesday afternoon at 2pm.

Kindling is available at £5 for two sacks and logs £4.50 a sack. Contact Robbie on 01305 785255. Our next **monthly coffee mornings are on Monday 2nd March** and Monday 13th April, 10am to 11.30am. We look forward to seeing you. We are a drop off point for Chickerell Food Bank when the hall is open.

For all enquiries, please contact Joe on 01305 789125.

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CHICKERELL MOONFLEET WI: Meets 7pm on second Monday of each month at Willowbed Hall

At the February meeting the group was transported back to the court of Henry VIII by Anne and Gareth Jones, resplendent in Tudor costumes, who played authentic instruments from that time. Tales of Henry's life and loves and songs were sung; some composed by Gareth. A large collection of Tudor instruments and their origins were explained, including how they developed into the instruments we know today. A very different and thoroughly enjoyable evening. For more information about future meetings/events, please contact Jacqui on 07870 411721.

NEWS FROM CHICKERELL METHODISTS: CHURCH & HALL corner of North Square and West St

The Craft and Chat group will meet at 2pm in the Chapel on **Wednesdays 4th & 18th March.** Bring your own craft and enjoy a chat with friends or perhaps learn something new. We welcome new members to our craft groups or just come along for a chat.
Our next Coffee Morning will be on **Saturday 28th March** from 10-11.30am in the chapel and hall. Coffee/tea and cake and biscuits will be served and there will be the usual raffle. All welcome.

MARSHALLSAY COURT: Events in the communal lounge in the flats in Marshallsay Road
Coffee mornings every Wednesday 10-11am with raffle.

CHICKERELL FOODBANK **Email: placemarys4@gmail.com Tel: 07591851075**

Thank you to all who support us whether that is by donating, being a collection point or volunteering. Without your support, we would be unable to help those needing it in our community. If you are struggling for any reason, or know of anyone who is, please give us a call on 07591851075 and leave a message if no answer.
We are in need this time of the following:
Toilet Rolls. Tinned meats – e.g., corned beef, ham, Spam, chicken in white sauce, minced beef. Tins of peas, carrots, sweetcorn. Pasta bake, pasta sauce. Custard. Teabags, coffee, semi-skimmed long-life milk.
Drop off points: 56 Lilly Lane (shed if out); Chickerell Library (when open); Chickerell Primary Academy (term time only); Wisebuys, Lynch Lane; Victory Hall, Charlestown; 57 Oldridge Rd; 11 Randall Close (garage if out).
Chickerell Town Council offices at the Willowbed Hall: The council can take donations Monday to Thursday, between 9.30 and 12noon.

MORE LOCAL GROUPS & EVENTS

WYKE REGIS GARDENING CLUB: As you will see we have rebranded! Do come along and see what we have to offer. As well as plants we have a well-stocked shop with a large range of gardening essentials, including seed potatoes and onion sets, and a friendly café to sit and have a drink and a chat with fellow gardeners. Thank you to everyone who came to our Seed Swap in February. It was lovely to see so many people. The Clubhouse in Rylands Lane will be open on Wednesdays from 2pm to 4pm and on Saturdays from 9.30am to 12.30pm. Membership is £10 per year. For more information email enquiries@wrhs.org.uk or call 01305 602137.

SOUTHILL GARDENING CLUB: Spring Show on Saturday 14th March 2-4pm at Southill Community Centre. Members and non-members are welcome to come and see the entries in various classes including horticulture, floral art, handicrafts, preserves & cookery. Drinks & cakes will be available. Further information on the show or the club in general can be obtained from Nigel Smith on 01305 788939.

CHITTER CHATTER CLUB Meets Mondays at the Royal Hotel, Weymouth Esplanade, 2.30pm. To combat loneliness. All welcome to sit and talk.

