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The magazine for the people and community of Long Ditton

ST MARY'S CHURCH
LONG DITTON
PRESENTS

Silent DISCO

LONG DITTON VILLAGE HALL
SATURDAY 3RD MAY

DOORS OPEN 7:00PM
DISCO 7:30-10:30PM
TICKETS £15

LIMITED NUMBER, PREPAID TICKETS ONLY
BYO FOOD & DRINK

Time to put on your dancing shoes
Three competing music channels
Expect timeless anthems from
the 70's, 80's, 90's and beyond!

Purchase tickets online at
www.stmaryslongditton.org.uk/events
or from Ann Leeson

TICKET SALES CLOSE SATURDAY 19TH APRIL 2025
or sooner if sold out

BYO food and drink. Prepaid tickets only.
Age 12+ only. 12-17's must be accompanied by an adult

Cover photo taken by Mark Herbert - sunset at the Marina, Portsmouth Road, Long Ditton

REGULAR SERVICES AT ST MARY'S

Sundays:

08.00am Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion
10.15am Parish Communion with Organ and hymns
6pm Evening Prayer (Choral Evensong 3rd Sunday of month)

Wednesdays:

10.00 am Holy Communion followed by Coffee Club

Prayer Chain

If you, or someone you know, would like to be prayed for (for any reason) please send your request by e-mail to:-
prayerchain@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

Your request will only be known to those in the Prayer Chain and your confidentiality will be respected.



ST MARY'S LONG DITTON

PALM SUNDAY

8am Holy Communion
10.15am Parish Communion
6pm Evening Prayer

MAUNDY THURSDAY

8pm Holy Communion and Tenebrae

GOOD FRIDAY

12pm The 3 Hour Service
join us for all or part of the service

EASTER DAY

8am Holy Communion
10.15am Parish Communion
followed by Easter Egg Hunt

FROM THE REGISTERS

RIP: Edna Francis



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Fri 4th April** 1pm Friendship lunch in the Community Hall £8pp
- Sat 5th April** 6.30pm Quiz in the Village Hall £10 - see page 5
- Wed 9th April** 8pm BookBox in the Community Hall—another chance to hear about The Titanic grave in St Mary’s churchyard - details on page 4
- Fri 2nd May** 1pm Friendship lunch in the Community Hall £8pp
- Sat 3rd May** 7.30pm Silent Disco in nther Village Hall £15pp - See page 2 for full details of how to get tickets
- Wed 21st May** 8pm BookBox - Dr Richard Milburn MBE speaks about the illegal wildlife trade—details on page 4

After-Easter prayer

Don't leave our Lord amidst the lilies
 Within a hallowed sphere
 Don't praise Him only in your churches
 In Easter hymn and prayer...
 Keep Him beside you through
 The business of ordinary days,
 In the common place encounters
 Along the humdrum ways.
 Our Master told us very simply
 What He would have us do....
 He taught: "Love one another
 Even as I love you."

Elsie Campbell

The Rectory, 5 Church Meadow Long Ditton, KT6 5EP

Tele: 020 8398 1583

email: rector@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

You may have come across the online game Wordle. If you haven't, it consists of guessing a 5-letter word by putting in a series of your own words. There are 6 guesses available. Each time you put in a guess, the game shows you how close you are to the hidden word: the right letters in the right places are green, the right letters in the wrong places are yellow, and letters which don't belong there at all are grey. If Wordle is too easy for you, there's Quordle where you have to solve 4 Wordles simultaneously. If words aren't your thing, there's Nerdle where you have to guess an arithmetic sum, and Worldle where you have to guess a country from its outline.

We humans live most of our lives with insufficient information and so we are good at picking up clues, spotting patterns, filling in gaps from our experience and general knowledge, and drawing conclusions as best we can. In the Gospels we see that Jesus' followers had the same issue: they heard what Jesus was saying, saw what he was doing, and tried to put that together with what they understood from their Bible. They had the clues and made their guesses as to who Jesus was and what he was doing. Some of their guesses were spot on, some were in the right direction, but in the 'wrong place'. Some they just got wrong: those ideas didn't belong with Jesus at all.

