

# The Lychgate



New Renters' Rights Act.  
New responsibilities for landlords.

First phase of implementation from May 1 2026.

With the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act, many landlords are choosing full property management to ensure they remain fully compliant and protected.

The first phase of the legislation includes:

- The abolition of Section 21
- A move to indefinite tenancies with no fixed end date
- Rent increases limited to once per year

Now is the time to review how you manage your rental property.

Humphrey & Brand's experienced lettings team are ready to advise you on your next steps, guide you through the new legislation, and manage every detail on your behalf with confidence and care. Scan the QR code to learn more about the Renters' Rights Act and how we can help you stay compliant.

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SCAN FOR OUR



IN-DEPTH GUIDE



The magazine for the people and community of Long Ditton



**ST MARY'S LONG DITTON**

**PALM SUNDAY**

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

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

8pm Holy Communion and Tenebrae

**GOOD FRIDAY**

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

**EASTER DAY**

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

**REGULAR SERVICES AT ST MARY'S**

**Sundays:**

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

**Wednesdays:**

10.00 am Holy Communion followed by Coffee Club

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**Prayer Chain**

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

[prayerchain@stmaryslongditton.org.uk](mailto:prayerchain@stmaryslongditton.org.uk)

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

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**An after-Easter prayer**

Don't leave our Lord amidst the lilies  
 Within a hallowed sphere  
 Don't praise Him only in your churches  
 In Easter hymn and prayer...

Keep Him beside you through  
 The business of ordinary days,  
 In the common place encounters  
 Along the humdrum ways.

Our Master told us very simply  
 What He would have us do....  
 He taught: "Love one another  
 Even as I love you."

**By Elsie Campbell**

## FROM THE REGISTERS

**Baptism of:** Jemma Swallow



**Renewal of wedding vows:** Dennis and Teresa Hyde

**Funeral of:** Peter Stuart-William  
Peter Davies



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### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Fri 10th April 1pm Friendship lunch in the Community Hall
- Wed 15th April 8pm BookBox - Frances Quinn on her new book - 'The Lost Passenger'. Details page 4
- Fri 17th April 2pm Film Friday
- Fri 1st May 1pm Friendship lunch in the Community Hall
- Fri 15th May 2pm Film Friday
- Wed 20th May 8pm BookBox - Baroness Sayeeda Warsi - talks About her book 'Muslims Don't Matter'.
- Sat 30th May 2pm BookBox Special - Mary Turner, creator of the Thunderbird puppets join us in the Community Hall. Entry by ticket only—on sale now
- ADVANCE NOTICE**
- Sat 4th July 8pm Concert in church - 'The Great American Song Book'- back by popular request - 'The Songbirds' and friends present a selection of songs to celebrate American Independence Day - tickets £15 - call 020 8398 5322 from 4th May to book

**The Rectory, 5 Church Meadow  
Long Ditton, KT6 5EP**  
Tele: 020 8398 1583  
email: rector@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

Dear Friends,

Easter is the original plot twist. One moment, the disciples are grieving, the world feels heavy, and hope seems lost. The next - the tomb is empty. Death has been outwitted, hope is back, and life has pulled off the ultimate plot twist. If that doesn't make you do a double take, nothing will!

It's tempting to think of Easter as just another story we've heard countless times but the empty tomb isn't a relic; it's an invitation. It asks us to look at our own lives and notice the places we've written off as "done" or "lost." Maybe it's a friendship that needs mending, a dream we thought had faded, or even a morning when getting out of bed feels like climbing a mountain. Resurrection whispers: "Not over yet."

And let's be honest - there's something wonderfully funny about it too. Who expects life to rise after death? Who imagines hope springing up in the most unlikely places? Easter's humour is in its audacity. It reminds us that God delights in surprises, in turning despair into joy, and in giving us a second (or third, or fourth) chance when we least expect it.

So this Easter, let's lean into the unexpected. Let's laugh at the absurdity, marvel at the miracle, and carry a little of that resurrection energy into ordinary days because if life can burst from a sealed tomb, surely it can burst into our hearts, our communities and our routines.

Easter isn't just a story to remember - it's a reality to live. And like every great plot twist, it changes everything.

