



JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

Massive Pipeline being built under Leigh Park – attend our January Monthly meeting!!

DID YOU KNOW - A pipeline will run from the new, under construction Havant Thicket Reservoir, which is due north of Middle Park Way, to the Bedhampton Springs Pumping Station in Meyrick Road, Havant. The dual pipeline will allow taking spring water to and fro the new Reservoir. **On Thursday 22nd January, in the after tea slot at our monthly meeting, Tom Foster**, a civil engineer representing the contractors, Ward & Burke Construction Ltd. will explain this giant engineering feat fully and give us an insight into just what is involved in this four year contract. The reservoir will be about one mile (1.6 km) long from east to west and 0.5 miles (0.8 km) wide from north to south. It would be up to 18 metres deep and have embankments on three sides.

Two pipelines are to be installed: one to transport surplus spring water from Bedhampton Springs to the reservoir in winter, and the other to take water out for customer supply during droughts or emergencies.

The majority of the 5.3km long pipeline route is being installed using microtunnelling (a "trenchless" method), which avoids digging large open trenches in roads and public spaces. They are not allowed to tunnel under people's property, so the line will follow roads, streams and open spaces. Just imagine – a channel tunnel under Leigh Park!



The pipes are being installed inside two adjacent concrete tunnels, each up to 2.5 metres wide, at a depth of between 3 and 10 metres underground, well below roads, utilities, and tree roots.

I understand that the design allows for potential future use by Southern Water's separate water recycling project, should it receive government approval, without requiring further disruptive construction at a later date. Without being too political, I was somewhat annoyed at the recent Green party pamphlet issued in 2025 in which the headline suggested that recycled

waste water would be filling the new reservoir. Tom Foster explained that the in flow would be around 70% spring water and only 30% recycled water.

In the long term Southern Water has forecast there will be a lack of water resources for Hampshire because its licences to take water from the River Itchen have been reduced by the Environment Agency, and Southern Water is legally obliged to do something about the future water supply.

Portsmouth Water have been reviewing this pipeline route's feasibility and the use of alternative construction techniques since 2021. They say that their overarching strategy is to deliver the scheme more efficiently and effectively, with less disruption to local communities and lessen the impact on the environment. As you probably know, Portsmouth Water is responsible for providing drinking water in our area, while Southern Water provides wastewater services to Portsmouth Water customers. We are most fortunate to have a senior civil engineer employed on this project take time off from work to come and explain the project, and I hope that enough of our members are interested and will attend!

Editor

Ems Valley u3a take over the Chichester College for Christmas lunch!

We were greeted with drinks and smiles warm enough to defrost any December chill. The dining room, dressed in its Christmas best, was so cosy it practically gave us all a festive hug. Eighty-four of us gathered, chatting merrily while the impeccably organised young chefs and front-of-house team glided around serving each delicious course with the confidence of seasoned pros (and the enthusiasm of people who still have functioning knees).



To keep us entertained between courses - and to stop us from attempting to lick the plates clean—a missing-word quiz kept everyone guessing right up until the dessert. Competitiveness was high. Cheating was... suspected.

The three course meal was a model of fine dining served with a wave of festive aroma that could have tempted even the strictest dieter into joyful surrender! The main course choices: the classic and much-loved Roast Turkey, a heavenly Celeriac & Stilton Pithivier, a zesty Lemon & Chilli Hake, or decadently tender Pork Belly were each devoured with gusto.

We finished with coffee and petit fours:

melt-in-the-mouth macarons and pastilles so delicate they practically evaporated on contact.

Members may wish to know that the all of the College Students who participated in serving us, including the chefs, bar, waiting and kitchen staff thanked us for the gratuities they received from you all. They in turn decided that the total sum would go towards their own Christmas party.

We have booked next year's lunch on the spot. Save the date: 3rd December!

Dbee Robinson

Editor's note: It would not be right to finish the above report without acknowledging the huge amount of work that Dbee has put in over a long period of time to ensure that the day was so successful.

Thank you Dbee!

Wine Appreciation One - change of Group Leader:

After twenty years, I decided to step down from leading Wine One, not sure whether because of age, energy – lack of, sozzlement or need of a new face at the helm! A “young” Triumvirate are taking over, and it promises to be an exciting time ahead for this group, and I am really looking forward to sitting in the audience and being entertained after all these years! David Milne, Geoff Wiggins and Trevor Smith are now in vinous charge and they have some new ideas but have promised the membership that it will, in essence, be more of the same!



