
Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

NEWSLETTER

Community News from Swanage and the Surrounding Villages

Welcome to The Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust's April/May 2026 newsletter. This is a bumper edition with articles from many local organisations in our communities.

A new additional option is that for this and hopefully future issues we shall be printing copies of the newsletter that will be available across Purbeck. This first edition's printing costs has been supported by **Swanage & Purbeck Rotary** for which we offer our sincere thanks. If you or your group or company would like to support the printing of one of our future issues, please contact me by email or phone.

Locations where printed copies can be obtained will be:

Swanage

Hull Gregson Hull, Miles & Sons, Corbens, HKLaw, Ellis Jones, The Focus Centre, Budgens, Nixons, Herston Village Hall, Greengage, Costcutters

Corfe Castle

Village Library, Shop & Hall, National Trust Base

Studland

Village Stores

The Newsletter team and The Purbeck Community Health Group are planning to publish soon, with the assistance of Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust a special **Health Provision** newsletter. We plan to provide lists of the clinics and services on offer at Swanage and Wareham Community Hospitals, along with details of how these services can be accessed, plus some other local health provision will also be included. It is hoped that these listings will reduce the need to travel to the large general hospitals and encourage greater use of our crucial local health facilities.

Newsletter Coordinator: Mel Norris
Trustee Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
email: melvyn.norris@icloud.com mobile: 07446 677924

find the newsletter at www.sandpdt.org.uk

DEADLINE

for contributions to the June / July 2026 issue of the Newsletter

MONDAY 11 MAY 2026



Swanage & Purbeck
Development Trust
Charity Reg. No. 1162662

Upcoming Events on Swanage Pier

Swanage Pier is celebrating Easter with a fun mix of trails, crafts, games and family activities from 28 March to 12 April.



Easter Trail

Children can follow the *Eggcellent Easter Trail*, hunt for the Easter Bunny's friends, and crack a secret message. Completed sheets earn a treat and entry into the Easter hamper draw. £2 per trail. Standard adult admission applies

Children's History Walk

Join a 45-minute guided walk on Wednesday 1 April at 10am to explore the Pier's stories of pirates, smugglers and shipwrecks. Suitable for ages 5+. Standard adult admission

Easter Bunny Crafts & Games

Meet the Easter Bunny and enjoy drop-in crafts and games on Wednesday 1st and 8th April, 11am–2pm. £3.50 per child. Trail + activities: £4.50

Swanage Pier will be buzzing with activity throughout the holidays, so pick up a trail sheet and enjoy a fun family day by the sea.

Other Events Coming Up

- Park to Pier Walk – Sunday 19 April
- Volunteer Recruitment Day – Saturday 16 May
- Fish and Chips Cruise – Sunday 24 May, Saturday 13 June, Friday 10 July and Wednesday 29 July
- Yoga – returning from week commencing 2 June, with sessions on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, plus pop-up sessions on Saturday early evening.

Tickets for both the Fish and Chips Cruises and Yoga sessions go on sale from Wednesday 1st April.

We look forward to welcoming you onto the Pier and hope you'll join us for a fun-filled programme of events.



Volunteer Opportunities at the Mowlem

Our volunteers support the smooth running of The Mowlem during live events and are a vital support to the small team of staff. Volunteers work on morning, afternoon and evening sessions depending on the type of live show booked, theatre, films, comedy, children's entertainment, live music etc. and these can be in the Auditorium, Showbar, or Studio.

To support our expanding programme, we are looking for additional volunteers, and we would be especially interested if you would be available to help us develop our daytime events.

We are looking for two volunteer ushers, a volunteer marketing assistant, a volunteer visual arts coordinator and a volunteer bar support to join our volunteer team.

For more information go to <https://themowlem.com/volunteers-2> or email volunteer@themowlem.com



Drop the Hammer Performed at The Mowlem by The Longest Johns

Transforming The Focus Centre

Tania Leigh, Property and Assets Manager for Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust offers a look behind the scenes at how the Focus Centre is being transformed ...

The last year has been a busy one at the Focus Centre, as we transform the former Day Centre building into a wellbeing and family hub for people in Swanage. Careful consideration, thoughtful planning and attention to detail have helped make a space which is not just functional, but inviting, and reflective of the environment's identity.

Creating a community building that successfully blends a Welcome Lounge with shared spaces for services requires a balance between hospitality and functionality. We also wanted to make the building really inclusive and accessible, ensuring the design exceeds basic ADA requirements by incorporating step-free entrances, wider doorways and lots more.

We have also successfully transformed the former children's centre into a wonderful space for families, meeting the demand for placements for children up to the age of school with the "Explorers" group.

Our next phase of works will be the creation of a Community Cafe, and we will need your help to raise the funds!

I am really proud that we have such an amazing asset in Swanage and looking forward to helping make it work really hard for local people!

Tania Leigh: Asset and Property Manager for Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust

Web: www.sandpdt.org.uk/focus-centre/

Phone: 01929 208 376

Pop in: The Focus Centre, 107 High Street, Swanage, BH19 2NB



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Swanage Community Health Group

Could you help with our **petition** to restore Swanage and Wareham NHS Services?

It's so important to protect existing clinics in Swanage and Wareham Hospitals and to restore those we have lost. There's nothing more important than looking after our NHS!

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/restore-swanage-and-wareham-nhs-services>

We need help with inputting signatures we have collected by hand onto the online petition. Hours and times to suit!

Please contact Debby Monkhouse on debmonkh@aol.com

WE DID IT!

At the end of January 2026 we were thrilled to announce the Phase 1 new ramps open for use! The SSCP team are grateful to King Ramps for designing and delivering such a fantastic new build. We would also like to thank all the organisations and supporters who helped make this first phase of building possible:

Swanage Town Council • Talbot Village Trust • The Valentine Charitable Trust • Sport England • Swanage Rotary • #Willdoes

And most of all, **thank you to everyone who supported the Crowdfunder campaign.** The Crowdfunder brought this to life, Now it is time to get out there and make the most of it.

We're thrilled to have started the year with more fundraising success. Two grant applications towards the Phase 2 build have been successful. We received £2,000 from Steve Bernard Foundation and £5,000 from #Willdoes. This brings us to achieving 48% of our £80k fundraising goal for Phase 2.

SAVE THE DATE

The official skatepark opening jam, hosted by King Ramps, will take place on **Saturday 30th May 2026 12.00 - 17:00**

If anyone shops at Co-op and is looking for an easy way to support us, please download the Co-op mobile app and select us as your chosen good cause.



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Swanage Community Defibrillator Partnership

Keep the heart of Swanage beating



The work of SCDP continues positively with another defib recently installed at Foleys garage in Harmans Cross. The garage team have done an amazing job, actively fundraising to provide a public access defib and trauma kit located on the

garage forecourt. A great achievement for the Foleys team which provides additional support / coverage for the village (the other defib is situated at the village hall)

Also following some fantastic fundraising by Alan May and his supporters at Newton Manor Hall plans are progressing very positively for a defib at Hoburne Park in Swanage - residents having identified a need for a device sometime ago.

Staff at the Therapy Centre in Swanage have initiated fundraising for a public access defibrillator at the Centre in Court Hill, Swanage and will be holding a sponsored walk later in the year (the approximate cost of a defib is £1k and £600 for a cabinet). They would welcome support.

SCDP has also been working with the Colvin family in Wareham who have successfully raised funds for several new devices in the Wareham area. The latest has been installed on the Wareham Police Station in Worgret Rd, Wareham.

Our local area has an amazing number of public access defibs - all thanks to wonderful community support and a team of dedicated volunteers who monitor and maintain this growing defib estate.

For more information please contact us by email info@swanagedefib.co.uk or calling in to Corbens in Swanage.

