

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:

info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

JANUARY 2026

'I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.' Revelation 3:8

As we begin this New Year, Happy New Year by the way, we may wonder what it may bring. It is also the season of Epiphany, a time of realisation and revelation. Last year I wondered if it could be a time of great revelation or realisation of how we could share our gifts.

Through our community survey last year, we learnt about community concerns and what we might be able provide. We are still in the process of working through what the findings may mean for St Mary's.

An almost immediate result from the community's Survey is that our Parish has been able to welcome our first Anna Chaplain. This is an outward-facing role for the spiritual care of the elderly in our area but rooted within our church.

Allan Evison was commissioned to this role at a special service conducted at St. Benedict's Centre, West Malling by Bishop Simon. In introducing the candidates to the congregation, Julia Burton-Jones, Anna Chaplaincy Lead for Rochester and Canterbury Dioceses, outlined Allan's qualities and experiences for this new role: "Allan's formal lay ministry at St. Mary's spans almost a quarter of a century since he was first licensed as a Reader in 2002. He has been involved in coordinating and supporting over many years a number of groups in the parish which serve older people, such as monthly lunches, Warm Welcome Space on Wednesdays and Hayes Men's Fellowship."

Allan has become an established part of the team which provides informal worship services at the local care home, Pittsmead Grange, for the residents and the staff and is building on his existing links

mentioned above. As for the future, we shall be looking to form a team of Anna Friends to support develop and sustain this exciting initiative. If this sounds something for you, please speak to Allan or others on the team at St Mary's.

As we begin our journey into 2026, may we all be mindful and prayerful of where God may be leading us, 'For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.' Matthew 7.8. At the start of this new year, and time of Epiphany, Christ's revelation to the Wise Men, the world, let us pray that doors are open to our church and our hearts. May we welcome all who come, revealing Jesus, through our hospitality, just the passing on of whatever gifts God has given us; all that we have and all that we are.

Rev'd Amanda

NEWLY-COMMISSIONED ANNA CHAPLAINS

On December 3 a service of commissioning was held in the Pilgrim Chapel at the Rochester Diocesan retreat centre, St Benedict's in West Malling. Bishop Simon (Julia's husband) commissioned three new Anna Chaplains and two archdeaconry leads.



Mandy, Allan, Hopeton, Joan and Jennie with Bishop Simon

Allan Evison was commissioned to the parish of St Mary's in Hayes, in Bromley borough. A licensed lay minister (Reader) for more than twenty years, he has been involved in coordinating and supporting a number of groups in the parish which serve older people.

Allan cared for his wife Jean for ten years after she was diagnosed in 2015 with vascular dementia. Jean died in February and Allan reflects on how much those years of caring for Jean taught him about, in his own words: 'the process of acceptance of living and dying including the value of having someone alongside for non-judgmental spiritual support.'

Julia reflected on all that the new team-members bring to ministry alongside older people across Kent and in the Borough of Bromley.

'The new Anna Chaplains bring a wealth of experience from working lives in areas including mental health, teaching, childcare and housing support, alongside family caring roles which have shaped their understanding of spiritual needs in later life. Several are well established in ministry in their parishes and see Anna Chaplaincy as the next step in building their work with older people, growing teams, and sharing learning and mutual support with those in ministry with older people in other parishes across the two dioceses.

'I am blessed to have a team of dedicated archdeaconry leads working alongside me to support the growing team of Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends in Rochester Diocese and their parishes, and to walk alongside those exploring a sense of calling to ministry alongside older people.'

The extract from the song below before the prayers of commissioning reflected wonderfully the spirit of the occasion:

'To this vocation now enlist
these chaplains who have Christ confessed;
inspire their hearts, direct their hands,
through them may heaven and earth be blessed.

And on our shoulders lay your hands
confirm the calling none deserve,
till all we do and all we are
reflect the saviour whom we serve.