They struggled along, and at one point it seemed that they'd got everything wrong – on the first Good Friday they saw Jesus crucified, dead, and buried. But then a couple of days later they got the biggest and best clue of all: Resurrection! Then gradually, the 'letters' started to fall into place: Jesus was God, come to be one of us, and his purpose was to give us all a way back to God, forgiven and accepted.

If there are things in your life just now which feel as if they don't belong, or as if they're in the wrong places, don't despair – have another look at the Easter story. Take heart from those first disciples' experience, put Jesus in as the first clue, and God will help you put whatever else is happening into a new and better perspective.

Easter blessings!

REGULAR GROUPS AT ST MARY'S

Friendship Lunch

Friday 4th April & Friday 2nd May at 1.00pm
£8 per person - to book call 020 8398 1184 or 020 8398 3182

Babes and Tots

Every Friday in term time. All carers and their little ones welcome for singing, outdoor play and crafting. 09.30 - 11.30
Coffee makers always welcome!

Film Friday

Friday 16th May at 2pm - no charge but donations welcome

**All of the above activities take place in
St Mary's Community Hall**

BOOK BOX

Wed 9th April - 8pm - The Anniversary of sinking of Titanic. Another chance to hear about the very special grave at St Mary's which houses Austin Partner, a local banker, who died that night. His body was brought back to be buried in our churchyard. Alison Baverstock and Liz Smith, who is related to the only other Titanic victim buried in England, will tell you about new evidence relating to the ship - and what has been learned since about marine engineering and society of the time.

Wed 21st May - 8pm - Dr Richard Milburn MBE will talk about how to bring an end to illegal wildlife trade. Based on his new book 'Killing the Trade', Richard will speak about what drives illegal wildlife trade and how we can bring it to an end. He will share examples from over a decade of work in the sector including helping to protect gorillas in the Democratic Republic of Congo and elephants in Zambia. The book is available from Regency Bookshop, Surbiton

Tickets £10—available in church, on the door or through the church website

These events will be held in St Mary's Community Hall followed by refreshments

ST MARY'S CHURCH CONTACTS

Ministry Team	The Rev'd Dr. Kuhan Satkunanayagam	020 8398 1583 (Day off -Tuesday)
Associate Priest	The Rev'd Prof Alison Baverstock	020 8546 9267
Churchwardens	Bob Hancock Joanne Hall	020 8398 0519 020 8398 5637
Pastoral Team	<i>Call us if you need someone to listen or talk with you</i>	
Pastoral Assistants	Cathy Doyle Joanne Hall Diana Jemmett Kenneth Mould Judith Topp	020 8398 0715 020 8398 5637 020 8398 1184 020 8339 0933 020 8399 1004
Sunday Club		children@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Churches Together	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
Director of Music	Julia Bowyer	music@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Church Electoral Roll	Lucy McMullan	office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Flowers	Tessa Vallings	020 8398 4807
Sacristan	Val Tanner	020 8974 2713
Stewardship Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
PCC Hon Sec	Penny Fussell	020 8672 0838
PCC Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Parish Office & Community Hall	Mandy Ali The Parish Office Church Road	020 8339 0008 office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

