



The Window

**October
2026**



They All Dunit!

Some 50 of us gathered at Ipsden Village Memorial Hall in the early evening on Saturday, 12 September for the first Ipsden "Playtime", a pre-supper show of theatrical sketches culminating in a mysterious murder to solve! This launched a "tour" of local care homes to entertain residents (and staff too!).

Originally conceived as four separate sketches, our talented Lottie Rundall stitched them together to form a short theatrical who-dunnit. We were greeted with a glass of fizz and seated around some 10 tables, leaving just about enough room for our brave and skillful actors to perform amongst us as well as on the stage. There was some light-hearted but not over-taxing audience participation as we negotiated our way around the clues presented on a Monopoly board. A gorilla (played by Jack McQuade) also appeared, swaying along to "King of the Swingers"!



Needless to say, there was only one winner of this financial fiasco, the deviously clever and cheating banker, played by Jesse-May. His four poor victims, Siobhan Bennett, Kate Moberly, Lottie Rundall and Liz Yates, all lost money or love, but they found revenge ... the scoundrel was mysteriously found dead beneath his newspaper in a consulting waiting room.



WPC Kate Slack and PC Jack McQuade arrived upon the murder scene and, not really aided by some unhelpful audience analysis, pronounced that the four murderers, the wronged victims, would be arrested and escorted to the local police station.

Between the several sketches, we listened to "Games People Play", "Hares on the Mountain", Pink Floyd's "Money", Tammy Wynette, the theme from Countdown, appropriately finishing with "Jailhouse Rock". All the music, props and front-of-house services were ably provided by Richard Moberly, George Slack and Damian Slack. And thanks too to David Coldwell for the photographs.

The show was never intended as a fund-raiser but as a means of providing light entertainment for villagers and local care homes. The first visit to a care home, at Millcroft in Wallingford, took place the following Thursday and was, so I am reliably informed, a resounding success and popular with the residents. Well done to everyone involved! We hope you'll be back.

Peter Bennett

"Autumn Days"

Autumn days when the grass is
jewelled
And the silk inside a chestnut shell
Jet planes meeting in the air to be
refuelled
All these things I love so well

So I mustn't forget
No I mustn't forget
To say a great big thank you
I mustn't forget

*"Autumn Days Hymn", Estelle
White c 1960*

Autumn came to Homer earlier than in previous years due to the prolonged dry weather. Trees looked "stressed" and their leaves began to change colour too soon. Blackberries ripened early along with apples, sloes and other fruits. The birds have been eating berries which may mean a shortage of food for them in winter months.

Our fields and those, it seems, across the country were brown but welcome rain has seen grass slowly growing, still not enough for the cattle who are fed silage and hay with rolled barley to which minerals are added. The



sheep have hay nets along with dry food of pellets and cereal. Water troughs constantly checked, topping up those not on a main water supply.

Nights are slowly drawing in with the promise of an early rest from the day's jobs and wood fires. Looking heavenward we have the most beautiful skies, be they sunrises, sunsets or fluffy clouds.

I am drawn to an encounter at the beginning of summer when visiting a farmer's market; a lady there was selling honey which she produces from her several hives, it is always a good excuse to chatter about bees which I love. After some moments a young boy and girl came and were looking at the honey along with bees-wax items.

He enquired how much the honey was a jar, the lady replied "£7". He asked when she was there again as he did not have any money on him. "Next month" came the reply.

Turning to him I said that I would like to buy him a jar of honey. "Thank you, are you sure?" he checked. Money was exchanged and the pair went away happily with a "thank you" on the way. "Enjoy" was my reply.

A brief moment and not one which I mention for any recognition, but a reminder that we must say "a great big thank you" as we never know what is round the corner.

Diana Jackson

"What Were They Looking At?"

Here is a little challenge to test your memory. Jeff Hayward captured this moment at Cross Farm during our long hot summer.