Maggie Hardy, SCDP Steering Group member



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Updates from the National Trust

Perilous time for puffins

At the time of writing, we're anxiously awaiting the return of the puffins to Dancing Ledge, near Langton Matravers. There is concern for the colony following recent reports of thousands of dead puffins washing up on Europe's



Photo: Puffin, Pete Christie

beaches during this winter's storms. Historically home to more than 80 puffins, the colony at Dancing Ledge has dwindled to just three pairs. Although these birds have shown signs of nest building, they haven't successfully raised any fledglings in recent years. The suspicion has long been that predators such as rats or crows are taking the eggs or chicks. We have again commissioned high ropes experts to install remote, motion-sensor cameras on the narrow fissure where the seabirds breed. Learning from last time, we've placed the cameras in specific locations to film deep into the ledge. There was some concern from locals that the cameras themselves might disturb the puffins, but this wasn't the case – in fact, we have many shots of puffins and other seabirds sitting right beside them! There has also been speculation locally about whether human activity, such as coastering, rock climbing or boating is adversely affecting the puffin colony, but the monitoring team believes this to be unlikely. The cameras revealed that the puffins are most active overnight, when humans aren't around.



Can you help Purbeck's precious seabirds?

Purbeck's stunning coastline is home to many breeding seabirds. Some are thriving, but sadly, others are struggling. Guillemot and razorbill numbers are steady, but kittiwakes and fulmars have been in decline for decades. And our much-loved puffins are on the brink of survival. In 1965, Trev Haysom of Langton Matravers, a skilled ornithologist, started keeping records of the seabirds here, and his work has continued almost every year since. Recently, the surveys have been carried out by the National Trust and Durlston Country Park. But with rising costs and reduced budgets, the 2026 survey is under threat. So, Birds of Poole Harbour has launched a fundraiser so this vital data gathering continues. Can you help? Find out more here: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/purbeck-seabirds>

Rare glimpse of our past

You'll have seen in the news that the recent winter storms revealed historic timbers on Studland beach. Maritime archaeologists from Bournemouth University believe the timbers are a section of hull from the Swash Channel wreck, thought to be the Fame of Hoorn, a Dutch merchant ship that sank in 1631. Four hundred years ago, this section of coast would have been open sea which is why the timbers were buried under the sand rather than lying on the seabed. It highlights the dynamic and ever-changing nature of the coast here. Excavation was carried out by the university, under licence from Historic England. Dendrochronology testing will establish whether the timbers match those from the Swash Channel wreck. They will then join the collection at Poole Museum.



Photo: Steve Haywood

Love is in the air (or water)!

It looks like we could be welcoming more baby beavers (kits) at Studland this summer. Earlier this year, our trail camera picked up rare footage of beavers mating. It's the pair we released last year (the same female that took a trip to Swanage before settling back down in Studland!). It's a clear sign that they have now settled into their new home, and if they're successful, the kits will be born in June (up to four). You can see the video clip here: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/kn6y20WpclQ>. Our monitoring programme, using dedicated volunteers and trail cameras, keeps us informed about the wellbeing of the beavers.



Photo: The 'Swanage' beaver, Mark Singleton

Nature's symphony

Now's the time to get out and enjoy nature's symphony. The dawn chorus is performed by birds looking for love, and to defend their patch. It starts at sunrise, and the loudest singers are the males. Thrushes, blackbirds and robins are among the first to rise, then others gradually join in – wrens, chiffchaffs, blackcaps and willow warblers. You might also be lucky enough to hear a yellowhammer, linnet or stonechat. If you're not an early riser, remember there's the dusk chorus too. It might not be quite so loud, but it's guaranteed to soothe your soul!

If you have any queries, email us on purbeck@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Cathy Lewis, the National Trust



Swanage Youth Club is a place dedicated to a precious layer of our society - our youth. It is a space where the young people of Swanage can socialise with their friends, make new ones or perhaps relax and unwind - a place where everyone is welcome and can be themselves. It is a place where fun is had, food is made and games are played. Our friendly and kind youth workers are paid, trained and skilled professionals that have experience building relationships with young people, helping them grow their confidence and become healthy and capable members of our community.



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Whilst most our sessions take place at Herston Village Hall (and the village green where many football matches have been played) our staff aim to incorporate special sessions where the youth has a chance to experience something new. Recently, we've had Rupert Oldridge, a world champion beatboxer, run a beatbox and music creation workshop with our members and we have a tour and movie night at the Swanage Library planned in upcoming weeks.

Swanage Youth Club runs on **Friday night during term time, 6-7:30pm for Year 6 and 7, and 7:45-9:15pm for Years 8, 9 and 10.** If you are interested in your child joining, or if interested in volunteering with us please email youthclubswanage@gmail.com.



Sir David Attenborough at 100
A Purbeck Celebration



Photo Credit: Etches Collection

Fri 8 May | 5.30pm - 8.30pm | The Etches Collection

Join Swanage & Purbeck Rotary for...
Tales from those who worked closely with Sir David:
Dr Steve Etches MBE - Fossil Collector
Sue Western - Producer & Scriptwriter

Tickets £28
Includes after-hours museum access
Paella supper | Q&A with keynote speakers
Slice of centenary birthday cake!

Book Now
Search For:
'Swanage & Purbeck Rotary'
QR scan QR code

Brought to you by:  Swanage & Purbeck Rotary
In association with:  The Etches Collection
 Planet Purbeck

HELLO - Swanage Businesses and Working People

- *Would you like to help improve your community?*
- *Would you like to help voluntary organisations?*
- *Would you like to get to know and work with others with similar aims?*
- *Have you time to join with others on **Monday Morning at 08.00** for 50 mins to find out more?*
- *Swanage Rotary are organising a **Breakfast Group on the last Monday of a Month** to develop the above.*
- *Come and join with us to discover how we can **Unite to Serve our Community.***

February 23rd and March 30th 08.00 hrs at McAllisters Institute Road.



To join us, text a yes message to;
Swanage Rotary 07857 925875

The Mowlem's programme for April features a varied programme of live performance, comedy, music, and a great family line-up for the Easter Holidays!



Highlights for April are:

- **The Invisible Man** – 24 April 7.30 pm
Our Star Theatre Company bring a new theatrical re-telling of the classic to The Mowlem, following the success of the previous show (Hannay Stans Fast)
- **The Etches Collection** – 16 April - 7.00 pm
Being introduced by Emilia Fox, enjoy a special showing of the exclusive behind-the-scenes documentary exploring the story behind the BBC's 'Attenborough and the Giant Sea Monster' followed by a Q&A with Dr Steve Etches MBE.
- **Super Silly Magic Show (PG)** – 25 April 2.00 pm
Perfect for all the family! The Super Silly Magic Show is just that, and will have the audience leaving with a huge grin on their faces.

You can view the full programme online at <https://themowlem.com/>

Swim for Charity 2025

For 2 days in October last year Wareham Lions Club took over the swimming pool of the Purbeck Sports Centre for their annual Swim for Charity event, with teams taking part from all over the Isle of Purbeck area, stretching from Swanage to Cheselbourne. 21 Organizations provided 49 teams from various clubs, schools, trusts, and people just wanting to raise money, with the team's raising money for their own use or other worthy causes. The teams came from Wareham, Wool, Lulworth, Cheselbourne, Swanage, Lytchett Minster, and Bere Regis. The 283 swimmers with ages ranging from children aged 5 years old up to seniors over 70 years old, they achieved a total of 2232 laps of the pool covering up to 112 Kms.

**WAREHAM
LIONS CLUBS**
We Serve!



The Wareham Lions carried out tasks from setting up an admin area and putting out signage to direct teams, and by the pool side counting laps completed by the swimmers for 5 hours on Saturday and 8 hours on Sunday, Lions and their wives carried out the administration of booking in all the teams on time and accounting for all the sponsorship money raised. Lion wives also ran a successful tombola in the All-Stars Cafe area for the 2 days. The event could not be run without the support of team captains, who organize the swimmers and get them to the event on time, and parents who support the teams with car rides and enthusiastically encourage the young swimmers during the swim.

