

# WOODNEWTON NEWS JANUARY 2026



Proudly Presents

# SNOW WHITE & the Seven Dwarfs

A Pantomime by Tom Whalley  
Woodnewton Village Hall  
11 to 14 February 2026

# What's On?

## Come & Chat

The 'Come and Chat' mornings are usually held on the last Thursday of every month from 10.30 to midday, the next date for your diary is the 29 January 2026.

Tea/Coffee and biscuits are available for a donation of £1 and everyone is welcome to pop in.



It's a good opportunity to meet with friends or to make new friends. If you are fairly new to the village do come along, you will be given a warm welcome.

## Line Dancing Class



Woodnewton Village Hall every Monday 7-8pm

No experience necessary. The aim is to have fun and improve fitness along the way. No need to book. £4 a session. Ring/text/email Tasha for further details.

07789 230671 or nteall@btinternet.com



*Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday,  
3.00 - 4.00 p.m.*

**CRAFT CHURCH in  
NASSINGTON CHURCH**



*A time for everyone to join together from all the villages in our Watersmete Group, including Woodnewton. Come and join us for crafts and activities with prayers and songs.*

**ALL WELCOME!**

***Our next Craft Church is 18<sup>th</sup> January.***



**WOODNEWTON  
ART GROUP**

**The Woodnewton Art Group led by John Russell now has a Website at <https://woodnewton25.wixsite.com/mysite>. You can also get to it via the homepage of the Woodnewton Hub: <http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk/>**



## **Woodnewton Parish Council Meeting Monday 1st December 2025.**

Apologies Received from Cllr Neville, no members of the public attended.

Previous minutes from meeting 3rd November were agreed and signed by the Chair

Following a discussion on expenditure for 2025/budget plans for 2026 the council resolved that there would be an increase of 3.8% (based on Sept 2025 CPI) in the 2026/27 precept and Cemetery fees. This increase would cover most expected costs planned in the budget with any minor shortfall covered by other income.

It was agreed in principle that additional funding of up to £350 would be provided for additional Wildflower seeding in the Cemetery, this is subject to appropriate ground preparation being completed prior to the sowing season.

The council reviewed grass-cutting tenders for 2026–2028 and the final decision will be made at the January meeting following reference checks,

Playground remedial works are mostly complete, with remaining Wicksteed parts due in January,

An Augean grant-funded project for approximately £5000 is being explored by Cllr Kiesel which would combine a replacement notice board for the village hall entrance with new information boards for areas such as the Coronation Orchard.

A letter was received from an allotment holder voicing concern about condition of certain plots and reduction of walkways between allotments caused by boundary “creep”. It was also noted that the allotment lease agreement contains specific requirements for both these items. The council agreed that that this would be revisited after the winter period if it is seen as an ongoing/increasing problem.

The Bonfire site was discussed, and it was agreed that it will be lit at the next available window, subject to dry weather/suitable wind conditions, however the vehicle access gate to the field/allotment area will be locked in December to prevent further dumping and allow for levelling and clearing of the site once existing material is burnt.

Following a review of the plans it was agreed that The Parish council will submit an objection to the Haddon 1 warehouse development consultation on the A605.

Cllr Pythian attended a training session in her new role as Climate and Nature Champion, she highlighted resources and support networks available to assist with local action to increase understanding and development of biodiversity in our area.

Concerns were raised about ongoing issues with dog fouling and horse riders using (and damaging) the public footpath towards Southwick, Cllr Blackmore said he would place some new dog waste warning signage (provided free by Northamptonshire Council), at additional spots around the village and the Clerk agreed to contact the relevant stable to request that they ask riders to keep to Bridleways in the future.

Cllr Guttridge attended the ENRMF and Thornhaugh Landfill site liaison meeting and provided interesting feedback on activities and water testing at the site.