Dates for Your Diary

Sat 3 October	Corn Exchange Open Day	See page 11
Sun 4 October	Harvest Festival Services	See pages 8 & 11
Fri 9 October	Churchyard Gardening	See page 15
Mon 12 October	Police Community Visit	See page 12
Wed 14 October	Ipsden Coffee Morning	See page 7
Fri 16 October	People's Emergency Briefing	See page 14
Fri 16 October	Cholsey's Past	See page 16
Sat 17 October	Ipsden Quiz Night	See page 13
Wed 21 October	Ipsden Games - afternoon	See page 19
Wed 21 October	Ipsden Games - evening	See page 19
Sat 24 October	Shamanic Journeying	See page 17
Sun 8 November	Remembrance Sunday Service	See page 8
Sun 8 November	Remembrance Sunday Curry Lunch	See page 12
Wed 11 November	Ipsden coffee Morning	See page 7
Sat 21 November	Ipsden Bake-Off	See pages 19-20
Sat 28 November	Ipsden Bingo Night	See page 16

Ipsden Village Lottery Winners

22 August	Laura Eden	12 Sept	John Allaway
29 August	No winner	19 Sept	No winner
5 Sept	Gloria Fitt	26 Sept	See next issue

View from the Vicarage



The Heron and the River

There are moments in nature that feel like parables waiting to be told. One of them is the sight of a heron standing in shallow water, tall and composed, its reflection resting quietly beneath it. Nothing about the scene is hurried. Nothing is forced. The bird simply stands where it needs to stand, trusting the river to bring what the day requires. This one stood by the River Thames as we cruised past the other day. What a picture of patience, of presence, and of that gentle wisdom we sometimes forget, "don't push the river, it flows by itself".

Hérons are extraordinary teachers of stillness. They do not flap or fuss. They do not churn the water or chase shadows. They simply wait, alert, poised, and utterly unafraid of silence. In a world that often rewards speed, noise, and constant motion, the heron offers a different kind of strength - the strength of being unhurried. It knows that life's gifts come not through frantic striving but through attentive presence.

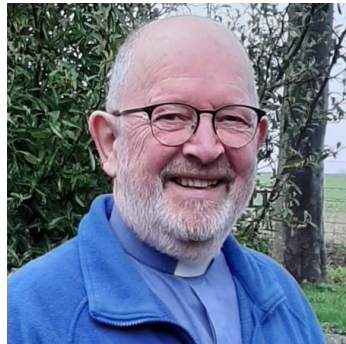
Standing by a river, watching a heron, you begin to realise how much of life we try to push. We push ourselves to recover more quickly than our hearts allow. We push situations to resolve before they're ready. We push conversations, decisions, even prayers, as though God's grace were something we could accelerate by sheer effort. But the river does not respond to pushing. It moves at its own pace, shaped by the land, guided by gravity, obedient only to the quiet pull of creation. And perhaps that is precisely why it calms us. It reminds us that some things unfold only in their own time.

The heron understands this instinctively. It doesn't try to hurry the river along. It doesn't demand that the fish appear on schedule. It simply trusts the rhythm of the water. Its patience is not passive; it is purposeful. It is the kind of waiting that prepares the heart to act when the moment finally arrives. One moment the heron is motionless, the next, it strikes with astonishing precision. Stillness becomes readiness. Waiting becomes wisdom.

There is something deeply spiritual in that posture. Much of faith is waiting - waiting for clarity, waiting for courage, waiting for healing, waiting for God's whisper to become audible. The psalmist knew this well, "My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning." The heron, standing quietly in the river, seems to embody that same watchfulness. It is not anxious. It is not idle. It is simply present, trusting that what is needed will come.

And perhaps this is the invitation the heron offers us. To stop pushing the river of our own lives. To stop forcing outcomes. To stop believing that everything depends on our speed, our cleverness, or our control. Instead, we are invited to stand where we are, breathe deeply, and trust that God is already at work beneath the surface. The river flows. The Spirit moves. Grace arrives, often quietly, often slowly, but always faithfully.

So, the next time you walk by the water and see a heron standing in its quiet dignity, let it preach to you. Let it remind you that patience is not weakness but wisdom. That stillness is not emptiness but attentiveness. And that the river of life, with all its twists, currents, and hidden depths, does not need to be pushed. It flows by itself. And in time, it will carry you exactly where you need to go.



Blessings to you all
Canon John Blair

Ipsden Coffee Mornings

A huge thank you to the many people who take it in turn to run the coffee mornings, and to the many others who donate cakes. Everything is free and it's a wonderful opportunity to catch up with neighbours. Ipsden Coffee Mornings are held in the Memorial Village Hall on the second Wednesday of each month, the next one is on 14 October, from 10am until 11.30am. All are welcome!