In January we gather in the All-Stars Cafe for a presentation of shields and medals which are presented to teams in various categories and age groups. The purpose of the event is to raise money for worthy causes, so at this presentation we pass on the cheques that the teams have raised to the team captains. This year's total was over £16,918 of which over £12,662 was returned to the teams for worthy causes. Wareham Lions Club takes 25% of the money raised to pay for pool costs and admin, the rest is used in the community for worthy causes.

SWIM FOR CHARITY EVENT 2026

The event this years takes place on Saturday 10th Oct & Sunday 11th Oct at Purbeck Sports Centre.

Who do you want to raise money for this year?

Contact john.goodwin1951@outlook.com

Last year the Long Family (Wendy and her daughters Zelig and Katie.....) raised £184 by swimming in the event which the split between Macmillan Cancer Unit at Christchurch Hospital and Dementia Friendly Purbeck. Wendy and Zelig presented a cheque to George Potheary, Dementia Friendly Purbeck at the Purbeck Sports Centre. They were motivated to swim because a family member is living with dementia. They'd also swam in 2024 when they raised £280 which was also donated to Dementia Friendly Purbeck.



BRIC A BRAC SALE

10.00 – 12.00 Sat 11TH April

The Corn Exchange, North Street, Wareham BH20 4NS



Corfe Castle Community Library Free To Join

Volunteer led, Community Library, providing Corfe Castle with Library and Information Services. Supported by Dorset Council.

Opening Hours:

Monday 3.00pm–5.00pm
Wednesday 10.00am–12.00pm
and 3.00pm–5.00pm
Friday 3.00pm–5.00pm
Saturday 10.00am–12.00pm
(Closed on Public Holidays)

- Free hot drink and biscuits every session
- Free Car Park



Browse and borrow
free books
Collect
reservations



Free Wifi
Free Public Computers
Printing & Laminating
at cost



Join us for events
throughout the
year



67 East Street, Corfe Castle. BH20 5EE
Phone: 01929 480760 (during library open hours)
Email: corfecastlelibrary@gmail.com

Registered Charity
Number 1162163

News from Corfe Castle Community Library

Enjoy a warm welcome in Corfe Castle Community Library - a cuppa and biscuit are always on offer during our open hours. We have a well stocked children's area, public PCs, teen and adult fiction and a selection of non-fiction including local history, biographies, well-being, travel, cookery, gardening etc. If we don't have what you are looking for, we can order it for you from libraries throughout the South West of England. You can also drop off books borrowed from any other Dorset Library which we can return on your behalf and best of all FREE PARKING!

All welcome to our free (donations always welcome) talks in the library for April & May 2026

April 16th @ 2pm

The Radioactive Life of Marie Curie with Alan Neal

Marie Curie revolutionized scientific understanding of radioactivity, discovered the elements polonium and radium, and became the first person to win two Nobel Prizes. Join Alan for a fascinating insight into the life of this incredible woman.

May 21st @ 2pm

From Beds to Burials with Lyn Fegan

After running a very successful hotel in Swanage with her husband, Lyn made a life-changing decision to become a family celebrant and she will be sharing her uplifting experiences taking funerals, weddings and more.

Wareham Whalers recently began their tour of this year's concert at the wonderful Durlston Castle in Swanage. We had a great audience who enjoyed our "Shanties and Strange Stories" show. In this concert we explore many of the superstitions and myths that sailors held in the 18th and 19th centuries. Find out why sailors wore one gold earring when they went to sea, a practice that was even made into law in Scotland for fishermen. Why did sailors not cut their hair or nails whilst at sea and what was the caulking kiss? This and many more superstitions will be explained and further illustrated by the singing of appropriate shanties.



Wareham Whalers Present..



Whalers will entertain you with stories and songs which explore some of the strange beliefs and superstitions held by sailors in the 18th and 19th centuries.

6th March	Durlston Castle, Swanage
27th March	North Perrott, Somerset
26th April	Hamworthy Club, Poole
11th Sep	St Mark's, Highcliffe
16th Aug	Arundells, Salisbury
30th Oct	Lymington Sailing Club
4th Oct	Wareham Parish Hall

For further information please email:
wareham.whalers@gmail.com
or ring 07923020946

Purbeck Film Festival celebrates 30 years with Encombe House anniversary event

The Purbeck Film Festival will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2026, launching the milestone year with a special celebratory event at Encombe House.

Founded to bring a rich mix of cinema to Purbeck, the festival now screens films in distinctive venues across the region each October, while its popular Cinema Under the Stars series brings outdoor screenings to iconic locations including Corfe Castle and the Blue Pool.

Reflecting on the milestone, festival patron Sir Mark Rylance described the event as “quite remarkable”, saying that at a time when many cinemas and festivals struggle to survive rapid technological change, small festivals like Purbeck are a “godsend for filmmakers” that help nurture the human heart of cinema.

The anniversary year will launch with a special Afternoon Tea at Encombe House on Saturday 16 May, where guests will enjoy a garden stroll and entertainment from the Fingask Follies.

Andrea Etherington, Chair of the Purbeck Film Festival, said:

“Reaching 30 years is a wonderful moment for the festival and for everyone who has supported us along the way. We’re thrilled to begin our anniversary celebrations at Encombe House, one of Purbeck’s most beautiful settings. Our sincere thanks go to James and Arabella Gaggero for so generously opening their home to help us mark this special occasion. Special thanks are also extended to the Dick Odgers Memorial Trust whose generosity has made this event possible.”



Photo: Encombe House copyright Richard Brown 2025

More information and tickets are available via the Purbeck Film Festival website: www.purbeckfilm.com.



Corfe Community Kitchen

Soup 'n Pud

A choice of 2 soups and 2 puds with custard

Corfe Castle Village Hall

Saturday April 4th '26, 12.30 – 1.45pm

**Come and join local friends for a simple, healthy, filling and sustainable
Free Lunch**



This venture is provided by volunteers, on a not-for-profit basis, in a friendly environment for local residents to increase community spirit. If you wish to make a donation, either of food or money please feel free but it is not obligatory.

March was again an excellent month for the numbers of diners attending. We had several new faces including a lovely couple from Canada, visiting the area, who had seen the lunches advertised and thought it was too good an opportunity to miss! Everyone enjoyed the 2 soups and puds and we even ran out of trifle on the first serving, as it was so popular.

We are now looking forward to April and our lunch on Easter Saturday. So as you would imagine there may be the odd chocolate egg about! If you would like to dress in your spring finery that would be lovely but it is not imperative but Easter bonnets will be most acceptable. We will be serving an old favourite of leek and potato soup and using the butternuts kindly given to us by a villager in the other soup. The puds we will keep a secret!

We are always so grateful for the help and support we get from our volunteers, without whom we would be unable to function. However we are always happy to welcome more into the fold as well as additional diners

We must, at this point, thank The Village Bakery for donating the bread rolls over the last 3.5 years. It has been so kind of Joan and Nigel. We wish them all the best in their retirement and look forward to welcoming the new incumbents to the bakery.

WHY DON'T YOU GIVE SOUP 'N' PUD A TRY?



Swanage Medical Practice Patient Participation Group

SystemConnect

The PPG last met on 10 March 2026. One of the issues we discussed was SystemConnect, the new way to contact the Practice online. The Practice started using SystemConnect last October, instead of eConsult, and they would like to encourage all patients to use SystemConnect, where appropriate.

SystemConnect allows you to make admin requests, such as requesting a Fit note or cancelling an appointment, as well as to request medical advice about new or existing health problems and to submit medication queries. You can access SystemConnect via the Practice website on your smartphone, tablet or desktop computer.

Urgent dental support

We also discussed what to do if you develop an urgent dental issue.

NHS

Not sure if it's an urgent dental problem?

If you have any of the following problems, you **can still get an urgent dental appointment by calling NHS 111**—even if you don't have a regular dentist:

- ✓ Broken or lost filling or crown
- ✓ Toothache that's not getting better
- ✓ Broken tooth that's causing discomfort
- ✓ Sensitivity or swelling in the mouth
- ✓ Gum problems causing pain or bleeding

You'll be assessed and directed to a local dentist for the right treatment.

Urgent appointments are there to help manage these problems quickly—before they get worse.