Easter blessings

## REGULAR GROUPS AT ST MARY'

### Friendship Lunch

Friday 10th April and Friday 1st May at 1pm - £8 per person  
To book call 020 8398 1184

### Babes and Tots

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

### Film Friday

Friday 17th April and Friday 15th May at 2pm

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

## BOOKBOX

**Wed 15th April 8pm** - To mark the anniversary of the sinking of The Titanic—on the very day - we are delighted to welcome Frances Quinn to host the launch of her new novel about the famous ship. 'The Lost Passenger' tells the story of someone who chose to change their destiny on the night the ship sank. Book is available from Regency Bookshop and Frances will kindly sign copies on the night

**Wed 20th May 8pm** - Baroness Sayeeda Warsi will talk about her book 'Muslims Don't Matter'. She is a lawyer for racial justice and has been consistently voted one of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world. She was co-chair of the Conservative Party from 2010-12 and now sits as an independent member of the House of Lords

**Sat 30th May 2pm BookBox Special** - Mary Turner, creator of The Thunderbirds joins us in the Community Hall. Entry by pre-purchased ticket only - on sale in church now!

**Tickets available in church, on the door  
or through the church website**

**These events are held in t Mary's Community Hall  
followed by refreshments**

## ST MARY'S CHURCH CONTACTS

Ministry Team	The Rev'd Dr. Kuhan Satkunanayagam	020 8398 1583 (Day off -Tuesday)
Associate Priest	The Rev'd Prof Alison Baverstock	020 8546 9267
Churchwardens	John Howe Felix Deer	020 8399 4887 07977 112 920
Pastoral Team	<i>Call us if you need someone to listen or talk with you</i>	
Pastoral Assistants	Cathy Doyle Joanne Hall Diana Jemmett Kenneth Mould	020 8398 0715 020 8398 5637 020 8398 1184 020 8339 0933
Sunday Club		children@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Churches Together	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
Director of Music	Julia Bowyer	music@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Church Electoral Roll	Lucy McMullan	office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Flowers	Timbo Rennie	07961 137 381
Sacristan	Val Tanner	07771 817 760
Stewardship Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
PCC Hon Sec	Penny Fussell	020 8672 0838
PCC Hon Treasurer	Sarah Carvalho	treasurer@stmaryslongditton.org.uk
Parish Office & Community Hall	Mandy Ali The Parish Office Church Road	020 8339 0008 office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk

**www.stmaryslong ditton.org.uk**

**LONG DITTON  
GENERAL CONTACTS**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Sugden Road Allotments	Mark Barwick	markbarwick@yahoo.com
Babes 'n' Tots	Cathy Doyle	020 8398 0715
LD Residents' Assn	Mark Herbert	020 8398 6037
LD Garden Club	Sue Corb	07766 742 370
Village Hall	Michelle Aveson	07804 057589
Rainbows	Lesley Sullivan	07801 440 510
Brownies (Wednesday)	Lesley Sullivan	07801 440 510
Brownies (Wednesday)	Rache Bowie	07786 991469
Guides	Fay Tiplady	07486 696167
Rangers	Georgie Sibley	07885 540472
Dittons Scouts	<a href="https://dittonsscouts.com">https://dittonsscouts.com</a>	
LDSM Junior School Sugden Road, KT7 0AD	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 1070
LD Infant School Ditton Hill Road, KT6 5JB	Sarah Martin (Head)	020 8398 4398
Long Ditton Youth Club	Glenn Sampson	07588 825 917
Ditton Bridge Club	Redvers Cunningham	020 8398 4338
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Jeremy Huntingford	07876 171 899
Surbiton Bowls Club	Keith Stedman	07543 095 070
Lychgate Editor	Janet Burton	07810 810 822
Dittons & Neighbourhood Care		020 8398 8600
Citizens Advice Bureau Esher	01372 464770	
Elmbridge Borough Council	01372 474474	
Elmbridge Dial-A-Ride	01372 474944	
Samaritans Kingston	0330 09405717	