Clare Davis

Church Services for October and November

Date	Ipsden	North Stoke
Sun 4 October HARVEST	6.30pm Harvest Festival with Harvest Supper	11am Holy Communion with Harvest Auction
Wed 7 October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 11 October	10am Service of The Word. Zoom Meeting Id 188 513 761 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Wed 14 October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 18 October	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
Wed 21 October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 25 October	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
Wed 28 October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 1 November	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
Wed 4 November	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 8 November	10.45am Remembrance Sunday Service at Ipsden with laying of wreaths at North Stoke at approximately 12 noon	
Wed 11 November	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 15 November	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
Wed 18 November	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 22 November	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
Wed 25 November	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sun 29 November	10.30am Team Advent Carol Service at Checkendon	

Church Opening Hours

As well as for services, both churches at Ipsden and North Stoke are open during daylight hours for private visits and worship.

From the Rectory

Harvest Time: The end of September and beginning of October find schools and churches celebrating the harvest. For most gardeners, "harvest" begins anytime from April (early rhubarb) and can stretch into November, but for the average UK gardener like me the harvest is now tailing off, and beds or tubs are being cleared and tidied up.



Out in the fields, the extreme heat and long dry summer meant that harvests of cereals were both earlier and thinner than hoped for. This will affect us all in food prices creeping higher towards the winter. Outdoor growers have done an incredible job this year keeping food on our shelves. We have all become very aware of the need to be better stewards of the "rain harvest" when it is given. Had it not been for the Rectory garden tap and the watering can, there would have not been the beans, cucurbits, or tomatoes we have enjoyed since June.

Sometimes our garden surprises us with its wonders. Last year a lettuce went to seed, and I so enjoyed its firework explosion to the sky, rocket like with little yellow flowers setting into small, smoky puffs of seed, that I let it

stay on the bed a while into the autumn. Why should I not be surprised that, a year later, I should find two random, self-sown, lettuce plants elsewhere in the garden?

Our garden has this year also produced a bumper harvest of field mice. Pressure to return to cat ownership has, so far, been resisted, however. The sight of guts on the back door mat, or a small liver on the utility room floor, are only for the strongest constitutions at 6.30am on a weekday morning.

The turn of the season is a great opportunity to be thankful to God for the creation, even as it groans under the weight of human interference, even as we collectively push to the limit the inbuilt feedback loops of stability in global ecosystems.

Here at the Rectory, our summer has been one of hard work, not only in the garden, but in the property itself, as we have made the transition from a heating system that relies on the harvests of pre-history (that is, fossil fuel) to one that uses only the heat that is currently present in the global atmosphere (that is, an air source heat pump). The happy bottom line is that we are now "off oil", thanks to the Church, and no longer compelled to put money in the pockets of any malign actors who hold the power of the taps.

The wider context is that the Diocese of Oxford has received a block grant from the Church Commissioners, which it is using to "retrofit" as many of its oil heated clergy houses as it can. This is excellent news for the Langtree Team ministry, as Checkendon Rectory was the only vicarage in the Team that used oil. As of now, we are probably the most energy efficient. This "harvest" will reap benefits over many years.

Our church Harvest thanksgiving services are on Sunday 4 October. At Checkendon there will also be a produce stall, hosted by our good friends Steve and Frances from Manor Farm, in Peppard, in support of the Ways and Means Trust, our local mental health charity. Do join us to give thanks, you will be very welcome.

Your Rector,
Canon Kevin Davies



Harvest Festival



There will be services for Harvest Festival in both churches on Sunday 4 October.

The service at North Stoke will be at 11am. Please will people leave fruit/veg and other consumables including non-perishables (tins, cereals, cleaning materials, etc) in the church prior to the service. Food where

possible will be donated to the local foodbank in Sonning Common. As in previous years, the service will be followed by a "Harvest Auction", proceeds going to the foodbank too.

The service at Ipsden will be at 6.30pm. Again, non-perishable food donations for the foodbank are most welcome. The service will be followed by a Harvest Supper in the church, most probably a "bring and share" affair but please watch out for any further information.

Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage?



The Corn Exchange in Wallingford is holding a Volunteer Open Day on Saturday 3 October from 10am to 2pm. This is your chance to see what goes on behind the scenes at the Corn Exchange - both the cinema and theatre.