FRIENDS OF WEYMOUTH LIBRARY (FOWL): Felicity Herring's talk on the first female doctor in Britain, who had to disguise herself as Dr James Barry, **Saturday March 7th**, 10.30am in the library. Tickets from the library, £2 for members and £3 non-members. More information: 01305 750557 or 01305 832613.

ANDYSMANCLUB Helping to get men talk, meets Mondays 7pm (except Bank Holidays) in the Dry Dock, St Thomas Street, Weymouth; at the Beehive, Portland and the Cadet Reserve Barracks, Dorchester info@andysmanclub.co.uk (National Charity).

DORSET PHOENIX FOLK DANCE meets Mondays from 7.30pm-9pm at Charlestown Victory Hall, Putton Lane. Ideal for gentle exercise. £3 per session. New members welcome.

CHICKERELL COMMUNITY LIBRARY – East Street, Chickerell. Telephone: 01305 760095

Opening Hours: **Tuesday 10am-12.30pm; Weds 10am-12.30pm and 4-6pm; Thursday 2-4pm; Friday 2-4pm; Saturday 10am-12.30pm.**

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of Chickerell Community Library will be held in the library at 6pm on **Wednesday 4th March 2026**. All are welcome to attend. Please come and support your local library.
Coffee Morning Friday 6th March 10–11.30am**.** A chance to chat with friends, old and new, over coffee and perhaps win a prize in the raffle. **Peto Book Club – Monday 9th March at 2pm.** A chance to read & discuss various genres of books.
The **Colour and Chat Group meets on Tuesdays 3rd & 17th March 2–4pm**. Pictures and pens/pencils provided. Come along and enjoy a relaxing afternoon with friends. **Craft Group** (formerly Knit and Natter): **Wednesdays 11th & 25th March** 10.15-12.15. Bring your own craft, knitting, crochet, cross-stitch, etc., and enjoy a cuppa with like-minded friends.
Rhymetime with Holly on **Thursday 26th March** 10am-10.30am for babies and toddlers and their parents and carers. More information on our Facebook page.
Watch out for the next Lego meeting – See Facebook page for more information.
Photocopying facilities & computers available and books & greeting cards for sale for a small monetary donation plus a range of local history books to borrow for anyone new to the area. Don't forget the library is a drop-off point for Chickerell Foodbank (during opening hours).

CHICKERELL PRE-SCHOOLS

DUCKLINGS PRE-SCHOOL: Methodist Church Hall, North Square, Chickerell DT3 4DX
Tel: 01305 766920 Email: ducklings.pre@btinternet.com
Website: ducklingspre-schoolchickerell.co.uk **or visit our Facebook page**

Sessions: Three and four-year-old sessions available from September 2026, with limited availability for children from two years six months. Please contact us now to request an application form. Tax-free 15-hour and 30-hour funded childcare accepted.
Information: The children have had a busy and fun half term, enjoying celebrations and special events. We continue to love our monthly dance and yoga with Carly; Sing, Sign and Play with Sandra, and mini athletics sessions. With spring hopefully just around the corner, we are developing our garden area and would greatly appreciate donations of bark, soil or herb and vegetable plants. For news, photos and updates, please visit our website or Facebook page, which are regularly updated.

CHICKADEES: Rashley Road (by Chickerell Primary Academy) Tel: 01305 773103.
Contact Jenny Lamming, pre-school manager. Email: pre-school@chickerell.dorset.sch.uk

CHICKERELL PRIMARY ACADEMY - Rashley Road.