Call NHS 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk for urgent or unscheduled dental care.

South West Regional Office

NHS App

The PPG has also been supporting NHS England's campaign to encourage more people to use the NHS App.

There is much more you can do with the NHS App than you may realise:

- You can quickly and easily request your repeat prescriptions
- You can view your GP health record
- You can access your test results

If you turn on notifications, you'll get messages from the NHS, including appointment reminders, as soon as they're sent.

NHS FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Turn on notifications to get messages as soon as they're sent

NHS 1

Tap the NHS App

The PPG will next be meeting at the Surgery on Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 6:00pm.

You can find out more about the PPG, including Minutes of our meetings and our current Priorities, at: www.swanagemedical.org.uk/pages/Patient-Participation-Group.

If you are interested in joining the PPG, please contact Natasha Ritchie, the Practice Manager, or email the PPG directly at ppgswanage@gmail.com.

Dr Margaret Guy
Chair
Swanage Medical Practice PPG
12 March 2026

ACCESS to FOOD

Swanage & Surrounds



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Swanage Pop up Larders

For families: Mondays 9-10am
St Marks School Hall, High Street, BH19 2PH

Open to all: Wednesdays 9.30-10.30am
outside Focus Centre on Chapel Lane
107 High Street BH19 2NB

Register at the larder with proof of address. We reduce food waste and support budgeting by distributing good quality surplus supermarket food at low cost. We have limited capacity for deliveries where needed, please ask. Members say the food really makes a difference. For enquiries email: food4thoughtpurbeck@gmail.com

FOOD BANK



One-off or occasional help from food bank, Self-refer by phone on **07759 230313**. More frequent or ongoing help, a referral needed from Citizens Advice, Social Worker, Mental Health Worker, The Focus Centre, GP or church minister. Open **Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12-2pm at United Reformed Church, High Street, BH19 2NY**. Need help, please call us **07759 230313** in the morning on above days. <https://www.facebook.com/>

COMMUNITY PANTRY



Food waste project collecting good quality food that would otherwise go to waste from supermarkets. Donations always welcome. **Monday mornings 10am-12pm Community Café Herston Village Hall Jubilee Road, Swanage BH19 2SF**

For Pop-Up Pantry follow: <https://www.facebook.com/Swanage-Community-Pantry-100080406136423/> **01929 208376** focuscentre@sandpdt.org.uk

Access to Food in Swanage

Working together to make sure everyone in Swanage and surrounding areas has access to food.

This map shows what community support is available and how you can access them.

There are also **community places** where, for a small donation, hot drinks, refreshments and a warm welcome await you. These include:

Mondays- Herston Village Hall café and citizens advice 10-12. Emmanuel Baptist Church café 10-2

Wednesdays- T-Pot, Rectory classroom 10-12. The Loft Community Centre lunch 12.30-2

Thursdays- Harmans Cross Village Hall café 1st & 3rd 10.30-1. Langton Village Hall monthly 10-11.30

Fridays- United Reform Church café 9-12.

Swanage Library is also a warm space (check latest opening times)

For more information pop into the Welcome Lounge at the Focus Centre or any of the above.

Food for Thought Purbeck, supported by the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, have brought weekly deliveries of good quality, inexpensive food to Swanage since 2023. Members pay a small weekly fee of £6 for families of 3 people or more, £4.50 for couples and single parent families with one child, and £3.50 for a single person, and in return receive fresh fruit and veg, cupboard staples, treats and chilled and frozen food worth several times the fee.

The Monday larder is held at St Marks School 9am - 10 am, and the Wednesday Larder outside the Focus Centre in Chapel Lane, from 9.30 - 10.30.

Photos: Swanage News




Swanage & Purbeck
Development Trust
Charity Reg. No. 1162662

Three New Events for May 2026

The Swanage Town Band are kicking off their summer season of concerts with a new item on their calendar! For the first time ever they are delighted to present a **Spring Concert** in the Swanage Methodist Church on Saturday 16th May at 7pm. As always this will be a FREE concert with a retiring collection for Town Band funds.

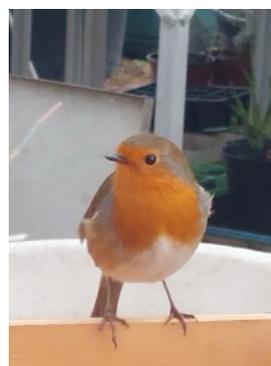
Following closely on from the concert is a **Quiz Night** at the Swanage Royal British Legion on Thursday 21st May at 8pm. Friends and supporters of the band will be most welcome for this fun event which will be a very sociable way to help raise funds for the band. £3.00 entry per person – cash prizes and a raffle.

On Saturday 23rd May at 2.30pm the band will be playing their **first bandstand gig for 2026** during the Swanage Pirate Festival – so it's "Ahoy Me Hearties", "Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum" and plenty of maritime music!

Check out the Band's website for more Summer 2026 gigs: <https://www.swanagetownband.co.uk/>



A promotional poster for the Swanage Town Band Spring Concert. The poster features a blue border with colorful bunting flags at the top. In the center, a blue silhouette of a church roof is positioned above the text "SWANAGE TOWN BAND" in large, bold, blue capital letters. Below this, "SPRING CONCERT" is written in large, bold, pink capital letters. A dark blue rectangular box contains the text "Saturday 16th May 7pm" in white, followed by "Swanage Methodist Church, High Street, Swanage, BH19 2LZ" and "Free admission Retiring collection for band funds" in smaller white text. At the bottom, the website "www.swanagetownband.co.uk" is listed in blue, with a Facebook icon and the text "follow us @swanagetownband" and "Registered Charity Number 1214942" in blue.



We opened at the beginning on March and it has been a very busy beginning to the growing season for us. Compost and seed have all been delivered ready for us to start and we have already sown leeks, broad beans, chard, brussels and so much more. Lobelia, cosmos, lots of herbs etc so we should have an amazing variety at Greengage this year.

We have worked hard to ensure our water supply is well supported by our storage facilities at Greengage and the purchase of a pump system now means we can use our water run off from the roofs of our buildings for watering in the garden. We pay for our water so this should be a really useful contribution to the garden.

Our new garden room is now lined and we should be having services fitted shortly along with a kitchen area. We will then provide good access to the building and we will be renovating our toilet block! Exciting days for Greengage and, hopefully, our Garden Room will be fully open before too long.

Last Friday, the 6th March, saw us organise a team quiz and it was a great evening raising over £500 for Greengage and it seemed to have been enjoyed by all.

Our robin, or robins, continue to come and see us but the oldest one seems to be managing very well with only one functional leg! His appetite, and friendliness seem unaffected and the advice we have been given suggests no intervention in the circumstances. Our robins are precious to Greengage and it is lovely to see them come and spend time with us..

We are open every Tuesday from 12 and every Friday from 10 ... come and see us. You will ALWAYS be welcome!



Swanage Food Bank

We are extremely grateful to local residents and organisations for your food donations and financial support that enable us to help folk in need in Swanage.

If you or someone you know needs one-off or occasional help from the food bank, please self-refer by phoning us on 07759 230313. If more frequent or ongoing help is needed, please get a referral from an agency that is aware of your circumstances - like Citizens Advice, your Social Worker, Mental Health Worker, the Focus Centre, your GP or a church minister.

If you are able to contribute to our stocks this month, the following items would be much appreciated:

Coffee • Honey • Peanut butter • Soup • Jelly and fruit • Tinned fruit • Sweet biscuits • Cheese biscuits • Shampoo • Soap

Our Blue Food Bins for donated items can be found in Budgen's, the Co-op, Costcutters and SPAR. Collection points can also be found in local churches. We welcome gifts of tinned and dried food and drinks - though we currently do have enough pasta and baked beans in our store. Items must be within their Best-by date.

To find out more about making a donation or for other enquiries, please call 07759 230313.

Thank you!

The Friends of Wareham Hospital

PLEASE CAN YOU HELP ?