I have agreed to continue to be responsible for the February Wine Tasting Dinner, but that will be the scope of my duties! (How I wish I was young enough to continue the Wine Trips abroad that we enjoyed a few years back!) Dbee painted a lovely card in which the members all posted kind comments (see pic left) and this accompanied a most generous voucher for the Chichester Festival Theatre and another for a visit or two to the Ashling Park Wine Estate, both of which are now burning a hole in my pocket! Anne Gains said some very nice things about my twenty years at the helm, and I generally considered myself very happy and totally flattered! My very sincere thanks to all of the group!

My swansong was our Christmas Wine tasting, see pic on right, and we had enough money in the kitty to order lovely canapés to accompany each of the seven wines.

(Supplied by Jane Kirk of Fresh Catering.)

After commencing with a Limoux Blanquette, (Blanquette is made from local grapes, Cremant is made from Champagne varieties), we tried an “EN RAMA” version of Tio Pepe dry sherry. About one third liked it, one third were so so, and one third pronounced “Disgusting” or “Awful”. Hey Ho.....

The whites and reds were liked however and the final sherry was enjoyed with a massive slab of rich fruit laden cake. Yes, it was a

fifteen year old Pedro Ximenez Don Zoilo from the Wine Society and it made our members realise what PX sherry is all about. Last year we tasted the ten year old sample, this year the fifteen year. Next year ????

Alan Borrow



CAMEO 25

Eileen Snow started this Cameo group and Cameo is short for “Come and meet everyone”. All are welcome to socialise in a friendly and relaxed, informal way. We all support one and other.

Eileen says: Hello Ems Valley U3A members, February is the first meeting in this year, 2026. A new venue with good parking will be announced soon. This is the second CAMEO group I have run. I have made many good friends through this format. I moved from Surrey, with my husband when I retired from my nursing career. I love Emsworth, and we have lived here about three years.

If you would like to attend the February meeting, please contact me in the usual way via the website.

I look forward to meeting many more members to join our enthusiastic group. We would especially like to invite new Ems Valley members to join us. The next meeting is on 3/2/2026 10.00 – 12.00 midday. It will be a new venue in Emsworth, to be advised.

We share knowledge, skills & interests, while enjoying a morning coffee. Warm regards to all, **Eileen Snow**



Wine Four Christmas Party



This year our final tasting of 2025, was kindly hosted by Celia and Iain Lynch. June and I decided to take advantage of Mr. Tesco's very generous offer of club card prices plus an extra 25% on six or more bottles. This was easily achieved in

order to satisfy 14 of our thirsty “experts”! You will see from the list below that we had a good time selecting from an extensive range on offer, including two from our newly discovered wine source of Chile, plus, of course some old favourites of Italy, France, Spain with a sprinkling from south of the equator. As a finale, we included a very pleasant Cockburns Port.



We leave you to imagine how the evening progressed, slowly at first, and rather more joyously to the end! As a test of our groups knowledge we included our “sleeper” (number 9 on the list) which we asked our experts to announce if they liked it, would they buy it? Where in the supermarket would they find it? Having planted the seed of how much we had spent on the rest of the evening’s wines, there ensued a few vague opinions, but most were fooled by my sincerity. It was of course directly from the bottom shelf at a magnificent £3.99.....less 25% you have been warned!!

You will see that we would have spent £161 before club card reduction to £130 and then an extra 25% of £33, leaving an evening’s total of £97.00, overall saving of £64!! A jolly time was had by all and once again, our thanks to our hosts, Celia and Iain.

June and Robert Lineham

Bearded reedlings on our doorstep at Thorney.



These small distinctive birds with vibrant orange-brown plumage, long tail, and the male's striking black "moustache," are found in reedbeds we have between Emsworth and Thorney. They feed on insects in summer and reed seeds in winter, often betraying their presence with a "ping" call and forming lifelong pairs, says Wikipedia. BRIAN BRATCHER posted most of these above shots on Facebook this month and said "a few more Bearded Reedling shots from recent sightings on Thorney Island. I just love watching these beautiful birds as they balance on the reed heads, though they make you work hard to get a clear photo as they move flit the reeds!" A reminder of how lucky we are to have such a wide variety of wildlife around Chichester / Emsworth Harbour and how important it is to protect it. It is the males that have the fancy "moustache"!

GARDEN GROUP CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!

Diana Faithfull writes: The Garden Group had their annual Christmas lunch at the Emsworth Sailing Club and, as ever, Ollie produced a festive menu with various choices which I think suited everyone. The food was delicious and as you can see from the photos, the tables looked festive and it was enjoyed by everyone. His team looked after us well. We missed our members who were unable to come either from illness or clashes with many other events at this time but 33 of us had a good time chatting over current news and garden visits during the year.



