THE COZY MURDER MYSTERY ADVENT CALENDAR

Visual Evidence Companion

Photographs • Records • Documents

Open only the pages for your current day.

Use this supplement alongside the book.

Keep earlier exhibits available for later comparisons.

The solution remains in the book.

30 visual exhibits • English edition

POLICE INCIDENT SUMMARY

24 December 2006 — Logged 18:45

At 18:24, village caretaker Benjamin Pike and delivery driver James Croft found Arthur Mercer unresponsive on the stone flags beside the glasshouse worktable.

The north door was locked at discovery. Pike opened it with the reserve key carried on his personal ring. The working key was normally kept at the hall office. No other entrance was open.

Attending officer: PC G. Evans
Times use the festival reference watch.

BENJAMIN PIKE — WITNESS STATEMENT

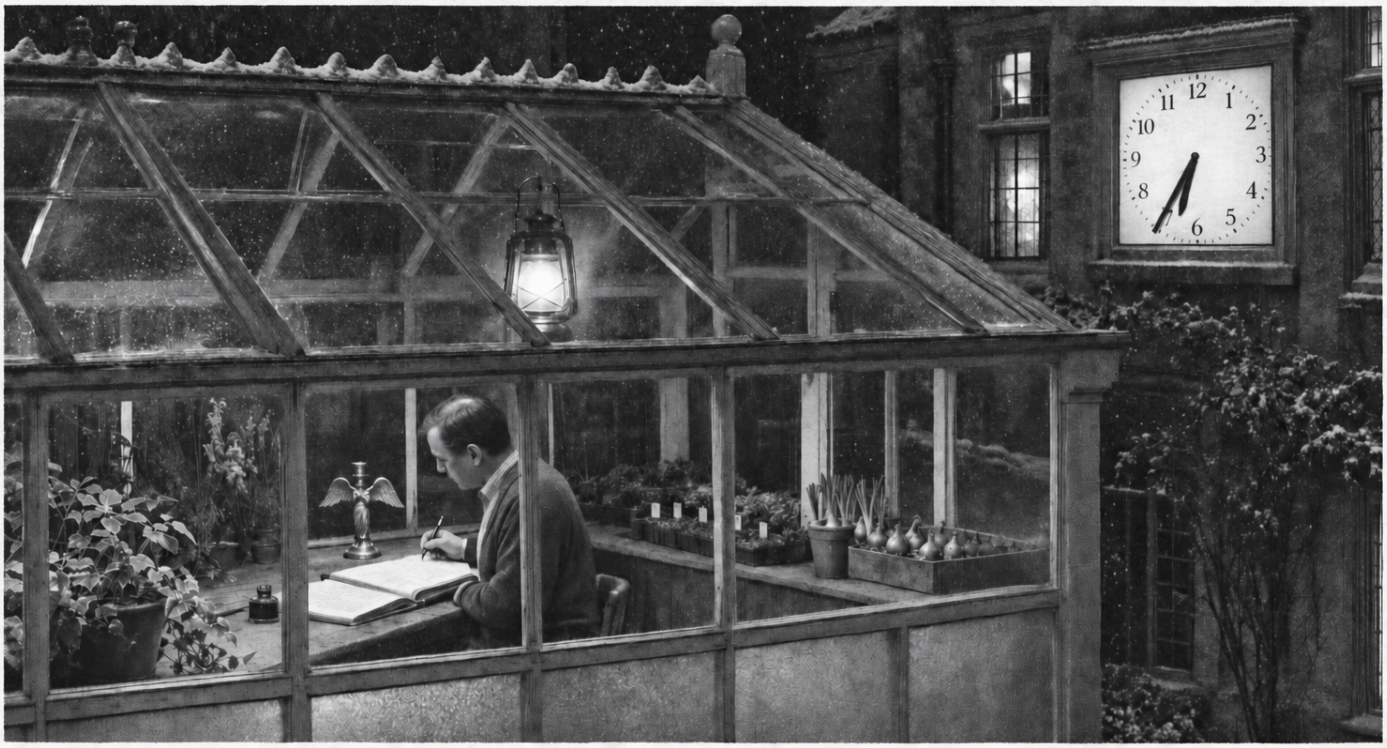
24 December 2006 — 19:10

“I locked the north door after Arthur went in at 17:45. I came back at 18:24 and found him beside the potting bench. Nobody else had the working key that evening.”

