SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 52 No. 4

MAY 2023



VILLAGE DIARY FOR MAY						
Wed 3	Friends of All Saints' AGM (pg 14) The Church		19:30			
Thur 4 & 18	WeCare2 (pg 15)	River Room	11:15-12:30			
Sat 6	Community Coronation Brunch	River Room	9:00-11:00			
Sun 7	Big BYO Picnic	The Green	12:30-16:00			
Thur 11 & 25	Community Café (pg 10)	River Room	10:30-12:00			
Thur 11	Together in Stitches (pg 16)	River Room	19:30-21:00			
Mon 15	Knit & Natter (pg 15)	River Room	14:00-16:00			
Tue 16	Sutton Courtenay WI (pg 14)	River Room	19:30			
26-29	English Music Festival	Dorchester	See pg 10			
Sat 27	Movie Matinee (pg 10)	River Room	16:00			
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For information about financial help during the economic crisis – see page 15

Previous copies of SCN are available on the website under Archives at suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk

JUNE 2023 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 17TH MAY 2023

Unless otherwise stated the Sutton Courtenay News copy deadline is the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

VILLAGE CONTACTS

County Councillor: Richard Webber, 534001
(Schools, Roads etc.) richardwebber777@gmail.com
District Councillor: Richard Webber—as above

(Planning, Waste etc.)

Parish Council Chair: Rita Atkinson, 848694

ritaatkinson@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk

Stay & Play Toddler Group: Facebook page: @SCstayandplay

Friends of All Saints'-Chair: Sue Jenkins 07885 437454

Matrix Music School: 847264 The Abbey: 847401

Village Hall – SC: scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com

Cricket Club: drb71@hotmail.co.uk
WI - Sutton Courtenay Val Melville 847612
Nordic Walking Group: Graham Wells 847322
Churchmere Carp Synd.: Andy Barrett 07717 662039

DAMASCUS Youth Project: 848694

SC Local History Society: John Talbot sclhs.org.uk

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SCIDS (Drama Society): Morna Whitlock, 848335

morna28whitlock@gmail.com

All Saints Singers: Kathy Harrop-Griffiths, 848230

secretary@allsaintssingers.org

www.allsaintssingers.org

Sutton Courtenay Action: suttoncourtenayaction@gmail.com

Non-urgent Police: 101 or policing team email:

AbingdonOuterNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Environment Agency: Landfill Odours 0800 80 70 60

Thames Water (leaks): 0800 71 46 14 Police Anonymous Hotline: 0800 555 111

Power Cuts: 105

Websites:

Sutton Courtenay News: www.suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk
Parish Council: www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk
Vale of White Horse DC: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk
Oxfordshire CC: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
Village Hall: suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

The Ministry Team

Rector: The Reverend Helen Kendrick

The Rectory, 3, Tullis Close, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4BD 01235 848297 rector@damascusparish.org.uk

Assistant Priest: The Reverend Rosie Bruce

07766 421773 rosie-bruce@hotmail.co.uk Associate Priest: The Reverend Phil Sutton 01235 635476 or 07507 378737 revphil@damascusparish.org.uk

Lay ministers: Jack Jarvis (831395) & Alex Landsbert (847443)

Authorised preacher: Paul James (848129) Churchwarden: Hilary Otterburn (01235 834725)

Pro-Warden: Alison Budd (01235 527853)

Parish Office: 01235 847179 admin@damascusparish.org.uk

For Services of Worship - Please see Page 8

VILLAGE HALL

The village hall is a registered charity available for hire for community related recreational activities. It is located in Hobbyhorse Lane (OX14 4BB). It has a large main hall, a smaller meeting room and kitchen. There are regular activities that take place on some weekday evenings. To find out more or book the hall please contact the Secretary to the Village Hall Management Committee Rita Atkinson on 01235 848694, email scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com.

Hire charges vary depending on the nature of the use of the hall. The maximum hire charge for the main hall is £16 per hour. Commercial bookings and regular hire are negotiated separately. Visits prior to hire are welcomed.

Sutton Courtenay Village Hall has a new website suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk from where you can access a trial online-booking system. Please use it to make your booking inquiry. Full instructions are given. Also, any feedback would be appreciated so that we can fully evaluate the system. If you have any difficulties booking or you want to speak to someone about a booking, please contact Rita 01235 848694 or email: scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com

SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS CONTACTS

Sutton Courtenay News is published by the editorial team, the members of which are: Katherine Harrop-Griffiths (07946 474238), Kathy Whittaker and Bernie Jones (07761 375991). Bernie deals with all the advertising.

Sutton Courtenay News is printed with support from the Sutton Courtenay Parish Council.

All contributions for the next edition should be emailed to editor@suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk, taken to Sutton Courtenay Tyres petrol station shop or posted in the mailbox on the outside the garden door of Cross Trees, 1 Church Street before the copy deadline. To have any contribution published you must provide your name & contact details to the editors.

To advertise, telephone 07761 375991 or email advertising@suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk

For distribution enquiries please contact Sue on 847158 or any of the editors.

The Editors have been contacted by people outside the village who would like to continue receiving a copy of Sutton Courtenay News. It can be viewed on-line at suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk but please contact the editors to discuss what other arrangements can be made for those unable to access the website.

SUTTON COURTENAY POST OFFICE

A wide range of key Post Office products & services are available at Hari & Esha News in the High Street. The opening hours are:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 08:00 -18:00

Wed: 08:00 - 17:00 Sat: 08:30 - 13:00 Sun: 09:00 - 12:00

SUTTON COURTENAY DEFIBRILLATORS

The village has three defibrillators.

One is located outside the front roller doors of Sutton Courtenay Tyres on the High Street. The second is in the old BT phone booth opposite the Nursery on the High Street.



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council has now submitted the Neighbourhood Plan to the Vale of White Horse District Council and the District Council's consultation period has started. You can view the documents online via

whitehorsedc.gov.uk/SuttonCourtenay-NP. The documents can also be viewed in person at the District Council Offices in Abingdon (Monday to Thursday, 8.30am—5pm and Friday 8.30am—4pm) or by appointment at Sutton Courtenay Village Hall on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays between 10.30am and 4pm. To make an appointment please contact the Clerk, Jennie Currie. The deadline for any comments is Wednesday 7th June 2023. Also see Page 18.

Elections – Thursday 4th May 2023 Parish Council elections

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council consists of 11 Councillors. 7 of the existing Councillors were nominated and as there were no further nominations an election was not held.

The Council is now looking to fill the remaining 4 seats by co-option. Individuals who are on the electoral register and who live or work in the parish or within 3 miles of the parish can be considered for co-option. If you are interested in working in a small team to contribute to local life, taking forward projects which benefit people across the parish, then please contact the Clerk, Jennie Currie.