Free guided tours are available, and volunteers will be on hand to chat you through the myriads of volunteer roles available. These include Front of house managers, Box office and bar staff, Ushers, Lighting and sound crew, Stage management, Projectionists, Set design, construction & painting, Acting, Directing and Producing (we do four plays and a panto each year), Costumes, Props/Set dressing, plus many other vital behind the scenes roles covering accountancy, HR, marketing, website, building maintenance and health & safety.

So, come along on 3 October to see for yourself. No need to book, just turn up on the day!

Nicola Webb

Remembrance Sunday Curry Lunch

The Remembrance Sunday Curry Lunch will be held on 8 November in Ipsden Village Hall.



Food will be served at 1pm. Tickets are £12.50 each and are available from The Shop, Ros Hall, and Anne Millsop). Net proceeds will be split between Combat Stress and St Mary's Church. There will be a bar and a draw.

Rev'd John Blair

Police Community Visit

We plan to be outside Ipsden shop/post office again on Monday 12 October at 2.30pm for one of our 'Have Your Says'. We enjoyed our visit to the coffee recently too.

Sarah Jones

Police Community Support Officer



The Window Needs You!

Thank you to all those who contribute to The Window and help to make it inclusive to those who dwell or work in Ipsden and North Stoke. We always need articles. And that's where all of you can help. We don't have any reporters; most content must come from those living in the villages. That's you!

You might be surprised: what seems mundane and everyday to you may be interesting and new to others. And don't forget to include news about forthcoming village events; and photographs always add substance. Please don't be shy and leave it to the "regulars"! Just let us know if you need help or guidance, and send your contributions to The Window, ipsden.window@gmail.com or me, Peter Bennett, peter.bennett28@btopenworld.com

The Window

The Window is edited, published and distributed by the churches of St Mary's Ipsden and St Mary's North Stoke. The deadline for contributions to the next issue is 18 October please.

Thanks to Vaughan Williams and the team of volunteers who deliver paper copies to homes in Ipsden, Mongewell and North Stoke. The Window is also available on the Ipsden village website [Ipsden Village website Home](#) and some paper copies are held in the Ipsden shop for individual collection.

Ipsden Village Lottery Tickets

There are numbers available for the Ipsden Lottery, which helps fund our Village Memorial Hall. A ticket is £1 per week, payable in 10-week blocks, with the winning number worth £25 each week. The winning number is the Saturday night bonus ball number in the National Lottery. If you are interested in joining, please talk to Shirley in the shop to arrange payment and to choose your number. Good luck!

Clare Davis

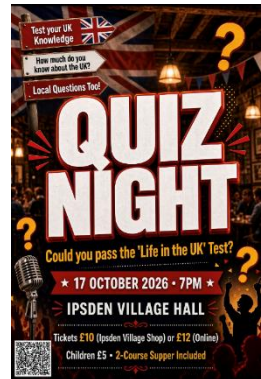
Could You Pass the "Life in the UK" Test?

To find out, come along or bring a team to compete in our Quiz Night at Ipsden Village Memorial Hall on Saturday 17 October 2026, from 7pm until 10 pm (doors will open at 6.30pm).

Tickets are £10 from Shirley at the Village Shop or £12 online (we're charged a service fee for online purchases) via [Ipsden Quiz Night! at Ipsden Village Hall event tickets from TicketSource](#). Children are welcome at £5.

Included is a 2-course supper and the quiz! All proceeds go towards Ipsden St. Mary the Virgin Church.

Tammy Nemeth





Last November, ten of the UK's leading experts briefed an invited audience of over 1,200 politicians and leaders from business, culture, faith, sport and the media. The briefing set out the implications of climate and nature breakdown for health, food systems, national security and the economy.

A 45-minute film has been made from the event "The People's Emergency Briefing". It features Chris Packham, Jennifer Saunders, Deborah Meaden and members of the public, processing and making sense of information from the Westminster event. Many of us will have already heard of or seen the film elsewhere, but we are now showing it in Ipsden in the early Autumn. It is in Ipsden Village Hall on Friday 16 October at 7.30pm and will be followed by a facilitated discussion. Entry is free.

Please share details of the screening with your friends and local networks – the film has specifically been created to reach out to speak to everyone including people who are not already aware of the critical state of the climate and environment.