**ST MARY'S 100 CLUB 22 RESULTS**

**WINNING NUMBERS**

**FEBRUARY**

1st prize No.52  
2nd prize No.100  
3rd prize No.23

**MARCH**

1st prize No.45  
2nd prize No.38  
3rd prize No.87

**Congratulations to all the winners!**

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**What does your child know about red squirrels?**

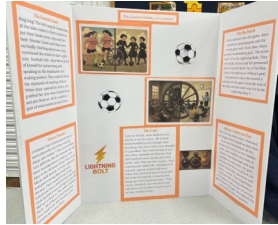
Sadly, red squirrels are now so rare in Britain that many of our children are not even sure what they are. A recent study found that one in 10 children are unable to even identify a red squirrel when shown a picture of one. And a third of British children do not know that red squirrels live in the UK.

It all means that our native species of squirrel is at risk of being forgotten as the larger grey American invader takes over.

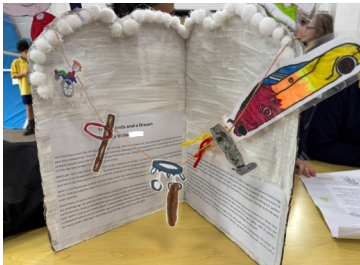
In order to combat this trend, Center Parcs, in collaboration with The Wildlife Trusts, has launched a campaign to create a red squirrel emoji. The aim is to help increase awareness of the species among our young people.



On 10 February, Long Ditton St Mary's buzzed with literary excitement as 35 young authors competed in the school's exciting 500 Words Competition. Launched in 2011, 500 Words is the UK's largest children's writing competition. Since it began, children have submitted over one million stories, totalling more than 500 million words.

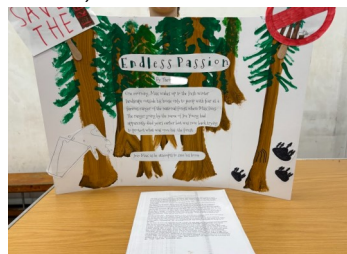


The school hall was transformed into a vibrant gallery, where participants proudly showcased their 500-word masterpieces alongside stunning original illustrations. Throughout the morning, student authors stood by their displays, fielding questions from curious peers and receiving well-deserved praise for their creativity.



While the standard of work across every year group was truly exceptional, twelve talented winners - three from each year - were selected for their particularly impressive storytelling. These top authors have secured a superb prize: an exclusive trip to the Odeon to see the new film Hoppers.

Whether they were writing tales or admiring the work of others, it was a day that celebrated the incredible imagination of the entire school community. Congratulations to all our budding writers. We look forward to more stunning narratives in the future, from our talented pupils at LDSM.



dedicated Elmbridge Councillors and shared Surrey County Councillor, and will gain two Unitary Authority Councillors, which will be shared across Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood, and Weston Green. Local elections in May 2026 will elect these two new Unitary Authority Councillors, who will shadow existing councillors until April 2027, when they will assume their full councillor roles and duties for four years.

### LDRA Committee

We are seeking new volunteers, so if you are interested in a position on the LDRA committee, please contact Mark Herbert (Vice Chair - [mark.herbert@longditton.org](mailto:mark.herbert@longditton.org)) or Paul Bartlett (Treasurer - [paul.bartlett@longditton.org](mailto:paul.bartlett@longditton.org)).

### LDRA on Facebook

The LDRA Facebook page continues to grow in popularity and has over 2,700 members. It is a great source of local information. You can join by searching FB for 'Long Ditton Residents Association' and requesting membership. Please read and agree to the FB page rules to be accepted.

### Monthly LDRA Committee Meetings – Community Hall

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

### Local Police

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

### Help us to help you!

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



### Taylor Wimpey development proposal on Long Ditton Green Belt

Taylor Wimpey lodged a planning application (2025/2018) with Elmbridge for a development comprising of around 144 homes on the Green Belt land extending from Hill Park Roses to the summit of One Tree Hill. This application has sought to justify the reclassification of the land as 'grey belt' and to secure approval for development. Taylor Wimpey continue to provide revisions and updates to their application attempting to address the issues raised in public comments and consultee responses. There is no planning committee date set at this time, but is expected to be Spring/Summer 2026