School Office: 01305 579148 – please contact office if you are new to the area and would like to join our school

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL: We hope you are all well and enjoying the lighter mornings and longer evenings of spring. It has been lovely to see brighter days and feel a real sense of the new season around us.
The children returned to school after the half-term break feeling rested, relaxed and ready to learn. They have settled back into their routines quickly and are fully engaged in their learning, showing great enthusiasm for their new projects. They are always so proud to share their work with visitors to the school and can confidently explain what they have been learning. Our youngest children at Chickadees have been particularly excited to make the most of the spring weather in their outdoor learning area, which has been especially welcome after so much rain.
Before half-term, the whole school thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the **NSPCC's Number Day**. The children came to school dressed as something linked to numbers and looked fantastic! We had great fun participating in a wide range of number-related activities, including scavenger hunts, number challenges and problem-solving games. **Thanks to the generosity of our parents and carers, a total of £225 was raised for the NSPCC**.
The School Council is excited to be leading work towards a School Climate Action Plan, supporting the school in promoting sustainable travel to and from the academy, monitoring waste levels in classrooms, rewilding areas of the school grounds, and maintaining the school pond's ecosystem. We will keep you updated as this exciting new initiative develops.
With best wishes from the children, staff and governors.

CHICKERELL TOWN COUNCIL

Council offices adjoin Willowbed Hall, Putton Lane.
Office open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to noon Tel: 01305 767458.
Website www.chickerell-tc.gov.uk Email: townclerk@chickerell-tc.gov.uk

The Town Council has responsibilities for Chickerell's **open spaces**, eg., Willowbed field, Claypits (off Glennie Way) and the land off Meadow Close. It is also responsible for the **hiring out** of the Willowbed Hall and Sports Pavilion (Lower Way); has responsibilities for the **local cemetery** (St Mary's), **bus shelters**, the **play area** on the Willowbed field and allotments**.** Please contact the council if there are any issues with these areas.

Town Council full council meeting 3rd Tuesday of every month, in the Willowbed Hall at 7pm.
Members of public welcome to speak in democratic half hour 7-7.30pm.

Anti-social behaviour: Please report all incidents to the police either online : The website is dorset.police.uk - see the Contact section (where you can report crime online) Or by calling 101, the non-emergency number available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Remember, if a crime is in progress or life in danger call 999.

CCTV is around the Willowbed field & is constantly monitored

WILLOWBED HALL, Putton Lane & THE SPORTS PAVILION, Lower Way: Available for hire. Queries and bookings: Town council number above.

IMPORTANT AND USEFUL COUNCIL DETAILS

REFUSE/RECYCLING, RUBBISH BIN PROBLEMS, FLY TIPPING: Call Dorset Waste Services on 01305 221040 or report online via dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-litter and follow the link.
The main number for Dorset Council is 221000. The main number for Dorset Council which covers this area is 251010.
HIGHWAY ISSUES: Roads, verges and hedges, public footpaths, streetlights, road signage, winter maintenance and bus timetables – if you have any queries regarding any of these contact Dorset Council.
DOG WARDEN: Contact by email: envhealth@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
STREETLIGHTS: If there is a streetlight out, please phone 0800 0684145.
FLOODING: For sandbags, please call 01305 251010 and ask for emergency planning who will advise where sandbags can be purchased.

Water emergencies: Report to Wessex Water – 0345 600 4 600.
Electric Emergencies: 105. Call this number for emergency help.
CITIZENS ADVICE: Details on website www.westdorsetca.org.uk

PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT: Dorset Council on 01305 251010. See website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk follow links to planning section and search for Chickerell to view applications.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS received by Dorset Council

P/HABR/2026/00846: Buckland Campsite Buckland House Lane to Buckland House Buckland Ripers: Application for a 60 day temporary recreational campsite. 22 May - 31 May 26 10 days 19 & 20 June 26 2 days 26 & 27 June 26 2 days 3 & 4 July 26 2 days 10 & 11 July 26 2 days 17 & 18 July 26 2 days 23 July - 31 Aug 26 40 days.
P/FUL/2026/00656: Jewson, 12 Cumberland Drive: External alterations to the warehouse including installation of new and replacement doors and windows, removal and infilling of openings, and replacement of rainwater goods. Reconfiguration of the yard including installation of external storage areas with covered racking, relocation of the tool hire compound, amended customer access, revised HGV servicing routes, updated parking layout and associated works.
P/FUL/2026/00583: 8 Clarence Road, Chickerell: Erect a 4x3 metre log cabin in the garden to be used to run a small scale appointment only nail business.
P/CLP/2026/00160: Tecan Components, Tecan Way, Granby Industrial Estate: The installation of a nitrogen tower and associated apparatus together with hard surface and fencing.
P/HOU/2025/07502: 15 Clarence Road, Chickerell: Erect side and rear extension.