**Next meeting; agreed for Monday 5th January at 8pm**

**Paul Blackmore - Chairman**

## **WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL**



Woodnewton Parish Council would like to thank everyone who has contributed to village life over the past year, whether through volunteering, supporting events or by simply being good neighbours. We wish all who live and work in Woodnewton a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

**To raise any issues please contact the Parish Council:  
clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk**

# St. Mary's Church News

## **Services at St. Mary's Church Woodnewton January 2026**

4th January – 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion (Modern Language)

11th January – No service at Woodnewton. Services at Nassington at 9.30 am and Yarwell at 11 am.

18th January – 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion (Modern Language)

25th January – 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion BCP (Traditional Language)

28th December – 10.00 a.m. BENEFICE HOLY COMMUNION at WANSFORD

Every Sunday 5.00 p.m. A Service at Home by ZOOM (phone or online). Log-in details from Rev. Jane (01780 782271 – [jdtailby@aol.com](mailto:jdtailby@aol.com))

Happy New Year!

I hope that your Christmas celebrations went well and that there will be joy for you and those you love in 2026. There was so much going on in our churches over Christmas and it is good to begin with a "thank you letter" to all those who worked so hard in so many ways to make sure that our celebrations were so special. Thank you to everyone who shared in our Christmas services in church and provided a warm welcome for regulars and visitors alike. Our church looked wonderful, thanks to all the hard work of our cleaners and flower arrangers, which was very much appreciated. It lifts our hearts to God and encourages our fellowship together when we meet in a church that is well-cared for and beautifully decorated – thank you, all. Thank you, also, to those who make sure that our church is well-maintained and warm, which is always so important. Thank you to those who prepared services and the church itself, and who provided uplifting music. Being able to sing together and enjoy the sound of our splendid organ helps us feel that we belong together and that all are included.

I always find that beginning to write the date of the new year takes a bit of getting used to; I have to keep checking that I have 2026 on the top of this service list, for example. I wonder how you approach the new year, as you get used to writing and typing 2026? Maybe it is just another year, maybe you are looking forward to a special event, or even that the new year may hold some anxiety or concern. Certainly as we look around at our world at the moment, we might indeed wonder what the new year might hold for us. Perhaps as we begin the year we might think of the poem "The Gate of the Year", which begins with lines you might know:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".

We all need those who will accompany us into the new year; friends, family, companions, and God offers to go with us, too. Where-ever the year takes us, may we walk in the companionship of ones who love us and in the light of God, who will always lead us with his love into the unknown.

With every blessing for the new year.

Rev. Jane

## St Mary's Church Toilet and Servery Project Update

The Toilet and Servery Project at St Mary's Church has faced significant delays (particularly with the impact of the COVID pandemic) and unfortunately the original faculty (formal go ahead from the Diocese) has now lapsed due to the three-year time limit that applies after approval. In addition, our original Heritage architect has retired and building regulations regarding disabled toilet access have changed since the first design was created, all of which mean that we need to develop an updated design and re-apply for approval from the Diocese.

However, we are pleased to report that we have secured the services of a new church approved Heritage architect with extensive experience in similar projects, who is based locally. He is confident that he can provide a more cost-effective design incorporating some new ideas which he has successfully used for other projects in this area. If this works, it will mean that grants available for this type of project will cover a much higher percentage of the overall cost so reducing the extra monies we require above the funds that have already been raised. A full digital survey of the church and graveyard was completed in November, and the new design process will begin in the new year.

Once the design is reviewed and costed, we will apply for a new faculty approval and overall, despite the many setbacks, we feel much more positive about the project's future and will provide updates throughout 2026, including details of ongoing fundraising activities. Finally the PCC and Friends of St Mary's Church would like to thank everybody who has contributed to the project, whether by volunteering for activities and events or providing donations, your ongoing support is greatly appreciated.

## WOODNEWTON HISTORY GROUP



We hosted our second public talk at the village hall on Sunday, 23rd November, and were delighted by the great turnout for "**Woodnewton: An Estate Village Under the Manor's Gaze.**" Our sincere thanks go to the 'Refreshment Team,' who were kept busy throughout the interval serving tea and cakes. We are also deeply grateful to Karen Palenski for her dedication in researching and producing such an insightful talk.

The afternoon was a success, generating a healthy profit that will help fund our research efforts, including access to historical records, also to support the ongoing costs of our website. We hope to stage another talk in April.