### Hook Park development proposal on Chessington Green Belt

Housebuilder Poppymill submitted an outline planning application for a development of 2,000 homes on Green Belt land adjacent to Chessington Equestrian Centre, next to the A3. (Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames app # 25/02749/OUT and EBC app # 2025/2765), arguing for the land's reclassification as 'grey belt' and approval for development. The LDRA is opposed to building on Green Belt land and is particularly concerned that this proposal would result in significant traffic congestion in Long Ditton and Hinchley Wood, due to the proposed new roundabout on the A309 and this being the main access/egress point for the development. <https://hook-park.co.uk/>

### LDRA Annual General Meeting

All residents are invited to attend the LDRA AGM which will be held on Wednesday 13th May at the Long Ditton Village Hall in Ewell Road 8.15pm. Our ward councillors (EBC & SCC) will be attending – which provides the opportunity to ask them questions. Many local issues will be covered like the new threat to our Green Belt (see above), Local Government reform (see below), street maintenance, pot holes, parking, recreation ground and other residents' concerns.

### Surrey County Council Reorganisation

Surrey County Council will be divided into two Unitary Authorities called East Surrey and West Surrey. Elmbridge Borough Council will cease to exist from April 2027 and will be merged with Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Tandridge and Reigate & Banstead Borough Councils to form the 'East Surrey Unitary Authority'. Long Ditton will lose its three

## What's sticky, orange and worth preserving?



This month sees National Marmalade Week (18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April). If you really want to celebrate, go to Dalemain Mansion and Gardens in Cumbria, where they hold the World Marmalade Awards and Festival. It celebrates, preserves and promotes artisanal marmalades, with thousands of entries. (Even Paddington Bear will be in attendance!)

If you like marmalade, ever wonder where it comes from? One tradition traces it to a storm-damaged Spanish ship which took refuge in Dundee Harbour in 1700. It was full of Seville oranges that the captain was desperate to sell before they went mouldy. A local down-on-luck merchant, one James Keiller, bought the lot. He didn't know what to do with the oranges either, but fortunately he had a resourceful wife. She set about turning a shipload of Seville oranges into a preserve, and so the first marmalade factory was born.

Marmalade has been at the heart of British breakfasts for centuries. Winston Churchill fought the Second World War on it (washed down with a flute of Pol Roger each morning). DH Lawrence wrote novels on it. Paddington Bear's sandwiches were all marmalade. If you also want to get your fingers sticky, visit: [www.marmaladeawards.com](http://www.marmaladeawards.com).



## The history of our chocolate

Chocolate. Just a mention of the word can trigger off all kinds of emotions: craving, greed, passion. Few foods have the ability to get such a hold on people. As you buy your Easter eggs and bunnies and whatever else this month, here are some of the facts of chocolate:



**Where does chocolate come from?** Chocolate is made from the seeds of the tropical cacao tree, *theobroma cacao*. The Greek word 'theobroma' means literally 'food of the gods'. The Cacao Tree is found in Latin America.

**Who first discovered it?** The Aztecs. The cacao beans were used to prepare a hot, frothy beverage with stimulant and restorative properties, something like hot chocolate.

**Who was (probably) the first chocoholic?** The Emperor Montezuma. He drank 50 goblets a day of the frothy drink.

**Who used chocolate as currency?** The Aztecs. 100 cacao beans would buy a slave; 12 cacao beans bought the services of a courtesan

**When did chocolate as we know it today begin?** Surprisingly, not until 1879. That year Rodolphe Lindt had the inspired idea of triglyceride cocoa butter. The cocoa butter in chocolate contains saturated fat, but a normal level of consumption doesn't have any bad effects.

**At what point does a chocolate lover become a chocoholic?**

It is generally considered to be when a person feels impelled to consume 12 or more 60 gram bars of chocolate per week. Chocolate contains its own cannabinoid (a chemical that prolongs pleasurable sensations) and when you eat chocolate, there is an increased blood flow in areas of the brain which are also activated by addictive drugs such as cocaine. But scientists agree that occasional over-indulging will cause no long-term problems... except perhaps around your waistline!