Please note the role is unpaid, as a minimum you would be expected to attend monthly meetings and check your Council email account at least once a week. You would be asked to take an active role in a couple of areas of the Council's work across recreational amenities, the cemetery, planning policy, community infrastructure (defibs, benches, bins), community events and representing the Parish Council at meetings with local charitable and commercial organisations.

District Council elections

The parish of Sutton Courtenay sits within the Sutton Courtenay Ward (which also includes Appleford). For this Ward only one Councillor seat is available and at the time of writing this article there were three candidates standing for election on 4th May 2023. The results of the election will be announced on www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/elections

Future elections

Following May's elections, the next planned election would be the general election, where Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected. The maximum term of a Parliament is five years from the day on which it first met. The current Parliament first met on Tuesday 17th December 2019 and will automatically dissolve on Tuesday 17th December 2024, unless it has been dissolved sooner by the King. Polling Day (elections) would be expected to take place 25 days later, not counting weekends or any bank holidays that fall within this period.

The next planned election for the County Council will be held in 2025. The total number of Councillors and the areas (divisions) they cover is currently being reviewed by the Local Government Boundary Commission, you can view the information at www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/oxfordshire

Planning updates

The Parish Council is invited to submitted comments on planning applications in the parish. Most applications are administered by the District Council, applications for sites managing minerals and/or waste and large infrastructure projects are the responsibility of the County Council.

Recently the Parish Council has submitted objections to the HIF1 scheme to build a new crossing over the Thames between Sutton Bridge and the Appleford to Culham railway bridge. The Thames crossing scheme is facing delays for numerous reasons. Oxford County Council's Planning Committee have not yet been able to consider the application and it is unlikely that the Committee will meet before June 2023.

At the Parish Council's May meeting it will consider an application to extend the operating hours at the Hanson Quarry railway sidings.

Planning applications can be viewed online at whitehorsedc.gov.uk/planning or myeplanning2.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Litter picking

The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who took part in the Council's Litter Pick on 25th March and to all residents who collect litter across on the parish whilst they are out enjoying a walk. The Litter Pick event was a great success and the Council are looking at organising similar events biannually.

Council meetings and contact details

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings. The dates of next meetings are Tuesday 16th May, Tuesday 6th June and Tuesday 4th July at 7.15pm in Sutton Courtenay Village Hall.

The agenda for the meeting will be published on the Council's website www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk and on the noticeboard outside Hari & Esha News, High Street, Sutton Courtenay.

Councillors from 9th May 2023: Rita Atkinson, Robert Dalby, Lyn Hodder, Father Morkos, Joanna O'Callaghan, Hugo Raworth and Jason Warwick. At the Council's meeting in May the Councillors will elect their Chairman for the year.

Correspondence should be sent to the Clerk, Miss J. Currie, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council, c/o 44 Harrington Close, Newbury, RG14 2RQ info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk 07495 123 353. Alternatively, you can contact Councillors directly, their email addresses are on the website.

SUTTON COURTENAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Preparing for Easter

special time as it is, of course, a major Christian festival. However, regardless of your faith or beliefs, there are key messages for all children that we draw out from the metaphor within the stories. For example, we understand that this is a time of year when we celebrate new life. This links with the theme of the resurrection in the Easter story, but we can help children understand that this is a more general message about hope and new beginnings which we can all share. With older children we have been helping them to reflect on how they feel when they see things that they know are unjust, and how they can challenge effectively. A Church of England education is about helping children draw out key messages from faith traditions; and this is something we can all do, regardless of our faith.

Reverend Helen and the team tell the Easter story



We are so lucky that each week, members of the church team come into school for Open the Book assembly. They tell the stories from the bible in a mixture of drama and narrative, with the children taking roles. It is an extremely popular slot in the timetable! Just before Easter, Reverend Helen and the team told the Easter story from the perspective of a Roman soldier. As usual, the story was told in a lively way with all the children participating in the crowd calls and some children acting on the stage. There are good links to be made here with our history curriculum, as children understand something of the power of the Roman army from their topic in Year 4 on the Romans in Britain. We can draw out how soldiers were required to follow orders from above, but they might have their own private feelings about what they saw. This enables us to have important conversations with children about the concept of conscience. For our oldest children in Year 6 who study the build up to World War 2, this is an important theme to return to.

Ramadan and fasting

We have a number of children in the school who are Muslim, who have been sharing their thoughts about fasting as part of Ramadan. Many older Muslim children choose to do this when they feel able. They have talked about their understanding of the



purpose in this and how it helps them feel closer to God through their growing ability to make choices as they and their families prepare for the festival of Eid-al-Fitr which begins on 21st April this year. In our school, we welcome children of all faiths and none, and seeing their friends talking about this is a way for all children to develop their understanding of different faiths and traditions. Here you can see Masoud with his prayer mat — many Muslim children like to maintain their daily prayers in school.

Pirates vs Mermaids



The end of term was an extremely busy one for Nightingales and Wrens as they performed their show, Pirates vs Mermaids. As always, there is a huge amount of work that goes into these productions, but it is well worth it to see the children grow in confidence and have the opportunity to find their voice before an audience. Learning to handle pre-show nerves is an important life skill! It is also a fantastic way to integrate aspects of the art, design technology and music curriculum together. It was a fantastic performance — well done to all involved!

Headteacher: Ms Rachel Hornsey

Asst Headteachers: Lisa Knight & Louise Potter Office.3243@sutton-courtenay.oxon.sch.uk

Telephone: 01235 848333

COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Difficult Choices

The problem of potholes has been in the news all over the country in recent months. We have had potholes ever since we had roads and tracks, but I don't remember this being as hot a topic as it is now.

Everyone would like our roads to be in mint condition at all times, but the cost of road maintenance has been rapidly rising over recent years and the ability to maintain our roads in reasonable condition is an increasing challenge for all councils. To upgrade all of Oxfordshire's roads to an ideal standard would cost several hundred million pounds and there would then be the cost of regular maintenance to keep them at that standard. The cost is more than the County's Adult and Children's social care put together. Not much wonder then that hard pressed Councils have, over the last 20 years, steadily made cuts to their road budgets in order to protect their social care and other services. It is all about Priorities for Councils and priorities for Government. In present economic circumstances, it is hard to see taxation increasing anywhere near enough to cover the cost of upgrade of all the nation's roads.

Councils have tried various initiatives to begin to address the problem. Prioritising main roads over others has been tried

but it leads to the question – just how bad do our rural roads have to get before deprioritising their maintenance becomes unacceptable?

"Prudential borrowing" against assets over many years requires substantial assets which few councils possess and few finance officers will countenance. Borrowing against future income growth depends on the growth happening and is a risky business.