New to the website this month are "Memories of Marjorie Fitzjohn" and adding to the section on Residential Properties: Broughton House.

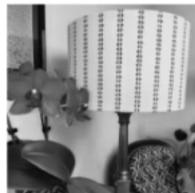
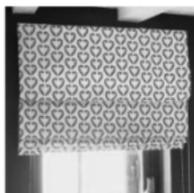


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## Useful Numbers and Information

**Parish Council Clerk** [clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk)

**Village Hall Booking** Anne Hills 07399 359262

[villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com](mailto:villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com)

**Neighbourhood Watch**

[woodnewtonnw@googlemail.com](mailto:woodnewtonnw@googlemail.com)

**Police**

101 Ext 345306 for PCSO Artur Pereira  
[artur.pereira@northants.pnn.police.uk](mailto:artur.pereira@northants.pnn.police.uk)

**Doctors Surgeries**

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**Veterinary Surgeries** Oundle  
Yarwell

01832 273521  
01780 783910

## Newsletter & Website Contacts

### Newsletter Team:

Grant Neville, Ann Galloway, Jane Martin, June Moore, Ivan Walker.

**Advertising:** Ivan Walker, Tel 01780 470438

**Contributions:** We are always happy to receive articles for publication. Please send articles by email whenever possible to [newswoodnewton@gmail.com](mailto:newswoodnewton@gmail.com).

We prefer pictures in jpg format and hi resolution whenever possible.

Handwritten / non-electronic contributions can be delivered or sent to:

June Moore, 5 Lindsey Close.

Closing date for all copy **14th** of previous month.

Recent issues available here: <http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk/village-newsletter/>

The Newsletter is edited and published by Grant Neville, 20 Orchard Lane, Woodnewton.

Any views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council unless otherwise stated.

**Website :** <http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk>

Submissions for material to be hosted on the Woodnewton Hub website should be emailed to [newswoodnewton@gmail.com](mailto:newswoodnewton@gmail.com).



Hall bookings may be made with Anne Hills on 07399 359262 or [villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com](mailto:villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com).

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# Lost the Plot?

## How resolute are you?

Are you in the habit of making New Year's resolutions? If so, how long do you generally stick with them? A week? A fortnight? Until the biscuits and the gin mysteriously reappear in the cupboard?

Personally, it's not a thing I have ever really gone in for, but that's because I have no willpower and therefore lack resolve. I admire people who announce on 1 January that they are "doing dry January", "running every morning" or "finally sorting the shed". By mid-February they are usually back in the pub, nursing a knee injury, and still unable to find the lawn mower.

I had always assumed that New Year's resolutions were a fairly modern invention — something dreamt up by gyms and stationery manufacturers — but I was surprised to learn just how old the tradition actually is. According to some sources, the first New Year's resolutions were made about 4,000 years ago by the Babylonians, who celebrated their New Year around the time of the spring equinox.

These weren't vague aspirations like "be a bit healthier". They were oaths to the gods to do very specific things: paying debts, returning borrowed tools, and staying loyal to the king. I assume these tools were kept in hanging garden sheds. These oaths were considered moral contracts, and failure to keep them could result in divine retribution such as crop failure, illness — or, in our terms, a badly weeded border and a mysteriously blighted allotment.

A couple of millennia later, the Romans moved the New Year more conveniently to January, naming the month after Janus, the god of doors and transitions. Again, these resolutions were not to be taken lightly. Romans pledged loyalty to the Emperor and promised good conduct and civic duty. There's no specific mention of punishment, but I imagine that if you were responsible for building a twisty or potholed Roman road that challenged a high status charioteer, the Roman street doctor's sanctions may have been more draconian than we are used to.

Elsewhere in the world, the idea of a New Year reset developed in rather different ways. In parts of Eastern Europe, people attempted to predict the coming year by laying out onion skins sprinkled with salt — one for each month — and checking in the morning to see which had gone soggy. This was apparently an accurate way of forecasting weather patterns. I was wondering about trying this with some shallots left in the fridge drawer but I suspect all I would discover is that it's time to clean out the fridge.