The Friends of Wareham Hospital are celebrating 60 years of support to the hospital this year during which time there have been many changes both within the NHS and the Hospital but the commitment and dedication of the Friends has never wavered.



My personal connection with Wareham Hospital goes back almost 35 years having been invited to manage both Swanage and Wareham Hospitals together in the early 1990's - a position I declined at that time preferring to concentrate my efforts in Swanage when an opportunity presented to review all services and improve the environment to support all the new services we were able to develop. However organisational change brought about another opportunity to be closely involved with management of both hospitals again (and Purbeck services) in the 2000's. Retirement provided a further opportunity to maintain my links with Wareham Hospital.

For me, Wareham Hospital has always been the 'Cinderella service', not receiving the same level of support as Swanage and yet providing such a wide range of important services for the local community. As a Friends committee we work hard to keep up a positive profile of Wareham Hospital and are determined to sustain the support offered by the Friends to the hospital and wider community but to do this we will need new Trustees and committee members to ensure continuity of the Friends. CAN YOU HELP PLEASE ?

We are actively reviewing our constitution and structure by preparing to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) so that we can continue the good work of the Friends.

We will be holding our **AGM on Saturday 26th September at 0930 followed by a fundraising coffee morning at the Town Hall in Wareham** (a date for diaries) when you would be assured of a warm welcome.

We will also be organising fundraising events in coming months to replenish our funds having used 75% of them to support the transfer of the Purbeck Community Mental Health Team to the hospital site bringing mental health services together in one place - a move that has proved beneficial for patients and staff.

Please do contact us through the hospital or by using our email friendsofwarehamhospital@gmail.com if you would like more information or can help us.

Our garden project work is beginning to show signs of Spring and we will be maintaining our links with the 'Its your neighbourhood' scheme again this year through the RHS Britain in Bloom competition hoping for continuing success when the judges arrive in June. The garden is such a wonderful quiet space for patients, visitors and the wildlife.

We are also seeking to reinstate the lost Chemotherapy clinic at Wareham Hospital by working with the Purbeck Primary Care Network and are most grateful for the support given by the South Dorset MP, Lloyd Hatton, who recently raised the need to restore this clinic in the House of Commons.

Kind regards

Maggie Hardy, Friends Chair

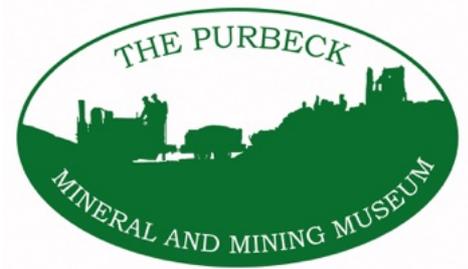
Workshops help to inspire a new generation of volunteers

Six special workshops were organised by the Purbeck Mining Museum as part of Swanage Railway's Community Weekend to provide visitors with a deeper insight into the skills of volunteers and all of the work that goes on behind the scenes at the museum.

Led by Peter Sills, Chairman of the Purbeck Mining Museum, the workshops demonstrated how a Ruston diesel engine was brought back to life in 2021 for operation on the museum's reinstated narrow gauge railway. The restoration entailed a complete rebuild of the locomotive's gearbox requiring the commission and development of a completely new engineering tool. He went on to explain the importance of the routine maintenance programme and how the Ruston is prepared for a day's demonstration pulling wagons on the network of rail tracks around the extensive grounds of the museum.

"Demonstrating our engineering experience with like-minded visitors is always a pleasure," says Sills. "Our workshops proved to be a really invaluable two-way learning exercise where we shared our own specialist knowledge and expertise while also learning from the varied skills and experience of others. They also gave our younger visitors the opportunity to get up close to our locomotives and rolling stock, ask plenty of questions and learn more about the inside workings of a diesel engine to feed their thirst for real hands-on technical information."

The Purbeck Mining Museum is run entirely by volunteers who have been busy over the winter months preparing for the 2026 season. The popular visitor attraction is reopening on the 27-29 March for the Swanage Railway Steam Gala and will be open most days from Easter until October. More details on opening times are posted on the museum's website, www.purbeckminingmuseum.org. This also provides more information on Purbeck's clay mining industry and the various roles and opportunities for volunteers who are always given a warm welcome, even if they are only available for just a few hours every now and then.



Purbeck Mining Museum - Workshops were held in the mining museum's engine shed during Swanage Railway's Community Weekend. Photograph courtesy of Andrew PM Wright.



Focussing on Wellbeing!

Volunteers from the Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust recently conducted a session at the local Co-op. We engaged with members of the community, explaining the services which Wellbeing Swanage offer at the Focus Centre, and showcased the centre's effective signposting services in the Welcome Lounge. Customers participated actively in interactive discussions and reported feeling well-informed by the information provided.

The stand was efficiently run by dedicated volunteers, who represented the trust well. We will continue this effort, as it was rewarding and had a positive impact on the community.

If you would like to get involved in connecting people to services, or find out more about the Trust and Wellbeing Swanage, do visit our website here: <https://wellbeingswanage.org/>

Or find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/wellbeingswanage.org/>



Mayday Singers

Musical Director: John Watkins

Spring Concert

Guest soloist: Rosie Kent (Violin)

Sunday 26th April 2026, 4pm

St George's Church,
Langton Matravers

Tickets £8 on the door

*Whitacre's 5 Hebrew Love Songs,
Holst's Part Songs,
Madrigals, and more!*

Retiring
collection for:



Quiz Night

Friday 17th April 2026

7 pm

All Saints Hall

Proceeds to Art Workshop

Tickets £10

(to include jacket potato, fruit and hot drinks)

Bring your own wine, if you wish

Raffle (please bring cash)

Tickets from Suzanne or Alan Dominy

Phone 01929 475883

e-mail: manager.artworkshop@outlook.com

Come in a team of 4, or join one on the night

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS®

is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. ... Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

This is still a very unsettling time. It is stressful for many people in many new ways. Some people turn to alcohol to help them cope and get through it. This can be more of a danger than a help to some of us. If you think you have a problem with alcohol we can help:

IF DRINK IS COSTING YOU MORE THAN MONEY then we can help you.

**Please telephone our free Helpline today:
0800 917 7650**



Coming Soon:

We have a Stage **Make-Up Workshop** on Monday April 13th! This will be lead by Davinia of the Make-up Academy in Bournemouth, and will be an interactive session covering make-up fundamentals, practical tips, and demonstrations, with plenty of time for questions. It's fine to come along and just watch, but if you'd like to be more involved, come as you are, or – if you have them – please bring along your own basic make-up kit, a small mirror, brushes or applicators, and make-up wipes or tissues. We expect to cover the full range from minimal make-up for outdoor performing, such as Murder Mystery Walks, through to pantomime dames, and it will cover all ages. Who knows who you will be when you go home! This event is at 7pm in Corfe Castle Village Hall as usual.

May Fair, Monday May 25th in the Castle.

Double Act is preparing a short entertainment to present a couple of times in the Castle during the May Fair. It will be a short performance in pantomime or melodrama style, and would be a great opportunity for some of our younger members to have a go without having to learn loads of lines. There will be a few rehearsals at times to suit the cast. It is sure to be great fun for both Double Act members and the enthusiastic audience of Castle visitors! Check for details in the CVN or contact doubleactdramagroup@gmail.com.

'The Cat and the Canary'...

...in a new up-dated and localised version by Dougal Dixon, is to be Double Act's main production in November (19th -21st). There are plenty of parts for willing thespians, and we would especially welcome some young fellows, teenagers to 40s-ish, or anyone of any gender and age who thinks they could look like a young man! What we glean from our Make-up Workshop on April 13th may help of course! Casting will be on Monday evenings May 11th and 18th in the Village Hall at 7pm.

Double Act's AGM:

Several new members have joined the Committee, which will shortly choose a new Secretary and Chairman. The Society is in excellent health, financially and in its active membership, and we always welcome newcomers—why not come along and see if it's for you?

If you would be interested in joining our friendly safe group or for more details, please contact the chairman, David Kemp 01929 480007, or secretary David Watson 01929 481265 - or email doubleactdramagroup@gmail.com
New members of all ages and abilities are always welcome!