www.stmaryslong ditton.org.uk

LONG DITTON
GENERAL CONTACTS

Group	Contact	Contact
Sugden Road Allotments	Mark Barwick	markbarwick@yahoo.com
Babes 'n' Tots	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
LD Residents' Assn	Mark Herbert	020 8398 6037
LD Garden Club	Sue Corb	07766 742370
Village Hall	Michelle Aveson	07804 057589
Rainbows	Lesley Sullivan	07801 440510
Brownies (Wednesday)	Lesley Sullivan	07801 440510
Brownies (Wednesday)	Rache Bowie	07786 991469
Guides	Fay Tiplady	07486 696167
Rangers	Georgie Sibley	07885 540472
Dittons Scouts contact	Stuart Jack	07971 479740
LDSM Junior School Sugden Road, KT7 0AD	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 1070
LD Infant School Ditton Hill Road, KT6 5JB	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 4398
Long Ditton Youth Club	Glenn Sampson	07588 825917
Ditton Bridge Club	Redvers Cunningham	020 8398 4338
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Jeremy Huntingford	07876 171899
Surbiton Bowls Club	Keith Stedman	07543 095070
Lychgate Editor	Janet Burton	07810 810822
Citizens Advice Bureau Esher	01372 464770	
Elmbridge Borough Council	01372 474474	
Elmbridge Dial-A-Ride	01372 474944	
Samaritans Kingston	0330 09405717	
Dittons & Weston Green		
Neighbourhood Care	020 8398 8600	

ST MARY'S 100 CLUB 22 RESULTS

WINNING NUMBERS

FEBRUARY

1st Prize: No. 56
2nd Prize: No.38
3rd Prize: No 19

MARCH

1st Prize: No.99
2nd Prize No. 53
3rd Prize No. 32

Congratulations to all the winners

QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 5th APRIL
LONG DITTON VILLAGE HALL

6.30pm FOR 7pm

Bring your own food
Drink, glasses and
money for the raffle

Contact

Joanne Hall 020 8398 5637
Email:joanne-h@hotmail.co.uk
Diana Jemmett 020 8398 1184
Email:diana.e.jemmett@gmail.com

£10 per person
Maximum of eight per team



Long Ditton St Mary's Thrilling Computer Science Week

Long Ditton St Mary's School has once again enjoyed an exciting and action-packed Computer Science Week, which has become a highly anticipated event each year. This year's theme, "Video Games," brought a fresh wave of enthusiasm and creativity to the school, with numerous activities and special guests inspiring both pupils and staff.

The week kicked off with an engaging talk from a parent who has been designing and creating video games for over 20 years. The presentation was both fascinating and informative, offering valuable insights into the world of video game development. The children were eager to ask questions, demonstrating their curiosity and enthusiasm for the subject.



Throughout the week, the school was buzzing with coding excitement. Students participated in coding lessons, lunchtime clubs led by their peers, and hands-on workshops delivered by Eduthing, an IT solutions company specialising in education. These workshops allowed each class to explore programming concepts, with children creating and testing their own code on handheld devices.

LDRA AGM

The LDRA AGM will be held on Wednesday 14th May at the Long Ditton Village Hall in Ewell Road 8.15pm. Our ward councillors (EBC & SCC) will be attending – which provides the opportunity to ask them questions. All local issues will be covered like the new threat to our Green Belt land, 20mph scheme by schools, Local Government reform, streets maintenance and telephone masts.

LDRA Committee

We are seeking new volunteers, so if you are interested in a position on the LDRA committee, please contact Mark Herbert (Vice Chair) or Paul Bartlett (Treasurer).

LDRA on Facebook

The LDRA Facebook page continues to grow in popularity and has over 2,600 members. It is a great source of local information. You can join by searching FB for 'Long Ditton Residents Association' and requesting membership. Please read and agree to the FB page rules to be accepted.

Monthly LDRA Committee Meetings – Community Hall

The LDRA continues to hold monthly committee meetings in the Long Ditton Community Hall, behind St. Mary's Church. All residents are welcome to attend, especially if they have an issue to raise. The meetings start at 8.00pm, on the first Wednesday in the month, except May, August and November.

Local Police

All incidents of anti-social behaviour should be reported to Surrey Police (ring 101 or online <https://www.surrey.police.uk/>). The LDRA is working with the local police team, so please feel free to keep us informed too. Information on police matters can be viewed on <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/surrey-police/the-dittons-and-hinchley-wood/>

Help us to help you!

In addition to Facebook and our website, we would like to use e-mail to keep you informed. If you would like to be on our e-mailing list please send your full name, your road and e-mail address to: mark.herbert@longditton.org. All information supplied will be used in accordance with GDPR, strictly by the LDRA Officers only, and not made public. All recipients are e-mailed using blind carbon copy (Bcc).



Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) – New Local Plan

The Planning Inspector found the Elmbridge Local Plan 'unsound' and consequently the EBC officers are starting the Local Plan process from the beginning. More up to date information is available on the EBC website: <https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/local-plan-examination/>

Overgrown Verges, Gutters and Public Areas

LDRA co-opted supporter, Paul Fagan, continues to challenge EBC and SCC on the state of Long Ditton's verges, church environs, cemetery, open public spaces and street cleaning. Paul has been meeting with EBC, pressing home the message that the gardening contractors are not fulfilling their contractual obligations. Our councillors are assisting Paul with his ongoing pursuit in these matters. Paul is making progress.

Stokes Field Nature Reserve

The EBC Countryside Team will be planting 2,200 whips (tiny tree plants) later in the year. EBC has been directed by the Forestry Commission on this work and it will be a managed project. The Countryside Team will be planting 40% Oak, 40% Silver Birch and 20% broadleaf trees. It will be monitored and managed as part of a 25-year woodland management scheme. The LDRA will keep a watching brief and will stay in touch through our councillors.

20mph Scheme Around Our Schools

SCC have advertised the proposed 20 mph scheme around Long Ditton St. Mary's School and Long Ditton Infants School. A public consultation, with opportunity for the public to comment, closed on the 7th March.

Hinchley Wood School Admissions Criteria Consultation

Hinchley Wood School held a public consultation on their proposal to change their admissions criteria from September 2026. The second proposal adversely affects Long Ditton, as priority would be given to Hinchley Wood Primary and Thames Ditton Junior schools over Long Ditton St. Mary's Junior school. The consultation ran until 22nd January and a strong objection was lodged by the LDRA. The consultation conclusion was announced on 5th March, stating that the second proposal was not being adopted. This result is welcomed by Long Ditton parents and the LDRA, and we express our thanks to HWS for listening to the local residents.



In addition to classroom activities, Year 6 students had the opportunity to visit Long Ditton Infant School, where they taught the Year 2s how to use iPads to animate objects. It was a wonderful opportunity for the older pupils to share their skills.

In their computing lessons, the children also delved into the history of video games, creating presentations that explored how video games have evolved over the decades. As an optional challenge, families were invited to participate in a home competition, designing their own video games.

The week culminated in a fantastic dress-up day, where pupils and teachers came in creative costumes inspired by their favourite video games. The costumes were impressive, showcasing the students' imaginative spirit and the teachers fully embraced the fun, making it a day to remember.



Overall, Computer Science Week was a resounding success, sparking curiosity, creativity, and a love for learning.

Chocolate food of the gods!



Did you know that the botanical name for the cocoa bean is *Theobroma* – which means ‘food of the gods’?

Millions of us obviously think chocolate is special – on average, each of us consumes 8.1 kilograms of it a year! Certainly, chocolate makes us feel better. Some scientists believe that this is due to the chemicals it contains. These trigger the release of endorphins, similar to those we naturally produce when we fall in love.

Nutritionists do warn against using chocolate as a pick-me-up, especially in the evening. Chocolate eaten before bedtime can cause your blood glucose levels to plummet during the night, which will disrupt your sleep. Chocolate eaten in quantity every day can lead to mood and energy swings, weight gain and poor immunity. If you have mad cravings for it, you could have a problem with blood sugar, or a deficiency in magnesium, copper, zinc or iron.

Occasional consumption of cocoa can provide medical benefits. Chocolate containing 60 per cent or more cocoa solids is rich in essential trace elements and nutrients such as iron, calcium and potassium, and many vitamins. Cocoa is also the highest natural source of magnesium.

Good as all this may be – most of us enjoy chocolate because of its high sugar and caffeine content. Chocolate simply gives you an instant sugar hit, providing a sudden burst in energy, unfortunately followed by a slump and then the desire for another sugar-fix.