Document excerpts

Hollymere & Vale Chronicle — 29 December 2006

TRAGEDY OVERSHADOWS ANNUAL FESTIVAL



The late Arthur Mercer, photographed through the upper panes of the village glasshouse while reviewing the winter-relief books. The illuminated clock on the hall's north wing marks 18:35. *Photo: Iris Lane*

HOLLYMERE CIVIC HOROLOGY SERVICE LOG

Date: 24 December 2006

Technician: Theo Finch

Reference time	Hall dial
17:45	18:00
18:55	19:10

Village Hall dial face runs +15 minutes fast relative to reference time.

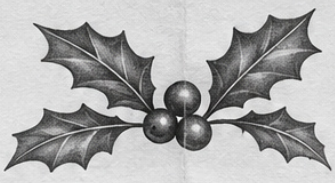
REFERENCE-WATCH INSPECTION

Dent Pocket Chronometer No. 4182

Checked against the radio time signal at 16:00.

No stoppage or adjustment was made between the two inspections.

PC Evans and Platform Warden G. Vance synchronized their watches to this reference before the service.



HOLLYMERE CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL PROGRAM

December 24

Order of Musical Devotions

18:00 — Gathering of the Congregation & Welcome
(Reverend C. Thorne)

18:15 — Prelude: Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
(Harmonium Solo)

18:25 — Processional Hymn: Once in Royal David's City
(Choir & Congregation)

18:35 — Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:2–7

18:45 — Choral Anthem: In the Bleak Midwinter
(Full Choir, directed by Mrs. J. Reed)

19:00 — Refreshments in the Vestry Corridor; Service Concludes

All timings approximate. Attendees are requested to remain seated throughout the choral anthem.



BELL'S BAKERY

24 December 2006

Till 01

Receipt 4104 18:12

white loaf and spice bun

Receipt 4105 18:30

festive fruit loaf and
hot cider sachet

Cash payment

These are the machine-printed entries retained on the roll. Handwritten customer sales were recorded separately. The roll does not identify who operated the till.

HOLTON DISTRICT CONSTABULARY
Witness Statement Transcript

Witness: Felix Rowan
Treasurer, Winter Relief Fund
Hollymere Village Hall Lobby
24 December 2006 — 18:32
Auxiliary Officer T. Briggs

"I was in Bell's Bakery from about 18:15 until half past six, waiting for a fruit loaf and talking to Mrs. Bell. I did not leave during that time. After hearing the commotion I walked toward the glasshouse. I only looked in from outside. Anyone could see the heavy brass angel candlestick lying under the potting bench, with its right wing snapped off at the shoulder. It is a dreadful tragedy for the festival committee."

Briggs's interview note: Rowan came to the lobby voluntarily. No description of an object was supplied or suggested in the question.

OFFICE KEY REGISTER

24 December 2006

Item	Time out	Borrower	Time returned
Glasshouse working key	18:05	[redacted]	18:10

IRIS LANE — EXPOSURE LOG

24 December 2006 • Rolleiflex 6 × 6 • Festival reference watch



Frame 14 — 18:19:12



Frame 15 — 18:20:00



Frame 16 — 18:21:05



Frame 17 — 18:23:40

DAY 8 / HOLLYMERE

WINTER ROUTE SURVEY

Exhibit 8-A • Route-specific minimum times • Schematic, not to scale

MAIN HALL BALCONY
GLASSHOUSE EXTERIOR

3 min →

North stairwell & terrace steps

Return: 3 min | Minimum round trip: 6 min

BELL’S BAKERY
GLASSHOUSE EXTERIOR

4 min →

Village green & rear service path

Return: 4 min | Minimum round trip: 8 min

MAIN HALL KEY DESK
GLASSHOUSE EXTERIOR

1 min →

Direct covered walkway

Return: 1 min | Minimum round trip: 2 min

BELL’S BAKERY
MAIN HALL KEY DESK

2 min →

West Village Lane

Survey note: The icy stone steps and closed gates rule out a usable shortcut by running. The minimum times refer to these routes and conditions, rather than an average pace on dry, open ground.