**Extract from article by Julia Burton-Jones
Training and Development Lead for Anna Chaplaincy**

HOPE

Dear Friends

I haven't written for a while so one of my New Year resolutions is to "communicate" with more people. I do try and speak to people as they arrive in church on a Sunday morning but sometimes get side-tracked by other tasks. When I used to read the Notices, I always started with a "Good morning" to those I had not already greeted.

Sometimes, we are so busy that we forget how long it has been since we were in touch with friends and family. In these winter months we do not see our neighbours as often as in warmer, longer days. I think sending and receiving Christmas cards can be a lovely way to keep in touch. Growing up I had 21 cousins but have sadly lost touch with some of them since my parents died.

On the subject of "communication" my husband Jim and I have taken to listening to Boom Light, a DAB radio station with presenters who mostly broadcast from their own homes and cater for those born in the 1950s – very nostalgic. We both grew up in homes where music was a constant and that has continued throughout our married life – wide ranging I should say to suit the moment and the mood. So when I heard an old song first sung in 1929 (music- Vivian Ellis: Lyrics Clifford Grey) "**Spread a Little Happiness**", it got me thinking. As Christians we are charged with spreading (communicating) the good news of the Gospel and the promise of life eternal through our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed our parish mission is "To know Christ and make him known to all".

However, it occurred to me that the song I heard could also be "**Spread a little Hope**" because I really feel that everyone would benefit from that in these difficult times. Many people have financial or employment worries, or are waiting for health test results. Some are supporting an unwell or disabled loved one, or are just getting on with everyday life, which for many is a constant struggle. We often listen to phone-in news programmes and so many people really are in need of some hope that their situation will improve. Some are very fearful of what the future holds for them and their children.

In our Christmas cards to those we do not see at all, or very rarely, I have written "We **hope** you are keeping well" and many have written similar words in cards to us. One of the key words on the Advent Tree in church is the word **Hope** that appears in the King James Bible approximately 133 times and many items of prose and hymns. However, in his letter to the people of Corinth, Paul says at the end of 1. Ch.13

“and now faith, hope and love abide, these three, and the greatest of these is love”. So by “communicating” the love of Christ to others, we may also give them hope.

By the time you read this a New Year will have started – so I hope that you will have enjoyed a Blessed Christmas and have stepped into this New Year with hope in your hearts.

With best wishes
Yvonne Pickford

ST MARY’S CHARITY GIVING – PLANNING FOR 2026

The PCC invites all members of the congregation to a meeting on Saturday **10th January 2026 at 10.30 am**, in the Meetings Room, to discuss St Mary’s Charity Giving for the year ahead.

It is hoped that each of the charities supported by our church will have a linked member of the congregation, helping us to strengthen our giving and deepen our connection with the causes we support. Please join us as we prayerfully consider how best to share our blessings in 2026. Your presence and input will be greatly valued.

Mary Whytock

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

Brenda – our Parish Administrator - is leaving to pursue her increasing role as a Counsellor. Therefore we are looking for someone to take on this role from the beginning of February. We are looking to appoint on a part-time basis – hopefully 3 hours per week day, which would ideally suit a person with young children at school. If you know of anyone who would like to be considered for this role – please contact The Reverend Amanda Spence (rector@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk) or myself (Mary.whytock@ntlworld.com – 07973 483557) for further details of the job specification, which can be sent to you.

Mary Whytock



May the blessings of happiness, peace and good health be with you all during 2026. I look forward to the year ahead and that our branch might continue to grow in faith and fellowship, and the opportunity for us to share our faith as Mothers' Union members within our parish.

In 2026, we will celebrate 150 years since Mothers' Union was founded in the small parish church of Old Alresford, Hampshire, by Mary Sumner, a young vicar's wife with a bold vision. She believed that women, regardless of class or status, could come together in faith to support one another and strengthen family life within the Church.

From that single spark of an idea, a global movement was born – and Mothers' Union has grown to 4 million members across 84 countries. As we look to the future our members will continue working to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities around the world. At the heart of everything we do will remain our unwavering belief that faith and compassion can transform lives.