NEWS FROM CHICKERELL TOWN COUNCIL Councillor surgery dates overleaf

PRECEPT AGREED: Chickerell Town Council has agreed to increase its part of the council tax for the next financial year (from April). It says the increase equates to five pence a week for a Band D property, or £2.09 a year. The council says it works hard to remain one of the lowest precepting town councils in the area. Chickerell Mayor, Coun Reid, said the council had been careful with finances over the years and was looking forward to the completed Willowbed Hall refurbishment & extension, resulting in an improved community facility for the town.

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TOWN COUNCILLOR SURGERIES: Chickerell Town Council invites residents to attend regular Saturday morning surgeries with town councillors at Chickerell Community Library for Chickerell Village Ward residents and at the Marquis of Granby pub on Chickerell Road for Charlestown and Littlesea residents. The next meeting, from **11am to 12 on March 21st is at the Marquis of Granby**. On 18th April the meeting is at Chickerell Community Library from 10am to 11.30am.

Nature Notes and news – including what has been seen in and around Chickerell

WHAT HAS BEEN SEEN

It has been so wet, but I think many have been cheered by the **Robins** still singing heartily by the streetlights and the lovely early morning song of the **Blackbirds** in Chickerell, despite all the downpours. Even the **Great Tit** has been heard in the afternoon with its 'teacher teacher' song on the path alongside the primary academy.

There are plenty of signs of spring in the plant and tree world. On the branches of **hazel**, you can see the dangling yellow catkins (male flowers) and now the little 'buds' (female flowers). The bud is like a small green olive, and it sprouts tiny bright red flowers, like a sea anemone, at this time of year. The word anemone comes from the Greek 'anemos' for wind, and Anemone means 'daughter of the wind', so named, it is thought, as the flowers open when the wind blows or in the case of the sea anemone, the water flows. **Crocuses and daffodils** have also been making an appearance, battling the elements; all heartening signs of spring.

NATURE NEWS - BUTTERFLIES

Butterfly Conservation has been urging landowners not to use flailing cuts on hedgerows after a rare butterfly in Wales, the Brown Hairstreak, saw its numbers boosted when the annual flail cut was stopped. The charity, based in Lulworth, has been working with landowners to achieve this and wants more landowners to help butterflies and other hedgerow wildlife such as dormice and birds, by 'cutting back on cutting back'.

In Chickerell, the large hedgerow that borders the Grey's Field estate with the fields towards Southill has been a good place to spot butterflies in the summer months, along with the areas bordering the stream which separates Lower Putton Lane from the Grey's Field estate.

Hedges are not just good for wildlife; did you know that a 50m hedgerow at the bottom of a one-hectare field can store up to 375 cubic metres of water during rainy periods? Some hedgerows are centuries old; on Dartmoor, there are hedgerows dating back to the Bronze Age. Chickerell has at least one hedge dating back to medieval times.

March is the traditional start of the spring arrivals of migrant birds such as Wheatears and Willow Warblers along with House Martins, Sand Martins and Swallows.

Next month, in April, it is hoped we will start to see Swifts. **Swifts are summer visitors**, famous for their 'scythe' like wings and distinctive 'scream' as they race through the air. The birds normally start to arrive in the UK in April after travelling up to 10,000km from Africa. They do not stay long – most have left by the end of August. The South Dorset RSPB group is so concerned about declining **Swift** numbers it has set up a Weymouth Swift Town project (WSTP) – more details on Facebook - with the aim of encouraging more of the birds to nest in the area to help reduce the national decline in numbers. The project has already given four nest boxes to Tumbledown Farm in Southill and aims to target known nest areas with more nesting boxes. Chickerell did have quite a population of swifts each summer, but they have been fewer in number in recent years. It will be interesting to see what happens this spring.