Why it matters now: Climate and nature breakdown will affect every constituency in the country, from health and food systems to infrastructure, security to economic stability. This crisis is more serious and immediate than many understand. There is strong evidence that bold, urgent action will improve lives and livelihoods, but the window of opportunity is narrowing as we delay.

The 45-minute film combines authoritative scientific content from the Westminster event with reactions from members of the public and some more familiar faces – designed to help audiences process the information on a more human level. It will deliver the frank facts about the threats, but also the enormous benefits if Government leads genuine emergency action.

Many of those attending the event commented that, although the facts are alarming, they felt a sense of optimism about confronting the challenge together, seeing a pathway to a better future through planning for possible future problems such as water and power outages in our community.

Nina Thomas & Kate Moberly

Churchyard Autumnal Tidy-up



Please join our working party for an Autumn tidy-up of Ipsden St Mary's churchyard. This will take place on Friday 9 October from 10am for about two hours. A selection of tools will be available but do bring your favourites to do the jobs you fancy.

There will be lots of trimming and tidying to do as well as continuing to remove moss and grass from the path. Also, careful removal of ivy from some of the gravestones. Nothing is nice but so is tidy and readable!

The work we do is greatly appreciated by visitors to the church and churchyard. See you there!

David Kelley

Dens and Swings And Other Things

Ipsden Parish Council welcomes the increase in the number of children and young people in the village and would like to invite them to advise us what we could do, or provide, to enhance their free time and play.

We are aware that some dens and bike tracks have been attempted, and wonder if this might be something they would like to work with us to provide, or would they like something else? We are open to suggestions!



Please let us know by emailing dilys.beaumont@ipsdenvillage.co.uk

We look forward to hearing from children, young people and their parents.

Ipsden Parish Council

Bingo Returns!



Bingo returns to Ipsden on Saturday evening, 28 November, in the Memorial Village Hall. Doors open at 6pm, eyes down at 7pm. Pay at the door!

There will be a bar selling wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks & snacks. Stay behind after the last game for nibbles and an eye on Christmas!

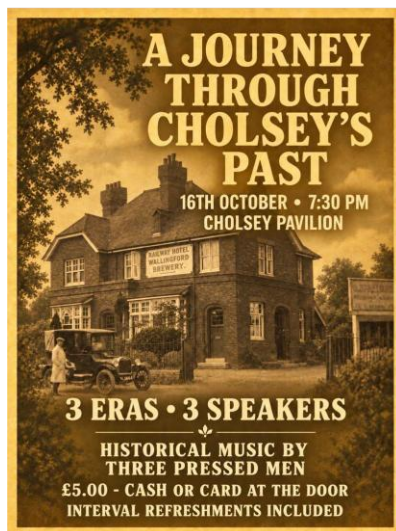
Rev'd John Blair

Cholsey History

On Friday 16 October at The Cholsey Pavilion, The Cholsey Archive will present an evening of three short talks on the village's history. Musical support will be provided by folk trio *Three Pressed Men*, singing songs themed (as closely as possible) to pubs, rough sports and Stephen & Matilda's 'Anarchy'. Doors will open at 7 pm for 7.30pm start.

Admission just £5 at the door, including light refreshments. Email archive@cholsey.com to indicate interest and help planning.

Ian Wheeler



Keep Up with Ipsden Gossip, and More!



For those living in Ipsden and are not aware, there is an Ipsden Whats-App Chat group which has been established for several years and currently has just under 100 members. The chat group is useful for information around the village and beyond. Topics such as road closures, water leaks, power cuts, missing dogs and cats, straying sheep, and events in the village are examples of what is circulated.

If you are not already there and would like to join the chat group then please email your name and

mobile number to Damian Slack damianslack@icloud.com or me, Peter Bennett peter.bennett28@btopenworld.com and we will add you to the group.

Peter Bennett

Shamanic Journeying



The "Art of Soul Flight" is an introduction to Shamanism with Hayley Trezise and will be held at Braziers Park from 10am until 5pm on Saturday 24 October and from 9am until 3pm on Sunday 25 October 2026. Through journeying, drumming, rattling, movement and community practice, participants will explore spiritual connection, healing and divination. Full course tickets (Saturday &

Sunday) start from £130 including lunch and refreshments. Optional accommodation is available. For more details, prices, and booking visit <https://web.braziers.org.uk/events>

Caroline Vitzthum

Join Our Friendly Team!