Are there any other alternatives? And if we want roads in good condition along with everything else we want, we have to find a way of paying for it. Persuading road users (i.e. just about everyone) that they must pay through taxation presents a great political challenge — how could it be done? And how could it be done fairly? But then politics, we are told, is all about choices. We just need our politicians to be brave enough to make them while our road system is still usable.

And one final thought. Given the challenge of maintaining our present road system, does it really make sense to be building yet more roads?

Richard Webber Richardwebber777@gmail.com 07546 571521

DAVID JOHNSTON MP



Although I live in Didcot, I saw it and many other places in the constituency in a different light last month: from the back of a police car! No, I hadn't done anything wrong, I'd asked to go on a 'Ride Along' with the local

force to get a better insight into the demands on the police as they respond to the calls they receive at the station. It turned out to be a relatively quiet 4 or so hours, but it was nonetheless fascinating to talk to PCs David and Alex about their experience in the force, the things they've had to respond to, how they're treated by the public and the things they'd like to see change. They perform a very difficult and vital role and I'm very grateful to them for letting me accompany them.

I continue to be on the case regarding the experience of parents and schools with Oxfordshire's service for children with Special Educational Needs. I spoke in a debate in Parliament about some of the problems and then met the Government minister responsible for SEND nationally. Oxfordshire has just been given a further £1 million by the Government to deliver outreach services from SEND specialists to support children with a variety of conditions including autism and moderate learning difficulties. But this won't solve the problems people complain to me about regarding calls and emails not being answered and so I will continue to work on this.

On the subject of government funding, the extension to the Energy Price Guarantee for a further 3 months is welcome and will have saved the average household £1100 since it began, while Oxfordshire County Council has just been given a further £3 million to fix the potholes so many of you rightly complain to me about!

Other business:

The Public Accounts Committee have held their hearing into the local AEAT Pension case on behalf of which I've been campaigning, and now we have to wait for their report in the coming weeks.

I must give credit to OX10 Community Centre, Wild About Wallingford, the Town Council and Incredible Edible for keeping their Public Living Room going at the Bull Croft through a miserable afternoon of rain. It was designed to bring the community together and it did – at least some of them - with a great ukulele band.

I had a good catch up with GWR about where next to take my campaign for reopening $Grove\ Station\ -\ watch\ this$ space.

Straight after my Apprenticeship Fair on 24th April at 12pm at Didcot Civic Hall, I will start planning this year's Wantage and Didcot Climate Summit – the date will be 13th of June.

As ever, if I can help with anything then do please get in touch via david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

YOU ARE INVITED Saturday 6th May

9:00-11:00 - Community Brunch in the River Room

Livestream ALL DAY of the Coronation Service in the River Room & the Church with tea & cake available

From 4pm the church bells will be 'Ringing for the King'

Sunday 7th May



11:00 - All Age Songs of Praise for the Coronation with Abbey Brass Band, All Saints' Church

12:30–16:00 - BIG BYO Picnic on the Green (or in the church if wet) with music from Abbey Brass at 1-1.30pm & 2-2.30pm

The pubs will be open and take-out food available to buy from

The George and The Swan

Tea and Cake served from The River Room.

Bouncy Castle - Raffle and other stalls

If you would like to help in anyway on either Saturday or Sunday – making cakes, putting up gazebos; setting up tables and chairs; serving refreshments; running the raffle; putting everything away again etc then please contact Helen at the parish office on 01235 847179 or rector@damascusparish.org.uk

Let's celebrate together as a community!

COMMUNITY Coronation BRUNCH

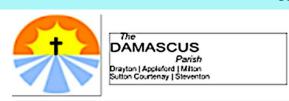


SATURDAY 6TH MAY 9-11 AM

Come and join us for a very special brunch with live screening of the King's coronation, open to the whole community.

River Room, All Saints' Church Free of charge, donations welcome.

Organised by Beth and Mike Summers in collaboration with All Saints' Church.



St Peter's, Drayton St Peter & St Paul, Appleford St Blaise, Milton All Saints', Sutton Courtenay St Michael and All Angels, Steventon



From the Ministry Team

The Coronation of King Charles III

Communities around the country are making preparations for Coronation Celebrations on the 6th May. These celebrations may take the form of village wide gatherings or as smaller street parties or as large-scale concerts. Whether you choose to celebrate or not, the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III alongside Camilla, The Queen Consort, in Westminster Abbey is still an opportunity to pray for him, as he approaches this important event in the life of our country and the Commonwealth.

In the Bible, St Paul says: 'I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.' (1 Timothy 2:1,2).

We Pray for God's presence to guide every aspect of King Charles' life as he prepares for his Coronation and future roles. At his Accession, he was proclaimed Defender of the Faith, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Charles has talked about 'the Sovereign's particular relationship and responsibility towards the Church of England - the Church in which my own faith is so deeply rooted.'

We Pray for God's wisdom as he provides leadership that will honour God and promote the wellbeing of our society. King Solomon prayed for wisdom for himself: 'So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.' (1 Kings 3:9).

We Pray for God's love to strengthen all relationships within the Royal Family; for reconciliation, understanding, forgiveness and good communication.

We Pray for God's purpose to be fulfilled through the work of the King and Queen Consort and their family in the years to come. He has said: 'and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavour to serve you with loyalty, respect and love, as I have throughout my life.'

A Prayer for the new King:

Everlasting God, we pray for our new King. Bless his reign and the life of our nation. Help us to work together so that truth and justice, harmony and fairness flourish among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With love and prayers

The Reverend Helen Kendrick, Rector of the DAMASCUS Parish

Services of Worship

1st Sunday: Family service at 11:00 am

2nd Sunday: Parish Eucharist at 11:00am +Junior Church 3rd Sunday: Morning Worship at 11:00am + Junior Church 4th Sunday: Parish Eucharist at 11:00am + Junior Church 5th Sunday: Special services across the Damascus Parish —

please see church noticeboard for details

CHURCH DIARY FOR MAY

Monday 1st - BANK HOLIDAY

Tuesday 2nd – 19:30 Baptism Preparation in the River Room for all parents interested in baptism for their children

CORONATION WEEKEND

Saturday 6th – 9:00-11:00 Community Brunch in the River Room - start the day with a delicious brunch and then watch the Live-streaming of the Coronation – or drop in for Tea and Cake during the day. 4pm Ringing for the King.

Sunday 7th – 11:00 All Age Songs of Praise for the Coronation with Abbey Brass in the church

12:30-4pm – BIG BYO Picnic on the Green (in the church if wet) see poster for details

Monday 8th – BANK HOLIDAY

Tuesday 9th – 19:30 DAMASCUS PCC Meeting

Thursday 18th ASCENSION DAY – 19:30 Holy Communion, All Saints' Church

Saturday 21st – 11:00 Holy Communion followed by bring and share lunch to celebrate Helen's 20 years of ministry in the DAMASCUS Parish – all are welcome!