As we look ahead to this remarkable milestone, we invite you to be part of it. Whether you're passionate about social justice, prayer, community outreach, or simply want to connect with people who care, there will be a way for you to **join us and join in**.

The Christmas Fayre this year was a great success and a lot of fun. Mothers' Union ran a tombola stall and a lucky dip for both adults and children. We made just over £60.00 splitting the proceeds between our Mothers' Union branch, and MU work with families both at home and abroad, and the charities being supported by the Church.

We have just returned from our Christmas meal at The New Inn where twenty members and friends enjoyed a festive meal. We were delighted that Rev. Tim could join us. It was a fun time of fellowship as we chatted. Thank you to Carol for organising this event.

'Tis the season for joy, peace and generosity. This Christmas, we had the chance to bring joy and lasting change to families across Uganda, who are struggling to meet basic needs such as food, school

fees, or healthcare. Without support, the most minor setback can push ordinary families deeper into the cycle of poverty.

That's where the Kingdom Savings Programme (KSP) comes in. When a savings group started in her parish, Miriam joined. The group helps her and her community to regularly save, access small loans, and work together to improve their financial stability and plan for the future.

What's more, participants are encouraged to see their own God-given potential and gain the confidence to put it into action.

Miriam used to have to choose between paying for food or education for her children and grandchildren. Now, she can save, improve her home, and pay for her grandchildren's school fees, thanks to the Kingdom Savings Programme. She says: "I never thought such change was possible. But with God's help, and the compassion of Mothers' Union members all around the world, we can change so many things for a better future." We gave money, in memory of Dorothy Burrows, to this programme.

Our next informal meeting will be **11am, on January 6th** at the New Inn when we can catch up on news of our various Christmas celebrations. There will not be a meeting in the Meetings Room in January. We will meet on **3rd February**, at the New Inn for coffee. Our next main meeting will be in the meetings room, on **16th February** (3rd Monday) when Janice and Humphrey Clarke will show a film depicting D Day in 1944, in 80 panels of knitting. It is called "The Longest Yarn".

Please put this date in your diaries as it should be very interesting.

This year is an important year as we celebrate 150 years of Mothers' Union. If you have any ideas of how we can celebrate, please let me know. If you and a friend would be interested in joining, please speak to me – Avril Ashford 02084687785 – you would be most welcome.



Thank you to Gill Kell who has been busy knitting hats and scarves for the seafarers.

Avril Ashford

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY JANUARY 2026

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom* and Monday to Friday in Church (10am on Saturday) throughout the year, except Bank Holidays.

THE EPIPHANY

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday 4th | 8.00am 10.30am | Holy Communion BCP Morning Praise Sunbeams session** (age 3-6) |
| Tuesday 6th | 10.00-11.00am | Prayer Group |
| Wednesday 7th | 10.30am | Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own** |
| | 12.30-3.00pm | Warm Welcome Space** |
| | 2.45pm | Hayes Men's Fellowship In OCS |
| Thursday 8th | 10.30am-12.30pm | Craft Group** |
| Saturday 10th | 12.30pm | Churchyard Tidy Up |

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday 11th | 8.00am 10.30am | Holy Communion BCP Parish Communion CW Sunbeams and Blaze session** (age 3-10) |
| Tuesday 13th | 10.00-11.00am | Prayer Group |
| Wednesday 14th | 12.30-3.00pm | Warm Welcome Space** |
| Friday 16th | 10.00-11.00am | Twinkles – singing, story, snacks** |

2ND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sunday 18th | 8.00am 9.15am | Holy Communion BCP Fresh Start |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|

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|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | 10.30am | Morning Praise |
| Wednesday 21st | 12.30-3.00pm | Warm Welcome Space** |
| Thursday 22nd | 10.30am-12.30pm | Craft Group |

THE CONVERSION OF PAUL

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Sunday 25th | 8.00am | Holy Communion BCP |
| | 10.30am | Parish Communion CW |
| | | Blaze session** (age 6-10) |
| Tuesday 27th | 10.00-11.00am | Prayer Group |
| Wednesday 28th | 12.30-3.00pm | Warm Welcome Space** |

* for Zoom link please contact the Church office

**denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for quiet space on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



CHARITY FAIR

A Big Thank You to all who volunteered, donated or attended. £1,721 was raised in total for charities. Wonderful work everyone, sharing the love of Christ with our local community.