Our pulpit has also been given a makeover, with the various panels painted in contrasting colours; I am sure the sixteenth century Flemish woodcarvers would be delighted with the result, although the next time any medieval historians come to view it, I shall take the day off – probably travelling abroad.

My dear Darren, your course took the stopper out of the bottle; would you please run another to put it back?

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Smile Lines

Good Friday

I was standing in line at the bank when there was a commotion at the counter. A woman was very distressed, exclaiming, “Where will I put my money?! I have all my money and my mortgage here!! What will happen to my mortgage?! You can’t do this to us!”

It turned out that she had misunderstood a small sign on the counter. The sign read: **WE WILL BE CLOSED FOR GOOD FRIDAY.**

Mr Bones

The orthopedic surgeon I work for was moving to a new office, and we, his staff, were helping transport many of the items. I sat the display skeleton in the front of my car, his boney arm across the back of my seat. I hadn’t considered the drive across town.

At one traffic light, the stares of the people in the car beside me became obvious, and I looked across and called, “I’m delivering him to my doctor’s office.”

The other driver leaned out of his window. “I hate to tell you, lady,” he said, “but I think it’s too late!”

St James the Least of All

On why you should never encourage your congregation

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren,

There are times when I indulge you too much; why I ever let you run your course 'Taking Responsibility for your Church' among our congregation, I am now unable to understand. I had hopes that it might encourage a few more people to volunteer for the flower rota, or to give occasional help mowing the churchyard. I even had a vague fantasy that someone might turn detective and discover who had been eating the chocolate biscuits between Sundays, condemning the rest of us to munch on Rich Tea after services.

Unfortunately, your course turned out to be inspirational and it has fired up our members to take on all sorts of new initiatives. Enthusiasm in a congregation can be a very dangerous thing, especially if people start making decisions on their own.

Those who formed a welcoming group are admittedly well-meaning – although it was more than a little traumatic for those coming through the door the next Sunday to be greeted with frenzied handshakes, big toothy smiles, and even hymnbooks. That is unheard of in this church – we always ignore people and leave them to find hymnbooks – if they can.

Naturally, all those offering to take the prayers, produce new Orders of Service and even to give the occasional sermon have been booked on the appropriate training courses. By the time they have been completed, I can only hope they will have gone off the idea.

It was the group which decided to "beautify" the church who have proved the most tiresome. Hanging the Christmas tree lights round the altar made it look as if I was standing behind a fairground stall, waiting to invite people to throw hoops round teddy bears – although I would have rather enjoyed making winners sit for the rest of the service holding a polythene bag containing a goldfish.

Sharing the Easter story with the help of an egg

There are 80 million Easter eggs being sold in the UK this year, but The Real Easter Egg is unique.

It is the *only one* which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

There are six types of eggs to choose from. Each Real Easter Egg comes with an Easter story in the box, the stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions. So, buy a 2025 edition Real Easter Egg this Spring, and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

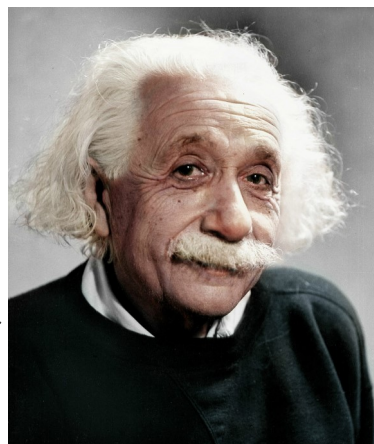
The 2025 Real Easter Egg is not available in any supermarket, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk, or by calling 01925 877004.

The Real Easter Egg is made by The Meaningful Chocolate Company which was 'crowd founded' in 2010 by thousands of churches and church schools which pre-paid for the manufacture of The Real Easter Egg. Since then more than two million eggs have been sold, and £420,000 raised for charitable causes.



Remembering Albert Einstein

Seventy years ago this month, on 18th April 1955, Albert Einstein, the German-born theoretical physicist, died. Considered the most influential physicist of the 20th century, he is known especially for developing the special and general theories of relativity.