We are looking forward to exploring some new gardens in 2026.





CRAFT GROUP GET TO GRIPS WITH CHRISTMAS!



Angela Blunden writes: We had a great time for our festive December meeting, as usual lots of fun and laughter. The first half was making Book Christmas Trees. Diana had kindly brought along the books where the spines were damaged - so a wonderful way to 'upcycle' them, some of us made the trees, Kim was knitting little Robins, and Ronnie made lovely gift labels.

The 2nd half was taken up with, drinks (even a bit of Sloe Gin!!!) and lots of festive nibbles. It was a wonderful way to end this year's programme!





Ems Valley Walking Group

On 3 December, after predictions the previous evening of Biblical floods and nearing cancellation, the



intrepid Ems Valley Walking Group woke to a bright sunny morning and decided to go ahead with our walk in Stansted Forest led by Ann and Reg Newnham. It didn't bode well for us, when arriving at the very soggy and muddy, normally empty, car park we found that it had

been infiltrated by another much larger walking group who had nabbed most of the parking spaces. But by innovative and judicious stewardship we managed to get everyone parked and ready to go.

Reg and Ann had planned a very enjoyable, shorter than normal, walk which mainly avoided very muddy fields. Stansted being a perfect and local walking area with beautiful views at every turn. This is obviously well known as apart from the parking space 'nabbers' we also encountered another large group who We discovered were the Emsworth Wellbeing Walking group!

The Newnham's designed a shorter walk than normal as it was our last walk of the year and we were going to the Castle Inn in Rowlands Castle for our annual Christmas lunch and very impressive it was, as can be seen by the happy faces in the photos. **Many thanks to Ann and Reg for organising**

BOOK GROUP TWO GO TO 'FAT OLIVES' FOR CHRISTMAS MEETING



For our December meeting, Book Group 2 had a Christmas lunch at Fat Olives where, over a delicious meal, we discussed our latest book, **The List of Suspicious Things** by **Jennie Godfrey**, and the results were revealed of our vote for Book of the Year. Each year each member gives every book we have discussed during the year a mark out of 10, where 10 equals excellent and 1 is terrible.

The winner was **The Remains of the Day** by **Kazuo Ishiguro** with an average 8.4. Second, with a close 8.3 was **The Penguin Lessons** by **Tom Michell**. Third was **My Antonia** by **Willa Cather** with 7.8. The wooden spoon went to **The Towers of Trebizond** by **Rose Macaulay** with an average 4.

Next year we have two themes. First, everyone has to select a book published in the year of their birth with a view to discussing changes in society and attitudes during our lifetimes. The second theme is the sea (which seems appropriate as we live close to it.) **There are a couple of vacancies if anyone is looking to join a book group.**

Sandra McGregor

Quotation Corner: This month THE CINEMA.

"One morning I shot an elephant in my pyjamas. How he got in my pyjamas, I don't know" **Marx Brothers**

"I'll have what she's having." —**Woman in diner, When Harry Met Sally**

"Gentlemen, you can't fight in here! This is the War Room." —**President Merkin Muffley, Dr. Strangelove**

"The cinema has no boundary; it is a ribbon of dream." - **Orson Welles**

"Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world." - **Jean-Luc Godard**

"The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder." - **Alfred Hitchcock**

A story needs a beginning, middle, and end, "but not necessarily in that order". **Jean-Luc Godard**

"Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn," **Clark Gable as Rhett Butler**,

I think cinema, movies, and magic have always been closely associated. The very earliest people who made film were magicians. **Francis Ford Coppola**

I'm under the impression that this notion of decency is disappearing from our society where conflicts are made worse on cinema and on television, where people are nasty and cruel on the Internet and where, in general, everybody seems to be very angry. **Helen Mirren**



A monkey is sitting in a tree, smoking a joint, when a lizard walks past.
The lizard looks up and says "Hey! what are you doing?"
The monkey says "Smoking a joint, come up and join me"
So the lizard climbs up and sits next to the monkey and they have another joint.
After a while, the lizard says his mouth is 'dry', and that he's going to get a drink from the river.
At the riverbank, the lizard is so stoned that he leans too far over and falls in.
A crocodile sees this and swims over to the totally stoned lizard, helping him to the side.
He then asks the lizard, "What's the matter with you?!"
The lizard explains to the crocodile that he was sitting in the tree, smoking a joint with the monkey and his mouth got dry and that he was so washed out that, when he went to get a drink from the river, he fell in!
The Inquisitive crocodile says he has to check this out.
He walks into the jungle and finds the tree where the monkey is sitting, just finishing a joint.
He looks up and says "Hey, MONKEY!"
The Monkey looks down and says:

Holy smoke Liz, HOW MUCH WATER DID YOU DRINK?!"