Wednesday 24th – 19:30 DAMASCUS Parish Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, St Blaise, Milton

Monday 29th BANK HOLIDAY – 14.15 English Music Festival Concert 'Moonrakers' will perform sparkling and unique arrangements of traditional British folk songs and tunes as well as their own compositions. Discounted rates for local residents available when entering a valid postcode on the EMF website. www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk or using one of the forms available from church.

An Invitation to All

On Sunday 21st May 2023 it will be exactly 20 years to the day that Helen was licenced as Priest-in-Charge of Sutton Courtenay with Appleford.

Over the years her role has changed so she is now Rector of the DAMASCUS Parish (Drayton, Appleford, Milton, Sutton Courtenay with Steventon). But to celebrate her 20 years of ministry here we are having a special service of Holy Communion on 21st May at 11am in All Saints' Church followed by a glass of bubbly and a bring-and-share lunch in the River Room. All are welcome!





Join us as we read and discuss Cris Roger's book, which explores how we can learn from Nehemiah's story to create a more hopeful, faith-filled future. Together we will look at how we can join in with God's heart and mission for restoring all things, renewing and rebuilding our hearts, our focus and our world.

Starting Wednesday 7th June 7:30pm

In the River Room, Sutton Courtenay and online via zoom.

For more information and to register your interest please contact admin@damascusparish.org.uk or 01235 847179





ALL SAINTS' CHURCH & RIVER ROOM

RIVER ROOM 200 CLUB

In Support of the All Saints' Community Space

Winners at the Draw on 13 April were:

1st - No. 35 (£40.00)

2nd - No. 24 (£20.00)

3rd - No. 30 (£10.00)

New members always welcome.

Please see the information in All Saints' Church or email landsbert@west-manor.co.uk

The next draw will take place on Thursday May 11th at the All Saints' Community Café in the River Room at 10.30 am.

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

THE RIVER ROOM

All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay OX14 4AE

This attractive, light and modern room, with adjacent well-equipped kitchen, entrance foyer & two WCs (one accessible) is perfect for group meetings or private parties.

Capacity: 40 seated to 80 standing. Plus – projector, complete A/V system, digital piano

All enquiries: 01235 847179

MOVIE MATINEES

The next Movie Matinee in the River Room (A WARM SPACE) is on

Saturday 27th May 2023 - 4pm

For a full programme to be sent to you please email: admin@damascusparish.org.uk or pick one up from the back of the church Entry is **free** and refreshments (to match the theme of each film) are available.

Voluntary donations in aid of the Church Fabric Fund gratefully received.

Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 9th May

Thursday 23rd May 2023

from 10:30-12:00 - all welcome!
Why not drop by for coffee or tea & delicious
homemade cake & conversation and to browse
the books or jigsaw puzzles on offer?
Open to all – a good place to meet with friends or

make new ones. If you need transport to and from the church please telephone the Parish

Office on 01235 847179

SUTTON COURTENAY PRODUCE SHOW

The committee are planning to have the annual Produce Show this year on Saturday, September 2^{nd}

Anyone can enter into any of the classes and we would love to see even more entries this year. The schedule will be accessible on the Sutton Courtenay News web site and, as usual, schedules and entry forms will be available from local shops and businesses nearer the time. There are children's classes for under sixes and for seven to elevens year olds but children and young people may compete against the adults in any class if they so wish. We would love to see entries from people new to Sutton Courtenay as well as familiar faces.

You may wonder where the money we raise from entry fees, teas and raffles goes. Whatever remains after paying the expenses of running the show is used for the benefit of the village. In the past we have made donations to The Sutton Courtenay News and have provided some of the seats around the village. If you enjoy seeing the beautiful displays of daffodils that have brightened various areas of Sutton Courtenay this spring, these were paid for in this way and were planted by the committee aided by some members of the Abingdon Damascus Youth Project.

So now, all you keen gardeners, knitters, craftspeople, artists and photographers get planning and making!

Any help with setting up the hall would be greatly appreciated, and also with clearing away after the show. Offers to 01235 848633 please.

The Produce Show Committee

SUTTON COURTENAY PRODUCE SHOW

Sutton Courtenay Craft and Produce Show 2nd September 2023 (Show open for viewing at 2pm)

NB: entries must be staged strictly between 9:45 and 11am when judging begins.

Early or late entries cannot be accepted.

	T
1 Seed tray with mixture of vegetables	CRAFTS See rules at end of schedule
2 1 sweetcorn – kernel to be ½ exposed	47 A hand knitted bobble hat
3 3 potatoes, any one variety	48 An item of hand embroidery- cross stitch or canvas work
4 6 runner beans	49 A home-made key ring
5 Bunch of fresh herbs	50 An item of crochet
6 3 onions (trimmed)	51 A quilted item – max 1 m sq or displayed folded to 1 m sq
7 A lettuce	52 Something new from something old
8 3 tomatoes	53 An item for a child, made from fabric
9 A truss of tomatoes - any variety	54 A hand-made Christmas card
10 2 courgettes – no larger than 6 ins	55 A piece of original craft work -ceramic, metal or wood
11 Collection of 3 different vegetables (3 of each)	56 Drawing – pencil, charcoal or pen and ink – max 2'x2'
12 3 carrots – with 3" tops	57 Picture – any medium including collage -max 2'x2'
13 3 beetroot – with 3" tops	PHOTOGRAPHY See rules at end of schedule
14 5 shallots (trimmed)	58 Black and white photograph
15 3 dessert apples	59 Colour print – general
16 3 cooking apples	60 Colour print - 'Sutton Courtenay'
17 5 plums	61 Colour print - Guess what?
18 3 pears	CHILDREN'S CLASSES a) 6 and under b) age 7-11
19 2 peppers	62 A picture - 'My favourite toy'
20 1 cucumber	63 A decorated pebble
21 A funny vegetable	64 A room in a shoe box
22 3 leeks	65 A garden on a plate
FLOWERS	66 4 decorated biscuits
23 Vase of 3 stems of roses	FLOWER ARRANGING Accessories to be within size limits
24 1 specimen rose	67 Petite- maximum 4" wide 9" high
25 Vase of 4 herbaceous flowers (different varieties)	68 Arrangement with 5 flowers and foliage only
26 4 dahlias	69 Arrangement of dahlias in a jug – garden flowers only
27 3 stems from a flowering shrub	70 'Global warming– max 20" sq unlimited ht. Accessories allowed
28 Vase of 5 or more mixed garden flowers inc. shrubs	RULES:
29 A begonia	Photographs: to be taken by exhibitor and not previously shown.
30 A potted geranium	Mounted, overall size max 14"x10"
31 A flowering houseplant	<u>Craft</u> : All items must be your own work, not worn or shown before.
32 A pot plant shown for foliage	Art: All items must be your own work and not shown before.
COOKERY	Class 39: Lemon Drizzle Cake Given recipe/tin size to be used
33 Jar of jam	Ingredients:
34 Jar of marmalade	 225g/8oz softened unsalted butter
	o 225g/8oz caster sugar
, ,	4 eggs225g/8oz self-raising flour
	1 unwaxed lemon, zest and juice
37 Jar of chutney	o 85g/3oz icing sugar
38 A jar of honey	1.Pre-heat oven to 180°C/160°F Fan/gas mark 4
39 Lemon Drizzle Cake - See recipe	Grease 2lb/900g loaf tin with a little butter and line with baking
40 4 flapjacks	paper. 2 Mix butter and caster sugar, add eggs one at a time, blending.
41 4 fruit scones	2. Mix butter and caster sugar, add eggs one at a time, blending after each addition, add flour and lemon zest and blend until
42 6 meringue halves (unfilled)	smooth.
43 4 ginger biscuits	3. Pour the batter into the lined tin, flatten the top with the back
44 3 Scotch eggs	of a spoon and bake for 50-55 minutes.
<u>DRINKS</u>	4. Stir together the lemon juice and icing sugar. When the cake
45 1 bottle home-made lemonade	has cooled a little, poke holes in the top using a skewer. Drizzle
46 Elderflower cordial	over the icing.