FESTIVAL PROGRAM ADDENDUM

Hollymere Parish Christmas Eve Festival Service

Due to the sudden indisposition of Mr. C. Pringle, the parish harmonium for the prelude and processional (18:10–18:30) will be played by Mr. Theo Finch.

HALL VESTRY DIARY

24 December 2006

Times use the festival reference.

18:08 — Finch seated at the harmonium.

18:12 — Rehearsal notes and tuning.

18:26 — Finch relieved at the console.

June Reed

These entries record arrival and departure; they do not state that he remained continuously under observation.

CONDUCTOR'S ANNOTATED SCORE — EXCERPT

June Reed
Selection No. 4: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
Harmonium: Theo Finch

"Printed order changed after the substitute accompanist was seated. Order revised on the rostrum. Commenced Selection No. 4 promptly at 18:15 by the warden's reference watch. Played through without pause to verse six. Concluded final cadence at 18:25 precisely. No break between verses. Theo stayed at the pedal throughout."

PLATFORM LOG — G. VANCE

The warden's watch was checked against the festival reference. He watched Reed and Finch without interruption from the first chord at 18:15 to the final cadence at 18:25; neither left the platform.

Document excerpts

BELL'S BAKERY — DAYBOOK
December 24
Register Operator: **M. Bell**

18:12 — Loaf, crusty white; 1 spice bun. Paid cash.

18:19 — 6 mince pies; 1 batch tea rolls. Mrs. E. Henderson. Recorded by hand.

18:25 — 1 jar winter preserve; 2 gingerbread figures. Rev. C. Wallace. Recorded by hand.

18:30 — 1 festive fruit loaf; 1 hot cider mulled sachet. F. Rowan. Paid cash.

CUSTOMER STATEMENTS — 26 DECEMBER 2006

E. Henderson: 'Mara served me herself at 18:19. I checked my watch because I was late to meet my sister. We spoke while she wrapped the pies.'

C. Wallace: 'I entered at 18:25 by my watch. Mara greeted me and packed my preserve and gingerbread herself.'

Both witnesses had checked their watches to the festival reference before the service.

ARTHUR MERCER'S PRIVATE AUDIT NOTES

A single bank draft of £150 cleared on 22 December for the roof repair, voucher 112. Hollymere Builders confirms no timber sale or second invoice.

Cash withdrawal voucher 115 bears Felix Rowan's signature; the contractor has no corresponding receipt. The second ledger entry appears to conceal an unauthorized withdrawal.

Action: Ask Rowan to account for the £150 at the glasshouse at 18:20 on Christmas Eve. If no supporting record is produced, refer the discrepancy to the trustees.

A duplicate of these notes survived in the parish audit file; these are not papers first recovered from Arthur's body.

WINTER RELIEF FUND

Official Parish Relief Ledger — December

Fund Treasurer: Felix Rowan

Voucher	Date	Purpose	Amount	Payee / status
104	Dec 12	Fuel subsidy, North Cottages	£45.00	Disbursed
108	Dec 18	Medical relief, Weaver family	£30.00	Disbursed
112	Dec 22	Emergency roof repair, Parish Annex	£150.00	Hollymere Builders Ltd; Disbursed
115	Dec 24	Seasonal timber supply, Parish Annex	£150.00	Hollymere Builders Ltd; Disbursed

Total Seasonal Disbursements Logged: £375.00

PARISH COUNCIL ARCHIVE TRANSFER DOCKET

Hollymere Parish Archives, Room 2 Annex

Transfer authority: Hollymere Civic Trust

28 September 2026

Received by: Beatrice Hart, volunteer archival custodian

Collection: Box 4-B, winter festival records from December 2006

Released for the scheduled twenty-year preservation review.

Contents: Duplicate caretaker key-register leaves; winter-relief fund ledger copies and vouchers; festival program proofs and performance records; copies of supplementary witness statements.

Beatrice’s folder note — 21 November 2026

Collation nearly complete. Request a meeting with the inspector after the remaining copies have been compared.