HOME START

Wessex

Swanage Seahorses

VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED



Are you passionate about supporting local families and making a real difference in your community?

Join us as a volunteer!

When: Wednesday mornings
Where: Herston Village Hall, Swanage

Friendly, rewarding, and flexible volunteering opportunities.
Full training provided!





Interested? Get in touch today:
office@homestartwessex.org.uk
 01202 574877
homestartwessex.org.uk



Volunteers Needed for Swanage Seahorses Group

Home-Start Wessex is looking for friendly, caring volunteers to join their Swanage Seahorses Group. The group meets on **Wednesday mornings at Herston Village Hall, Swanage**, providing a welcoming space for families and children.

This role is ideal for anyone who enjoys working with families and children and can offer understanding and practical support. Full training is provided, so no formal qualifications are needed. Volunteering with Home-Start Wessex is a rewarding way to make a real difference in your community, meet new people, and gain valuable experience.

If you're interested in helping local families thrive, get in touch with Home-Start Wessex today:

office@homestartwessex.org.uk - 01202 574877 - homestartwessex.org.uk

There for families when they need us most. Because childhood can't wait.

Sandy Hill Arts, Corfe Castle

Find us next to the railway station in Corfe Castle Village

Performance and events

April 11 - Me and My Friends *gig*

April 18- Arty Bazaar

April 25- Sound of Movement Dance/ Music *Workshop and performance*

May 2 - Momoko Gill *gig*

May 17- Will McNicol guitar *workshop and gig*

May 29 - PAW Grace Newcombe *gig*

Exhibitions

April 25-7 May - Sandy Hill Open Exhibition

May 16-30 - Susan Cox *residency and exhibition*

May 23 -7 June - Sandy Hill Arts Group *Exhibition*

Courses and workshops

April - *Easter holiday Zartclub* for young people (*see website for dates*)

April - *Blacksmithing workshops* for young people (*see website for dates*)

April 13-17- *Signwriting course with Terry Smith*

May 16 - *Mandala Drawing course with Pia Elliot*

Find out more on our website www.sandyhillarts.co.uk Contact us via info@sandyhillarts.co.uk

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Purbeck Sounds community partnerships deepen and strengthen as we focus on co-creating initiatives within the community.

Our partnership with Poetry Purbeck and The Mowlem to produce a celebration of local women on International Women's Day, was incredible. The event highlighted 14 women's who inspiring initiatives have deeply impacted Purbeck. Each Guest of Honour opened her heart with courage, vulnerability and tenderness and as she did the audience found themselves in tears of joy, laughter, shared loss and hope. Purbeck revealed itself in a whole new way.

Purbeck Sounds has launched a new show 'Purbeck Women' to interview each guest of honour and ensure everyone has access to their incredible stories.

Maggie and the team were invited to work with the local Langton scouts, to help them achieve their media badges. It was a wonderful evening learning interview techniques and interviewing each other.

Our Youngstars team are growing with new young presenters joining the team from The Swanage School and Purbeck School. The youngsters are enjoying developing their skills and confidence through Purbeck Sounds Youth Program. Whilst having fun the program is designed to support their future careers, under the guidance of Youngstars lead, Pierre Martel.



The Welcome Lounge Celebrates Its First Anniversary

As the Welcome Lounge in Swanage approaches its first anniversary, the team is taking a moment to reflect on a busy and rewarding year.

Since opening its doors in April 2025, the Welcome Lounge has grown into a trusted and friendly space with trained staff and a team of friendly volunteers. Visitors can receive information and signposting to services, groups, and opportunities that can help.

Nearly **300 people** have visited the Welcome Lounge in its first year, each bringing a unique story and set of needs. What has remained constant is the value of simply having time to talk. For many, that supportive conversation has been the first step toward finding solutions, rebuilding confidence, or connecting with their community. One visitor said, "This is an invaluable service. Thank you, I've learnt so much."

Support has included signposting to local clubs and social groups, giving information about where they can get practical support for things like debt or disability and finding support for their mental health.

As the Welcome Lounge marks its anniversary, the team wants to say a huge thanks to the community, partners, and volunteers who make this work possible. Together, we look forward to building on the work of the past year and continuing to offer a warm, supportive space for everyone in Swanage and the surrounding villages.

If you'd like to see what we can do for you, pop into the Lounge on Mondays, Tuesdays or Wednesdays between 10 and 4, or visit <https://wellbeingswanage.org/the-focus-centre/welcome-lounge>

Sinead O'Neill

Welcome Lounge Assistant: Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust



Swanage & Purbeck
Development Trust
Charity Reg. No. 1162662

First, a huge thank you to everyone who responded to the request for knitted teddies to be given to children attending Swanage Hospital's Minor Injuries Unit. As usual, you have responded brilliantly. The teddies will bring comfort and smiles – and help the staff to deliver treatment. A special shout out to Beryl Mitchel who continues to knit endless goods to raise funds for the Hospital – you can see her happy teddies below.



FRIENDS OF SWANAGE HOSPITAL
<https://www.friendsofswanagehospital.org.uk/>

It's a great privilege to be part of the Friends of Swanage Hospital and have the opportunity to work in partnership with community groups, Swanage Hospital staff and Dorset HealthCare to enhance the services provided locally. Here's a flavour of what we've been up to recently:



Monitoring is a significant and important part of our cardiology service to identify patients who need urgent treatment and pacemaker implementation. Until recently, patients were monitored using recorders which needed to be sent away for analysis. Patients needed to take care not to get the equipment wet and the process was rather cumbersome and time consuming. Just before Christmas, the outpatient team made us aware of new mini recorders with waterproof patches which are lighter, can be worn in the shower and which link directly into the Hospital's software system to enable faster analysis. With greater battery life (potentially up to two weeks) they're also ideal for patients experiencing paroxysmal episodes of atrial fibrillation or whose symptoms are infrequent. The initial request was one set of kit, but the Friends asked that the team come back and request more once they had been trialed and if patients and staff found them more comfortable and effective. In January, we were delighted to agree the purchase of two more of these monitors, costing just under £5000 in total and feedback has been very positive.

Another small piece of equipment that makes a big difference is a pachymeter, which is used to determine corneal thickness measurements preoperatively for laser correction procedures and for monitoring of other eye conditions as well as general corneal health assessment. The Friends were pleased to replace the

current pachymeter with a newer model to support the ophthalmology clinics at Swanage Hospital. Next issue, we hope to bring you news of a significant piece of equipment we have purchased to support these clinics.

Dates for your diary

This year's Afternoon Tea is planned, as usual, to take place in the Hospital Car Park and gardens between 2.00 and 4.00pm, with the usual range of stalls offering you the chance to purchase something special or win a prize as well as enjoy the gardens with some delicious cake. If the weather is unkind, we will move to the Catholic Hall in Rempstone Road and inform you all via social media. Our AGM this year will take place on 6 October 2026 in the Emmanuel Baptist Church (more details to follow) and our Autumn Fayre and Coffee Morning will be held on Saturday 14 November 2026 between 10am and 12 noon in the Catholic Hall.

Until next time, take care

Pat, Chair, Friends of Swanage Hospital

Discover The REC – Recovery, Education, Community

The Recovery Education Centre (REC) offers free educational courses and resources that focus on recovery, wellbeing and mental health. It's delivered through a partnership between Dorset HealthCare and Dorset Mental Health Forum, combining the expertise of mental health professionals and people with lived experience.

At the REC, we believe people and communities hold their own solutions and that, through shared learning and choice, everyone can realise their own unique potential. The focus is on shared learning, self-determination and choice — giving you opportunities to explore experiences and develop skills and tools that may support your recovery journey.