**How to get the best from your chocolate:** Keep your chocolate cool (16 – 18 degrees Centigrade) and in a dry, airtight place. Never put your chocolate in the fridge (if you already have, let it warm to room temperature for a couple of hours before you eat it). Bring out the full flavour of chocolate by drinking water with it. If you are drinking tea or coffee, don't bother with expensive chocolates – you won't be able to appreciate them properly!

what the 'white stone' in Revelation 4 is all about, but let me assure you that to members of our congregation, knowing why the second verse of the National Anthem is no longer sung at our Remembrance Services is of pivotal importance.

At 2.30pm we wake up those who have enjoyed an hour's slumber and totter off home, knowing we have once again done our bit for faith in the parish.

I am sure your own group will also return home after your sessions – even if a digestive biscuit and weak tea is all that has been offered – invigorated and braced to tackle the heathen in the parish. We all take our pleasures in different ways.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

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## Smile lines

**When you mix children and religion...**

*You get some unexpected gems. The following are extracts from religious exam papers...*

In the first book of the Bible, Guinnesses, God got tired of creating the world, so He took the Sabbath off.

Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of Ark because Noah built an ark. The animals came on in pears.

The Jews are a proud people and throughout history they've had trouble with unsympathetic genitals.

Moses led the Jews to the Red Sea where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.

The Seventh Commandment is: Thou shalt not admit adultery.

Moses died before he ever reached Canada.

Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

St Paul cavorted to Christianity down the Damascus Road. There he preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.

## St James the Least of All

### On the perils of small study groups

The Rectory  
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

So, you are about to run an Alpha course in your parish; I am sure your bishop will be delighted. I remember him from my Oxford days. He was just starting his course as a gangly undergraduate when I was finishing my doctorate on Eusebius.

I recall him as a keen rugby player who took early morning dips in the Isis, who led intense discussions on Saint Paul's theology of 'the body' over cups of cocoa in the evenings in his rooms and who spent his holidays laying paths for the National Trust in the Lake District while lodging in Youth Hostels. He's exactly the sort of person who will empathise with your ministry – hearty, enthusiastic and overflowing with compassionate intensity. We were not close friends.

We tend not to go in for those sort of things, here at St James the Least of All, preferring matters a little more relaxed and understated. If we ever do hold discussion groups (and they are a regrettable necessity during Lent), they always start with a good lunch, finishing with coffee and one of Mrs French's excellent Madeira cakes. Once we have removed from the table, those who manage to stay awake will start to tackle the chosen topic.

However, we always seem to veer off to discussing more interesting matters, such as why Colonel Chorley is never allowed to sing solos in the choir anymore, or who moved Mrs Cholmondeley's flower arrangement from the font the previous week. Apparently, she has given notice that her weekly contributions on the plate will be much reduced unless an appropriate apology is received.

These matters may not seem as important to you as deciding

## National Parks fortnight 4<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April

This month would be a good time to visit at least one of our 15 National Parks, and to appreciate once again the role they play in conserving our environment and encouraging people to enjoy outdoor activities.

Just some highlights:

**Oldest:** The Peak District was designated as the first UK National Park in 1951.

**Largest Park:** Cairngorms National Park in Scotland, covering 1,748 square miles.

**Smallest:** New Forest National Park, at only 150 square miles.

**Most populated:** South Downs National Park, with about 12,000 people living within it.

**Most visited:** Lake District National Park, with about 18 million visitors a year.

**Longest coastline:** Pembrokeshire Coast National Park with a coastline of 186 miles

Altogether, there are ten National Parks in England, three in Wales and two in Scotland:

**England** – Dartmoor, Exmoor, the New Forest, the South Downs, the Broads, the Peak District, the Yorkshire Dales, the Lake District, the North Yorkshire Moors and Northumberland.

**Wales** – Snowdonia, the Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast.

**Scotland** – Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and Cairngorms.

Altogether, the National Parks make up roughly 10% of the total landmass in the UK.



## Sudan War – 15<sup>th</sup> April to mark third anniversary



This month brings a tragic milestone – the third anniversary of the vicious civil war in Sudan. Since the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) began fighting in 2023, more than 12 million people have been internally displaced and more than four million refugees have fled to neighbouring countries. Now a staggering 33.7 million people (two-thirds of the population) need humanitarian aid.