ABINGDON DAMASCUS YOUTH PROJECT



We have been busy building the foundations for young people in the village to become young citizens and play a bigger role in their community. Young people supported the parish council in its litter pick, and it was great to have Roxy join in.



As always, we are grateful for support from the wider community. In April, both Sutton Courtenay WI and the North Abingdon WI gave donations to ADYP—a huge thank you to the members who worked hard to raise the funds.





Tel: 01235 848694

f

James Damascus, Jake Damascus



James_Damascus; Jake_Damascus

YouTube-The Abingdon Damascus Youth Project—MIND GYM Website - www.damascusyouthproject.org.uk

THAMES VALLEY ALERT

Residents are being warned to be wary of cold callers or leaflets offering to do garden clearances, tree cutting and work to roofs and gutters

Here are some top tips from Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards team:

- O If it is out of the blue, it's not for you! Don't agree to work from an unsolicited, cold call.
- O Be aware of 'alarm bell' tactics, claims such as 'I was working in the area and saw that your garden/roof needed urgent attention'; 'we are working at one of your neighbours' and we have some material left over'; 'I can take you to the bank/cashpoint to get the money'.
- Take five to stop fraud. Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe. Trust your instincts.

- If you want some work undertaken, get a number of detailed quotes in writing, including full contact details and a detailed breakdown of exactly what work will be done
- Be cautious about any requests for large deposits. For larger work, agree when staged payments will be paid and what work should be completed before any money is handed over. And stick to what is agreed.
- Check with friends and family for trusted recommendations and consider a trading standards' approved trader, from the Buy with Confidence (www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk) scheme.
- Consider learning more about how scams work and how you can protect yourself and others, by becoming a Friend Against Scam (www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk).

For more advice on consumer rights, or to report a rogue trader to trading standards, contact the Citizens Advice national consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133** or by visiting its website citizensadvice.org.uk.

THE FRIENDS' GARDEN PARTY SUNDAY 2ND JULY 2023



The Friends of All Saints' Church have great pleasure in announcing the date of their annual Garden Party which will be held on Sunday 2nd July from 12.30am -3.30pm in Sue Jenkins' garden, Churchmere Road, Sutton Courtenay. We welcome all members of the Sutton Courtenay Community and beyond. There will be a Jazz Band playing and entertainment will be arranged for children.

A buffet lunch will be served during the afternoon.

Tickets £12 adults £6 children (Family ticket for two adults & 2 Children £30)

Tickets available from Sue Jenkins (SJJenkins33@aol.com) or any member of the committee. Please ring 07885 437454 for details

Entertaining This Summer?

Borrow a tent from 'The Friends of All Saints' Church'

The Friends of All Saints' Church have two good quality white tents that can be borrowed for your outdoor entertaining this summer. Each tent is 6m x 3m (20ft x 10ft) with sides that can be added or not, depending on weather.

A donation to The Friends of All Saints' Church would be appreciated.

To erect and strike the tents - Friends of All Saints' will provide a supervisor but the borrower would need to provide an ablebodied team of four as labour. Times for this would be negotiable.

All enquiries to:

Morna Whitlock (morna28whitlock@gmail.com)
David McKenzie (d.j.mckenzie@hotmail.com)

SCIDS - EMPRESS MATILDA THE MUSICAL



WOW! What a show. Thank you from SCIDS to the village for coming along to watch Empress Matilda, The Musical. The whole cast did an amazing job, a record number involved this year and only 10 rehearsals! We hope you all enjoyed learning about our village history and hearing about the most famous queen that you might not have known about. We always welcome new members, so please do come and join us next year. Over to the cast for their say! Thank you all.

'SCIDS is a great way for different people in our village to work together to form something that can amuse family, friends and anyone else. It's been great meeting and working alongside everyone this year and I can't wait for the next one.' *Bradley*

'SCIDS is so much fun and a good way to make new friends.' Gabriella

'SCIDS was lots of fun and it was a great opportunity to meet new people, sing, dance, act and to become more confident. I will definitely be doing it next year.' *Martha*

'Joining SCIDS allowed my daughter to make new friends of all ages in the community.' parent

'This year, SCIDS took it to another level: apart from the usual fun, superb songs, friendship and community, the play was also educational and full of history (not just Sutton Courtenay's).' *Abi* 'Enjoyable Sunday afternoons that lead to an exciting, rewarding show — I can't wait for next year!' *Miriam*

'SCIDS is a great way to make friends with others in the village.' *Erin*

NORDIC WALKING

With a qualified instructor
Wednesdays & Fridays from 09:30 at the
Sutton Courtenay Recreation Ground
(OX14 4AR)

For more information contact Graham Wells at graymar.wells@btopenworld.com

From the Editor

I have been told by one of the parishioners that the new starting time of services at All Saints' Church has made it possible for people to get to church on time by bus! According to the timetable the 33 leaves Bradstocks Way at 10:27 and gets to the George shortly after 10:30 giving plenty of time to walk into church for the 11:00 am service. The return journey leaves the George at about 12:38 (leaves Culham at 12:36) and gets to Bradstocks Way at 12:45 allowing one a little time for a cup of coffee and a chat in the River Room after the service.

The Friends of All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay AGM

We will also be holding The Friends' AGM on Wednesday 3rd May at 7:30 pm in All Saints' Church. This is open to all members and anyone who would like to find out more about our fundraising events within the community.

The Friends of All Saints' is a Charity supported by villagers (both current and past) of various faiths (and of none). We welcome everyone who has a concern for this historic and wonderful Grade 1 listed building to help maintain it for today and for future generations.