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## A RECENT FUNERAL IN THE PARISH

Colin James May

## HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

It is time for our entry in the first 2026 *Hayes Herald* and we have only just held our final meeting for 2025 such are the publishing deadlines. Just as well we strive to be well prepared for all eventualities!

We learnt that the speaker scheduled for our 3 December meeting was ill in hospital only the day before! Our best wishes go to him and his family especially at this time of year. Thank goodness we had a stand-by arrangement – a series of quizzes which were expertly run to fill the gap by our Chairman, David Rowedder, and our Speakers' Secretary, Ray Neve. Then, as is our tradition for the December meeting, our tea was accompanied by festive mince pies.

Our final meeting of the year was preceded by two other activities that we have yet to report in these pages. So here we go with the first of these which was our outing to Guildford with a nearly full coach of 49 people. First stop was the cathedral which is relatively new and, as motorists on the A3 will know, unusual in that it is brick faced on the outside rather than stone as in our more traditional cathedrals. The group was given an excellent guided tour taking them through the origins of the cathedral, its construction and its current uses.



Edward Maufe, who had previously worked on a number of ecclesiastical buildings, was selected in 1932 as architect for the new cathedral. Funding for the estimated £250,000 cost had been raised before the foundation stone was laid in 1936, but only work on the chancel and choir were completed by 1939 when the project was suspended due to WWII. After the war, the priority was to build/rebuild homes so work on the cathedral did not fully recommence until 1952. By then, it was realised that the original funding was not going to be sufficient. Additional funding was, in part, raised through an innovative 'Buy - a - Brick'

campaign in which more than 200,000 people over a nine year period paid “half a crown” (12.5p now but worth more at the time) to sign their name on a brick. Bricks were on display signed by Queen Elizabeth II and other members of the Royal Family.

Maufe’s use of “new” building techniques, reinforced concrete in particular, allowed the traditional high vaulted ceilings but without the need for heavy buttresses essential in stone structures giving a more open aspect. Inside the cathedral there is some stonework, but only a stone veneer and used on only some surfaces with cream painted render over brick and concrete elsewhere. The palette of cream and blue makes the cathedral light and welcoming. This is accentuated by the tall windows being mainly of clear glass with only small panels of stained glass, illuminating the space inside. The addition of the nave and other elements of the original design was final completed in 1965, 29 years after it started.



After the cathedral, the group visited the town centre for a mixture of lunch and shopping. Many also visited the remains of Guildford Castle which had a light show in the run up to Christmas. Then a smooth coach ride back to Hayes after another successful outing.

The second activity was our walk along the Thames downstream from Barnes Bridge. We were again lucky with the weather; perfect for a walk – sunshine and, although cold, very little wind. Leaving Barnes Bridge Station, we progressed downstream from Barnes Bridge and the walkers later enjoyed a good lunch at “The Eight Bells”, 89 Fulham High

St. before the walk back to the station. The total distance walked was 4.6 miles.

Arrangements for our Annual Lunch on Friday 23 January are complete with 63 reservations made for members and their guests. It promises to be a great event once again and we will report on it in later editions of the *Hayes Herald*. The receipt of subscriptions for this coming year, at just £20/head for yet another year, continues with a total of 59 members confirmed and still counting!