Are you seeking a new challenge, and want to contribute something positive to your community? Citizens Advice Oxfordshire is looking for dedicated and compassionate volunteer advisers to work in our offices.



Citizens Advice gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to see their way forward - whoever they are and whatever their problem. Our volunteers play a vital role, ensuring that people receive the advice and support they need.

A Citizens Advice volunteer recently commented on the way many clients are transformed after benefitting from the close attention and help of an adviser. Lewis told the Henley Standard: "There are problems that seem insurmountable to those experiencing them, but we break down those seemingly impenetrable problems into manageable steps, providing a route out of despair. This process has a profound impact on the resilience and happiness of our clients."

What kind of basic skills will you need to volunteer with us? You will need to be confident with computers and have a both a willingness to learn and a positive desire to help people. In the course of your volunteering you'll learn new skills and meet new people, helping clients with problems in the areas of debt management, benefits, employment, housing and relationships (no prior knowledge necessary). After extensive training you will be giving confidential advice to clients, mainly on the telephone at first,

and then later by emails, in person or by using webchat.



We would like you to be available for two sessions per week, either mornings or afternoons or for a whole day. We offer a rewarding, flexible and supportive working environment. If you would like to discuss these volunteering roles, please email: volunteer-recruitment@caox.org.uk and one of our staff will contact you.

Darius Halpern

Games Café Launches an Evening Session



The afternoon Games Café takes place on the usual third Wednesday of the month – in this case, Wednesday 21 October from 3–5pm at Ipsden Village Hall – and will be swiftly followed by the first of our regular evening ‘cafés’ on the same day, from 7–9pm.

There’ll be the usual hot drinks with cakes and biscuits, and you’re welcome to bring something stronger for the evening session if you wish. We have a wide selection of games, but feel free to bring your own favourites along too.

Email katemoberly@hotmail.com or thewordbird@yahoo.co.uk if you’d like any further details.

We look forward to seeing you!

Kate Moberly, Lottie Rundall & Jesse-May

The Great Ipsden Bake-Off Is Coming!

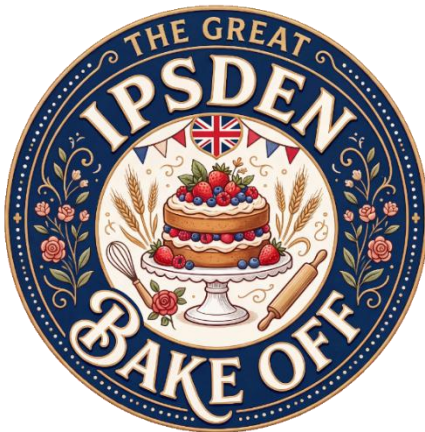
Tummer has moved on, the larder has been replenished and the people in and around Ipsden are settling down for a long, dark winter ... full of cake and merriment!

Please gather in Ipsden village hall on Saturday 21 November from 3pm until 5pm to taste and judge all the delicious goodness our resident bakers have magically drawn out of their ovens.

Everybody is free to enter up to five cakes, cupcakes or cookies. Likewise, everybody is invited to come and eat yourselves through the surely marvellous collection of baked goods.

You will have the chance to vote for your favourite piece of edible delight. At the close of the afternoon we will be able to crown the best baker around!

You can enter a cake by mailing me, Allen Lüttke at luedtke@ebg-rottenburg.de Please also feel free to get in touch if you have any questions. There will be more details about the whole event in the next issue of The Window.



To enter there are 5 categories: cookies & muffins/cupcakes, cakes with chocolate and/or nuts, cakes with fruit, sweet Christmas bakes. Cake: £1, cookies/muffins: 50p.

You'll receive a tasting card on which you mark how many pieces of cake/cookies you had. You should also note down your favourite per category.

Coffee/tea/water are included. Pay at the end when you go. Cash only. Leftover cakes will be donated to a nursery home in Wallingford.

To register a cake: please email me with your name, email address and type of cake (category) as well as the recipe. No more than one cake per category. luedtke@ebg-rottenburg.de . The overall winner and best category will receive a prize, and a recipe book will be available in due course.



Allen Lüttke