Sue Jenkins (Chairman)



SUTTON COURTENAY WI



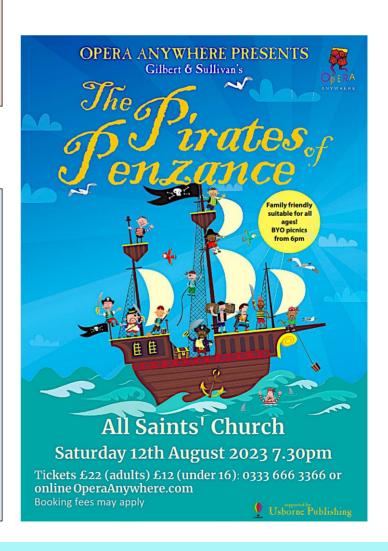
Make a difference

- come and join us for some great evenings and activities - a visit from Thames Valley
 Air Ambulance Unit in May - in June a super
 'historic' outdoor trip and experience
- and in July it's all we need to know about hairdressing!

We meet every third Tuesday monthly in the River Room, Sutton Courtenay at 7.30 pm

Contact us at ofwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk or Tel 01869 331081





LOCAL ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

Do you live with, or care for someone living with Dementia?

Wecare2

Wecare2 is a small group of people with dementia and, of course, their carers. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month from 11:15 to 12:30 in the 'River Room' at All Saints' Church.

Our aim is to sing a little, socialise a little and have an "elevenses" together.

New members will always be welcome.

If interested either as a customer (transport can be arranged) or to help, please contact

Alan & Morna Whitlock

Brookfield, 30 Chapel Lane. Sutton Courtenay,

OX14 4AN

morna28whitlock@gmail.com 01235 848335 or 07787 521039



Sutton Courtenay (National Power) Trust

Financial Problems due to the Current Economic Crisis?

If you live in Sutton Courtenay and are experiencing financial problems arising from the current economic crisis, you may be eligible for a grant from the Sutton Courtenay (National Power) Trust. For further information please email clerk.scnpt@gmail.com or telephone 07476 026406

ALL ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

KNIT AND NATTER



Afternoons of chat and craft

Come along with your own knitting / sewing / craft and enjoy free refreshments and company.

Every 3rd Monday of the month 2:00 – 4:00pm

The River Room, All Saints' Church, The Green, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4AE

Tel: 01235 847179 for more information

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Car Club Pilot launches

Fourteen new car club EVs have launched across Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Eynsham, Henley, Kidlington, Oxford, Thame, Witney, Wallingford and Wantage. These shared vehicles — operated by CoWheels, Enterprise CarClub and Thame EV Hire Club - are available for people to use on a pay-per-use basis that provides a convenient and affordable alternative to individual car ownership, as well as providing an opportunity for petrol and diesel drivers to try an EV without any long-term commitment. www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/EVcarclubs

Naomi Cooper Marketing & Campaigns Officer Oxfordshire County Council naomi.cooper@oxfordshire.gov.uk www.oxfordshire.gov.uk



LOCAL ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

Letter to the Editor:

DOGS!

It has been such a pleasure to make so many lovely human and doggy friends (and renew old acquaintances) during the six years Merlin has been taking me for my daily walks. Merlin is my golden retriever who, more often than not, can be seen sitting on the pavement stubbornly refusing to move, or sharing a bench with friends. He is usually on a lead because – given half a chance – he heads towards The Plum Pudding in Milton to be picked up by his personal taxi service. He is probably the naughtiest dog I have ever had, but has a wonderful temperament and loves people. We enjoy meeting Merlin's friends and their owners.

Recently however, I have been stalked on several occasions by a loose dog. He is threatening and spots us from quite a distance, prowls towards us with hackles raised, tail slightly raised, and lip curled. He stands right beside me glaring balefully, his head lowered and his body quivering. Sometimes he circles us and is totally out of control. I cannot know whether this dog is going to attack or injure me or Merlin and I would not be able to defend either of us. It is not a banned breed but the law is the same for any potentially dangerous dog.

It is an offence under the Dangerous Dogs Act 2018 to allow your dog to be out of control and cause someone to feel threatened or to fear for their pet and their own safety. Under this act, the penalties are very harsh for the owner *and* the dog.

There have been so many dog attacks recently with tragic consequences. It is much better to be safe than sorry and ensure that your dog is on a lead at ALL times.

Nicki Broadbent

Address supplied



For more than 38 years, Flexicare (registered charity no. 1172635) has been providing a specialised sitting service for severely disabled children (and their siblings) of registered families in Oxfordshire.

From 9:00am on Sunday, 14th May 2023, we return to Snells Hall in East Hendred, OX12 8LA for our annual community fundraising walk. Routes of varying lengths (including two wheelchair/buggy accessible options) are available to walk, run or cycle, some taking in the glorious views from the Ridgeway. Refreshments are available en route and at the Hall. To register, or to find out more, visit www.flexicare.org/events or contact admin@flexicare.org

Donations can be made in advance via our website www.flexicare.org/donate or by cash or card at the event.

Together in Stitches

Do you wish you could find time for craft projects?
Would you like a fun evening,
meeting like-minded people in Sutton Courtenay?
If so, Together in Stitches is for you!



Bring your craft project, whatever that may be, and come and enjoy a chat (and possibly a glass of wine)

Second Thursday in the month (7:30-9pm, River Room)

(11th May, 8th June, etc.)

For more information 'phone 01235 847179 or just turn up!





THE SIXTEENTH ENGLISH MUSIC FESTIVAL

26 - 29 May 2023

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk



The sixteenth annual English Music Festival opens in Dorchester Abbey, Oxfordshire on 26 May and will run until the evening of 29 May 2023, with a highly anticipated visit by the BBC Concert Orchestra on opening night to perform major works by E. J. Moeran and Ralph Vaughan Williams, as well as World Premières by William Lloyd Webber, William Alwyn and Paul Lewis. Concerts continue at Dorchester Abbey, Radley College Silk Hall and at All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay, with a mini-bus transfer provided between venues.

The English Music Festival celebrates the brilliance, innovation, beauty and rich musical heritage of Britain with a strong focus on unearthing overlooked or forgotten masterpieces of the late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century.

For the Festival's opening concert, EMF patrons will be making a special pilgrimage to Dorchester Abbey to hear a rare live performance of E.J. Moeran's glorious Cello Concerto when soloist Raphael Wallfisch joins the BBC Concert Orchestra with conductor Martin Yates. Moeran's biographer, Dr Ian Maxwell, sets the context to this marginalised yet much-loved work in his pre-concert talk.

DISCOUNTED TICKETS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

Further information including the full Festival programme is available on the EMF's website:

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2023-may-festival/programme.php.