Who Can Join

REC courses and online resources are free to attend and available to anyone aged 18 or over who lives in Dorset or who is accessing local healthcare services. The learning space is open and inclusive, welcoming:

- People with personal experience of mental health challenges
- Those accessing mental health services
- Carers, family members and friends
- Supporters, staff or professionals interested in recovery and wellbeing

continued on next page

Types of Courses & Resources

The REC offers three main types of learning:

Face-to-Face Courses

Delivered in community settings across the county — such as libraries, halls and community venues — where you can meet others and share learning in person.

Online Webinars

Live online sessions you can join from your phone, tablet or computer. Webinars are available in different interactive formats to suit your preferences.

Self-Directed Learning Resources

A range of podcasts, videos, worksheets and downloadable materials you can explore in your own time through the REC Learn Online section.

Registration & Enrolment

Before you can attend a course, you'll need to register and enrol with the REC. To register, please visit the [Registration and Enrolment](#) webpage and complete the short online form. Once registered, you'll be contacted to book an enrolment appointment. During enrolment, you'll talk with a tutor about your interests and build an individual learning plan together. Then you will be able to book onto courses and webinars that interest you.

Upcoming Course at the Focus Centre

Early Warning Signs – 5th March 2026 – 13.30 - 16.00

This session gives you a chance to experience the REC's supportive learning environment and explore what mental health and recovery mean in a practical, welcoming setting.

How to Join

Register and enrol using the information above. If you have any questions, please contact the REC office by telephone 01202 584478 or by email dhc.recovery.educationcentre@nhs.net

For more information and to browse all courses and online resources, visit:

<https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services-and-sites/mental-health-and-learning-disabilities/recovery-education-centre>

Rachel Tapping

[Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust | \(sandpdt.org.uk\)](http://Swanage and Purbeck Development Trust | (sandpdt.org.uk))



7 April, 5 May, 2 June, 7 July

10-12 noon

Welcome Lounge, Focus Centre

107 High St, Swanage

Give a Little, Gain a Lot

Would you like to: make a difference, use existing or learn fresh skills, meet new people, have fun and be proud to know that you have helped keep Swanage great?

Local organisations, who need volunteers, have joined together to bring all their volunteering opportunities into one place.

From one-off to regular opportunities

Pop in and meet our friendly Volunteer Champions to find out more or go to

<https://www.sandpdt.org.uk/swanage-volunteer-bureau/>



Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust
and Swanage Area Forum

NEWSLETTER

Community News from Swanage and the Surrounding Villages

Connected, Informed, Supported: Your Community Newsletter

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- 17 Events & Activities
- Mental Health Support
- Wellbeing Services Directory
- Volunteering Opportunities
- Completely FREE Subscription
- Emailed Every 2 Months

JOIN THE MAILING LIST



Wellbeing Swanage | Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust



BIX BEIDERBECKE

Swanage Jazz Club Presentation by Howard Oliver
Thursday 26 March, 7 for 7:30pm
Top Building, Chapel Lane Children's Centre

Jazz cornet player, Bix Beiderbecke, had a short but influential career. His inventive lyrical playing and gift for improvisation resulted in many memorable recordings of the 1920s. The talk will cover a wide range of performances, beginning with the Wolverine Orchestra in 1924 and ending with the Hoagy Carmichael Orchestra in 1930. It will also include his own compositions for piano plus some more recent versions of the recordings he made famous.



A warm welcome to all:

Mondays 10-12 – **Community café with Community Pantry, Citizens Advice, Digital Adviser**

Wednesdays 9.30 - 11 – **Seahorses Carer and Preschool Children/Babies Group**, led by Home-Start

Fridays – **Swanage Youth Club**. Years 6 & 7, 6-7.30. Years 8 & above, 7.45-9.15

First Saturday of the month 10-12 – **Craft Circle**

Last Saturday of the month 10.30-12.30 – **Repair Café**: reduce waste and save money.

Herston Community Picnic 4th May 11-3. Free activities for all the family on Herston Community Field and in Herston Village Hall. Bring a picnic

Contact via Facebook to: Herston Village Hall, Swanage Community Pantry, Swanage Youth Club, Repair Café Swanage & Purbeck



Despite heavy rain and flooded roads, our buses managed to get through to the Seven Stars pub in East Burton for the Club's annual lunch in February. As always, we were treated to delicious food with lots of chat and laughter as all the members and volunteers congregated in a warm and welcoming environment.

SWANAGE DISABLED CLUB

Charity no: 1133375



We have also enjoyed a trip to Holme Nursery on a much sunnier day. The teas in the cafe are always well received and many appreciate the opportunity to buy spring flowers and plants. Our next trip will be to the newly-opened Lidl at Sandford as well as a light lunch at Riva's Hub next door. Food is usually an important part of our trips!

We try to have a speaker once a month and so far this year we have had a visit from Purbeck Ice Cream with samples of their lovely product; Maggie Hardy came along to tell us about her lunch at the Woman of the Year awards. She was nominated as a 'Woman of the Year', well deserved because of her many contributions to the town. In March, the lovely Vanessa Neish came along to explain the importance of exercise, even if limited by disability, and to get us exercising our arms, legs and brains.

Our other Monday afternoon meetings involve us all in dominoes, whist, Scrabble and other games or doing crafts like jewelry making, painting by numbers, colouring or other 'crafty' things.

The mini-buses are kept busy with transport of various groups in town. Our small vehicle, which takes one wheelchair and up to four passengers, is in demand for wheelchair users for appointments at hospitals, surgeries, dentists etc., but also for more social occasions. This needs to be booked in advance and operates solely on donations for the service. To book a trip, please contact the number listed below.

We always welcome new members; disability is not limited to just mobility but also covers hidden disabilities like loneliness, vision problems etc. Do come along and give us a try.

For information about the Club, the mini-buses or the small wheelchair-transport vehicle, please call 07426 928224 or by email to scp.swanlidge@gmail.com.

Swanage Bowls Club

Spring brings in the new season with our Opening Day on 18 April. We play a light-hearted game followed by fish and chips. The season begins in earnest towards the end of the month when our Club teams begin playing in the Dorset leagues and the Bournemouth & District leagues. We hope to build on our successes of last year, in particular 'Swans' winning the top Division of the Bournemouth & District Mixed Triples, 'Dolphins' winning back to back promotion, 'Puffins' gaining promotion and 'Seagulls' maintaining their position.

We also play internal matches, with friendly roll ups on Mondays and Fridays, the Club triples league and our Club Nights on Fridays. Anyone is welcome on a Friday at 4.45 to meet Club members and have a go. The Club has a great social side, such as a themed President's Day, quizzes, meals and entertainment.

We have 2 days of Have-a-Go sessions on 4th and 11th of May. There's a session at 10am and another at 2pm where experienced members can help you understand the basics of the game. We just ask you to wear flat shoes.

For more information please call Barrie on 01929 421162, leave a message via our Facebook page [@swanagebowlsclub](https://www.facebook.com/swanagebowlsclub), or have a look at our website; swanagebowlingclub.co.uk.



Swanage Bowling Club FREE "Have-A-Go" SESSIONS



**Sunday 3rd & 10th May 2026
Either 10am and 2pm**

No need to pre-book. Just turn up!

Come and try this wonderful outdoor game!

Members will be on hand to assist.

Bowls will be provided.

Please wear trainers/flat shoes/no heels.

-Fresh Air - Stay Active - Challenge Yourself

-Make new friends - Easy to learn, tricky to Master

For more information contact: Barrie Tatman, Club Secretary

T: 01929 421162 | W: www.swanagebowlingclub.org.uk

F: [facebook.com/Swanagebowlsclub](https://www.facebook.com/Swanagebowlsclub)

Entrance at Beach Gardens, Northbrook Road or
Cauldon Ave, BH19 1PG

I've found myself in a really difficult financial situation and I don't know where to turn. I was made redundant recently and now I'm finding it hard to keep up with my bills and am getting into debt - what can I do?

Money problems can feel overwhelming, but the most important thing to remember is that you don't have to face this alone. We know that times are incredibly tough for lots of people right now, and Citizens Advice is here to help you find a way forward.