In Japan, the year traditionally ends not with fireworks and a headache, but with cleaning. And not a light tidy, either. Cupboards are emptied, corners scrubbed and forgotten objects rediscovered. The idea is to enter the New Year with nothing unresolved. This strikes me as admirable but unrealistic. If I attempted it, I would still be cleaning by Easter and would probably uncover several things that I'd been perfectly happy not remembering.

In some remote villages in the Scottish Highlands, some New Year traditions involved filling the house with smoke from burning juniper to cleanse it of evil spirits, before throwing open the doors to let them escape. I like the symbolism, but I suspect the fire brigade were less enthusiastic.

What all these traditions have in common is that they weren't really about self-improvement. They were about putting things right. Settling accounts. Clearing out the old. Making sure nothing was left hanging — whether that was a debt, a grudge, or a borrowed spade.

Modern resolutions, by contrast, are usually private, optimistic, and completely unenforceable. No gods, no emperors, no juniper smoke. Just us, our good intentions, and a calendar app that quietly stops reminding us after a few weeks.

So perhaps the problem isn't that we lack resolve. Perhaps it's that nobody is threatening divine retribution over the state of the hedge.

That said, if anyone would like to borrow a tool and return it promptly, I'm happy to revive the Babylonian system. The Hanging Gardens of Woodnewton could be quite an attraction.

**The Grumpy Geek**



# Jingle AND Mingle

The pre-Christmas Jingle and Mingle evening at the Village Hall proved to be a great success with an excellent turnout. Aside from the mingling plenty of mulled wine was imbibed and mince pies scooped.

Eunice had us all puzzled with a very sweet little quiz. Donation and the quiz raised funds of £53.16 for the Village Hall.

Thanks to all who donated and attended and as always thanks to the Village Hall team for organising it.



## ***Another Change of Scenery***

Earlier in the month the Woodnewton Players backstage crew and cast members were at the village hall preparing new scenery for their February production of the classic tale of short people, a wicked queen and a poisoned apple, Snow White. Details of how to get tickets are on the back of this issue. Come along and see how a lot of cardboard and a bit of imagination can magically transform the village hall.



## LISTEN TO ALL THOSE BIRDS!

It may now be midwinter but not all wildlife in the village is hibernating.



On a fine day you can hear the clear, sweet notes of the song thrushes perched high up in trees proclaiming their territories. They repeat each song phrase three or four times. They are joined by starlings singing from television aerials, whose song is an unmusical but cheerful mix of whistle, whines and squawks.



Robins sing throughout the winter, even by street lights at night. They have a warbling song that sounds more mournful than during the breeding season. Did you know that, in winter, both male and female robins hold territories and sing to defend them? No other British birds do that.

At the top of a nearby beech tree, you might hear a charm of goldfinches conversing with their cheerful twinkling calls, before flying off to another tree to continue their conversation there. In previous years there has sometimes been a similar flock of chattering siskins in the village, but I have not heard one yet this winter.

Flocks of house sparrows always bring a smile to my face with their non-stop, joyful chirping from their favourite hedges - for example at the eastern end of village, just north of the village sign. And further along the road, a dunnock may surprise you with the gusto of its song from the top of a hedge - amusingly described as 'a squeaky little ditty'!



High in the sky or in a tree top a kite may give its whistling call, and down below



in the ivy at the hedge bottom you may hear the loud machine gun-like rattling of a wren.

On warmer days you might hear a great tit singing 'tea-cher, tea-cher, tea-cher'. But no singing blackbirds - you may hear their sharp 'pink, pink' calls as they go to roost but you will have to wait until perhaps March before you hear their mellifluous song heralding spring.



**David Townshend**  
**9 Pridmore Close**





Proudly Presents

# SNOW WHITE & the Seven Dwarfs

A Pantomime by Tom Whalley

**Wednesday 11 February at 7.30**

**Thursday 12 February at 7.30**

**Friday 13 February at 7.30**

**Saturday 14 February at 2.30**

**Saturday 14 February at 7.30**

Woodnewton Village Hall  
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