THE ROYAL VISIT TO DORSET – in 1902!

Did you know that in the spring of 1902 King Edward VII arrived in Dorset on his royal yacht, the Victoria and Albert? London papers announced he would arrive in Portland harbour on the royal yacht after sailing from Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Rumours circulated locally that instead of landing and motoring into Weymouth as was expected, he might go to visit the family estates of the Welds at Lulworth and the Earl of Ilchester at Abbotsbury first. As it turned out, the yacht anchored off Lulworth Cove and could be viewed from Weymouth. In the bright early April sunshine, the King was met ashore by the Welds of Lulworth Castle and journeyed to the castle for the afternoon. By the time the King returned to the royal yacht the weather had changed with rain. A thick fog cloaked Portland. He still sailed on to Portland, however, and was welcomed by a rainbow and a 21-gun salute from the Royal Garrison Artillery on The Nothe.

The King spent the night on his yacht, and no-one was sure whether he would go any further because of the weather. He did, however, land at Castletown pier from his yacht the next day and a carriage took him round the island.

Brewers Devenish put a supply of ale on board the royal yacht and Cosen and Co steamboats were decked in bunting to celebrate; a host of local buildings joined in, flying flags.

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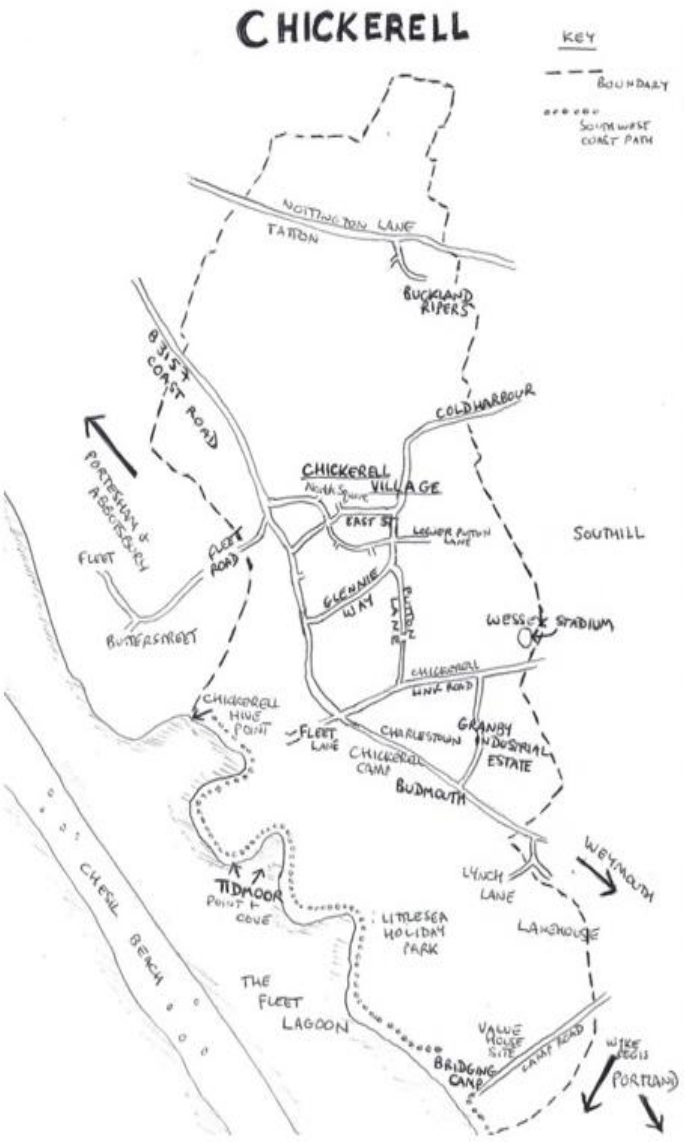
DID YOU KNOW ?