He formulated possibly the best-known theory in the world – the special theory of relativity (including the iconic equation $E = mc^2$) – in 1905 while working as a technical expert, third class, at the Swiss Patent Office in Bern. He went on to become widely known and admired as a physicist of genius. He died in his local hospital in New Jersey of a haemorrhage, having become an American citizen.

He was also a Swiss citizen.

Einstein's family were secular Ashkenazi Jews. He was never convinced that God intervened on a personal level, regarding such an idea as naïve but he had a firm belief in God as creator and sustainer of the universe.

He had an ongoing and never settled debate with Niels Bohr, the Danish theoretical physicist, about the way the universe was described by quantum mechanics, holding that chance could not be behind it because "God does not play dice". Einstein was clear that he was not an atheist – more a "religious nonbeliever". He was disappointed in the end by his failure to prove non-randomness and to come up with a unified field theory by including electromagnetism in his geometric theory of gravitation. He did receive the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics for his theory of the photoelectric effect.

Not long before he died, he wrote in a letter to physicist David Bohm: "If God created the world, His primary concern was certainly not to make its understanding easy for us."

Albert Einstein was married twice and had three children by his first wife, Mileva Marić. He also played violin – hence the subtle reference to him "playing electric violin" in Bob Dylan's *Desolation Row*.

Many millennials are still at home

Renting and buying your home is much more expensive than it was 20 years ago. So, no wonder that nearly half a million more young people are currently still living with their parents. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), the 'Hotel of Mum and Dad' is flourishing, with nearly a fifth of all millennials still at home.

Bee Boileau of the IFS says: "In the last decade and a half, there has been a substantial increase in the proportion of young adults living with their parents. This has occurred alongside, and indeed has been fuelled by, increases in rents and house prices."

There are many advantages to living at home: young people can save more of their incomes and living at home also provides a shelter for those recovering from bad relationships or redundancy.

Overall, in the 25 to 34 age brackets, men are more likely than women to be living at home (23% compared with 15%). Rates are higher among UK-born young people from Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds (62% and 50% respectively)

Why a glass of milk may save your life



Drinking a glass of milk a day could cut the risk of you getting bowel cancer by almost a fifth. So say researchers at the University of Oxford. They have found strong evidence that calcium protects against the deadly disease.

According to the data, it takes only an extra 300mg of calcium a day (found in a large 240ml of milk, or a couple of pots of yoghurt) to result in a 17 per cent lessening of the risk of bowel cancer. Currently, one in 20 women and one in 17 men in the UK will be diagnosed with bowel cancer during their lifetime. It affects around 44,000 people each year in the UK.

Changing a light bulb is a generational thing



Do you know how to clean a car, change a light bulb, hang a picture and identify a spanner? If yes, then chances are that you are a Baby Boomer (1955-1964) and not a Gen Z (1997-2012). For recent research has found that some Gen Z are paying up to £1,300 a year for simple household tasks to be done, because they don't want to tackle them.

Changing a light bulb? Gen Z worry that a step ladder can be dangerous, and that the bulb might be "too hot". They do not want "to mess around with electrics."

Hanging a picture frame? Add air to a car tyre? Identify a spanner? Fit a wiper blade? Clean a car? The list of practical jobs is endless and huge numbers of Gen Z get round them by asking a parent or even paying a professional, to do it.

The research was commissioned by Halfords. It concluded that DIY may sadly be a dying skill, because too many Gen Z-ers are simply not practically minded.

Lemon juice, anyone?

In the morning, do you drink coffee, tea or freshly squeezed lemon juice mixed with warm water? Lemon juice has recently become a fashionably healthy lifestyle choice, according to nutritionist and autoimmunity specialist V J Hamilton.

She explains that, as well as being high in Vitamin C, lemon juice helps with hydration and digestion, and can help reduce bloating, constipation and free radicals.

Lemon juice is full of goodies: vitamin C, vitamin B6, folate, magnesium and potassium, and antioxidants and flavonoids. These all help to keep your skin, liver, kidney and heart healthy.