So, with a fervent prayer from our newly-commissioned Anna Chaplain (ie Allan Evison, our Pastoral Care Officer, with an added title from the church) - that there are no other eventualities to confound our confident assumptions, may we wish you a Happy New Year. Latest news is always available at our website ([www.hayesmensfellowship.org](http://www.hayesmensfellowship.org)) or we can be contacted at the details given below.

**Allan Evison, Asst Secretary**

**Graham Marsden, Secretary**

**Contact details: [secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org](mailto:secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org)  
or phone 07764 153383**

## **CHILDREN'S SOCIETY**

Thank you to all the people who gave so generously all their small change and notes in their Children's Society box. We raised **£333.07p**.

I will put up some stories, in the porch, of children we have helped. Thank you so much.

The following article came from a letter I received:

*Last year box collection jointly raised £900,000 for the Children's Society. These donations enable us to open new service like 'Time for young people' in Newham. This hub will give young people in Newham a place where they can drop in and meet trained staff one to one, without needing an appointment or a referral. They will also be able to access group sessions, events and a range of practical resources, as well as using the physical support space to relax and feel safe. None of this would be possible without your support.*

Also I have sold Christmas Cards amounting to **£344.50**. Thank you for all your support this year.

**Pauline Muggridge**

## NEW YEAR

Here we are  
Facing the new year with trepidation:  
Like a vast reel of unrecorded tape  
Waiting ....

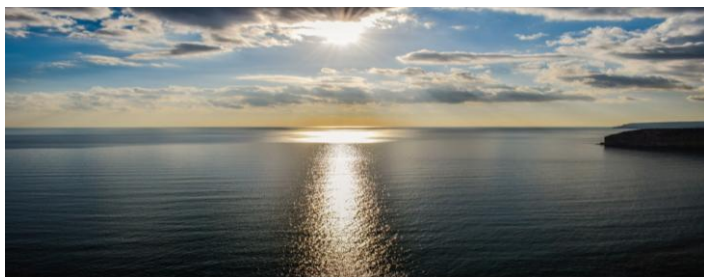
For a new thought,  
    a new day,  
    a new life,  
    a new way.

Expectant  
    of further history,  
At the gate of know not what,  
            to know not where,  
Only to be known when we get there.

Unease  
    At potential deeds  
    Lining up to take part  
    Like ready soldiers;  
    Some will die, some survive  
    Some make good with honours.

Stand for the fanfare  
To herald God's promise:  
To witness innovation,  
And to welcome hope.

**Mary Glover Bandy**



## THE PRINTED ENGLISH BIBLE – CELEBRATING 500 YEARS

Tyndale had little reason to suspect his new found friend from England. In jovial mood together they left the English Merchant's House in Antwerp where he had been staying. It was about noon and they were off to dinner. It might have seemed a little strange that at the narrow path leading from the house to the nearby lane Henry Phillips had gestured to Tyndale to walk ahead. Phillips, much taller than Tyndale, then pointed down at him to the officers, seated at the end of the path, waiting to enforce the arrest of this noted 'heretic'. The arrest was quietly done. He was taken to the castle of Vilvoorde, in what is today a suburb of Brussels.

William Tyndale had been betrayed by a fellow Englishman to the authorities in the Low Countries. Phillips had been paid well to seek out Tyndale, possibly by Thomas More or the Bishop of London, both of whom had fiercely opposed the writings and translation work of Tyndale.

It was now almost 10 years since the publication, in **1526**, of Tyndale's truly remarkable New Testament, the **first printed copy of the New Testament in English**. He had left the shores of England in around April 1524, realising that given the opposition he faced in his home country he would need to go abroad if he was to have any chance of taking forward his driving mission: translating the Bible into English. In an amazingly short time, by late 1525 the first edition of his New Testament was being run off the printers in Cologne. But publication was delayed. The authorities had discovered the printer he was using. Grabbing as much of that first print run as he could, he fled up the Rhine to Worms where the New Testament was finally printed a few months later (but for that, we would be celebrating the first printed publication of the NT in English in 2025 rather than 2026!). By February 2026 copies were already appearing in London and elsewhere, smuggled into the country by merchants and cleverly hidden amongst bales of cloth, wheat or other merchandise.