Tickets are now on sale via the website:

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2023-may-festival/box-office.php and by means of a postal booking form. Full Festival and Day Passes are also offered. Subject to availability, tickets for individual concerts will also be available on the door. Audience members who are local are eligible for a 10% discount on tickets. To check whether your postcode qualifies, please click the button marked 'APPLY DISCOUNT BY POSTCODE'.

IN MEMORY OF OUR POSTMAN MAT (MATHEW DOWNES)

Mat, our postman, died in the early hours of 20th March. The Just Giving page which was set up to support his family had raised £5370 at the time of going to print. This was raised by 117 supporters. The comments on the page show what a loss Mat has been to our community: 'What an amazing postman, who always went the extra mile, whatever the weather, and always smiling and cheerful'. 'We miss your happy lovely face and never-ending supply of dog treats. A gem of a guy x', 'Matt was always smiling, chippa and wearing shorts, whatever the weather! What a lovely man and what a loss, both to his family and Sutton Courtenay. We miss you Matt!'

Mat's funeral was so well attended there was standing room only in the church. The family was well supported by friends, Mat's work colleagues and a lot of Mat's customers from Sutton Courtenay. We were asked to wear bright colours and his sons and grandsons wore the strip of his favourite team, Aston Villa. It was a lovely ceremony which demonstrated the love Mat had created around him amongst family and friends, and was a celebration of his life as well as a farewell.



R.I.P. Mat

Have your say

Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

The consultation runs from 19 April until 7 June 2023

View the documents and find out more at whitehorsedc.gov.uk/SuttonCourtenay-NP

Scan the QR code on the right to go straight to the online comment form

View the hard copy documents at Sutton Courtenay Village Hall by making an appointment in advance with the Parish Clerk (please check opening times before travelling)

Please help spread the word to others who may wish to take part





For any queries, please call 01235 422600 or email planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk and we will be happy to help

If you would like to arrange an appointment to view a paper copy of the Plan, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Correspondence should be sent to Miss J. Currie, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council c/o 44 Harrington Close Newbury, RG14 2RQ info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk 07495 123 353

News From the Abbey

The Abbey opened its doors on 1 April thanks to the dedicated work of our amazing band of volunteers. On that very day our first group was welcomed by Nancy, who is now settling in as our manager, and by one of our, as yet, small group of resident volunteers.

Another significant milestone was passed on 18 March when we all gathered in the Great Hall for our Annual General Meeting, welcoming as guests many supporters and well-wishers from the village. The Regeneration Group, which I have mentioned in earlier posts, presented the Regeneration Plan which sets out a 12 month programme to get The Abbey fully back on its feet both financially and in terms of its work as an inter-faith centre for individual spiritual growth and for social action in the community.

An important part of our journey to financial security is letting the Garden Lodge (formerly known as the Guest House) for Airbnb. There is a lot of demand for weekday letting in, for instance, Milton Park, and this can be coordinated with our need to use it for residential retreats. So please do feel free to book rooms if you have friends or family visiting and you need extra space.

Shed Oxford is a volunteer organisation set up to encourage people, young and old, to practice wood and metal working and pass on knowledge through craft skill sharing. The Shed team has created a community workshop in the old tractor shed and repaired a dilapidated adjoining greenhouse to provide a solar heat source for the workshop. We are pleased to secure Shed Oxford's Abbey home for the foreseeable future and to enlist their help in urgent restoration work on the historic fabric. Please email shedoxford@gmail.com if you would like to get involved.

Talking of the historic fabric, we are now getting really valuable volunteer help from experts in historic buildings and heritage management. The Oxfordshire Buildings Trust is willing in principle to provide a grant towards the costs of an updated condition survey, from which we can develop a regular building maintenance plan and a long-term repairs strategy. Oxfordshire Buildings Record (a separate organisation) is also ready to undertake (at no cost), a detailed historical survey and analysis of the complex evolution of the building. This will help to guide future conservation decisions.

One exciting development is a partnership with REBOOT, a charity that offers an extraordinarily successful programme of workshops dealing with trauma and PTSD. It is a faith-based charity and fits well with the Abbey's purpose. The work is aimed at military, veterans, first-responders and anyone who has experienced trauma, and has a track record in reducing the risk of suicides. We will have an introductory workshop in November and launch the programme, which will be free to participants, soon after.

We are now working up a programme of local events including a return to Oxfordshire Artweeks in 2024. We would like someone from the village to help lead this work

please! Also, if you would like to come and join a meditation group at The Abbey there are two daily opportunities. Just come along:

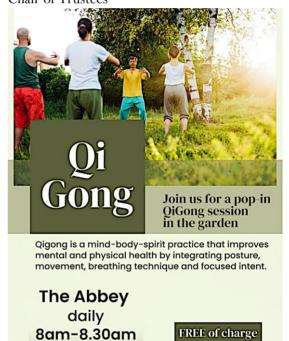
- Daily silent meditation 8.30 9.00 am
- QiGong in the garden at 8.00 8.30am. QiGong is a mind body spirit experience which improves physical and mental health by integrating posture, movement, breathwork and focussed intent.

Also, we do need someone to be our Treasurer trustee. If you have financial management skills and would like to be part of an active and dynamic new group of trustees at The Abbey please email me at adrianrancemcg@theabbey.uk.com and we can arrange to have a chat about it.

Finally: we are looking for an office manager so please do look at the ad we have placed in this newsletter:

Don't forget! If you would like to get involved in any way, please email volunteering@theabbey.uk.com

Adrian Rance-McGregor Chair of Trustees



MEDITATION
AT THE ABBEY

every day
at 8:30-9:00AM

FREE of charge
donations welcome
no booking necessary

donations welcome

PUZZLE PAGE

Easy Sudoku

8								
	1	3	8	6	7	5	4	9
4	7		5		3	2	6	
				5		9	8	1
	6	8	9					
7		1	3	4			2	
6				7				4
		7			9			
	3			8			1	2

Medium Sudoku

	3		9		4	7		
		7		1				6
1		8		3				
6						4	1	
	7					4 6	5 8	
							8	3
		4			6			
		4 5						4
			5		8			

WORDSEARCH

The topic is **COLOURS**

Т T 0 К Н Ι S G 5 G J Ι Ι R Ε А Ε D Ι G S D В Ν 0 Ε Ν Ν R Ι 0 G Ν 0 W R U S Ε А I А М Z Ε Ε R Ε A P R I \subset ОТ G 5

 $Taken\ from\ www.puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com$



Taken from www.puzzles.ca/sudoku (1087)



Become a Healthwatch Oxfordshire trustee – and help us make local health and care better

- Do you care about the way health and social care services are run in Oxfordshire?
- Would you like to play a part in making these services better for all?

If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire needs you to become a trustee!