The genius of Madame Tussaud

Some 175 years ago, on 16th April 1850, Madame Marie Tussaud, a French artist known for her wax sculptures, died. She was the founder in 1835 of Madame Tussauds wax museum in London.



Born Anna Maria Grosholtz, she was taught wax modelling in Paris by Philippe Curtius, from whom she inherited two wax museums.

Imprisoned as a royalist during the French Revolution, she was given the job of making death masks from heads freshly removed from their bodies by the guillotine. Her subsequent marriage to François Tussaud was not a success and she moved to England, where she toured for over 30 years with her collection of wax models until she found it a permanent home in Baker Street, London, where it became extremely popular: Charles Dickens described it as "more than an exhibition... an institution". Her grandson Joseph Randall moved it to its current location on Marylebone Road in 1883.

The extensive exhibition is now operated by Merlin Entertainments and has locations in cities across four continents. The waxwork figures depict prominent people from many fields, including three Popes, Martin Luther King and Billy Graham. It has not been without controversy: in 2004 a Nativity scene using "celebrities" – including David and Victoria Beckham as Joseph and Mary, Graham Norton as a shepherd and Kylie Minogue as an angel—was roundly criticised by the Roman Catholic Church in particular, and removed after it was damaged in an attack.

Wax figures of gods were used in funeral rites in ancient Egypt; the Greeks and Romans also used them in religious ceremonies, and dolls for children were also made of wax. In the Middle Ages, churches sometimes received votive or thanks offerings of wax figures.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

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Social media is not for children

Most adults would support a ban on under-16-year-olds visiting social media platforms such as X and Instagram.

Such are the findings of a recent survey. It found that 75 per cent of adults favour the minimum age for accessing social media sites to be raised, from 13 to 16 years old. The survey was conducted by the More in Common think tank. It reports that support for raising the age level is found right across the political spectrum: 79 per cent of Conservative voters, 75 per cent of Labour voters, 76 per cent of Liberal Democrat voters, and 81 per cent of Reform UK voters

Concern about the effects of social media on young people comes at a time when tech giants are facing increasing criticism about the impact their platforms can have on young people. The survey also found that 71 per cent of adults want a ban on all smartphones in school, while 14 per cent oppose the idea.

The Village Hall

2 Ewell Road
Long Ditton



Welcomes
sports clubs, workshops,
meetings, societies, lectures,
demonstrations, classes,
children's parties.
Occasional and
long-term hire
07804 057589

The Village Hall Trust
is sometimes able to make
donations for charitable
purposes to benefit the
residents of Long Ditton.
Enquiries to 020 8398 3643

**If you would like to
advertise in or contribute
an article to this
magazine,
please contact
Janet Burton
07810 810822
email:
janetpb15@gmail.com**

What do children worry about?

Sadly – a problem that is far too heavy for their young shoulders, but which can cripple them with anxiety: climate change. ‘Eco-anxiety’ now affects nearly four out of five children, according to a recent YouGov survey. Increasingly, teachers are struggling to cope with the rising numbers of pupils who confess they are really worried about climate change.

One expert advises against sheltering the children, pointing out that “homes torched by wildfires, flooded villages, people fleeing hurricanes – pictures of climate impacts are coming in thick and fast, and our kids are watching,” she said. Instead, she says: “Our children will come of age during a climate crisis so building their emotional resilience is one way to prepare them. We do understand that this can be a challenge for parents and teachers, who already have a lot on their plate.”

“The reality is that the climate crisis will be one of the major forces shaping the world they’ll grow up in and it’s good to give them the tools they need to make sense of it.”



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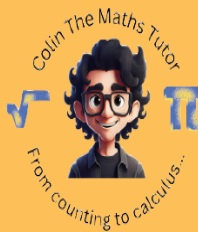


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Whether you are interested in hiring the Hall for a regular slot, or for a one-off event, please contact Mandy Ali, Hall Manager, on: 020 8339 0008 or email office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk to arrange a viewing.