Editor's aside

I had just returned from a walk around Nore Barn Woods exercising a loveable toy poodle that I dog sit for occasionally. It is amazing how many interesting conversations you join because of your companion! (My favourite chat up line when not with OKA is "Excuse me, I haven't got a dog but can I join in this conversation!")

Oka sitting on my lap after the walk! (Left)

So I open the first email back at my desk: It is from someone I do not know the other side of the world, but the message was quite interesting:

"A man and his dog were walking along a road. The man was enjoying the scenery, when it suddenly occurred to him that he was dead. He remembered dying, and that the dog walking beside him had been dead for years. He wondered where the road was leading them. After a while, they came to a high, white stone wall along one side of the road. It looked like fine marble. At the top of a long hill, it was broken by a tall arch that glowed in the sunlight.

When he was standing before it he saw a magnificent gate in the arch that looked like mother-of-pearl, and the street that led to the gate looked like pure gold. He and the dog walked toward the gate, and as he got closer, he saw a man at a desk to one side. When he was close enough, he called out, 'Excuse me, where are we?'

'This is Heaven, sir,' the man answered.

'Would you happen to have some water?' the man asked.

Of course, sir. Come right in, and I'll have some ice water brought right up'. The man gestured, and the gate began to open. 'Can my friend,' gesturing toward his dog, 'come in, too?' the traveller asked.

'I'm sorry, sir, but we don't accept pets.'

The man thought a moment and then turned back toward the road and continued the way he had been going with his dog.

After another long walk, and at the top of another long hill, he came to a dirt road leading through a farm gate that looked as if it had never been closed. There was no fence. As he approached the gate, he saw a man inside, leaning against a tree and reading a book.

'Excuse me!' he called to the man. 'Do you have any water?'

'Yeah, sure, there's a pump over there, come on in..'

'How about my friend here?' the traveller gestured to the dog.

There should be a bowl by the pump.'

They went through the gate, and sure enough, there was an old-fashioned hand pump with a bowl beside it. The traveller filled the water bowl and took a long drink himself, then he gave some to the dog.

When they were replenished, he and the dog walked back toward the man who was still standing by the tree.

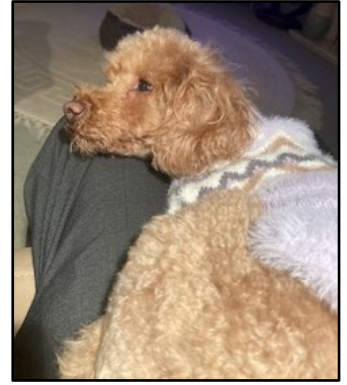
'What do you call this place?' the traveller asked.

This is Heaven,' he answered.

'Well, that's confusing,' the traveller said. 'The man down the road said that was Heaven, too.'

'Oh, you mean the place with the gold street and pearly gates? Nope. That's Hell.'

'Doesn't it make you mad for them to use your name like that?' 'No, we're just happy that they screen out the folks who would leave their best friends behind.'" Dogs are family!"





"It keeps me from looking at my phone every two seconds."

Getting Back to Normal

We swear we won't eat leftovers now,
 No turkey, ham, or trifle—how?
 The fridge is full, the doors won't close,
 Yet wretched mince pies still interpose

The bins are groaning, bursting seam
 Which week is black? Which week is green?
 Was it last night, or is it due?
 The neighbours know—but sadly, you??

What day is this? It might be three.
 Or Tuesday? Thursday? Hard to see.
 Time slipped away in festive cheer,
 Somewhere between the wine and the beer.

We long for normal, calm and plain,
 A cup of tea, a quieter brain.
 No more "just one more drink" to try—
 We're over-alkoholed, my head to lie....

And tell us please, oh retail land,
 When do the shops go back as planned?
 No "Sunday hours," no festive twist,
 Just open the doors we've dearly missed.

There's something dark upon that floor—
 The dining room carpet bears the score
 Of gravy spills and red wine crimes,
 Committed during jollier times.

So bring us back the boring days,
The steady, dull, familiar ways.
The routines us folk come to adore—
Predictable, peaceful... and frankly, we need no more. (until Christmas 2026.....)

**All contributions for the next newsletter please to:
alanborrow1@gmail.com**