Do you know where Chickerell's boundary lies?
The sketch map below outlines it (not to scale)



FACTS ABOUT THE WOODLAND TRUST'S CHICKERELL DOWNS

The site, which is bordered by Glennie Way, Putton Lane, Trenchard Way, fields and the Water Gardens, was acquired by registered national charity the Woodland Trust in 1990.

It was formerly part pasture, part reclaimed brickworks.

The naturally formed wet scrub woodland was expanded by the trust when it planted a mix of alder, oak and ash trees.

FACTS ABOUT THE FLEET LAGOON

- The Fleet lagoon is the UK's largest lagoon, covering an estimated 600 football pitches.
- It is eight miles long and 900 metres wide at its widest point at Littlesea, down to 65 metres at the Narrows, the 'pinch point' between Littlesea and Wyke.
- It is very shallow over much of its length.
- Its saltiness varies from its eastern end at Ferrybridge to near freshwater at its Abbotsbury end, with brackish water in between. Sea water enters through the narrow channel into Portland Harbour and depending on the weather and tides, through the shingle of Chesil Beach.
- It is recognised as a wetland of international importance.
- Upstream from the Narrows, seagrasses including eelgrass form the largest mixed seagrass meadows in Britain.
- It is the place where thousands of migrant birds overwinter; supports the largest Mute Swan population in Britain and welcomes Common and Little Terns in the summer. Little Terns are one of the UK's rarest seabirds and nest on Chesil Beach.

A LOOK BACK TO CONTACT MAGAZINE 32 YEARS AGO

MARCH 1994

- Chickerell Parish Council said it was extremely concerned over the recent numerous cases of flooding and was pleased to receive a letter from Dorset County Council assuring that 'these matters will be looked into'.
- The parish agreed a request from the Chickerell Primary School governors to incorporate the Chickerell Parish Council crest as part of the new school uniform.
- Friends of Chickerell School asked people to enter the Dorset Quiz, with 84 questions to test knowledge of Dorset places. Quiz forms were available from the school for £1.
- Work was expected to start on the new Chickerell school on 11th April 1994.
- Chickerell and Charlestown Evening Townswomen's Guild had welcomed a local reflexologist for an 'enlightening talk and demonstration' at the February 1994 meeting.
- Charlestown Social Club was to welcome the Jess Upton Soul Band (10-piece band) on March 12th 1994.
- The Fisherman's Arms in Lower Putton Lane was offering Chickerell's newest take-away service – 'telephone your order and we will have it ready and waiting' (closed Thursday evenings and Sundays).

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THINGS TO DO & SEE IN MARCH & AHEAD TO EASTER

ABBOTSBURY SWANNERY'S opening weekend (**14th & 15th March**) is advertising **mums go free** (other family members need to book normal day tickets). Swan feeds are at 12noon & 4pm.

****

WEYMOUTH PAVILION: A whole host of attractions for March & Easter including The Ukrainian National Opera ® with Madama Butterfly (live orchestra) on March 24th ; An Audience with Harry Redknapp on March 15th (Tickets £38) and WOW presenting Legally Blonde, The Musical, from April 1st to 4th.

For children there is the sporty animal animation film Goat at 11am on March 14th; 'Toddler Time' – The Gruffalo and the Gruffalo's Child (film, U certificate) at 11am on March 27th; Dorchester Ballet & Dance Once Upon a Dance, which promises a magical journey through fairy tales at 2pm and 6pm on March 21st and on April 9th The Sooty Show.

Tribute performances include: Tributes to: Cher (27th March) Taylor Swift – Taylor Fever (19th March); Tina Turner (What's Love Got to Do With It tribute – 13th March).

Event Cinema: 4th March, 7pm: Othello: Toby Jones is one of the stars in a new production of the Shakespearean classic with music by P J Harvey. Filmed live at Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London.