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- Keep in close contact with our councillors

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Second Most Dangerous Country in the World for Christians

After North Korea, where in the world is it most dangerous to be a Christian?

The World Watch List puts Somalia in second place. In the entire country there are only hundreds of Christians, almost all from a Muslim background. As under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, being Muslim is a huge part of Somali identity, to reject Islam is seen as a huge betrayal.

Somali converts to Christianity are often killed on the spot when their faith is discovered – murdered either by Islamic militants or even their own family. Believers who aren't killed outright face vicious persecution from family members, house arrest, forced marriage, sexual violence or being forced to take part in Islamic rituals.

Al-Shabaab, a violent Islamic militant group at war with the government, controls large swathes of the country. This group enforces a strict form of Sharia (Islamic law) and is especially keen to eradicate Christianity from Somalia. Church leaders are particularly targeted.

How can you help **Somali Christians**? Please keep praying, as your prayers make an enormous difference to those following Jesus, no matter the cost.

Open Doors supports Somali believers across the Horn of Africa through discipleship training and by equipping them to cope with severe persecution. If you want to help, please go to: <https://www.opendoorsuk.org>



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PLASTIC FREE LONG DITTON WE NEED HELP FROM OUR COMMUNITY



Plastic Free Long Ditton is a small group of volunteers which has active support from Cllr Liz Laino. We launched in September 2021 and are registered with Plastic Free Communities, part of Surfers Against Sewage, and are one of more than 800 groups in the country. The aim of these groups is to mobilise local communities in the fight against unnecessary plastics. Whilst an amazing invention, sadly plastics do not decompose – they break down into ever smaller micro-plastics that are found in our soil, rivers, oceans and the air we breathe. They are practically impossible to remove. In fact, excavation of a landfill site close to the SCC recycling facility at Leatherhead revealed intact plastic supermarket bags from the 1960s!

It has been estimated that globally only 9% of the plastic ever produced has been recycled and even then, “recycling” is something of a misnomer because plastic bottles cannot be recycled into new plastic bottles, only something of lower grade. It is difficult to do something about this since our modern lives revolve around the use of plastics. However, in addition to all the environmental problems referred to above, plastics are a produce of oil and therefore contribute towards climate change, so we really do need to look for solutions.

Apart from occasional stalls, our group has so far organised once or twice yearly litter picks on Stokes Field and One Tree Hill when we often carry out a brand audit. The date for our group’s next litter pick on Stokes Field and One Tree Hill is Sunday, 27th April, 2.00 – 4.00pm. Gloves, bags and grabbers provided and all welcome.

We are now looking for community groups to sign up as Plastic Free Community Allies to show support and help us work towards an accreditation from Plastic Free Communities for our Village. The aim

is not to replicate the work of other local groups, for instance the KT6 Litter Pickers are doing an excellent job of collecting litter around the village on the first Sunday morning of every month. There is a pledge which community groups can display saying that they are working to remove at least three single use plastics items from day-to day activities (this can be retrospective). Sugden Road Allotment Association has already agreed to be a Community Ally and many plot-holders there are already making their own compost and trying to re-use and recycle items needed for cultivation.

We would love to be able to collaborate with other local groups so please get in touch if you are a member of one or can make suggestions. We do not have the cash to pay for stalls at charity events but ideas of any other opportunities would be gratefully received! One idea has been to produce a collection of recipes/ideas that can be used to avoid purchasing lots of different household products in plastic containers. Maybe we could compile a directory and make it available digitally. Lots of people we have spoken to have various tips for cleaning and one of our members has tried making laundry powder and hand cream.

We also need to find five locally based businesses to sign up with Plastic Free Communities as Plastic Free Champions who will pledge to eliminate or have eliminated three single use plastics from their day-to-day activities. Larger businesses are not eligible but can sign up as Community Allies.

Finally, if anyone would like to join us and can offer some practical help and/or ideas, no matter how little, please do get in touch. Our email address is plasticfreeld@outlook.com or phone 07477 863474.

Christine Manly
Plastic Free Long Ditton