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is the county's independent health and social care watchdog. We listen to people's experiences of local services and share what we hear with commissioners and providers to help bring about improvements.

Becoming a trustee offers a real opportunity for you to help improve care across the county.

The role will only require around 20 hours of your time a year.

We welcome applications from people of all ages and backgrounds, and no previous experience of being a trustee is necessary – your lived experience and skills are what we need! A full induction will be given, and you will be well supported by our existing trustees and staff.

One of our current trustees said the role was rewarding and satisfying, adding: "Using skills and experience you already have, and learning new things, you get back much more than you put in."

This is a voluntary role, although expenses will be paid.

To find out more, including how to apply, see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/news/becomeatrustee

You can also contact us for more information on **01865 520520** or at **hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk**

Charity Office Manager

Based at The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay

(25-30 hrs, 5 days/week)

£15-£17 per hour gross, dependent on experience

(with optional live-in at a reduced hourly rate)

For further details please email Wyon.Stansfeld@theabbey.uk.com

Closing date for applications: 9am, 10th May

CLEANER WANTED

For THE RIVER ROOM at ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

3 Hours a week – flexible timing.

£15 per hour.

Contact Alison Budd on alison@pbudd.me or

The Parish Office on 01235 847179



OBITUARIES - REST IN PEACE

We send our condolences and the assurance of our prayers to the family and friends of the following people who died recently:

Mathew Richard DOWNES (Mat) the village postman for Sutton Courtenay for over twenty years died on 20th March 2023. He was born in Oxford on 25th September 1967 to his parents, Vivian and Sheila Downes. He was the second youngest in a family of five boys and grew up in Abingdon in Gainsborough Green.

He was hardworking from an early age, having started with a Saturday job with a mobile greengrocer, in order to save money for a skiing holiday. He attended Larkmead School but was always eager to start work and earn money so left school early. Apparently, he was offered the opportunity to be a hairdresser – an offer he, perhaps fortuitously, declined! On leaving school he had a variety of jobs – working in a Tannery and then the Pavlova Factory and for Grahams; he also worked at a newsagents; then spent a couple of years at Ariston on Milton Park and then for various container and distribution companies.

But he finally discovered his true vocation when he started working for the Royal Mail. From the very start he loved his job and this village. When anyone first encountered Mat I'm not sure if it was his warm and welcoming smile and always cheerful greeting that they first noticed or the fact that he was wearing shorts — whatever the weather! He became a friend to all he delivered post to. He was a fixture of this community — far more than just a postman. By the nature of his job he knew more people in this village than anyone. Having known him for the past twenty years I know that he was always looking out for people and would go above and beyond his duties to help anyone he could. His kindness and his compassion shone through his duties as a postman. With total professionalism he would show care and concern whenever needed.

He was also extremely popular with all the dogs in the village. This might have been something to do with the fact that he always carried dog treats with him and was very generous in sharing them amongst the canine population. I'm sure we weren't the only house who regularly received dog treats through the letter box along with our post!

For all of his life Mat had so much energy and gave so much of himself to all that he did. He rarely sat back and did nothing. He was full of joy and fun and very generous with his time and his gifts in so many ways to family, friends and complete strangers alike. His job kept him fit as he walked extremely fast around the village- but never so fast he couldn't stop for a chat — and his energy levels were inspiring! He really enjoyed cooking — and was good at it. He loved watching The Repair Shop — his dream was to have a big workshop where he could put his large collection of DIY tools about which he was passionate. Apparently, he kept every single screw he ever found — just in case!

He was a devoted Aston Villa Fan and he loved supporting his grandchildren playing football. Indeed, even with his supreme dedication to his job, it was his beloved children and grandchildren that were always the main focus of his life. Everything he did was for them.

Sadly, in April last year he was diagnosed with Oesophageal Cancer - but even his response to that was upbeat and positive, 'Let the fun begin' he proclaimed as he started treatment. He was determined to return to work and not let his illness define him so just before Christmas he returned to his delivery round and it was a wonderful surprise for all of us to see his smiling, cheery presence on our doorsteps again. Sadly, he was back in hospital in January when they discovered that the cancer had spread and he was admitted to Sobell House where he died on 20th March 2023. The funeral service was held in an overflowing All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay on 19th April 2023 and was conducted by the Reverend Helen Kendrick who gave the address from which this is an edited extract. Personal family tributes were also given by his children and grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by them and by this village.



And the following whose ashes were interred in the churchyard:

George James Marshall (20th April 2023) Audrey Joyce Marshall (20th April 2023)





10% DISCOUNT FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

Join us here at beautiful All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay on Monday 29th May 2023 at 2.15pm for a very special concert featuring highly-acclaimed folk group *Moonrakers*, who will perform sparkling and unique arrangements of traditional British folk songs and tunes as well as their own compositions. Also, in Dorchester Abbey over the Spring Bank Holiday, enjoy a feast of English music; from the BBC Concert Orchestra with World Premières by Vaughan Williams and others and Raphael Wallfisch performing E. J. Moeran's deeply moving Cello Concerto, through a Coronation choral concert, chamber and song recitals to an intimate late-evening guitar and lute recital, a brass band and 1930s jazz.

Book at www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2023-may-festival/box-office.php. For a postal booking form or further information please contact Festival Director Em Marshall-Luck at The English Music Festival, PO Box 123, Clunton, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 7BP or email em.marshall-luck@englishmusicfestival.org.uk.

26-29 MAY 2023

DORCHESTER - SUTTON COURTENAY - RADLEY

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk









I'm mum to two children who has been in your shoes. I'm here to tell you I can help you CELEBRATE sleep again!

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Want to see your business or services advertised here?

Please contact advertising @ suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk



DOG SERVICES
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JACKIE'S CARE

Passionate dedicated personal carer available for work in Sutton Courtenay village

My service is to provide an ethnically sensitive domiciliary care to members of the local community

Quality practical personal care, and support for people in their own home companionship, shopping and socialising

£20 per hour/ £22 weekend (negotiable)

Hours of work

Monday- Friday 8am to 6pm Bank holiday if required

07712 456093 jackiefideria@yahoo.com



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DENTAL, FACE & BODY

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info@theoxfordsmileclinics.co.uk

www.theoxfordsmileclinics.co.uk



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MOVING HOME?

We are locally based property consultants who specialise in Residential Property, offering a bespoke, personal conveyancing service.



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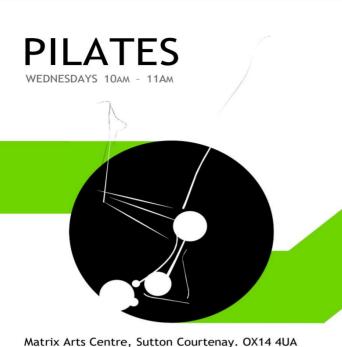
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