LINFORD MILL
CROWN & OAK

The High Street Stationers & Bookbinders

Great Linford

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14 October 2026 — 11:24 AM

Transaction: #8841-B

1x Pack Heritage Vellum Envelopes & Note Cards

Qty: 25, Cream 300gsm

Embossed Maker’s Mark: Linford Mill / Crown & Oak

1x Blue-Black Archival Ink Cartridge

Payment Method: Cash (£14.50)

Customer: B. Hart (Signature on record)

Glasshouse Full Frame



Broken Angel Candlestick



CONSTABULARY EVIDENCE RECOVERY LOG

Incident: Death of Arthur Mercer
Hollymere Community Glasshouse
24 December 2006
Detective Sergeant H. Miller

ITEM W01

Heavy cast-brass angel candlestick, 11 inches high.

Recovery point: Stone floor beneath the north potting worktable, screened by its wooden apron.

Condition: Right wing fractured at the shoulder; fragment nearby. Left wing intact. Recent impact marks at the base.

Suspected assault instrument, retained for examination.

Time secured: 18:50 reference time.

The space was not visible from the doorway; an officer knelt with a torch to locate the object.

CONSTABULARY DISPATCH & PRESS LOG

Mercer Homicide Investigation

24–27 December 2006

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24 December — 19:15

Death confirmed; public asked to avoid the scene. No weapon, damage, or recovery-position description disclosed.

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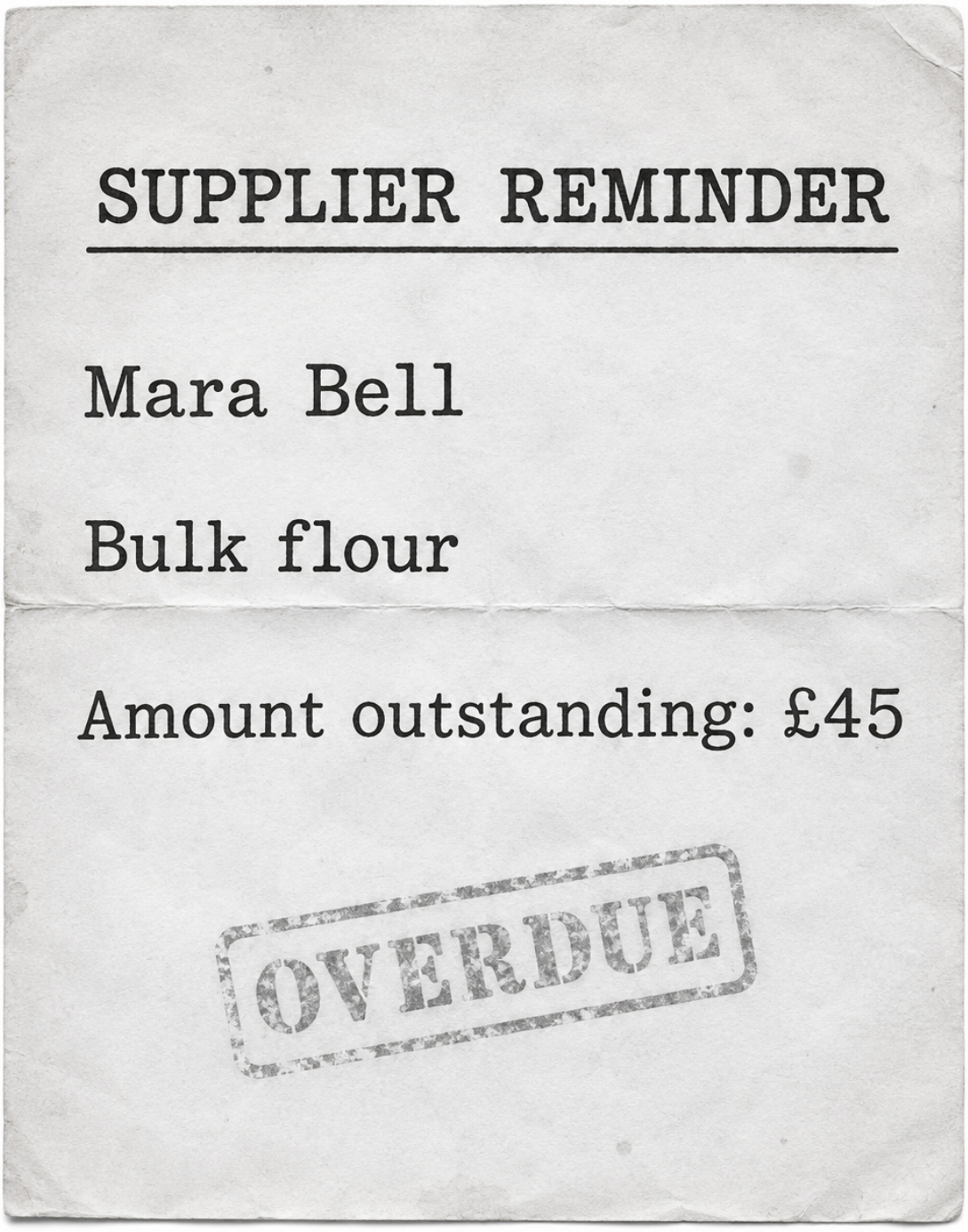
25 December — 10:00