Make sure you've been paid everything you're entitled to by your former employer. [You can check what your rights are on the Citizens Advice website](#). If you're finding it difficult to stay on top of bills, free budgeting tools [like the one on the MoneyHelper website](#) can help you understand what money you have coming in and going out each month, and where you might be able to cut costs. Before you start, try to find your most recent bank statements, payslips, debit and credit card statements or bills, and receipts for things you usually pay for in cash. Make sure you include all your expenses, for example money you spend on your partner or family. If your budget just doesn't add up and you need help to afford essentials like bills and food, you can find out [how to get help with your bills](#) as well as [what cost of living support is available](#) on the Citizens Advice website. Please don't ignore bills or letters about money that you owe. You should collect and organise all debt-related documents to create a comprehensive list of all your debts. It might feel overwhelming when you see everything written down - but try not to worry, the important thing is that you're taking action to sort things out. If you're behind on household bills, prioritise paying your rent or mortgage, plus energy bills and Council Tax first. Not paying these bills has the most serious consequences. [Take a look at the Citizens Advice website](#) for more information about what bills to prioritise and how to manage debts. You can then speak to the organisations you owe money to – they might let you pay smaller amounts or take a break from payments.

For other types of debt like credit cards or loans, gather all the information on what you owe, create a budget, and contact your creditors to set up an affordable repayment plan. This might seem scary, but it's an important first step.

Lots of people miss out on benefits they're entitled to, so it's worth [checking what you can get on the Citizens Advice website](#). Claiming benefits might also let you get access to other financial help like cost of living payments and discounts on energy and transport.

Whatever your situation, you don't have to face this alone - get in touch with a free support service like us at Citizens Advice. Our advisers can help to check if you're eligible for any benefits or financial support, and explore all the options for dealing with your debts.

Contacting your local Citizens Advice

If you're worried about debt and not being able to pay bills, Citizens Advice can help. Come along to one of the local drop-ins where no appointment is needed. Advice is free, confidential and impartial.

Local Drop-in

The Focus Centre, Swanage Drop-in

Starting Tuesday 7th April, Citizens Advice drop-in will move from Swanage Library to The Focus Centre, 107 High Street, Swanage every Tuesday, 10am-12pm. No appointment is needed, just come along and have a chat with our friendly advisers. All of our drop-ins and outreaches can be found on our website here www.edpcitizensadvice.org.uk/get-advice/in-person

Advice Bus

The Advice Bus stops weekly at Swanage Market on a Friday morning, 9.30am-12.30pm and at Corfe Castle at the Residents Car Park, West Street, the third Friday of the month. Next on the 17th April, 15th May and the 19th June 1pm-3pm. Visit our website for all of our bus stop locations www.edpcitizensadvice.org.uk/get-advice/advice-bus

Energy Advice

The Dorset Energy Team provides free energy advice to households across Dorset. They can offer energy efficiency advice, help with billing issues and meter problems. They can also help with supplier questions, prepayment meters, carbon monoxide awareness and provide free CO monitors and advise about available support. The Dorset Energy Bus visits locations around Dorset where Energy Adviser are on hand to answer questions. The bus timetable can be viewed online here www.edpcitizensadvice.org.uk/energy

To speak to an energy adviser, call the Energy Line on 01929 775500, leave a message and someone will return your call, or email: energy@edpcitizensadvice.org.uk.

For more information about Citizens Advice services, including all of our outreaches, visit www.edpcitizensadvice.org.uk or to speak to an Adviser, call the Dorset Adviceline freephone on 0800 144 8848, 10am-4pm weekdays.



Herston ‘Community’ Halt

As nature wakes up, we are ramping up our efforts at the small railway station at Herston. It is called an Halt, as trains are not timetabled to stop at the platform. If you wish to catch a train you must clearly put your arm out to signal to the driver to stop, alternatively, ask the guard to stop the train so you can get off!

This year we have pushed on with the rainwater harvesting project which will gather up to 2000 Litres of rainwater which falls on the tarmac at the railway bridge. The water is routed into tanks for watering the plants during, what we hope will be, a long summer. We have been doing this since 2005, but this work will double the capacity of water which we can save. We look forward to the return of some of our faithful volunteers who tend our gardens; and we are very keen to encourage some new faces into our fold...

There are a number of outstanding projects, including the refurbishment of our 1938 Southern Railway ‘Scenery Van’. It has this name as the 50-foot long vehicle was used for transporting theatre scenery across the land, utilising the very large doors at each end of the vehicle. In the days of old, identical vans were also used for moving parcels, newspapers, other goods and even elephants – I have a photograph of an elephant inside one van used for a circus!

We are arranging an OPEN DAY for Saturday 2nd May between 1000-1600hrs, when we will be delighted to show you around the Halt and its facilities. We are also hoping that some other local community organisations might also join us too. There will be brake van rides which will run up and down the Reception Line at Herston (Please book on the main Swanage Railway website for this ride). There will be refreshments, for a small donation, and the fish will need feeding too! **Please note that there is no vehicle parking at this station**, so please walk over the fields (Herston Village Green), or catch the train from Swanage or another station on the line through Purbeck.

For further information: frank.roberts@swanagerailway.co.uk

Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck Launch Bid to Become UK’s Town of Culture 2028

Cultural Purbeck is excited to be coordinating the bid for Swanage and the Isle of Purbeck to become the UK’s first Town of Culture 2028. This bid celebrates the area’s exceptional creativity, natural beauty, and vibrant community spirit, showcasing why Purbeck is a place of inspiration for residents and visitors alike.

The bid brings together local organisations, creatives, businesses, and community groups to highlight the cultural richness of the region. From exhibitions and theatre performances to live music, festivals, historic sites, and stunning natural landscapes, Purbeck offers an inclusive and dynamic cultural experience that celebrates both creativity and the beauty of its surroundings.

From Stone to Sea – a theme shaped by community

Following a series of workshops and conversations with local groups and community organisations, the bid has adopted the theme “From Stone to Sea”. The theme captures the distinctive geology, natural landscapes, heritage, and creativity of Purbeck, reflecting the ideas, energy, and inspiration shared by the community.

Feedback from the community is helping to shape the focus of the bid, ensuring it reflects the creativity, heritage, and unique experiences that define the area.

“This bid is truly a collaboration with the Purbeck community. The workshops showed just how much passion, creativity, and knowledge exists across the area, and we’re excited to see those ideas at the heart of our plans for UK Town of Culture 2028.”

Debbie Evans, Chair, Cultural Purbeck

For more updates or to share your thoughts on what makes Purbeck unique follow us and tag us on social media @CulturalPurbeck on Instagram and Facebook.



The **Seniors Section of the Isle of Purbeck Golf Club** chose Dementia Friendly Purbeck as their charity for 2025. Mo Andrews and Tim Lench were pleased to receive a cheque for £1065 at the club from the Seniors Captain, Barry Moorhouse who was supported by other members of the section. Mo thanked the members for their support.

On Wednesday 11th February Mike Bonfield, Chairman Dementia Friendly Purbeck received a generous donation of £830 from Paula Lawton-Archer, Chair of **Purbeck Runners** and Greg Bemment, organiser of the **Purbeck 10k**, supported by other members of the club before they set out on a training run. £500 was raised from the 10k and a further £330 raised from the members themselves at their Christmas awards evening. The money was donated in appreciation of one of their founder members who benefited greatly from support from Dementia Friendly Purbeck.

Swanage Town Band were delighted to have raised more than £1,500 for Dementia Friendly Purbeck. Mike Bonfield, Chairman of Dementia Friendly Purbeck, personally came to a band practice to thank the band.



Dementia Friendly Purbeck



We are a local group who raise funds to support families in the community living with Dementia

'Singing For Pleasure Group'
'Forget Me Not Clubs'
'Community Garden'
'Specialist Dementia Admiral Nurse'

Contacts for more information:

Email: dfpurbeck@icloud.com

Telephone no: 07831 156240

Website: www.dementiafriendlypurbeck.org



DEADLINE

for contributions to the June / July 2026 issue of the Newsletter

MONDAY 11 MAY 2026

Photograph by Gwenda Yeomans