10th March, 7pm: Exhibition on Screen – Turner & Constable – documentary to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of the two artists.

Films: Include: Hamlet (15) on March 18th: A reworking of Shakespeare's classic, set in contemporary London.

****

NOTHE FORT nothefort.org.uk has a host of activities from March onwards: March 7th is **Fort Science Day** from 10am to 4pm. To mark British Science week, an immersive science day is promised with a science exploration station and science fun for all the family.

On March 8th and 22nd the **artillery displays** are back 12-3pm with live firing by The Nothe Fort Garrison The Dorsetshire Regiment (ear defenders available).

On March 14th and 15th and March 21st & 22nd (10am to 4pm) Artist Elaine Harris has curated a **Heartfelt Exhibition** of hidden treasures from across Dorset. This is combined with artworks on the Heartfelt theme by Artwey members.

On March 15th from 10am to 4pm the **Cold War Bunker talks and tours** are back and on March 21st from 10am to 4pm the **World War II Garrison** returns with the World War II Garrison's Living History group showcasing authentic duties WWII soldiers carried out at the fort.

Easter Eggstravaganza at the Fort from March 28th to April 12th with an Easter Egg Hunt, bunny bingo, Easter dress-up, Easter croquet and Easter fair games promised.

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March 2026

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Sunday 15th March | Mothers Day - Roast dinner served 12pm - 6pm

Saturday 21st March | Round Table Race Night

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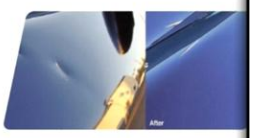

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CHURCHES PAGE FOR MARCH

ST MARY'S CHURCH, CHICKERELL www.stmaryschickerell.co.uk Parish Office: 01305 786043
Sunday Services at 9.30am, with coffee/tea and chat afterwards.

Midweek BCP Communion: Thursday 5th March at 10am with Rev Dan Harland

1st March: Family Service with Jacqui Meadows
8th March: Parish Eucharist with Rev Dan Harland
15th March: **Parish Eucharist for Mothering Sunday** with Rev Richard Simmons
22nd March: Parish Eucharist with Rev Richard Simmons
29th March: **Parish Eucharist for Palm Sunday** with Rev Dan Harland
30th March: 7pm: Compline for Monday of Holy Week

THE BENEFICE OF WEYMOUTH ST PAULS WITH FLEET – Service at Fleet 2nd Sunday of the month

Holy Trinity Churches Fleet: The monthly service will be at 9am on **Sunday 8th March** (based on our usual 30-minute communion service) in the New Church, taken by Fr Gregory/Fr James.

We are in the process of revising the electoral roll for Holy Trinity, Fleet. Anyone wishing to be included should apply to Geoff Taylor now.
General queries: Geoff Taylor, Secretary 01305 782757.
Fund raising/events: 01305 778080 (churchwarden).

CHICKERELL METHODIST CHURCH: DT3 4DX On the corner of North Square & West Street. Home to the Ducklings Pre-school. Services Sundays, 10.30am with coffee served afterwards

1st March: Chris Warren
8th March: Angela Gardner
15th March: United Service at Lanehouse
22nd March: Rev Helen Harrell (Holy Communion)
29th March: Sarah James

See more about Methodist Church groups and regular events in the Methodist Church news section each month

LANEHOUSE ROCKS METHODIST CHURCH Lynch Lane, Weymouth. Services 10.30am Sundays

1st: Pam Woodland
8th: S James
15th: D de Gruchy
22nd: J Yarrien
29th: H Harrell – Holy Communion
All services are followed by light refreshments. All welcome!

CHICKERELL GOSPEL HALL: Corner of Chickerell Road/East Street. Services Sundays 3.30pm

PRAYERHOUSE CHICKERELL, East Street, (by library). Contact David and Caroline White at chickerell@theprayerhouse.co.uk or 01305 759968 www.prayerhousechickerell.