Of these, more than 21 million face high levels of food insecurity.

Sudan is the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. It is also the largest and fastest displacement crisis. No end is in sight, as both SAF and RSF leaders have regional backers and both continue to profit from Sudan’s war. Meanwhile, the country is in chaos: civilians and infrastructure are often attacked; sexual violence is widespread; and forced child soldier recruitment is common. With 70% of Sudan’s hospitals destroyed, millions have no access to medical care. Cholera and other diseases are spreading fast.

Several Christian relief agencies are still operating in Sudan or neighbouring countries. If you would like to help, you might consider supporting:

**Christian Aid:** Working through local partners to provide emergency cash, water, and sanitation to over 20,000 families in Sudan, while also supporting refugees in South Sudan.

**World Vision:** Providing food assistance and water, particularly in Chad for Sudanese refugees, serving around 70,000 on a daily basis.

**CAFOD:** Delivering emergency aid and repairing water pipelines.  
**Barnabas Aid:** Supporting Christian refugees fleeing the conflict.

## Dawn chorus

If you sleep with your bedroom window open, you will know all about the dawn chorus around now. The birds are busy establishing their territorial rights, and the ‘early birds’ have probably already selected a nest site and started building.



The blackbird builds a solid cup of twigs, plant stems and leaves, lined with a thick skin of mud covered with finer grasses and leaves. The long-tailed tit forms a soft hollow ball of mosses, hair and wool, with a tiny hole as entrance.

The wrens do it differently, with the male wren sometimes building several nests before his finicky mate will accept one. He gets his revenge, though, because he sometimes installs a second wife in one of the rejected sites.



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## Our obesity is costing us millions

66% per cent of UK adults are now overweight or obese. That is according to recent NHS England figures. Around 30% of these are officially obese, with a Body Mass Index of 30 or above.

It is affecting our chairs, our ambulances and even our coffins. Furnishing companies are getting orders to provide bigger chairs. Airports provide wider seating. We now have bariatric ambulances with double-width stretchers to accommodate patients. Additionally, our fire fighters are given special training on how to rescue people whom they can no longer lift.

One doctor at the University of Cambridge explained what is happening: “We are surrounded by cheap calories, and they are available in more places.” Meanwhile, obesity has become a huge public health issue: it is the main cause of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and strokes. Treating weight-related diseases is now costing the NHS an estimated £11.4 billion a year.

## What home gadgets do you regret buying?

You know what they are: those things you never knew you needed until you saw one in an advert. Then suddenly you felt that life would never be complete without one.



So, you brought home the spiraliser that makes vegetables look like spaghetti; the pasta maker that you can't quite figure out how to use; the ice-cream maker that makes everything sticky and helped you put on another three pounds; the robot vacuum which terrorises the cat. As for the bread maker, well, at least it makes a good shelf on the kitchen counter.

If this is you, you are not alone. A recent survey by Saga has found that 65% of us have experienced 'gadget regret'. It occurs when we buy something and then wonder why we ever bothered, because who needs it anyway?

Top of the list of regrets is the spiralizer – 62% of us woke up one morning to realise that no one needs vegetables to look like spaghetti. Second place belongs to digital picture frames, which 52% of us regret buying. After that comes the pasta maker (45%), the ice-cream maker (42%), VR headsets (35%), the bread maker (31%), the internet-connected exercise equipment (31%) and finally, the robot vacuum (29%).



What do we do with all this stuff? 46% of us keep it, even when we don't want it. 15% of us try and sell the things, while a desperate 14% of us simply throw them away and 19% of us grimly hang on to them for a year or so, before passing them on to an unsuspecting friend.

## Remembering the musical genius of Richard D'Oyly Carte



It was 125 years ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1901, that Richard D'Oyly Carte, theatrical impresario, died. He built the Savoy Theatre and the Palace Theatre in London, managed some of the most important theatrical stars of the era and founded a touring opera company.