So what drove Tyndale's passion? At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in England church services were in Latin, as also the Bible. The Lord's prayer, recited in Latin, for most was just a meaningless patter of words. Attempts to circulate hand written copies of the Bible, translated into English by John Wycliffe 100 years earlier, were ruthlessly suppressed by the religious authorities.

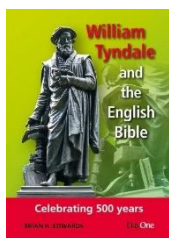
500 years later it is difficult for us to fully grasp the mindset that would oppose the translation and publication of the Bible into any language, let alone English. And the arrival of printing just a few decades

earlier now opened so many new possibilities. But the religious establishment were adamant. Partly it was a question of trust: ordinary folk could not be trusted with the Bible. Partly arrogance: they would not be able to understand it anyway. Partly a genuine concern that it would be treated irreverently, 'sung and jangled in every alehouse' in King Henry VIII's memorable words. It had to be kept as the preserve of the 'religious'. And just being in Latin was a good way of ensuring that this was so.

But Tyndale was appalled by this, by the attempt of the religious establishment to monopolise and suppress the scriptures. To Tyndale, the Bible is God's voice to everyone in all generations, which is why it needs to be translated and made accessible to everyone. He was not afraid to put the Bible in the hands of all, learned and unlearned alike, fishmonger, weaver, saddler or servant. To him the Bible is the living and active word of God.

"I do marvel greatly, dearly beloved in Christ" wrote Tyndale that anyone could "speak against the scripture to be had in every language, and that of every man".

The religious establishment had effectively sidelined the Bible, no longer listening to it themselves and denying it to the people. But set an open Bible before the people and they would be able to see how far the church had drifted from the historic faith. Tyndale was passionate that the people should once again hear the Gospel, the good news about Jesus, His saving death on the cross; about repentance and trust in Christ. The potential for lives to be changed. And society. There lay the fear of the authorities.



*An excellent  
introduction to the  
Tyndale story  
recently published*

Tyndale's constant companion, throughout his 10 perilous years on the continent, was the fear of arrest and death. And so it was. After the arrest he spent almost 18 months in a damp prison in Vilvoorde. In September 1536 he was finally tried, found guilty of heresy, and burnt. The irony is that by this time the situation in England was already changing, and there was a new climate more favourable towards church reform and Bible translation.

Thomas Cromwell made token overtures to the authorities in the Low Countries to get Tyndale released but this was under the rule of the Emperor Charles V, whose aunt, Queen Katherine, King Henry had just cruelly cast aside and, in his mind, dishonoured. An example of the way in which throughout Europe the cause of the Reformation was playing

out and being played against a backdrop of power politics and deeply personal agendas.

At his death, it's reported that Tyndale's last words were: 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes'. Within two years, the prayer was answered. Agreed by the King, and under Cromwell's patronage, a copy of the 'Great Bible' (leaning heavily on Tyndale's translation) was to be placed in all English churches by Easter 1539.

The brilliance of Tyndale's translation was shown over 80 years later. A body of 54 translators was appointed by King James 1 to produce a new version. After 7 years, in 1611 the work was complete. The King James Bible. It is overwhelmingly based on Tyndale's translation.

In a subsequent follow-up article, we shall take a look at the fascinating nature of Tyndale's translation.

## David James

*All are warmly invited to join us in our Bible Study group. We are currently studying the early chapters of the Gospel of Mark. The central Bible Study meets first and third Tuesdays in the Church Meeting Room. 11am -12.15pm.*

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The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email ocs.hayes@hotmail.com

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*Photos on p10 and p11 by Graham Marsden*

**Items for the Feb magazine by 20<sup>th</sup> Jan please. Copy to the Editor – see below.**

**Feb magazines will be ready for distribution on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan.**

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