ST EDMUND'S CHURCH Lanehouse Rocks Road. Rector: 01305 784649. Services 11am Sundays
Rector: Rev John MacKenzie

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS: 396D Chickerell Rd. Sunday worship service 10am. Games night 7pm every Wednesday. Contact volunteer missionaries 07800 614589.

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SALVATION ARMY Westham Rd Weymouth. **Worship Sundays 10.30am** Coffee mornings Thursdays 10am.

WEYMOUTH SPIRITUALIST CENTRE Moose Lodge, 137 Chickerell Rd. Details on Facebook

THE LIGHT WEYMOUTH CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST CHURCH Preston Village Hall, Preston Road, Weymouth DT3 6BH. Details on Facebook: The **church normally meets on a Sunday** and for special events; open to all. Facebook page for more details of all services. Thelightspiritualistchurch

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Gardening Notes for MARCH 2026 by Carrie Dalby

I think we had spring on 14th February! Hopefully, by the time you read this, we may have had a few dry days. If the soil is too wet to dig, cover with humus to keep it warm in case of frost.
Seedlings should not be planted out until the soil is at least 10 degrees centigrade - covering with a cloche will protect against sudden frosts. Have fleece ready to protect new buds from frost and snow. Slugs can be reduced using Nematodes once the soil is over 12 degrees centigrade.
There is still time to prune roses back to a couple of buds. Prune spring blooming shrubs after flowering. Trim and retrain climbers now. Deadhead daffodils; leave the leaves to die down, feeding the bulbs for next year. Cut back Cornus and Willows grown for stem colour. Divide snowdrops while still green.

REFRESH CONTAINERS

Refresh containers by removing the top two inches of compost and replacing with new peat-free mixes containing appropriate fertiliser. If lifting small plants, check for vine weevil grubs. Alpines should be top dressed with gravel. Start flower and vegetable seeds in trays and pots to plant out in May.
Being careful not to disturb wildlife; clear debris from hedge bottoms and fork the top crust. Apply a general fertiliser and water in if dry conditions (I am an optimist!). Feed round trees similarly. Save or make an area under shrubs for hedgehogs and other wildlife. This is an ideal time to plant trees and hedges. Encourage birds by feeding them.

****

NEWS EXTRA….NEWS EXTRA……NEWS EXTRA…..NEWS EXTRA…

REPAIR CAFÉ WEYMOUTH: Did you know Weymouth's Repair Café is at Southill Community Centre on Radipole Lane on the **second Saturday of every month from 10am until 12.30pm**? The café is staffed by expert volunteers who will help repair broken household items from toasters to clocks; electronics such as gadgets and games; sewing machines and mechanical items. Volunteers can also help glue items, do sewing repairs and sharpen tools. **The March date is (different this month) Saturday 21st.** All repairs can be completed for a donation, and visitors are invited to watch and learn during the repair. Refreshments are normally available.

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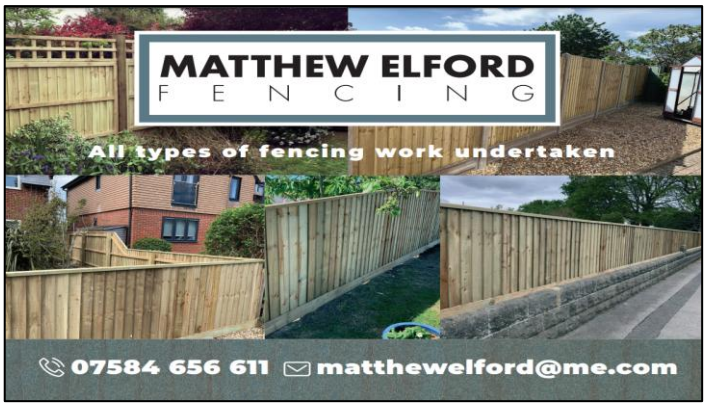

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