Suspicious death; blunt head injury confirmed. Instrument withheld.

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27 December — 14:00

Appeal mentions a brass decorative item. Neither its broken wing nor its location beneath the bench is disclosed.



SUPPLIER REMINDER

Mara Bell

Bulk flour

Amount outstanding: £45

OVERDUE

Arthur had queried whether the expense belonged to the festival account; the debt remained a separate dispute.

DAY 17

THEO & JUNE

Theo’s memorandum

Theo’s memorandum, dated 26 December 2006, records his embarrassment about the fast hall clock and admits his first workshop account omitted the stage substitution.

June’s accompanying note

June’s accompanying note acknowledges that her initial statement leaned on the printed order instead of recording the actual performance.

Manuscript excerpts



Frame 16 — 18:21:05

Iris's note says she cropped the newsletter print to keep that private quarrel out of the festival coverage.

JAMES ‘JIM’ CROFT

Supplementary deposition — excerpts

Northshire Winter Freight

Recorded 27 December 2006 by PC G. Evans

“On Christmas Eve, I backed the freight lorry into the village hall service bay at 18:15. Caretaker Ben Pike met me at the tailgate at 18:18.”

“From 18:18 until 18:23, Ben Pike and I were working side by side without interruption, unloading five heavy crates of festival cider and winter produce onto the service dock. Ben never left my sight or my side during those five minutes; he took the front handles of every crate while I took the back.”

“We walked down the exterior flagstone path together, arriving at the glasshouse door at precisely 18:24.”

Croft’s cab clock was checked against the festival reference before arrival. His recorded minutes use that reference.

CARETAKER'S KEY LOAN REGISTER

Original carbon duplicate

24 December

Item	Borrower	Out	Returned	Signed
Glasshouse working key	F. Rowan	18:05	18:28	F. Rowan
Ladders, two	J. Reed	16:30	17:45	J. Reed
Annex padlock	M. Bell	17:15	17:40	M. Bell



Doorway sightline — reconstruction

The worktable's wooden apron screens the floor beneath it.

CONSTABULARY INCIDENT CORDON SHEET

December 24 — Archive Entry #88

Selected entries

18:24

Ben Pike and Jim Croft enter using Ben's personal reserve. They see Arthur and check for a pulse. Neither inspects beneath the worktable, sees the angel, or describes it. No other person approaches while they are inside.