Best known now for his association with Gilbert and Sullivan, Carte operated during the late Victorian age as a talent spotter/agent and theatrical impresario, as well as building a hotel empire. Among his many clients were Jacques Offenbach, Clara Schumann, James McNeill Whistler, Matthew Arnold and Oscar Wilde.

Carte was born in 1844 in Soho but when he was a boy the family moved to Dartmouth Park in Islington, North London, where he was brought up in a large, detached house by an artistic family who spoke French at home two days a week. The name D'Oyly is French/Norman, and the family also had Welsh ancestry. Musically gifted, Carte studied violin and flute from an early age, then took up composing.

While risqué French musicals were popular on the London musical stage in the 1870s, Carte felt that wholesome, skilful English comic opera could take over. So, he recruited dramatist W S Gilbert and composer Arthur Sullivan, whose first joint venture was the short, experimental *Trial by Jury*. This became a huge success and led to the 13 'Savoy' operas, whose clever wordplay and magical tunes exhibited such staying power that they are still in constant demand today.

To exploit his 'find', Carte founded the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which was run after his death by his second wife, Helen. He also built the state-of-the-art Savoy Theatre and, next to it, the Savoy Hotel. Other hotels followed. Biographer Hesketh Pearson said: "He took what other people thought were risks, but he felt were certainties."

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**Sprinkled Fragments**

At the beginning, she patted the relatives' hands,  
"Don't worry, I'll keep an eye on your Mum and  
make sure she's ok". She thinks she's at college, welcoming new  
students.

**I wondered where she had gone to, where was the mother who  
Reminded us all about birthdays; answered phone calls, and  
rang us,  
Organised all of us.**

She's lost her bag, we search the home, the wardrobe.  
The bed, the lounge, the bathroom, up and down the stairs,  
Keep moving.

**I want her back, I'm in a fog, am I lost?  
The doctor asks, "what is HER name?", "I don't know she says  
But she belongs to me".**

She can't walk, it was her hip, but no help'  
No food either, so took her home, a little sprinkling of speech.  
Carols? Phew, not cold enough!

**I belong to her, I was in her, part of her, she birthed me,  
She's ill now and can't remember my name.  
I know hers', she is Dureen, my mother-child now.**

They rang me at work, she fed herself, amazing, great progress.  
They took a photo and gave me one, I still have it.  
Eating porridge, impatient to eat.

**Then:  
Your Mum has collapsed, I sit beside her and sing.  
I read her poetry and hold her hand, I eat my sandwich; and she  
wakes up and says, 'That's MINE'. She says a poem with me, all  
the words, so there are still – some sprinkled fragments of her.**

**Sue Scott**

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Long Ditton Residents' Association  
(LDRA)  
[www.longditton.org](http://www.longditton.org)



Contact: Mark Herbert Tel: 020 8398 6037

We aim to:

- Preserve Long Ditton from over development
- Maintain the character of the district
- Improve the amenities and defend our Green Belt
- Keep in close contact with our councillors

*If you share these aims please help us -  
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*The Association is non-political and non-sectarian*

*Committee meetings are held at 8pm on the first  
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*All residents are welcome!*



## Come to Thrive Club

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Call Hall Manager Mandy Ali on 020 8339 0008 or email office@stmaryslongditton.org.uk



# Share joy Grow hope Fight hunger

Join the fun this Christian Aid Week, 10-16 May, and put **hope into action.**



Fridah, with grandson Quillan, joined a Christian Aid funded urban farming project in Nairobi, Kenya.

Help St Mary's to raise funds for Christian Aid!

Join us for a Big Brekkie - Full English & Continental.

No set charge – donate what you can.

See posters & flyers for full details.



Together we can support someone like Fridah to grow food, protect their children from hunger and nurture hope.

#7DaysToMakeADifference

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# You're invited to a Big Brekkie!

**Want to change the world over breakfast?** Then come and tuck in at our Big Brekkie! We'll be serving a delicious morning meal, while raising money to fight poverty and injustice worldwide.

Where: ST MARY'S COMMUNITY HALL  
ST MARY'S CHURCH  
CHURCH ROAD  
LONG DITTON  
KT6 5HH

When: SATURDAY 9TH MAY

Time: 8:30am to 11:00am



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