18:25

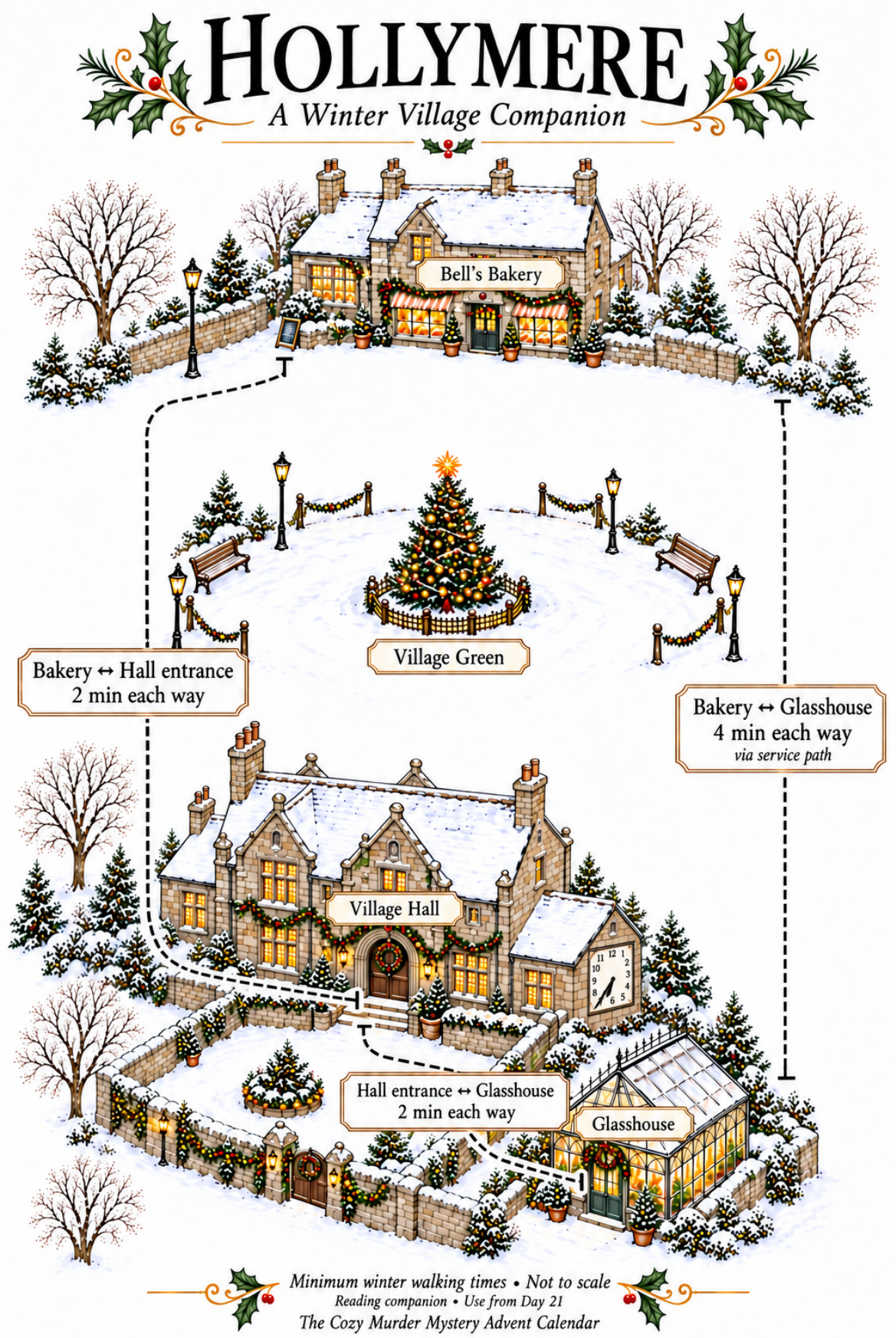
Croft leaves to summon Evans. Pike remains at the doorway and admits nobody. The discoverers report only that Arthur is unresponsive; neither supplies a weapon description.

18:28

PC G. Evans arrives, takes over the guard, and installs a rope barrier. Pike waits outside. No visitor has entered since the discoverers.

18:34

Felix Rowan arrives from the direction of the village green. Demands entry to inspect relief fund account documents inside. Request denied by PC Evans. Rowan ordered to remain behind the stone boundary marker beside the path.


HOLLYMERE
A Winter Village Companion
Bell's Bakery
Village Green
Bakery ↔ Hall entrance
2 min each way
Bakery ↔ Glasshouse
4 min each way
via service path
Village Hall
Hall entrance ↔ Glasshouse
2 min each way
Glasshouse
Minimum winter walking times • Not to scale
Reading companion • Use from Day 21
The Cozy Murder Mystery Advent Calendar

DAY 21 / HOLLYMERE

VERIFIED TRANSIT TIMES

Hollymere grounds • Route-specific minimum times • Not to scale

Main hall entrance → Glasshouse door Begins at the entrance, not the separate external key desk.	2 min
Glasshouse door → External key desk Covered walkway.	1 min
External key desk → Bell’s Bakery counter	2 min
Bakery counter → Main hall lobby	2 min
Bakery counter → Glasshouse door Via service path; 4 min each way.	4 min

Closed gates and icy steps rule out an open shortcut. These are the routes and minimum times listed in the investigation.

YOUR ROUTE NOTES